Between Cosmopolitan and Classical: Persian in Early Colonial India, c.1757-1857

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Abstract 1

This thesis investigates the significance of Persian learning in Britain and India during the period of colonial expansion under the East India Company, from 1757 to 1857. It seeks to situate Persian in its wider social context in north India, and understand the significance and function of the language during a period which is typically described in terms of the decline of the Persianate world. It does so by studying Persian literary production and language-learning by a range of actors at different sites in north India. By examining the presence of Persianate texts and individuals in spaces and endeavours which are typically classified as modern (orientalist textual production in the colony, the rise of linguistic studies, colonial education and nineteenth-century Indian printing), this thesis emphasizes the ways in which Persianate relationships and sensibilities shaped these sites of Indian modernity, and were themselves altered in the process. This thesis shows that the reasons for the continued usage of Persian in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century India went beyond its symbolic value as a marker of earlier Mughal power. Persian played an important role in shaping and constructing cosmopolitan literary and scholarly identities, as well as enabling spatial and social mobility. In so doing, this thesis hopes to contribute to the historiography of the Persianate world, as well as the histories of language, printing and education in colonial South Asia more broadly. In making these arguments, this thesis suggests a reappraisal of the ways in which the relationship between Indian modernity and cosmopolitan cultures now seen as 'classical' - such as that of Persian - is conceived. Rather than viewing Persian as a mere symbol of Mughal rule, a socially-grounded understanding of the Indian and colonial engagement with Persian is suggested. Understanding Persian in its social context in India, and recognizing the variety of spaces, languages and groups it interacted with challenges any neat categorization of the language as 'classical' or 'foreign' to India, or in opposition to vernacular or indigenous languages.

Abstract 2

This thesis investigates the significance of Persian learning in Britain and India during the period of colonial expansion under the East India Company, from 1757 to 1857. It seeks to situate Persian in its wider social context in north India, and understand the significance and function of the language during a period which is typically described in terms of the decline of the Persianate world. In investigating the reasons and nature of the survival of Persian in India during this period, this thesis asks two broad, though linked, questions. The first concerns the impact of Company rule on Persianate culture in South Asia, in a context when 'modern' forms of knowledge transmission, such as colonial education and Indian print cultures, emerged.

The second concerns the changing status of Persian during a period when attitudes towards language and identity (and the relationship between the two) underwent crucial changes. In particular, languages came to be seen as representative of territorially bound communities, often also defined by religious or ethnic commonalities. In order to answer these questions, this thesis has examined a range of primary sources which shed light on linguistic interactions involving Persian in colonial India. These include published and unpublished writings of various orientalists, East India Company records dealing with education and printing, as well as Persian and Urdu printed books, translations and *taẕkiras* produced in India during the period of study.

First, this thesis argues that Persian played a crucial role in the construction of scholarly identities and interactions in India during the period of colonial rule. It was able to integrate into, and helped to shape, sites of Indian modernity, such as print spheres and colonial educational establishments. Further, Persian provided access to an epistemic space which structured literary activities and regulated claims to scholarly and individual authority. As a cosmopolitan language which sustained networks stretching across the Ottoman, Safavid (and later Qajar) and Mughal empires, Persian performed important functions which far exceeded its ability to evoke nostalgia for a lost Mughal past. In particular, participation in Persianate literary networks was an important

form of sociability which enabled mobility and belonging in a cosmopolitan socio-intellectual episteme.

Colonial rule had a limited impact on the study and significance of Persian in India for much of this period, although counter-flows of the engagement with Persian had an important influence on the development of modern European linguistic methods at the turn of the nineteenth century. This thesis also suggests that at the beginning of the period under study, it was possible for both Britons and Indians to interact with Persian as a cosmopolitan language, in that it was seen as a language which enabled mobility and the forging of transregional and transtemporal connections in the early modern world. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Persian had started to be seen as a classical language in the European sense of the term. However, this change had a limited impact on members of the Indo-Persian sphere, and indeed, constituted a never-complete process.

This thesis begins by introducing the place of Persian in early modern India. It discusses the nature of pre-colonial languages, and seeks to define Persian as a cosmopolitan, rather than classical, language in this context. Chapter One traces the emergence of what this thesis calls 'colonial orientalism', i.e. a form of orientalist scholarship in India which was a descendent of, but distinct from, university-based orientalism in Europe. It shows that the orientalist engagement with Persian was an unstable process, which underwent multiple convolutions to define a particular mode of legitimate scholarship in the colony. In such scholarship, Persian came to be valued for its literary, rather than functional, characteristics.

Chapter Two studies the changes wrought in orientalist scholarship at the turn of the eighteenth century, when the consolidation of a British community in Calcutta, coupled with the troubles of the colonial state, resulted in increased feelings of paranoia. It suggests that these conditions resulted in the increased production of grammar textbooks and also led to the institutionalisation of Persian learning in colleges established by the East India Company.

Attempting to eliminate Indian informants and teachers, these developments led to the view of language as an abstract phenomenon, a fundamentally modern position to take up. During this period, the tendency to focus on Persian as a classical language according to European definitions of the term, cut off from its cosmopolitan functions, emerged. A comparison with the state of orientalist scholarship in Britain at the time shows that these new attitudes towards language were essentially colonial developments.

Chapter Three turns to the Indian side of the story. It investigates the lives and careers of the Indians employed by the Company, who were otherwise described by colonial officials as 'native informants'. It shows that the careers of these men went far beyond the interests of the colonial state, as they took part in a range of literary activities that helped cement their position in the Persianate world. Further, the texts produced by these men for the Company were Janus-faced, in that they spoke to multiple audiences. Ostensibly authored for the use of the Company's British employees, these texts sought to consolidate their authors' literary identities to a much wider network of Persianized literati. Such efforts ensured that although the colonial state hardly recognized the original scholarship of these men, their legacy survived and was commemorated in alternative spaces and texts such as poetic gatherings, *taẕkira*s and in different kinds of urban and communal memory. This chapter also discusses the different view of 'classical' and 'modern' literature held by such scholars. It emphasizes that the classical literary past was seen as historical, yet connected to the present by these men. This contrasted with the Euro-centric definition of 'classical' as representing a remote past, separated from the present by a historical rupture.

Chapter Four studies the interventions of the colonial state in Indian education. It shows that despite the fact that a decision to abolish Persian, and replace it with English and Indian vernacular languages in colonial schools and colleges, was taken in 1835, the existence of Persian in colonial institutions hardly suffered. It is argued that the difficulty of neatly categorising Persian into colonial binaries such as classical/vernacular or Muslim/Hindu – which underlay much educational policy – led to the survival of Persian in colonial institutions during this period. At the

same time, as the social composition of students able to access Persian changed, subtle changes in the way that Persian was approached can be glimpsed. These changes were the result of Persian being taught as a 'classical' language, unrelated to the immediate Indian past, in the European sense of the term. However, for the most part, institutions of discipleship were able to filter into colonial institutions and ensured that Persian remained embedded in its social function of enabling mobility and creating literary identities.

Chapter Five studies the emergence of lithographic printing in India, and the publication of Persian works from privately-owned presses. It shows that the range of works published by such presses was much wider than that studied at colonial institutions, and that the success of lithographic printing cannot be ascribed to the presence of educational markets alone. Lithographic press-owners were quick to tie themselves into existing structures of epistemological authority, and to build reputations as scholarly men. The capacity to mass produce (in relative terms) texts did alter the distribution and circulation of books which had previously circulated from hand to hand in manuscript. As a result, texts could reach newly-literate readers as well as readers spread over a much wider geographic area more quickly. New readers and ways of accessing texts were drawn into existing norms of personalised knowledge transmission, rather than positing a break from them. Finally, the Epilogue briefly considers the shifting geographies of Persianate literary sociability after 1857, when many of the north Indian centres of Persian culture turned towards English and Urdu more decisively. It shows that even after 1857, Persian literary production retained the capacity to draw together disparate individuals with different vested interests in textual production. Whether asserting princely autonomy or scribal lineage, Persianate production spoke to cosmopolitan spaces and ways of being that went beyond the boundaries and structures of the colonial state.

This thesis shows that the reasons for the continued usage of Persian in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century India went beyond the merely symbolic. Persian played an important role in shaping and constructing cosmopolitan literary and scholarly identities, as well as opening up

(physical and imagined) spaces of mobility and sociability. In so doing, this thesis hopes to contribute to existing literature on the Persianate world in India, as well as the histories of language, printing and education in colonial South Asia more broadly. In making these arguments, this thesis asks for a reappraisal of the ways in which the relationship between Indian modernity and cosmopolitan cultures now seen as 'classical' - such as that of Persian - is conceived. Rather than viewing Persian as a mere symbol of Mughal rule, (and hence the antithesis of colonial modernity), a socially-grounded understanding of the Indian and colonial engagement with Persian is suggested. Understanding Persian in its social context in India, and recognizing the variety of spaces, languages and groups it interacted with, challenges any neat categorization of the language as 'classical' or 'foreign' to India, in opposition to vernacular or indigenous languages.

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Abbreviations and Transliteration

List of Abbreviations

Bodleian Library	**BDL**
British Library	**BL**
Cambridge University Library	**CUL**
General Committee of Public Instruction	**GCPI**
India Office Records	**IOR**
Modern Asian Studies	***MAS***
Selections from the Records of the Government of the North Western Provinces	***SRGNWP***
The Indian Economic and Social History Review	***IESHR***

Note

I have transliterated all Persian words, including names of persons, in accordance with the scheme followed in: F. J. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English dictionary, including the Arabic words and phrases to be met with in Persian literature* (London, 1892). Names of places are excluded from this system, and instead given as they are commonly spelled in English. I have also departed from Steingass in rendering the Arabic article 'al-': instead of 'Karimu'd dīn', the spelling 'Karīm al-Dīn' is used.

For ease of reference, bilingual Fort William publications with English titles, and translations of Persian works retain their original spellings in English. Poetic *takẖallus* (pen-names) are indicated by double inverted commas the first time they occur in the text.

Introduction

The second half of the eighteenth century was a time of intense political and social changes in India. As the Mughal state lost political control, a host of colonial and Indian polities sought to consolidate their autonomy and power in South Asia. In Awadh, Bengal, and Hyderabad, strong successor states to the Mughal empire emerged, while the Marathas in western India and the Sikhs in the Punjab represented some of the new social groups rising to power.[1] By the early nineteenth century, the English East India Company had established itself as the dominant power in India. Throughout this period, however, the legacy of the Mughal empire continued to exercise considerable influence as a symbol of legitimate governance and sovereignty in India. Newly-established powers drew upon Mughal cultural codes and practices in order to integrate themselves within the broad framework of the Mughal empire and thus legitimise their own rule.[2] In other words, political decline did not equate to cultural decline. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the persistence of Persian in India during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even as vernacular cultures became more formally established and gained a firmer footing in elite circles, Persian continued to play an important role in India's literary landscape, and formed a significant part of education.[3]

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[1] G. D. S. Sood, *India and the Islamic Heartlands: An Eighteenth-Century World of Circulation and Exchange* (Cambridge, 2016), pp.6-11; D. Washbrook, 'India in the early modern world economy: modes of production, reproduction and exchange', *Journal of Global History*, 2/1 (2007), pp.87-111; C. A. Bayly, *Rulers, townsmen and bazaars: north Indian society in the age of British expansion, 1770-1870* (Cambridge, 1983)

[2] See, for instance: Sood, *India and the Islamic Heartlands*, pp. 8-9, K. Chatterjee, *The Cultures of History in Early Modern India: Persianization and Mughal Culture in Bengal* (New Delhi, 2009), pp.159-61

[3] On vernacularization, see: R. O'Hanlon, 'Performance in a World of Paper: Puranic Histories and Social Communications in Early Modern India', *Past and Present,* 219/1, pp.87-126 (2013); V. Naregal, *Language Politics, Elites, and the Public Sphere: Western India Under Colonialism* (New Delhi, 2001); M. Alam, *The languages of political Islam : India, 1200-1800* (London, 2004), pp.183-5. For longer-term trends, see: S. Guha, 'Transitions and Translations: Regional Power and Vernacular Identity in the Dakhan, 1500-1800', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24/2 (2004), pp.23-31; S. Pollock, 'Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History', *Public Culture* 12/3 (2000), pp.591-625. For the presence of Persian in elite education: M. Pernau, 'Teaching Emotions: The Encounter between Victorian Values and

Although the presence of Persian in colonial India has often been noted in passing, the subject has not received due scholarly attention on its own terms. At best regarded as a symbol of elite (and largely Muslim) nostalgia, and at worst, a remnant of Mughal rule which accidentally managed to survive, the continuing usage of Persian in nineteenth-century India is commonly treated as a mere hangover from the past.[4] This thesis studies the ways in which the East India Company and Indians engaged with Persian over a century of Company rule, between 1757 and 1857. It seeks to understand the reasons for the continuing presence of Persian in India during this period, as well as the changing significance of the language for different groups in South Asia. This thesis argues that as a language which sustained networks stretching across the Ottoman, Safavid/Qajar and Mughal empires, Persian performed important functions which far exceeded its ability to evoke nostalgia for a lost Mughal past. Participation in Persianate literary networks was an important form of sociability which enabled mobility and belonging in a cosmopolitan socio-intellectual episteme.

The production and consumption of Persian texts provided Indians with access to an epistemological framework which existed alongside (and often interacted with) colonial forms of knowledge and authority. This alternative framework was sustained by, and in turn reproduced, hierarchical relationships of patronage, friendship and discipleship (*ustād-shāgirdī*). Such relationships functioned as nodes between which verbal knowledge (in oral and written forms) was produced, circulated and transmitted across geographical

Indo-Persian Concepts of Civility in Nineteenth -Century Delhi', in D. Ali and I. Sengupta (eds.) *Knowledge production, pedagogy, and institutions in colonial India* (New York, 2011), pp.227-47

[4] Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam,* p.184; S. R. Faruqui, 'A Stranger In The City: The Poetics of Sabk-i Hindi', *Annual of Urdu Studies,* 19 (2004), pp.1-93, 71-2; T. Rahman, 'Decline of Persian in British India', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies,* 22/1 (1999), pp.47-62

and temporal distances.[5] Knowledge of Persian permitted admission to wider networks of scholars and poets, linking Indian scholars to their counterparts beyond South Asia. Simultaneously, belonging to the Persianate world also helped to situate individuals in particular contexts through the creation and advancement of intellectual lineages.[6] The continued usage of the language late into the nineteenth century thus signals that Persian played an active role in structuring and maintaining social relations and identities within and beyond India in several ways. At the same time, the place of Persian also began to shift during this period, and by the end of the nineteenth century, its presence in India began to be perceived by many as a relic of the pre-modern past. This was enabled partly by a growing tendency to view the place of Persian in India as that of a classical language which paralleled that of Greek and Latin in Britain. While these changes only manifested themselves widely after the period studied in this thesis, it is argued that much of the groundwork for such attitudes was laid in the early nineteenth century.

By examining the presence of Persianate texts and individuals in spaces and endeavours which are typically classified as modern (orientalist textual production in the colony, the rise of linguistic studies, colonial education and nineteenth-century Indian printing), this thesis emphasizes the ways in which Persianate relationships and sensibilities shaped these sites of Indian modernity, and were themselves altered in the process. Indeed, the delineation of Persian as a classical language in opposition to vernacular languages was itself a fundamentally modern position to take up. Further, engagement with Persianate texts and individuals also played an important role in the

[5] F. Robinson, 'Education' in R. Irwin (ed.) *The New Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 2010), pp.495-531, J. Malik, 'Muslim Culture and Reform in 18th Century South Asia', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 13/2 (2003), pp.227-43

[6] On mobile intellectual lineages and connected geographies: N. Green, *Making space: Sufis and settlers in early modern India* (New Delhi, 2012), pp.1-31; N. Green, 'Geography, empire and sainthood in the eighteenth-century Muslim Deccan', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 67/2 (2004), pp.207-25

development and expression of modern European ideas about language, as the colonial state attempted to gain access to the Persianate knowledge economy in India. However, as the first two chapters of this thesis demonstrate, orientalist interest in Persian did not always represent a stable or coherent set of ideas. Chapter One traces the emergence of 'colonial orientalism' as it came to be practiced in the late eighteenth century. It argues that this form of studying non-European texts had a multifaceted heritage which drew upon traditional European scholarship as well as strategies used by travellers, merchants and Company servants in India.

By the early nineteenth century, as Chapter Two demonstrates, an increasingly abstract approach to linguistic study was adopted by colonial orientalists, as paranoia regarding the reliability of Indians resulted in a withdrawal from the social contexts in which Persian functioned. This abstract approach to language represented the emergence of modern linguistic strategies.[7] Focusing on colonial experiences of language learning, the first two chapters trace a shift from etymological methods to grammatical approaches amongst colonial Britons studying foreign languages, as well as a growing emphasis on a 'classical' canon of Persian texts. In this sense, the engagement with Persian generated dissimilar experiences for orientalists in India and those in Britain. The latter continued to privilege older orientalist methods, where the focus remained upon etymological approaches to Persian, and a relatively flexible conception of Persian literature existed. This suggests that linguistic modernity – or the conception of language as an abstract phenomenon - in relation to Persian was worked out as a result of imperial anxieties in the

[7] Works which trace this shift in linguistic/philological strategies at the turn of the century: M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences,* 2nd edn, (London, 2002), esp. pp.321-9; G. Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation,* 2nd edn, (Oxford, 1992), pp.80-3

colony, which differed considerably from linguistic ideas current in the metropole at the time.[8]

Chapter Three turns to Indian attitudes towards Persian during this period, focusing in particular on the Indian employees at the Company's College at Fort William. This chapter shows that while many Persianised Indians interacted with the colonial state, they also participated in activities and social relations which extended beyond the interests of the colonial state. Individuals who were employed by, or educated at, colonial institutions, also used their positions to further cement their standing and mobility in the alternative socio-intellectual networks offered by knowledge of Persian. This chapter also discusses some of the ways in which early nineteenth-century Indian scholars thought about the 'old masters' of Persian, and the ways in which this differed from European conceptions of the classical. Despite working for the colonial state, it is clear that Persianate frameworks of epistemic authority continued to hold more importance for most Indians in the Company's employ, and the texts they produced for the Company reflected a wider range of intentions than colonial officials may have intended.

This is not to suggest that the East India Company did not have an impact on the historical trajectory of Persian as experienced by Indians. With the beginning of the Company's interventions in Indian education after 1813, colonial conceptions of Persian did begin to impact the curricula taught at the Company's schools and colleges. However, Persian was by no means abolished or eliminated. Instead, the increasing alienation of colonial officials and orientalists from their Indian environment, traced in Chapter Two, and the contradictory attitudes to languages which it generated, led to policies which

[8] The link between colonial anxieties and the emergence of the modern state, with which Chapter Two draws a parallel, is elucidated in: J. E. Wilson, *The domination of strangers: modern governance in eastern India, 1780-1835* (Basingstoke: 2008)

inadvertently supported the presence of Persian in educational institutions. Chapter Four shows how, even after the formal abolition of the official status of Persian in the Company's administrative and educational policies in 1835, Persian was reinforced in different kinds of colonial schools and colleges for a variety of conflicting reasons. As a result, the language was also made accessible to new social groups who may not otherwise have had access to the systems of discipleship which underpinned Persian learning in India. While the colonial curricula also narrowed the scope of what constituted a literary education in Persian, it appears that these changes were slow to take effect, particularly since the vast majority of Persianate education in India continued outside of colonial institutions.

Chapter Five thus shows that outside colonial institutions, a much wider range of Persian texts continued to be consumed by Indians, as evidenced by the output of the lithographic printing industry during the 1840s and 1850s. Supported by the market created by colonial educational institutions, the lithographic industry drew upon existing norms of manuscript production and circulation to embed itself within the Indo-Persian episteme. In this sense, Persianate print modernity in India was a hybrid phenomenon (like all modernities), as it simultaneously reached wider readerships while retaining elements of the personal transmission that had hitherto dominated textual dissemination.[9] After 1857, the relationship of Persian to its social function changed considerably. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine later changes in any detail, the Epilogue suggests the manner in which cosmopolitan relationships built on the basis of Persianate knowledge

[9] Sanjay Joshi has noted that mid-nineteenth century Indian modernity was built upon (or against) 'existing foundations'. Thus, modernity in any context is necessarily specific and hybrid. See: S. Joshi, *Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India* (New Delhi, 2005), p.3; discussion in: D. Peers and N. Gooptu, 'Introduction' in D. Peers and N. Gooptu (eds.) *India and the British Empire* (2012), pp.1-15; (in the same volume): J. Majeed, 'Literary Modernity in South Asia', in D. Peers and N. Gooptu (eds.) *India and the British Empire* (2012), pp.262-83

continued to hold sway amongst certain social groups, albeit in altered geographies of literary sociability.

In sum, this thesis argues that Persian played an active role in sustaining particular kinds of epistemic authority in India, which in turn upheld cosmopolitan identities and modes of sociability. Enabling social and spatial mobility throughout this period, Persian participated in the construction of modern India alongside the vernacular languages which have commonly received more attention.[10] As Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi has noted, the texts of Persianate modernity were 'rendered "homeless" by their lack of inclusion into either Indian or Iranian nationalist accounts of modernity'.[11] Simultaneously, they were also erased from the western canon of oriental texts, in an imperialist act which he terms 'genesis amnesia'.[12] Certainly, the de-authorization of non-European epistemes and the formation of a narrow canon described in this thesis support Tavakoli-Targhi's thesis. However, in demarcating modernity, Tavakoli-Targhi's focus falls on a relatively narrow set of scientific, philosophical and travel texts which match expressions of European modernity.[13] In contrast, this thesis focuses on the function of Persian as a set of linguistic spaces and practices (rather than on particular texts) which enabled particular kinds of social and intellectual modernity. The British engagement with Persianate texts and scholars in South Asia was also key to the development of modern linguistic methods in

[10] Joshi deals with the vernacular press in his book on Indian middle-class modernity: Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*; K. S. Datla, *The language of secular Islam: Urdu nationalism and colonial India* (Honolulu, 2013), T. Rahman, *From Hindi to Urdu: a social and political history* (Karachi, 2011); F. Orsini, *Print and pleasure: popular literature and entertaining fictions in colonial North India* (Ranikhet, 2009); A. Ghosh, *Power in print: popular publishing and the politics of language and culture in a colonial society, 1778-1905* (New Delhi, 2006). Essays in V. Dalmia and S. Blackburn (eds.), *India's Literary History: Essays on the Nineteenth Century* (Delhi, 2004). For English novels in India: P. Joshi, *In another country: colonialism, culture, and the English novel in India* (New York, 2002)

[11] M. Tavakoli-Targhi, 'The Homeless Texts of Persianate Modernity', *Cultural Dynamics*, 13/3 (2001), pp.263-91

[12] M. Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and historiography* (New York, 2001), pp.18-34

[13] Ibid. Also: G. Khan, *Indian Muslim perceptions of the West during the eighteenth century* (Karachi, 1998)

India – which do not seem to have manifested in the metropole until later. As such, it is not possible to talk of modernity exclusively in terms of either 'western' colonial or vernacular spaces and practices. While colonialism did not eliminate Persian from the Indian context, in the long run educational policies meant that Persian became increasingly presented as foreign, static and classical, rather than cosmopolitan and mobile. This transition, however, was never complete, and Persian continued to fulfil alternative roles in connecting Persianised Indians with their counterparts in the *'ajam* (Persian-speaking lands), albeit on a reduced scale. Studying the presence of Persian in India from the late eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries hence permits a better understanding of the fragmented, rather than monolithic, nature of colonial and metropolitan modernities, beyond the emergence of Muslim reformism and Indian nationalisms.

Two interlinked themes underlie this thesis. The first is the impact of Company rule on the function and significance of Persianate literary culture in South Asia. The second concerns the changing status of Persian during a period in which many of the features we now associate with modernity emerged in different parts of the world.[14] In order to understand these changes, a working idea of the function of Persian in early-eighteenth century encounters and exchange is necessary. The remainder of this Introduction discusses the function of Persian as a cosmopolitan language which enabled social and spatial mobility in early modern India. A distinction between the 'cosmopolitan' and the 'classical' is drawn in order to elucidate the themes and arguments underlying this thesis. It is suggested that Georg Simmel's category of the 'stranger' is a useful way of overcoming conceptual issues regarding the relative indigeneity or foreignness of Persian,

[14] C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons,* (Oxford, 2004)

highlighting instead the specific kind of cosmopolitanism the language offered in the pre-national context of South Asia.[15]

The Cosmopolitan and the Classical: Persian in the Early Modern World

Persian has a long and complex history in the Indian subcontinent. Until the nineteenth century, it occupied a preeminent place among the languages of India. Although its usage in South Asia predated the Mughal empire, it was during the reign of the emperor Akbar (r.1556-1605) that Persian was promoted to become the official language of the Mughal empire in 1582.[16] While other languages such as Brajbhasha and Sanskrit were also patronized by Mughal rulers, revenue records and official correspondence at almost every level of the imperial administration were in Persian.[17] Mughal rulers, as well as regional courts, also patronized production in a range of genres, particularly literary and historical works, and drew political inspiration from classic Persian works on ethics and good governance.[18] As such, an important and influential scholarly class working and writing in Persian flourished in the Indian subcontinent between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, centred on *munshī*s, or Persian secretaries, who often attained great political influence as statesmen, administrators and diplomats, and recognition as poets and scholars.[19]

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[15] G. Simmel, 'The Stranger' in K. H. Wolff (ed. and trans.), *The Sociology of Georg Simmel* (New York, 1950), pp.402-408.

[16] A. Truschke, *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court,* (New York, 2016), p.3

[17] For a discussion of Sanskrit, see: Truschke, *Culture of Encounters*; for Braj: A. Busch, *Poetry of Kings: the classical Hindi literature of Mughal India,* (New York, 2011)

[18] M. Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam*; Chatterjee, *Cultures of history*; M. Alam, 'The Pursuit of Persian: Language in Mughal Politics', *MAS*, 32/2 (1998), pp.317-49

[19] A substantial literature on *munshī*s has emerged. See: R. Kinra, *Writing self, writing empire: Chandar Bhan Brahman and the cultural world of the Indo-Persian state secretary,* (Oakland, 2015); N. Haider, 'Norms of Professional Excellence and Good Conduct in Accountancy Manuals of the Mughal Empire', *International Review of Social History*, 56/19 (2011), pp.263-274; M. Alam and S. Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World: Studies on Culture and Politics* (New York, 2012); for the long view of the bureaucracies in the Safavid, Ottoman and early Mughal empires, see: W. L. Hanaway, 'Secretaries, Poets and the Literary Language', in W. L. Hanaway and B. Spooner (eds.), *Literacy in the Persianate world: writing and the social order,* (Philadelphia, 2012), pp.95-142

Such Persianised individuals were ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse. In addition to drawing literate individuals from different parts of India, the Indo-Persian sphere also included Iranian/Safavid/Qajar, Armenian and Uzbek settlers in the subcontinent. Indeed, the increasing importance of the Persian language in South Asia from the late sixteenth century onwards can be attributed at least in part to the sustained influx of Iranian immigrants who came to settle in the Indian subcontinent.[20] Hindus, drawn mainly from the castes of Kāyasthas and Ḵẖatrīs, and to a lesser extent, Brahmans, were also educated in Persian to serve the empire and its bureaucracy. In the Punjab at least, lower-caste (shudra) individuals also participated as Persian scribes in bureaucratic networks.[21] These clusters were important service groups whose caste identity became closely linked with knowledge of Persian.[22] Persian-speaking regions, known as the *'ajam*, thus constituted a cosmopolitan intellectual and social formation which encompassed disparate regions and political cultures in western, central and southern Asia, and cross-cutting Ottoman, Safavid/Qajar and Mughal domains.[23]

Literary education and poetic production sustained the Persian cosmopolis and ensured its cohesiveness over dispersed geographies. A fairly stable corpus of texts underpinned the education of itinerant scholars from the early seventeenth century, and ensured that Persianized individuals could take part in cosmopolitan literary and intellectual conversations. Texts falling under the category of *adab* (polite literature) provided the fundamental aspects of bureaucratic training in the Indo-Persian world, since

[20] Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam,* p.124
[21] Kinra, *Writing Self, Writing Empire,* pp.24-5
[22] H. J. Bellenoit, 'Between qanungos and clerks: the cultural and service worlds of Hindustan's pensmen, c. 1750–1850', *MAS*, 48/4 (2014), pp.872-910; H. J. Bellenoit, 'Paper, pens and power between empires in north India, 1750–1850', *South Asian History and Culture,* 3/3 (2012), pp.348-72; S. Guha, 'Serving the barbarian to preserve the dharma: The ideology and training of a clerical elite in Peninsular India c. 1300-1800', *IESHR*, 47/4 (2010), pp.497-525
[23] Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam,* p.7; M. Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community, 1722-1835' (PhD thesis, Harvard University, 2011), pp.1-4

they contained the necessary ethical, mystical and aesthetic understanding crucial to authoritative scholarly identities. Although drawn from principles of religious discipline and conduct as understood by Islamic scholars, in the Indo-Persian context under discussion, *adab* had become dissociated enough from religious training to come to signify literary fields as an entirely independent field.[24] In its intellectual and literary sense, an *adabī* education consisted not only of poetic genres, but included an array of sub-genres in its scope, including 'history, collections of letters (*insha*), manuals of prosody, mirrors for princes, [and] books of ethics'.[25]

The transregional dispersal of literate users of Persian, as well as the diglossic culture of writing (i.e. a formalised culture of writing that developed differently to its spoken forms) it developed at an early stage, has led to the language being defined in opposition to vernacular cultures, particularly in the context of South Asia.[26]. As understandings of the vernacular can vary in emphasis, two epithets have commonly been employed in its opposition. The first emphasizes Persian's status as a 'classical' language (where vernacular signifies a less literate, younger or less prestigious literary tradition).[27] Second, Persian is also characterized as a 'cosmopolitan' language (here it is usually opposed to a local or 'native' vernacular operating in a relatively confined region).[28] While the 'classical' privileges a particular historicity or temporal positioning of a language, the 'cosmopolitan' emphasizes a geographically or culturally 'well-travelled' phenomenon.[29]

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24 Robinson, 'Education', p.500

[25] Hanaway, 'Secretaries, Poets and the Literary Language', p.97

[26] W. L. Hanaway and B. Spooner, 'Introduction: Persian as *Koine:* Written Persian in a World Historical Perspective' in W. L. Hanaway and B. Spooner (eds.), *Literacy in the Persianate world: writing and the social order,* (Philadelphia, 2012), pp.1-3.

[27] Hanaway and Spooner, 'Introduction', p.1

[28] A. D. Dudney, 'A Desire for Meaning: Ḳhān-i Ārzū's Philology and the Place of India in the Eighteenth-Century Persianate World', (PhD thesis, University of Columbia, 2013), pp.300-4

[29] Ibid. Sheldon Pollock characterizes the cosmopolitan as 'well-travelled' in opposition to which vernacular spaces were carved out – in relation to Sanskrit. S. Pollock, 'Cosmopolitanism, Vernacularism, and Premodernity' in (eds.) A. Sartori and S. Moyn, *Global Intellectual History* (New York, 2013), pp.59-80

In general terms, Persian fits both categories with ease, due to its longstanding literary tradition on the one hand, and its wide geographical spread on the other. However, as Sheldon Pollock has noted, there is no single or universal way of being cosmopolitan.[30] It is therefore necessary to reflect on the particular ways in which Persian was cosmopolitan. This also holds for the term 'classical', which has had a range of meanings for different observers over time.[31] In particular, it is necessary to draw a distinction between the connectedness signified by the 'cosmopolitan', as opposed to the sense of temporal rupture implicit in eighteenth and nineteenth-century European understandings of the classical.[32] These understandings certainly coloured colonial approaches to India and its cultural past.[33] In order to define these terms more clearly, it is essential to consider the eighteenth-century environments of contact and exchange in which Persian functioned.

Persian as a Cosmopolitan Language in Eighteenth-Century India

In recent decades, the global eighteenth century has emerged as a field in its own right. Central to this has been the study of European colonial expansion.[34] However, two rather different images of colonial encounters arise. The first, situating itself within the framework of the European Enlightenment, presents a vision of brightly illuminated

[30] Pollock, 'Cosmopolitanism, Vernacularism and Premodernity', p.78

[31] For instance, in the context of Telugu, Lisa Mitchell notes that 'classical' and 'modern' were categories which emerged at particular moments. L. Mitchell, *Language, Emotion and Politics in South India: the making of a mother tongue* (Bloomington, 2009), pp.184-5. Similarly, Losensky has noted, 'the definition of a "classical period" and a "classical canon" […] is always a historical act, occurring at a particular place and time.' P. E. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal* (1998), p.153

[32] Pollock also sees the classical as indicative of a rupture, see discussion which follows later in this chapter. S. Pollock, 'Crisis in the Classics', *Social Research,* 78/1 (2011), pp.21-48; this sense of rupture is also implicit in R. Schwab, *The oriental renaissance: Europe's rediscovery of India and the East, 1680-1880* trans. G. Patterson-King and V. Reinking, (New York, 1984)

[33] P. Vasunia, *The Classics and Colonial India,* (Oxford, 2013), pp.9-16; J. Siegel, 'Art, Aesthetics and Archaeological Poetics', in C. Martindale, N. Vance, D. Hopkins & J. Wallace (eds.), *The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature: Vol. 4: 1790-1880,* (Oxford, 2015), pp.203-41, esp. 208-229

[34] See, for instance: F. A. Nussbaum (ed.) *The Global Eighteenth Century*, (Baltimore, 2003); S. Davies, G. S. Espinosa, & D. S. Roberts, *India and Europe in the Global Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2014)

projects of discovery, classification and mapping. Many scholars situated at this vantage point acknowledge the problematic nature of these projects as well as the Enlightenment's uneven progress.[35] While the view through the prism of the Enlightenment is now recognized as being more varied, the framework of the Enlightenment still lends itself to a tendency to seek an intellectual coherence underlying European interactions with the rest of the world. This is at odds with a second strain of scholarship, in which the framework of the Enlightenment is discarded in favour of the early modern, in which the world became increasingly more connected with the creation of world economies and 'long distance commerce' from the sixteenth century onwards, accompanied by increasingly dense networks of communication. [36] This lends itself to studies of South Asia particularly well, allowing scholars to attend to internal dynamics in India as well as the diversity of the region's interactions with the rest of the world.[37] As a result, there has been a growing focus on alternative arenas of circulation, particularly between India and the rest of Asia. This has led to the emergence of the category of the Persianate as a set of social and geographical networks along which exchange and circulation occurred.[38]

In the context of cross-cultural encounters, the global early modern also offers a framework which both limits and variegates the presence of Europeans, as it allows us to contextualize the movement of Europeans across the globe as participating in complex

[35] F. A. Nussbaum, 'Introduction' in F. A. Nussbaum (ed.) *The Global Eighteenth Century,* (Baltimore, 2003), p.3; *Placing the Enlightenment: thinking geographically about the age of reason,* (Chicago, 2007); M. L. Pratt, *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London, 1992)

[36] S. Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia,' *MAS,* 31/3 (1997), pp.735–762; R. O'Hanlon, 'Contested Conjunctures: Brahman Communities and "Early Modernity" in India', *The American Historical Review,* 118/3 (2015), pp.765-87

[37] Washbrook, 'India in the early modern world economy'; J. E. Wilson, 'Early Colonial India Beyond Empire', *The Historical Journal,* 50/4 (2007), pp.951-70

[38] Sood, *India and the Islamic Heartlands*; M. Alam and S. Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400-1800* (Cambridge, 2007), M. Alam and S. C. Levi (eds.), *India and Central Asia: commerce and culture, 1500-1800* (New Delhi, 2007). For the Company in an early modern perspective: P. J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford, 2011)

relationships driven by diverse players, and along routes of circulation with multiple centres. Through the early modern framework, structural similarities in the ways in which Persian was deployed by Europeans outside of Europe, and Indians, can be perceived. In particular, the instability and murkiness which lay at the heart of contact between Indians and Europeans comes to the fore when the linear relationship imagined between the two is replaced by the multidirectional exchanges taking place between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even as Europeans – and especially Britons – began to travel in increasing numbers directly to India by sea in the eighteenth century, their knowledge and experiences were not unmediated. Relying on introductions, letters of recommendation and chance meetings, travellers became acquainted with a range of guides and companions as they made their way across these well-traversed routes. Consequently, it is not possible to talk about intercultural contacts, particularly on the Eurasian landmass, as though they occurred in a vacuum, or, as Subrahmanyam has phrased it, as though they took place between cultures which were 'watertight and largely impermeable'.[39] At the same time, Subrahmanyam has also cautioned against amplifying the 'protean character' of early modern identities. While individuals could, and did, attempt to assume different identities, this was largely made possible due to the perceived existence of specific attributes which went along with these identities. Moreover, traveling and interacting with the world was not a smooth experience, but characterized by friction and intractability.[40] Thinking and acting 'beyond the local' – in other words, being cosmopolitan – was not necessarily a harmonious act or immune to hierarchies and inequalities.[41]

[39] Subrahmanyam critiquing Bernard Cohn: S. Subrahmanyam, *Three Ways to be Alien: travails and encounters in the early modern world* (Waltham, 2011), p.175
[40] Subrahmanyam, *Three Ways to be Alien* (2011), p.13, pp.173-6
[41] 'Introduction' in C. A. Breckenridge, S. Pollock, H. K. Bhabha and D. Chakrabarty (eds), *Cosmopolitanism* (London, 2002), p.10

It was in such a context of mobility that Persian existed in the early eighteenth century, upholding both particular, layered identities and knowledge systems, as well as allowing movement and encounters between diverse individuals and locations. Here, different categories have been recently used to understand such mobile individuals whose movements were central to connecting disparate groups and regions. Variously discussing these itinerants as 'go-betweens', 'trans-imperial subjects' and 'cosmopolitans', for instance, scholarship has drawn upon Simmel's concept of the 'stranger' in order to better understand the function and nature of such groups.[42] Briefly, Simmel's stranger is a mobile figure who occupies a particular 'combination of nearness and distance' in relation to other (more static) members of a group.[43] Unique by virtue of a set of functions only he or she is able to perform (Simmel suggests intermediary activities such as trade and communication outside a group), the stranger is 'the *potential* wanderer.'[44] That is to say, the capacity or tendency to be mobile is present, regardless of whether such activity actually takes place, and is a crucial part of the stranger's identity even when in a fixed position. At the same time, representing the 'unity' of mobility and fixity, the stranger is no outsider: he 'is an element of the group itself. His position as a full-fledged member involves both being outside it and confronting it.'[45] The very aspects which make the stranger unique to the rest of the group determine the group's everyday existence and 'produce a pattern of coordination and consistent interaction.'[46] In this sense, the stranger

[42] Drawing on Simmel's work, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Kapil Raj and Jon Wilson have considered the relevance of the category of the 'stranger' in different contexts of cultural encounter. While Subrahmanyam has focused his attention on particular individuals who became aliens within the groups through which they travelled and traded, Wilson has suggested that the early colonial state in India moved from treating its subjects as 'familiar' to a relationship of strangeness, which permitted the assumption of the 'objectivity' which came to be a characteristic of modern states. Here, however, I emphasize the stranger's mobility and potential to connect groups. See: S. Subrahmanyam, *Three Ways to be Alien*; J. E. Wilson, *The Domination of Strangers*; K. Raj, 'Go-Betweens, Travelers and Cultural Translators, in B. Lightman (ed.), *A Companion to the History of Science,* (Malden, 2016), pp.39-57

[43] Simmel, 'The Stranger', p.402

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

regulates the workings of the group and different aspects of its identity even while not necessarily sharing these characteristics. The concept of the stranger is central to cosmopolitanism, and indeed, the figure of the cosmopolitan has long been defined in relation to the stranger.[47] For our purposes, we may take cosmopolitanism to be a mode of structuring interactions between otherwise potentially unconnected groups and individuals.

The usage of Persian by mobile groups connected across western, central and southern Asia, means that many of the observations made above apply to the language as much as itinerant individuals. Circulating widely through oral and written texts as well as the movement of its speakers, Persian forged intimate, but sometimes frictional, relations with other languages with which it came into contact. Its linguistic boundaries were permeable in certain contexts, but policed in others.[48] In this sense, the kind of cosmopolitanism Persian embodied was not one underpinned by universalistic principles, or even one that sought to deliberately 'occlude difference' as a part of its ethos.[49] Recent literature has tended to understand cosmopolitan practices as those that explicitly challenge modes of belonging such as national and religious affiliations.[50] However, these terms are not relevant for understanding the role of Persian in early modern and early colonial contexts. In the multilingual context of South Asia, the position occupied by Persian

[47] For Diderot, being a cosmopolitan meant being a 'stranger nowhere'. More recently, Kwame Appiah has considered the possibility of cosmopolitan ideals as tools for navigating a 'world of strangers'. See: K. Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York, 2006)*;* V. P. Marotta, *Theories of the Stranger: Debates on Cosmopolitanism, Identity and Cross-Cultural Encounters* (Abingdon, 2017)*,* p.80

[48] On the use of loan-words from other languages: Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community'*,* p.44; there are countless examples of interactions between Persian and other languages, nicely theorised in: F. Orsini, 'How to do multilingual literary history? Lessons from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century north India', *IESHR*, 49/2 (2012), pp.225-46; S. Phukan,'"Through Throats Where Many Rivers Meet"': The Ecology of Hindi in the World of Persian', *IESHR,* 38/1, pp.33–58.

[49] S. Pollock, 'The Cosmopolitan Vernacular', *The Journal of Asian Studies*,57/1 (1998), pp.6-37

[50] Ibid. Similarly, Kwame Appiah sees ideal cosmopolitan behaviour as based on set of universalistic principles and commonalities: K. A. Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (London, 2007)

allowed for the negotiation and layering of different identities and affiliations even while opening up the potential for crossing and moving across the boundaries it created.[51]

I suggest that Georg Simmel's conception of the 'stranger' is useful for allowing an understanding of Persian's cosmopolitan status and function which allows it to escape modern, Eurocentric categories of foreign versus indigenous languages, based on national and religious affiliations as the primary modes of identification. Simmel's discussion of the stranger enables Persian to maintain its specific position in (often hierarchical) relations with its users as well as other Indian languages. In other words, it allows for Persian's cosmopolitan status to be a specific, rather than universal, homogenous or general position.

It is striking that, for Europeans and Indians alike, Persian never functioned alone. A language which was neither regionally nor ethnically limited to a single group of users, Persian existed in multilingual contexts in relation to other vernacular and learned languages. In particular, it served a purpose that other languages were not able to fulfil, namely, connecting particular individuals, polities and economies on the basis of shared aesthetic, sentimental and epistemological vocabularies.[52] In this sense, like the stranger, Persian functioned as the intermediary which enabled the gaze to be turned outwards. This does not mean that Persian was an outsider in India, or that it did not have longstanding and deep ties with many of the regions where other languages were also in use. On the contrary, as quoted above, Simmel's definition allows an understanding of Persian in which it was a part of the multilingual contexts in which it operated, even as it opened avenues of circulation which reached beyond these contexts. Individuals and groups versed in Persian gained social and spatial mobility of specific kinds – whether or not the language was their native tongue. Indeed, as Mana Kia has observed, literary and written Persian

[51] See: Mitchell, *Language, Emotion and Politics,* pp.48-9
[52] Sood, *India and the Islamic Heartlands,* pp.30-94; Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community', p.79

had to be learned by those for whom it was a first language.[53] It was this very quality of being able to cross and connect regions which also allowed Persian users to retain (multiple) alternative identities. For instance, the Isfahan-born poet and scholar, Muḥammad ʻAlī "Ḥazīn" Lāhījī (1692-1766), spent time as an exile in Delhi and Benaras as a result of the fall of the Safavid state and the rise of Nādir Shāh (1688-1747) in 1739.[54] The nature of this exile, in which Ḥazīn retained his identity as a man of letters, was made possible by the presence and recognition of Persian in the Indian cities to which he moved.[55] However, exiles were not the only strangers who spoke and wrote in Persian: rather, this strangeness was a quality which certain forms of the language itself conferred on its users. As Alam and Subrahmanyam have remarked, wandering was the 'fate of the *munshi*'.[56]

Thinking about Persian as a 'stranger' in the sense of a go-between is also illuminating for an understanding of the objective stance that usage of the language was able to offer. As Simmel explains, objectivity is not a pre-existing state, but a 'specific attitude' arrived at through a precise combination of 'nearness' and 'distance' that characterized the stranger.[57] In Persian, therefore, in the early modern period, we find this objectivity – or this peculiar positioning - in genres and terms deployed by a range of actors as they slipped into the roles of intermediaries. It is significant, for instance, that many prose works in Persian possessed strong ethnographic elements, as they described different

[53] Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community', pp.33-4; 44
[54] M. Kia, 'Accounting for Difference: A Comparative Look at the Autobiographical Travel Narratives of Ḥazīn Lāhiji and 'Abd-al-Karim Kashmiri', *Journal of Persianate Studies,* 2/2 (2009), pp.210-36; Ḥazīn's *Taẕkira-i Ahwāl*: Oxford, BDL, MS Ouseley 273.
[55] Ibid.
[56] M. Alam and S. Subrahmanyam, 'The Making of a Munshi', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24/2 (2004), pp.61-72, p.64
[57] Simmel, 'The Stranger', p.404-8

social groups from the vantage-point of seemingly external observers.[58] Similarly, it is noteworthy that translations of texts and traditions from vernacular languages were undertaken and circulated widely in Persian from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.[59] Such ethnographies and translations rehabilitated their subjects into Persianised categories even as they realigned and expanded the structure of the Persianate through the introduction of new subjects.

In recent years, much work has been done to demonstrate that projecting nationalist imaginaries onto early-modern geographies results in an array of historical distortions and lacunae. Tavakoli-Targhi, Mana Kia and others have convincingly argued for the shared history of Persian texts emanating from the regions which comprise present-day India and Iran as texts and individuals traversed territories which were not divided by national boundaries.[60] While agreeing with these observations, it is necessary to be aware of the different personas and roles individuals could take up as they employed particular languages in multilingual contexts. For instance, Luṭfullāh (1802-1874), a 'Mohamedan Gentleman' who worked for the East India Company, described his upbringing in a Persianate family in Malwa. In his household, Persian was employed by older family members on 'occasions of secrecy and religious discussions'.[61] The fact that Persian was

[58] See, for instance, discussions of Muḥammad Ḥasan Qatīl's ethnographic *Haft Tamāshā*, Nek Rāy's autobiography, and the writings of Ānand Rām Muḵẖliṣ in Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World*, pp.311-38, 423-6;

[59] Translations: (for e.g.) Persian renditions of the Punjabi *qiṣṣa* of Hir Ranjha were undertaken in 1731 in Lahore, and in the late eighteenth century by Qamar al-Din "Minnat" for William Jones: A. Sprenger, *Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindu'sta'ny Manuscripts of the Libraries of the King of Oudh,* Vol.1 (Calcutta, 1854), p.317, 498. In the nineteenth century: Lāla Jot Prakash's *Dastūr-i 'Ishq* (Calcutta, 1812). This was a Persian version of the *qiṣṣa* of Sassi Punnū and reprinted in 1865.

[60] Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community', pp.1-41; Tavakoli-Targhi, 'The Homeless Texts of Iranian Modernity', p.270

[61] Lutfullah, *Autobiography of Lutfullah, a Mohamedan Gentleman and his Transactions with his Fellow Creatures,* ed. E. Eastwick, 3rd edn (London, 1858), p.20. Similarly, in the 1830s, William Adam noted examples of seemingly unconscious code-switching between Hindi/Urdu and Persian amongst Indians when writing formal reports. W. Adam, *Third Report on the State of Education in Bengal* (Calcutta, 1838), pp.4-5

deployed in specific contexts and to express specific sentiments or types of communication is also underscored by Kia and Sood, who have pointed to the common linguistic, conceptual and even sentimental features of Persianate historical and epistolary writings in the eighteenth century, regardless of the ethnicity or location of their authors.[62]

None of this is to say that individuality or intimacy could not be expressed in the medium of Persian, nor that the language posited an opposition to the 'indigenous' in India. Indeed, pursuing questions about the relative indigeneity of languages, particularly in early modern multilingual contexts, is often a fruitless task. Multi-ethnic Persianised groups in India displayed confidence, pride and enthusiasm in their command over Persian. However, oral traditions across a range of north Indian vernaculars sometimes represent these professional and literate groups as suspect – perhaps due to their social and geographic mobility, and their powerful roles as scribes, administrators and revenue officials. One Punjabi cautionary tale tells of a village of foolish weavers which came under the control of the Durrani empire in the eighteenth century. To avoid exploitation at the hands of the new tax officials, the villagers gathered together money and sent two men to 'bring back a supply of the Persian language'.[63] Unsurprisingly, they soon met a cunning - and cruel - man, who tricked them into buying two jars filled with wasps which, on their return to the village, stung all the villagers who had gathered to 'receive' the Persian. The villagers learned 'never to meddle with Persian and to leave that language to those who were cunning enough to master strange languages.'[64] Even in stories in which Persian was successfully acquired, it came at a cost: here, the tale of the youth who became so Persianised that he could not remember the local word for water, when he returned to his

[62] Sood, *India and the Islamic Heartlands,* pp.30-94; Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community', p.79
[63] A. K. Ramanujan, *Folktales from India: a selection of oral tales from twenty-two languages*, (New York, 1991), pp.243-5
[64] Ibid.

village, offers a grim warning. Although water was plentiful, the boy died of thirst, being unable to communicate with his anxious mother. Permutations of such stories abound in north India, and give some indication of the view of Persian from vernacular traditions, as well as the ways in which Persianate culture could come into tension with less mobile groups.[65]

Given the complexity of the position of Persian in South Asia, the concept of the 'stranger' allows us to avoid imposing oppositions of high/low, or classical/vernacular, on the relationship between Persian and the languages with which it came into contact. While long-term processes of vernacularization are apparent in the Indian context, the continuing influx of works into Persian disrupt notions of a hierarchy in which texts were translated 'down' from high/classical languages into low/vulgar registers.[66] Indeed, it is striking that prior to the nineteenth century, many Europeans were prone to compare the presence of Persian in India with the polite languages of French and Italian in Europe – as opposed to Greek and Latin, Europe's classical languages.[67] Instead of a vertical hierarchy progressing from high to low languages, it is useful to think in terms of overlapping linguistic and literary geographies – like the stranger, Persian's ability to fulfil certain roles and access specific geographies made it the language of choice in specific circumstances.[68] For instance, Seema Alavi refers to the 'vernacularization' of Persian in India in the context of the production of simplified Persian versions of Arabic medical texts in the early nineteenth century.[69] Moreover, while there were certainly power structures which identified Persian

[65] Hayden Bellenoit also cites a story about the Kāyastha clerk who took his revenge on a rude soldier by forcing him to knock out his own front teeth through a manipulation of his scribal power. Bellenoit, 'Between qanungos and clerks', p.873

[66] Orsini, 'How to do multilingual literary history?'

[67] BL, IOR/E/1/36 fos. 67-68v, R. Mapletoft to R. Chauncey, 23 Mar. 1750/1; E. S. Waring, *A Tour to Sheeraz by the route of Kazroon and Feerozabad* (London, 1807), pp.145-6

[68] On the significance of linguistic choice: F. Orsini, 'Introduction' in F. Orsini (ed.) *The History of the Book in South Asia* (Burlington, 2013), p.xiv

[69] S. Alavi, *Islam and healing: loss and recovery of an Indo-Muslim medical tradition, 1600-1900* (New York, 2008), p.42

as an elite language of refinement and authority, these existed side by side with alternative valuations in other languages also in use, as 'no single language was completely hegemonic' in the early modern Indian context.[70] For example, as Farina Mir has noted, from the seventeenth century onwards, the *qiṣṣa* (epic romance) occupied a high status in the context of Punjabi oral and textual literary culture – a fact which also helps to explain why certain poetic renditions of local romances were more frequently translated into Persian than others.[71]

In addition to connecting geographical locales and mediating between an array of local languages, Persian also provided access to connections over temporal distances, as its usage often functioned as a marker of personal or ancestral histories of migration. Further, these historical connections were created and sustained through the acquisition of Persianate knowledge through relations of discipleship (*ustād-shāgirdī*) which formed chains of transmission, as well as the hand-to-hand circulation and production of manuscripts.[72] While there have been many points at which different moments in the history of the Persian literary tradition was reconfigured and reassessed in India, these moments did not signal radical breaks with the past in the sense that eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europeans looking back at the Greco-Roman past experienced.[73] Similarly, although a relatively stable set of classic texts was recognized and formed the basis of Persianate education, these belonged to a past with which connections were maintained through discipleship, poetic emulation and circulation. In this sense, the language offered not only links with geographically dispersed regions, but also to

[70] F. Orsini, 'Whose amnesia? Literary modernity in multilingual South Asia', *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 2/2 (2015), pp.266-272
[71] F. Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab* (Berkeley, 2010), pp.6-9.
[72] Robinson, 'Education'; Green, *Making Space,* pp.1-31; N. Green, 'The Uses of Books in a Late Mughal Takiyya: Persianate Knowledge Between Person and Paper', *MAS,* 44/2 (2009), pp.241-65
[73] Siegel, 'Art, Aesthetics and Archaeological Poetics'; R. O'Hanlon, 'Contested Conjunctures', p.769

cosmopolitan pasts. Thus the cosmopolitan nature of Persian can be seen as a phenomenon specific to individual circumstances and the particular constellation of 'nearness and distance' that every speech act in the language expressed. The multilingual contexts that Persian operated in meant that each choice to use Persian was a representation and reconfiguration of the dialogic relations with contemporary 'sociotextual' communities, as well as an intervention in the historicizing of the Persian literary tradition itself.[74]

Recent studies have been wary of probing too deeply into the dissonances which manifest themselves in the early modern Indo-Persian world. The desire to portray precolonial South Asia as being more integrated and free of frictions than its colonial and postcolonial counterparts has been the driving force for some such scholarship. Others have sought to be sensitive to the predicaments of the Indian nation-state in particular, where right-wing ideologies have resulted in a portrayal of Mughal culture and Indian Muslims as foreign to South Asia.[75] This has been negotiated by scholars by studying the engagement of Muslims with India's vernacular languages, particularly in the contexts of Sufi saints and their teachings, as well as through a focus on the participation of Hindus in the Persianate cosmopolis.[76] However, ethnicity or religious affiliation (if we can speak of such affiliations in this context) were not as important as mobility as identity markers for the Persianised professional and literary elite of India. Persian's capacity to enable mobility

[74] Orsini, 'Introduction' to *The History of the Book in South Asia,* p.xiv; as Bakhtin/Voloshinov explains, the dialogic nature of language means that every speech act is a response to everything that has been said or written previously in that language; in a multilingual context, this dialogue should be extended to include (albeit in a hierarchical or selective fashion) other literary traditions. M. M. Bakhtin/V.N. Voloshinov, 'Critique of Saussurian Linguistics' in *The Bakthin Reader,* ed. P. Morris, (London, 2003), pp.25-38

[75] P. van der Veer, 'The Foreign Hand: Orientalist Discourse in Sociology and Communalism', in C. A. Breckenridge and P. van der Veer (eds.), *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia* (Philadelphia, 1993), pp.23-44; essays in: D. Gilmartin and B. B. Lawrence (eds.), *Beyond Turk and Hindu: rethinking religious identities in Islamicate South Asia* (Gainsville, 2000); for a relatively recent view of Muslims as 'foreign': S. C. Ghosh, *Civilization, Education and School in Ancient and Medieval India, 1500 B.C. - 1757 A.D.* (New Delhi, 2001)

[76] Essays in Gilmartin and Lawrence, *Beyond Turk and Hindu*; R. Eaton, 'Introduction' in R. Eaton (ed.), *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750* (New Delhi, 2008), pp.1-34

and facilitate the construction of complex identities applied as much to those who travelled and engaged with 'difference' within the territories which comprise the modern state of India, as beyond them, at a time when 'circulation was the norm rather than the exception'.[77]

Persian as a Classical Language

That this aspect of Persianate culture was available also to Europeans, albeit in limited ways, is evident from the letters exchanged between European and Indian writers in the eighteenth century.[78] Alavi and Alam have noted, for instance, that the letters of Antoine-Louis Henri Polier (1741-95), a Frenchman who served in India under the Company for thirty years, displayed his familiarity with the terminology and sensibilities of a 'pre-colonial work ethic'.[79] Indeed, it is striking that eighteenth-century European travellers' accounts of India and other Asian regions hardly attended to the fact of having to deal with foreign languages. Interpreters and guides were a matter of course, and reliance on them was a necessary part of moving through the world. The 'picaresque' itinerants of this period who have been singled out by historians belonged to much larger formations of strangers – for whom, strangeness could be mundane.[80] Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, the orientalist interest in Persian significantly narrowed the scope of how Britons could approach the language, as this cosmopolitan behaviour came to be undermined by feelings of alienation and growing tensions between European powers in

[77] A. Busch, S. Pello & T. de Bruijn, 'Introduction', in A. Busch, S. Pello & T. de Bruijn, *Culture and Circulation: literature in motion in early modern India*, (Leiden, 2014), p.3

[78] A. L. H. Polier, *A European experience of the Mughal Orient: the I'jāz-i arsalānī (Persian letters 1773-1779) of Antoine-Louis Henri Polier*, eds. M. Alam and S. Alavi (New Delhi, 2001); C. M. Wade, *A man of the enlightenment in eighteenth-century India : the letters of Claude Martin, 1766-1800,* ed. R. Llewellyn-Jones, (New Delhi, 2003)

[79] M. Alam and S. Alavi, 'Introduction' in *A European Experience,* pp.71-74

[80] Llewellyn-Jones, *A man of the enlightenment*; Alam and Alavi, *A European Experience*; R. Travers, 'The connected worlds of Haji Mustapha (c. 1730–91): A Eurasian cosmopolitan in eighteenth-century Bengal', *IESHR,* 52/3 (2015), pp.297-333. These insightful works need to be seen as a prosopography of a wider community.

India and on the Continent.[81] During this period, orientalists turned towards viewing Persian as a classical language, rather than one which was cosmopolitan and connected to the present in relevant ways. During the period covered by this thesis, this change began to be reflected in colonial education systems also, although it took much longer for these attitudes to be widely adopted.

This colonial sense of the classical was shaped by Europe's own perception of its Greco-Roman past, and denoted the highest point of a lost culture. As Dudney has noted, cosmopolitan languages are often classical because they are usually historically formalized and prestigious enough to become transregional.[82] However, these terms are not interchangeable. To the colonial observers discussed in this thesis, the term 'classical' was laden with the baggage of Europe's own perceived relationship between the ancient and modern worlds, in which the rupture between the present and the classical past was emphasized. This sense of rupture informed other aspects of the 'classical' in the European imagination as it was placed in opposition to 'modern' vernaculars: the function of classical languages as a source for vernacular translation and literary production, rather than a medium of co-production; and the seeming irrelevance of a classical culture to the production and maintenance of difference and localised identities within Europe, which required expression in vernacular languages.[83]

In contrast, while there was a strong sense of a classical set of texts in the Persianate tradition, these, supported by social relations and literary lineages bridging space and time, did not appear to be separated from the present by a definitive rupture.

[81] Wilson, *The Domination of Strangers*; Travers, 'The connected worlds of Haji Mustapha', p.330
[82] Dudney, 'A Desire for Meaning', pp.300-4
[83] M. Adams, *Teaching Classics in English Schools, 1500-1840* (Newcastle, 2016), pp.101-113. See also essays in: C. Martindale, N. Vance, D. Hopkins & J. Wallace (eds.), *The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature: Vol. 4: 1790-1880,* (Oxford, 2015);

Further, Persian in India was a site of multi-directional literary exchange, as Persian acted as both a source language and target language of translations from other vernacular and learned traditions throughout this period.[84] Moreover, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 5, Persianate culture provided space for the expression of specific, overlapping, identities on different levels, ranging from imperial and courtly affiliations to localised urban and *qaṣabatī* connections, and from expressions of caste identity to attachment to particular Sufi lineages. Thus, for the purposes of this thesis, unless otherwise specified, the term 'classical' is used exclusively to denote eighteenth and nineteenth-century European views of a past with which there had been a rupture. In contrast, the term 'cosmopolitan' is employed in this thesis to describe Persian as an established literary tradition aware of its longstanding historical status, which was able to perform special functions of connecting its participants across transregional geographies, as well as connecting them temporally to its past. While intellectual and social breaks may have been effected, contested, and accepted at different points in the Persianate literary tradition, the Indo-Persian writers discussed depicted these as taking place within a connected history, rather than representing an engagement with a distant, irretrievable object.[85]

The experience of colonialism paved the way for this sense of rupture and loss in relation to India's own Persianate heritage as a result of the application of this Eurocentric category of the 'classical' to Persian in colonial policies and writings. It is no coincidence that the colonial focus on the supposed obscenity in Persian works coincided with an intensification of debates about the morality of Greek classics in England, nor that the colonial state's push towards vernacular education in India took place alongside similar

[84] For e.g. see, Phukan, 'Through Throats Where Many Rivers Meet'
[85] For instance, Losensky documents the creation of a Persian classical canon in fifteenth-century Timurid Herat. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*, p.153

Utilitarian attacks on Latin and Greek education in British grammar schools.[86] Indeed, as Spooner and Hanaway have noted, from a technical point of view, Persian only attained classical status after its supposed decline in 1835.[87] While this thesis questions the periodization of the decline of Persian in India as seen by Spooner and Hanaway, the discursive tendency to link a seemingly declining culture with classical status is taken seriously as a process which unfolded over the nineteenth century. The following chapters emphasize the many ways in which Persian remained a cosmopolitan language, active in performing literary identities in India and connecting them to a wider Persian cosmopolis, while also paying attention to the shifts in the status that the language was accorded.

This is at odds with much scholarship which, despite reappraising eighteenth-century decline, still treats the onset of colonialism as the end of Persian cosmopolitan literary culture – a chronology which coincides with the rise of colonial views of Persian as a 'classical', and hence, outdated language in the Indian context. For instance, in two important works on Persianate writing and culture in India, Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam indicate such a conclusion by ending their analyses just before the nineteenth century.[88] Similarly, Gagan Sood and Prashant Keshavmurthy also view the end of the eighteenth century as representing the end of Persianate literary traditions and cosmopolitanism.[89] Seema Alavi's recent work on late nineteenth-century transregional modernities in the Muslim world is one of the important exceptions here.[90] Imperial fragmentation notwithstanding, the connections and routes which sustained what Sood has termed 'Islamicate Eurasia' were also anchored in local power structures and

[86] Adams, *Teaching Classics in English Schools*, pp.107-113
[87] Spooner and Hanaway, 'Introduction', pp.1-2
[88] Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam*, Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World*
[89] Sood, *India and Islamic Heartlands*; P. Keshavmurthy, *Persian authorship and canonicity in late Mughal Delhi: building an ark* (Abingdon, 2016)
[90] S. Alavi, *Muslim Cosmopolitanism in an Age of Empire* (London, 2015)

relationships.[91] These, in turn, were connected to other global nodes. While imperial formations influenced and structured these networks of exchange, the individuals involved in constructing and renewing affiliations and exchange on a daily basis had interests and drives which were not always directly linked to the rise and fall of empires. Sood has suggested that certain 'settlements and sub-elites, which usually enjoyed a great deal of autonomy, did not depend solely on the imperial capital or metropolitan centre for their well-being.'[92] In pushing the study of the Persianate sphere forward into the nineteenth century, this thesis reinforces the theory of independent circulation and exchange, as it demonstrates that well after the decline of the Mughals, Persian continued to play an important role in shaping temporally and spatially cosmopolitan identities.[93] It attempts to contribute to the ways in which India's Persianate heritage made a variety of modern networks and attitudes possible even as the early colonial state increasingly cast Persian as a vestige of India's classical heritage. In highlighting the range of functions and significance Persian could have for different players, it hopes to go further than simply associating Persian with elite cultural capital, and to demonstrate the significance of the language beyond its symbolic value.[94]

[91] Sood, 'Circulation and Exchange'

[92] G. D. S. Sood, 'The Informational Fabric of Eighteenth-Century India and the Middle East: Couriers, Intermediaries and Postal Communication', *MAS,* 43/5 (2009), pp.1085-1116

[93] In the context of Muslim cosmopolitan networks, Lambek suggests that there is an 'elective affinity between Islam and relatively autonomous cities, polities where the state is either absent, irrelevant, or at some degree of arm's length'. M. Lambek, 'Foreword' in E. Simpson and K. Kresse (eds.), *Struggling with history: Islam and cosmopolitanism in the Western Indian Ocean* (London, 2007), pp.xvii-xix

[94] It is common for literary languages considered to be 'foreign' to be approached using concepts of symbolic and cultural capital. However, these ideas are dominated by Pierre Bourdieu, whose work referred to the context of European Graeco-Latin classical learning and its place in France. As this thesis argues that Euro-centric concepts of the classical were not applicable to the Indian context, these ideas need to be substantially rethought and a better frame for the presence of Persian in the Indian context developed. P. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power,* ed. J. B. Thompson, trans. G. Raymond and M. Adamson (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991); P. Bourdieu and J. C. Passeron, *Reproduction in education, society, and culture,* trans. R. Nice, 2nd edn (London, 1990)

Chapter 1: The Making of Colonial Orientalism in the Eighteenth Century, c.1742-84

1. Introduction

Over the course of the eighteenth century, European interest in eastern texts increased dramatically. Diplomatic and missionary links with the Ottoman empire, coupled with the rise of the East India Company as a territorial power in India, intensified contact with non-European polities, individuals and literatures. On the one hand, this resulted in the development of 'oriental' literary styles, genres and themes in Britain, as authors sought novel and exotic modes of writing.[1] On the other, the eighteenth century also saw the production of colonial knowledge – a wide-ranging corpus of writings that sought to translate, inscribe and interpret Indian literatures, legal codes and history into forms suitable for colonial use.[2] Central to such enterprises were orientalists, or scholars of eastern languages, who became involved in the transmission of texts from colony to metropole. Orientalist scholarship was not a new phenomenon by any means. The roots of eighteenth-century orientalism can be traced back to at least the beginning of the seventeenth century, when university-based scholars evinced a growing interest in Hebrew and Arabic.[3] However, as will be discussed, by the late eighteenth century, orientalists in the Company's Indian territories also saw themselves as departing from this older tradition.

[1] R. Ballaster, *Fabulous orients: fictions of the East in England, 1662-1785* (Oxford, 2005), pp.5-6

[2] N. Bhattacharya-Panda, *Appropriation and invention of tradition: the East India Company and Hindu law in early colonial Bengal* (New Delhi, 2008); B. S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Delhi, 1996); P. B. Wagoner, 'Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 45/4 (2003), pp.783-814; For an overview of the debates about the extent to which colonial knowledge posited a break or continuation with the Indian past: Peers and Gooptu, 'Introduction' in Peers and Gooptu (eds.) *India and the British Empire*, pp.1-15; W. Pinch, 'Same Difference in India and Europe', *History and Theory*, 38/3 (1999), pp.389-407

[3] R. Irwin, *For lust of knowing: the orientalists and their enemies,* (London, 2007), pp.6-7, 82-4

The Asiatic Society of Bengal expressed this difference succinctly in its first publication in 1788:

> A mere man of letters, retired from the world, and allotting his whole time to philosophical or literary pursuits, is a character unknown among *Europeans* resident in *India*, where every individual is a man of business in the civil or military state, and constantly occupied either in the affairs of government, in the administration of justice, in some department of revenue or commerce, or in one of the liberal professions.[4]

This chapter will trace the emergence of this form of orientalist scholarship – which I term colonial orientalism - as it came to be constructed and practiced in colonial India in the late eighteenth century. It shows that this type of orientalism had a multifaceted heritage consisting of several strands. The first consisted of what may be called traditional orientalist scholarship, largely practiced by biblical and humanistic scholars.[5] The second was the practice of language learning and cultural interaction through contact and travel through territories where these languages were in use. These two modes of language learning came into tension in the 1760s as 'scholarly' and 'practical' methods were increasingly placed in opposition to one another, and resulted in a literary interest in oriental texts. Following the English Parliament's Regulating Act of 1773, which sought to bring order to the Company's government in India, a new cohort of men were enlisted by the Company to serve as judges and magistrates in its Indian territories. This marked a transition from merchant or adventurer to civil servant in the constitution of the Company's upper echelons.[6] As a result, men with more elite educational backgrounds and experience of scholarship informed by Greco-Roman classics and the scriptures, arrived in Calcutta.[7]

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[4] The Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Asiatic Researches: Transactions of the society, instituted in Bengal, for inquiring into the history and antiquities ... of Asia* (3 vols, Calcutta, 1788-1836) i, p.1

[5] T. R. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (New Delhi, 2004), p.53

[6] D. Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal renaissance: the dynamics of Indian modernization, 1773-1835*, (Berkeley, 1969), p.22

[7] K. Raj, 'The Historical Anatomy of a Contact Zone: Calcutta in the Eighteenth Century', *IESHR,* 48/1 (2011), p.66

The growth of a more class-conscious British community in India went hand in hand with an increasing importance accorded to reading and the pursuit of 'useful entertainments' (such as orientalist research) within it.[8] By 1784, orientalism as practiced in India had come to signify a particular kind of scholarly engagement which departed from its predecessors in important ways as it attempted to resolve tensions between 'academic', 'practical' and 'literary' knowledge. The colonial imperative of 'action' in India was fused with that of literary interests to produce a new, hybrid form of orientalism. This chapter will show that underpinning these modes of linguistic attainment and engagement were textual and oral forms of knowledge, which over the course of four decades – from the 1740s to the 1780s – were realigned to produce a specific kind of scholarly authority over India.

In so doing, this chapter will contribute in multiple ways to ongoing debates surrounding orientalist activities. Despite the protracted discussions on orientalism that have taken place in the wake of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), the relationship between colonial orientalists and their predecessors in Europe has not been properly interrogated.[9] While Said was not the first to discuss the phenomenon of orientalism, subsequent debates have tended to centre on his often-controversial work. It is useful therefore to briefly consider responses to Said regarding orientalists and orientalism. Advocates and critics of Said alike have focused on his dual claims that orientalism constituted a totalising (and effective) discourse for 'dominating, restructuring and wielding authority over the Orient', and that this form of inquiry, since it constituted a process of Othering, only reflected the European Self.[10]

[8] A. M. F. Kabir, 'English Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Bengal', *Journal of Library History,* 14/4 (1979), pp. 436-456, pp.443-5
[9] E. W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London, 1995)
[10] Said, *Orientalism,* pp.3-7, 70, 132

The implications of this strategy have been the object of much criticism, most of which is familiar by now. First, it has been pointed out that such a broad-ranging definition of orientalist activity ignores the specifically scholarly connotations of the term, and as such, is historically inaccurate.[11] Second, it is difficult to sustain the notion that the entire corpus of orientalist writings succeeded only in representing Europe, and was hence completely irrelevant to the subjects with which it tried to engage.[12] The monolithic view of East and West, or orient and occident, critiqued by Said was, ironically, also fundamental to his own argument. Finally, and relatedly, is the question of non-European agency: it is problematic (and inaccurate) to conceive of Indians as being the passive recipients of such a totalizing and disempowering discourse.[13] In responding to the problems generated by *Orientalism*, however, further issues have emerged. On the one hand, suggesting that 'serious orientalists' had little or nothing to do with European colonial expansion, Robert Irwin, for instance, places orientalists from the late-sixteenth to the twentieth century in a direct continuum, even as he attempts to emphasize the heterogeneity of orientalist scholars.[14] Similarly, even Thomas Trautmann's nuanced studies of British orientalists' activities in Calcutta and Madras, and the subsequent production of knowledge and ideologies which served to establish the superiority of the imperial race, are subject to these issues.[15] British intellectual history is presented as undisrupted and unfolding in a linear progression, as it moved from metropole to colony, and little attention is paid to the ways in which orientalist practices underwent

[11] Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing,* pp.3-4, 289-97;
[12] For e.g. R. O' Hanlon and D. Washbrook, 'After Orientalism: After Orientalism: Culture, Criticism, and Politics in the Third World'*, Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 34/1 (1992), pp.141-67
[13] J. Malik (ed.), *Perspectives of mutual encounters in South Asian history, 1760-1860,* (Leiden, 2000)*;* F. Pouillon and J. C. Vatin (eds.) *After Orientalism: Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-Appropriations* (Leiden, 2014)
[14] Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing*
15 Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*; also: T. R. Trautmann, *The Madras school of orientalism: producing knowledge in colonial South India,* (New Delhi, 2009)

modifications in the process. In such views, the fact of colonial expansion is relevant only insofar as it facilitated access to new languages and texts, thus simply expanding the scope of traditional oriental studies.

On the other hand, those who more or less agree with Said's conception of orientalism tend to focus on rather a broad set of texts, incorporating Romantic and Victorian pseudo-oriental poetry and fiction, as well as certain translations of 'oriental' literary works.[16] This approach is based on the notion that European writings about other cultures was fundamentally unable to engage with any real aspect of these cultures and was thus, 'more to do with the Occident than with the Orient'.[17] From this it follows that it is not always useful to try to separate the fictive from the factual elements of European representations of others, since they had little to do with the cultures they claimed to describe in the first place.[18] While such a broad approach can be useful for an understanding of developments in metropolitan literary cultures, it is prone to obscure the finer mechanisms of knowledge production in the colony, particularly the role of non-Europeans in the construction of colonial epistemic spaces. The active part played by Indians in orientalist enterprises has been addressed by a number of scholars. Ascribing different degrees of agency to Indians variously described as 'native' informants, scholars, agents and collaborators, Philip Wagoner, Nandini Bhattacharya-Panda, Nicholas Dirks, Eugene Irschick and Claire Gallien, to name only a few, have discussed the dependence of colonial orientalists on their Indian counterparts.[19] However, while it is usually agreed that

[16] Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients*; R. Ballaster, *Fables of the East: selected tales, 1662-1785* (Oxford, 2005); S. Makdisi, *Making England western: occidentalism, race, and imperial culture* (Chicago, 2014); K. Teltscher, *India Inscribed: European and British Writing on India, 1600-1800* (New Delhi, 1995); M. Sharafuddin, *Islam and romantic orientalism: literary encounters with the Orient* (London, 1994), N. Leask, *British romantic writers and the East: anxieties of empire* (Cambridge, 1992), M. J. Franklin (ed.) *Romantic Representations of British India* (London, 2006)

[17] Ballaster, *Fables of the East*, p.2

[18] M. J. Franklin, 'Introduction' in Franklin, *Romantic Representations,* pp.1-44, 2-8

[19] N. B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, 2001), Wagoner, 'Pre-colonial Intellectuals', C. Gallien, 'From tension to cooperation: the interactions of British orientalists

Indians were not 'systematically acknowledged', the tensions between different sources of knowledge have not been given due attention.[20] As this chapter will show, the ways in which Britons learned and interacted with Persian underwent important shifts in the eighteenth century, resulting in its delineation as a primarily scholarly and textual subject.

Beginning with a consideration of the place of Persian in traditional oriental studies in Britain, Section One shows that comparative methods of language learning initially dominated this discipline. Section Two examines the ways in which Europeans could engage with Persian in India in the first half of the eighteenth century. Section Three identifies a growing unease with such 'practical' methods, coinciding with a literary turn in scholarship in Britain, and resulting in the characterization of Persian as a 'literary' rather than 'practical' language. Finally, the last section of this chapter examines the rise of 'colonial orientalism' in India following the Regulating Act of 1773, culminating in the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784, and the articulation of new scholarly methods that sought to combine scholarly and practical approaches, by regulating the knowledge acquired practically in the Indian setting, within a scholarly and literary framework. In so doing, the chapter shows that rather than constituting a coherent project, colonial orientalist discourse and strategies were constructed through the pressures of producing 'proper' scholarly knowledge when merchants and scholar-officials came into tension as the Company moved from trading body to imperial power.

with indian scholars in Calcutta, 1784-1794', *Theatrum Historiae,* 4 (2009), pp.235-50; Bhattacharya-Panda, *Appropriation and Invention*; E. F. Irschick, *Dialogue and history: constructing South India, 1795-1895* (Berkeley, 1994)

[20] Gallien, 'From tension to cooperation', p.236

2. 'Traditional' Orientalism in Britain: methods and sources

In 1750, Robert Mapletoft (1723 -56), the newly-arrived chaplain of the East India Company in Fort William, Calcutta, wrote to the Company's chairman in England, Richard Chauncey (fl.1747-54), requesting him for assistance in learning Persian and Arabic. In particular, Mapletoft wished Chauncey to procure grammars and lexicons for this purpose.[21] Accordingly, Chauncey contacted Samuel Jebb (c.1694-1772), a well-known scholar and physician who practiced in Stratford, asking him to identify suitable sources.[22] Although Jebb also enlisted the aid of Thomas Hunt (1696-1774), Laudian Professor of Arabic at Oxford, between them, the two men were only able to name three works suitable for learning Persian.[23] All were in Latin, and had been published over sixty years previously, in the seventeenth century.[24] Further, it was not certain whether any of these works were even available in Britain, as Jebb had only read about them in the catalogue of the French royal library. Hunt suggested two further channels which were open to those keen to learn Persian. One was to compare the *Evangelica Persica*, a literal translation of the Bible in Persian, with the Latin text. The other was to contact James Fraser (1713-1754), a Scottish merchant who had spent many years in India, but had now returned to Inverness. According to Hunt, Fraser understood Persian 'perfectly well', and spoke it as fluently as English. Aware that his words would reach the chairman of the East India Company through Jebb and Mapletoft, Hunt added,

> I wish that they who have the same opportunity of learning the Persic, which this gentleman [Fraser] had, would make the use of it, for it is a fine language and abounds in curious and useful books of all kinds.[25]

[21] BL, IOR/E/1/36 fos. 67-68v
[22] BL, IOR/E/1/37 fos. 102-106v, S. Jebb to R. Chauncey, 3 Jul. 1752
[23] BL, IOR/E/1/37 fos. 151-154v, T. Hunt to S. Jebb', undated (ca.1751/2)
[24] *Rudimenta Lingua Persicae* (1639) by Louis de Dieu; *Elementa Lingua Persicae* (1649) by John Greaves and Angelo S. Joseph's *Gazophyla Lingue Parsarum* (1604)
[25] BL, IOR/E/1/37 fos. 151-154v

In effect, men in Mapletoft's position were faced with a conundrum. As a churchman who had received a traditional education at Cambridge, Mapletoft understood the study of oriental languages in the context of the comparative study of scriptures as well as the efforts of humanistic scholars in retrieving Greek scientific knowledge through Arabic translations.[26] As a result, he prioritized knowledge that was gleaned from texts within this tradition rather than 'the uncertain methods' employed by teachers in India.[27] However, as Hunt emphasized, such knowledge was only produced in the first place through experience and engagement with texts that were not already established within the canons of biblical orientalism or humanism. In other words, there was a circular relationship between learning and knowledge production, which undercut the very possibility of working within pre-established hermeneutical frameworks while simultaneously seeking to expand them. The fact that no 'proper' European scholars of Persian seemed to exist in India, and that Europeans in India were in fact dependent on their environment for learning, constituted a problem for Mapletoft. This was a dilemma which was to plague scholars of Persian throughout the eighteenth century. Even as contact with Persian increased, new knowledge – whether acquired orally or through alternative textual routes – had to be accommodated within a recognizable framework already vested with epistemic authority. The gap between theory and practice, or between what came to be seen as systematic and unsystematic ways of acquiring Persian, generated significant discursive disparities.

Chauncey's correspondence highlights the multiple ways in which Persian could be learned in the mid-eighteenth century. The objectives for which different individuals engaged with the language shaped the texts and strategies employed. These motivations

[26] Accordingly, Mapletoft had also written to the Bishop of London, requesting him to apply to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SPCK) for Arabic and Persian books to aid him in his studies – even though he was doubtful whether the SPCK had ever engaged in producing any knowledge about Persian: BL, IOR/E/1/36, fos.67-8v

[27] Ibid.

can be broadly divided into two overlapping categories, each of which generated their own methods and attitudes towards Persian. The first set of motives were linked to the acquisition of Persian as a by-product of an older tradition of oriental scholarship, which centred on Hebrew and Arabic, and represented by Mapletoft. The second consisted of utility-based learning, as merchants, diplomats and mercenaries travelled through or communicated with individuals and polities whose main language of exchange was in Persian. James Fraser is an important example in this context. While these approaches were intertwined, and individuals often combined elements of both in their engagement with Persian, they were also markedly different, and situated Persian in relation to other languages in different ways. By the late eighteenth century, the tensions between these approaches resulted in the construction of a specific kind of orientalist scholar.

In other words, 'practical' and 'textual' methods came to be seen as distinct and often conflicting by late-eighteenth century orientalists. A particular concept of what constituted (orientalist) scholarship was produced through these tensions. This conception of 'scholarly' endeavour, along with the methods it advocated, had two important implications. First, it allowed the specific context of India, and interactions with 'learned' Indians, to be placed at the centre of colonial knowledge production even as 'native informants' were transformed into generic and passive categories.[28] Second, these changing textual strategies permitted articulations of a growing sense of British difference and estrangement from India, discussed in Chapter Two.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, Persian occupied a peripheral position in the context of British orientalist scholarship. From its inception, British academic interest in Persian was linked to the study of Arabic, of which a fairly well-

[28] Gallien, 'From Tension to Cooperation', p.236; Gallien notes that Indian names were 'sprinkled' throughout texts 'as signs of authenticity'.

established tradition of orientalism existed in Europe.[29] There were multiple reasons for this interest in Arabic. Attempts to retrieve Greek classical learning had prompted humanist scholars to the study of its dissemination and legacy in Arabic, and some of this interest still remained in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[30] In the early eighteenth century, the curiosity in Arabic medical texts continued to fuel further investigations of scientific texts, obtained mainly through contact with Ottoman territories in north Africa and the Near East.[31] Such researches were deeply entangled with the theological pursuits of Biblical scholars and missionary groups, as translations of the Scriptures into Arabic were undertaken for the benefit of Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire.[32] While continental polities necessarily engaged with Arabic to a greater extent than Britain, given the proximity of Ottoman domains, the establishment of Arabic chairs at Cambridge (1632) and Oxford (1636) ensured that a small but steady stream of Arabic scholars continued to be trained throughout the eighteenth century in Britain.

Since Arabic shared a common script with Persian, it acted as a gateway to Persian for Britons. The long history of interaction between the two languages had resulted in the production of countless dictionaries, lexicons and commentarial works explicating texts in either language. As a result, many scholars acquired Persian as a by-product of Arabic, and it is likely that a knowledge of Persian served as an important aid in accessing alternative versions, glosses and commentaries to Arabic scientific works. This is indicated by the fact that although several Arabic scholars had knowledge of Persian, few Persian works were

[29] J. Loop (ed.), *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2017), especially M. Feingold, 'Learning Arabic in Early Modern England', pp.33-56
[30] D. N. Hasse, *Success and Suppression: Arabic Sciences and Philosophy in the Renaissance* (Cambridge Massachusetts, 2016), pp.173-4; S. Mills 'Learning Arabic in the Overseas Factories: The Case of the English', in J. Loop (ed.), *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* pp.272-3
[31] A. Wear, 'English Medical Writers and their Interest in Classical Arabic Medicine in the Seventeenth Century', in G. A. Russell (ed.), *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Leiden, 1994), pp.266-77
[32] Feingold, , 'Learning Arabic in Early Modern England', p.53

translated directly into English during the early decades of the eighteenth century.[33] It seems likely, thus, that knowledge of Persian was used in aid of Arabic. Arabic's status as the language which had preserved classical Greek authors and scientific works, and its centrality to studies of Islam and the Bible, led to it being bestowed with a status superior to that of Persian. As a result of the role played by Arabic texts in foregrounding encounters with Persian, the two languages were interlinked from the perspective of European learners. It was assumed that Persian could not be learned without knowledge of Arabic – a misconception that persisted in the popular imagination well into the nineteenth century.[34] This notion was reinforced by the etymological thrust of philological studies in Britain. The significant presence of Arabic loan words in Persian, and the incorporation of Arabic verses and phrases in texts in which Persian was the main language, led scholars to understand the two languages as being completely 'blended' even while remaining separate languages.[35]

In addition to Arabic sources, it was also possible for scholars to learn Persian using the limited Latin resources available. Since the late seventeenth century, it appears that few new works on Persian were produced in English or Latin. Of these seventeenth-century works, the most well-known in England were lexicons and grammars compiled by Jacobus Golius (1596-1667), Louis de Dieu (1590-1642), John Greaves (1602-1652) and Fransiscus Meninski (1623-1698). Like their eighteenth-century successors, these men also belonged to the same tradition of orientalism rooted in religious and scientific imperatives. Golius and Greaves were both mathematicians, whose researches led them to

[33] E. Savage-Smith, 'John Channing: Eighteenth-Century Apothecary and Arabist', *Pharmacy in History*, 30/2 (1988), pp.63-80; Henry Wild was another Arabic scholar with knowledge of Persian: T. Burgess, *Motives to the Study of Hebrew*, 2nd edn (3 vols, London, 1814), pp.117-23

[34] This is discussed further in Chapter 4, in the context of the linking of the study of Persian and Arabic in colonial educational curricula.

[35] Ibid.

travel to gather manuscripts, collaborate with fellow scholars and to hone their linguistic skills.[36] However, Greaves' own Persian lexicon was compiled on the basis of words he encountered in the Psalms and the Evangelists.[37] Similarly, the theologian, Louis de Dieu, was the son of a Calvinist minister whose initial acquaintance with Persian had come about through contact with a polyglot Bible which had been printed during the sixteenth-century at Constantinople.[38] This interest was furthered when de Dieu acquired a copy of the Persian *Mir'āt al-Quds* ('Mirror of Holiness'), containing the lives of Christ and St. Peter. Originally written in Portuguese by a Jesuit priest, Father Jerome Xavier (15491-1617), at the request of the Mughal emperor Akbar, the works had been translated into Persian at Akbar's court at Agra.[39] Working with his colleagues at Leiden, de Dieu compared the texts side by side to arrive at a basic understanding of Persian grammar and vocabulary. Prompted, at least partly, by a desire to critique the Jesuits' rendition of the Christian faith, De Dieu printed the two texts in Persian, along with a Latin grammar of Persian that appears to have been the first of its kind.[40]

The comparative method is an important indicator of the ways in which early orientalists viewed eastern languages and cultures. The practice of comparing texts viewed the original Persian in the light of existing translations meant that predetermined concepts and meanings were transferred onto Persian texts. The dominance of comparative techniques and the readiness with which they were employed reflected the Tower of Babel narrative which underpinned such linguistic transactions. According to the Babel model,

[36] J. T. P. de Bruijn, 'Golius, Jacobus', *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* (London, 1982), ix/1, p.96.
[37] J. Greaves, *Miscellaneous Works of Mr. John Greaves*: Professor of Astronomy in the University of Oxford (2 vols, London, 1737), i, p.lvi
[38] J. T. P. de Bruijn, 'Dieu, Louis (Ludovicus) de', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, (London, 1996) vii/4, pp.397-398
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.

all languages were confusions and distortions of a single original language.[41] This assumed that concepts, things, feelings, and so on, were common to speakers of different languages, and divided only by the artificial difference of linguistic utterance and representation. As a result, all languages consisted of words which were equivalent to each other, and hence could be matched up. By comparing two versions of the 'same' text in different languages, it was understood that the two had the potential – if the translations were accurate – to represent each other's meanings completely. If the meaning was already known through one text, then the language which encoded the same meaning in the second text could be unlocked. This illusion of similarity resulted in an attitude of familiarity, as orientalist practices were informed by a framework which did not (in theory) permit the existence of unknowable entities. The notion that the Bible could be literally translated into other languages and its meaning relayed without loss or corruption also underscored this view. The comparative method continued to dominate language learning in scholarly contexts for much of the eighteenth century. As late as 1771, in his *Grammar of the Persian Language*, the orientalist William Jones (1746-94) recommended that beginners read the Persian text of the *Gulistān* ('The Rose Garden', by Sa'dī Shīrāzī', c.1208-92) alongside a Latin translation by Gentius, even though he thought the latter to be an clumsy rendition of the original.[42] Such learning through comparison consisted mainly of learning equivalent words in each languages, with rather less attention paid to grammatical structure. Importantly, it emphasized the semantic similarities of languages, rather than differences.

The practice of textual comparison on its own, however, was not a sufficient guide to foreign languages. Orientalist endeavours are often - erroneously - seen as consisting

[41] For the story of Babel: P. Rangarajan, *Imperial Babel: translation, exoticism, and the long nineteenth century* (New York, 2014), pp.68-9; Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* pp.43-4
[42] Jones, *A Grammar,* xv-xvi

primarily of self-learning, as solitary scholars ensconced in the reading rooms of universities, private libraries and personal collections available in Britain appeared to learn an array of eastern languages by simply applying themselves to the limited resources available.[43] In the first place, even the seventeenth-century grammars and lexicons which scholars relied upon were the products of travel and interpersonal contact.[44] In this sense, they were constructed upon experiences and individuals, rather than some pristine, pre-existing texts cut off from contexts of usage. Secondly, while there were certainly instances of gifted individuals who managed extraordinary feats of learning in isolation – the orientalist Henry Wild (c.1684-1721), who worked in obscurity and managed to learn nine languages until he was discovered by a clergyman is one example - most scholars worked closely with their colleagues to learn and translate from different sources.[45] Although these men spent innumerable hours in libraries, they also moved in circles where assistance was readily available. For instance, both Wild and John Channing (another Arabist with knowledge of Persian, fl.1766-78) found a common patron in Dr. Richard Mead (1673-1754), the eminent royal physician and antiquarian.[46] Mead's other connections included the Laudian Professor of Arabic at Oxford, Thomas Hunt, John Gagnier (c.1670-1740), a Frenchman who had learned Hebrew and Arabic in Paris but had settled in London, and Salomon Negri (c.1665-1727), a Damascan who was 'extremely well-versed in all the oriental languages' as well as Latin.[47] Born Sulaimān bin Ya'qūb, Negri was an Ottoman subject who had also spent time working with scholars in France and Germany. He played

[43] For instance, this is the view emphasised in: Savage-Smith, 'John Channing'; Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing*
[44] A. Hamilton, 'The Qur'an as Chrestomathy in Early Modern Europe', in Loop (ed.), *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* pp.222-4; Mills, 'Learning Arabic in the Overseas Factories', pp.272-93
[45] Burgess, *Motives to the Study of Hebrew,* pp.117-23; D. M. Dunlop, 'The "Arabian Tailor", Henry Wild', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* 19/3 (October, 1957), pp.579-81
[46] Savage-Smith, 'John Channing', pp.79-80
[47] R. Mead, *The Medical Works of Dr. Richard Mead, M. D.* (London, 1762) p.cccv. N.B. Solomon Negri sometimes appears in records as 'Salomon Negri'.

a crucial role in building bridges between English, Latin and eastern languages. Negri's position as a Greek Orthodox Christian Syrian, involved in the translation of biblical texts into Arabic for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), further fortified his standing in England.[48] In addition to assisting in rendering Arabic medical texts into Latin and English for his patrons, Negri also served as a general cultural mediator, as he appears to have been relied upon by antiquarians in their attempts to date and identify artefacts and manuscripts.[49]

Figures such as Negri and Gagnier, though rarely featured in the increasingly patriotic and scholastic canons of orientalists constructed at the turn of the nineteenth century, were central to the accessing non-European knowledge in early-eighteenth century England. Termed 'trans-imperial subjects' by Natalie Rothman, such individuals marketed their linguistic skills and capacity for mobility to different patrons.[50] Their presence was thus integral to the functioning of imperial institutions and relationships between western European polities and the trans-continental Ottoman empire, as well as the production of knowledge.[51] During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, France had also been particularly attentive to building ties with the Safavids, and had received Iranian diplomats and interpreters at different junctures.[52] The movement of such figures was structured by communication lines between western European polities and Asian empires, and helped set up nodes of language learning and textual exchange. The proximity of continental polities to the Ottoman empire also meant that cities such as Paris and Venice

[48] J. A. Ghobrial, 'The Life and Hard Times of Solomon Negri: An Arabic Teacher in Early Modern Europe', in Loop (ed.) *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* pp.310-31. As Ghobrial notes, Negri may also have have taught Arabic to George Sale, who translated the Qur'an into English.
[49] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 6/60 (November, 1836), p.492
[50] E. N. Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Transimperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca, 2016), pp.166-86
[51] Rothman, *Brokering Empire,* pp.11-16
[52] S. N. Mokhberi, 'France and Persia in the Age of Absolutism' (Phd thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2010), p.41 and pp.69-103;

actively encouraged and institutionalised the study of Turkish and Arabic to a greater extent than their counterparts in Britain.[53] However, oriental scholars in Britain also built far-reaching networks of contacts in continental Europe and Ottoman territories, and through the British presence in seventeenth-century North Africa.[54] Orientalist scholars travelled to study at different institutions (such as the University of Leiden) and to liaise with other colleagues in the 'republic of letters', where polyglot scholars often convened when they found patronage.[55] Collaborations and rivalry, rather than isolation, characterised early orientalist endeavours. Although some centres of oriental learning, such as Leiden, witnessed a decline in the eighteenth century, their valuable manuscript collections ensured that they continued to draw scholars from across Europe.[56] Effectively, these methods involved textual comparison alongside reliance on interpreters and collaborators whose presence, far from being problematic (as it later would become), was considered a standard part of scholarly strategies.

Eighteenth-century scholarly frameworks situated Persian on the fringes of a configuration which combined humanistic and theological interests. Aligned with Hebrew and Arabic, Persian was accommodated uncomfortably within the existing academic framework in Britain which focused on Latin, Greek and the Semitic languages.[57] The same was true of Turkish. Both Persian and Turkish were accorded little space in the limited ambit of oriental studies as practiced in British academic institutions and scholarly circles. This is evidenced by fact that most scholars of Arabic did not engage directly with

[53] E.g. Rothman, *Brokering Empire,* pp.166-86; Travers, 'The connected worlds of Haji Mustapha'; essays in Loop (ed.), *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*

[54] For an excellent account of early British networks of information gathering and exchange in North Africa, see: W. J. Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment: Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England and its Empire*, 1648-1715 (Cambridge, 2015)

[55] D. Progler, *English Students at Leiden University, 1575-1650: 'Advancing Your Abilities in Learning and Bettering Your Understanding of the World and State Affairs'* (Abingdon, 2016); W. McKane, 'Benjamin Kennicott: An Eighteenth-Century Researcher', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 18/2 (1977), pp.445-64

[56] Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing*, p.126

[57] N.B. the term 'Semitic' was not applied by these scholars since this nomenclature arose later.

works in Persian or Turkish. John Channing and Henry Wild, who both knew Persian, never published any material directly translated from that language. Simply put, because Persian works were not known to be carriers of biblical or scientific knowledge recognised by scholars (who tended to view it as a polite, or courtly language), they were not accorded any attention in academic discussions. As late as 1767, when Benjamin Kennicott (1718-1783), the Keeper of the Radcliffe Library at Oxford, suggested that a Persian chair be established at Oxford, his proposal met with little interest.[58]

The rigid agenda of academia, and narrow definitions of what constituted scholarly subjects (despite the range of methods of producing information), played an important role in side-lining the study of Persian in Britain for at least the first half of the eighteenth century. At the same time, however, the perceived relationship between Arabic and Persian (and hence, the latter's somewhat awkward inclusion in the traditional orientalist imaginary) situated Persian within the scope of comparative textual and linguistic methods, permitting its literature to be viewed as both accessible and familiar. Moreover, the oral foundations of grammars and lexicons, as well as the presence of non-European interlocutors, were largely treated as mundane but necessary parts of the process of language acquisition and textual production by scholars in Britain.

3. The East India Company and Persian, ca. 1742

The East India Company had been operating in India since 1600. At different times, the Company had possessed factories scattered at locations across the subcontinent, including Surat, Agra, Patna, Madras, Bombay, Hooghly and Calcutta. Despite the Company's long involvement with trade and governance at these outposts, little attention

[58] B. Kennicott, *A Proposal to Establish a Professorship in the Persian Language at the University of Oxford,* (Oxford [?], 1767)

was paid to the linguistic training of its European employees.[59] However, this does not mean that there was no structure to the Company's interactions with its employees and subjects: as Philip Stern has shown, even before it acquired territorial control of Bengal, the Company was a complex corporate body which functioned much like 'other early modern governments', as it regulated its subjects, commercial enterprises and trading outposts through enacting laws, and communicating with local rulers and populations.[60] In so doing, Company generated, monitored and relied upon specific kinds of 'writing practices' which were a 'crucial part of constructing […] the global geography' to which the Company also belonged.[61] Although the Company's transactions in India were not limited to Persian, the language was central to maintaining mercantile, courtly and diplomatic relations. Thus, the Company relied on multilingual interpreters, couriers and secretaries, who transmitted and produced documents in Persian and translated vast quantities of official material. In the Company's factories in the south of India, the office of the 'native interpreter' (also referred to as *dubāsh*, 'two-tongued') became formalised relatively early, from at least the 1690s.[62] The value accorded to linguistic skills in the mid-eighteenth century is evidenced by the high pay received by such individuals, and the competitive nature of the industry.[63] In such contexts, skills in Persian and other Indian languages were valued for pragmatic, rather than scholarly, reasons, and as shall be discussed, were acquired through a combination of different textual and oral/socially-rooted modes of learning.

[59] For an excellent study of the Company's involvement in governance and politics before the mid-eighteenth century, see: Stern, *The Company-State*

[60] Stern, *The Company-State,* pp.3-6; see also: R. Travers, *Ideology and empire in eighteenth century India: the British in Bengal* (New York, 2007), pp.8-26; Wilson, *The Domination of Strangers,* pp.19-44

[61] M. Ogborn, *Indian ink script and print in the making of the English East India Company* (Chicago, 2007), p.22; Stern, *The Company-State,* p.11

[62] 'East India Company General Correspondence', Jun-Jul. 1693, BL, IOR/E/3/50, fos. 83-88, 144-45

[63] BL, IOR/E/1/56, fos. 270-271v, J. Capper to the Court', 25 Nov. 1772 (outlines Capper's past career and pay of £1300 for his services as translator)

Although Britons also took part in such interpretative activities, details of the practices involved in language acquisition, translation and negotiation are conspicuous for their absence. Many, of course, never learned to communicate formally in Persian even after spending time in regions where Persian was employed, and relied exclusively on translators. Since there is no evidence that tuition in Persian or other Indian languages was being offered in the first half of the century in England, Britons had to rely on learning useful linguistic skills while working in India. The majority of Britons who joined the Company as writers at its factories prior to the 1773 Act arrived in India during their teens. It is unlikely that these youths had many chances to acquire familiarity with Persian using the few seventeenth-century Latinate grammars available in Britain, and in which even academics seemed to evince little interest. As late as 1770, Adam Austin (d.1773), a physician in Scotland, wrote to Robert Clive (1725-74), who had recently retired from service as Commander-in-Chief of the Company forces in India, about his struggles in finding Persian teachers for his son who was soon to leave for India as a writer. [64] Unable to locate anyone for the purpose in London and Edinburgh, Austin eventually settled on arranging a few Arabic lessons on the basis that the script would at least become familiar to his son. Persian and other Indian languages would have to be acquired in India.

While the prospect of travelling to a new country without knowledge of its languages may have been daunting, Company careers were a familiar enough concept by the early eighteenth century. Employment at the East India Company's factories as a family occupation had become increasingly common by the turn of the eighteenth century.[65] This

[64] BL, MS Eur G37/59/4, fo.34, A. Austin to R. Clive, 24 May 1770 . Austin's son, Hugh Adam Austin, went on to become a judge in Burdwan.

[65] D. Veevers, 'The Early Modern Colonial State in Asia: Private Agency and Family Networks in the English East India Company', (PhD thesis, University of Kent, 2015), p.141; C. Newbury, C. 'Patronage and Professionalism: Manning a Transitional Empire, 1760–1870', The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 42/2 (2014), pp.193-214

produced patronage and kinship-driven patterns of settlement, association and support at the Company's colonial outposts. As service in the Company became a family occupation, it allowed foresight in ensuring that the sons, relatives and acquaintances of eminent employees could be initiated and trained in India, through apprenticeship-like experiences. Henry Vansittart (1732-70), governor of Bengal between 1760 and 1764, provides a good example of this phenomenon. Born to a family with a history of mercantile activity, Vansittart arrived in India in 1745 when he was thirteen. Making quick progress in Persian, he worked as a translator in the Company for some time. After his governorship concluded and he returned to England, Vansittart fell from favour among the Court of Directors. However, he obtained permission for his son, Arthur, also thirteen by this time, to accompany him to Bengal on his next visit. The Company was given to understand that the elder Vansittart desired his son to become a Bengal writer, and wished to 'instruct him in the Persian and accompany him to the several Presidencies, gaining a knowledge of the Company's affairs'.[66] The Vansittart family supported other acquaintances in a similar manner, encouraging for instance the son of a friend in his study of Persian while in India.[67] Henry Vansittart's grandson (also named Henry, d.1786) went on to become an enthusiastic Persian translator and a member of the Asiatic Society.[68]

These decisions were not random or coincidental: they indicate the conscious pursuit of a specific career trajectory, of which those with a family history of mobility through trade, travel and military service had a heightened awareness. Aided by support

[66] BL, IOR/E/4/864, p.770, Persian, Son of H. Vansittart to be instructed in
[67] BL, MS Eur F331/19, Letters to Europe, No. 2: Oct. 1769-Aug. 1773
[68] M. J. Franklin, *'Orientalist Jones': Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794* (Oxford, 2011), p.232. Another official Persian translator, Stephen Sulivan was the son of Company chairman Laurence Sulivan, who carefully monitored his son's career and advised him on language-learning in India: G. McGilvary, *Guardian of the East India Company: The Life of Laurence Sulivan* (New York, 2005), pp.216-7, p.243. Polier also had a similar background, as he hailed from a family of merchants and travellers. Alam and Alavi, *A European Experience,* pp.1-17

systems of advice, patronage, friendship, and apprenticeship, well-connected writers in the employ of the Company could follow well-established paths. In this sense, early Bengal writers bear a striking resemblance to other professional itinerant groups with whom they frequently crossed paths. In this context, language was not simply 'picked up'; it was acquired as a professional skill. Beyond stray remarks in Company officials' petitions and applications for particular posts stressing the difficulty of such learning, there are few details of what exactly such learning would have consisted.[69]

However, it is possible to make some basic assumptions by extrapolating from contemporary linguistic research and from methods employed in eighteenth-century European language academies more generally. Specialist language academies in Paris, Vienna, Venice, Constantinople and other cities, which trained dragomen for trans-imperial service, took pedagogical strategies seriously, teaching Persian amongst other useful languages such as Turkish. A variety of methods were employed to ensure that students learned efficiently and effectively. Comparative textual strategies were (and continue to be) rarely used in language learning at a young age, even in the case of acquiring a second language. Instead, immersive approaches, which combined reading, speaking and grammatical study, were favoured.[70] François Pétis de la Croix (1653-1713), the interpreter to the French court, advocated a method in which students learned and read a text aloud to themselves, and then transcribed it from memory.[71] Translation also formed a central aspect of such learning, as the ability to move between languages quickly and fluently (orally and in writing) was deemed extremely important. As mentioned earlier, the

[69] BL, IOR/E/4/863, Stracey rewarded; translators retained; BL, IOR/E/4/624, Salary of William Redfearn; BL, IOR/E/1/56

[70] This was the method adopted by Francois Petis de la Croix as a teacher: P. Ageron and M. Jaouhari, 'Le programme pédagogique d'un arabisant du Collège royal, François Pétis de La Croix (1653-1713)', *Arabica*, 61/3-4 (2014), pp.396-453

[71] This method is known as auto-dictee. Ageron and Jaouhari. 'Le programme pédagogique'

study of Turkish and Persian did not fit well in the scheme of scholarly interests. As a result, at such technical institutions in France at least, Latin was usually replaced by French as the medium of instruction.[72] This meant that the usual classical education of elites was not a requirement and a different, or more mixed, social stratum engaged in such learning. While such trans-imperial itinerants were to be frequently met with in India, Company employees from Britain usually did not have such backgrounds. However, the skill sets required for both roles were not dissimilar. This, coupled with the relatively young age of most arrivals in India, and the fact that Britons in India constituted a mobile, professional group (however loosely linked to each other), suggests that learning strategies may have been quite similar.

Like imperial dragomen, Company employees who wished to market their linguistic skills would have focused on quick oral and written translation skills, as well as the ability to read and compose letters, treatises, and other documents with ease. Instead of Biblical Hebrew and classical Latin, Persian was placed alongside French, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch and English – the languages spoken by most European itinerants in India, as well as Arabic and Turkish. James Fraser (mentioned by Hunt and Jebb), who worked for some time for the East India Company, attained fluency in Persian (and possibly also Arabic) during the seventeen years he spent in India.[73] His first stint in India was of eleven years, and spent as an independent trader. Fraser's common-place books – written entirely in Persian - indicate that he spent considerable time in practicing his handwriting, drafting letters, and copying out excerpts from other texts, including an Arabic-Persian dictionary.[74] The only Persian dictionary which referenced a European language in his possession was

[72] I. B. McCabe, *Orientalism in Early Modern France: Eurasian Trade, Exoticism, and the Ancien Régime*, (Oxford, 2008), p.28

[73] For a recently-authored account of Fraser and his politics: S. Subrahmanyam, *Europe's India: Words, People, Empires, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2017), pp.144-210

[74] Oxford, BDL, MS. Fraser 118; Oxford, BDL, MS. Fraser 58

a manuscript vocabulary comprising Italian-Arabic-Turkish-Persian.[75] This dictionary mapped the geography of trading and diplomatic routes across Eurasia, as it crossed languages of exchange from west to east.[76]

Along with such textual methods, it is evident that Europeans in India also relied on native speakers and interpreters in their attempts to learn Persian. While these relationships are not discussed in detail, their existence is acknowledged in personal accounts and official records of the eighteenth century. At the East India Company's factory in Calcutta, for instance, two 'occouns' (an Anglicization of the Persian *ākẖẖwund*: teacher/religious scholar) were employed by 1750 to 'instruct the servants if they show any inclination to learn it.'[77] In his *History of Nadir Shah* (1742) Fraser provided a more detailed account of the experiences of learning from Indian teachers:

> The first Master under whom I studied the Persic, was a Parsi (or one of the race of ancient Persians) now at Surat. The second was Mullah of one of the mosques there, whose name is Fakhrodin. When I was at Cambay, I studied under Shaikh Mohammed Morad, a man famous in those parts for his knowledge in the Mohammedan civil and ecclesiastical laws. During my stay at that place, I employed three hours each day with one Sri Nat Veaz, a learned Brahmin whom I allowed a salary on that Account.[78]

Like generations of Company officials after him, Fraser relied on Indian teachers. It is striking that Fraser did not describe any of his instructors as *munshī*s: by the 1790s (as the following chapter will discuss), British officials conflated *munshī*s almost exclusively with language teachers.[79] Instead, Fraser's account of his teachers is more nuanced, as he is

[75] Oxford, BDL, MS. Fraser 23
[76] This linguistic configuration continued to be important till at least the end of the eighteenth century, when Italian and French interpreters could easily be hired at Baghdad and Basra for to aid those traveling westward: Howel, *A Journal of a Passage from India*, pp.131-83
[77] BL, IOR/E/1/36.
[78] J. Fraser, *The History of Nadir Shah, called Thamas Kuli Khan* (London, 1742), p.vi
[79] For e.g. Gallien, 'From Tension to Cooperation'; . C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870* (Cambridge, 1996), pp.73-7

keen to name and locate each of the men who guided him. Fraser's relationships with his teachers appear to be similar to the *ustād-shāgird* bond of discipleship common to the Indo-Persian learning relationships, as Fraser made no mention of hiring or even paying for the services of the first three tutors, whom he deferentially referred to as 'Masters'.[80] At this point in time, apart from travel accounts, British merchants and Company servants in India did not normally attempt to relay literary or historical works to the British public. Before discussing the significance of Fraser's translation on the development of orientalism, therefore, it is worth registering that in pursuing this manner of learning, he was not necessarily departing from previous practices, which had simply gone unpublished, and perhaps unrecorded. Rather, it seems likely that in building relationships with teachers and learned individuals in India, Britons would have accommodated themselves within modes of discipleship which already existed – such as the relationship of *ustād-shāgirdī*.[81] Shaikh Muḥammad Murād's lineage is described in a manuscript in Fraser's collection, and reveals that the Shaikh traced two lines of descent to the founder of the Chistī order of Sufis, from which it appears that he enjoyed a high standing locally.[82] It is clear that Fraser was aware of his attachment to a reputed teacher, whose knowledge he relied upon and used to build his own authority as an expert on India.[83]

However, *ustād-shāgirdī* and traditional Indo-Persian modes of learning were not the only possible relations available to Europeans: Indians could and did respond to the

[80] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* p.vi; the later monetization of the *munshī*'s wages is an indicator of the changing nature of teacher-student relations. There is little extant literature on this topic, but Peter Robb indicates a shift in master-servant relations and the formalization of salaries: P. Robb, *Clash of Cultures? An Englishman in Calcutta in the 1790s: an inaugural lecture given on 12 March 1998*, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

[81] In a recent book, Subrahmanyam has discussed Fraser and suggests that Fraser's manuscript collection indicates that he received the typical education of a *munshī* in India. However, this is not necessarily the case, as Fraser's desire to bring back and exhibit his manuscript collection, and his correspondence with a scholar, Reverend Smalbroke suggest that his interests resembled those of an antiquarian also. Subrahmanyam, *Europe's India*, pp.169-81

[82] Oxford, BDL, MS. Fraser 122

[83] See also: Subrahmaynam, *Europe's India,* pp.169-70

needs of the growing European populations in South Asia. It appears that along trading routes in particular, non-Europeans were familiar with French or English. European travellers in the eighteenth century described their reliance on such intermediaries, who helped facilitate the movement of Europeans and their trading goods between India and Europe by acting as interpreters and guides.[84] Instead of imagining Europeans – armed with texts and dedication, struggling to understand their Indian interlocutors – learning the language in order to communicate and to extend their studies, it is necessary to realize that such communication was sometimes already possible. Certain contexts of exchange and interaction were far more cosmopolitan than is usually realised, and the knowledge that Indians and other itinerants had of European languages is a subject that requires further research. For instance, Qobād Beg, the grandfather of the poet Mirzā Muḥammad Bak̲h̲sh "Āshob" (d.1784/5) was a well-travelled man who had visited foreign countries (*firangistān*) and learned Latin and Greek in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century; however, his motivations for doing so remain unknown.[85] By the early 1780s, individuals literate in Persian and English were advertising their services as bilingual

[84] J. Capper, *Observations on the Passage to India, through Egypt, and across the Great Desert* (London, 1783), pp.6-7. This mentions an Indian from Gujarat transacting business between western India and Mocha (where Fraser also spent some time as a merchant), in 'English and Moors'. Another example is that of Meer Joad, of Turkish origin, who spent time in Sindh, Bengal and France during his career and 'spoke the Turkish, Hindostani, Arabic, and French languages well, and some others imperfectly': T. Howel, *A Journal of a Passage from India,* 2nd edn (London, 1791), p.57. See also Travers' account of Hājī Muṣṭafá: Travers: 'The Connected Worlds of Haji Mustapha', pp.301-4. Interpreters could also take on the role of teachers and provide learning aids. For e.g. 'Dictionarium Latino-Arabico-Persico' was produced by an eighteenth-century scribe for a European patron: Oxford, BDL, MS. Mill 201; an earlier English/Persian dictionary was also compiled by an Armenian, "Tumajan" for Robert Hughes: Oxford, BDL, Ms. Bodl. Or. 492. Beyond India, in Julfa, Cornelius le Bruyn learnt the orthography of Persian from his Armenian interpreter in Julfa. The latter was versed in Persian, Turkish, Dutch and French. C. de Bruyn, *A voyage to the Levant*, trans. W. J. (2 vols, London, 1702), i, p.246

[85] 'K̲h̲ulāṣat al-Afkār', Oxford, BDL, MS Elliott 181, fos.347-8r. No dates are provided, but Āshob's grandfather was in the service of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (d.1707). Later, as producers of translations for the Company, this was a more common and explainable phenomenon: one example is Tazafful Ḥusain: Raj, 'The Historical Anatomy', pp.70-1; G. Khan, 'Indian Muslim Perceptions of the West during the Eighteenth Century' (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1993). According to Sisir Kumar Das, Maulawī Allāhdād of the Fort William College, who died at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was also versed in Greek and Latin: S. K. Das, *Sahibs and Munshis: An Account of the College of Fort William* (Michigan, 1978), p.17

*munshī*s in the Calcutta press.[86] Thus, in order to build a complete picture of colonial, and particularly British, interactions with texts in Persian (and other non-European languages), it is important to be alert to the fact that rarely were these exchanges one-way processes.

Modes of learning Persian in the first three quarters of the eighteenth century would thus have incorporated a range of approaches, both textual and social. Certain features, like the common linking of Persian with Arabic, were shared with humanist and theological scholars in England. However, Persian sat alongside a broader range of mercantile and courtly languages in this context - an alignment which reflected the geographies of trade and diplomacy, and Persian's function as a 'living' language.[87] In this sense, it is possible to see Britons (and other Europeans) as participating and engaging with Persian as a cosmopolitan language. The cosmopolitans mentioned earlier, such as Polier, Claude-Martin Wade (1735-1800) and the Eurasian Ḥājī Muṣṭafá (c.1730-91), as well as James Fraser, belonged to a wider set of itinerants who approached Persian as a language of mobility and a means for negotiating different spaces. Not knowing a language, reliance on intermediaries, or learning in 'unscholarly' contexts were mundane realities. For those who did learn Persian as merchants and travellers, ability to speak and write (in addition to deciphering) Persian was far more important than for their scholarly counterparts in Europe, and accordingly shaped learning practices. There are no signs that the kind of textual comparison employed by scholarly or biblical orientalists was a method of learning in these situations. Instead, translations were the products (rather than the means) of such immersive language acquisition. Such translations, however, consisted largely of official documents and private correspondence, and were not intended for publication. Grounded in the oral contexts of trade and communication, Persian documents were thus the products,

[86] For example, *Calcutta Gazette; or, Oriental Advertiser*, 2/35 (1784), pp.6-7
[87] Kennicott, *Proposal,* p.13

rather than the objects, of study. The important exception here is James Fraser's translation of the life and times of Nādir Shāh, discussed next in this chapter. However, as emphasized, Fraser's approach to Persian was immersive, rather than distanced and objective. The history of Nādir Shāh written by Fraser marked an unstable moment of transition as he sought to transform Nādir Shāh into an object fit for scholars. It appears that no further works of this kind were published in English until 1768, when, as the following discussion will demonstrate, the concerns of oriental studies took a literary turn.

The literary turn: changing scholarly strategies in Britain, c.1742-72

In his *Persian Grammar* (1771), William Jones complained that 'the state of letters seems to be divided into two classes, men of learning who have no taste, and men of taste who have no learning.'[88] The former were the orientalist scholars who, according to Jones, had obstructed the development of interest in Persian literature, while the latter were those who had most likely travelled or worked in India and appreciated such writing, but were not well-educated. These tensions, generated by a divide between traditional academics in Britain and the purportedly less scholarly methods employed by itinerants in India, emerged in Britain in the 1760s and 1770s. Beginning with a discussion of Fraser's 1742 translation of the *History of Nadir Shah*, this section traces the emergence of these tensions, which culminated in a more literary approach to Persian. As a merchant who had been a writer in the Company's employ and learnt Persian for practical purposes, Fraser belonged to the second class of men to which Jones referred. Unlike Jones and the later orientalists, Fraser seems to have had a very limited knowledge of Latin, and seems to have

[88] Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian,* p.v

been primarily moved in mercantile social circles, numbering traders amongst his close acquaintances.[89]

James Fraser's translation of *The History of Nadir Shah* in 1742 was one of the earliest works to be translated into English directly from Persian. The book signalled Fraser's attempt to relocate himself in British society after his return to England after an absence of eleven years. It also served to advertise his knowledge of Asia and linguistic skills, as he was simultaneously applying to return to India in the Company's service.[90] The publication reveals Fraser's contacts among the British academic world with whom his interests in India partly coincided, and who also sustained him financially. Dedicated to Dr. Richard Mead, to whom Fraser referred as his patron, it reveals the deeply interlinked world of scholars in Britain and merchants abroad.[91] As Fraser's patron, Mead is likely to have bought or otherwise made use of Fraser's extensive collection of Arabic manuscripts, a significant proportion of which were medical texts. The manuscripts on which Salomon Negri and John Channing worked under Mead's supervision, were thus obtained through the services of manuscript hunters such as Fraser. Indeed, Fraser may have been the first to provide Mead with extensive access to materials from India.

Another acquaintance who prompted Fraser to learn 'ancient Persic' (Avestan) in addition to contemporary Persian, was the Reverend Smalbroke (1672-1749), whom Fraser seems to have known in Scotland.[92] Prior to Fraser's first departure for India, Smalbroke requested him to bring back Zoroastrian texts from India.[93] Collecting books and artefacts

[89] That Fraser did not have a good command of Latin was a source of frustration to him, although it appears that he made some attempts to learn it when making an effort to approach Persian in a more scholarly manner. MS Fraser 58 (cited earlier) has some Latin translations of Persian words in the margins, along with English. For Fraser's lack of Latin: W. Irvine, 'Note on James Fraser, Author of the History of Nadir Shah', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 31/1 (1899), pp.214-220
[90] BL, IOR/E/1/31, Petition of James Fraser to the EIC', read in Court 15 Oct. 1742
[91] Fraser, 'Dedication' to *History of Nadir Shah,* front-matter.
[92] Irvine, 'Note on James Fraser'
[93] Ibid.

for patrons was not an uncommon pursuit for those who had the opportunity to travel in Asia; however, according to most accounts, Fraser was the first to have brought back an entire collection from India.[94] The collection became a focal point when the French orientalist, Abraham Hyacinth Anquetil-Duperron (1731-1805), made use of its materials to produce his work on Zoroastrianism. However, as Trautmann has noted, soon afterwards, William Jones attack on Anqetuil-Duperron's translation of the *Avesta* delayed further researches on this topic for a significant time, as other scholars were reluctant to engage with texts whose authenticy had been thrown into question.[95] Hence, little interest was displayed in Fraser's collection for some time. These controversies aside, *The History of Nadir Shah* attempted to speak to established scholars, and to carve out a space for Persianate texts such as his *History* by broadening the interests of academics and lay readers alike. In so doing, it provided a template for (re)producing historical texts from Persian. Re-reading Fraser's description of his qualifications as an authority on Indo-Persian history, two features stand out. The first is Fraser's description of his teachers in India. While there is little doubt that Fraser did indeed learn from these men, it is significant that he presented them in the form of a religious triumvirate.[96] The 'Parsi', the 'Mullah' or the Shaikh, and the Brahman together symbolised the three religions known by orientalists to exist in India: Zoroastrianism, Islam, and Hinduism. This reframed Indian knowledge systems to fit the framework of eighteenth-century epistemic authority, based on theological authority, of the 'learned' British readers whom Fraser addressed.[97] These religious and epistemic categories were to become central to orientalist concerns later in

[94] Ibid.
[95] Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* p.35
[96] Irvine, 'Note on James Fraser' – writes that Duperron confirmed Fraser was among the Zoroastrian teachers he mentioned, while his relationship with Murād is indicated by: Oxford, BDL, MS Fraser 122; for more on European views of India informed by religion in this early period: H. Garcia, *Islam and the English Enlightenment, 1670-1840*, (Baltimore: 2012); J.-P. Rubies, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India Through European Eyes, 1250-1625* (Cambridge, 2000)
[97] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* p.iv

the eighteenth century, even though Fraser was rarely, if ever, mentioned in imperialist canons of pioneer orientalists. During this period, British views of categories of religion and race overlapped, as Fraser described Parsis as the 'ancient race of Persians'.[98] Race was not defined in terms of outward appearance, but in the cultural and civilizational associations made with different religions.[99] As a result, Fraser showcased the comprehensiveness of his cultural knowledge of India, as he had access to India's three important civilizational groups. In the works of subsequent orientalist scholars, informants defined by their faith were to serve as authorities on the historical and cultural knowledge of South Asian 'peoples', who usually fell into one of the religious groups identified by Fraser. By employing categories familiar to his British readers, Fraser attempted to straddle the two modes of learning he had encountered, even as he marked out their differences.

Second, there was the question of Fraser's sources for the *History*. Here, there appeared to be more room for manoeuvre, and it does not appear that he substantially reframed the way in which he had gathered the materials for his work. As already explained, traditional orientalist scholarship was deeply intertwined with travel and diplomacy, and relied on collaborative methods. As a result, the categories of authentic sources used were not as rigid as they would later become. While Fraser carefully explained the reasons behind each choice, and dutifully attested to their reliability, the explicit inclusion of a variety of different kinds of knowledge stands in stark contrast to later orientalists' methods of building textual authority. This does not mean that textual authority was not a concern at all at this point. Rather, Fraser was keen to set his readers' minds at ease and appended a detailed account of his undertaking:

[98] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* p.vi
[99] R. Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia, 2000), p.288

> ... to satisfy my Readers what Pains I have been at not to impose upon them, and what Opportunities I have had of being informed, I beg leave to present them with a short Account of the following Sheets.[100]

Five Mughal-era Persian histories from Fraser's own collection provided the necessary background for readers. In addition, Fraser had obtained a Persian manuscript from Richard Mead, who in turn had received it from Humfries Cole, then chief of the East India Company's factory at Patna.[101] The accuracy of this manuscript was established by Fraser himself, by the simple expedient of comparing it with his own knowledge of India, which he had accumulated over more than a decade. Moreover, Fraser considered himself to be well-informed about Nādir Shāh's invasion of India due to having held a 'constant Correspondence with some Persians and Moghols' in India.[102] A 'Gentleman' (it is not made clear whether he was a Persian, Indian or European) 'who resided several years in Persia, speaks that Language, and has been frequently in Company with that Conqueror' provided a first-hand account of Nādir Shāh's early years. Finally, another manuscript containing records of Nādir Shāh's activities in India were conveyed from Delhi to Fraser via Fraser's 'intimate friend' in Ahmedabad.[103]

Thus, seven separate manuscript sources, personal experience, an account from an unnamed gentleman in London, probably transmitted orally, as well as correspondence with Persian emigres and Mughal subjects in India provided the contents of Fraser's *History*. While Fraser felt the need to establish the authority of Cole's manuscript, in the case of the information he had gleaned through correspondence with his friend, his personal relationship eliminated the need for any such checks. In some ways, Fraser's approach resembled that of the established conventions employed by travellers, as he

[100] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* p.iii
[101] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* p.iv
[102] Ibid.
[103] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* pp.iii-v.

mixed personal experience with correspondence and a formal interview, and the oral and the textual. More importantly, Fraser clearly felt no obligation to work from a single source. In contrast, later translations of Persian material tended to be focused on single manuscripts considered to be complete works, and were more consciously modelled as translations which identified source and target languages as being entirely separate. Travellers' accounts themselves also came to lose authority as scholarly works, as shall be discussed later in this chapter. Fraser's *History*, however, functioned as an original compilation as much as a translation, and in this sense contributed to ongoing projects of historiographical writing about Nādir Shāh.[104]

The rise to power of Nādir Shāh and his subsequent attacks on Mughal domains, has been termed the first 'truly global crisis' by Christopher Bayly.[105] Certainly, western Europe was mesmerised. In addition to James Fraser's version, several other works dealing with Nādir Shāh were compiled and/or translated for circulation in Europe. A French account, as well as Italian, Portuguese, and Dutch renditions of the subject appeared between 1740 and 1742 alone. These travelled back and forth across European languages, as alternative versions of the events were sought and new additions translated quickly.[106] In addition to European trade interests in hitherto Safavid, as well as Mughal, domains being impacted, Nādir Shāh's invasion of Delhi was of interest to many who interpreted it as a signal of imminent Mughal decline – the 'fatal hour' in which an 'adventurer was to have it in his power to exterminate the race of Tamerlane'.[107] Further, as a 'usurper' who

[104] Indeed, Irvine notes that Fraser's use of sources is valuable for it preserves manuscripts which have since been lost: Irvine, 'Note on James Fraser'
[105] Cf. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones,* p.65
[106] J.M., *A Genuine History of Nadir-Cha [...] Together with a particular account of his conquest of the Mogul's country* (trans. from Dutch, 1740); M. de Voulton, *Verdadeira e exacta noticia dos progressos de Thamas Kouli Khan Schach da Persia* (Lisbon, 1740); L'Histoire de Thamas Kouli-Kan "Sophi de Perse" (Amsterdam, 1740); A. de Claustre, Histoire de Thamas Kouli-Kan nouveau roi de Perse, ou, Histoire de la derniére révolution de Perse, arrivée en 1732 (Paris, 1742); Vida de Thamas Kouli-Kan, desde su nacimiento, hasta su entrada triunfante en Hispahan (Madrid, 1741)
[107] J. H. Grose, *A Voyage to the East Indies* (2 vols, London, 1766), ii, pp.vi-vii

had the chance to conquer 'the richest empire of the world', Nādir Shāh came to epitomise eastern tyranny and greed, Mughal decline and the desirability of India, and fascinated European merchants and rulers alike.[108] In the context of William Jones, who translated a Persian account of Nādir into French in 1768, Michael Franklin has written that 'Nadir was a part of a global historical process that would help facilitate Jones's own Indian adventure'.[109] Given the abrupt impetus to orientalism provided by Nādir Shāh's fame, as he brought the 'east' to the notice of a far wider public than before, Franklin's statement can be generalised to include all future orientalists who wrote about India.

Nādir Shāh's ascent thus played an important role in making Indo-Persian historiographical genres more familiar to readers in Britain. The work sowed the seeds of the new orientalism as it came to be practiced in India in the late eighteenth century, especially as Fraser provided a catalogue of some of the works in his collection, inviting interested parties, as it were, to make use of these textual materials.[110] However, as already explained, there was hardly any academic interest in Britain in studying the language at this point, and the Company, too, displayed little interest in patronising scholars. This resulted in a lack of funding, and consequently, it appears that no further translations from Persian were published in Britain for the next two decades.

In 1768, however, the first volume of Alexander Dow's (1735/6-1779) *The History of Hindustan translated from the Persian of Ferishta* and *Tales from the Persian of Inayat Ullah* were published. In the intervening years, the Company's presence and influence in India had rapidly expanded, even as it underwent a series of internal and

[108] Grose, cited above, was a traveller and merchant; see also account of 'the great usurper', Nādir Shāh, in J. Hanway, *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea* (4 vols, London, 1753), i, pp.228-40; ii, pp.26-32
[109] Franklin, p.65
[110] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* pp.1-40 [This is appended to the *History*]

external crises.[111] In 1764, following the British victory at Buxar, the Company gained control in Bengal and won the rights to revenue collection in the region. In the years that followed, the Company began to gradually encourage the study of Persian amongst its junior servants, offering rewards and promotions to those who acquired the language.[112] Promoting the study of Persian was not simply the result of recent victories: there was no reason why military success should yield more responsible or interested attitudes. Rather, it was the result of the tenuous position in which the Company was prone to find itself. In 1766, rebellions in the Company's armies led to the articulation of a racialized discourse, and recommendations that European officers qualify themselves sufficiently (by learning Persian and other Indian languages) to lead regiments. These arguments were couched in the language of discipline and racial superiority. Only if Europeans could portray themselves as knowledgeable and independent, could discipline be effectively enforced.[113] Even so, the measures taken were minimalist, rewarding only those who had managed to attain 'proficiency' – in other words, the efficient management of Company interests – independently in the language.[114]

Dow was one such Scotsman who had learned Persian in India, where he had spent the last eight years in the Company's army in Bengal. On his return to Britain, he attempted to build a career as an author and translator. In his preface to his *History* Dow stated that he had initially learned Persian to 'qualify himself for action, and negotiation in India'.[115] However, he also professed that

[111] N. Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2006), pp.1-34
[112]BL, IOR/E/4/861, 'Persian, Study of, by junior servants to be encouraged and books forwarded; BL, IOR/E/4/863
[113] BL, IOR/E/4/619, fos.162-5, Extracts from General Correspondence with India', Mar. to Nov. 1768
[114] BL, IOR/E/4/863; BL, IOR/E/4/861
[115] A. Dow, *The History of Hindostan translated from the Persian of Ferishta* (2 vols, London, 1768), pp.i-iv

> as he advanced in his studies, other motives for his continuing them arose. He found, that however different the manner of the eastern writers may be from the correct taste of Europe, there are many things in their works worthy of the attention of literary men.[116]

Dow's representation of his labours thus marked a moment of transition, as the imperatives of colonial 'action' were fused with those of literary interests to produce a new kind of orientalism. As a result, the description of his learning also indicated a kind of hybridity. While Dow's liberties with the structure and content of both the *Tales* and the *History* suggest that his representation of his motives and labours may not have been accurate, they nevertheless represent an ideal type.[117] Although his professed motives for learning were pragmatic, Dow's studies were pursued, in a gentlemanly fashion, during his 'leisure hours', and he did not specify which 'teachers' first put the *History* 'into the translator's hands'.[118] In this sense, Dow was the first of the literary men affiliated with the East India Company, emphasizing the aesthetic (rather than purely informative) value of his work. Such a category had not been available to Fraser twenty-six years earlier, who did not seem to have had recourse to this type, and had instead vaguely referred to the public's interest in 'works of this nature'.[119] Arguably Fraser had contributed to the construction of a specific genre which came to fruition in Dow's work.

The changes involved in the crafting of the figure of the literary orientalist are even more apparent in the second edition of Dow's translation of the *History,* issued only two years later in 1770. In the preface to the second edition, references to Dow's military career in India were erased, and replaced instead with a philosophical reflection on contemporary attitudes towards knowledge.[120] This was not merely a stylistic change, but

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[116] Ibid.
[117] Ballaster, *Fables of the East,* pp.49-51
[118] Dow, *History of Hindostan,* pp.i-iv
[119] Fraser, *History of Nadir Shah,* p.i
[120] Compare Dow, *History of Hindostan,* pp.i-iv (cited above) with: A. Dow, *The History of Hindostan translated from the Persian of Ferishta* (3 vols, London, 1772), p.i-iii

a consistent strategy: later in his preface, Dow also removed 'action' in India as an imperative for learning Persian, underlining only his scholarly and literary interest in the language. In other words, the study of Persian as a serious academic and aesthetic pursuit was taking form in Britain, as individuals such as Dow consciously attempted to project themselves as men of letters rather than men of 'action'. After the publication of the first edition of the *History*, Dow also wrote two plays, *Zingis* (1769) and *Sethona* (1774) which were performed in theatres in London.[121] Partly, this was due to the rising popularity of pseudo-oriental fiction in Britain, which allowed orientalists to capitalise on their purportedly authentic knowledge of Asia.[122] Such literary orientalists differed from their scholarly and mercantile predecessors in that they privileged the aesthetic value of Persian texts, and their appeal to refined readers. A combination of gentlemanly scholarship and aesthetic ideals was emphasized, resulting in a focus on poetic, historical and fictive works which were seen to reflect the 'manners' of nations. This was reflected in the first edition of John Richardson's (1740/1-95) Persian dictionary and **'**Dissertation on the Languages, Literature, and Manners of Eastern Nations', published in 1777. Not yet having been to India, or any other Persianate region for that matter, Richardson was also keen to iterate the primacy of scholarship over experience. He argued that compared with travel, the study of languages and literature provided a superior understanding of different cultures.[123] This

[121] These met with mixed success: *The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal,* 50 (March, 1774), pp.202-5; *The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal,* 40 (January, 1769), pp.50-4

[122] Dow emphasized his scholarly credentials in these publications. See: A. Dow, *Zingis. A Tragedy* (London, 1769), front-matter. There is a substantial literature on pseudo-oriental genres in Britain. For discussions, see: Ballaster, *Fabulous orients;* S. Aravamudan, *Enlightenment Orientalism: Resisting the Rise of the Novel* (Chicago, 2012)

[123] J. Richardson, *A Dictionary, Persian, Arabic, and English* (London, 1777), pp.330-331. In 1782, Richardson appealed to the Company to allow him to go to Bengal so he could continue his linguistic work, but did not leave until the 1790s. See: IOR/E/1/70 ff. 216-217v : Letter 109 'Memorial from John Richardson to the Court outlining the necessity of his proceeding to Bengal to perfect the second edition of his Persian dictionary, 2 Apr 1782'; P. J. Marshall, 'Richardson, John [styled Sir John Richardson, ninth baronet] (1740/41–1795)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004)]

signalled a radical shift in authority: practical experience now played second fiddle to knowledge gained through textual scholarship or as a gentlemanly pursuit.

This epistemic shift meant that the relative authority of different kinds of texts and the strategies employed to produce authoritative translations, also underwent fundamental transformations. Rather than the mixture of oral and manuscript resources harnessed by Fraser in his *History of Nadir Shah,* Dow's generation focused on the translation of individual texts by single authors. In 1768, the rising orientalist, William Jones, also produced a French version of the events surrounding Nādir Shāh's rise to power. Although Jones' introduction was based on multiple sources, the translation itself was based on Mirzā Mahdī 'Alī Ḵẖān Astārābādī's (fl.1729-59) Persian *Ta'rīḵẖ-i Nādirī* (ca. 1757-8). Further, Muḥammad Qāsim Hindū Shāh "Firishta" (the author of Dow's translation) and Astārābādī both occupied formal positions as official court historiographers, unlike Fraser's correspondents. While Astārābādī was the chief *munshī* of Nādir Shāh's court, Firishta (1560-1620) had been in the service of Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh II of Bijapur. Vinay Dharwadker has suggested that British orientalists during this period treated non-European writing in much the same way as they did European literature.[124] In the sense of pursuing an 'author-oriented' strategy by focusing on texts by single authors, this certainly seems to have been the case. As Marcus Walsh has argued in the context of editing practices relating to English texts, the perceived task of eighteenth-century scholars was to retrieve a single authorial voice from his/her writing.[125] This was also increasingly reflected in orientalists' engagement with Persian texts. It is well-established that British conceptions of 'literature' and attitudes towards authorship underwent dramatic changes in the second half of the

[124] V. Dharwadker, 'Orientalism and the Study of Indian Literatures' in Breckenridge and van der Veer (ed.) *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, pp.158-85

[125] M. Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and eighteenth-century literary editing: the beginnings of interpretative scholarship* (Cambridge, 1997), p.29

eighteenth century, as the conception of literature as an aesthetic product of autonomous individual endeavour emerged strongly.[126] Emphasis was directed towards the author, and in the case of translation or editing, on the retrieval of individual voices.[127] As a result, the focus now shifted to single Persian 'works' by individuals serving in formal scholarly capacities, rather than the more fuzzy genre embodied by Fraser's amalgam of textual and oral sources.

In being acknowledged as belonging to the domain of literature, Persian also began to be taken seriously by the traditional orientalists described earlier. Part of the reason for this was that such scholars were influenced by the rising category of literature, and thus increasingly interested in studying (oriental) literary styles to historicize the language and meaning of ancient works.[128] In practice, this meant that academic techniques, such as etymological and comparative approaches to language and literary texts, were now ideally to be applied to Persian works as well. This return to the academy was best exemplified by William Jones, particularly in the writings and translations he produced before his departure for India in 1780.[129] Unlike his counterparts who had learned Persian abroad, Jones promoted the use of the seventeenth-century aids which had long fallen out of use. He also advocated the use of learning techniques recommended by the 'old rhetoricians' (i.e. the classical writers), such as the practice of double translation.[130] In 1770, Jones lent his support to a project for printing a new edition of Franciszek Meninski's Arabic-Persian-Turkish-Latin thesaurus which was now out of print. This work had been originally

[126] Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton,* pp.6-51; A. Bennett, *The Author* (Abingdon, 2004) pp.31-59; T. Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford, 1990), pp.64-5
[127] Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton,* pp.6-51
[128] A. David, Sir William Jones, Biblical Orientalism and Indian Scholarship', *MAS,* 30/1 (2008), pp.173-84
[129] Ibid.
[130] Jones, *GPL*, pp.xv-xvi. Double-translation was translating an author's work into the translator's native language, and then (after a period of time had elapsed) back again into the target language. According to Jones, this technique developed the capacity to imitate the different styles of various authors.

published in 1680, and Meninski had copied the Persian sections of his work from Golius's even older lexicon.[131] Seeking patronage from the Company, the new edition of Meninski was to be a collaborative undertaking involving Jones, John Richardson and John Uri (fl.1770-87), two other 'academic' orientalists' based in England.[132] Although the project was never completed as it was originally intended, it signalled the resurgence of seventeenth-century 'classical' Latinate approaches to Persian, hitherto regarded only as the language of commerce and action abroad. Jones' own classical education informed his approach, and he promoted the study of Persian by comparing the language with Greek and Latin in several of his early essays.[133] In the context of the eighteenth century, when neo-classical literary works in English were in vogue, the association of classical methods with Persian led to its characterization as a language which was not only worthy of scholarship, but had significant literary value.

This generated fresh tensions. Even as Persian finally came to be regarded as a language fit for attention, it required funding. The East India Company was the obvious choice for those seeking patronage; however, it was neither practical nor cheap to print a work as voluminous as Meninski's dictionary. At the same time, having entered the domain of university-based scholarship, challenging the work of an established scholar was no easy task, since it was assumed that correcting and updating Meninski's work threatened the

[131] Golius died in 1667, but his work was posthumously printed by Edmund Castell in 1669. For this reason, this work is also often referred to as 'Castell's dictionary'.

[132] BL, MS Eur G37/17/66, 'A proposal to print a new and more useful Oriental Dictionary'. At this point, Richardson had not visited India either. John Uri (d.1796) was a Hungarian orientalist working on the oriental collections at the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and had been educated in Leiden. His involvement in the project reflect Jones' place in networks of traditional academic orientalism.

[133] W. Jones, *Poems, Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages* (Oxford, 1772), pp.vi, 195-6. Despite comparing Persian with Greek and Latin, Jones is not clear about how to fit Persian into this Eurocentric schema. In one instance, he drew a parallel between Persian and Greek, and Latin and Turkish, but in the same essay he compared Arabic to the Greek and Persian as the younger, Latin-like counterpart. See also his Latin writings on 'eastern' poetry: W. Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticæ commentariorum libri sex* (London, 1774)

latter's stature.[134] Due to a lack of funding, Jones and Uri soon abandoned the project, and the dictionary appeared seven years later due to the efforts of Richardson, who alone had remained committed to the scheme.[135]

Richardson's dictionary was geared almost exclusively to the requirements of the East India Company, and met with hostility from several scholarly quarters on account of his supposedly disrespectful criticisms of Meninski. Richardson's dictionary dispensed with the Turkish section of Meninksi's work altogether, and expanded the scope of the Persian dictionary by adding words from other sources. Not only did this decrease the cost of the publication, it was also far more portable, and thus suit the needs of the growing number of Company employees traveling to India. Moreover, Richardson claimed (and was among the first to do so) that Meninski had been 'from his situation and employment more immediately connected with the Turks than with any other of the eastern nations.'[136] Consequently, Richardson argued, the Persian parts of Meninski's work were 'far from being so compleat as could be wished' and were not suitable for the Indian context.[137] Finally, the dictionary was to be in English, rather than Latin, so that it could be 'useful to every trader'.[138] These alterations, together with Richardson's rather erratic decision to transliterate according to the 'Hindustani' pronunciation wherever possible, and to adhere to Meninski's system in other instances, caused much controversy. Dr. Gregory Sharpe (1713-71), a senior Hebrew scholar at Oxford, berated Richardson:

> Your account of the project for a Persic Dictionary very much surprized me. It is impossible to be completely master of the Persic without a good knowledge of the Arabic and some acquaintance with

[134]BL, IOR/E/1/54 fos.209-11, 220, G. Sharpe to J. Richardson, Sep. 1770, and W. Crichton to P. Mitchell, Secy. to EIC, Oct. 1770
[135] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones* p.67
[136] MS G37/17/66
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid. Indeed, Richardson suggested that Latin was not suitable even for educated classes: 'Gentlemen of good education, the Latin is not always so familiar as to serve for the explanatory language.'

> the Turkish. The best orientalists have derived their skill in those languages from Meninski […] and nothing can be more impudent or ignorant than to decry Meninski.[139]

Only after William Jones had lent his support to the project could Sharpe rest any confidence in it.[140] Similarly, another scholar, William Crichton advised the Company against patronising a dictionary which left out Turkish and Arabic words.[141] Admitting that Meninski's work focused on Turkish, Crichton argued that 'such is the connection between the Turkish, Persic and Arabic' that Persian could not be learned without studying Turkish and Arabic. Hence, against the charge that Meninksi's work was inadequate (as Richardson had implied), Crichton wrote, 'Meninski's work answers completely to its title which is "Turcico Arabico Persicum", a title that a man of his great learning and modesty would not have given to his work had it not been a complete dictionary of all the three languages.'[142] Notwithstanding the disapproval of contemporary and later scholars, Richardson's dictionary was printed under the patronage of the East India Company in 1777, and became one of the most popular learning aids for Company servants in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, running into several print editions.[143] Richardson's position in regard to the Persian's status as an independent language is important for understanding the changing linguistic geographies within which the colonial state saw Persian. While he removed the Turkish segments of the dictionary, he retained the Arabic, and also broadly followed Meninski's format throughout the work.[144] However, the most radical change

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[139] BL, IOR/E/1/54, fo.209
[140] Ibid.
[141] IOR/E/1/54, fos.210-11
[142] BL, E/1/54, William Crichton to Peter Michell, Secy. to the EIC, 3 Oct 1770. Crichton claimed that the fact that 'all the gentlemen in the Company's service who are desirous of attaining a knowledge of the Persic' preferred Meninski to Angelo's dictionary which 'is of the Persian only' was due to the inclusion of Arabic and Turkish. However, the key difference actually lay in the fact that Father Angelo's older outdated dictionary translated Persian into Latin, French and Italian, making its bulk even more impractical.
[143] J. Richardson, *A Vocabulary Persian, Arabic, and English,* ed. C. Wilkins (London, 1810); F. Johnson, *A Dictionary, Persian, Arabic and English* (London, 1852)
[144] Richardson, *Dictionary*

made was in the reversal of the directionality of the dictionary. While Meninski's work was arranged alphabetically from Latin to Persian, Arabic and Turkish, Richardson's dictionary was arranged according to the Persian alphabet.[145] This reversal revealed the shift in emphasis from Persian as a language of communication, useful for translating letters and texts from European languages, to one which privileged the parsing and glossing of Persian works by orientalist scholars. While a user of Meninski's dictionary did not even need to have a knowledge of the Persian script, it was a prerequisite for readers of Richardson's work.

Thus, on the one hand, pragmatism and the requirement of patronage demanded that Persian should be learned in such a way as to be of service in India. On the other, such methods faced criticism of traditional orientalists who now expressed an interest in learning Persian and were primarily interested in accessing texts in that language, rather than communicating. In either case, it was now expected that learning should follow a systematic course, marked by an increased emphasis on textual sources. As Persian was brought into the ambit of traditional orientalism as practiced in Britain, the marks of its acquisition though 'unlearned' experiences needed to be erased. In attempting to accommodate Persian texts into the ambit of 'literature', the relationship between orality and practice, on the one hand, and traditional orientalist techniques which centred on texts and textual comparison, was reconfigured. As the next section will show, this had significant ramifications on orientalist practices in the colony. Since practical, or experience-based, learning no longer carried the same weight as that cultivated through apparently systematic scholarship focused on texts (ideally by single authors), the contexts in which learning or engagement took place had to be altered. From 1773, when British orientalists began to arrive in India

[145] See F. Meninski, *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium* (Vienna, 1680)

in greater numbers, a new form of colonialism, built on the accommodation of scholarly and literary methods, as well as practical researches in India, emerged.

4. Orientalists Abroad: the making of colonial methods, 1773-1784

In 1804, the Reverend Claudius Buchanan (1766-1815), Vice Provost of the College of Fort William in Calcutta, offered a prize of sixty pounds for a poem in English, 'On the Restoration of Learning in the East'.[146] Open to the University of Cambridge, the prize was won by Charles Grant (1778-1866) for a poem which charted the decline of Indian civilization (brought about by Muslim invasions) and its subsequent revival by the British empire. Arranged in the form of an epic, Grant's verses exhibited a pantheon of British orientalist scholars which crossed two generations of Company employees. Led by William Jones (d.1794), most of these men were also members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. In addition to 'accomplish'd Jones', the scholar-administrators mentioned by Grant included Charles Wilkins (1749-1836, a Writer for the Company and acclaimed translator of the *Bhagavat-Gītā*), Jonathan Scott (1754-1829, army officer in the Carnatac and translator of numerous Persian histories), John Shore (1751-1834, orientalist and governor-general of India, 1793-7), and Colin Mackenzie (1754-1821, Surveyor General of India, 1810-1817).[147] Another entry for the competition which received the judges' approval, by the Reverend Francis Wrangham (1769-1842), also pivoted on the figure of William Jones, 'the mind of ages in a single breast'.[148] In 1804, John Shore, the ex-Governor General of Bengal, had compiled and published *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Correspondence of Sir William Jones*, paying homage to Jones as a linguist, poet and

[146] C. Grant and F. Wrangham, *A Poem on the Restoration of Learning in the East* (Cambridge, 1805), front-matter
[147] Grant and Wrangham, *A Poem,* pp.19-25
[148] Grant and Wrangham, *A Poem,* p.10

judge.[149] By 1806, the first volume of the journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Asiatic Researches*, had reached its fifth edition in print.[150] In effect, a canon of orientalists was in the process of being constructed, and excluded from it were most of the orientalists discussed so far in this chapter, as both traditional orientalists confined to British universities as well as Company employees such as Alexander Dow and James Fraser were ignored. As this section will show, the construction of the colonial orientalist as a 'man of letters' as well as action occurred during this period, premised on a specific set of methods and framework of authority. While the role of Indian informants, particularly *munshī*s, *pandit*s and *maulawī*s in different projects is well-known, the oral contexts in which Europeans formally encountered Persian literature and language were far more extensive.[151] Many of these contexts, however, were rejected in scholarly productions. Placing language learning and textual production in this wider setting is crucial to an understanding of how Indian authority and oral contexts were regulated, textualized, and ultimately subjugated to British individuals and their methods.

Following the 1773 Act, Warren Hastings' (1732-1818, governor-general from 1772-85) policies to centralize Company power in Calcutta were accompanied by the 'creation of a supra-local authority in the form of a strong judiciary'.[152] This resulted in a new cohort of Company officials arriving in India. Tasked with administering justice to the Company's new subjects, these men played active roles in codifying Indian laws for usage by the Company's courts. Many were qualified as lawyers and magistrates, and the majority shared educational backgrounds with the traditional orientalists and academics.

[149] J. Shore, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Correspondence of Sir William Jones* (London, 1804). For a reading of this: Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* pp.99-100.
[150] The Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Asiatic Researches,* 5th edn (London, 1806), i
[151] E.g. Wagoner, 'Pre-colonial Intellectuals', Gallien, 'From tension to cooperation'; Bhattacharya-Panda, *Appropriation and Invention*; Irschick, *Dialogue and history.*
[152] Bhattacharya-Panda, *Appropriation and Invention of Tradition*, p.83

Accordingly, these scholar-administrators brought with them the methodological baggage of British academia discussed in the previous section, including a resistance to what they saw as unsystematic learning. The orientalist engagement with Indian 'laws' and 'customs' has been the subject of much discussion. The extent to which the Company constructed, altered or fixed South Asian legal practices and texts is a topic which is still hotly debated.[153] In this section, however, the focus will be on the emergence of a new orientalist methodology in the colony, which drew on its multifaceted heritage in Europe and India to produce a new configuration of textual authority. Central to the production of authoritative texts were a variety of oral sources and settings. Situating the British engagement and production of orientalist texts during this period requires an understanding of how alternative sources – such as these oral contexts - were eliminated or regulated in the process. However, because these aspects of knowledge production were often erased from the final product, this section draws on a range of scattered evidence to build a more complete picture of the orientalist engagement with Persian. It is argued that the practical and social settings of the colonial engagement with Persian in India were reframed to align with the scholarly ideals of the colonial orientalists who arrived in India during this period.

It is well-known that orientalists in India who were engaged in the editing and/or translation of a range of texts worked closely with the aid of native informants. For religious knowledge, Hindu *pandit*s were relied upon, whereas those scholars who were interested in Islam looked to *maulawī*s for help. In the context of works which were of historical or literary interest, however, informants were usually referred to as *munshī*s, a group discussed further in the following two chapters. Such interlocutors played a vital role in the production of colonial knowledge. They did not just help to translate, edit or interpret texts,

[153] For e.g. Bhattacharya-Panda, *Appropriation and Invention of Tradition*; Dirks, *Castes of Mind;* N. Peabody, Cents, sense, census: human inventories in late precolonial and early colonial India, *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 43/4 (2001), pp.819-50

but became central to basic language acquisition, and functioned as cultural mediators as they helped to understand the reception of literary styles and works amongst the Indian literati. In his advice to students of Persian, William Jones recommended, reading an 'elegant history or poem with an intelligent native, who will explain to him in common words the refined expressions that occur in reading, and will point out the beauties of learned allusions and local images.'[154] At the same time, as Claire Gallien has suggested, 'Indian priests or teachers function as signs of authenticity skilfully and sparsely sprinkled throughout the discourse of orientalist researchers.'[155] This certainly seems to have been the case; however, Gallien stops short of discussing the implications of such strategies, returning instead to the fact that relations between orientalists and Indian scholars reflected 'conviviality and even friendship.'[156] In essence, for orientalists in India, references to 'intelligent' or 'learned' Indian assistants represented an acceptable and desirable way in which orality could be embedded into texts for consumption by readers. No longer viewed as a mundane necessity, the figure of the informant became a symbol which validated and authenticated the foreign text. Even as the oral entered the texts, it was policed, corrected and, as the next chapter will emphasize, often silenced, as colonial editors strove to remove the errors and extravagances of their (nevertheless) 'intelligent' interlocutors.

In addition to the practice of individual study with one or more Indian teachers, however, Britons also encountered Persian texts in other oral contexts. Such settings included performances which incorporated singing, dancing and theatrical elements, as well as *mushā'ara*s and *majālis* (poetic assemblies and other gatherings, respectively). Although few colonial officials recorded in detail the language or content of literary performances they witnessed, there is sufficient evidence to prove that Persian-language

[154] Jones, *GPL,* pp.xix-xx
[155] Gallien, 'From Tension to Co-operation', pp.236-49
[156] Ibid.

texts were encountered in such performative contexts. In his work on *European and Indo-European Poets in Urdu and Persian,* Ram Babu Saksena suggests that some Europeans, including John Baillie (1772-1833) and John Shore, composed poetry in Persian and Urdu in the late eighteenth century.[157] Such activity would have entailed involvement in poetic circles.

A particularly complex example of the contexts of Persianate gatherings in which Britons took part is provided in an unexplored text entitled *Mir'āt al-Majālis* ('The Mirror of Assemblies', 1789). It documents some of the meetings of a group of twelve Europeans and ten Indians who began to meet at the Freemason Lodge in Madras. That these meetings happened in the Freemason Lodge was of significance, and often mentioned, although it was not made clear whether any or all of its members were themselves Freemasons.[158] This was an amateur *mushā'ara*, aimed at refining conversation in Persian and developing the ability to express themselves eloquently in prose and verse. This is clear from the rules laid down for meetings, in which it was stated that any member who used English during the assembly would be subjected to a fine of one rupee. Members were to gather at the Lodge every Monday and read and discuss Persian poetry and prose (*naẓm o naṣr*) which they had prepared to the rest of the group. In addition to practicing the art of recitation, it appears that good handwriting was also a focus of attention, since it was mandatory to copy out the verses for each meeting.[159] Part European-style club, and part *mushā'ara*, the group stressed the usage of polite forms of address and composition, and collected some of its

[157] R. B. Saksena, *European and Indo-European Poets in Urdu and Persian* (Calcutta, 1941)
[158] This is not spelled out explicitly in the text, but is implied in the 'discourse' of Captain 'Diram': CUL, MS Add. 2773, fos.7-8v. Masonic lodges and associations did play an important role in building imperial communities as they helped Britons to adapt to unfamiliar circumstances by providing material as well as emotional help to their 'brethren' in the colonies. Establishing a club where members could hone their skills in Persian was one way in which Masons could have extended such support: J. Harland-Jacobs, '"Hands across the Sea": The Masonic Network, British Imperialism, and the North Atlantic World', *The Geographical Review*, 89/2 (1999), pp.237-53
[159] Ibid. Neglect to do so was punishable by yet another fine of one gold piece.

early proceedings in the format of a *taẕkira*. The interactive club was founded on the premise of friendship, as speakers constantly addressed their listeners as '*dostān*'(friends). At the same time, there was a clear division between the Indian members of the group, here referred to as *munshīyān* (pl. of *munshī*), and the *ṣāḥibān wilāyat* (Europeans). Thus, the fact that Britons took part in such gatherings and interacted with Indians to a greater extent than would be the case later, should not be taken as a sign of a 'golden age' of good relations. Rather, as Naomi Tadmor has noted, the concept of 'service' was central to eighteenth-century British notions of 'friendship', which was a relationship that was capable of simultaneously being 'equal and hierarchical'.[160] The oral contexts in which Persian was encountered by colonial officials were therefore complex and varied, and not easily reduced to moments of simple harmony or 'conviviality'.[161]

In the 1790s, a fad for Persian and Hindustani songs and music swept colonial society.[162] Although this was later than the period under discussion, the fad represented the entry and Anglicization of such performance forms in domestic British spaces such as homes and private parties. Beyond these spaces, Britons (particularly men) would have encountered Persian oral and visual performances even earlier. Bartholomew Burges (fl.1789-90) *Series of Indostan Letters*, published in 1790, recounted his experiences of not only watching enactments of 'comic operas' and hearing tales from story-tellers, but also of listening to histories being read aloud to him.[163] Burges, too, took lessons from a *munshī*, Saiyid 'Alī K̲h̲ān, during his time in India, who instructed him in Persian. Such experiences were not only a means of encountering Persian texts, but also furnished modes of

[160] N. Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 2001), pp.213-44
[161] Gallien, 'From Tension to Cooperation', p.249; see also W. Dalrymple, *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth-Century India* (London, 2012), which has been criticized for assuming an easy intimacy in private relations between Britons and Indians during the late eighteenth century.
[162] For a study of colonial society's interest in music: I. Woodfield, *Music of the Raj: A Social and Economic History of Music in Late Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Indian Society* (New York, 2000)
[163] B. W. Burges, *A Series of Indostan Letters* (New York, 1790), p.13, pp.36-8

understanding them. William Jones, who certainly privileged texts over oral sources, still found it useful and pleasurable to read the lengthy *Shāh-nāma* ('Book of Kings', by Abū'l Qāsim Firdausī', c.940-1020, and often performed in India) aloud 'from the beginning to the end.'[164]

Joseph Champion (c.1750-1813), who published a translation of the *Shāh-nāma* in a collection entitled *The Poems of Ferdosi* in 1785 provides another instance in which the *Shāh-nāma* was accessed orally by a British orientalist. Champion was a Bengal writer who began his career with the Company in Sumatra. He was then posted in Calcutta from 1778 to 1791: it was during these years that that he started the project of translating episodes from the *Shāh-nāma*. Like many of his contemporaries, Champion accessed Firdausī's works and learnt Persian while stationed in the Company's offices in India. In his preface, Champion explained that these verses were to serve as an introduction to the works of Firdausī, as he intended to publish the story of 'Rustem and Sohrab' in the future.[165] Champion was rumoured to have based his translation entirely on performances by minstrels, 'public singers and dancers'.[166] However, Champion's methods did not arouse any disparaging comments at the time that the work was published. Several individuals subscribed to his publication, and Champion was confident enough to present a copy to George Macartney (1737-1806), who was then Governor of Madras. Later, however, his translation generated largely negative responses, as it was considered to be lacking in

[164] 'W. Jones to R. Johnson' Jan 1789, in W. Jones, *The Letters of Sir William Jones,* ed. and trans. G. H. Cannon (2 vols, Oxford, 1970), ii, p.827. For orality in eighteenth-century Britain: J. George, 'Public Reading and Lyric Pleasure: Eighteenth Century Elocutionary Debates and Poetic Practices', *ELH*, 76/2 (2000), pp.371-397

[165] J. Champion, *The Poems of Ferdosi* (London, 1788), pp.13-14. This project was never completed, as Champion suffered from a nervous breakdown: A. Karimi-Hakkak and E. Whelan, 'Joseph Champion', *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* V/4 (London, 1991), pp.361-362

[166] 'Letter to the Editor from Gul-Chin', *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India*, IX/51 (1820), pp.233-4. Gulchin was the nom de plume adopted by James Ross.

scholarship.[167] As a result, he remained a marginal figure amongst orientalists, and never attained the scholarly status that other colonial translators in India managed to obtain.

These examples indicate the range of forms which linguistic and literary study continued to take during this period. However, the oral and performative aspects of British interactions with Persian texts were not always apparent or articulated in print. The increasing theoretical emphasis on retrieving the authorial meaning of textual sources led orientalist scholars to suppress information about encountering oral versions of poetry and Indian interpreters, and narrate instead processes of manuscript acquisition and verification in order to prove to their readers their fidelity to the original.[168] Since classical and ancient texts were the main object of orientalist endeavour, informed as it was by notions of Indian decline and the desire to retrieve ancient truths, this meant that oral sources were, if nothing else, too modern and corrupted to access the original authorial meaning and intention. Although Indian informants served as markers of authenticity in the context of purportedly unchanging legal or religious texts (usually the two were conflated), such mediators did not often feature in orientalist readings or renditions of literary works.

The proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal provide an excellent insight into the ways in which different kinds of knowledge and texts were incorporated and transformed into categories fit for scholars. First, there was the obvious matter of allowing Indians to contribute to the Society's researches as members. A vote was taken to resolve this question, and answered in the negative. Until 1829, there were no Indian members of

[167] Although this was Champion's first publication, and he was not an established scholar of Persian, it appears that his work was reasonably well circulated and advertised among the British community in Calcutta: seventy-three subscribers in India are listed in the volume, some of whom (like Warren Hastings) requested several copies of the work: Champion, *The Poems of Ferdosi,* front-matter.
[168] For e.g. Champion, *The Poems of Ferdosi;* F. Balfour, 'Preface' in H. Multānī, *The Forms of Herkern, Corrected from a Variety of Manuscripts,* trans. and ed. F. Balfour (Calcutta, 1781), pp.1-7; S. Sulivan, 'The Preface', in M. Sa'dī , *Select Fables from Gulistān, or Bed of Roses,* trans. and ed. S. Sulivan (London, 1774), pp.iv-v

the Society.[169] As a result, Indian contributions, which were occasionally sent to the Society, had to be mediated and introduced by a European scholar, ensuring that the interests of the Society were determined by British and European attitudes towards India. Second, it was stipulated that the members would not submit 'mere translations of considerable length, except of such unpublished essays or treatises as may be transmitted to us by native authors'.[170] Effectively, Indians were confined to acting as the producers of primary sources for Europeans to gloss and explicate. While central to providing raw information, they were relegated to the peripheries of transforming and interpreting this into knowledge. Even in the presentation of research and judgments based on interviews or conversation, such interactions were not recorded as verbal sources, but presented as observations. In this way, the oral and visual aspects of learning and exchange were reduced to passive image and text, and for material to be taken seriously by orientalist scholars, it had to be communicated (and hence, authorized) by a European.[171]

However, the fact that Britons engaged with Indian socio-cultural modes of textual transmission and performance should not be taken to suggest that texts were interpreted by Britons in exactly the same way as their Indian counterparts. Rather, the significance of these social interactions lies in building a historically accurate picture of the range of scholarly and non-scholarly contexts in which orientalists and amateurs worked. Thus, situating colonial texts in the context of their production can yield important information about the oral foundations of orientalist endeavours at the end of the eighteenth century, while also disturbing the notion of 'modern' colonizers who (successfully, it is often

[169] In 1829, the Sanskritist, H. H. Wilson, advocated for the election of five Indians. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* p.218

[170] The Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Asiatic Researches* (Calcutta, 1788), i, p.xv

[171] S. Turner, 'An Account of an Interview with Teeshoo Lama', in, Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Asiatic Researches,* pp.196-205; W. Hastings, 'On the Trial by Ordeal among the Hindus – by Ali Ibrāhīm Khan, Chief Magistrate at Banares, Communicated by Warren Hastings, Esq.' in, Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Asiatic Researches,* pp.289-404

assumed) adhered to abstract theories of textual study. While the colonial tendency to value textual resources over other forms of knowledge should not be disregarded, the interest in the production of colonial knowledge and orientalist involvement in the codification of Indian 'traditions' has obscured the oral foundations of much of this knowledge. Despite the acknowledgement of the role of Indian collaborators, historiography of the eighteenth century has tended to undermine the extent to which colonial textual production relied on oral interactions as a means of not only translation, but also of accessing and experiencing literary texts. Similarly, although it has been suggested that some Europeans composed poetry in Persian from the eighteenth century onwards, such interactions are seen as being unrelated and opposed to the academic language-learning, reading and translation practices of orientalist scholars.[172] In reality, however, orientalist scholars participated in, employed and were influenced by, a variety of oral social contexts, performances and methods.

5. Conclusion

The British engagement with Persian during the eighteenth century was neither a static, nor intellectually coherent, project. Rather, it underwent several convolutions over this period, and displayed different attitudes towards correct modes of scholarship. Orientalist scholarship as it came to be practiced in India did not spring from a vacuum but had a multifaceted heritage that allowed it to be perceived as scholarly and textual, on the one hand, while also taking on an active, imperialist character in the colony. By textualizing Persian in this way, reviving comparative approaches to the language, and obscuring the socially and orally grounded modes of orientalist production, Persian came to be presented as another one of the 'dead' languages traditionally studied by biblical orientalists in Britain. While Persian was not actually considered to be a dead language (it was called a

[172] For European poets who may have composed in Persian: R. B. Saksena, *European and Indo-European Poets*

'living language'), it was treated as such by scholarly methods.[173] The strategies involved threw into relief the figure of the native informant while also effectively subjugating this figure into a generic category for the authentication of orientalists' texts. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the figure of the *munshī* became the focus of colonial anxieties and doubts regarding knowledge production, and in this sense, was central to the forging of new approaches to languages and grammar between 1785 and 1810.

[173] Kennicott, *A Proposal,* p.13

Chapter 2: Colonial Anxieties and the Institutionalization of Persian Language Learning, c.1785-1815

1. Introduction

This chapter continues with an examination of the colonial engagement with Persian. It focuses on two aspects of this encounter at the turn of the nineteenth century: the teaching of Persian at the Company's colleges, and the way in which the language was treated in grammars and textbooks produced during this period. It is argued that the proliferation of grammars, and the institutionalization of languages at Fort William College (Calcutta, est. 1800) and Haileybury College (Hertfordshire, est. 1801), were strategies developed in response to rising colonial anxieties regarding Indian intermediaries. Such anxieties centred on the figure of the *munshī*, whose loyalty and learning came to be regarded with profound scepticism in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. As the previous chapter mentioned, the *munshī* had come to be synonymous with a teacher of Persian (and sometimes also Hindustani). Toward the end of the eighteenth century, however, the *munshī* became seen as an increasingly undesirable and unreliable figure. The establishment of the East India Company's colleges at Fort William and Haileybury reflected racially framed apprehensions about the corrupting environment of colonial Calcutta, and sought to relocate learning from *munshī*s to institutions which could be monitored by the Company. Concomitantly, Persian grammar textbooks sought to replace, or at least reduce reliance upon, the *munshī* as a language teacher. This resulted in an increased tendency to locate authority in the abstract rules of grammar, and a view of language as an autonomous system. This chapter argues that many of the characteristics of 'linguistic modernity', or the abstract treatment of languages in linguistic thought, emerged as a result of the colonial experience in India. This denoted a departure from previous

approaches to Persian, as orientalist interest in literary texts and information contained in those texts waned and gave way to a linguistic interest in the language instead.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw European scholarly thought regarding language undergo profound changes. During this period, linguistics emerged as a separate discipline. Whereas previously the study of languages had been the means of accessing biblical, historical and ethnological information, scholars during this period positioned language as the object of study, a science in its own right.[1] This shift has been recognized by a number of scholars: most famously, Michel Foucault, who saw the rise of the discipline of linguistics as symptomatic of an epistemic shift to modern frames of thinking.[2] Other theorists, including Mikhail Bakhtin, George Steiner and James Turner, have also viewed this period as transformative in the study of language and the humanities.[3] Key to this shift was the conception of language as an abstract phenomenon, dissociated from its representational function. This was accompanied by the rise of comparative methods focusing on grammar, rather than etymology, as the basis for understanding linguistic structure and development.

The link between colonial encounters and new ways of thinking about language have yet to be elaborated fully. While some scholars have indicated a correlation between developments in European intellectual history and increased contact with foreign languages, the latter have been treated as the raw material to which new theories were simply applied.[4] Others have noted the important role played by Indo-Persian and Sanskrit

[1] Trautmann notes that William Jones' conception of himself was as a 'knower of many languages', rather than one who studied languages for their own sake. In this sense Jones belonged to the generation who saw language as an 'instrument', rather than the 'object' of learning. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* p.40.
[2] Foucault, *The Order of Things,* pp.321-9
[3] Steiner, *After Babel*, pp.80-3; J. Turner, *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities* (Princeton, 2014), pp.71-89; Bakhtin/Voloshinov, 'Critique of Saussurian Linguistics', pp.25-38
[4] E.g. Foucault, *The Order of Things;* Steiner, *After Babel*, pp.80-3; J. Turner, *Philology*; Bakhtin/Voloshinov, 'Critique of Saussurian Linguistics'

philological texts and scholars in enabling European 'discoveries'. This is best exemplified by William Jones' unearthing of the affinity between Persian and Sanskrit using comparative philological in 1786, when in fact this link had already been made by Sirāj al-dīn 'Alī Ḵẖān "Ārzū" (1687-1756) earlier in the eighteenth century.[5] However, the question is not only one of intellectual ownership.[6] Even if we restrict ourselves to a consideration of European linguistic thought, Jones' ideas had already been elaborated by his predecessors, although they had not received much interest.[7] Indeed, Trautmann has convincingly shown that rather than inaugurating a new era of linguistic thought, Jones stood at the end of a much older tradition of Biblical scholarship.[8] Given these continuities, it is worth asking what exactly were the conditions which enabled, as Kinra has termed linguistic advances in the period, the 'Copernican moment of European intellectual modernity'.[9] In his valuable work of synthesizing linguistic and historical concerns, Errington attempts to tackle this problem. He suggests that William Jones' work gathered 'rhetorical force […] as it travelled from India to a European readership.[10] According to Errington, this force was drawn from the linguistic project of asserting colonial authority over subject populations, and the concomitant reification of national identities in imperial metropoles. In this, Errington follows Bernard Cohn, whose work assumes neatly-defined cultural boundaries as well as a well-executed intent on the part of colonial powers, thus leading to the assumption that techniques to control languages and their speakers pre-

[5] R. Kinra, 'This Noble Science: Indo-Persian Comparative Philology, c.1000-1800 CE' in Y. Bronner, W. Cox & L. J. McCrea (eds.) *South Asian texts in history: critical engagements with Sheldon Pollock* (Ann Arbor, 2011), pp.359-85; Dudney, 'A Desire for Meaning'
[6] Kinra, 'This Noble Science', pp.359-85
[7] K. R. Jankowsky, 'Comparative, Historical, and Typological Linguistics since the Eighteenth Century' in K. Allan (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Linguistics*, (Oxford, 2013), pp.636-54. L. Campbell, 'Why Sir William Jones got it all wrong, or Jones' role in how to establish language families', in J. Lakarra et al. (eds.), *Studies in Basque and Historical Linguistics in Memory of R. L. Trask* (Bilbao, 2007) pp.245–64
[8] Trautman, *Aryans and British India,* pp.40-63
[9] Kinra, 'This Noble Science', p.359-85
[10] J. Errington, 'Colonial Linguistics', *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 30/1 (2001), pp.19-39

existed in the colonial mindset.[11] This gives the impression that the experience of colonialism itself effected no changes in European linguistic strategies in the colony over almost four centuries. Instead, as this chapter shows, the orientalist encounter in colonial conditions profoundly influenced European linguistic thought.

Rather than interpreting the emergence of systematic grammars and institutions as the result of a natural, European modernization, or a changeless colonial 'tendency', such changes need to be placed in the context of a specific set of colonial anxieties. In this regard, this chapter is influenced by Jon Wilson's work on British governance in Bengal. Wilson argues that faced with the task of following existing legal practices in India, Britons became increasingly anxious about their ability to interpret and implement customary laws and sought instead abstract legal codes to guide them. It was through this process that many of the characteristics now associated with the modern state emerged, as the East India Company departed from both European and Indian models of rule and began to rule as though their subjects were distant objects.[12] Doubts about the capacity of Indians to act in faithful accordance with 'custom' also led to the removal of Indians from positions of official power.[13]

This alienation is also visible in British approaches to learning Indian languages. Sections One documents British anxieties regarding the intermediary figure of the Persian *munshī*, and the desire to eliminate such middle-men from language-learning. However, this was not entirely possible, partly because of the contradictory stance that ignorant and

[11] J. Errington, *Linguistics in a Colonial World: A Story of Language, Meaning, and Power* (Malden, Massachusetts, 2008), pp.3, 60-8; Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge,* esp. 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', pp.16-56.

[12] Wilson, *The Dominance of Strangers;* this recognition of a distancing of the British community in India from the Indian context also chimes with Daniel White's account of British society in Bengal: D. E. White, *From Little London to Little Bengal: Religion, Print and Modernity in Early British India, 1793-1835* (Baltimore, 2013), pp.4-5

[13] J. E. Wilson, 'Anxieties of Distance: codification in early colonial Bengal', *Modern Intellectual History,* 4/1 (2007), pp.7-23

corrupt native speakers were best qualified to teach languages. Thus, the establishment of the Company's colleges attempted to reconcile these contradictions by providing a space where *munshī*s played a central role in language-learning, but could also be policed within a hierarchical institution. Section Two shows how the same paranoias regarding the unreliability of *munshī*s resulted in the increased production of grammar textbooks and learning aids, which tried to reduce dependence upon Indian teachers. Close readings of these works in Section Three show how, in this environment of alienation and anxiety, increasingly abstract approaches to Persian emerged, cut off from the contexts of its literary and social usage. Where literary texts were used, a small selection of classical works which demonstrated grammatical structure or pronunciation were chosen. Finally, Section Four compares these new colonial attitudes towards Persian with linguistic practices in the metropole, showing that in Britain, at least, older, more 'literary' ways of thinking about language still prevailed. As a result, dealings with Persian texts in Britain and colonial India began to diverge. This chapter argues that intellectual shifts in the early nineteenth century stemmed as responses to colonial anxieties about Persianate intermediaries. Furthermore, it seeks to explain the decline of British interest in Persian literature in the colony in the first quarter of the nineteenth century as a corollary of the new linguistic methodologies, which used grammar, rather than etymology and particular texts, as the basis of orientalist research.

2. 'The folly of confiding in any stranger': *Munshī*s and the East India Company

In 1825, writing a guidebook for colonial officers travelling to India, the linguist and military surgeon, John Gilchrist (1759-41) was keen to caution fresh arrivals of the 'knavery' that awaited them in India, and noted the particularly vulnerable state of young men as they experienced the 'anxiety inseparably attendant on arrival in a country where

everything is new, everything strange…'.[14] In particular, ignorance 'of the language, as well as of the customs' was the greatest disadvantage that adventurers and new Company servants alike faced, as they were prone to be misled by anyone who could communicate with them in English.[15] The narrative sketched by Gilchrist linked moral degeneracy with the unequal balance of power between the naïve Briton and multilingual Indian interpreters, as the victim's path to death was populated by dancing girls and encounters with the police.[16] Such warnings were by no means uncommon, and the dangers of falling in with the wrong company was a familiar topic of discussion in colonial British society. These discussions, rooted as they were in fears about the authenticity of colonial knowledge, inevitably centred on intermediary figures such as interpreters, *munshī*s and Indian officials responsible for discharging duties on behalf of Company employees.

As mentioned earlier, *munshī*s were Persian secretaries who had well-defined roles in Indian courts, and often rose to occupy high-ranking positions as bureaucrats, statesmen and scholars who wielded considerable political and cultural power. *Munshī*s were important participants in the literary life of Indian courts. Their poetical prowess was a vital signifier of their fitness to act as arbiters of correct literary language, occupy high positions as the writers of royal letter and declarations, and also allowed them to display their understanding of mystical knowledge, crucial to their duties as scholar-administrators.[17] The Company's reliance upon such professionals is indubitable, and for much of the eighteenth century, *munshī*s to Company officials remained courtly figures deeply involved

[14] T. Williamson, ed. J. B. Gilchrist, *The General East India Guide and Vade Mecum*, (London, 1825), pp.81-8

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Hanaway and Spooner, 'Persian as Written Koine', in W. L. Hanaway and B. Spooner (eds.), *Literacy in the Persianate world: writing and the social order,* (Philadelphia, 2012), pp.3-52. See p.7, where Spooner and Hanaway explain that *munshī*s 'were among the literati who served as the arbiters of correct usage not only in language, but in all interaction insofar as it was legitimized by textual models. So long as they remained arbiters of correct usage they were also arbiters of the use of writing'.

in local politics.[18] However, following military defeats against the Marathas and in Mysore between 1779 and 1782, as well as the scandals surrounding the rule of Warren Hastings, the Company attempted to effect a 'significant and self-conscious rupture with earlier styles of governance'.[19] Amongst other things, this involved lessening reliance on Indian intermediaries and dismantling the courtly cultures of patronage that had come to be seen as inefficient, corrupt and exploitative during the trial of Warren Hastings.[20] Together with the gradual waning of extensive local patronage (partly accounted for by the Company's own moves to discourage intra-regional political communication during the 1780s), this led to a dwindling of the cultural and political power that *munshī*s could exert.[21] As early as 1781, Murtaẓá Ḥusain Bilgrāmī (d.1795) complained that people of noble birth *(mardumān-i nujābā)* were not promoted above the rank of *munshī* by the British, signalling both the limited prospects of the Persianate literati as well as the changing status associated with the term *munshī*.[22] Another writer, Khim Narāyan "Rind" asserted that from the 1790s, the British were not interested in poetical productions, and were interested only in the study of history (presumably for the purpose of more efficient administration).[23] Thus, within the Company, as a result of growing demands for informants and scribes, coupled with an increasing reluctance to allow non-Europeans to play important political roles, the status of the *munshī* declined from poet-scholar-adminstartor to that of clerk and language-teacher – although as the following paragraphs will discuss, even these positions were treated with considerable suspicion.

[18] Bayly, *Empire and Information,* pp.73-7;
[19] Wilson, *The Domination of Strangers,* pp.46-8
[20] Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire,* pp.9-23
[21] Bayly, *Empire and Information,* pp.73-7
[22] Khan, 'Indian Muslim Perceptions', p.38
[23] Cf. A. F. L. Beeston, *Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindustani and Pushtu Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library: Part III: Additional Manuscripts* (Oxford, 1954), p.8

The trope of the corrupt *munshī* began to emerge in colonial discourse in the late 1770s, and intensified after 1784, with the changes brought in by the Cornwallis administration. From around 1788 onwards, Calcutta gazettes and magazines frequently reported cases of *munshī*s being involved in fraud and other nefarious activities. Ramlochun Moonshee, interpreter to the Company's judges in Calcutta, was convicted of 'licensing and encouraging a gaming house'. Others were described as impersonators who conned Europeans.[24] One such instantece involved Khyroo, who spoke 'the Persian language fluently, and correctly, and has long passed for a moonshy', but robbed British residences, while another adopted the manners of a 'pretended moonshee' but entrapped Europeans in fraudulent commercial ventures.[25] English-language gazettes sought to put readers on their guard by reporting such instances, and also lauded the efficiency of British magistrates in arresting and jailing the culprits.[26] Initially, these crimes were not construed as being particularly Indian phenomena, and indeed, it was remarked that 'swindling […] is conducted with as much ingenuity in this Settlement as in the celebrated metropolis of England.'[27] Petty theft was seen as being inevitable in any city, and reflected the growth in the population of Calcutta during the 1780s as much as Indian criminality. However, since the attention given to *munshī*s in such publications was, for the most part, in the forms of negative reports and incidences of law-breaking, the image of the *munshī* became inevitably suspect, and inseparable from his criminal impersonator.

In this regard, British officials found themselves to be particularly vulnerable in India, where Company servants felt increasingly alienated from their surroundings.[28] This

[24] *Calcutta Gazette; or Oriental Advertiser,* 10/ 256 (Calcutta, 1789), p.70
[25] *Calcutta Chronicle; and General Advertiser*, 3/113, (Calcutta: 1788), p.20; *Calcutta Chronicle and General Advertiser*, 5/219, (Calcutta, 1790), p.23
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Wilson, *Domination of Strangers*, pp.66-9

isolation often manifested itself in a sense of being unnaturally exposed, rather than insulated, as Gilchrist compared the experience to being hunted: 'There is something about a stranger, in that quarter, which instantly announces him to all the predatory tribe'.[29] This sense of anxiety was a relatively new phenomenon amongst Britons in India, and emerged strongly in the 1780s and 1790s.[30] It was partially produced, as Wilson has noted, by a number of overlapping forces including the financial instability of the Company and military defeats in India.[31] Reports, such as those cited above, suggest the unease with which Britons began to view Indian intermediaries. Moreover, impersonation was enabled by the very familiarity of the figure of the *munshī,* easily distinguishable by his ability to speak in a refined language (usually Persian), his clothes and his demeanour. It was this capacity to recognize which came under question and contributed to the sense of isolation and mistrust, since previous knowledge about Indian identities came to be seen as the root of confusion. In other words, such mistakes in identification could only be made where a previous familiarity had been established.

Linked to the moral corruption and propensity for deception that was presumed to be widespread amongst *munshī*s, another cause for doubt stemmed from their perceived ignorance. In the last two decades of the eighteenth century, the idea that Indian scholars possessed little or false knowledge, gained primacy. This was partly linked to the growing influence of Evangelism, especially within Parliament and the upper echelons of the Company.[32] While the missionary bid to proselytize in India was rejected in 1792, the influence of individuals such as Charles Grant and John Shore was strong. Tracts written

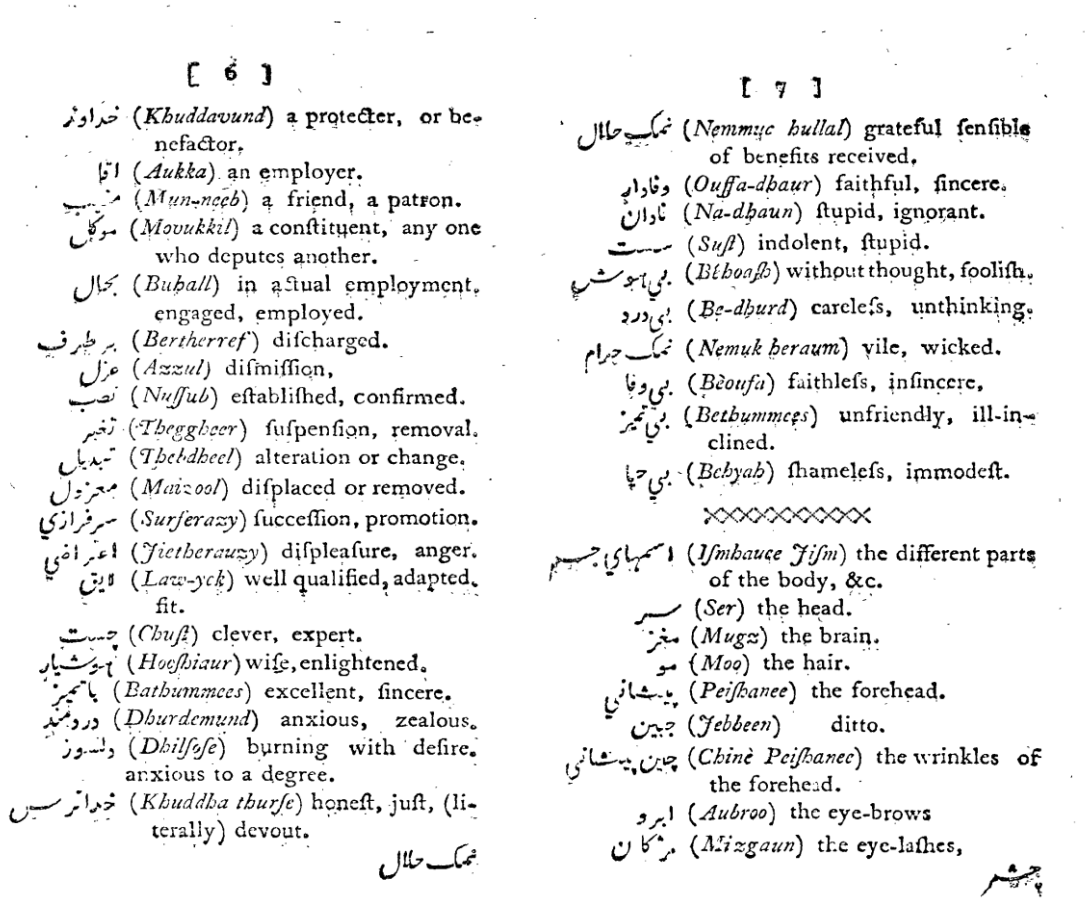
[29] Gilchrist, *East India Vade-Mecum*, p.81
[30] Wilson, *Domination of Strangers,*pp.66-7
[31] Ibid.
[32] C. A. Bayly, 'Orientalists, informants and critics in Banaras, 1790–1860' in J. Malik (ed.) *Perspectives of Mutual Encounter in South Asia,* pp.97-124; Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* pp.99-112; W. J. Glover, 'Objects, Models, and Exemplary Works: Educating Sentiment in Colonial India', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 64/3 (2005), pp.539-66, p.542

by those in favour of missionary activity in India increasingly couched comparisons of European and Indian knowledge in terms of 'obvious truth' versus falsehood or ignorance, and produced an uncomfortable relationship between what were seen as irreconcilable epistemic frameworks.[33] In addition to the Evangelical influence, the growing hold of theories of oriental decline during this period also had a deep impact on colonial officials and policy.[34] The notion that Indian learning was corrupted and in disarray was common. Thus, Francis Balfour (fl.1781-1805), the translator and editor of the *Forms of Herkern* (1781), described the *munshī* as 'poorly instructed in the principles of grammar, and not sufficiently qualified for the task he undertakes.'[35] Balfour's motives for editing and translating the *Forms of Herkern* had been prompted, he explained, by a desire to compensate for 'the defects of Moonshies and Manuscripts'.'[36] Balfour seemed to have missed the irony in the fact that he was editing a work to retrieve the authority of a *munshī* in the first place. Printing 'correct' versions of texts edited from multiple manuscripts, and reducing textual differences, became an important project for orientalist scholars over the next two decades. Many of these standardized texts were used in teaching, and helped to regulate the relationship between British students and their Persian *munshī*s, as they offered 'a proper medium of communication between the Instructor and the Student.'[37]

The extent to which concerns about the character and intelligence of Indian officials and servants affected Company employees in their day-to-day interactions with

[33] E.g. C. Grant, *Observations On the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to Morals* (London, 1797), pp.76-8; Quintin Craufurd, *Sketches Chiefly Relating to the History, Religion, Learning, and Manners, of the Hindoos* (2 vols, London, 1792), i, pp.9-11
[34] Wilson, *Domination of Strangers,* pp.58-69
[35] Balfour, 'Preface' in Multānī, *The Forms of Herkern*, p.3 This well-known work consisted of model letters and was considered to be of much use to officials serving in the Company. Harkaran Dās was active in the early eighteenth century, and died in 1631 AD. Bayly discusses the the value of this work to Company officials. Bayly, *Empire and Information*, p.144, 285
[36] Balfour, 'Preface' in Multānī, *The Forms of Herkern*, p.5
[37] Ibid. For a list of works printed by the Company: G. Shaw, *Printing in Calcutta to 1800; A description and checklist of printing in late 18th-centuy Calcutta* (London, 1981), pp.74-206

Indians is reflected in a Persian grammar produced by Robert Jones (fl.1792). Published in Calcutta for the use of beginners, Jones' *A new Persian and English work* (1792) listed basic Persian words and phrases, arranged according to the context of usage – an arrangement adapted from early modern Indo-Persian lexical traditions, but reduced to a particularly narrow colonial context and accompanying set of expectations.[38]



[6]

خداوند (*Khuddavund*) a protecter, or benefactor.
اقا (*Aukka*) an employer.
منيب (*Munneeb*) a friend, a patron.
موكل (*Mouukkil*) a conſtituent, any one who deputes another.
بحال (*Buhall*) in actual employment, engaged, employed.
برطرف (*Bertherref*) diſcharged.
عزل (*Azzul*) diſmiſſion,
نصب (*Nuſſub*) eſtabliſhed, confirmed.
تغير (*Theggheer*) ſuſpenſion, removal.
تبديل (*Thekdheel*) alteration or change.
معزول (*Maizool*) diſplaced or removed.
سرفرازي (*Surferazy*) ſucceſſion, promotion.
اعتراضي (*Jietherauzy*) diſpleaſure, anger.
لايق (*Law-yck*) well qualified, adapted, fit.
چست (*Chuſt*) clever, expert.
هوشيار (*Hooſhiaur*) wiſe, enlightened.
باتميز (*Bathummees*) excellent, ſincere.
دردمند (*Dhurdemund*) anxious, zealous.
دلسوز (*Dhilſoſe*) burning with deſire, anxious to a degree.
خداترس (*Khuddha thurſe*) honeſt, juſt, (literally) devout.

نمک حلال

[7]

نمک حلال (*Nemmuc hullal*) grateful ſenſible of benefits received.
وفادار (*Ouffa-dhaur*) faithful, ſincere.
نادان (*Na-dhaun*) ſtupid, ignorant.
سست (*Suſt*) indolent, ſtupid.
بيهوش (*Bihoaſh*) without thought, fooliſh.
بيدرد (*Be-dhurd*) careleſs, unthinking.
نمک حرام (*Nemuk heraum*) vile, wicked.
بيوفا (*Bèoufa*) faithleſs, inſincere.
بيتميز (*Bethummees*) unfriendly, ill-inclined.
بيحيا (*Behyah*) ſhameleſs, immodeſt.

اسمهاي جسم (*Iſmhauce Jiſm*) the different parts of the body, &c.
سر (*Ser*) the head.
مغز (*Mugz*) the brain.
مو (*Moo*) the hair.
پيشاني (*Peiſhanee*) the forehead.
جبين (*Jebbeen*) ditto.
چين پيشاني (*Chinè Peiſhanee*) the wrinkles of the forehead.
ابرو (*Aubroo*) the eye-brows
مژگان (*Mizgaun*) the eye-laſhes,

چشم

Fig. 2.1: Robert Jones' *A new Persian and English work, after the method of Boyer and others*, (Calcutta, 1792)

The list included the *munshī*, 'a person superior to a menial servant'.[39] In the section dealing with relations between employers and employees, Jones listed the following terms which he deemed essential to interactions between master and employee:

[38] W. N. Hakala, *Negotiating Languages: Urdu, Hindi, and the Definition of Modern South Asia* (New York, 2016), pp.14-17

[39] R. Jones, *A new Persian and English work, after the method of Boyer and others*, (Calcutta, 1792), p.5

'displeasure; well-qualified; clever; wise; anxious; honest; grateful; faithful; stupid; indolent; without thought; careless; vile; faithless; unfriendly; shameless.'[40]

This register articulated the categories used to classify Indian employees, and indicates the extent to which personal characteristics had become objectified in this context. Indians could either be loyal, zealous, enlightened and grateful servants, or – as writers in English more commonly implied - immoral, lazy and stupid. In either case, the British employer had to be on his guard, and treat employees with suspicion. At the same time, many British officials described positive relationships with their Indian employees. In this context, Wilson has read John Shore's affiliation with his Persian teacher as being comparable to relations of 'obligation and connection' that governed eighteenth-century social life in Britain.[41] However, the employment of complimentary epithets such as 'intelligent' and 'loyal' should not lead us to assume that there was such an easy continuity with earlier norms; rather, the increasingly systematic way in which these terms were deployed should alert us to a different process of objectification. Rather than existing alongside colonial anxieties of alienation, British expressions of Indian intelligence and loyalty were inextricably linked to these frustrations and fears, even as they offered the antidote to them. In this sense, discussions of Indian 'merits' or the existence of close relationships with Indians cannot be separated from anxieties about Indian corruption. Instead, they highlight the fact that judgment and discrimination (issues of trust) were the basis of such relationships.[42]

[40] Jones, *A new Persian and English work*, pp.5-7. I have omitted the English synonyms provided by Jones for each entry but they are provided in the image above.
[41] Wilson, *Domination of Strangers,* p.69
[42] Charles Metcalfe's relationship with his *munshī,* Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn demonstrates how fears of scandal and corruption influenced even very close relationships, built on trust and long association. Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, but here it is sufficient to note that Metcalfe distanced himself from his *munshī* with much guilt after rumours of his corruption began to spread. See Chapter Three.

Fears about the corrupt *munshī*, his capacity to misinform, as well as doubts about the capacity of Europeans to recognize the 'artifices of the lower class of natives' and make judgments about their qualifications, all combined to form a more general anxiety surrounding the figure of the *munshī*.[43] These anxieties also became racialized as a result of British feelings of alienation, as Company officials began to see *munshī*s as embedded in complex networks and relationships inaccessible to Europeans. In 1797, John Murray (1768-1827, Quarter-Master to the East India Company from 1801-5) expressed 'a wish, that Moonshies were entirely excluded from any knowledge of the Political Business in the Persian Department,' and recommended that Europeans should be employed in such positions instead, on account of their trustworthiness.[44] For such a change to take place, however, the East India Company needed to have a greater number of European officials familiar with Indian languages.[45] The establishment of the Company's colleges at Fort William and Haileybury were direct responses to these anxieties of empire.

In order to reveal this connection more clearly, it is necessary to understand the role played by John Gilchrist in the founding of Fort William College. Gilchrist was a pioneering figure in the history of the colonial engagement with Hindustani, the language which came to be known as Urdu or Hindi. Initially employed as a military surgeon in Bengal, Gilchrist carved out a niche for himself as an expert on Hindustani during the 1780s. In the process, he wrote several dictionaries and grammars, as well as an edited version of Thomas Williamson's *East-India Vade Mecum*, cited at the beginning of this

[43] *India Gazette; or Calcutta Public Advertiser*, VI/263 (1785, Calcutta), unpaginated. The writer discusses the possibility of setting up an office for the supply of reliable Indians whom Europeans could employ without any fear of being duped.

[44] BL, IOR/F/4/43/1033D, Sir John Murray's Recommendations Regarding the Custody of Government Archives, Jan 1797. In the same memorandum, Murray also observed that many *munshī*s in the Persian Office had been informants for other rulers, and claimed to be in possession of 'a list of pensions paid from different Durbars to a native or natives belonging to the Persian Office, a circumstance sufficient to shake confidence in that description of Public Officers.'

[45] Ibid.

section. In his study of Gilchrist's career, Steadman-Jones shows how Gilchrist's initial ideas were motivated by fears of speaking Indian languages inadequately and hence being misunderstood.[46] However, Gilchrist also deployed these anxieties for commercial ends, as he created a market for his own textbooks and services as a teacher of Hindustani. Full of warnings about deceptive Indian teachers, Gilchrist established a seminary for teaching Hindustani and Persian in 1798. This aimed to provide newly arrived British civil-servants with an enough of an introduction to quickly begin communicating with Indians independently.[47]

In so doing, Gilchrist sought to change existing modes of learning, and replace the *munshī* with a European instructor who was both systematic and trustworthy. In his letter to the Company requesting support for his seminary, Gilchrist made this displacement explicit. He assured the Bengal administration that he 'required no further compensation than the allowance now established for a Moonshee'.[48] Instead of providing thirty rupees to each writer on arrival in India, Gilchrist suggested that this sum should be paid to him instead, for providing daily lessons in Persian and Hindustani to those officers whose allowances were thus diverted.[49] Gilchrist's methods of teaching at the seminary were geared towards practical acquisition of the spoken language, rather than attainments in classical literary texts. In particular, Gilchrist promised to ensure a much greater degree of success in language learning than any native teachers could offer. One report expressed the belief that a few months of study under Gilchrist could achieve more 'than all the

[46] R. Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism and grammatical representation: John Gilchrist and the analysis of the 'Hindustani' language in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries* (Oxford, 2007) p.13
[47] BL, IOR/H/488, Extract Public Letter from Bengal', Dec 1798, in 'Educational Establishments in India and England'
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.

moonshees in India'.[50] The seminary achieved a remarkable degree of popularity very quickly, and its success motivated calls for its expansion.[51] By 1800, the governor-general, Richard Wellesley (1760-1842) had responded by establishing the College of Fort William. In 1806, this was followed by the institution of the Haileybury College in England.

Race and Authority at the Company's Colleges

The College at Fort William represented the first serious step towards institutionalizing and systematizing the study of Persian and other Indian languages. Central to these institutions was a teaching staff comprised mainly of *munshī*s. It is argued that the perceived unreliability of *munshī*s and their integration into a colonial institution presented a paradox. In attempting to solve the problems of unsystematic learning through unreliable *munshī*s and personal experiences by integrating and regulating interactions with Indian teachers, the two colleges revealed and shaped emergent ideas about the relationship between linguistic ability, ethnicity and territory. Structured along European lines, the College was divided into departments and professorships, headed by a Vice-Provost.[52] A chaplain was appointed for the spiritual welfare of students, while the Governor-General was the official patron. Beneath this European surface, however, was the 'Native Establishment' of the institution, comprising of *munshī*s and *pandit*s in each department.[53]

Fort William College was also meant to offer a traditional European education, including the study of Greek, Latin and English Classics. Due to funding and

[50] *The Oriental Herald and Journal of General Literature,* 7 (Calcutta, November 1825), pp.379-381. This article also cites other endorsements of Gilchrist.
[51] BL/IOR/H/488
[52] For more information on the Company's colleges: Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal renaissance,* pp.47-119; Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*; M. Fisher, 'Persian Professor in Britain: Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim at the East India Company's College, 1826-44', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East,* XXI/1-2 (2001), pp.26-7
[53] Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, pp.11-17

organizational constraints, these subjects were not offered when the College first opened.[54] However, when classes in these subjects began, they were not well-attended by the students, whose focus remained on the lectures on the 'Oriental languages'.[55] By 1805, all classes, except for those teaching Indian languages, were abolished at Fort William.[56] It was partly to fill the gap in European subjects that Haileybury was instituted in England the following year. However, another reason for the establishment of Haileybury was that it would reduce the time spent by young officers as students in Calcutta, thus lessening their exposure to the temptations of the city.[57] As a result, Haileybury also offered courses in Indian languages, so that students would arrive in India somewhat prepared for a language-heavy education. The Company colleges thus attempted to address anxieties about corrupt Indian intermediaries and British susceptibility within a single framework. This revealed significant contradictions in the ways in which language, territory and identity were perceived.

For instance, Wellesley hoped that the college at Fort William would ideally 'counteract the defects of the climate and the vices of the people [of India], and form a natural barrier against habitual indolence, dissipation, and licentious indulgence'.[58] It was thus meant to safeguard British identity.[59] In Wellesley's statement, it was the Indian environment that was seen as being threatening to this identity. At the same time, Fort William claimed to provide a period of acculturation and adaptation to Indian languages,

[54] Das, *Sahibs and Munshis,* pp.8-26
[55] R. C. Wellesley, 'Regulation for the Foundation of the College at Fort William […] Passed by the Governor-General in Council, on the 10th July 1800', in R. C. Wellesley, *Letters of the Marquis Wellesley, Respecting the College of Fort William* (London, 1812), pp.54-5; T. R. Malthus, *A Letter to the Rt. Hon. Lord Grenville, Occasioned by Some Observations of His Lordship on the East India Company's Establishment for the Education of Their Civil Servants* (London, 1813), pp.18-19
[56] BL, IOR/H/489, Bengal to Court of Directors, 5 Jun 1805; BL, IOR/H/489, Public Letter to Bengal, 21 May 1806
[57] Malthus, *A Letter,* pp.28-33
[58] R. C. Wellesley, 'Minute in Council, 1800' in Wellesley, *Letters of the Marquis Wellesley*, p.16
[59] Ibid.

climate and customs, through a controlled introduction to colonial life in a trustworthy setting.[60] Maintaining a British identity and adapting fully to India thus appeared to be mutually opposed.

Haileybury suffered from a similar paradox. This institution could not offer such an experience of adjustment to the Indian environment, and drew its legitimacy from the fact that it offered a linguistic education free of the temptations that lured young men into moral laxity in India. Indeed, it claimed that British students would arrive in India prepared for further learning. Without this basic introduction to Indian languages, they would be 'on a par with the European adventurers and the lady portion of the European society.'[61] Clearly, systematic approaches were the only way to protect masculinity and supposedly legitimate colonial identities (as opposed to adventurers and other non-official Europeans in India). However, Haileybury was accused of undermining British identity by separating young men from their peers. This, according to Lord Grenville, 'formed them into a class resembling an Indian caste.'[62] More importantly, Haileybury struggled to establish its credibility as an institution for learning Indian languages. It was increasingly believed that these languages could not be properly learned in England.[63] The main reason for this was the prevailing notion, discussed in Chapter One, that the colonial context offered 'authentic' informants in the form of *munshī*s and *pandit*s. However, now that these figures had come to be regarded as suspect and inferior, the Company's colleges had to face a double-edged sword.

At Fort William, these issues were somewhat resolved by pursuing a hierarchical and discriminatory policy. On the one hand, the college actively recruited Indians to join

[60] Ibid.
[61] BL, MS Eur F303/445, Memorandum regarding the teaching of Oriental Languages at Haileybury College
[62] Lord Grenville, quoted in Malthus, *A Letter,* pp.2-3
[63] Malthus also held this view: Malthus, *A Letter,* pp.18-19

as faculty, and *munshī*s were responsible for teaching as well as editing texts in collaboration with their British colleagues. At the same time, the College maintained an official separation between Indian *munshī*s and British professors in their records, and British members of the faculty received immeasurably more recognition and monetary compensation than their counterparts.[64] In this regard, one of the most obvious advantages that Fort William College possessed was that it had access to a range of human resources, and provided a controlled space for interactions with native speakers. This was a radical reconfiguring of authority as the colonial state expressed their view of a hierarchy of authoritative knowledge. Moreover, as the discussion of grammars below will demonstrate, the new approach to language-learning was equally revolutionary for colonial orientalists.

At Haileybury, the situation was more difficult to negotiate. The importance of native teachers led to efforts to recruit Indian teachers, as it was believed that this would result in more accurate pronunciation and efficient learning.[65] However, a much greater incentive was required to persuade Indian teachers to undertake the journey to England, and live there for an extended period of time. Finally two *munshī*s, Mirzā K̲h̲alīl (fl.1808-26) and Mīr ʻAbdul ʻAlī (d.1812) of Benaras, along with a Writing Master from Bihar, G̲h̲ulām Haider (1776-1823), were hired to work at Haileybury. They arrived in England between 1806 and 1808 to teach Hindustani and Persian to the students of the college. According to Michael Fisher, ʻAbdul ʻAlī and Mirzā K̲h̲alīl received similar salaries to

[64] Fisher, 'Persian Professor in Britain', p.26. Fisher notes that there was much less disparity in wages at Haileybury. Das, *Sahibs and Munshis,* p.11. Das notes that [British] Professors earned 1500 rupees/month and teachers 1000, while the Chief *Munshī* earned 200 rupees/month, the Second *Munshī*, 100, and Sub-Ordinate *Munshī*s only 40 rupees/month at Fort William College.
[65] MS Eur F303/445

British professors employed at the College, and held similar responsibilities, but they were not equal 'in rank or administrative responsibilities.'[66]

The idea that Indians may have been better equipped to teach Persian remained problematic, and the two *munshī*s became the subject of many complaints. Even before their departure for England, their proficiency in Persian and Hindustani was tested by the British professors of Fort William College, indicating the colonial state's contradictory attitudes towards Indians and their capabilities. In 1826, Neil Edmonstone (1765-1841) and John Baillie, appointed at the Persian and Arabic departments respectively, penned a memorandum on the subject of 'the gradual decline of oriental acquirement in the College since the removal [...] of the Native Asiatics who were attached to it'.[67] While expressing anxiety about the declining quality of Persian and Hindustani classes at the College, and calling for *munshī*s to be recruited from India once again, Baillie and Edmonstone also noted that there were disadvantages in employing Indians, and enumerated these in a list. For one thing, Indians were considered to be incapable of learning English properly, which meant that students would find it difficult to learn from them.[68] Other drawbacks ranged from having to provide for the *munshī*s' families in India in the event of their deaths, to their 'immorality of conduct' and lack of time-keeping. Most significant was their:

> difference in religion, dress, customs, of manners, which has a tendency to lessen that respect on the part of the pupil towards his teachers which is indispensable to the former's improvement.[69]

The contradictions in this attitude are apparent. On the one hand, it was essential that native speakers be involved in the teaching of Persian, implying that ethnicity was important in transmitting the structure and pronunciation as well as the character of the language. On

[66] Fisher, 'Persian Professor in Britain', p.26
[67] BL, IOR/J/2/5, fos.279-89, Records of East India College, Haileybury, 1749-1857
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

the other, the ethnic background, culture and behaviour of Indian teachers were major drawbacks. Ultimately, these were questions of authority: while Indians and Persians were considered to be more appropriate teachers of Persian, it was the very fact of their being foreign and in particular 'oriental' that undid their authority. To look at it from another angle, constructions of British intellectual and moral superiority stemmed from their perceived difference from eastern nations: if this logic was to be pursued, however, then it also prevented Britons from learning the language to the same extent as native speakers.

In the end, Baillie and Edmonstone had to strike a compromise: they suggested employing Mirzā Ibrāhīm (d.1857), a 'native of Persia'.[70] Ibrāhīm had

> adopted the European Costume for the avowed purpose of acquiring knowledge, and rendering himself useful in this Country, without attracting public observation which might interfere with the accomplishment of those objects.[71]

It is likely that the fairer skin of Mirzā Ibrāhīm also helped in detracting attention from his foreignness. Neither Indian nor English, a Persian in 'European Costume', he fitted the requirements of being a native speaker who sought to erase his own differences in manners and clothing. As an Iranian rather than an Indian, it could also be argued that Mirzā Ibrāhīm's Persian was the most authentic of all. Robert Jones, for example, suggested in 1792 that people who were 'newly arrived from Persia' spoke in a way that was 'far more correct and agreeable' than Indians.[72] This appears to have been a recent development in British thought, but was a familiar idea in India. While the debate between Ārzū and Ḥazīn, over correct language use, had centred on lexical usage rather than pronunciation, different accents were also recognised by users of Persian in India.[73] However, Baillie and

[70] For a more complete account of Mirzā Ibrāhīm's career, including his return to Tehran, see: Fisher, 'Persian Professor in Britain'.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Jones, *A new Persian and English work,* p.64
[73] Kia, *Contours of Persianate Community,* p.279

Edmonstone recognised that, for practical purposes of communicating in India, hiring an Iranian was not ideal, as they noted that Ibrāhīm could not teach Hindustani nor pronounce Persian words as they were spoken in India.

When in 1767, Benjamin Kennicott had suggested that a 'native' was required to teach Persian, he had done so in a context where it was very rare to find anyone with experience of speaking Persian. Moreover, Kennicott had included 'natives' of 'Persia or Indostan' in his recommendation.[74] As Stephanie Hackert has shown, the concept of native speakers was not always a given, and in the context of English, emerged strongly only when those perceived as foreigners began to use the language widely.[75] It may be argued, then, that the question of who constituted a native speaker in the context of the colonial encounter with Persian only emerged when Britons began to feel alienated from the context in which they operated. To an extent, pursuing these questions also led to the exclusion of Indians from this category. To give another example, William Price, the author of a grammar published in 1823, offered a system of orthography aimed at removing the defects of the 'false' Persian pronunciation learned in India.[76] Over the first three decades of the nineteenth century, it became increasingly common for such ideas to be articulated.[77] In the 1790s, however, such ideas did not influence the theoretical apparatus with which Persian was approached. Rather, as the following section demonstrates, grammars were oriented towards the possibility of Britons being able to communicate (orally and in writing) in India, while also often studying classical texts. In other words, the spoken element of such grammars was geared towards the colonial Indian context.

[74] Kennicott, *A Proposal to Establish a Professorship*, p.13 (emphasis mine)
[75] S. Hackert, *The Emergence of the English Native Speaker: A Chapter in Nineteenth-Century Linguistic Thought* (Berlin, 2012), pp.219-62
[76] W. Price and M. M. Ṣāliḥ, *A Grammar of the Three Principal Oriental Languages: Hindoostanee, Persian and Arabic, to which is added a set of Persian dialogues by Mirza Muhammad Salih* (London, 1823) pp.v-ix
[77] The question of Persian as a foreign language in India is further discussed in Chapter Four.

3. Developing New Approaches to Language: Persian Grammars at the turn of the century

The grammar textbooks of the 1790s displayed a pressing concern with the practical usage of Persian in colonial India. Grammars performed complex functions in cultural encounters. As Steadman-Jones has suggested, grammars anticipated and mediated the actual encounter between the learner and native speakers or texts.[78] In this sense, they performed an important role in alleviating and coping with anxieties relating to experiences of alien cultures, by familiarizing the learner not just with information about another language, but also by allowing the articulation of such differences, making them more manageable. The anxiety regarding *munshī*s was also the primary reason for the proliferation of grammar text-books authored by Europeans from the 1790s onward, as they attempted to enable the beginner to retain more autonomy over his initial experiences in India.

Until the 1790s, William Jones's *Grammar of the Persian Language* (1771) was the only major work on Persian grammar available in English. Two other books that were employed by students were John Richardson's *A Dictionary, Persian, Arabic, and English* (1778-80), and George Hadley's (d.1798) *Introductory Grammatical Remarks on the Persian Language* (1776). Richardson's *Dictionary* was found to be especially useful because of the lengthy 'Dissertation on the Languages, Literature, and Manners of Eastern Nations' which was prefixed to it. In contrast, Hadley's brief work received little attention, as its grammatical component was much less comprehensive than Jones's, and the vocabulary appended was more limited than Richardson's.[79] While Hadley had served the

[78] Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism and Grammatical Representation*, p.8
[79] G. Hadley, *Introductory Grammatical Remarks on the Persian Languages, with a Vocabulary, English and Persian* (Bath, 1776)

East India Company until 1771, and thus based his works on his experiences in India, both Jones and Richardson published their works before they left for India.

The three authors' conception of their work was similar in many ways, and both Richardson and Hadley treated Jones with reverence.[80] Richardson and Jones had collaborated on the *Grammar of the Persian Language,* and as discussed in the previous chapter, had plans to work together on bringing out an edition of Meninski's thesaurus. Hadley advertised his work as being a supplement to facilitate learning from Jones and Richardson's books, rather than competing with them.[81] His main contribution was the claim to an easier and more precise mode of transliteration than Jones and Richardson. Thus, Hadley placed more emphasis on pronunciation and orthography than either Jones or Richardson.[82]

As orientalists situated in Britain, both Richardson and Jones were primarily interested in Persian grammar and vocabulary as a means of accessing literary works and 'useful clues to the dark labyrinths of Ancient Mythology, History, and Manners.'[83] In other words, their concentration was focused on the literary and ethnological fruits of linguistic scholarship.[84] In pursuing these objectives, Jones and Richardson employed a technique which combined the reading of particular texts, along with comparative etymological methods applied to the language. From the contents of texts, they could glean information about the history and 'manners' of 'nations', while etymological approaches allowed links between languages to be established. In 1786, Jones famously rejected the latter method in favour of comparative grammar, launching his attack on Jacob Bryant

[80] Hadley, *Introductory Grammatical Remarks,* p.9
[81] Ibid.
[82] Hadley, *Introductory Grammatical Remarks*; pp.9-14
[83] Richardson, *A Dictionary,* p.385
[84] On William Jones' concept of the 'Mosaic ethnology' of languages and nations: Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* pp.28-61

(1715-1804), one of the foremost proponents of comparative etymology.[85] However, his opposition to comparative etymology has been overstated, partly because of the dramatic nature of his statements. These debates had started even earlier, and Richardson had also critiqued Bryant in his 'Dissertation on the Languages, Literature, and Manners of Eastern Nations'.[86] As Chowdhury has explained, Jones and Richardson only took issue with Bryant's assumption that all similar-sounding words were related.[87] This led to obvious errors and misjudged linkages, particularly since Bryant had no serious interest in 'oriental' languages. As Richardson put it, Bryant's

> scene of action lay chiefly on Asiatic ground; yet Asiatic languages he affected to despise. He substituted definitions, which no man ever knew; and he sheltered himself behind the visionary shade of an inexisting tongue.[88]

An orthographically and historically informed usage of this method, however, was widely accepted. Such a view of linguistic relationships was also held by Hadley, as is evidenced by the short 'list of Persian words resembling European words, of the same signification' attached to Hadley's grammar.[89] Importantly, Hadley included not only whole words in his list, but also some suffixes and patterns of verbal conjugation.[90] This shows that grammatical comparison, while not yet a fully-fledged method of linguistic analysis, was already being used, and that Jones' deployment of it was not as dramatic a move as it would later seem.

This generation of scholars placed an emphasis on learning through the perusal of literary works as well as contact with native speakers. Once acquainted with Persian, Jones

[85] W. Jones, 'Third Anniversary Discourse' cf. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* pp.38-41
[86] Richardson, *A Dictionary,* pp.385-470
[87] Z. A. A. Chowdhury, '"Imperceptible Transitions:" The Anglo-Indianization of British Architecture, 1769-1822' [PhD Thesis, North-Western University, 2012], pp.78-86
[88] Richardson, p.385
[89] Hadley, *Introductory Grammatical Remarks*, pp.215-216
[90] Ibid.

promised, the 'man of taste will undoubtedly be pleased to unlock the stores of native genius, and to gather the flowers of unrestrained and luxuriant fancy.' Given these literary objectives, it was fitting that Jones' *Grammar* included short excerpts from 'elegant writers', including Sa'dī, Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī (c.1315-1390) and Firdausī.[91] In his preface, Jones explained that he had wished to include a full-length history also, but shortage of time had prevented him from doing so. Instead, he offered a list of 'the Most Valuable Books' in Persian, in which he catalogued thirty manuscripts in the categories of poetry, history and philosophy.[92] In addition, he suggested that students read Sa'dī 's *Gulistān* and Ḥusain Wā'iẓ Kāshifī's (c.1436/7-1504/5) *Anwarī Suhailī,* a syllabus that closely corresponded with the texts studied by Persian scholars in Mughal India.[93]

At the same time, Jones stressed that the student should not 'neglect to converse with his living instructor'.[94] Although Jones remarked that the Company had found it 'dangerous to employ natives as interpreters', he framed this solely in a political sense, rather than implying that they did not have correct knowledge.[95] That is to say, he stated that the Company found it difficult to transact diplomatic business in India without a knowledge of Persian. Hadley held a similar position: *munshī*s could be inaccurate, but this was because without a knowledge of the language, the student could not discuss the finer points of grammar with the *munshī*. Like Jones, he recommended engaging with *munshī*s, emphasizing that his work was only a channel through which the learner could become acquainted with Persian enough to communicate his problems to his teacher.[96] Unlike later colonial grammars and textbooks of the 1790s, neither Jones nor Hadley offered set

[91] Jones, *GPL,* pp.31, 45-6
[92] W. Jones, *GPL,* pp.141-50; B. Teissier, 'Texts from the Persian in Late Eighteenth-Century India and Britain: Culture or Construct?', *Iran,* 47 (2009), pp.133-47, p.134
[93] Jones, *GPL,* pp.xviii-xx
[94] Jones, *GPL,* pp.xviii-xii
[95] Ibid.
[96] Hadley, *Introductory Grammatical Remarks,* p.214

dialogues for students to use with his *munshī,* and displayed little of the anxiety that would later govern language learning. Grammatical knowledge was merely an aid to enable an engagement with literary works and conversations with Persian-speaking individuals.

A Practical Turn: Persian Grammar in the 1790s

Throughout most of the 1780s, these works appear to have been considered sufficient for colonial officers traveling to India. Jones' *Grammar* and Richardson's *Vocabulary* were usually paired with the services of a *munshī.* For the latter, the Company had instituted an allowance to all junior officers on their arrival in India.[97] However, during this period, anxieties regarding Indian intermediaries began to be voiced more and more frequently, as explained in Section Two. The 1790s thus saw the publication of a new generation of grammars and learning aids. As titles such as Edward Moises' (d.1845) *Persian Interpreter* (1792) and Francis Gladwin's (1744/5-1812) *The Persian Moonshee* (1795) suggest, such textbooks sought to replace Indian teachers as much as possible. The most successful of these in Persian was Gladwin's *Moonshee,* which was intended for use in colonial contexts.[98]

Unlike most other textbooks of this kind, Gladwin's work lacked an introduction, launching straight into the rules of Persian grammar instead. In terms of the grammatical rules, it was very similar to Jones's work. However, in contrast to Jones' eloquent essay on the benefits of Persian literature, or Richardson's discourse on the 'manners of eastern nations', the *Moonshee* was conspicuous for its practical attitude towards learning. It contained far more examples of Persian writing than its predecessors, which was the main

[97] J. Bowen, 'The East India Company's Education of Its Own Servants', *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* 87/3-4 (1955), pp.105-123

[98] The success of Gladwin's grammar is indicated by the fact that it was printed at least four times by 1800, and also formed the basis of other grammars. E.g. D. Forbes, *A Grammar of the Persian Language,* (London, 1828)

reason for its widespread success. However, any claim to providing literary or aesthetic pleasure was dispensed with. The 'pleasant tales' that Gladwin included were similar to the fables used in educational material for children in England, and the stories of the *Gulistān* and *Anwarī Suhailī* in India.[99] Simple and effective, these excerpts responded to the rise of Evangelism in India, and concomitant concerns about the corruptibility of British students exposed to purportedly immoral Persian writings. The 'inflammatory odes of Hafiz' and the 'love tales of Jami' (which had been included in Jones's *Grammar*) were not deemed suitable for young men embarking on serious careers.[100]

Hence, many of the tales and anecdotes that Gladwin included had clearly been selected for their conformity with Latin-Christian traditions. The 'lives of the philosophers', for instance, were carefully selected from the *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Akhbār* of Mīr Ḵẖwānd (fl.1524-34).[101] Gladwin's excerpts from this work included stories about Sikandar/Alexander, Loqmān/Aesop, Suqrāt/Socrates and Fīshāgẖuras/Pythagoras.[102] He also included Mīr Ḵẖwānd's praise of 'Adam, Seth, and Enoch', who were counted as philosophers.[103] Similarly, although the presence of the *qāẓī* in 'Story I' lends it an Islamic character, it would also have been well-known to British students as the Biblical 'Judgement of Solomon', reminding students, of course, of the underlying Christianity of such moral tales.[104] Finally, three chapters of the *Anjīl be-Kalām-i Matī* (the Gospel According to St. Matthew), translated from Greek into Persian by William Chambers (c.1748-93, an enthusiastic member of the Society for the Propagation of Christian

[99] F. Gladwin, *The Persian Moonshee* (Calcutta, 1795), pp.1-29
[100] J. Scott, *Observations on the Oriental Department of Hon. Company's East India College at Hertford* (Hertford, 1806). Scott suggested that students focus on Persian historical works and avoid poetry.
[101] This in turn was an abridged version of 'Rauẓāt al-Safa', composed in the late fifteenth century by the author's uncle.
[102] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee,* pp.1-29
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.

Knowledge) were also included.[105] The material chosen by Gladwin reflected the increasingly religious atmosphere of the 1790s, as he chose fables which could fit easily within the ethical framework of Christianity. The only extracts provided by Gladwin which were less familiar to British readers were those which equipped the student with bureaucratic knowledge, which remained essential to the Company's interactions with Indian rulers. These included models for drafting letters and *farmān*s, as well as extracts from the seventeenth-century *Qawā'id al-Salṭanat-i Shāh Jahān,* translated by Gladwin as 'The Rules Observed during the Reign of Shah Jehan'.[106]

The use of stories with which students were already familiar meant that in addition to mediating the foreignness of a different language, the material would also be morally unambiguous, since the interpretations or lessons of the stories were already known. Later, teaching at the College of Fort William continued in this vein. Only one thesis – in 1804 - concerned itself with Persian poetry. It considered whether the poems of Ḥāfiẓ were to be read in their literal or figurative sense, and resulted in a study of the poems within a strictly moral framework.[107] George Swinton, the student who defended the stance that Ḥāfiẓ's verses were 'figurative' insisted that all Persian poetry, even when it appeared to be obviously literal, could only be understood in a moral context if it was interpreted in mystical terms. Although allusions to wine and love were present in the poet's work, the respondent argued, that the literal meanings of Ḥāfiẓ could not 'occupy a place in the minds of those virtuous and devout theologists.'[108] Similarly, William Oliver, who refuted these arguments, did so in very black and white terms. Arguing for a literal interpretation of

[105] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee,* pp.359-74
[106] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee,* p.92, 230. The *Rules* were extracted from 'Chahār Chaman' by Chandar Bhan Brahmān. See: Kinra, *Writing Self, Writing Empire,* pp.6-7
[107] Fort William College, *Primitiae Orientales: Vol. III: Containing the Theses in the Oriental Languages* (Calcutta, 1804), pp.36-55
[108] Ibid.

Ḥāfiẓ, Oliver challenged the famed piety of Ḥāfiẓ, and concluded that the poet had not been morally upright after all.[109] Although both these ideas had an older genealogy in the history of Persian thought, they became central to colonial judgments of Persian poetry in the context of rising Protestant influence in the Company. That this had an impact on Indians in the employ of the Company is evident from the defence of Ḥāfiẓ that Abū Ṭālib (1752-1805/6), the editor of the *Dīwān-i Ḵẖwāja Ḥāfiẓ* (printed by the Company in 1791), felt compelled to insert in the preface to the publication. Ṭālib wrote that his patron, Richard Johnson (1753-1807) had been uncomfortable with the pederastic elements (*'ishq-i amardān*) in Ḥāfiẓ's work, and hence supplied his own theory to explain their presence. Interestingly, while insisting on a figurative reading of the poems, Ṭālib made no reference to their mystical content, arguing only that references to male beloveds were aesthetic convention and rested on the internal literary logic of poetry.[110] Interestingly, George Swinton did not take up this idea in his defence of Ḥāfiẓ, despite the fact that he had been a close friend of Abū Ṭālib, who he considered his mentor. Piety and religiosity, rather than aesthetics, governed the arguments made by the students. These disputations can be usefully compared with Edward Scott Waring's (d.1821) remarks on the same subject. Although a Company servant, Waring was not constrained by the institutional pressures exerted on the students of the College, and directly criticised this Manichean approach to the topic in a work addressed to metropolitan readers. Specifically, he suggested that the poems be interpreted in both mystical and literal terms, and was rather more sympathetic to the homoerotic content of the poetry of Ḥāfiẓ, which he described as 'human propensities'.[111] At Fort William College, however, the range of interpretations that poetry

[109] Ibid.
[110] Abū Ṭālib, 'Dībacha', in Ḥāfiẓ Shīrazī, *Dīwān-i Ḵẖwāja Ḥāfiẓ,* ed. Abū Ṭālib, (Calcutta, 1791), p.3
[111] E. S Waring, A tour to Sheeraz, by the route of Kazroon and Feerozabad (London, 1807) 225-9

was open to constituted a source of anxiety, and examiners ensured that moral judgements of such works formed a central part of the students' engagement with these works.

Although Francis Gladwin's *Moonshee* sought to eliminate reliance on Indian teachers, this was not possible to implement. Partly, this was because exercises and training were required to hone useful skills such as writing in the Persian script and holding conversations. More importantly, no grammar could encompass all the ways in which language was actually used in practice, whether in conversation or in manuscripts. The aid of a *munshī* remained necessary for knowledge about pronunciation as well as deciphering different Persian scripts. The difficulty of the latter was elucidated at length by William Ouseley (1767-1842), whose *Persian Miscellanies* (1795) sought to aid those learners who had to 'derive his knowledge from books alone'.[112] However, Ouseley's intended audience was the literary enthusiast situated in Europe, not the colonial official abroad. Since Ouseley's was the first book of its kind and hence somewhat of a rarity, Gladwin still expected the student to spend around two hours a day engaged with his *munshī*.[113]

Unlike William Jones and George Hadley, Gladwin's approach to dealing with *munshī*s betrayed a much deeper contempt of such individuals, and viewed the relationship between student and *munshī* as one which required policing. To this end, Gladwin enlisted the aid of William Chambers, who composed a set of dialogues for Britons to practice with their *munshī*s. Indeed, in providing these imaginary conversations, the book replaced and controlled encounters with actual individuals as much as possible. The dialogues recommended by Gladwin for practise in speaking Persian also indicate the kind of relationship that British officers were now meant to have with Indians. Personal

[112] W. Ouseley, *Persian Miscellanies: An Essay to Facilitate the Reading of Persian Manuscripts* (London, 1795), p.xxx
[113] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee,* p.10

interactions with *munshī*s appear to have been marked by elitist attitudes, in which the *munshī* was reduced from his scholarly position as a respectable teacher, to an ignorant servant.[114]

These dialogues were composed by William Chambers in collaboration with his *munshī* (whom he also superintended), although the extent of each individual's contribution is difficult to ascertain. In these dialogues, the *munshī* was presented as being singularly obtuse and vague when asked straightforward questions by the student, and often led to undermine his own authority. For example, when the student asked whether the *munshī* was able to teach the letters of Abū'l Faẓl (1551-1602 and chief minister of emperor Akbar), the *munshī* responded, 'One who constantly teaches such books, has them fresh in his memory, I have taught but little.'[115] Similarly, the student enquired, 'Can you read the text with propriety, and do you know the various kinds of *izafas* there used?' The *munshī* replied, 'I do not pretend to *great things*, but I will read as well as I can.'[116] The student was put into a position of power from the start, as Gladwin advised him on how to instruct the *munshī* to teach, and to judge him for his skill in a language the student had not yet mastered himself ('bring a specimen of your hand writing tomorrow, and I will see whether it be a settled hand or not').[117]

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[114] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee,* pp.8-10. Steadman-Jones submits John Gilchrist's *Dialogues in Hindostani* to a similar analysis. Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism and Grammatical Representation,* pp.192-217

[115] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee*, p.9

[116] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee*, p.11

[117] Although the unequal relations between the student and *munshī* may be explained in terms of class rather than race, it is unlikely that Gladwin, who also taught Persian to British students, would have placed himself in such an inferior position. Compare with Muḥammad Ibrāhīm's *Grammar*, which also provided dialogues for students. The context for the dialogues is one of equality: 'An English gentleman (A.) during his travels in Persia, becomes intimately acquainted with a gentleman (B.) of that country, who, having been in England some time, has acquired a tolerable knowledge of the English language. The English gentleman speaks Persian fluently; but not altogether free from occasional imperfections, as to the *idiom* and *grammar.* He has therefore begged his Persian friend to set him right, whenever he commits an error of that sort; promising never to be offended, except by "*injudicious pedantry in the presence of company,",* when *such marks of affection,* are, certainly, *not very agreeable*.' M. Ibrāhīm, *A Grammar of the Persian Language,* Hertford, 1841), p.141.

A similar work produced during this period was Robert Jones' *A Work, Persian and English* (1792). This dispensed with literary excerpts altogether. Instead, he provided a limited number of model letters in Persian with literal English translations, and a set of aphorisms. However, the bulk of Jones' text was based on a series of Persian dialogues aimed at all kinds of interactions between British masters and Indian employees, ranging from coach-men to a *munshī* who continually contradicted himself under the British student's interrogation.[118] Like Hadley, Robert Jones was preoccupied with pronunciation and different accents. As mentioned earlier, Robert Jones' grammar was one of the earliest to comment on the difference the speech of individuals newly-arrived from Persia and Indians.[119] The diction of Indians was considered by Jones to be inferior to that of Iranians. This idea was transmitted to British students, positing the pronunciation of 'Persians' as the standard to which students should aspire. Technically, this meant that imitating the speech of Indians was not necessarily the best way to learn to speak Persian. While Robert Jones left this problem unresolved in his text, these issues assumed greater importance in the first years of the nineteenth century.

Thus, the 1790s saw the emergence of a new set of Persian learning aides that advocated a practical approach to language. Responding to growing anxieties about dealing with suspiciously multi-lingual middle-men and unreliable teachers, these books used dialogues to equip Britons to communicate with their Indian intermediaries upon arrival in India. They helped produce the impression that Company officials were far more shrewd and knowledgeable than may actually have been the case. Further, they specifically taught students to judge and exercise authority over their Indian teachers in order to avoid been duped or misinformed. Colonial fears and feelings of being unable to connect with Indians,

[118] Jones, *A new Persian and English work,* pp.48-66
[119] Jones, *A new Persian and English work,* p.64

along with the feeling that one could not survive without a proper knowledge of Indian languages, produced changed attitudes towards language. Rejecting the literary interests of earlier orientalists and linguists, Gladwin, Hadley and Robert Jones framed Persian exclusively in terms of its utility as a colonial language.

However, apart from the increased emphasis on orthography and transliteration, the grammatical content of the textbooks remained similar to the ones produced by Jones and Richardson. It was only in the first decade of the nineteenth century that grammatical techniques witnessed a serious shift and came to conceive of Persian in a completely abstract sense. The groundwork for these changes, however, had been laid in the shift away from literary works and towards more practical knowledge. As the following section will discuss, the emphasis on the practical usage of Persian paradoxically resulted in the abstraction of language.

The Grammatical Turn: Language as an Abstract Phenomenon

Representative of the new turn in scholarship in the early nineteenth century was Matthew Lumsden (1777-1835), Professor of Persian and Arabic at the College of Fort William, who published his lengthy work, entitled *A Grammar of the Persian Language,* in 1809. This work sought not only to correct previous grammars such as those of William Jones and Francis Gladwin, but also to improve the current theoretical understanding of the grammatical structure of Persian. Despite Lumsden's importance in the history of Persian learning and linguistic thought in general, he has been largely neglected. Eva M. Jeremias' two-part article on Lumsden is the only attention he has yet received.[120]

[120] E. M. Jeremias, 'Matthew Lumsden's *Persian Grammar* (Calcutta, 1810): Part I', *Iran,* 50/1 (2012), pp.129-40; E. M. Jeremias, 'Matthew Lumsden's *Persian Grammar* (Calcutta, 1810): Part II', *Iran,* 51/1 (2013), pp.197-206. This is a good descriptive introduction to some of Lumsden's ideas, but it is written from a linguistic point of view only. Part I deals with Arabic and Persian infinitives and particles, while Part II discusses syntax.

Lumsden's grammar was held in high regard by many of his contemporaries in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and was even used to correct and revise the eighth and ninth editions of William Jones' *Grammar.*[121]

In his introduction, Lumsden voiced the tensions between theoretical and practical knowledge which were becoming increasingly central to educational debates. He began by arguing for a more theoretical approach to Persian, explaining that common speech was only useful for the communication of simple ideas:

> The conversation of the vulgar is, however, the only standard of reference which is open to the resources of an illiterate man; and his Language, formed on that imperfect model, will be necessarily defective in the observance of those nicer proprieties of speech which distinguish the purer Language of written composition.[122]

Lumsden then went on to admit that, 'it cannot be denied that practical improvement is the true end of theoretical study.'[123] Further, he stated, that the 'most essential purpose of Language [is] that of expressing intelligible sentiments.' The command of any language, even in 'its most imperfect state' was proof of 'no inconsiderable skill in the practical application of the parts of speech.'[124] Precisely because speakers of a language naturally introduced exceptions to strict grammatical rules, Lumsden was forced to concede, it was difficult for any work on grammar to do complete justice to any language in its entire complexity.[125] According to Lumsden, the limitations of grammar were based on two issues. First, including exceptions and practical examples instead of rules disrupted one of the most important features of grammar: the preservation of a 'clear and perspicuous

[121] 'Review of Books', *The Asiatic Journal and monthly miscellany,* 15 (1823), p.349
[122] M. Lumsden, *A Grammar of the Persian Language : Comprising a Portion of the Elements of Arabic Inflexion, Together with Some Observations on the Structure of Either Language, Considered with Reference to the Principles of General Grammar,* (Calcutta, 1810), p.vi
[123] Lumsden, *A Grammar,* p.vi-xxix
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.

arrangement.'[126] This seemingly ordinary statement is significant as it revealed Lumsden's belief that practical usage of the language came into conflict with grammatical study.

The second, and more important, problem created by the rift between practice and theory was the notion that only native speakers could speak and innovate in a particular language correctly. As discussed earlier, the idea that Qajar subjects were the only native speakers of Persian was a relatively recent development in colonial thought. Since learning through imitation was a course only open to native speakers, Lumsden offered the study of systematic grammar as the only alternative available to non-native speakers. As a result, Lumsden's work consisted mostly of grammatical rules and observations. Where examples were given, they were taken from lexical and grammatical works. In certain instances, couplets were quoted: significantly, they were not deployed to explain grammatical rules, but to demonstrate correct pronunciation.[127] No dialogues were included, since this would have constituted imitation. Even the imitation of classical works, resting on the 'superior authority of those writers, whose Works they are accustomed to read and admire', was discouraged, since such attempts would only undermine the grammatical system.[128]

However, there were contradictions in Lumsden's ideas. On the one hand, native speakers possessed an unsurpassable advantage over all others. On the other, he also implied that his grammar would erase such disadvantages as it would allow the student to access any text and negotiate any situation in which Persian was required, based on his knowledge of grammatical principles alone. These points of conflict bear a striking resemblance to the mid-eighteenth century debate between the famous Indo-Persian scholars, Ārzū and Ḥazīn, and it is worth speculating on whether Lumsden had been

[126] Ibid.
[127] Lumsden, *A Grammar*
[128] Lumsden, *A Grammar,* p.vii

directly influenced by the writings of the two scholars. Certainly the poetry of Ḥazīn was admired by William Jones and his readers, who would have included Lumsden.[129] Lumsden himself claimed to be responding to concerns voiced by 'Oriental grammarians' about the deficiencies of existing English grammars of Persian. However, this is complicated by the fact that although Lumsden claimed to reject European grammatical sciences, his work was in dialogue with European ideas about philology by default, since he formulated it as a response to the etymological system espoused by John Horne Tooke (1736-1812) and which was immensely influential in Britain at the time. Whether he was responding primarily to Tooke or to Ḥazīn, however, Lumsden chose to privilege a theoretical and abstract approach to language over the 'natural' acquirements learned through trial and error, and imitation.[130]

Calling on the authority of established writers was, of course, a strategy common to European and Persianate traditions alike: Indo-Persian scholars would deploy instances of the past usage of words to indicate their correct function and meaning.[131] Similarly, William Jones had also defended his use of pronouns in the following manner: 'I here use his self and their selves instead of the corrupted words himself and themselves; in which usage I am justified by the authority of Sidney, and of other writers in the reign of Elizabeth'.[132] Lumsden's approach to language broke away from this reliance on tradition, and placed authority more firmly within the bounds of what he saw as a more objective system.

[129] Eva Jeremias notes that Lumsden appeared to be aware of the works of Turkish and Arabic grammarians. Jeremias, 'Matthew Lumsden's *Grammar*', pp.137-8; W. Jones, *Poems, Consisting Chiefly of Translations,* p.198

[130] Lumsden, *A Grammar,* p.xxiii

[131] The issue of how to acquire correct language became a point of conflict in the Arzū/Ḥazīn controversy. Dudney, 'A Desire for Meaning', pp.171-4

[132] W. Jones, *GPL,* p.32

It is noteworthy that in very different ways, both Lumsden and William Jones favoured a rather ahistorical approach, and saw Persian as an essentially fixed entity which was, however, prone to corruption. The fixed or pure aspect of the language existed only in its written forms: despite his claims to practicality, Lumsden found the act of speaking or 'living' the language corruptive in itself. This appears to be in direct contrast with Francis Gladwin's *Moonshee* and other works of the 1790s, which had incorporated sample dialogues. A change had occurred in the generation between Gladwin and Lumsden. However, rather than viewing Lumsden's work as a discursive break with his immediate predecessors, it is more accurate to see him as taking their ideas to their logical conclusion, albeit in a more intellectual way. Here, it is important to note that Gladwin, Robert Jones and Hadley had been constrained by the imperative of finding a market, and thus had to produce works which would, in the first instance, sell. Lumsden, on the other hand, was assured of funding from the Company, and the usage of his books by his own students at Fort William College. The proliferation of grammars, particularly those making use of dialogues, were the first responses to colonial anxieties about *munshī*s and their own position as aliens in India. Lumsden's new approach stemmed from the same concerns.

Whereas William Jones had distanced himself from the profession of a 'mere' linguist, and regarded the acquisition of languages as an instrument to gaining further ethnographic knowledge,[133] Matthew Lumsden belonged to a generation which saw Jones as a 'poet rather than a philologist'.[134] Lumsden saw the language itself as the object of learning, comparing it to a puzzle to be solved.[135] Lumsden's views on the logical nature of language went so far as to consider Arabic 'perfect' since he thought that it had been

[133] W. Jones, *Discourses delivered before the Asiatic Society and Miscellaneous Papers, on the Religion, Poetry, Literature, etc. of the Nations of India,* ed. J. Elmes (2 vols, London, 1824), ii, pp.90-92
[134] Forbes, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, p.i
[135] Lumsden, *A Grammar*, p.iv

formulated according to a set of complex grammatical principles, rather than evolving naturally. Since each language had its own internal logic, Lumsden argued that European grammatical principles were not appropriate tools for explaining the rules of Oriental languages such as Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit.

This said, Lumsden did hold the concept of a 'universal grammar' to be both desirable and possible. The idea that all languages had a common origin, and therefore must share a basic, universal structure, was an old one in Europe, and had its source in the old Babel model of language.[136] Most of Lumsden's predecessors – most notably William Jones - subscribed to this notion. In this sense, Lumsden was not saying anything new when he spoke of a 'general grammar'. Nonetheless, his approach to this concept was significantly different in that it did not treat 'universal grammar' as a phenomenon to be revealed or discovered, but one that had to be constructed artificially, by the employment of human reason and rationality. Whereas Jones and other early orientalists attempted to trace the similarities of languages in order to work out their familial connections, Lumsden and his generation wanted to use these relations between languages in order to create a universal system that could give access to any language, once the basic rules were learnt:

> [Let us] turn our attention to those of Asia; and more especially to the noble and sublime structure of its two learned Languages, that of Arabia, […] and the Sanscrit Language, […] To these, if we add the very extraordinary system of Speech […] of the Chinese Empire, it is probable that the most important questions of General Grammar may be settled on a basis never to be shaken.[137]

Here, Lumsden implied that only by combining and accumulating knowledge of different languages, would it be possible to create a grammatical framework comprehensive enough to encompass all the languages of the world.

[136] Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* p.42
[137] Lumsden, *A Grammar*, p.xxii

The key feature was Lumsden's emphasis on the difference of languages and their grammatical features, rather than their similarity. While he did not deny that etymological and grammatical resemblances between different languages existed, Lumsden argued that existing grammatical formations taken from one language were not sufficient to understand another. For this reason, Lumsden's method involved not a reduction of languages to their basic common features, but an accumulation of their differences. Lumsden also privileged older languages, like his predecessors. However, his reasons for this were new, since he was of the opinion that 'unmixed' or 'pure' languages were better suited to his purpose, since they displayed their grammatical differences more clearly, rather than because he expected them to be more similar since they were more closely related.[138] Lumsden's distrust of etymology may be explained by the same reasoning: in his attack on Horne Tooke's *Diversions of Purley*, Lumsden showed that etymological similarities between languages were usually historical and incidental, and did not further their structural analysis and understanding.[139] While Lumsden's reliance on 'pure' and ancient languages meant that his view of language was also inevitably tied with the idea of history and historical change, it was in a very different way from that of William Jones and even Horne Tooke.[140]

Although Lumsden's *Grammar* is important for a discussion of approaches to Persian, he was not alone in preferring a structural approach to language. This shift was part of a broader change in scholarly methods. Lumsden's ideas were similar to those of his colleague at Fort William, John Gilchrist (who held the position of Professor of Hindustani), who rejected the orthographical features of language to the preferment of a deeper knowledge of the language's structure. Even more explicitly focused on the

[138] Lumsden, *A Grammar,* pp.xxiii-xxvi
[139] Lumsden, *A Grammar,* pp.xi-xv
[140] Ibid.

practical aspects of language than Lumsden, Gilchrist had attempted to create what he called a 'universal character', or a system of orthography by which all other languages could be represented in a Roman script. This would be easily learned by beginners in England and India alike, and allow them to attend to the niceties of the oral and structural aspects of what was known as the Hindustani language.[141] This made for more standardized textbooks which were a far cry from Gladwin's *Moonshee,* in which the word 'moonshee' itself was not spelled consistently.[142] Despite the fact that those working on other languages may have shared similar opinions to Lumsden, it was only in the context of Persian that these ideas were most clearly elaborated. The reason for this is that in dealing with Indian vernaculars, scholars such as Gilchrist had to emphasize not only their practical utility, but also justify their potential as literary and systematic languages worth studying. As a result, Gilchrist's grammar of Hindustani offered long and frequent extracts from Rekhta poets, most notably Mīr Muḥammad Rafī' "Saudā" (1713-81), in an effort to raise the prestige of the language in the eyes of his readers.[143] While Gilchrist's teaching technique made use of dialogues and the spoken forms of Hindustani, he did so reluctantly, claiming that such methods made students lazy and unsystematic, as they relied on rote.[144]

Aside from his *Grammar*, Lumsden also superintended the publication of six volumes, containing portions of twelve works in Persian. These were edited by Maulawī Allāhdād and Maulawī Karam Ḥusain, and were the class books from which students read and translated sections. It is significant that Lumsden did not integrate excerpts from these works into his own *Grammar,* or even mention them, as was the norm amongst earlier

[141] J. Gilchrist, *Orienti-Occidental Tuitionary Pioneer*, (London, 1826), p.2
[142] Gladwin, *Persian Moonshee,* p.8
[143] Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism and Grammatical Representation,* p.16. Rekhta' (lit. 'mixed') refers to a genre of Hindi/Urdu poetry written in a highly Persianised register, which came to be conflated with Urdu in the twentieth century.
[144] Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism and Grammatical Representation,* p.192

grammar-writers. The grammar and structure of a language was considered by Lumsden to be separate from its literary and spoken forms. Moreover, all the works included in the *Selections for the Use of the Students of the Persian Class* were those reckoned to be 'classical Persian'.[145] In nineteenth century terms, this meant that these were works which reflected the highest point of a civilization's literary tradition, or its golden age, which displayed correct usage of rules which had already been laid down by then.[146] Thus no texts written after the mid-seventeenth century were included, when Persianate (and particularly Mughal) culture was considered by colonial observers to have gone into decline. The golden age of Islam was thought to correspond to the European medieval period, and it was this era from which the texts were chosen. Further, no histories, or ethnographic texts were included in Lumsden's selection, but only those which aided the student in 'correct' language learning. It is uncertain if these works were also picked for their literary, ethical or aesthetic value, and given that only excerpts were included, it seems unlikely. The logic was that they progressed from the easiest to the most difficult, and were thus chosen with their grammatical structure in mind.[147]

Thus, the first generation of orientalists saw language as an instrument for acquiring knowledge justified by the religious, historical and ethnographic value it had for Europeans. The second generation of orientalists, however, saw language as the object of study rather than merely the means.[148] Matthew Lumsden's discussion of the study of Persian, for instance, shows that he viewed such learning as being a contribution to a wider

[145] *Selections for the Use of the Students of the Persian Class,* ed. M. K. Ḥusain and M. Allāhdād (6 vols, Calcutta, 1809-11). The works included were: *Aḵẖlāq-i Muḥsinī, Zulaiḵẖā, Gulistān, Bostān, Aḵẖlāq-i Jalālī, Lailá Majnūn, Ruq'āt-i Jāmi, Ṣuḥbat al-Abrār, Bahār Dānish, Dīwān-i Sa'dī , Inshā-i Abū'l Faẓl*

[146] U. Walter, 'The Classical Age as a Historical Epoch', in K. H. Kinzl (ed.) *A Companion to the Classical Greek World* (Chichester, 2010) , pp.1-25, esp. 4-7

[147] T. Roebuck, *The Annals of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta, 1819), p.289

[148] Trautmann, *Aryans and British India,* p.39-40. Trautmann notes this shift acknowledged by William Jones, but does not find it as significant as Jones' discovery of the Indo-Aryan language family and its inclusion of Sanskrit.

body of knowledge, which in turn would aid further understanding of languages.[149] The changing nature of Persian textbooks and learning methods between the 1770s and the 1810s should not suggest that radical changes were always visible in practice. It is more accurate to say that they reflect changes in approaches and attitudes rather than major changes in the classroom, where students still relied on rote learning, translation exercises and a mixture of Persian grammar and speech, all acquired with the aid of a *munshī* or professor.

Moreover, Lumsden's difficult and lengthy work, with few examples to aid the student, did not gain the same popularity amongst students as it did with contemporary scholars. As a result, Lumsden's grammar was used to inform further works which combined both approaches – theory with practical aids such as dialogues and excerpts – in the next few decades. One example is Duncan Forbes' (1798-1868) *A Grammar of the Persian Language* (1828), which attempted to combine Lumsden's grammar, 'which we conceive necessary for all who wish to excel in this elegant language,' with 'appropriate examples from the best authors'.[150] Forbes claimed that despite the utility of Lumsden's work, its size, price and complexity made it unsuitable for beginners.[151] Such later adaptations and criticism of Lumsden's works notwithstanding, it is clear that his work evidenced a new way of thinking about Persian, as an abstracted entity, independent of its works or speakers.

4. Colonial Divergences: Responses in the Metropole

How influential were these ideas and approaches in shaping the ways in which readers and scholars in Britain thought about Persian? During this period, a number of

[149] Lumsden, *A Grammar,* pp.xxii-xxv
[150] Forbes, *A Grammar of the Persian Language,* pp.i-iv
[151] Ibid.

works on Persian grammar and literature were produced by orientalists in Britain. However, it is apparent that the developments discussed above did not materialise in the metropole, and were the result of a specific set of colonial conditions in which Persian was encountered and employed. Instead, scholars based in Britain continued to place an emphasis on Persian literary works as both the means and end to learning the language. Such scholars formed belonged to the same school of thought as William Jones, who had come to achieve an iconic status in the British imagination.

Two examples of such works were Edward Moises' *The Persian Interpreter* (1792) and Samuel Rousseau's (1763-1820) *The Flowers of Persian Literature* (1804). Moises was a churchman and school-master in Newcastle. Born into an educated family, he was the founding member of the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society, and involved in the printing of the Arabic Bible in Newcastle in 1811.[152] Rousseau, by contrast, was a London-based printer's apprentice. He appears to have had a talent for languages and was largely self-taught, although it is likely he also took lessons from Mirzā Abū Ṭālib "Landanī" (1752-1805/6), when the latter visited Britain.[153] He went on to set up his own press, from which he printed works in the Arabic and *nasta'līq* script.[154] Despite differences in education and background, both men treated Persian as Jones' generation of orientalists would have done: as belonging to a set of classical and Biblical languages, positioned next to Arabic, Latin and Hebrew.[155] Accordingly, both scholars placed emphasis on Persian's value as a literary and historical language (see table below). Edward Moises' work offered extracts from ten Persian works of prose and verse, as well as the Gospel of Matthew which

[152] 'Obituary – The Rev. Edward Moises', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 177 (May 1845), pp.553-4
[153] 'Obituary – Samuel Rousseau', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 128 (Dec 1820), pp.569-70; S. Rousseau, *The Flowers of Persian Literature* (London, 1804), front-matter. Abū Ṭālib is discussed in the following chapter.
[154] Ibid.
[155] 'Obituary – The Rev. Edward Moises', pp.553-4; 'Obituary – Samuel Rousseau', pp.569-70

he borrowed from Gladwin's *Moonshee.*[156] Rousseau was even more thorough, as he included excerpts from no less than twenty works, ranging from histories, geographical compendiums and travel accounts, in addition to well-known Persian poets.[157]

Table 2.1: Contents of Edward Moises' and Samuel Rousseau's grammars.[158]

Moises, *The Persian Interpreter*	**Rousseau, *The Flowers of Persian Literature***
Excerpts from the following authors or texts:	
• *The Institutes of Timur* trans. Major Davy • Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī, *Ẓafar-nāma* • Mīr Ḵẖwānd, *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Akhbār* • Nūr al-Dīn Jāmī, *Bahāristān* • Sa'dī Shīrāzī, *Gulistān, Bostān* • Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Maṣnawī* • Abū'l Qāsim Firdausī, *Shāh-nāma* • Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī, *Dīwān* • Ḥusain Wā'iẓ Kāshifī, *Anwarī Suhailī* • *Anjīl-i Matī* (Gospel of Matthew, trans. William Chambers)	• Sultān Muḥammad b. Tāj al-Dīn Ḥasan, *Tuḥfat al-Majālis* • Ḥamdullāh al-Mustaufī, *Nuzhat al-Qulūb*, • Muḥammad 'Alī Hazīn, *Taẕkirat al-Aḥwāl* • *Haft Iqlīm* • 'Alī b. Busṭamī, *Nigāristān* • *The Institutes of Timur* trans. Major Davy • Niẓāmī, 'Miscellaneous extracts' • Ā'ṣim Kūfī, *Ta'rīḵẖ-i Ā'ṣim Kūfī* • Al-Ṭabarī *Ta'rīḵẖ al-Ṭabarī* • Abū'l Qāsim Firdausī, *Shāh-nāma* • Ḵẖāqānī, *Dīwān* • Sa'dī Shīrāzī, *Dīwān*, *Pand-namā, Gulistān, Bostān* • Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī, *Dīwān* • Nūr al-Dīn 'Abdul Raḥmān Jāmī • Rafī' al-Dīn • *History of Christ*, by Jerome Xavier • Mirzā 'Abdul Raḥīm of Isfahan, 'A story in modern Persian, presented to W. Jones' • Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Maṣnawī*

Whereas William Jones had been unable to provide such samples in his *Grammar*, and suggested only a list of the most important works, Moises and Rousseau followed in

[156] E. Moises, *The Persian Interpreter* (Newcastle, 1792)
[157] Rousseau, *Flowers of Persian Literature*
[158] Table collated from: Moises, *Persian Interpreter*; Rousseau, *Flowers of Persian Literature*

his steps and worked to provide these examples. As Moises candidly put it, while it could be wished that Jones or Richardson ('names dear to every oriental scholar') had edited more Persian works, 'the drudgery of collating manuscripts is better adapted to moderate abilities, aided by patient industry, than to genius and brilliant talents.'[159] It was in this spirit of 'drudgery' that Moises envisaged his labours. Similarly, Rousseau also saw his work as bringing to fruition Jones' unfulfilled promises.[160] He also attached an essay on Persian language literature, which was based on Jones' and Richardson's observations.[161]

Thus, the study of the Persian language remained primarily an aesthetic and ethnological project for orientalists in Britain. The new generation of grammatical works and ideas in India had largely divorced itself from, for instance, the researches of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and thus carved out a separate space for the study of language alone. In contrast, the grammars of Moises and Rousseau borrowed from a range of colonial and metropolitan scholars' works in translation. These included Francis Gladwin's grammar, William Chambers' translation of the Gospel of Matthew, as well as the contents of *The Oriental Collections*, a London-based journal instituted by William Ouseley on his return from India.[162] Together, they sought to move beyond the limitations of the practical grammars of the colony (such as the contents of Gladwin's grammar alone), by including as many literary extracts as possible. Samples from literary works were reframed to constitute a linguistic training, in the process also maintaining the tradition of linguistic study as a corollary of literary, religious and ethno-historical interest.

This divergence between Britain and India was visible amongst readers and students as well. For colonialists in India, the most popular ways of learning Persian

[159] Moises, *Persian Interpreter,* p.3
[160] Rousseau, *Flowers of Persian Literature,* p.vi
[161] Rousseau, *Flowers of Persian Literature,* p.1
[162] W. Ouseley (ed.) *The Oriental Collections* (London, 1797)

remained those which combined more modern grammatical methods with dialogues. In England, however, these practical and theoretical works received less attention. One of the most sustained private responses to language learning, particularly Persian, in Britain is offered by the diary of Alexander Leith Ross (1797-1821). The son of a Scottish minister, Ross was a talented student of languages, and recorded his experiences of self-learning from a range of works between 1817 and 1819. At this point he was between twenty and twenty-two years old. His diary gives an important insight into the ways in which a reader who had never travelled outside Europe coped with learning Persian. Ross's approach to Persian followed that of the older tradition of biblical orientalists and literary scholars. Persian was one among many world languages that Ross sought to acquire. In addition to Persian, Ross learned Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Hindustani, Chinese, Spanish, German, Portuguese and Hebrew.[163] Ross provides an importance source of comparison with officers situated in the colony, and shows that marginal orientalist scholars outside the Company's bureaucracy operated quite differently to their colonial counterparts.

Like many of his contemporaries and predecessors in the late eighteenth century, Ross's observations often took the form of comparisons between different languages. While Ross's diary did not provide emotional reflections on his reading, it did express his opinions about the authors he found interesting. To begin with the question of Persian language grammars, Ross offered comprehensive overview of some of the textbooks he had encountered, namely, those by William Jones and Matthew Lumsden:

> Lumsden's performance exhibits a good deal of industry, but little taste, and less judgment: yet he pretends to find fault with the elegant work of Sir William Jones […] The grammar of Sir William presents the language in an alluring and attractive view. It is formed upon such a comprehensive

[163] A. L. Ross, *Remains of A. L. Ross with a Memoir of his Life* (Aberdeen, 1822), p.xxxvii

> and yet simple plan, that to master the elementary principles is to the student, a work not of drudgery, but of pleasure.[164]

In contrast, Ross claimed, Lumsden's grammar was encumbered with technical terms unfamiliar to most students of European languages. Lumsden's textbook was a disappointment for Leith Ross because it failed to make Persian familiar, which, as discussed earlier, was one of the most important function that grammars were meant to fulfil. Lumsden's lack of interest – and hence, failure to evoke interest – in Persian literature, and his dry treatment of Persian as a dissociated object, met with Ross's disapproval. Although experienced scholars with a particular interest in linguistics expressed their approval of Lumsden's work, William Jones still commanded the admiration of students new to Persian. Ross's criticism of Lumsden demonstrates that the latter's work did not necessarily have an immediate, or even positive, influence. Rather, new instructive texts and manuals were treated with scepticism in comparison with established scholars. In contrast, Leith Ross was unrestrained in his praise of William Jones, writing that 'no European [had] trod the path of Oriental literature with more success.'[165] Ross had read William Jones' Latin *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentarii* [Commentary on the Poetry of the Asiatics] and claimed that it was the best introduction to oriental poetry since it was the only one which gave any sense of the character of Persian.

Leith Ross's attitudes towards grammar and language-learning thus matched those of other metropolitan orientalists such as Edward Moises and Samuel Rousseau, who continued to follow the method of learning influenced by William Jones and other Biblical orientalists, privileging etymological and poetic discussions over abstract grammatical rules. Another clergyman, Stephen Weston (1747-1830), authored a work entitled, *A specimen of the conformity of the European languages, particularly the English, with the*

[164] Ross, *Remains,* pp.22-24
[165] Ibid.

Oriental languages, especially the Persian.[166] Lacking any introduction or explanation, this was a reference work for the use of those interested in tracing linguistic lineages. Similarly, Reverend John Orman (fl.1826), a Cambridge scholar, penned an 'Essay on Oriental Poetry and the Classics' which drew upon William Jones's descriptions of Persian literature to present the poems of Ḥāfiẓ to his readers.[167] Ḥāfiẓ was compared with Anacreon and Horace, and Orman promised a future work comparing Firdausī, Homer and Virgil.[168] Orman also expressed his debt to Samuel Rousseau's translation of Ḥāfiẓ, of which he had made use. In such works, shared etymological lineages, as well as literary and linguistic resemblance were stressed, rather than grammatical difference. In contrast, the study of languages by Britons in India had departed from these older attitudes, and followed a new trajectory based on the grammatical and abstract study of Persian literature predicated on linguistic (and colonial) difference.

5. Conclusion

This chapter has argued that many of the features now associated with linguistic modernity, or the conception of language as a thing in itself, to be studied for its own sake, developed in the colonial context. However, these changes were the products of specific circumstances. Colonial feelings of estrangement and alienations, and concomitant anxieties and paranoias regarding the trustworthiness of the Company's Indian subjects, resulted in the shaping of these new attitudes towards language learning. In particular, the desire to control or eliminate the *munshī* resulted in the formalization of Persian study, and efforts to contain the *munshī*'s activities within the framework of colonial institutions. Beginning with a turn towards dialogue-based and practical approaches to learning Persian

[166] S. Weston, *A specimen of the conformity of the European languages, particularly the English, with the Oriental languages, especially the Persian; in the order of the alphabet* (London, 1802)
[167] J. Orman, 'Essay on Oriental Poetry and the Classics'. CUL, MS. Add. 2774
[168] Ibid.

in the 1790s, colonial linguists developed completely abstract conceptions of language in the early nineteenth century. Divorced from contexts of literary and everyday use, language was presented as a system disconnected from its expressive value. Following its own internal logic, externally influenced changes were treated as irrelevant corruptions rather than developments.

In contrast, the practices of metropolitan orientalists towards Persian displayed considerable continuity with their eighteenth-century predecessors. As Chapter One argued, the study of texts with a specifically literary – or aesthetic – character dominated approaches towards Persian in Britain. By the early nineteenth century, few changes, if any, had taken place in the metropole. The only area of overlap between colonial and metropolitan practices was that a tendency to view the 'classical' period of Persian literature as one which ended in the seventeenth century had developed, and to value works from this period above all others. While orientalists in Britain valued these works for their aesthetic and expressive appeal, colonial orientalists found them to be useful for demonstrating correct use of language.

Although Indian intermediaries suffered a loss of authority from the point of view of colonial observers, the *munshī*s employed by the Company participated in alternative networks of literary production during this period. These provided an alternative epistemological framework with its own rules of scholarly authority. Belonging to these circles allowed Indians employed by the Company to build scholarly reputations and further their own careers. The following chapter examines the careers and attitudes of such Indo-Persian scholars in detail.

Chapter 3: 'A Body of Learned Natives': Indo-Persian Scholars and Literary Authority, c.1790-1815

1. Introduction

> It is not very easy for an European to procure a sight of the animadversions passed upon the conduct of himself or his friends; some artifice is requisite to obtain samples of the method employed to amuse the reading portion of the native community at the expense of persons differing so widely in the habits of their public and private life. [Emma Roberts, 1825][1]

> Is it conceivable, that, in his journey from Calcutta to Travancore, Dr. Buchanan would proclaim his sentiments respecting Hindoos and Mahomedans? Is it likely that the Europeans on the Coast, supposing them to have known them, would publish them to the natives? Would they be detailed in the Madras or Calcutta newspapers? Do the natives in every, or any quarter, of Hindostan read these newspapers? [John Shore, 1808][2]

Writing for completely different audiences and ends, the English traveller and journalist Emma Roberts (1794-1840) and John Shore, the ex-governor-general of India, both expressed the view that Europeans and Indians participated in separate social and intellectual spheres in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. While Shore doubted whether Indians ever read English newspapers, Roberts argued that it was impossible for Europeans to reach the materials circulated within educated Indian society. The two writers suggested that Europeans and Indians behaved differently depending on the contexts in which they were operating, and that certain social experiences were thus impossible to access. The previous chapter suggested that key features of the colonial engagement with oriental languages stemmed from increased feelings of British alienation and paranoia in India. This chapter will examine the reverse of the coin: that is, the lives, interests and connections of the *munshī*s of Fort William College. It is argued that Indo-Persian

[1] E. Roberts, *Scenes and characteristics of Hindostan; with sketches of Anglo-Indian society*, (3 vols, London, 1825), iii, p.188

[2] J. Shore, *Considerations on the Practicability, Policy, and Obligation, of Communicating to the Natives of India the Knowledge of Christianity*, (London, 1808), p.18

identities were sustained by networks of scholars and poets who moved between different patrons and engaged in literary production beyond the demands of their colonial jobs. Furthermore, the Company represented only a fraction of the experiences of many of these individuals who worked hard to integrate themselves within the frameworks of authority which underpinned Persianate literary identities and their legacies.

In so doing, this chapter highlights the multifaceted social and aesthetic concerns and experiences of members of the Persianised elite in India. Although the last decade of the eighteenth century witnessed a loss in the authority of Indian intellectuals, this shift was largely limited to the British point of view. By contrast, Indians in the employ of the Company drew their authority from a range of sources such as scholarly contacts, patrons, personal experiences of travel as well as individual intellectual and poetic accomplishments. This said, it should not be supposed that these groups were insulated from others - including the colonial state - or even sought to be so. Although Persianised Indians engaged with the colonial state and the ideas generated by the imperatives of colonial knowledge-making, they constituted a social configuration which was able to maintain a distinct identity over the course of the nineteenth century. Despite the fact that Indian scholars were often ignored in imperial historiography and records, many individuals managed to carve out a niche for themselves within the Persianate world during their lifetime. This chapter seeks to uncover and explain the survival of literary legacies of the Persianised elite in India under the pressures of colonial rule. In this sense, the social function of literary activities in building specific identities and relationships is emphasized. Further, it highlights the activities of Indians outside of the interests and expectations of the state, moving beyond a discussion of the extent to which Indians did or did not engage with colonial ideas. The continuing evolution of a Persianate literary and intellectual world alongside the colonial encounter is significant to our understanding of the Indo-Persian

episteme as a dynamic space in the early nineteenth century.[3] Despite being in the paradoxical position of being simultaneously integral and marginalized in British frameworks of scholarly authority and knowledge production, *munshī*s were able to continue participating in the construction and performance of literary networks outside the state – in some cases deploying the stage offered by colonial institutions in order to do so.

The assumption that Indians did not interact with European ideas and texts has been addressed by historians such as Priya Joshi, Christopher Bayly, and others, who have highlighted Indian engagement with colonial ideas and technologies.[4] For the first part of the nineteenth century, much of the emphasis has been on emergent Bengali middle-classes (*bhādrālok*), who were deeply influenced by western education.[5] In the context of Indo-Muslim society, Gulfishan Khan has considered the ways in which late-eighteenth century scholars viewed Europe, bringing to light a rich body of writings in Persian.[6] Such studies have tended to focus on interfaces of exchange, such as particular institutions or milieus where colonial-Indian interactions were concentrated. There are many advantages to be drawn from examining such nodes of intercultural activity, framed as sites of contestation and debate rather than the transfer of ideas. As Margrit Pernau has noted, focusing on the boundaries between colonizer and colonized yields important insights into the permeability and limitations of colonial structures.[7] However, there is also a danger that such interfaces

[3] I use 'Indo-Persian episteme' rather than Bayly's concept of the 'Indian ecumene' since the Bayly deploys 'ecumene' to signify the embryo of later Indian public spheres which debated religious reform and nationalism, and 'mounted a critique' of the colonial state. While there were significant overlaps between the 'Indian ecumene' and the Indo-Persian episteme, they did not overlay each other neatly. The latter signifies a more cosmopolitan geography, and interests that may or may not have included reform or patriotism at different times. Bayly, *Empire and Information,* pp.180-211

[4] Joshi, *In Another Country;* C. A. Bayly, *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire* (Cambridge, 2011), B. A. Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement: Vidyasagar and Cultural Encounter in Bengal,* (New Delhi, 1996)

[5] Joshi, *In Another Country;* G. Viswanathan, *Masks of conquest: literary study and British rule in India* (London, 1990) .

[6] Khan, 'Indian Muslim Perceptions'

[7] M. Pernau, 'Introduction' in M. Pernau (ed.), *The Delhi College: traditional elites, the colonial state, and education before 1857* (New Delhi, 2006), pp.2-3

can seem to stand for the whole picture, producing an image of widespread interaction, when in fact the relatively weak colonial state's penetration into Indian society remained very limited.[8] While the reliance of Britons on Indians in the production of colonial knowledge has been stressed by many scholars, few have explored the wider contexts - beyond the interests of the colonial state - in which Indian intermediaries operated in the early phase of colonial rule. As a result, the ways in which these interfaces are studied can be unequally weighted. In studies of Fort William College and the Delhi College, for instance, Indian agency has all too often been measured in terms of Indian interactions with European knowledge or colonial schemes for the promotion of vernacular literatures.[9] The unarticulated assumption underlying such an approach is that the ability and willingness of Indians to take up, appropriate or react to European ideas reflected on their capacity to be modern.

Conversely, the extent to which Indians partook in social and intellectual activities beyond the purview of the colonial state is in need of further attention. Farina Mir, Francesca Orsini and Raisur Rahman, amongst others, have crossed the bounds of the colonial state to examine literary and print cultures, as well as regional centres of identity-formation to reveal thriving cultural spheres which functioned largely independently of state patronage.[10] These studies focus on the late nineteenth century. There are, of course, exceptions. Seema Alavi's work on Islamic medical traditions in precolonial and colonial

[8] E.g. Alavi, *Islam and healing*, pp.7-8; J. E. Wilson, 'Early Colonial India', pp.958-67

[9] Kopf, *British Orientalists and the Bengal Renaissance,* pp.253-75; G. Minault, 'Qiran Al-Sa'adain: the dialogue between Eastern and Western learning at Delhi College' in Malik, *Perspectives of Mutual Encounter,* pp.260-77; K. Raj, 'Colonial Encounters and the Forging of New Knowledge and National Identities: Great Britain and India, 1760-1850', *Osiris: Nature and Empire: Science and the Colonial Enterprise,* 15 (2000), pp.119-34; I. V. Peterson, 'The Schools of Serfoji II of Tanjore: Education and princely modernity in early nineteenth-century India' in M. Dodson and B. A. Hatcher (eds.), *Trans-colonial Modernities in South Asia* (London, 2012), pp.15-44.

[10] Mir, *The Social Space of Language*; Orsini, *Print and Pleasure*; Anindita Ghosh; M. R. Rahman, *Locale, everyday Islam, and modernity: Qasbah towns and Muslim life in colonial India* (New Delhi, 2015); Ghosh, *Power in Print*

India is a case in point. Alavi argues for a need to contextualise *yūnānī* medicine during the colonial period in the context of Indo-Persian medical thought, rather than attempting to measure its consistency with European medicine during this period.[11] Although the East India Company features prominently in her analysis, Alavi shows how the interests and aims of most practitioners did not necessarily overlap with the agendas of the colonial state, despite interaction and sometimes fruitful engagement.[12] Also relevant is Farhan Nizami's earlier thesis on Muslim responses to the British presence in early nineteenth-century north India. Nizami shows that *madrasa*s which were not dependent on state patronage fared much better in the first half of the nineteenth century than their government-supported counterparts.[13] For the most part, however, the notion that Indians were inherently fascinated by the British still persists for the period under discussion. Contributing, thus, to literature which emphasizes the weakness of the colonial state, as well as the careers and interests of Indians beyond colonialism, this chapter studies the period from 1790 to 1815 to argue that the East India Company had a minor impact on the construction and development of Persianate identities and literary networks in India. Employing the interface of the College of Fort William as a point of departure rather than a representative of the whole picture, the chapter reveals the much wider networks which structured, and were structured by, Indo-Persian literary activity.

Section One examines the construction of scholarly and literary authority in *taẕkira*s (biographical anthologies) of poets. It focuses on *K̲h̲ulāṣat al-Afkār* by Mirzā Abū Ṭ̲ālib, and also briefly considers *Riyāẓ al-Wifāq* by Ẕu'lfiqār 'Alī K̲h̲ān "Mast" (fl.1814) – both of which centred on Calcutta and its environs. Although Abū Ṭ̲ālib was in the

[11] Alavi, *Islam and Healing,* pp.1-17, 54-99
[12] Alavi, *Islam and Healing,* p.302
[13] F. A. Nizami, 'Madrasahs, scholars and saints : Muslim response to the British presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab, 1803-1857' (Phd thesis, University of Oxford, 1983)

employ of the Company for much of his later career, his *taẕkira* demonstrates the extent of his networks of patronage and friendship beyond the Company's officials. Mast's work comprises notices of poets in Calcutta and Benaras, and provides a useful point of comparison with Ṭālib's work. Together these *taẕkira*s highlight the ways in which individuals were integrated into Persianate literary-historical memory at the turn of the eighteenth century. Section Two examines texts produced at the College of Fort William, and shows that the Indians involved in translating, editing or composing works for the East India Company often had more than one audience in mind. Accordingly, Indian authors and editors used these works as an opportunity for enhancing their own authority and reputations. Despite the fact that colonial methods of textual attribution erased or reduced the role played by Indians in the production of such texts, the works produced were able to speak to multiple readers, beyond the colonial state. The personas projected by these individuals closely followed the kind of information upon which *taẕkira*s were based, and as a result, ensured that they were recognised as authors, poets and scholars in their own right in Indo-Persian circles

However, not all the Company's employees achieved such recognition. Section Three offers a study of the career of Maulawī Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn (fl.1814), a *munshī* at Fort William College, whose exclusive reliance on the Company denied him a literary legacy in the long nineteenth century. Finally, a brief account of contemporary Indian attitudes towards the distinction between 'classical' and 'modern' Persian literature is offered. Here it is suggested that although clear opinions on these issues were offered by Indians, they do not appear to have been taken up by Europeans. By examining the different aspects of Indian involvement in Persianate textual production, this chapter aims to show how seemingly overlapping spheres of indigenous and colonial scholarship concealed deeper rifts in attitudes towards literary and scholarly authority.

2. *Sharāfat,* Scholarly Authority and *Taẕkira*s: the construction of literary legacies

The most common form of documenting and commemorating Persianate literary lives and works was via the *taẕkira*, which usually took the form of a biographical anthology. The term *taẕkira*, derived from the Arabic *ẕikr* (to remember), means 'recollection'.[14] A genre found in Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Urdu, there were many types of *taẕkira*s, including biographies of saints, 'ulama, poets and princes. This section will be concerned with poetic *taẕkira*s, focusing on the *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār* ('The Essence of Thought', 1792/3), authored by Mirzā Abū Ṭālib Iṣfahānī. Such works sought to record literary legacies, and could embrace a variety of forms. While some *taẕkira*s attempted to be comprehensive in their scope and (for instance) alphabetically included all known poets, others could be organized according to a specific principle, such as a particular region or time period. Although they have long been used as sources of historical information, only recently have *taẕkira*s begun to be analysed as a literary genre.[15]

Moving beyond concerns of historical accuracy, Lawrence and Hermansen have rightly noted the role played by *taẕkira*s in representing the 'relationship between personal authority and place' which in turn structured 'Indo-Muslim identities'.[16] However, 'Indo-Muslim' is better replaced by 'Persianate', particularly in the case of poetic *taẕkira*s, since many such *taẕkira*s were shaped by individuals who did not necessarily have a direct relationship with or interest in Islam.[17] In the context of Urdu poetry, Frances Pritchett has described the role played by *taẕkira*s (derived from the Persian genre) in canon-

[14] J. G. Balachandran, 'Exploring the elite world in the *Siyar al-Awliya*: Urban elites, their lineages and social networks', *IESHR,* 52/3 (2015), pp.241-270

[15] See discussion in W. M. Callewaert and R. Snell, 'Themes in Indian Hagiography' in W. M. Callewaert and R. Snell, *According to tradition: hagiographical writing in India* (Wiesbaden, 1994), pp.1-9

[16] M. K. Hermansen and B. B. Lawrence, 'Indo-Persian Tazkiras as Memorative Communications', in Gilmartin and Lawrence (eds.), *Beyond Turk and Hindu,* pp.149-75

[17] Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community', p.5. Works such as

formation.[18] While this may be true for many *taẕkira*s, this was not the main function of all such works, particularly in the period under discussion. *Taẕkira*s did not always seek to define specific qualtities or standards of poetry, and followed different organizing principles. For instance, Mīr Ḡẖulām Āzād Bilgrāmī's *Māṣir al-Kirām* (Lahore, 1971) listed the poets of Bilgram, while his *K̲ẖazānat al-'Amīra* focused on poets who had received valuable rewards from their patrons.[19] Thus, Stefano Pello's suggestion that the genre's mission was to 'transmit a certain view of literature (and of its producers) and to preserve a specific perspective on cultural memory' is more fitting.[20] While the purpose of canon-formation implies an explicitly literary interest on the part of *taẕkira*-writers, the genre was the representation of social relations within the field of literary production. At the same time, in terms of providing biographical information about poets, the *taẕkira* bears a strong affinity with Islamicate history-writing (*ta'rīk̲ẖ*).[21] Poetic *taẕkira*s should not, however, be treated simply as a sub-genre of *ta'rīk̲ẖ*: rather, by bringing together poets from disparate geographies and histories in single works, they created networks which collapsed such distances. The author of the *taẕkira* – who was the reader and chronicler of the poets of the *taẕkira* - was the point where diverse spatial and temporal connections intersected. In this sense, *taẕkira*s were ultimately self-referential, as they placed their authors at the centre of the literary world, and marked a specific vantage point determined by his own reading, connections, sensibility and literary lineage. Not only did they offer a

[18] F. Pritchett, *Nets of awareness: Urdu poetry and its critics* (Berkeley, 1994), pp.64-6
[19] Ḡẖulām Āzād Bilgrāmī', *Māṣir al-Kirām* (Lahore, 1971); Ḡẖulām Āzād Bilgrāmī', *K̲ẖazānat al-'Amīra* (Kanpur, n.d)
[20] S. Pello, 'Persian Poets on the Streets: The Lore of Indo-Persian Poetic Circles in Late Mughal India', in F. Orsini and K. B. Schofield (ed.), *Tellings and Texts: Music, Literature and Performance in North India* (Cambridge, 2015), pp.303-25
[21] M. Cooperson, 'Biographical Literature' in R. Irwin (ed.) *The New Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 2000), pp.458-73

framework of epistemological authority upheld by learned figures, but they also marked the compiler as authoritative as he placed himself within a chain of transmission.

Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār provides an ideal starting point for exploring these networks of scholars and patrons in the early colonial environment, and as this section argues, highlights the peripheral position occupied by the colonial state in Persianate networks of authority. Mirzā Abū Ṭālib Iṣfahānī is well-known to historians as an Indian who visited southern Africa, France and England between 1799 and 1803, and authored an account in Persian of his travels, *Masīr-i Ṭālibī* (1804).[22] For this reason he was also known as Abū Ṭālib 'Landanī'. The work was later translated into English by Charles Stewart (1764-1837) of the Company's army.[23] However, prior to his travels in Europe, he had produced a number of other works. He edited the *Dīwān-i Ḵẖwāja Ḥāfiẓ* ('The *Dīwān* of Ḥāfiẓ') for the East India Company, published in 1791, and a history of the reign of Āṣaf al- Daula (r.1775-97), *Tafẓīḥ al-Ġẖāfilīn* (1797), which appeared in English as *The Disgrace of the Negligent Ones* in 1885. Apart from these works which were written for his English patrons, Abū Ṭālib also wrote and compiled his *dīwān* (collected poems), a treatise on astronomy, and *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār*. The latter was comprised of two parts: the aforementioned *taẕkira,* or biographical anthology of poets, and a collection of five treatises on music, rhetoric, medicine, ethics and cosmography. The *taẕkira* was begun in 1791, and likely completed in 1793.

At the time of writing *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār,* Abū Ṭālib was employed by the East India Company. That the work was known to colonial officials is evident from the copies

[22] For discussions of Abū Ṭālib's travels: N. Leask, '"Travelling the Other Way": The travels of Mirza Abu Talib Khan (1810) and romantic Orientalism' in Franklin (ed.), *Romantic Representations,* pp.220-37; Khan, 'Indian Muslim Perceptions', pp.12-110

[23] Mirzā Abū Ṭālib Ḵẖān Iṣfahānī, *Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan in Asia, Africa, and Europe,* trans. and ed. C. Stewart (2 vols, Hertfordshire, 1810)

acquired by British libraries: in fact, one manuscript in the India Office was copied by George Swinton (fl.1798-1809), who had taken Persian lessons from Abū Ṭālib in London.[24] However, the *taẕkira*, was not dedicated to his British patrons, or carried out at their request. Instead, *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār* was meant for a wider readership, indicating that Abū Ṭālib's activities extended beyond the Company's interests, even while he benefited from its patronage. As Abū Ṭālib explained in the preface to the work, writing a *taẕkira* had long been his ambition. More specifically, however, the writing of *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār* was also an act of homage and friendship. In the first instance, Abū Ṭālib was inspired by Nawab 'Alī Qulī Ḵẖān (d.1756), whose *taẕkira* Ṭālib had read and admired.[25] *Taẕkira*s often borrowed material from each other: in some instances reproducing entries in their entirety, in others collating information from a number of sources. In this sense, they were crucial to transmitting temporally and geographically distant cultures of literary knowledge and value, while also altering, excluding and adding certain figures and information. Second, Ṭālib's friend, Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain (d. before 1791), had encouraged him to begin the project of abridging this *taẕkira*.[26] It was with Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain's biography, accordingly, that the list of contemporary poets in the *Ḵẖulāṣat* began.[27] Abridging, adding and altering, the sum of Ṭālib's labours was a *taẕkira* consisting of the biographies of over four hundred poets, twenty-three of whom were Abū Ṭālib's contemporaries and friends.[28] While the older poets were simply arranged alphabetically, Ṭālib's contemporaries formed a separate section at the end of this series.

[24] H. Ethe, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office* (2 vols, Oxford, 1903), i, pp.357-8

[25] This was most likely *Riyāẓ al-shu'arā*, a wide-ranging *taẕkira* comprising over 2000 entries and completed in 1748. For a discussion of this *taẕkira*: Kia, 'Contours of Persianate Community', pp.195-290. Dates provided for the poets listed in Abū Ṭālib's work have been difficult to ascertain, since the majority of his contemporaries mentioned were still alive at the time of writing. In some cases they have been approximated from the events described.

[26] MS Elliott 181, fos.2-3r

[27] MS Elliott 181, fos.340-2v

[28] For a full list of the twenty-three contemporary modern poets, see image below.

It is important to note that while Abū Ṭālib's *taẕkira* was first and foremost a Persian anthology, it did not ignore other literary cultures in India. In his preface to the work, Abū Ṭālib referred multiple times to Persian as his own language (*zabān-i mā*), but also mentioned '*hindī*' and Arabic as valuable literary languages. It is not made clear here whether '*hindī*' refers to an Indian vernacular or Sanskrit, but that Ṭālib refers to Persian's position alongside an Indic language is evident. Importantly, in his section on the poet Rāy Sinath Singh "Bīdār" (fl.1756-1791), Ṭālib chose to incorporate some of Bīdār's Braj compositions into the margins of the *taẕkira*.[29] Although he did not expatiate at length on Braj, the presence of Braj in the margins, as well as the contextualization of Persian in reference to Hindi and Arabic, demonstrate Ṭālib's awareness and appreciation of the multilingual context in which Persian literary culture functioned, and with which it interacted. This was in direct contrast to the kinds of works focusing on single Indian languages patronised by the Company from the 1790s onwards, and colonial translations from Persian into 'lower' vernaculars seemingly in need of a literature. Ṭālib's understanding of Persianate literary production as interacting closely with other languages differed from the Company's approach to languages as completely discrete and independent.

The map below shows the connections of the twenty-three contemporaries that Abū Ṭālib lists in the conclusion (*k̲h̲ātima*) of *K̲h̲ulāṣat al-Afkār*. It should be noted that while there were doubtless more links between these poets and their patrons listed in the *taẕkira*, the map only shows these networks from Abū Ṭālib's perspective, and which he chose to include in his work.

[29] This feature was dropped in some copies of the *taẕkira,* including the copy at the Bodleian Library. However, it is present in the manuscript: BL, MS. Isl. 2692

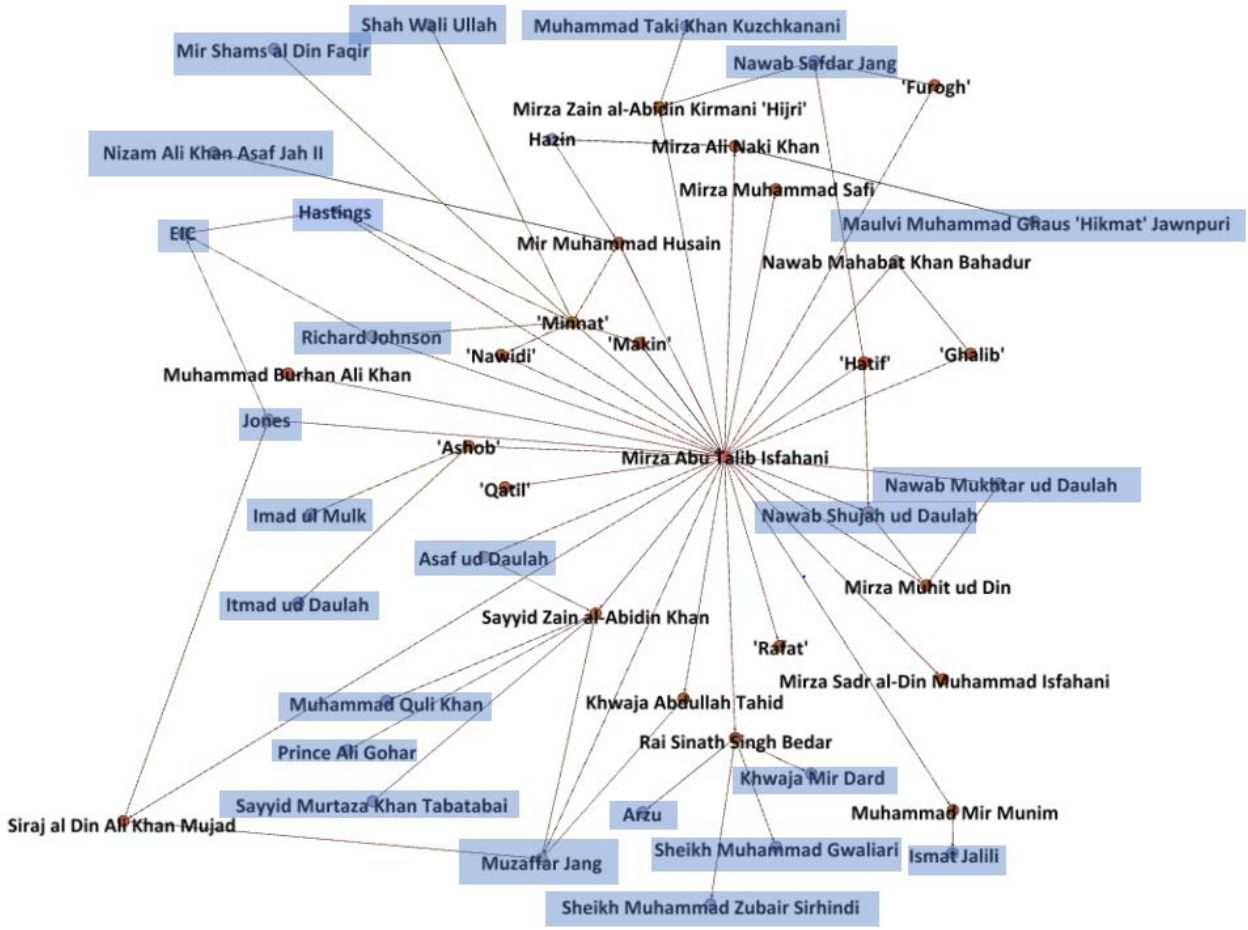


Fig. 3.1: Network of poets and patrons described in *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār.* Red nodes represent the poets whom Abū Ṭālib knew, and devoted a section to in his *taẕkira,* while blue boxes represent patrons, friends and teachers mentioned in their biographies.[30]

A major limitation of visualizing these networks in the form of a map such as this is that the itineracy of scholars and poets is not reflected. Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain, for example, was born in Lucknow, but he visited Arabia and Egypt as well as Persian-speaking countries (*'ajam*).[31] Later, in India, he moved between Deccan and Bengal, and was buried in Benaras, near his close friend Shaiḵẖ ʻAlī Ḥazīn. It was at Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain's home in Lucknow, however, that his disciples continued to gather after his death.[32]

[30] MS Elliott 181, fos.340-358v
[31] MS Elliott 181, fos.340-2v
[32] Ibid.

Similarly, Nawab Sayyid al-Mulk Asadullāh Ḵẖān "Ḡẖālib" (fl.1748-1791) visited Iran and Arabia and then settled in Delhi. However, due to political upheavals and unrest (*harj o marj*) in Delhi, Ḡẖālib once again moved to Murshidabad at the invitation of Nawab Mahabat Jang (1671-1756) of Bengal.[33]

In addition to individual journeys and personal experiences of travel, the *taẕkira* also highlighted longer histories of movement. Three basic levels of identification with particular regions or towns are discernible. First, ancestral origins were mentioned: for instance, in Abū Ṭālib's own case, he explained that his paternal lineage stemmed from Turks settled in Azerbaijan.[34] Similarly, Mirzā Ṣadr al-dīn Muḥammad Iṣfahānī's (fl.1757-1791) ancestors were originally from the Arabian peninsula.[35] Second, there was familial migration, which often resulted in shifting to Hindustan. Ṭālib's father, for instance, was born in Isfahan, where he lived for a long time. Later, he entered India and became attached to Nawab Ṣafdar Jang of Awadh (r.1739-54) and then his successor, Nawab Shujā' al-Daula (r.1754-75). In Mirzā Ṣadr al-Dīn's case, his ancestors moved from Arabia to settle in Isfahan for an extended period of time. Finally, there was the place of birth of the individual described, followed by personal travel. Thus, Abū Ṭālib was born in Lucknow, while Ṣadr al-Dīn Iṣfahānī had been born in Isfahan, but from there went to Kabul, Kashmir and Delhi before settling in Lucknow.

The Hindustani element in such accounts of migration was – if not a major city such as Lucknow or Calcutta – usually a *qaṣaba* (a small town or large village) in north India.[36] Often a place where migrants of Muslim heritage came and settled, *qaṣaba*s were

[33] MS Elliott 181, fos.343-4r. This "Ḡẖālib" not to be confused with the famous Urdu and Persian poet of the mid nineteenth century.
[34] MS Elliot 181, fos.357r-358v
[35] MS Elliot 181, fos.352r-353v
[36] Mushirul Ḥasan notes, the term 'qasbah' has no precise equivalent in English. M. Ḥasan, *From Pluralism to Separatism: Qasbas in Colonial Awadh* (New Delhi, 2007), p.14

central to the production of Persianate culture in India. Focal points for learning and education for local gentry, *qaṣaba*s were 'marked by a robust intellectual culture and leading Muslim families sharing *ashrāf* (high-born) status.'[37] Many *taz̲kira*s testified to the importance of *qaṣaba*s, as clusters of patrons poets, scholars and holy men formed around such spatial markers.[38] Highly concentrated in Awadh, Bengal, Bihar and the Deccan, *qaṣaba*s were also significant for another reason: often they were the locations of *kẖ̲ānaqāh*s (places for Sufi associations to meet and meditate) and shrines, which drew pilgrims to festivals ('*urs*) and sacralised particular places where spiritually significant events had taken place.[39] For many members of the *ashrāf*, being associated with particular shrines or saints constituted an important signifier of their social status. This is not to suggest that such relations were cultivated on merely economic grounds, but rather, that these associations were referred to in scholarly and poetic works as a source of intellectual and cultural authority. In the context of literary authority in particular, Sufi networks and histories of migration, often centred on the *qaṣaba*, linked urban Indian literati with Persian speakers and scholars in Qajar domains, Central Asia and across the western Indian Ocean.[40] At the same time, the opportunity of forging relationships with teachers, mentors and patrons, offered by the intellectually and culturally rich life of the *qaṣabas*, meant that they also attracted non-Muslim scholars and poets.[41] *Taz̲kira*s such as *K̲ẖ̲ulāṣat al-Afkār* provided a means of documenting and valorising these locations and identity-markers.

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[37] Rahman, *Locale, everyday Islam, and modernity*, p.4.

[38] For example, Mīr Ḡẖ̲ulām Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Māṣir al-Kirām* (Lahore, 1971) focused on the *qaṣaba* of Bilgram.

[39] Rahman, *Locale, everyday Islam, and modernity,* pp.39-40

[40] For discussions of shrines as connecting geographically dispersed communities: N. Green, 'Migrant Sufis and sacred space in South Asian Islam', *Contemporary South Asia,* 12/4 (2003), pp.493-509

[41] See reports on indigenous education for examples of Kāyastha teachers and students often outnumbering other groups in such locales. For e.g. Henry Stewart Reid noted in 1850-1 that Kāyasthas made up over 65% of students at Arabic and Persian schools in the districts around Delhi and Agra. In addition, there were also a substantial number of Muslims, Banyas, Rajputs and Brahmans. H. S. Reid, *Report on Indigenous Education and Verancular Schools in Agra, Aligarh, Bareli, Etawah, Farrukhabad, Mainpuri, Mathura, Shahjahanpur, for 1850-51* (Agra, 1852), p.48, 176

In all these accounts, family history was intimately linked with narratives of travel and migration, particularly for Muslims who wished to trace their lineages back to particular holy places or individuals. For example, to assert Saiyid status (descent from the Prophet Muḥammad), it was necessary to trace a bloodline back to Arabia. Similarly, if an individual claimed Central Asian ethnicity in order to strengthen ties with the old administrative elite of the Mughal empire, migration was again key. In such itinerant communities, then, the history of one's ancestors was necessarily a history of movement.

The emphasis on travel within an individual's own lifetime was also the result of the importance accorded to it as a marker of piety and learning. Travel was central to Islamic concepts of education, which stressed the importance of *riḥla* (journeys undertaken for the purpose of learning). Travel also constituted valuable life-experience, and was a form of social capital in its own right: mobility meant the ability to find friends and patrons in unfamiliar places, and thus signified personal as well as familial achievements. In this sense, there were different levels of movement: from towns and cities within India, (usually familial) migration from domains beyond the earlier extent of the Mughal empire, and journeys to sacred locations such as Mecca and Madina. As a result, travel had become deeply linked to Persianate scholarly identities, and extended to non-Muslim scholars in India as well. Rāy Sinath Singh Bīdār is the only non-Muslim mentioned in Abū Ṭālib's list of contemporaries.[42] His itinerant lifestyle, and exile-like experiences away from his home in Shahjahanabad, were deployed by Ṭālib to construct a scholarly character that resembled his contemporaries with Muslim heritage.[43]

Despite the mobility described by Abū Ṭālib, the majority of the poets in *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār* were living in the vicinity of Lucknow and Calcutta at the time of writing. In this

[42] MS Elliot 181, fos.350v-352r
[43] Ibid.

sense, the close-knit nature of the literary world is apparent, and makes even more sense if we consider the fact that the circulation of literary works relied heavily on personal interactions, rather than being produced for mass audiences. As a result, circulation over disparate geographies was less even and could take longer. Thus, Abū Ṭālib would have found it easier to access the works of poets who lived in close proximity to him and whom he knew or had met recently.

More importantly, however, Abū Ṭālib's selection of contemporary poets was clustered around specific patrons. These included Nawab Ṣafdar Jang of Awadh (r.1739-54), his successor, Nawab Shujā' al-Daula (r.1754-75), Nawab Āṣaf al-Daula of Awadh (r.1775-97), Mukẖtār al-Daula (Āṣaf al- Daula's minister), I'timād al-Daula Faẓl 'Alī Kẖān (d.1830, Prime Minister of Awadh) and members of the East India Company.[44] The majority of the patrons connecting the poets were affiliated with the court of Awadh. This in itself is not surprising, since Mirzā Abū Ṭālib himself was born in Lucknow, where his father had longstanding links with the Awadh dynasty. After the death of Ṭālib's father, Nawab Shujā' al-Daula had taken responsibility for Ṭālib's upbringing and education.[45] Later, Abū Ṭālib served at Āṣaf al-Daula's court at Lucknow, where his patrons had included Mukẖtār al-Daula, Alexander Hannay (who was employed privately at the Awadh court during the late 1770s) and Colonel Middleton (1750-1807), the British resident at the Awadh court.[46] To focus on Awadh was thus a logical consequence of his long association with the leading families and patrons of the province. Despite no longer being in the employ of the Nawabs of Awadh, it is clear that Abū Ṭālib was keen to acknowledge their patronage and prestige by focusing mostly on poets whom they had sponsored at some point in their lives. The relationship between poets and patrons was of

[44] MS Elliott 181, fos.340-58v
[45] MS Elliott 181, fos. 357-8v
[46] Ibid.

significance to both parties: the presence of poets was vital for a court to be considered cultured, and to participate in the production of culture. At the same time, the political and moral standing, as well as aesthetic judgment, of patrons was equally important for upholding and advancing the credentials of poets and scholars. It is certain that over the course of his own travels, Abū Ṭālib must have made more than just twenty-three acquaintances: viewed in this light, the focus on patrons and poets in the Awadh region becomes even more evident.

There were, of course, exceptions to this general trend. Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain, for example, was attached at some point in his career to Niẓām ʻAlī Ḵẖān Āṣaf Jāh II (1734-1803) of Hyderabad. Although Abū Ṭālib did not mention this directly, Ḥusain's verses in praise of Niẓām ʻAlī Ḵẖān signal this connection clearly.[47] It is probable that despite not sharing the link of patronage with other poets from Awadh, the fact that Muḥammad Ḥusain's birthplace was Lucknow, and that he spent time in Bengal, made him known to Abū Ṭālib. The section on contemporary poets thus functioned as a portfolio of personal contacts, which enhanced Abū Ṭālib's own credentials. This is borne out by the biographies of poets linked to the East India Company also. Although Abū Ṭālib occasionally employed such general terms as '*ṣāḥibān-i farang*' (Europeans) and '*kampanī-i ʻālī-shān*' (the most noble Company), more frequently he named specific individuals as patrons. William Jones, Richard Johnson, Alexander Hannay, Nathaniel Middleton and Warren Hastings were the five English patrons named.[48] As already mentioned, Hannay and Middleton were both closely affiliated with the Nawabs of Awadh, rather than representing the patronage of the East India Company directly.

[47] MS Elliott 181, fos.341r
[48] MS Elliott 181, fos.355, 357-8v

As the map shows, only three poets, including Abū Ṭālib himself, were employed by members of the Company: these were Qamar al-Dīn "Minnat" (d.1793), who was given the title of *malik al-shuʿarā* (king of poets) by Warren Hastings, Sirāj al-Dīn ʿAlī Ḵẖān "Mūjad" (fl.1781-1814), and Abū Ṭālib himself. While Minnat was indeed patronized as a poet, Abū Ṭālib and Mūjad fulfilled other roles.[49] Abū Ṭālib was a key figure in the production of Persian texts for the Company, as his occupation as an editor of Ḥāfiẓ and Saʿdī indicates, and was later invited to remain in England to teach Persian (a position he did not take up). In contrast, Mūjad was involved in the translation of Arabic books on *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) for the use of the Company and its courts.[50] By the time Ṭālib and Mūjad were employed by the Company, Warren Hastings was no longer in office, and the Company had mostly withdrawn from its position as a possible patron of the arts. Beyond the Company, however, Mūjad's fame also rested on his reputation as a poet.[51] This again reinforces the argument that the lives of 'native informants' extended far beyond the interests of the Company, and that they participated in multiple, overlapping spheres of activity and association.

The lack of attention given to other Company employees, whom Abū Ṭālib surely must have been acquainted with, is conspicuous, given that Ṭālib was working for the Company at the time of writing this *taẕkira*. One reason is hinted at by Abū Ṭālib: he claimed that while he worked for Colonel Hannay, he was made to admonish some of his colleagues who were corrupt, and for this reason he became an object of hatred and jealousy.[52] Another reason is that Abū Ṭālib simply was not interested in the poets patronized by other Company officials, preferring those to whom he was attached. This

[49] Ibid.
[50] MS Elliott 181, fo.355
[51] Ibid. See also MS Sprenger 341, fos.214-17, where extensive verses by Mūjad are quoted.
[52] MS Elliott 181, fos.357-8

would suggest that rather than seeing the Company as a single patron or institution, Abū Ṭālib focused on individual patrons within it, as he did with Indian patrons – although of course, there was much greater possibility of being attached to subsequent generations of a single family in the Indian context. He saw his own relationships in this light also, and by so doing, did not need to subscribe any broader political or moral allegiance to the East India Company or 'the British' as a whole. The British men whom Abū Ṭālib served were just a few among the many nobles, poets, teachers and rulers who patronized literary activity in India: it is only from the perspective of the colonial state that a hard line between the British and 'others' is visible.

A useful point of comparison is provided by another *taẕkira*, *Riyāẓ al-Wifāq* ('Garden of Unanimity', 1813). This work was compiled by Ẕu'lfiqār 'Alī Ḵẖān "Mast", who served the Māharāja of Benaras, Udit Narāyan Singh (1770-1835).[53] *Riyāẓ al-Wifāq* contained notices of 143 Persian poets who lived in Benaras and Calcutta. Like Abū Ṭālib's *taẕkira*, *Riyāẓ al-Wifāq* contained elements of multilingualism even while focusing on Persian poets. Rather than Braj, Mast's work included verses in '*hindī*', and which varied considerably from poet to poet in terms of vocabulary and Persianization. All the poets included were the author's contemporaries, although some were no longer alive at the time of writing. Many of the individuals included worked at some point in their lives for the East India Company or private British patrons. However, given the prominence of the Company in Calcutta and Benaras, Mast barely accorded the Company and its servants any attention. It seems that Mast did not view the Company as being properly embedded in networks of patronage. Mast did not criticize the Company, and mentioned it only rarely and in passing. However, the very lack of details and epithets, which would have served

[53] Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteliung, MS Sprenger 341, fos. 155r. Little is known about Mast's life. This appears to be the only extant copy of the work.

to situate the Company in relation to other patrons, individuals and interests, signified the Company's growing distance from Persianate networks. *Riyāẓ al-Wifāq* underscored the importance of active participation and patronage in belonging to literary geographies: from the point of view of this *taẕkira*, focusing on a region which was increasingly controlled by the Company and even threatened by its dominance, the East India Company may well not have existed.[54]

In rare instances, details of a poet's patrons were omitted altogether by Ṭālib. Instead, Muḥammad Ḥafīẓ Ḵẖān "Nawīdī", Muḥammad Burhān 'Alī Ḵẖān and Mirzā 'Alī "Taqī" Ḵẖān "Lisān" (all active during the 1790s), for example, were praised for their elevated ancestry and personal qualities (*ṣifat*), and in the case of Nawīdī, the fact of his having been a disciple of the renowned poet, Minnat.[55] These were important characteristics for all the poets included. Abū Ṭālib described the poets he listed variously as free, dignified, cultured, brave, educated, tender-hearted, scholarly, pious and pure, amongst other attributes.[56] All had poetically inclined and well-balanced (*mauzūn*: lit. 'with measure') temperaments – the mark of educated respectability. Abū Ṭālib appears to have taken care not to include any poets of whom he disapproved. This was by no means an established norm amongst *taẕkira*-writers, but as Ṭālib emphasised, the poets admitted to the *taẕkira* were his friends. In addition to personal qualities (*ṣifat*), patronage (usually indicated by the phrase '*dar ḵẖidmat-ash*'/ 'in the service of') and ancestry (*asal*), two other important licenses or social markers of membership to Indo-Persian poetic circles were the relations of friendship (*dostī* or *rafāqat*) and discipleship (*shāgirdī*).[57] *Rafāqat*

[54] For a discussion of the pressures of colonialism on zamindars and patrons in the Bihar region (covered by *Riyāẓ al-Wifāq*); K. Chatterjee, *Merchants, politics, and society in early modern India: Bihar, 1733-1820* (Leiden, 1996), pp.210-17
[55] MS Elliott 181, fos.344v, 352-3v
[56] MS Elliott 181, fos.340-57r
[57] Ibid.

carried connotations of friendship, companionship and trust, and was an important relationship in such itinerant networks. Friends not only helped to introduce and vouch for each other, but also performed services such as accommodating newcomers to a particular locale. Indeed, the importance of friendship in the networks described by Abū Ṭālib is underscored by the fact that he had undertaken the task of writing the *taẕkira* in the name of friendship and affection (for Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain).[58] Similarly, *shāgirdī* and patronage ensured that the admission of new members to this class was not limited by ties of blood alone: personal ambitions and aspirations, as well as the capacity to learn, carried a lot of weight. Disciples also played an important role in maintaining the authority commanded by scholars and poets, and were often involved in the collection and transmission of their masters' literary works.

Significantly, these qualities signalled aristocratic status and good company, rather than material wealth, indicating the possibility of social mobility and the acceptance of newcomers through the cultivation of personal relationships. While the five features listed (*ṣifat, k̲h̲idmat, asal, rafāqat* and *shāgirdī*) were not mutually exclusive, and were subject to shifts, it would not be wrong to see them as formalized and recognizable characteristics of a poet-administrator's résumé. Indo-Persian scholarly authority was thus deeply linked with *ashrāf* identity, the latter being a gentlemanly status built on Indo-Persian concepts of honour, and associated with being high-born.[59] *Sharāfat*, or the respectability of the *ashrāf*, was the sum of a set of distinct factors including ancestral and spiritual lineages, vocation, travel and migration, and, of course, command over Persian. All these qualities were present in Ṭālib's biography of Mirzā Muḥammad Ba k̲h̲sh "Āshob" (d.1785), the renowned poet of war.[60] Āshob came from a particularly prominent

[58] MS Elliott 181, fos.2-3v
[59] M. Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle-Classes: Muslim in Nineteenth-Century Delhi* (New Delhi, 2013), pp.84-5
[60] MS Elliott 181, fos.347-8r

family: well-known members included the poet "Ḥairat", and Āshob's father, Mirzā Muḥammad Ḥāriṣī, who had been a celebrated member of the *'ulama* under the Emperor Muḥammad Shāh (r.1719-1748). Āshob's maternal grandfather, too, had been a well-known scholar of Islam who had visited Europe (*farangistān*) and learned Greek and Latin. Āshob himself had trained as a soldier and taken part in the wars against Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī (1722-72) around Lahore and Delhi.[61] It would be hard to find a poet with better *ashrāf* credentials than Āshob, whose ancestors had been important religious, administrative, military and literary figures. Although Āshob was also patronised by many of the Company officials who were also associated with Abū Ṭālib (including Richard Johnson), Abū Ṭālib did not feel the need to mention these English patrons, and focused only on Āshob's ancestry and Indian patrons.[62] Abū Ṭālib's own autobiographical note was positioned at the end of this series of poets. By placing himself in this way, he located himself within an intellectual lineage of his own creation, which was, as a result, both geographically and politically aligned with his interests.

Taken together, these biographies yield a complex system of prestige, manifested in a network of poets, patrons and teachers (*ustād*s), many of whom, like the employees of Fort William, belonged to aristocratic or saintly families, and all of whom displayed a certain set of skills that marked them as *sharīf* (well-born) with norms of respectability (*sharāfat*) separating them from merchants.[63] This respectability was partly achieved by presenting material concerns as being secondary to personal qualities, piety, literary talent, friendship and discipleship. Thus, notwithstanding the mobility of scholars, administrators and poets across India (and other regions of the *'ajam*), the Indo-Persian elite sustained a remarkable level of intimacy, which was essential both to its stability and the circulation

[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle-Classes*, pp.84-5

of information within it. From the view of the Indo-Persian elite, British patrons of literature appeared to be a peripheral, if powerful, minority, compared with the more deeply entrenched networks of influence which existed in the Indian subcontinent and connected locales across the Persianate cosmopolis. The following section shows how these ideals of *sharāfat* were reflected and deployed in the texts produced by the *munshī*s in the employ of the Company to further their reputations.

3. Janus-Faced Texts at the College of Fort William

Most Persian texts published under the aegis of the Company had two title pages: one in English, and the other in Persian. These were usually situated at opposite ends of the book, along with a preface in each language, so that the reader could open the book from either side. The information provided in English and Persian in these bilingual texts was often very different, and embodied a dual vision of scholarly authority and patronage within a single work. Gallien has described the products of orientalist scholarship as 'polyphonic', 'in which the voices of the orientalist and of native scholars intersect.'[64] This is a particularly useful term in this context, as it acknowledges the coexistence of multiple voices. However, Gallien's discussion centres on translations of historical works undertaken by orientalists in India, and leads her to conclude that, 'the hybrid narratives resulting from this process were presented not as forces of resistance and disruption but as reinforcing the colonial enterprise.' Thus, 'the Indo-Persian corpus was altered in order to comply with the rules of British historiography, and only once transmogrified did it enter the realm of global knowledge in English.'[65] In the texts discussed in this chapter, however, English was not the main language of communication, and separate voices were not easily

[64] C. Gallien, 'British Orientalism, Indo-Persian historiography and the politics of global knowledge' in S. Davies, G. Sanchez Espinoza and D. S. Roberts (eds.) *India and Europe in the Global Eighteenth Century,* pp.29-52
[65] Ibid.

translated and marshalled into 'hybrid' forms which resisted or reinforced colonial narratives. Nor was global knowledge, in the sense of a widespread network of epistemic exchange, only possible in English. Instead, it is argued that these texts addressed multiple audiences, and that much of what was said whistled past the ears of the colonial state to reach Indo-Persian readers. Beginning with a demonstration of the ways in which Indian authority was erased in the 'realm of global knowledge in English', this section shows that such works simultaneously reinforced frameworks of knowledge in Persian. In other words, the work done by these texts exceeded the imperatives of the colonial state.

In the English front-matter and preface, while the Indian author or editor of a text was usually acknowledged (particularly if it was the labour of a single scholar), credit for the intellectual labour was given to the British superintendent of the work, who often did no more than employ or oversee Indian scholars. Such bibliographic information in English, in turn, shaped the ways in which these texts were referred to in library catalogues and literary periodicals, as well as the records of the colonial archive. As a result, in the records of the College of Fort William, British members of the faculty appeared to be the dominant intellectual force. For example, the *'Iyār Dānish* of Abū'l Faẓl was translated by Maulawī Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn Aḥmad and published by the college under the title of *Khirud Ufroz* (*Ḵẖirad Afroz,* 'The Illuminator of Understanding') in 1815. However, the inscription on the spine of the book simply stated 'Roebuck's *Khirud Ufroz*', since the re-publication of the text had been overseen by Thomas Roebuck (1781-1819) of the college's Hindustani Department.[66] Although Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn appeared on the title page of the book, and was mentioned briefly in Roebuck's preface to the edition, Roebuck made no effort to indicate their relationship or detail the work done by Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn. In the *Annals of the College of*

[66]Abū'l Faẓl b. Mubarak, *Khirud Ufroz,* trans. M. Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn Aḥmad (Calcutta, 1815)

Fort William (1819), authored by Roebuck, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn only featured twice. Both these references occurred in lists of college publications in which the *Khirud Ufroz* was mentioned, and also provided no further information about Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn.[67]

Similarly, Matthew Lumsden wrote in his English preface to the Calcutta edition of Firdausī's *Shāh-nāma* (1811) that the work had been edited and collated by:

> …a body of learned natives selected by myself […] At the head of the establishment I have placed Muoluvee Allah Dad and Meerza Muhdee, two men of sound sense and excellent education eminently skilled in Persian Poetry [...][68]

Barring Allāhdād (fl.1801-1811) and Mirzā Mahdī (fl.1809-1811), no clue was given as to the identities of the remainder of the 'body of learned natives'. As discussed in Chapter One, translators and superintendents deployed the generic figure of the 'natives' to provide a basic authenticity to their texts. Even as the superiority of European authority was asserted, it was founded on the fact that Indians had been involved at some stage of the procedure. However, these two figures also disappeared in later references to the text. Consequently, when James Atkinson used this edition of the *Shāh-nāma* as the basis for his translation of *Soohrab*, he acknowledged only Matthew Lumsden's 'industry and erudition' in editing and publishing the work.[69] In turn, reviews of *Soohrab* also mentioned Lumsden's work as providing an authentic basis for Atkinson's translation.[70] Similarly, Alexander Dumoulin (fl.1807-23) dedicated his translation of Sa'dī 's *Gulistān* (1807) to John Herbert Harington (1765-1828), the superintendent of the edition of Sa'dī 's works

[67] Roebuck, *Annals of the College*, p.26, 422
[68] Abū'l Qāsim Firdausī, *The Schah Namu, Being a Series of Heroic Poems, on the Ancient History of Persia,* ed. M. Lumsden, Maulawī Allāhdād and Mirzā Mahdī (Calcutta, 1811), p.ii
[69] J. Atkinson, *Soohrab, a Poem: freely translated from the original Persian of Firdousee* (Calcutta, 1814), pp.xxiv-xxv
[70] 'Atkinson's Translation of *Soohrab, A Poem*', *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and Its Dependencies*, 2 (July, 1816), pp.49-56

published in 1791.[71] In actuality, (as Harington had briefly noted), the editor of the text was Muḥammad Rashīd, a *munshī* at the East India Company.[72]

Such omissions of Indian intellectual labour were especially significant during the early colonial period, when, as Jamal Malik has phrased it, 'authorship was emerging as a prime principle of textual attribution and accreditation.'[73] In part a sustained project on the part of colonial rulers, as Malik would have it, the erasure of Indians was also the result of colonial methods of referencing, footnoting and cataloguing. These played an integral role in the construction of colonial authority over India, and contributed to erasing all signs of Indian agency.[74] Often, but not always, British editors would pay tribute to their 'assistants' in English prefaces, but this information was lost in further processes of translation and classification of texts.[75] Thus, the erasure of Indians should also be read not only as a sign of colonial efforts to dominate knowledge production, but also as an indicator of the limits and inadequacy of European bibliographic systems to manage the complexities of texts with multiple authorship. The idea of standardized texts, with easily identifiable authors and editors, did not sit well with the processes of collaborative production involved in the colony, particularly when working across several socio-linguistic contexts.

This process of losing editorial and publication information could be surprisingly fast, even when no linguistic transition (for example, Persian to English) was involved. For example, at some point in the early nineteenth century, one Maulawī Tamīz al-Dīn

[71] Sa'dī Shīrāzī, *The Goolistan of the Celebrated Musleh-al-Deen of Shiraz, Surnamed Sheikh Sadi, with an English Translation*, trans. A. Dumuolin (Calcutta, 1807), front-matter.
[72] Sa'dī Shīrāzī, *The Goolistan of the Celebrated*; Sa'dī Shīrāzī, *The Persian and Arabick works of Sadee,* ed. Maulawī Muḥammad Rashīd and J. H. Harington (2 vols, Calcutta, 1791)
[73] Malik, J. 'Muslim Culture and Reform', p.228
[74] Ibid.
[75] For instance, Lumsden and Harington, cited above, did name Indian editors, albeit as assistants working under European supervision. However, in complete editions of particular works, less credit was given to Indians than in excerpts published only for students. E.g. *Selections for the Use of the Persian Class*

collated and edited three Persian manuscript versions of Abū'l Faiẓī's (1547-95) *Nal Daman* for the Company. When the Asiatic Lithographic Society reprinted this work in 1831, it was forced to acknowledge in the *k̲h̲ātima al-ṭiba'* (printer's epilogue), that no information about Tamīz al-Dīn was now available.[76] Despite having worked for the Company, the latter seemed to have retained no material regarding his life or achievements. The long-term consequences of this lack of information and its reinforcement through orientalist publications in Europeans languages meant that by the second quarter of the nineteenth century, authoritative knowledge seemed to rest entirely with the Europeans who appeared to have singlehandedly retrieved and translated Indian texts assisted, at best, by Indians in clerical positions.

However, closer examination of these polyphonic texts yields invaluable insights into the agency, motivations and literary concerns of the Indian scholars who worked on them. They show that these individuals had rich lives outside the colonial state and give us an insight into the social circles they moved in. They also signal the fact that the *munshī*s working for the Company used these printed texts to enhance their own prestige in Indo-Persian society, and envisaged the works being circulated further afield than the Company and its employees.

The texts produced by Mīr Sher 'Alī "Afsos" (d.1809) of the Hindustani department at Fort William College provide an excellent example of the intellectual and social concerns of a scholar employed by the East India Company. Afsos was involved in translating works from Persian into Hindustani, as well as editing works for publication in Hindustani. In addition, Afsos also taught the Hindustani classes at the College with John Gilchrist. Under Gilchrist's superintendence, he translated Sa'dī 's *Gulistān* into Urdu to

[76] Abū'l Faiẓī Fayyazi, *Nul and Dumun, a Tale in Persian Verse, originally translated from the Sanscrit Work*, ed. Maulawī Tamīz al-Dīn (Calcutta, 1831), p.253

furnish the Fort William class with a basic textbook. The work appeared under the title of *Bāgh-i Urdū* ('Garden of Urdu', 1802). He also translated a history of India from the Persian, published as the *Ārāyish-i Maḥfil* ('Ornament of Assemblies', 1808), and edited a number of works in Urdu, including the *kullīyāt* (collected works) of the poet Mīr Saudā. Beyond attributing these works to Afsos, the records of the College are silent about his life and activities, and based on such sources, Afsos appears to be merely another 'learned native' involved in textual production under the aegis of the Company. When William Nassau Lees (1825-89) brought out an edition of the *Ārāyish-i Maḥfil* in 1871, he called Afsos a 'plunderer' and a 'dishonest translator' who had not sufficiently acknowledged the extent of his reliance upon *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Tawārīkh*, the Persian original upon which this translation was based.[77] Dismissing Afsos' agency as a translator in this way, Lees then devoted the rest of his introduction to the life of Sujan Rāy Bhandāri (fl.1696), the original author of the seventeenth-century Persian text.[78]

However, Afsos took the opportunity to include a short biography of himself in his Urdu preface to the *Bāgh-i Urdū.*[79] To an extent, this was a matter of adhering to precedent; however, it was by no means necessary to do so. Thus, this must be interpreted as a conscious decision, by which Afsos sought to further his prestige and prove his literary credentials. From this preface, we learn that Afsos had a long and varied career before he joined the Company in 1800: born in the 1740s to a Saiyid family (*qaum-i sādāt*), Afsos lived most of his life in Delhi and Lucknow before moving to Calcutta at the turn of the

[77] W. N. Lees, 'Introduction' in Mīr Sher 'Alī Ja'fari "Afsos", *Ārāyish-i Maḥfil,* 4th edn (Calcutta, 1871), pp.i-ii While it is true that Afsos's translation was based mainly on Sujan Rāy Bhandāri's *Ḵẖulāṣat al- Tawārīkh,* Afsos acknowledged this as the main source and added his own observations to the translation.

[78] Lees, 'Introduction', pp.i-iv. Although Lees' text was an edited version of the translation produced by Afsos, the latter was not acknowledged on the title page. Lees also erroneously referred to Sujan Rāy as "Sobhan Rai" in his introduction to the work.

[79] Mīr Sher 'Alī "Afsos", 'Dībācha' in Sa'dī Shīrāzī, *Bāgh-i Urdū,* trans. Mīr Sher 'Alī "Afsos" (Calcutta, 1802)

century.[80] His family had a history of imperial service for at least one generation before him, since his uncle and father (Saiyid ʻAlī Muẓaffar Ḵẖān) were employed as revenue officers as well as in the artillery of the Mughal state. Afsos traced his ancestry back to Khaf (in present day Iran), and wrote that his family had moved from Khaf to the *qaṣaba* of Narnaul in India (about 75 miles south-west of Delhi). During the reign of Muḥammad Shāh, his family moved once again, this time to Shahjahanabad (Delhi), where they prospered.[81]

Throughout the preface, Afsos cast himself first and foremost as a poet.[82] Even though the purpose of translating the *Gulistān* was to furnish British students with a sample of Hindustani prose, Afsos chose to intersperse his preface with fairly lengthy (and difficult) couplets which displayed his talents in Rekhta. His descriptions of his childhood and career matched this persona. Afsos claimed that he was reading the *Gulistān* at the (relatively late) age of eleven, and that at this time he was also reading the *dīwān* of the Rekhta poet, Walī Dakhanī (c.1665-1707). During his late teens, when Afsos was living in Lucknow, his father moved to Patna, Calcutta and Hyderabad, while Afsos continued to live in Lucknow. Afsos remarked that he had a poetic turn of mind at this point, but was occupied with learning Arabic. When the Mughal prince, Mirzā Jawān Baḵẖt Jahāndār Shāh (1749-88) visited Lucknow, Afsos had the opportunity to recite his poetry to the prince, and was subsequently employed as a court poet by him. By this time, his poetry had matured and he had completed his *dīwān*. Afsos was a close companion of Mirzā Jawān Baḵẖt, as he informed his readers that he stopped writing poetry and gave up attending *mushāʻara*s altogether after the death of the prince in 1788. After this, Afsos

[80] Afsos, 'Dībācha', pp.12-22
[81] Ibid.
[82] It is also significant that Afsos used his poetic *taḵẖallus* to identify himself as the translator of a work which was mostly prose. Other *munshī*s at the College of Fort William did the same, for example, Ḥaidar Baḵẖsh "Ḥaidarī", discussed below.

employed himself only in learning and teaching (*ta'līm o tadrīs*), and was supported by emoluments sent to him by Sarfarāz al-Daula Ḥasan Raẓā K̲h̲ān, Āṣaf al-Daula's deputy in Awadh. On the 17th of October, 1801, a British officer, Colonel Scott, met Afsos and listened to his '*kalām*' (discourse/poetry), and subsequently asked him to join Fort William College in order to teach 'correct and idiomatic' Hindustani to East India Company employees. It was here, at the request of John Gilchrist, that Afsos translated the *Gulistān*, published as *Bāgh-i Urdū* in 1802.[83]

It is evident that Afsos did not consider the East India Company to be the most eminent of his patrons: he had certainly held Prince Mirzā Bak̲h̲t in more esteem. In order to prove his credentials as a poet and scholar, Afsos mentioned the appreciation of Mirzā Bak̲h̲t and his attachment to Sarfarāz al-Daula. The East India Company was only the last of his patrons, as he died in 1809 in the Company's service. Indeed, it appears that the most important phases of his career had passed by the time he joined Fort William. Afsos also drew attention to his knowledge of Persian, Hindustani and Arabic, indicating his breadth as a scholar. It is telling that Afsos claimed that he had commenced the translation of *Bāgh-i Urdū* with great reluctance, and did so only to avoid offending Gilchrist. This is not to say that Afsos did not appreciate the Company at all: on the contrary, he claimed to be impressed by the English character and government, and that he valued Lord Wellesley's approval of his work.[84] By the time that Afsos translated *Ārāyish-i Maḥfil* in 1808, he paid much more attention to his British patrons (in particular, George Hilary Barlow); however, even here he acknowledged his debt to a Mirzā Ja'far, who had first introduced him to the Company.[85]

[83] Afsos, 'Dībācha', pp.12-22
[84] Ibid.
[85] Mīr Sher 'Alī Ja'fari "Afsos", *Arayish-I Maḥfil* (Lucknow, 1869/70), pp.5-6

Thus, Afsos and his colleagues participated within a social and intellectual framework that stretched far beyond the concerns of the East India Company and its employees. Lumsden had noted in his preface to the *Shāh-nāma,* the activities of Indo-Persian scholars at the College was often motivated by the desire to complete 'a task in which their own reputation among the learned in India is necessarily and very seriously involved.'[86] Thus, in the preface to the *Ārāyish-i Maḥfil,* Afsos claimed that after the success of *Bāgh-i Urdū*, he had been charged with the responsibility of correcting a number of other works published by the College of Fort William. His duties here had amounted to those of a supervisor, as he oversaw the work of other *munshī*s employed by the Company. However, this had created problems, since it arbitrarily placed the other *munshī*s in a subordinate position and threatened their reputations outside of the College.[87] As a result, Afsos had his name removed from those publications, and was not acknowledged.[88] This is an important statement, as it reveals something of the nature of Indo-Persian scholarly circles, and the ways in which patterns of authority already established here came into conflict with the demands of the East India Company. As discussed earlier, Abū Ṭālib had also come into conflict with his colleagues while working for the Company, and this had probably led to his deciding to exclude most of his colleagues from his *taẕkira.* Men such as Afsos and Ṭālib had to navigate these hierarchies sensitively: citations, references and scholarly authority were as much intellectual concerns in the Indo-Persian world as Europe. Afsos' decision to forego acknowledgement in Fort William publications shows that he was embedded firmly within an indigenous system of authority, and that he did not wish to disturb this hierarchy by highlighting his superior position in the Hindustani department of the colonial institution.

[86] Lumsden, *Schah Namu,* pp.iv-v
[87] According to Ẕu'lfiqār 'Alī Ḵẖān "Mast", Afsos also translated Sa'dī 's *Bostān.* MS Sprenger 341, fos.41-2r
[88] Afsos, *Arayish,* p.6

This caution signals that despite producing a textbook for the use of British students, Afsos was alive to the possibility of it being read in the Persianate circles to which he belonged. This sense of straddling two worlds, and of addressing bifurcated audiences was characteristic of the Janus-faced texts produced under the Company's patronage. In addition to bilingual title pages, autobiographical details and prefaces, seemingly minor decisions also reinforced this duality: for example, the title, '*Bāgh-i Urdū*' is a chronogram yielding the numerological result of 1214, the Hijri year in which the work was completed. This was clearly not necessary for Fort William publications, which printed the date on the title page in any case. In Perso-Arabic manuscript culture, however, in addition to colophons added by the scribe (which usually signified the date of copying), the numerological manipulation of the title was a common way to indicate the date of composition (and was a demonstration of literary skill). Similarly, '*Ārāyish-i Maḥfil*' functioned as a chronogram for 1807/1808, and indeed, was also the title of another translation by Ḥaidar Bak̲h̲sh "Ḥaidarī" (d.1828) at the College, produced in the same year. Ḥaidarī's work was a translation of the Persian *qiṣṣa* of Hātim Taiy.[89] These chronograms were not merely offered as aesthetic or intellectual objects, but rather that their presence indicates that Afsos and his colleagues expected their work to be distributed further afield via manuscript.[90] Integrating the date of composition into the title functioned as a mode of protecting authorial identity, and so prepared the text for manuscript circulation and copying.

This duality also explains why Company employees provided so much detail about aspects of their lives which were unlikely to have interested students at Fort William

[89] See: P. M. Khan, 'The Broken Spell: The Romance Genre in Late Mughal India' [Phd thesis, Columbia University: 2013], especially pp.4-5

[90] Printed works were largely unpopular at this point, until lithography was introduced and lowered the price of works while retaining their calligraphic aesthetic. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

College. Facts about lineage and migration, for instance, would have been mainly significant to other members of the Indo-Persian literati. Other scholars employed by the College behaved similarly to Afsos. Ḥaidarī drew attention to his Shahjahanabad connections, adding that he had been educated under the auspices of Nawab Ibrāhīm K̲h̲ān and had remained a student of Maulawī G̲h̲ulām Ḥusain G̲h̲āzīpurī.[91] So too did Nihāl Chand Lahorī (fl.1803-4), who also translated Persian works for the College. Although his ancestors belonged to Lahore, Nihāl Chand elaborated that he had been born in Shahjahanabad and that his destiny had 'pulled' him to Calcutta, where he found employment under John Gilchrist.[92]

Concomitantly with this emphasis on migrant status or travel experience, Indian scholars working for the Company also followed an established tradition by identifying themselves with particular regions or *qaṣaba*s. For instance, in *Bāgh-i Urdū,* Afsos stated that his family came to be called 'Nārnaulī' because Narnaul was the *qaṣaba* his ancestors had settled in when they immigrated to India.[93] Other places used as identity markers by Company *munshī*s were Patna, Shahjahanabad, the Deccan, as well as the *qaṣaba*s of Jaunpur and Burdwan. References to these places with established histories of producing scholars, poets and administrators advanced the writers' credibility, and placed them firmly on the intellectual and social map of Persianate scholars. The fact that these names were mentioned meant that they were significant markers of identity and that the authors drew social (and often, economic) capital from their connections with these regions.[94]

[91] Ḥaidar Baḵẖsh "Ḥaidarī", 'Dībācha' in Ẓiyā al-Dīn Nakshabī, *Tuta Kuhanee,* trans. Ḥaidar Baḵẖsh "Ḥaidarī", 2nd edn (Calcutta, 1810), pp.2-3

[92] Nihāl Chand Lahorī, 'Dībācha' in 'Izzatullāh Bangālī, *Mazhab-i 'Ishq,* trans. Nihāl Chand Lahorī (1844, Calcutta), p.8

[93] Afsos, 'Dībācha', p.13

[94] Raisur Rahman notes that the *ashrāf* often acted as revenue officers in *qaṣaba*s. This means that direct British presence was often quite limited in these areas.

Despite the apparent interest taken by the Company in the history and politics of Indian towns, these details were often dropped from English title-pages of publications.[95]

The scholars employed by the Company were at pains to demonstrate their belonging to the Persianate world, and to ensure that their legacy as scholars and poets was visible to readers beyond Fort William students in the texts they produced under the aegis of the Company. Their depictions of themselves and their connections overlapped with the modes by which *taẕkira*s such as the *K̲h̲ulāṣat al-Afkār* described, connected and commemorated literary personas. In this sense, their activities at Fort William College were self-conscious acts of participation in the broader Persianate cosmopolis.

4. The East India Company and Generational Change

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were a time of social mobility and change in the Indo-Persian world. To an extent, the East India Company can be held responsible for some of these changes: as Gulfishan Khan has noted, employment prospects offered by the Company drew substantial numbers of literate men to Calcutta and its environs.[96] Many of these men were directly employed at government sponsored institutions, while others served as representatives (*wakīl*) of regional courts.[97] Despite the employment opportunities offered by the Company, there was little room for the fulfilment of personal ambitions in its service. In 1791, despite holding a job with the Company, Abū Ṭālib asserted that all the *ashrāf* of the time struggled for their livelihoods.[98] However, possessing skill-sets that were easily transferred from one court to another, the Indo-

[95] For e.g. Ḥusain ʻAlī Jaunpurī was simply Ḥusain ʻAlī on the English title page to *Anwarī Suhailī*: Ḥusain Wāʻiẓ Kāshifī, *The Anwari Soheily of Hussein Vaez Kashefy,* ed. H. ʻAlī and C. Stewart (Hertford, 1805), front-matter. The same is true of Maulawī Allāhdād ʻBurdwānī'. Compare title pages in Persian and English: Firdausī, *The Schah Namu, Being a Series of Heroic Poems, on the Ancient History of Persia,* front-matter.

[96] Khan, 'Indian Muslim Perceptions', p.39

[97] Ibid.

[98] 'K̲h̲ulāṣat al-Afkār', Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Special Collections Library, Isl. Ms. 269, fos.595-6

Persian literati also moved between different Indian patrons such as the Nawabs of Awadh to (in the case of Mast, for example) established landholding (*zamīndār*) families in Bengal and Behar who were keen to retain their elite status in the face of the increasing economic pressures exerted by the colonial state.[99] Aḥmad ʻAlī K̲h̲ān Hāshimī of Sandilah (b.1749, fl.1803/4) came from an impoverished family with little access to education, but managed to move into *ashraf* circles through employment in the army of the Iranian-born Mughal commander, Najaf K̲h̲ān (1723-82). It was here, through 'conversation with men from Khurasan and Iraq and Fars' that Hāshimī's command over the Persian language and understanding of its finer points was gained.[100] However, this was period of stability in Delhi was short-lived. Unrest in Delhi after the Maratha seizure of Delhi following Najaf K̲h̲ān's death in 1782, resulted in the death of many of Hāshimī's friends, and soon caused Hāshimī to migrate to Awadh, along with his poetic mentor, Mirzā Muḥammad Ḥasan "Qatīl" (c.1759-1822) whom he had met in Delhi.[101]

Employment with the Company offered a different kind of relationship, with limited prospects of promotion and the fulfilment of personal ambitions. At the same time, as literate professionals required as interpreters, clerks and revenue officers, *munshī*s continued to be in demand by the East India Company as well as other Indian patrons. The preceding sections showed that Indo-Persian scholars addressed multiple audiences in the texts they edited for the Company, and thus projected *ashraf* personas which facilitated their survival in the memory of literary history. However, not all managed to leave such

[99] Chatterjee, *Merchants, Politics and Society,* p.19, 210-218

[100] 'Maḵ̲h̲zan al-Ġ̲h̲ara'ib', Oxford, Bodl. MS. Elliott 395, fos.13-14r. These men were probably part of Najaf K̲h̲ān's retinue or army.

[101] Ibid. It is possible that Hāshimī became attached to Qatīl in Delhi, since Qatīl also moved to Lucknow after Najaf K̲h̲ān's death, but Hāshimī does not make this clear. For a discussion of Qatīl: Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World,* pp.423-6; S. Pellò, 'A Linguistic Conversion: Mirza Muhammad Hasan Qatil and the Varieties of Persian (ca. 1790)', *Euroasiatica, Borders: Itineraries on the Edges of Iran*, 5 (2016), pp.203-240

legacies, and are not to be found in *taẕkira*s or other source materials. Using the case study of Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn, this section investigates why such omissions occurred. It is argued that scholars who did not attempt to engage their Persianised colleagues were not remembered or commemorated in contemporary sources. While this could be a matter of personal choice, it was also linked to generational change, as some scholars began to rely exclusively on the Company for support, resulting in their isolation. While many individuals remained connected to Persianate circles throughout the nineteenth century, those who chose not to participate in these milieus were not provided adequate support.

It is useful to begin with a comparison of the generations to which Afsos and Abū Ṭālib belonged, and its juniors. Both Afsos and Abū Ṭālib joined the East India Company towards the end of their careers: Abū Ṭālib died in Calcutta in 1803, and Afsos in 1809. Although not mentioned by Abū Ṭālib, Afsos was in every way his contemporary and equal, and belonged to the same socio-intellectual formation as Abū Ṭālib, as the following account of his life and works will demonstrate. As already explained, like Abū Ṭālib and others of his social sphere, Afsos was deeply invested in the literary relationships and networks of influence that enabled mobility and social advancement in the Persianate world. Afsos and Abū Ṭālib can be fruitfully compared with Maulawī Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn Aḥmad, who has already been discussed. Although Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's exact date of birth is not known, it is likely that he was born around 1780/81, since he says that when he joined the College of Fort William in May, 1801, he was twenty years old.[102] This made him at least thirty years younger than Ṭālib and Afsos. Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn was educated at the Calcutta Madrasa, established by Warrren Hastings in 1780.[103] Having completed his education in Arabic and

[102] Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn Aḥmad, 'Dībācha', in Abū'l Faẓl, *Khirad Afroz,* trans. Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn Aḥmad, ed. S. A. A. Abid and S. I. A. Taj (Lahore, 1963) p.3; BL, MS Eur D116: 1800-1802, fos.75-86, Reports of the College of Fort William, including details of College regulations and statutes, lists of staff and students, reports of lectures, examination papers and result

[103] Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn, 'Dībācha', pp.2-3

Persian at this institution, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn was hired at the newly instituted College of Fort William as a member of the Hindustani department, where his father, Maulawī Ḥilāl al-Dīn, was also a *munshī*. The East India Company was Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's only patron throughout the whole of his career.

In the works he produced for the Company, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn emphasized his Arabic descent and connections with important Sufi lineages. Indeed, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's full name, Shaiḵẖ Ḥāfīẓ al-Dīn Aḥmad bin Shaiḵẖ Ḥilāl al-Dīn Muḥammad bin Shaiḵẖ Muḥammad Ẕākir Ṣiddīqī, carried this information, but British sources referred to him simply as Maulawī Ḥāfīẓ al-Dīn, indicating a lack of awareness of the significance of such an ancestry. Having settled in the Deccan, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's family formed close bonds of service to Shāh 'Ināyatullāh, a descendant of the Deccani saint Haẓrat Shāh 'Abdullāh Kirmāni. Ḥāfīẓ al-Dīn's family then moved to Bengal, where he entered the employ of the Company.[104]

Barring details about his family, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's preface and conclusion to the *Khirud Afroz* consisted of relatively lengthy sections in praise of his East India Company patrons, the Marquis Wellesley and John Gilchrist, and an account of the Sanskrit origins of the work being translated, which he acknowledged the orientalist Henry Thomas Colebrooke (1765-1837) for uncovering.[105] Unlike Abū Ṭālib and Afsos, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn addressed himself exclusively to a British readership, specifically to Company officials. The only qualifications he claimed to possess were those acquired under the aegis of the Company, and he made no reference to other Indo-Persian literati in India. It is clear that

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn, 'Dībācha', pp.5-17; Abū'l Faẓl's *'Iyār Dānish* was a rendition of the well-known tales of the *Hitopadesa,* which became known as the 'Fables of Bidpai', and was rendered into Persian several times.

Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's experience was very different to that of Abū Ṭālib and Afsos: his relationship with the Company was a longstanding one and dominated his whole career.

After a stint at the College of Fort William, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn was employed by Charles Theophilus Metcalfe (1785-1846), who went on to become governor-general of India. As a student at the College of Fort William, Charles Metcalfe had been taught by Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's father, Ḥilāl al-Dīn.[106] Metcalfe was evidently deeply attached to Ḥilāl al-Dīn. After Ḥilāl al-Dīn's retirement, Metcalfe tried to reward him by granting him a perpetual allowance of twenty rupees per month. However, Metcalfe was dissuaded from making such a settlement, and ended up paying Ḥilāl al-Dīn a single sum of two hundred rupees as a mark of his gratitude in 1803.[107] Building on the trust he reposed in Ḥilāl al-Dīn, when Metcalfe joined General Lake's army in Delhi in 1805, he summoned Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn, whom he had also known at the College of Fort William. By offering Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn a higher salary than the one he received from the college, Metcalfe was able to secure his services as a private *munshī*.[108]

Unlike many of his Persianate contemporaries, it seems that Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn was not involved in court politics prior to his employment with Metcalfe, and was only a *munshī* who taught Hindustani at Fort William. In fact, his lack of experience was one of the factors which led to him being employed by Metcalfe, who remarked to Sherer, 'I am not certain that [Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn] is a man of business, and I am not anxious that he should be, for I should like to form him for my own habits.'[109] While the East India Company certainly should be seen as Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's patron, the role he fulfilled as a scholar and teacher was much

[106] J. W. Kaye and C. T. Metcalfe, *The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, ed. J. W. Kaye (2 vols, London, 1854), i, p.40
[107] Kaye and Metcalfe, *The Life and Correspondence,* i, pp.64-5
[108] Kaye and Metcalfe, *The Life and Correspondence,* i, pp.159-60
[109] Ibid.

narrower than many of his contemporaries at Indian courts, and even that of Afsos and Abū Ṭālib who belonged to an earlier generation of Indians working for the Company. More significantly, Metcalfe's decision indicated that the less political experience an Indian had, the more desirable he was as a Company employee, reflecting the British estrangement from their subjects after the 1780s.

After joining Metcalfe's service, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn accompanied his employer on various missions until the latter became Resident of Delhi in 1811. At this point Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn became an official Company employee once again, as he became head *munshī* to the Resident. When Charles Metcalfe left this position in 1818, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn also resigned. It was after this that Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn became the subject of many rumours; specifically, it was said that he had been in the practice of receiving bribes, and in this way had amassed a fortune of over four lakh rupees. In response to these rumours, Metcalfe distanced himself from Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn, and withdrew his patronage altogether. [110] As Prior and others have noted, this period saw increasing pressure on officials to conform to stereotypes about the 'uprightness' of British employees, in opposition to the corruption of Indians. These stereotypes were in the process of being constructed by the generation of Utilitarian civil-servant employees, to which Metcalfe also belonged.[111] When they met again in 1827, in Calcutta, Metcalfe found Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn in an impoverished state, and having ceased to hold a public position himself, he restored Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn to his private service once more. Metcalfe ended his account of Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn by saying 'This is the history of Hufoozoodeen,

[110] Kaye and Metcalfe, *The Life and Correspondence,* i, pp.511-13

[111] K. Prior, L. Brennan & R. Haines, 'Bad Language: The Role of English, Persian and Other Esoteric Tongues in the Dismissal of Sir Edward Colebrooke as Resident of Delhi in 1829', *MAS,* 35/1 (2001), pp.75-112. See also: E. Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India* (Oxford, 1959), pp.3-5

into which I have been led by a desire to leave nothing untold respecting a man who is said to have made a fortune of four lakhs at a place where the man never was.'[112]

Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's experiences provide a useful insight into the nature of the Company's engagement with Indian scholars in the early nineteenth century. It is evident from the inclusion of verses in his published work that, like most members of the Indo-Persian sphere, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn composed poetry, although he does not appear to have had a *takẖẖallus* or a *dīwān*.[113] Despite this, as well as a remarkably close affiliation with the East India Company, he did not gain recognition as a scholar or poet amongst his Indian counterparts, since he was not mentioned by other *taẕkira*s of the time. Even Mast's *Riyāẓ al-Wifāq* ('Garden of Unanimity', 1814), a *taẕkira* which devoted itself solely to poets living in Calcutta and Benaras, and included many Company employees, did not include Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn.[114] Beyond passing references to Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn in letters and papers such as the correspondence of Thomas Metcalfe, he was not noticed by British officers and scholars for his skills as a scholar either – but this was true of most of the *munshī*s employed by the Company. Thomas William Beale's (d.1875) *Oriental Biographical Dictionary,* which was completed and published by Henry George Keene (1825-1915) in 1881, offered the following brief notice of Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's life:

> author of the "Khirad Afroz," an Urdu translation of the "Ayar Danish," or Pilpay's Fables, which he translated for the use of the College of Fort William in 1803 A.D., 1218 A.H.[115]

The reason that Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's literary legacy did not survive beyond the College of Fort William can be explained by his exclusive relationship with the East India Company. While most of his colleagues who wrote prefaces and epilogues to the works they produced

[112] Ibid.
[113] Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn, 'Dībācha', pp.4-6
[114] MS Sprenger 341
[115] T. Beale, *Oriental Biographical Dictionary,* ed. Asiatic Society of Bengal and H. G. Keene (Calcutta, 1881), p.99

mentioned at least some of their local patrons and friends, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn did not do so, indicating that he was less involved in alternative networks of prestige and patronage. Coupled with Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's lack of experience beyond the ambit of the East India Company, this meant that he was less well established amongst local scholars, poets and administrators. Superficially at least, he fulfilled the role of the *munshī* in the narrowest sense of the word in British usage: as a subordinate teacher and producer of textbooks. Bayly has noted the emergence of a 'new type of *munshī*' between the 1820s and 1850s, most of whom were educated in English and more closely tied to British patronage.[116] Avril Powell makes a similar argument for a slightly later period (1840s to 1860s) in her study of Maulawī Karīm al-Dīn.[117] These men were often involved in the translation of Victorian schoolbooks in English into Urdu and Hindi for Indian students. However, it is arguable that this shift began much earlier, and was not determined only by generation but also the extent to which any actor relied exclusively on state patronage. Prior to the 1820s, we can see in Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn a transitional figure, who was involved in the production of Urdu textbooks translated from Persian for British students, but whose close ties with the British seem to have made him choose to be less embedded within the Indo-Persian episteme. The weakness of his ties with Indian patrons and men of letters meant that he was not included in contemporary *taẕkira*s: in this sense, his status was that of a 'mere' *munshī*, rather than a scholar or poet, since his legacy depends very much on British understandings of the term. In contrast, Afsos and Abū Ṭālib featured in the writings of their contemporaries, and enjoyed much more widespread recognition.[118]

[116] Bayly, *Empire and Information*, p.229; Trautmann, *Languages and Nations,* p.134

[117] A. Powell, 'Scholar Manque or Mere Munshi? Maulawi Karimu'd-Dīn's Career in the Anglo-Oriental Education Service' in M. Pernau (ed.) *The Delhi College: traditional elites, the colonial state, and education before 1857* (New Delhi, 2006), pp.203-31

[118] MS Sprenger 341, fos.41-2r, 147-8v; Mast also mentioned Ḥaidarī, and Kāẓim 'Alī "Jawān" (who translated works from Sanskrit into Braj and Hindi at Fort William, but also composed verses in Persian): MS Sprenger 341, fos. 67-8r, 81-2r; Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān "Shaifta", *Gulshan-i Bīḵẖār* (Lucknow, 1874), p.23;

The point here is not so much that men such as Afsos and Ṭālib belonged to a very different generation to that of Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn, but rather that the extent to which individuals participated in the networks outside the colonial state had an important impact on their legacy in the literary and historical record. It was the Indo-Persian literati which was largely responsible for ensuring that contemporary poets and scholars were recognized and remembered, in biographical anthologies, poetry and histories. For instance, Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain, who featured in Abū Ṭālib's *taẕkira*, did not leave a *dīwān* of poems when he died. However, he was an active poet and teacher. This is evidenced by the fact that his disciples and admirers gathered after his death in order to recite and commemorate his verses, and finally collated them into a *dīwān.*[119] Unlike Afsos or Abū Ṭālib, however, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn did not complete a *dīwān* of poetry, and it is possible that this correlated with a lack of participation in poetic activities, and thus he was not considered to be a serious poet. This is supported by the case of Mīr Amman (fl.1801-1806, the translator of *Bāgh o Bahār*, and who also had no *dīwān* or *taḵẖallus.*[120] Indeed, it is unlikely that Amman even attempted to address non-European audiences. Amman's inaccurate portrayal of the original text of his translation, as well as the fictive account of the origins of Urdu he offered, has led Faruqi to suggest that Amman did not expect his work to be circulated beyond Fort William College students.[121] While Amman's reasons for these decisions remain unknown, they indicate that authors who chose not to participate, or address, their Indo-Persian colleagues, had little chance of surviving. It was not until much later in the

Naṣrullāh Ḵẖān Ḵẖweshgī, *Hamīsha Bahār,* ed. A. Farruḵẖī (Karachi, 1967), pp.67-8 [First published in 1857]

[119] MS Elliott 181, fos.340-2v

[120] M. Ḥusain, 'Introduction' in Mīr Amman Dahlawī, *Bāgh o Bahār*, ed. M. Ḥusain (Karachi, 1958), pp.22-9

[121] While working between two Hindi/Urdu texts, Mīr Amman referred to the Persian *Qiṣṣa-i Chār Dervish,* deliberately implying that he had translated straight from Persian. He also seems to have been the originator of the myth that Urdu developed at the 'camp' of the emperor Akbar. S. R. Faruqi, *Early Urdu Literary Culture and History,* pp.36-8

nineteenth century, after *Bāgh o Bahār* had become part of educational curricula, that Mīr Amman started gaining popularity amongst Indians.[122]

Similarly, texts by Afsos and Abū Ṭālib also circulated via manuscript, including, but not limited to those works they produced under the aegis of the Company. Such copying obviously relied on either the author's autograph manuscript being available, or the distribution of the printed book from which the manuscript could be transcribed.[123] Thus manuscript circulation signalled the strength of the author's contacts and his position in Indo-Persian scholarly networks; as the discussion of Ṭālib's *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār* has already demonstrated, such relationships were framed in terms of intimate friendship and also served to bolster literary authority.

Membership in the Indo-Persian literary world thus continued to be arbitrated by Indians, and not their British patrons. Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's life and legacy reflect this clearly: it is possible to see the division of the overlapping identities of the scholar/poet/secretary and bureaucrat. However, Abū Ṭālib was able to bridge the perceived gap between the poet/editor and the administrative official (he was a revenue officer in the Company's establishment for some time). Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn belonged instead to a more narrowly defined group of 'native informants', author of a textbook for colonial officials and an assistant on Thomas Metcalfe's missions. This was because Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn did not attempt to locate himself within a broader intellectual community, and instead focused only on his

[122] A. H. Sharar, *Lucknow: The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture*, trans. E.S. Harcourt and F. Ḥusain (Colorado, 1975) cf. F. W. Pritchett, *Marvellous encounters: folk romance in Urdu and Hindi* (Riverdale, 1985), p.22

[123] 'Bāgh-i Urdū' in manuscript: Oxford, Bodl. MS Bodley Or. 746; At least three copies of Ṭālib's '*Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār*' exist: Ethe, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts,* pp.357-8; Bodl. MS Elliott 181; Michigan, Isl. Ms. 269; for a version of Arayish-i Maḥfil copied by a European: D. Bredi, 'Remarks on Ara'ish-e Mahfil by Mir Sher 'Ali Afsos', *Annual of Urdu Studies,* 14 (1999), pp.33-53; Aloys Sprenger also noted in 1848 that Afsos' *dīwān* was very common in Indian private collections. He also mentioned that 'Bāgh-i Urdū' was available in print: A. Sprenger, *Report of the Researches into the Muhammadan Libraries of Lucknow* (Calcutta, 1896), p.16

relationship with the Company. This was unfortunate, since little literary recognition was given to contemporary poets and scholars by the East India Company, particularly those who composed poetry in Persian.

Although the Company acted as a patron for Persian scholars, it did not provide the necessary apparatus or motivation for these scholars to be recognized beyond their roles as native assistants and editor-translators. The focus remained, as noted in Chapter Two, on 'classical' poets and authors. On the rare occasions when British bio-bibliographic works took an interest in contemporary poets, they tended to rely heavily on Indo-Persian *taẕkira*s and histories for their content. This meant that only if an individual had been mentioned in such commemorative sources would there even be an opportunity for their legacy to survive. Since the first British attempts to compile biographical anthologies which were not restricted to classical poets occurred only after the 1840s, Ḥafīẓ al-Dīn's literary life had already been largely forgotten. An examination of Thomas Beale's *Oriental Biographical Dictionary* (1881), highlights the difference in available information between Persianate scholars tied to the East India Company and those with a wider base of patronage.[124] Beale's *Dictionary* – which claimed to be the first such work in English - relied on a range of Persian *taẕkira*s (most of which were not named), as well as Elliot and Dowson's *A History of India, as Told by its Own Historians* (1867-77), which was entirely composed of translations of Indian works.[125] Belonging to the networks of scholars who in addition to producing their own writings, transmitted, copied and promoted the works of their colleagues, played an important role in determining the poets who would be granted a position in India's Persianate history.

[124] Beale, *Oriental Biographical Dictionary*
[125] Ibid.

This is not to say that all British biographies of poets produced after the 1840s meekly followed the imperatives of the Indian sources from which they were drawn. Recent literary productions in Persian were ignored almost systematically. In 1846, the Persian scholar Nathaniel Bland (1803-65) delivered a paper to the Royal Asiatic Society in Britain entitled, 'On the Earliest Persian Biography of Poets, by Muḥammad Aufi, and on some other Works of the Class called Tazkirat ul Shuârá,' and in the same year, Gore Ouseley's (1770-1844) Biographical Notices of Persian Poets with Critical and Explanatory Remarks was posthumously published by the Oriental Translation Committee. While Bland's paper listed 42 taẕkiras, including the relatively recent Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār and Maḵẖzan al-Ḡẖara'ib, it focused on the value of these works as sources on older poets.[126] In particular, Bland was fascinated by the potential of Aufi's (1171-1242) Lubb al-Albāb, 'the earliest Persian biography of Poets', to which he devoted a quarter of his paper. Hāshimī's Maḵẖzan al-Ḡẖara'ib, although known to be the most extensive existing taẕkira, was accorded a short paragraph.[127] Similarly, Ouseley demonstrated a knowledge of a range of taẕkiras, but almost all the poets he discussed had flourished during or before the fifteenth centuries.[128] Ouseley included a notice on Sirāj al-Dīn 'Alī Ḵẖān Ārzū, who died in the mid-eighteenth century. However, despite Ārzū's fame, he was not treated as a poet, but included for the usefulness of his taẕkira as a source for older poets.[129] Given lack of colonial interest in contemporary scholars and poets, as well as the tendency to rely on Indian sources when such interest arose, it is clear that only belonging

[126] N. Bland, 'On the Earliest Persian Biography of Poets, by Muhammad Aúfi, and on Some Other Works of the Class Called Tazkirat ul Shuârá', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* 9 (1847), pp.111-76

[127] Bland, 'On the Earliest', pp.112-126, 173

[128] The only exceptions, including Ṣā'ib Tabrīzī, died in the early seventeenth century, corresponding to the end of the perceived 'golden age' of Muslims culture. G. Ouseley *Biographical Notices of Persian Poets with Critical and Explanatory Remarks,* ed. J. Reynolds (London, 1841), pp.1-4.

[129] Ouseley, *Biographical Notices,* pp.180-3

and participation in Indo-Persian networks could ensure the survival of literary legacies within and beyond India.

5. The Question of Classical Persian

Although British readers hardly engaged with contemporary poets writing in Persian, it is possible to compare British and Indian approaches towards the 'ancient' (*qadīm*) poets of Persian literature. Recently scholarship has begun to question two linked aspects of Persianate literary history: first, the notion of *bāzgasht-i adabī,* a gradual movement professing a return towards the classical writers of Persian that is meant to have begun at the end of the seventeenth-century and carried into the twentieth.[130] Second, there is the question of whether an Indian style of Persian composition, known as *sabk-i hindī,* even existed. The idea of an Indian style is questionable for a style that can be located in regions far beyond India, including Afghanistan and Iran.[131] Briefly, these formulations were proposed by Muḥammad Taqī Bahār in the early twentieth century, but have had an immense hold over subsequent literary history and criticism since. *Bāzgasht* (lit. 'return'), in this view, was a reaction to the 'sickly' Persian compositions of Indian decline, manifested in the style known as *sabk-i hindī.* It is beyond the scope of this thesis to engage deeply with this literature, or the concept of *bāzgasht* as a whole, however, the observations in this section contribute to an understanding of how early nineteenth century scholars in India may have perceived the relationship between the 'ancient' and the 'modern'. For the

[130] For stimulating discussions on *bāzgasht* and its politics*:* R. Kinra, 'Fresh Words for a Fresh World: Taza-Gūi and the Poetics of Newness in Early Modern Indo-Persian Poetry', *Sikh Formations,* 3/2 (2007), pp.125-49; K. Schwartz, 'Bâzgasht-i Adabî (Literary Return) and Persianate Literary Culture in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Iran, India, and Afghanistan' (Phd thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2014); Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani*; Keshavmurthy, *Persian authorship and canonicity*

[131] Losensky explains: 'The designation "Indian", moreover, is of recent origin, gaining currency only in the twentieth century. The term is never mentioned by Safavid-Mughal poets or critics themselves, who usually referred to the movement as the *shivah-i tazah,* the "fresh style": Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani,* p.4. See also: Kinra, 'Fresh Words'; A. D. Dudney, 'Sabk-e Hendi and the Crisis of Authority in Eighteenth-Century Indo-Persian Poetics', *Journal of Persianate Studies,* 9 (2016), pp.60-82

purposes of this thesis, the following discussion is essential to an understanding of how British orientalist practices of focusing on classical poets, as well as colonial educational policies intended for Indians (discussed in Chapter Four), were based on crucially different concepts of the 'classical' to their Indo-Persian counterparts.

In the preface to *K̲h̲ulāṣat al-Afkār*, Abū Ṭālib stated that his *taẕkira* was the result of a lifelong study of 'old' (*mutaqadmīn*) and 'recent' (*mutāk̲h̲irīn*) poets.[132] His conception of the different poets was, however, more complex than this, and the *K̲h̲ulāṣat* reveals a dual conception of the temporal aspects of poetic lives and productions. On the one hand, the *taẕkira* is simply divided into two main parts: the 'old' and the 'contemporary' poets. The latter comprised individuals whom Ṭālib knew personally, while the 'old' represented all other poets who had written in Persian. In this sense, on an organizational level, the *taẕkira* did not attempt to make finer delineations between different points in the literary past. However, Abū Ṭālib's long preface to the *taẕkira* provided a more detailed and formalised history of Persian poetry, starting with the reign of Ya'qūb b. al-Laiṣ al-Ṣaffar (d.879).[133] Broadly speaking, Ṭālib's divisions of Persian literary history followed a pattern common to eighteenth and nineteenth-century groupings.[134] This began with Rūdaki, commonly identified as the founder of Persian poetry (d.941), followed by Sa'dī (d.1291/2) and his thirteenth-century contemporaries, who included Amīr K̲h̲usrau (1253-1325 AD). According to Ṭālib, this triumvirate represented the peak of the *g̲h̲azal* form, made possible by the impetus to poetry provided by an intense period of patronage under Maḥmūd of G̲h̲aznī. They were followed by the

[132] MS Elliott 181, fo.2v

[133] MS Elliott 181, fo.3v; The inclusion of Ḥāfiẓ in this lineage is both unusual and significant as it departs from the usual dating of the 'new style' to the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Moreover, it was on the figure of Ẓuhūrī Tarshizī (d.1616/17) that Ṭālib next focused, claiming that until the ninth Hijri century (early seventeenth century CE), the use of everyday or common words was not admitted in poetry. Ẓuhūrī changed this by introducing familiar and everyday words into poetic language.

[134] Faruqi, 'A Stranger in the City', pp.6-9

innovators of the 'fresh style' (*ṭarz-i tāza*) – Bābā Fiġẖāni (d.1516 or 1519), Ṣāʾib Tabrīzī (1601-1677), and unusually, Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī (c.1315-1390).[135]

While Abū Ṭālib held older poets such as Firdausī, Sa'dī , Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (c.1145-1221) in great esteem, it should not be assumed that he (or others of his milieu) shared the prevalent European tendency to value Persian literature in terms of its antiquity. To take one example among many, Abū Ṭālib considered his contemporary and friend, Āshob, to have surpassed Firdausī in his depictions of war.[136] This being said, the veneration that certain classical poets such as Firdausī enjoyed was the reason that he could be deployed by Abū Ṭālib in order to express extreme praise. 'Alī Aḥmad Hāshimī praised his teacher, Qatīl, in a similar vein, writing that if the poet Anwarī (1126-89) had been alive, he would have bestowed the title of *malik al-shu'arā* (king of poets) on Qatīl, and learned the arts of '*faṣāḥat o balāġẖat*' (precision and eloquence in discourse) from him.[137] Linking Āshob with Firdausī, and Qatīl with Anwarī, however, were not just statements comparing two poets. Instead they signalled that Āshob had successfully imitated (and surpassed) the style of Firdausī, while Qatīl had mastered that of Anwarī. They marked the different styles that poets chose to follow at different times, while also connecting poets over time, in a manner akin to the relationship of *shāgirdī*.[138] The interplay between modern and ancient, articulated through intertextual references as well as modes of interpretation, meant that the Persian canon was being constantly altered and reformed with each addition. Abū Ṭālib's appreciation of Āshob's verses on war resulted in a value judgment which reconfigured the high position occupied by the Firdausī.[139] In effect, while

[135] MS Elliott 181, fos.2-6r
[136] MS Elliott 181, fos.347-8v. Using the language of war, Ṭālib wrote of Āshob's 'arrow' defeating Firdausī.
[137] MS. Elliott 395, fos.13-14r
[138] Schwartz notes poets displayed a 'healthy mix' of imitation of different styles, rather than adhering to a single style. Schwartz, Bâzgasht-i Adabî, p.25
[139] MS Elliott 181, fos.347-8v

the ancient masters were highly revered, they did not present an obstacle to recognizing the genius and skills of contemporary poets, who remained connected to them through literary engagement, imitation and contestation.

The British conception of 'classical' literature was associated with a purer, simpler and less corrupted style.[140] This was a framework which was also projected onto Persian literature by colonial observers, as noted in the previous chapter.[141] However, it is clear that Indo-Persian scholars viewed these works as being far more complex. Afsos, for example, mentioned that the *Gulistān*, which was used as a beginner's textbook, was very pure, but also difficult and complicated (*pīchdār*: lit. 'coiled'). Simplicity of language and narrative did not equate with conceptual understandings of linguistic devices and moral frameworks. Similarly, in his introduction to *Maḵẖzan al-Ġẖara'ib* (1803/4), Aḥmad 'Alī Hāshimī Sandilah of Delhi explained that he had compiled the *taẕkira* at the wish of his teacher (*ustād*), Muḥammad Ḥasan "Qatīl".[142] The latter had persuaded Hāshimī that a comprehensive anthology of poets, alphabetically arranged, would be a worthy project because of the abundance of 'poetry of every kind' which made it difficult for people to locate the works of poets they wished to read. Hāshimī wrote, however, that he included the 'ancient' poets unwillingly, since they were already famous and easily available, and stood in no need of promotion. More importantly, he wrote that older poets were far more difficult to interpret than modern poets: he claimed that much expertise (*mahārat*) was necessary in order to understand this kind of poetry.[143] Compelled by the promise to produce as complete a *taẕkira* as possible, and to include all classes of poets, Hāshimī did not exclude the ancients. However, his brief explanation as to why they appeared to be

[140] Busch, 'The Poetry of Kings', pp.1-4
[141] MS. Elliott 395, fos.13-14r
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.

difficult to early nineteenth-century readers provides us with a valuable insight into the ways in which Hāshimī thought that older texts were meant to be analysed.

First of all, Hāshimī asserted that it was difficult for his contemporaries to appreciate older poetry, because the idioms and language deployed by in earlier times had become archaic and outdated, and were thus unfamiliar to many readers. This certainly unsettles any assumptions that the trajectory of Persian literature was seen as being linear or unchanging, or that it continued to be valued in the same way across time. Rather, Hāshimī signalled his awareness that 'ancient Persian' was no longer accessible to many, for which reason it was under-appreciated. The reasons for this were linguistic, rather than social, as it was the changing language which caused this distance. In other words, the relevance or value of older works was not questioned. Secondly, Hāshimī claimed, in addition to understanding the language, readers had to be well-versed in the techniques that the classical poets deployed. One technique which Hāshimī mentioned was that of extracting and borrowing from other poets (*iqtibās*) and allusion (*talmīḥ*) which necessitated a wide knowledge of the ancient poets and their contexts. Other poetic practices were even more technical, such as the use of palindromes, anagrams and inversions (*maqlūb*) of which there were various categories. Even the use of irony and puns (*ihām*), hyperbole and exaggeration (*g̱ẖalū* and *ag̱ẖrāq*) required contextual knowledge in order to be understood. From the long list of poetical terms Hāshimī furnished the reader with, it is clear that to him, reading Persian poetry was not a simple task, nor a source of immediate pleasure. Rather, it was only by being aware of the minutiae of the poet's technique, and being able to accurately and precisely (with *faṣāḥat*) follow the structure and diction of poetry, that true appreciation and understanding could be attained. Reading was in this sense an exercise that required effort and a deep knowledge of poetic discourse

(*kalām*) in order to be fruitful. Indeed, it was Hāshimī's anxiety that difficult poetry would not be 'properly' understood which tempted him to omit it altogether.[144]

It is possible to interpret Hāshimī's emphasis on the technical aspects of language as stemming from his own experience as a poet who learned Persian as a second language, relatively late in life. Hāshimī explained in his preface that due to his family's straitened finances he had no opportunity in his childhood to learn from language experts (*zabāndān*), and thus did not have enjoy the pleasures that money could have granted. However, after joining Najaf Ḵẖān's son as a soldier around the age of thirteen or fourteen, he had the opportunity to mingle with men from 'Khurasan and Iraq and Fars'. From their 'learned conversations', Hāshimī acquired skill and discrimination in Persian. Thus he studied *dīwāns* of poetry and acquainted himself with the idioms and metaphors of the language which had previously been inaccessible to him. From Hāshimī's own experience, then, it appears that he was only able to find pleasure in Persian poetry once he became educated in the finer points of the art (*fann*) of understanding verse.[145] The emphasis was thus placed on linguistic attainments, rather than the narratives or messages that poems could offer. 'Proper' reading entailed awareness and appreciation of language, and the ability to decipher the intentions and methods of the poet; an untutored or impressionistic reading could not generate the same pleasure or have the same value.

Hāshimī implied that different sets of rules and knowledge were needed to understand ancient and modern poetry. Unfortunately, he did not provide an apparatus for reading contemporary authors, perhaps because he assumed that his audience would already be skilled in deriving meaning from more recent poetry. It also suggests that he thought that classical poets merited a more scholarly approach, while the moderns were

[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.

simpler to understand – if only because their vocabulary, idioms and style were more familiar to contemporary readers. In this sense, Hāshimī was deeply aware of, and concerned by, the possibility of a loss of meaning, and viewed poetic texts in a historical context.[146] Hāshimī assumed that contemporary poetry was able to be understood by a broader and less tutored readership, while the ancients required specialist knowledge. Contemporary poetry, in this sense, would be more accessible to the layperson. However, as Abū Ṭālib's *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Afkār* indicated, this did not mean that no critical vocabulary existed for modern poets or that Ṭālib considered all poets to be equally accessible: while betraying none of Hāshimī's anxiety, Ṭālib noted that certain poets such as Minnat and Āshob were appreciated by the elite as well as the common people, while the discourse of others, such as Ḵẖwāja 'Abdul "Tāhīd" (fl.1771-91), was so refined that it was difficult to understand.[147]

The terms most commonly applied in praise of contemporary poets (apart from their personal qualities as individuals) by Abū Ṭālib were those which described their expertise at deriving and displaying multiple meanings with precision. Mīr Muḥammad Ḥusain, for example was described as having attained knowledge of the minutiae and subtleties of Persian ('*daqā'iq-i zabān*'). Abū Ṭālib also admired this quality in the poetic styles of Hātif (fl.1754-91) and Āshob, whose pens he described as '*ma'ná shikāfash*', (lit. meaning-splitting).[148] This capacity for precision allowed for the generation of multiple meanings from a single word or phrase, and is considered by many to be characteristic of *tāza-guī*, or the 'fresh style' of Indo-Persian poetry, discussed earlier.[149]

[146] This loss of contextual meaning is similar to that described in regard to historical works in: V. Rao, D. Shulman and S. Subrahmanyam, *Textures of time: writing history in South India, 1600-1800* (New York, 2003), pp.3-8
[147] MS Elliott 181, fos. 340-56v
[148] MS Elliott 181, fos.347-50r
[149] Faruqi, 'A Stranger in the City', pp.16-40

This is demonstrated by the importance placed on eloquence – denoted by the terms *faṣāḥat* and *balāg̱ẖat*. However, whereas *faṣāḥat* indicated precision and accuracy, *balāg̱ẖat* connoted copiousness and fluency. The ability to be eloquent about the particular as well as the general was immensely valued by Abū Ṭālib and his contemporaries, and again emphasized the importance of melding the aesthetic and cerebral in the appreciation of literary works. Another such binary was formed between the concepts of the outer/apparent and inner/hidden (*ẓāhir* and *bāṭin*) aspects of writing.[150] The same concept was also described by *ṣūrī* (lit. external, facial) and *ma'nawī* (relating to the 'true' meaning). These terms usually occurred together and created an opposition between 'inner' meaning and 'outward' beauty. For example, writing about the poetry of Mirzā Ṣadr al-Dīn Iṣfahānī, Abū Ṭālib wrote that the latter painted beautiful 'pictures' or 'outward appearances' (*jamāl-i ṣūrī*) and also excelled in creating meaning (*kamāl-i ma'ná*). The poet's success rested on his ability to overcome this apparent opposition between form and meaning, while the reader should be able to distinguish between them and take pleasure from their union. This dual function of poetry could manifest itself in a more obvious manner also, as demonstrated by the verses of Bīdār, whom Ṭālib described as an expert in the art of history (*fann-i ta'rīk̲ẖ*). Bīdār's *dīwān* consisted of poems of which each *miṣra'* (line) or *fiqra* (verse) yielded the date of a particular event (such as births, deaths, accessions and wars).[151] Historical information was transmitted and preserved in a form which was both accurate and aesthetically pleasing. In certain couplets, the date was not given directly, but needs to be worked out by identifying the correct phrase which yielded the date as its numerological result. The popularity of such chronogrammatic verses attested to the pleasure derived from solving such puzzles. Whether or not different styles

[150] E.g. MS Elliott 181, fo.353r
[151] MS Ellliott fo.351r

were appreciated by particular readers, their reading of them was certainly influenced by the different options opened up by the 'fresh style'. Reading poetry thus involved an understanding of the multifaceted implications of each verse, and indeed, each word had to be interpreted in several different ways simultaneously in order to yield the fullest meaning and aesthetic pleasure. The fact that aesthetic and intellectual satisfaction were inextricably interlinked in this way was recognized and elucidated by readers such as Abū Ṭālib and Hāshimī.

In contrast, the idea of an overall oriental decline prevented most European readers from valuing the complexity of the poets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As discussed in the previous chapter, British scholars defined and valued classical Persian works according to the chronological correlation of pre-sixteenth century poetry with a pre-decline golden age. In terms of temporal connections, this was at odds with the more complicated but fluid Indo-Persian conception of the classical. On the one hand, the appellation *qadīm* could just mean 'old', and thus be applied to simply denote that one poet lived and produced poetry a longer time ago than another. However, as in the context of the ideas of the *bāzgasht*, '*qadīm*' also referred to styles which simply pre-dated *tāza-gui,* or the movement of 'fresh speaking'.[152] Newer poets could copy different styles, and were fundamentally connected to the older ones through chains of transmission and contact. While this does need to be taken so far as to suggest (as Faruqi does) that 'nothing ever went truly out of date, hence nothing ever was truly new', it does indicate the crucial difference between Indo-Persian and European ways of looking at older writers who had become the foundation of a scholarly education. On the one hand, there are strong affinities with the Persianate context. Eighteenth-century European neoclassical aesthetics self-

[152] Kinra, 'Fresh Words'. As Kinra notes, while these concepts may be irrelevant to the actual conditions in which a 'fresh style' was innovated, they were contested throughout the early modern and modern period.

consciously sought to imitate classical models, and even the rejection of neoclassicism by many nineteenth-century Romantics turned to present classical themes in modern language.[153] However, in the European context, the classical denoted was a world that was seen as being lost and recovered after a long rupture.[154] By contrast, while there were specific turning points and movements in Persianate literary traditions, they were ongoing and connected, and Indo-Persian scholars and poets belonged to a cosmopolitan, multi-centred geography in which change was constantly taking place.

Despite working in close proximity with Indian scholars, the East India Company and its attendant orientalist scholars do not seem to have responded to the concerns and interests of their Indian counterparts. Although orientalists collected Persian works of all kinds, the output of scholars in Britain and at Fort William did not reflect these interactions. While there was an obvious interest amongst Indo-Persian scholars in producing and reading 'modern' poetry, and value accorded to it, European orientalists continued to focus on classical writings, defining 'classical' according to the Greco-Latin framework with which they were familiar – as being disconnected from the present. Abū Ṭālib, Afsos and many of the other scholars employed by the Company were acknowledged poets, in whom the Company displayed little interest save as their function as informants and editors. In the final analysis, the Company was unable in its capacity as a patron to understand and respond to contemporary literary concerns, signalling its increasing remoteness from the society within which it operated.

[153] This comparison is drawn by Dudney, although he criticizes it on the grounds that the relationship between the vernaculars and Persian is dehistoricized by applying this frame. Dudney, 'Sabk-e Hendi', p.66

[154] Siegel, 'Art, Aesthetics and Archaeological Poetics'

6. Conclusion

Despite the pressures of colonial rule and the limitations it imposed on poetic patronage, far from being a static or even declining segment of Indian society, the Persianate sphere in India was a dynamic space which continued to wield a strong cultural influence over who was to be admitted into its members, as well as the transmission and circulation of the works of these individuals. As Abū Ṭālib's *taẕkira* shows, to be counted amongst the literary elite, poets and scholars had to display a range of personal skills and qualities, including integrity, piety and refined sensibilities and discriminating taste. Commemmoration in Persianate literary history depended largely on participation in scholarly and poetic circles. These in turn influenced later colonial British accounts of Indian poets, which drew upon *taẕkira*s. British concerns about Persian literature did not seem to have much impact at this point on how members of the Indo-Persian literati thought about Persian texts. This was because well-established interpretative already existed and were connected to dynamic social contexts. Finally, it appears that the presence of the East India Company did cause certain changes, since by now the Company's approach to patronage and transmission departed from Indian norms. This meant that the political career of the *munshī*-poets was more limited than before, and the *munshī* was defined in the narrowest sense of the term (i.e. as a clerk and native informant). However, this impact was felt most strongly by those Indians whose base of patrons and contacts in India was limited, and who invested wholly in the Company for patronage and security. Indo-Persian literary authority continued to be arbitrated by South Asian networks of literati, which, for the most part, were not penetrated by the colonial state. In order to be recognized as scholars and poets in their own right, indigenous systems of gaining authority and transmission were crucial. As the following chapter will discuss, however, the intervention of the East India Company in Indian education from the second quarter

of the nineteenth century began to introduce gradual (albeit uneven) changes in the ways that Indians accessed and valued Persian texts.

Chapter 4: The 'War against Persian':[1] British Interventions in Indian Education, c.1813-1857

2. Introduction

The preceding chapters examined the emergence of different colonial and Indo-Persian constructions of scholarly authority and attitudes towards the Persian canon in the first decades of the East India Company's rule. These divergent approaches emerged in the context of the Company's engagement with Persianate scholars and texts to produce knowledge for the purposes of colonial rule. Thus far, British interactions with Persian had centred on the ways in which the language could directly benefit the colonial state. From 1813, however, the Company was forced to become actively involved in the promotion of education and the 'revival and improvement of literature' in India.[2] This chapter examines the impact of colonial policies on Persian as a result of the colonial involvement in the education of Indians. Colonial education represented a new arena of Persian education, separate from the personalized practices of *ustād-shāgirdī*. Focusing in particular on the debate between Orientalists and Anglicists, this chapter argues that the role ascribed to the Company in the decline of Persian in India has been exaggerated. Recent scholarship has pointed towards the continuing usage of Persian in India after 1835 in certain contexts – for instance, as a part of private elite education, or in literary activities encouraged by particular patrons.[3] However, the role and reason for survival of Persian in state-run educational establishments is yet to be explored.

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[1] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1839-40* (Calcutta, 1841), pp.104-5

[2] 'Charter Act of 1813', in M. Moir & L. Zastoupil (eds.), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843*, (Toronto, 1999), p.91

[3] Pernau, 'Teaching Emotions'; K. L. Schwartz, 'The curious case of Carnatic: The last nawab of Arcot (*d*.1855) and Persian literary culture', *IESHR,* 53/4 (2016), pp.533-60, Rahman, 'Decline of Persian in British India'.

While it is often assumed that the 1835 decision to abolish Persian as the language of Indian administration and education, and its subsequent implementation in 1837, dealt a death-blow to the language in the subcontinent, this chapter shows that the impact of this decision was limited.[4] Nineteenth-century colonial educational policy was dominated by the Orientalist/Anglicist controversy, the rhetoric of which was predicated on the notion that Indian society was composed of two rival religious groups – Hindus and Muslims, who were fundamentally opposed to each other. This framework underpinned the binaries commonly deployed in education discourse, such as religious/secular, foreign/vernacular and traditional/modern. However, Persian's complicated status as a cosmopolitan language did not easily fit into such formulations, and hence occupied an ambivalent position in the educational framework. As shall be explained, this ambivalence inadvertently enabled Persian to continue to be learned by traditional elites during this period, while newly-literate groups were also able to access the language more easily. However, the social function of Persian began to shift as it was integrated into colonial curricula, as colonial views of it as a classical language, foreign to India with no relevance or connection to the present influenced the curricula studied. This, too, was a result of the ambivalence with which the language was treated by colonial policy, which had enabled its survival in the educational curricula in the first place.

This chapter will examine the impact of colonial policy on the history of Persian in the subcontinent. In order to do so, the following section situates Persian in nineteenth-century colonial discussions. It is argued that the most striking feature of these debates was

[4] For e.g. Bellenoit states that Persian was 'banished' by the state in the early 1840s: . Bellenoit, 'Paper, pens and power', pp.363-4. This is a view that is largely held by the older literature on education in India; however it has still not been challenged, as historians of Indian education focus on English and vernacular education. On Bengali education: T. Bhattacharya, *The Sentinels Of Culture: Class, Education, And The Colonial Intellectual In Bengal, 1848-85* (New Delhi, 2005): Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement*. General surveys of education also avoid the issue of Persian, mentioning it only in passing in lists of subjects: T. Allender, *Ruling Through Education: The Politics of Schooling in Colonial Punjab* (New Delhi, 2006)

the dearth of direct references to Persian on the part of Anglicists and Orientalists alike. This was a result of the difficulty of neatly categorising the language, and resulted in the depiction of Persian as inherently foreign, outmoded and classical (rather than cosmopolitan) in opposition with the vernacular. Section Three demonstrates how the contradictions of the colonial discourse resulted in policies which inadvertently allowed Persian to persist in educational institutions, even after the language was officially abandoned. Despite the apparent continuities in the survival of Persian, Section Three attempts to reconstruct the changed form in which Indian students might have encountered Persian as it was taught in colonial institutions, as a 'classical' foreign language, rather than a living 'cosmopolitan' one. While this may not have impacted Indian interactions with Persian at the time, the colonial education system treated Persian as alien and dislocated from its socio-political functions in India. In sum, this chapter argues that the colonial state both facilitated and dislocated the study of Persian in India by reconfiguring the way in which the language was accessed. Before continuing, it is useful to briefly recapitulate the background and historiography of colonial education in India.

Prior to 1813, only two Indian educational institutions received formal patronage from the Company: the Calcutta Madrasa and the Sanskrit College at Benaras, established in 1781 and 1791 respectively. However, the two establishments remained largely autonomous until the second decade of the nineteenth century. A report on the activities of the Madrasa noted in 1785 that, 'it does not appear that we are authorized to interfere further than to inspect from time to time the state of the Madressa and report upon it.'[5] The activities of the Sanskrit College were similarly protected from state intervention, as the rules stated that even the British Resident was not permitted to attend many examinations

[5] BL, IOR/H/487, pp.12-16, Report by John Evelyn and Committee of Board of Revenue on the Madrasa, 2nd Aug. 1785

which concerned Brahmanical ritual knowledge.[6] The Company's involvement in Indian education thus remained nominal during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. This laissez-faire approach, however, was not universally popular in Parliament or even amongst the Company's own employees. In 1793, when the Company's charter to trade in India had been reviewed, the Company had come under considerable pressure to allow missionary activity in its Indian territories.[7] Although the Company managed to maintain its stance against missionary activity in 1793, such religious sentiments were growing within its own echelons. By 1813, missionary and evangelical influence within the Company had become strong enough to overturn the previous policy of non-interference.[8] In 1813, when the charter was renewed, it was agreed that the Company would take greater responsibility for the intellectual and spiritual well-being of its Indian subjects. Not only was missionary activity to be permitted in the Company's domains, but a sum of one lakh rupees was to be set aside from any surplus funds, and directed towards the promotion of learning in India.

It was not until 1823, however, that such a sum became available and that discussions on the ideal nature and content of colonial education for Indians seriously commenced.[9] By this time, in addition to missionary and evangelical influence, a new generation of colonial administrators had also begun to arrive. While some, such as William Bentinck (1774-1839, governor general from 1828-35) and Thomas Macaulay (1800-1859), had been educated in Britain and influenced by the Utilitarian philosophies of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, others, such as Charles Metcalfe, were the liberal

[6] BL, IOR/H/487, pp.27-57, Proposals from Jonathan Duncan, Resident at Benaras, to Lord Cornwallis 1st Jan. 1792 for the establishment of a Hindu College at Benaras and other Papers 25th Nov. 1790 to 1st Dec. 1791
[7] Dirks, *Scandal of Empire,* p.23
[8] Ibid.
[9] S. C. Ghosh, 'English in Taste, in Opinions, in Words and Intellect' in J. A. Mangan (ed), *The Imperial curriculum: racial images and education in British colonial experience* (London, 1993), p.181

products of Fort William College and the Wellesley administration.[10] In addition, local also played a significant role in determining the agenda of education, as they often donated to different colonial and privately-run institutions. These ranged from individuals such as Muḥammad Moḥsin of Calcutta, whose charitable *waqf* endowments were posthumously used to establish the Muḥammad Moḥsin College at Hooghly, to the ruling family of Awadh, who donated generously to the Delhi College.[11] Members of the rapidly growing Bengali *bhādrālok* were also extremely influential, particularly in their support for Anglo-Vernacular institutions.[12]

While the ideological leanings of different individuals did not always fall into categories according to their age or educational background, these conditions set the scene for a variety of responses to the question of Indian education. Broadly speaking, more members of the newly-arrived generation of officials leaned towards education in English or vernacular languages (or a combination of the two), as did most missionaries.[13] So too did most members of the *bhādrālok;* however, such local support for English-language education should not be taken as a sign of rejection of Persianate education, as many such elites continued to take part in multilingual domains outside colonial institutions.[14] Older officials, used to forging relations with elite groups in India, gravitated towards the promotion of education in the 'learned' languages, and were more prone to ally themselves

[10] Eric Stokes was one of the earliest historians to link Utilitarianism in India with generational change: Stokes, *The English Utilitarians*; for examinations of how Utilitarian and liberal ideas emerged as a result of the colonial engagement in India: J. Majeed, *Ungoverned imaginings: James Mill's The history of British India and Orientalism* (Oxford, 1992); U. S. Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: a study in nineteenth-century British liberal thought* (Chicago, 1999)*;* C. A. Bayly, 'Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire' (Cambridge, 1988), pp.82-3; C. Hall, *Macaulay and son: architects of imperial Britain* (New Haven, 2012)
[11] E. Koch, 'The Madrasa of Ghaziu'd-Din K̲h̲ān at Delhi', in *The Delhi College: Traditional Elites, the Colonial State and Education before 1857,* ed. Margrit Pernau (New Delhi, 2006), p.21
[12] P. Sengupta, *Pedagogy for Religion: Missionary Education and the Fashioning of Hindus and Muslims in Bengal* (Berkeley, 2011), pp.4-27
[13] For a typology of different stances: Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement,* p.46; On missionaries and vernacular education: Sengupta, *Pedagogy for Religion*
[14] A case in point is Ram Mohan Roy, discussed below. See p.203

with the Orientalist point of view. Those with a scholarly interest in particular literary or linguistic traditions tended to promote those, resulting in a kaleidoscope of positions.[15]

After 1823, when the Company established the General Committee for Public Instruction (GCPI), such debates were brought to centre-stage. The question of language was prominent amongst the topics discussed, and resulted in a long and bitter conflict. Broadly classed as 'Anglicists' and 'Orientalists', colonial officials, missionaries and Indians variously argued for the merits of education in English, the vernaculars and the languages studied by established elite groups in South Asia: Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. The argument was closely fought, and for the first quarter of the nineteenth-century, proponents of orientalist education had greater influence.[16] After Bentinck took office in 1828, the administration became decidedly more reformist in tone, tilting towards English-language and vernacular education, favoured by many Utilitarians.[17] The variety of positions taken up by different administrators and officials, as well as their reliance on Indian donors for funding, resulted in a constellation of institutional types emerging by the 1830s. These were 'Anglo-vernacular' institutions which privileged Utilitarian aims of education in the vernaculars and English, 'oriental' institutions (often referred to as seminaries) in which Sanskrit or Arabic were privileged, and 'Anglo-Oriental' institutions, where English was taught alongside Sanskrit and Arabic. As shall be seen, however, Persian managed to maintain a presence at all these types of establishments. In addition, it is also necessary to be aware of the importance of privately funded 'indigenous' schools,

[15] An excellent example is given in Dodson's study of James Ballantyne, who 'attempted to employ Sanskrit-based education in Western 'useful knowledge' as a tool for the propagation of Christianity.': M. S. Dodson, 'Re-presented for the Pandits: 'Useful Knowledge,' and Sanskrit Scholarship in Banaras College during the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *MAS,* 36/2 (2002), pp.257-298; M. S. Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire and National Culture: India, 1770-1880* (New York, 2007)

[16] Moir and Zastoupil, 'Introduction', p.23

[17] Ibid. See also: C. Hall, 'Making colonial subjects: education in the age of empire', *History of Education*, 37/6 (2008), pp.773-87, 784

which also continued to function throughout this period and offered an array of educational approaches and languages. Such schools were established and supported in two main ways: through the enterprise and patronage of local elites, or by the initiative of individual teachers, who then received food, accommodation or monetary compensation from students and their families. Finally, there were enterprises run by missionaries, which focused exclusively on English and vernacular education.

The defining moment of the debate in history came in 1835, when Thomas Macaulay delivered his notorious 'Minute on Indian Education'.[18] Since Bentinck had already signed the order replacing Persian with English and vernacular languages, Macaulay's speech had no actual impact on educational strategies. However, his fiery denunciation of Indian languages and literatures is still commonly seen as the death-knell of Persian learning in India.[19]

The historiography of the education debate is well-established, and stretches back to the nineteenth century, beginning with colonial appraisals of their own policies.[20] However, most scholarship has remained focused on two interlinked themes. The first of these is British ideologies of empire, such as liberalism, evangelism and utilitarianism, and their proponents.[21] The second area of interest has been the impact of these ideologies on Indian thought. While forms of intellectual hybridity as well as resistance to colonial ideas have been given attention, such writing is often preoccupied with education and the

[18] T. B. Macaulay, 'Minute recorded in the General Department by Thomas Babington Macaulay, law member of the governor-general's council, dated 2 February 1835', in M. Moir and L. Zastoupil (eds), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (Toronto, 1999), pp.162--72

[19] Ibid.

[20] For e.g. G. W. Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab since annexation and in 1882* (Delhi, 1982), this was first published in 1882; H. Sharpe, *Selections from Educational Records* (2 vols, Calcutta, 1920)

[21] E.g. Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest*; Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement*; H. Schwarz, 'Aesthetic Imperialism: Literature and the Conquest of India', *Modern Language Quarterly,* 61/4 (2000), pp.563-586

production of modern public spheres.[22] In the context of nineteenth-century India, this has often signified arenas where reformist and nationalist ideologies were developed and debated.[23] In other words, the history of education has been particularly difficult to extricate from its imperial and nationalist entanglements.

Consequently, key aspects of this debate and its influence still remain to be examined properly. First, while the support of many Anglicists, particularly missionaries, for vernacular education has been recognized, little attention has been paid to the consequences of this on the way in which learned languages (Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian) were conceived. Second, the question of the actual decline of these languages has also been elided. It is still widely assumed that the official abolition of Persian in 1835 naturally resulted in the demise of Persian in India more generally, although the continuance of the vernaculars has been discussed in detail.[24] While it has been noted that the shift towards vernacularization began before British interventions, the apparent decline of the Persian has been cast as a natural consequence of this move. Alam has argued, for instance, that the mid-eighteenth-century 'Hindi-ization of Delhi' was one manifestation of the ways in which regions sought to express distinct identities against the 'Persianised Mughal centre'.[25] While the relationship between regional identities and the increase in the importance and formal usage of vernaculars cannot be denied, it does not adequately evidence nor explain the supposed decline of Persian. Given the multilingual nature of South Asian sociocultural and political life, the rise of the vernaculars should not assume

[22] E.g. S. Seth, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India* (Durham, 2007); P. V. Rao, 'Modern Education and the Revolt of 1857', *Paedagogica Historica*, 52/1-2 (2016), pp.25-42
[23] Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement*; Kopf, *British Orientalists and the Bengal Renaissance*; Bhattacharya, *Sentinels Of Culture*; Datla, *The language of secular Islam*;
[24] S. Evans, 'Macaulay's Minute Revisited: Colonial Language Policy in Nineteenth-century India', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 23/4 (2002), pp.260-81; Zastoupil and Moir, 'Introduction', pp.1- 72
[25] Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam*, p.184

a concomitant decline in other languages - as though there was not enough space for multiple languages to flourish. As a cosmopolitan language, Persian was able to exist alongside and in dialogue with others, and even act as a mediator between groups separated by different vernaculars.

Despite the privileging of Anglicist demands in policies after 1835, Persian remained part of the curricula at many of the Company's schools and colleges throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, official policy continued to be challenged and altered. Following Bentinck's decision to replace Persian with English and the vernaculars, his successor Lord Auckland (governor-general from 1836-42) significantly softened the impact of the 1835 ruling by renewing stipends for institutions which taught Arabic and Sanskrit.[26] Moreover, individual 'on the spot' decisions prompted by pragmatism at particular institutions often departed considerably from official policy. Through these debates and their contradictory implementation, South Asian languages were repositioned in relation to each other and English, and particular characteristics of different languages emphasized. The opinions and conclusions drawn during these conversations translated into colonial policy and influenced individual decisions in Company-sponsored schools and colleges. As a result, colonial educational discussions played a significant role in shaping the ways in which Persian language and literature came to be viewed and accessed by Indians.

[26] Auckland, 'Minute about "Native Education" recorded in the General Department by the governor-general, Lord Auckland, 24 November 1839', in M. Moir and L. Zastoupil (eds), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (Toronto, 1999), pp.306-31

2. The Terms of the Debate: Situating Persian in Colonial Educational Discourse

During much of the eighteenth century, Persian had been accepted by the East India Company as the main language in which it administered its territories, communicated with Indian elites and accessed historical and ethnographic texts. Chapter Two showed how the 1790s and 1800s witnessed a turn towards practical approaches to languages in the colonial context. Concomitantly, a greater attention towards vernacular languages emerged, as they appeared to be the most'practical way of communicating in India, particularly in military situations.[27] The Company's growing concentration on vernacular languages coincided with missionary interests. Although missionaries were not allowed in the Company's territories, they had established a significant presence in other parts of India, and exerted a considerable influence across Bengal from their base in Serampore. Believing that the vernacular languages were the most important vehicles of proselytization, the Serampore missionaries had been at the forefront of establishing printing presses and producing grammars of different Indian languages.[28]

Missionary objectives of converting and enlightening Indians struck a common note with many colonial officials.[29] For all its anxiety and paranoia, the colonial government at the turn of the century saw itself as an 'empire of improvement and enlightenment' as it attempted to break with seemingly corrupt Indian practices.[30] The governor-general Lord Minto (in office from 1807-1813) made the link between corruption and the apparent lack of education explicit in 1811, claiming that:

[27] Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism and Grammatical Representation,* pp.2-4
[28] M. A. Laird, 'The contribution of the Serampore missionaries to education in Bengal, 1793–1837', Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 31/1 (1968), pp.92-112
[29] Vishwanathan, *Masks of Conquest,* p.102
[30] Travers, *Ideology and Empire,* p.244

> the prevalence of the crimes of perjury and forgery so frequently noticed in the official reports is in a great measure ascribable both in the Mahomedans and Hindoos to the want of due instruction.[31]

The prominent missionary and supporter of vernacular education, William Adam (1796-1881) took this further in his education reports, in which he statistically correlated the incidence of crime with education.[32] Paternalistic motives of morality, as well as efficiency in the running of empire, demanded that Indian knowledge be radically reformed through educational interventions.[33]

However, the exact form that such 'improvement' should take was still open to question. The Charter Act of 1813 stipulated that the Company had to take responsibility for the 'revival and improvement of literature, and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences' amongst Indians in British territories.[34] This legislation could be interpreted in a number of ways. While some, like Minto, held that Hindus and Muslims required 'instruction in the moral and religious tenets of their respective faiths' which were in need of revival, others – such as Macaulay - emphasized the need for new knowledge, particularly in the European sciences. In effect, a contradiction between the 'revival' and the 'introduction' of learning was present in the Charter itself, and would frame all subsequent discussions regarding Indian education.

While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the complex ideologies at work in the shaping and reception of colonial education, it is useful to briefly sketch out the questions and criteria which grew out of this contradiction, and brought to centre-stage the question of language. If the promotion of learning in India entailed the revival of

[31] Minto 'Minute of 1811', cf. Moir and Zastoupil, 'Introduction', p.19
[32] W. Adam, *Third Report*, pp.123-8
[33] Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest,* pp.69-73
[34] 'Charter Act of 1813', p.91

decaying knowledge systems, was the state bound to uphold the existing elites who seemingly dominated these systems? On the other hand, if European knowledge was to be implanted into India, should it be 'engrafted' onto existing structures and modes of transmission, or replace them entirely?[35] Crucial to the merits of any answer was its relative efficacy and expediency. These questions divided colonial officials and Indian elites into an array of positions regarding education. Common to all colonial observers, however, was the use of religion as the defining feature which structured Indian society. In other words, religion provided the primary lens through which Indians were viewed and thought about. Consequently, all discussions centred on the impact of different policies on Hindus and Muslims.

This religious lens enabled Persian to be effectively argued out of the education debate. The tendency to view religion as stemming from a body of texts carrying particular laws meant that Arabic and Sanskrit, the languages of the Quran and the Vedas respectively, were taken as the twin representatives of India's two religious communities.[36] Much has been written about the division and classification of South Asian identities according to rigid religious categories derived from European experiences of Christianity.[37] A tendency to conflate religion, culture, civilization and territory was common to colonial observers in India.[38] To this list of identity-markers, may be added language – the exemplary case being the colonial differentiation between 'Muslim' Urdu

[35] H. T. Prinsep, 'Note, dated 15 February 1835', in M. Moir and L. Zastoupil (eds), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (Toronto, 1999), pp.176-86, p.183

[36] More recent historical writing has also tended to conflate Arabic and Islamic learning in India, to the detriment of both a richer Indo-Arabic literature and the role of Persian in transmitting religious instruction: R. Ivermee, *Secularism, Islam and education in India, 1830 – 1910* (London, 2015); T. Qutbuddin, 'Arabic in India: A Survey and Classification of Its Uses, Compared with Persian', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 127/3 (2007), pp.315-338.

[37] E.g. P. Gottschalk, *Religion, Science, and Empire: Classifying Hinduism and Islam in British India* (New York, 2013)

[38] Eaton, 'Introduction', p.11

and 'Hindu' Hindi.[39] Such categories - of religion, culture, language and ethnicity - were expected to neatly overlay each other and, in theory at least, yield distinctive identities. Since colonial frameworks perceived India as being composed of two opposing religious 'nations', Hindus and Muslims, it followed that each community would also be marked by a particular language.

Indian society was thus reduced to 'the Maulvi and the Pundit', and Sanskrit and Arabic to 'Hindu and Mahomedan media'.[40] As one would-be reformer of the courts suggested, 'the *Koran* having been written in *Arabic*, the Mussulman expositors of the law would necessarily have preferred giving their opinions in that language'. He argued that only British policy had made it necessary for legal procedures to be enacted in Persian, 'so that the Persian was not agreeable to any part.'[41] In this regard, Persian fell through the argument by default, as it represented neither of India's religious communities as imagined by colonial observers. Thus, Macaulay was able to ignore Persian altogether in his minute on education, despite the fact that it was the main language being displaced from the imperial administration. Basing his argument for the promotion of English on the premise that the Company's rule was secular, Macaulay focused only on arguing for the irrelevance of religious instruction, represented by Arabic and Sanskrit. Since, in his view, the functions of Sanskrit and Arabic were confined to the transmission of religious knowledge, there was no reason for the state to support these languages.[42] Similarly, a letter propounding the opposite view, authored by the Orientalist faction of the General

[39] Essays in F. Orsini (ed.) Before the divide: Hindi and Urdu literary culture (New Delhi, 2010); D. Lelyveld, 'Colonial Knowledge and the Fate of Hindustani', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 35/4 (1993), pp.665-82

[40] 'Letter, dated 18th August 1824, from the GCPI to the Governor-General', in H. Sharp (ed.) *Selections from the Educational Records* (Calcutta, 1920), pp.93-8

[41] E. East, 'Reform of the Mofussil Courts' in *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords Appointed to Enquire into the Present State of the Affairs of the East India Company* (London, 1830), ii, pp.161-4

[42] Macaulay, 'Minute recorded […] 1835', pp.162-72

Committee for Public Instruction, also made no mention of Persian. The letter, whose signatories included prominent oriental scholars such as J. H. Harington, H. H. Wilson and Holt Mackenzie, referred to 'metaphysical sciences, as found in Sanscrit and Arabic writings' only.[43]

A petition penned by the Muslim elite of Calcutta in response to the call to abolish the Calcutta Madrasa also referred exclusively to Arabic language and learning, although Persian was taught alongside Arabic at the Madrasa.[44] Similarly, petitioners also defended the teaching of Sanskrit at the Benaras Sanskrit College, and did not bring up Persian, which was also taught there. The petitioners took on the language used by the colonial administration to which they were responding: since education debates targeted Arabic and Sanskrit explicitly, these were the languages defended.[45] Arguing for the opposite cause, the social reformer Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), protested the establishment of Sanskrit classes at the Hindu College and called for government support of English and vernacular education while also making no reference to Persian which was taught alongside Sanskrit at the college.[46] Indeed, despite his enthusiasm for western education, Roy was not opposed to the use of Persian as a medium for communicating his reformist ideas or theological works: as Bayly has noted, Roy's Persian newspaper, *Mi'rāt al-Aḵẖbār* (established in 1822), drew extensively on traditional Indo-Persian ethical *aḵẖlāq* vocabulary.[47] Given the extent to which education outside colonial schools was still dominated by Persian

[43] 'Letter, dated 18th August 1824, from the GCPI to the Governor-General', pp.93-8
[44] 'Petition of the Muslim Inhabitants of Bengal', 1835, in M. Moir and L. Zastoupil (eds), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (Toronto, 1999), pp.189-91
[45] 'Petition of the Students of Sanskrit College' in M. Moir and L. Zastoupil (eds), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (Toronto, 1999), pp.254-6
[46] Ram Mohan Roy, '1823 Address to Lord Amherst' in M. Moir and L. Zastoupil (eds), *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (Toronto, 1999), pp.110-4
[47] Bayly, *Recovering Liberties,* pp.39-58

(discussed in the following section), it seems likely that Roy envisaged a far more pluralistic education, in linguistic terms, than his support for English education suggests.

The framework of religion reproduced itself in various forms, even when religion was not being explicitly discussed. For instance, religion underpinned the binary between scientific and 'irrational' learning. As Parna Sengupta has explained, 'instruction in science also became a means to instruct the Indian child, whether Christian, Hindu, or Muslim, about the primacy of reason and rationality over superstition.'[48] Stemming from the same root, European science and Christianity were deeply intertwined, resulting in an ideological stance that Peter Gottschalk has termed 'Scientism'.[49] Partly, this was because European sciences had themselves emerged in the pursuit of Biblical truths, and also (as Chapter One explained) because Arabic (now seen exclusively as the language of Islam), had been traditionally associated with 'eastern' science in Europe. Thus, when colonial observers discussed Indian science, they did so in terms of 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' science, and hence turned to Sanskrit and Arabic literatures.[50] Scientific works cited by the orientalists in support of the argument that eastern learning was not devoid of rational inquiry were usually Sanskrit and Arabic mathematical treatises and Arabic books on medicine, and from which European learning had benefited.[51] Attempts to propagate 'European knowledge' via 'oriental' languages also positioned Arabic as the language of science at the expense of Persian. Arabic was, for instance, the language of choice for many translators of English scientific works, such as the Company surgeon, John Tytler (fl.1829-44), who emphasized the shared Greco-Arabic heritage of European and *yūnānī*

[48] Sengupta, *Pedagogy for Religion,* p.2
[49] Gottschalk, *Religion, Science and Empire,* pp.14-36
[50] For e.g. W. Adam, *Report on the State of Education in Bengal* (Calcutta, 1835), p.125;, BL, IOR/F/4/1289/51641, 'Report on the Calcutta Madrissa'
[51] BL, IOR/F/4/1846/77633, pp.103-125, J. C. C. Sutherland, Letter, dated the 22nd January 1835, from the GCPI; also BL/IOR/F/4/1170/30639-40

medicine.[52] In contrast, for those opposed to instruction in Arabic or Sanskrit, the perceived modernity of vernacular languages made them ideal vehicles for conveying scientific knowledge. Persian, as a result, was forced to occupy a marginal position and thus attracted very little attention in colonial discourse on the relative merits and demerits of Indian science.

Occasionally however, Persian was referred to as a language esteemed by Muslims.[53] As William Adam put it, this was because it was the language of the Mughals, rather than its direct relationship with Islam. As a result, as discussed below, even Muslim usage of the language was depicted as the result of an 'artificial influence' exerted by despotic rulers.[54] Fitting colonial conceptions of neither Hindu nor Muslim and their resultant scientific traditions completely, Persian escaped sustained discussion in relation to both communities.

Persian as a Foreign Language in India

Thus, for Anglicists and Orientalists alike, Persian failed to become a central issue in the education debates. Partly, this was because colonial policy was primarily concerned with the question of whether Indians required secular or religious instruction, and whether 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' science was worth teaching. Persian, it was understood, was not integral to the laws or sciences of either religion, and was hence ignored. Underlying these questions was the problem which plagued the East India Company throughout its rule in India: was the Company to adhere to (what was perceived as) existing Indian tradition or was its duty to transform India? Hence, the only time that Persian was referred to in the

[52] I. Pande, *Medicine, Race and Liberalism in British Bengal: Symptoms of Empire* (Abingdon, 2010), p.73
[53] IOR/F/4/1170, C. T. Metcalf et al. to H. H. Wilson,. Secretary to the Committee of Public Instruction, Calcutta, 12 Feb 1829
[54] Adam, *Third Report,* p.79

education debates was in its capacity as the language of the Mughal empire. However, this resulted in a paradoxical situation, scattering Anglicists and Orientalists into unusual constellations.

During the eighteenth century, in theory if not in practice, following Indian custom had meant following Mughal precedents.[55] However, as Wilson has shown, during the Cornwallis administration (1786-93), the Company sought a break with the past, resulting in a new constitution which 'abandoned any claim to being based on historical precedent'.[56] The education debates brought this question back to centre-stage, but amidst new concepts of what constituted tradition in India. Early nineteenth-century discourse increasingly cast Mughals as foreign invaders.[57] In this reckoning, Persian had been artificially introduced into India. In 1814, when the reform of the Benaras Hindu College was being discussed, the Court of Directors expressed their 'strong doubts of the policy of the British Government in India employing active means to perpetuate and propagate in that country those languages which were introduced into it at the period of the Mussulman Conquest.'[58] In this argument, it was suggested that Persian and Arabic were 'considered not only as foreign by the great mass of the inhabitants but as relics of a domination from which they have been long since liberated.'[59] However, Arabic was linked to the laws and religion of Muslims, who had 'an equal right with the Hindus to protection', and in any case, was not taught at the college in question.[60]

[55] Travers, *Ideology and Empire*
[56] Wilson, *Domination of Strangers,* p.46
[57] For e.g. histories such as James Mill's, in which the 'Muslim invasion' was cast as a dichotomy between 'foreign' tyrants and indigenous subjects. J. Mill, *The History of British India,* ed. H. H. Wilson (9 vols, London, 1858), ii, pp.479-85. John Malcolm's history of the Sikhs viewed the Muslims in a similar light. J. Harrington, *Sir John Malcolm and the Creation of British India* (New York, 2010), p.75
[58] BL, IOR/F/4/708/19201, Reform of the Calcutta Madrasa and of the Hindu College at Benaras
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

Surprisingly, it was the Anglicists who called upon precedent to support their call to abolish Persian. Since the defining characteristic of Persian was its foreignness, then as Charles Grant argued, by imposing the English language in India, the British would only be following the precedent set by the Mughals. The Mughal empire had imposed a foreign language as they 'employed the Persian language in the affairs of government, and in the public departments'.[61] Indeed, the fact that Persian had been 'readily learnt' by Hindus meant that English would also be quick to take root. If the British had done this from the start, 'the English language would now have been spoken and studied by multitudes of Hindoos throughout our provinces'.[62] Thus, although the case for abolishing Persian at the administrative level was based on its position as a language foreign to India, imposing a foreign language was not necessarily a negative act.[63] While the trope of the irrational, despotic Mughal effectively delegitimized Persian, it also paved the way for rulers such as the British to impose their own, supposedly more rational and useful, language on Indians.[64]

This sentiment was later echoed by Macaulay's brother-in-law and junior in the Company's service, Charles Trevelyan (1807-1886) in his influential treatise, *On the Education of the People of India* (1838). Although Trevelyan, like many of his counterparts, focused mainly on Arabic and Sanskrit, he also made occasional references to Persian. Advocating a more aggressive policy for promoting English, Trevelyan argued that Persian and Arabic were 'as foreign to the people of India as English'.[65] Moreover, for all his desire to enlighten India, Trevelyan also offered the reassurance that existing class

[61] Grant, *Observations On the State of Society,* p.150
[62] Ibid.
[63] Indeed, for Mill, part of the problem with the Mughal government had been that it was a 'foreign' government which behaved like a native one (and was thus not objective towards Hindus). Mill, *History of British India,* ii,pp.479-85
[64] Grant, *Observations On the State of Society*, pp.197-8
[65] C. E. Trevelyan, *On the Education of the People of India* (London, 1838), p.217.

hierarchies would be upheld. By promoting English and simultaneously offering support to the vernacular languages, he argued that Indians who could afford to educate their children more widely would continue to do so in the absence of Persian.[66] Instead of Persian, Macaulay hoped that English would be learned by the upper and middle classes and indeed, be 'appointed, in preference to others, to situations under Government.'[67] Mughal precedent would be adhered to, but in concordance with the interests of the new rulers of India. Edward East, a retired Calcutta judge, also advocated for the replacement of Persian with English in courts by drawing on notions of precedent. While English would be foreign to most of the individuals who appeared in court, it would at least be the native language of the judges who sentenced them.[68] Calling for the reform of the Company's courts, he wrote, 'it was natural for the first Mussulman Conquerors, whose language was Persian, to administer the laws in their own tongue to the conquered people'; following this rule, if the British were not going to adopt vernacular languages, they should 'give the law in English'.[69] Since Indian languages varied in different regions, English was preferable to any one Indian language. Mughal rule thus provided both legitimacy and a point of departure for proponents of English.

These remarks about the perceived foreignness, and unpopularity, of Persian contrasted starkly with the reality in which Persian was ubiquitous to north Indian education. William Adam's reports on Bengal and Bihar (1834-1838) provided a rare source of statistics pertaining to indigenous education, and revealed the prevalence of Persian in these provinces. This was overcome by Adam as well as Trevelyan by the application of a religious framework which at once asserted that Persian was 'strictly

[66] Trevelyan, *On the Education,* p.151
[67] Ibid.
[68] East, 'Reform of the Mofussil Courts', pp.161-4
[69] Ibid.

Mahommedan' and yet displaced it from its religious relevance by calling upon the greater authority of Arabic in Islam. This contradictory reasoning is worth spelling out, since it displays the unstable position of Persian in colonial discourse. Claiming that the Company had 'unnaturally' promoted the study of Arabic and Sanskrit, Trevelyan cited William Adam's report on vernacular education in Bengal and Bihar: while Adam had found only 114 scholars studying Arabic in five districts, the Calcutta Madrasa alone catered to 158 students of the language.[70] According to Trevelyan, this discrepancy indicated that the Company had unnecessarily encouraged the study of oriental languages which were otherwise unpopular. At the same time, Trevelyan was forced to admit that 3496 students of Persian had also been noticed by Adam, in the same five districts. The only way in which this could be reconciled within Trevelyan's argument in favour of English education was by the application of rigid ethnic and religious frameworks. It is worth quoting Trevelyan at length in order to understand the logic applied by him:

> … although Arabic and Persian literature is strictly Mahommedan, the majority of the scholars were Hindus […] With regard to teachers; there is not a single Hindu teacher of Arabic in the five districts: all are Mussulmans. With regard to scholars, there are only 9 Hindu to 149 Mussulman students of Arabic, and consequently 2,087 Hindus to 1,409 Mussulmans who are learning Persian. The small comparative number of Arabic students who are Hindus, and the large comparative number of the Persian scholars of the same class seem to admit of only one explanation; viz., that the study of Persian has been unnaturally forced by the practice of government; and it seems probable, that even a considerable number of the Mussulmans who learn Persian may be under the same artificial influence![71]

Several contradictions are apparent in this statement. Earlier, Trevelyan had claimed that the low number of Arabic students in the five districts suggested that the government was unduly promoting it. Here, the high number of Persian students led to the same conclusion, and was supported by the low number of Arabic students. Furthermore, while highlighting

[70] Trevelyan, *On the Education*, p.91
[71] Trevelyan, *On the Education*, pp.139-40

that only Muslims were teachers of Arabic, he ignored the figures given by Adam for the number of non-Muslims who taught Persian. Next, by conflating Persian with Arabic, and both of these with Islam, Trevelyan was able to argue that the former had been unnaturally forced upon Hindus by government policies. Finally, returning to the idea that Persian was not strictly Islamic and rather, a language useful for career advancement, Trevelyan was able to repeat his argument that it was also artificially forced upon Muslims.[72]

Linguistic theories thus increasingly underpinned understandings of race in the nineteenth century. There was a possibility that the close relationship between Sanskrit and Persian would allow the latter to seem less foreign in India. However, Trevelyan artfully quoted – and misunderstood - William Jones' writing on the subject to prove the opposite:

> 'the ancient unadulterated Persian is closely allied to the Sanskrit; but Arabic, with which Persian has been completely saturated since the conquest of Persia by the Arabians, is as unlike Sanskrit as it is possible for one language to be unlike another […] They are written in opposite directions; — Sanskrit, from left to right; Arabic, from right to left. "In whatever light we view them," observes Sir William Jones, "they seem totally distinct; and must have been invented by two different races of men."

In other words, although the ancient Persian was grammatically related to Sanskrit, Muslim invasions had made its identity dubious and suspect. If Arabic and Sanskrit represented two different races, and in Trevelyan's understanding, religious groups, then modern Persian had no place in the context of India, and there could possibly be no rational reason to encourage it.[73] Focusing on script and etymological influences, as well as grammatical structure, Trevelyan implied that Persian fell between Arabic and Sanskrit, as it shared its script with one language but was grammatically related to the other.

[72] Ibid.
[73] Trevelyan, *On the Education,* pp.117-118

The focus on the learned languages of religion, and vernaculars which expressed regional identities, temporarily pushed into the background other colonial ideas informed by the relationship between language and script – namely the connections between Urdu, Arabic and Persian - in the context of the debates. As the next section will discuss, the relationship between Persian and Urdu emerged properly in educational discussions only after 1835, when Urdu teaching became a widespread reality. The shaping of Urdu and Hindi as distinct languages during the colonial period, as well as the association of each with Persian and Sanskrit respectively, has been well-documented.[74] Since Persian was seen as the foreign ancestor of the 'Muslim' vernacular, Urdu, this association also contributed to destabilizing the position of Urdu and strengthened the notion that Urdu was also foreign.[75] Essentially, Persian was treated as an Islamic language only when it suited the individuals arguing for or against its presence in India. Effectively argued out of education debates as unable to fit the binary religious framework deployed by colonial observers, Persian came to occupy a liminal, unstable character as it was defined only in relation to other Indian languages (which were also being constantly reconfigured). However, this very ambivalence allowed the language institutional space after its abolition. Since Persian was not supported explicitly by proponents of any school of educational thought, whether of a vernacular, Anglicist or Orientalist leaning, it was never the primary object of study in colonial schools and colleges. However, because colonial policy was not consistent and continued to seesaw, it was also not explicitly rejected on the numerous

[74] Lelyveld, 'Colonial Knowledge'; Orsini, (ed.) *Before the Divide*; A similar process of the "Hinduization" of Bengali by colonial policies has also been documented by Ghosh, *Power in Print,* p.259

[75] F. Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism* (Oxford, 2002) pp.29-30, 105-16; Datla, *A worldly vernacular*

occasions after 1835 when the colonial government attempted to secularize state-sponsored education.[76]

The only consensus regarding Persian was its foreignness to India, and hence its unnatural, artificial presence in the region. This was an extremely significant position. 'Foreign' was offered as the opposite of the 'indigenous' and the 'vernacular' in the colonial discourse on education. While Persian certainly did not fit these latter categories, there is no reason to assume that 'foreign' was the logical alternative classification. As Sheldon Pollock has explained, 'naturalness is itself a component of a vernacular language ideology produced in early-modern Europe [...] the ideology of naturalness takes on heightened value in the domain of literary expression in Romanticism.'[77] As Chapter Two noted, the colonial usage of the category of 'native speakers' in relation to Persian, and the exclusion of Indians from it, became frequent only from the 1790s. Furthermore, British views of Persian also cast it as a classical language, as already discussed. The notion that Persian was 'foreign' did not contradict this view of it as a classical language in India, as since classical languages (especially Latin) were also increasingly being viewed as foreign in Europe, whether criticised for this, or being lauded as an artificial source of culture.[78] This resulted in a colonial view in which the Persian was doubly displaced in the Indian context, as it was dislocated both temporally and geographically.

Recognizing that the denotation of Persian as a foreign language in the Indian context resulted from the application of European historical experiences and frameworks allows us to raise the question of the available alternatives, and hence, the changes wrought

[76] On secularization in Indian education: Ivermee, *Secularism, Islam and Education in India, 1830-1910*; N. Chatterjee, *The Making of Indian Secularism: Empire, Law and Christianity, 1830-1960* (Basingstoke, 2010), esp. pp.10-29

[77] S. Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men* (New Yok, 2006), p.319; Mitchell, *Language, Emotion and Politics,* pp.10-14

[78] Adam, *Teaching Classics,* pp.113-117;

in perceptions of the language in the colonial context. Chapter Three demonstrated the relevance of Persian as the language in which specific literary personas and relationships were expressed, and also through which pre-national, cosmopolitan identities were expressed. By classifying Persian as foreign, it was precisely this cosmopolitan character which was being denied, as a binary between the vernacular and the foreign was formed on the premise that language could be directly mapped onto religious, ethnic and territorial identities.[79] As the next section will demonstrate, the fact that Persian fitted with difficulty into such identities allowed it to be employed in colonial institutions.

3. Translating Discourse into Policy: Persian in Colonial Educational Institutions

In 1835, Bentinck's government passed English Language Act, which established English and Indian vernaculars as the language of the courts and of education. However, the education debates were not over, and the question of language remained controversial. Initially, the funds which had been provided to oriental seminaries, were redirected towards English education. In 1839, however, the newly appointed governor-general, Lord Auckland, restored these funds (amounting to the small sum of approximately twenty-five thousand rupees) to oriental institutions in the light of further petitions from those in favour of orientalist education.[80] While Auckland did not agree with the principles of such an education, he believed that no harm could come from this move.[81] However, even as he allowed the funds to be returned to the oriental institutions, he did not increase this allowance or envisage the establishment of further such seminaries. His main policy objective was to strengthen and expand vernacular education.[82] In 1841, the Court of

[79] Although working on an earlier context, of relevance: Orsini, 'How to do multilingual literary history?', pp.226-34;
[80] Auckland, 'Minute', pp.306-31
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.

Directors approved the continued disbursement of six thousand rupees for 'printing the most esteemed works in the literature of the Mohammedans and Hindoos'. This was a tiny sum, however, and the Court of Directors took the opportunity to reiterate the Company's priorities, as they wrote,

> we cordially subscribe to one of the principal declarations of the Resolution of 7th March 1835, that "it should be the great object of the British Government to promote European Science and Literature amongst the Natives of India," and have no hesitation in sanctioning it, as a general principle for the conduct of our Indian Governments.[83]

Government policy continued to seesaw over the next two decades, but it remained geared towards extending Anglo-Vernacular education. In 1844, under the governor-general Henry Hardinge, the state passed a resolution 'assuring preference in the selection for public office to Indians who had distinguished themselves in European literature'.[84] This was accompanied by the establishment of 100 vernacular schools in Bengal.[85] In 1847, the introduction of the pay system dealt another blow to oriental departments in schools and colleges, many of which were already deprived of stipends. In 1854, again, Charles Wood (1800-1885), President of the Board of Control of the Company in London, put forward a plan for the encouragement of English education in India.[86] Although its implementation was delayed due to the 1857 uprising, the thrust of colonial policy was clear. Ignoring education in 'oriental' languages, Wood's Dispatch detailed the ways in which western learning would be further propagated by central and provincial authorities under newly established Education departments in each of the Company's presidencies.[87] It should be noted that the General Committee of Public Instruction (GCPI) also remained dominated

[83] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1839-40*, pp.clii-cliii
[84] Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest,* p.89
[85] Allender, *Ruling through Education,* p.4. It has been argued that despite the alleged aims of its policies, the Company 'dismantled' vernacular education in India. Sengupta, *Pedagogy for Religion,* p.15
[86] C. Whitehead, *Colonial Educators: The British Indian and Colonial Education Service 1858-1983,* (London, 2003), p.5
[87] Ivermee, *Secularism, Islam and Education,* p.8

by English officials throughout this period. In 1840, for instance, the Committee comprised of seventeen members, of whom three were Indian.[88] By 1855, Indian representation had actually worsened. The committee appointed to plan university education in India consisted of thirty-three members, of whom only four were Indian.[89] The Committee was further divided into subcommittees who took responsibility for different state-sponsored schools and colleges, and in some cases no Indians would be on the sub-committee for an institution.

On the face of it, then, it would appear that Persian instruction received little interest from the authorities. The unequal representation of Indians in the GCPI meant that education policy at the highest level remained a reflection of the colonial government's own ideological directions. However, an examination of the reports of colonial schools and colleges reveals that the policy to abolish Persian was never seen through fully at any time. To the contrary, the language was taught at both oriental seminaries which were geared towards learning in Arabic and Sanskrit, as well as 'Anglo-Vernacular' institutions which emphasized education in English and the vernaculars. By 1843, in Bengal alone, these institutions included the Agra College, Delhi College, Dacca College, the Calcutta Madrasa, Benaras English Seminary, Benaras Sanskrit College, Hindu College (Calcutta), the College of Mohammed Mohsin at Hooghly, as well as 41 schools.[90] This section shows that there were two main reasons for Persian's presence at both types of institution. First, as discussed, the fact that Persian had never been neatly bracketed as a learned oriental language, linked to religion and science in India. Second, the fact that the Company struggled to attract Indian students to its schools and colleges. Thus in practice, policies

[88] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1839-40*, p.119
[89] *General Report on Public Instruction in the Lower Provinces of the Bengal Presidency* (Calcutta, 1856), pp.viii-ix
[90] *Reports of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1842-1843* (Calcutta, 1843)

made by schools and inspectors on the district or school-to-school level resulted in the inclusion of Persian to cater to the demands of local populations.

Colonial Policy and Persian in Schools and Colleges

Bentinck's 1835 Resolution declared that henceforth, only English and the vernaculars would be supported. However, schools and colleges where such departments already existed, would be allowed to continue. The abolition of stipends for students of oriental subjects, as well as the expected popularity of English and vernacular education, would, it was assumed, eliminate oriental subjects in time. The removal of stipends had an undeniable impact on students' choices in the immediate aftermath of the decision. In the Calcutta Madrasa, the number of stipendiary students dropped from 85 to 62, while the number of students who had already been self-funded remained the same.[91] Similarly, the number of Persian scholars dropped from 132 to 111 at Delhi College within eight months of the 1835 decision.[92] However, in many places, the results of colonial policy were much more uneven, especially in the slightly longer term. In the College of Mohammad Mohsin at Hooghly, the attendance of Persian classes almost doubled between 1836 and 1841, while the English department suffered a loss of forty percent of its pupils during the same period.[93] Similarly, in Agra College, the Hindi department suffered rather than the Persian. Between 1835 and 1836, Hindi students decreased from 107 to 86 students, while the number of Persian students only changed from 146 to 142, signalling the continuing importance attributed to the language by locals. The failure of the pro-vernacular policy at Agra resulted in the abolition of the Persian class in 1838, despite its evident popularity. It

[91] *General Report on Public Instruction in the Lower Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, 1835* (Calcutta, 1836), pp.10-11; also: BL, IOR/F/4/1255/50501(1), Papers Regarding the Promotion of Native Education in the Bengal Presidency

[92] Ibid.

[93] *General Report of the GCPI for 1840-41 & 1841-42*, p.141. The same is true of Barisal school, further east, p.261

was hoped the Anglo-Vernacular department would be encouraged by this measure. Following criticisms from within the government and the possibility of causing local disapproval, however, this 'impolitic' decision was reversed, and the class reinstated after 1840.[94] In the same year, at Benaras Sanskrit College, the Persian class was abolished and revived on the same principles as that in Agra.[95]

The revival of the Persian class was justified by reverting to the ambivalent categorisation of the language. On the one hand, it was argued that the Muslim population would be 'grateful' if Persian were to be taught. At the same time, since Persian was seen as being the language of Islam (since that was considered to be primarily Arabic), it would also be relevant to Hindus. Persianised Kāyasthas were cited as an example of the beneficial influences of Persian, even while the author contradicted himself in regard to Persian being appropriate for Muslims. According to him, the Kāyasthas' 'superior intelligence and social influence', meant that Persian enabled them to 'take the lead in the progress of civilization'.[96] In contrast, the apparent attachment of Muslims to Persian resulted in the impression that Muslims were regressive and resistant to change.[97] The report continued to extoll the virtues of the Kāyastha caste:

> Look at a well-educated Kayuth [sic] how vastly superior he is to every class of the educated Hindoos […] at the same time that they escape from imbibing fanaticism which the same course of study seldom fails to impart to the Mussulman.[98]

In this sense, Persian was represented as double-edged sword: able to engender 'enlightenment' (for Hindus) and intellectual stagnation (for Muslims) simultaneously.

[94] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1839-40,* pp.87-106
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.

In vernacular schools where Urdu was taught, the presence of Persian was supported by another colonial contradiction. Urdu was considered to be the vernacular of the Muslim population because of its high content of Persian, and via Persian, Arabic vocabulary.[99] As a result, it was also believed that proficiency in the former could not be attained without knowledge of the latter. For instance, James Ballantyne, superintendent of the Benaras College, remarked in 1846 that 'the shortest and surest way of making a good Oordoo scholar of a man, speaking the Oordoo as his mother tongue, is to teach him something of Persian, and at least the most ordinary verbal forms of Arabic.'[100] Similarly in 1845, addressing the students of the Benaras College, the Indologist and Company judge, John Muir (1810-82), stressed the importance of Persian to the 'formation of a good Urdu style' and recommended its study.[101] The project of forging an indissoluble bond between the two languages was, however, fraught with contradictions. Since Urdu was, by definition, a Persianised register of what orientalists often called Hindustani, its identity as a vernacular was problematic for colonial officials from the start. One official, for instance, even claimed that Urdu was 'nearly as foreign to the mass of people as the Persian' because of its affinity with the latter, and suggested the removal of both languages.[102] Urdu was employed at most of the Company's courts, and the official argued that if Urdu could be abolished at the courts, Persian would be effectively banished.[103] In contrast, few of the Company's courts used Hindi. Many in government believed that Urdu and Hindi were 'distinct languages […] the Urdu deriving […] from the Persian and the Hindee […] from

[99] This was largely a result of colonial practices of separating Urdu from Hindi. F. Orsini, 'Introduction', in F. Orsini (ed.), *Before the divide: Hindi and Urdu literary culture* (New Delhi, 2010), pp.1-20, 3
[100] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1846-47* (Agra, 1848), p.21
[101] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1844-45* (Agra, 1846), p.xcvii
[102] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1844-45*, p.lxii
[103] Ibid.

the Sanscrit'.[104] Since Urdu was not abolished, those with knowledge of Persian were able to write Urdu due to the familiarity of its script and vocabulary, and found it easier to obtain employment in the Company's courts and other departments, while Hindi scholars found themselves severely restricted. The characterization of Urdu simultaneously as an indigenous vernacular, and a foreign, Persian-inflected language placed pressure on Urdu to demonstrate its identity as a unique and local language. Searching for a distinctive identity for Urdu, officials found students' translations between Urdu and Persian completely unsatisfactory. One member of the GCPI commented in his report on Agra:

> In Persian, the same word […] is generally admissible as an Urdu word also. Hence the pupil translates his Persian by simply introducing Urdu verbs or auxiliaries, retaining the Persian Noun or Adjective as it stands […] the sentence as given in Urdu should be expressed according to the current usage of the language, and not be a slavish copy of the Persian idiom.[105]

Another report complained of the 'barbarous application of Persian idiom to the Urdu language' in which the 'idiom of Urdu' was ignored. What exactly this idiom was meant to be was not made clear since the observer also suggested that Urdu was distinct from Hindi, and based on Persian.[106] The anxiety caused by the apparently unstable nature of Urdu and other vernaculars notwithstanding, the relationship between Urdu and Persian paradoxically resulted in strengthening the place of Persian in colonial schools and colleges. Indeed, here it appears that translating from Persian to Urdu was to be a method for development of an independent identity for Urdu – a process that was patronised only in one direction by the state. The idea that Persian and Urdu were necessarily intertwined (partly because of the script they now shared, increasingly to the exclusion of Hindi)

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[104] Ibid.

[105] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1849-50* (Agra, 1851), p.20

[106] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1844-45,* pp.lxiii

underpinned the common tendency to conflate Urdu and Persian departments, and ensured the presence of Persian even at schools which were designated 'Anglo-Vernacular'.

The uncertain relationship presumed to exist between Arabic and Persian also operated similarly, and contributed to the survival of Persian in the post-1835 years. As discussed in the previous section, oriental institutions under the aegis of the Company focused on the study of Arabic and Sanskrit. In the case of Arabic, it appears that Persian was considered to be essential to mastering this difficult language. The progression of learning supposedly simple vernaculars first, followed by apparently difficult classical or learned languages (here Arabic and Persian) is reflected in the curricula set by the colonial government.[107] Commencing his education with Urdu, the pupil would next 'pass into the Persian course'. Then only 'when a student shall have read through the Dubachah of the Sikunder Namah, he may commence the Arabic course.' The perceived links between Urdu, Persian and Arabic were further strengthened in classes by examining and teaching students by the practice of translation between the three languages.[108] To some extent, these languages were also already associated in India through translations, the *dars-i niẓāmī* syllabus followed at many *madrasa*s and (in the case of Urdu) the popularity of Rekhta.[109] However, in such contexts, these relationships did not monopolize the transactions between these and other Indian languages, as they came to do in colonial establishments.

The Indian Demand for Persian Education

In addition to colonial conceptions of Persian's relation to Indians and Indian languages, the other main reason for it being taught in colonial educations was the fact that

[107] This was common to the progression of students in multiple institutions. *Reports of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1842-1843*, p.cxc (relating to the course of the 'Nizamut College', Murshidabad); *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1846-47,* pp.lxii-lxiii, xvi-xvii (Benaras College and Agra College), etc.
[108] Ibid. 'Dubachah of the Sikunder Namah' refers to the preface of Niẓāmī Ganjawī's *Sikandar-nāma.*
[109] F. Robinson, *Islam, South Asia, and the West* (New Delhi, 2007), pp.72, 147-8

it was highly demanded, and indeed, was considered tantamount to education by many groups. Colonial reports frequently complained that parents were hesitant to enrol their children in schools where Persian was not taught. While the unwillingness of some was put down to religion, i.e. that Muslims placed great importance on Persian, most explanations were more general. Many parents were simply not willing to pay for their children to become literate in the vernaculars, some forms of which were already spoken in the home and did not constitute a subject to be learned. In 1836, the local committee of education at Ajmer was forced to agree that 'the entertainment of a Moonshee would induce Musulman parents to enter their younger children'.[110] By this it was clear that the demand for Persian existed, but the committee still insisted that a *munshī* be hired only for the sake of appearances, and only be allowed to teach Urdu (the 'Musalman's colloquial dialect'), while 'entirely excluding Persian.'[111]

As educational reports noted, in many instances, the Persian education offered by colonial institutions, as well as that acquired elsewhere, was of a higher standard than the basic English taught to students.[112] This reinforces Seema Alavi's argument that Persian had undergone a process of vernacularization as it became more widely understood and accessed in the early nineteenth century.[113] As a result, Persian was considered to be of use as a language of instruction. At the Hooghly College of Mohammed Mohsin, it was suggested that a master 'who would be able to explain difficulties [of English] in the Persian language' be employed.[114] In many schools where the colonial government tried to enforce the use of vernacular textbooks, the books were returned to the government

[110] *Report of the GCPI in Bengal for the Year 1836* (Calcutta, 1837) p.13
[111] Ibid. Also: *Reports of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1842-1843,* p.143
[112] E.g. *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1839-40,* pp.34-54, p.110
[113] Alavi, *Islam and Healing,* pp.43-4
[114] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1839-40*, p.142

since teachers did not want to make use of them.[115] Such circumstances pressurized the government to also allow learning in Persian, and added to the uncertainty and difficulty attending the implementation of a consistent policy.

The demand for Persian was not restricted to disaffected traditional elites only. It was also echoed by new groups eager to gain respectable employment. To an extent, the changing composition of Persianized groups in India had already been triggered before the state became directly involved in education.[116] This appears to have been a more widespread shift: in the 1830s, William Adam felt that more lower-caste boys were entering into education at the village level than before, particularly in the context of vernacular learning.[117] In this sense, colonial schools offered an additional path for those seeking Persian learning but who did not have established access to *ustād-shāgird* relationships. As a result, colonial institutions made Persian more accessible to upwardly mobile groups, evidenced by government reports as well as the dominance of Shaik̲h̲s in such institutions.[118] In 1849, one report documented the case of a butcher's son who gave up his profession to study Persian. He became a librarian at the colonial school where he had been educated.[119] Similarly, it was observed that in the Persian class at Benaras, the majority of boys were from very poor backgrounds.[120] That the state often struggled to attract those wealthier groups who preferred private tutorship is evidenced by the introduction of *ṣāḥibzāda* (lit. 'sons of *ṣāḥibs*, in other words, the sons of local aristocrats

[115] BL, IOR/E/4/790, Books Returned
[116] In the context of medical knowledge, Alavi has suggested that Persian learning became more devolved in the aftermath of the collapse of Mughal rule, as more localised elites sought to cement their power through use and patronage of the language. Alavi, *Islam and Healing,* pp.43-4
[117] Adam, *Third Report,* pp.17-30
[118] The link between social mobility and Shaik̲h̲ identity is made in the context of English education in India by: Y. Jaffery and M. Pernau, *Information and the Public Sphere: Persian Newsletters from Mughal Delhi,* (New Delhi, 2009), p.7
[119] 'Report on public instruction in the United Provinces, 1850/51-1854/55', BL/IOR/V/24/907
[120] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1839-40*, pp.87-8.

and landlords) classes aimed exclusively at elite young men.[121] While incentives in the forms of servant allowances, stables and apartments were offered to *ṣāḥibzāda*s, these were extremely slow to have any effect. According to the Urdu poet and writer, Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥalī (1837-1914), when he arrived in Delhi in the late 1840s, the Company's college was treated with disdain and considered to be attended by 'barbarians'.[122] However, enrolling in government schools and colleges did not posit a problem for those from more humble backgrounds.[123]

Despite having been abolished in courts and bureaucracies, Persian was still considered integral to administrative jobs, particularly due to the prevalence of Urdu. Thus, the preference for Persian in schools, particularly from poorer segments of society, continued to be expressed throughout this period. As late as 1844, a colonial education inspector found forty boys in Sylhet studying Persian in the 'expectation of obtaining employment under Government'.[124] The inspector complained that 'many persons assert that a knowledge of it is still necessary' and that he had 'frequently been requested to recommend that it should be studied in the government schools.'.[125]

By contrast, in 1828, it had been noted that the study of Hindi was undertaken with 'great reluctance' as it did not guarantee any jobs.[126] In 1844, the situation did not seem to have changed, as a report on education in the United Provinces noted that the study of Hindi only aimed to 'train up the boys to be Putwarries or shopkeepers', noting that even this paltry aim was not always achieved.[127] Despite the limited scope of jobs available

[121] *Reports of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the Year 1842-1843,* p.clxxviii
[122] Cf. Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness,* p.14
[123] Powell, 'Scholar Manqué or Mere Munshi?', p.207
[124] *General report on public instruction in Bengal for the year, 1843-1844*, p.156
[125] Ibid.
[126] IOR/F/4/1255/50501(1)
[127] BL, IOR/V/24/905, p.9 [N.B. A 'putwarri' or *patwari* is a land record keeper, usually at the lowest level of the administration]

to such students, the report remarked that the government was able to offer support only to the Hindi schools. This was due to the nature of the support offered: here, the report was referring to textbooks, which were already in Hindi, having been printed to further the cause of vernacular education. Little, however, seemed to have been done to open up new jobs or roles for such students, and resulted in creating a class of vernacular-educated Indians, with limited opportunities for acquiring jobs. While such students were in theory meant to serve as translators and teachers in other government schools, few jobs of this kind opened up, since government spending on education and employment opportunities remained severely limited. In 1849, Gobind Chunder Sandel, a student of Benaras College demanded in an essay, 'Of the thousands who are educated in the Colleges of India, how many are there that fill any post of trust or honour under Government?' Sandel claimed that the 'young Lalla' with a cursory knowledge of Persian had more advantages than a student who had spent the 'best years of his life in an English seminary.'[128] As a language still associated with royalty and high social status, Persian scholars were able to find jobs with Indian patrons outside the ambit of the Company's operations, including smaller courts and princely states such as Indore, Jaipur and Ambala.[129] Others went on to join lithographic presses, discussed in the next chapter. Consequently, despite the efforts of the government to confine education as much as possible to English and the vernaculars, Persian remained in demand during this period, and many colonial educational establishments offered it in order to entice students to their institutions.

The multilingual contexts in which north Indians were used to operating meant that the demand for Persian often coexisted with that for English or other languages. The

[128] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1849-50*, p.214

[129] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency*, for 1850-1, pp.37-8; *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1839-40,* lxiii-lxvi. 66.

statistics provided for Agra College for 1836, for instance, reveal that of the 223 scholars studying English, 105 were enrolled in an 'oriental' department (either Persian or Hindi) and chose to study English as a secondary language. Of the remaining 118, who took English as a primary language, a further 29 studied Persian as a secondary language, while 6 were also enrolled in the Hindi department.[130] The point here is that students' enrolment patterns suggested that a strong emphasis on multilingual acquirements remained, despite the students having to attend other classes in mathematics, science, and so on. It appears that while government policy to promote education did have a strong impact on the subjects taken by students, the general response was to take English in addition to other languages if possible, rather than as a replacement for them. Partly, this was in order to spread risk, as it allowed students to keep their employment options open in an environment where the comparative efficacy of Persian and English was uncertain. However, it also reflected instances of multilingual social contexts being increasingly institutionalised – at least to the extent that colonial policy would allow. In this regard, indigenous schools provide a useful comparison. In his account of vernacular education in the Lower Provinces of Bengal, the missionary James Long (1814-87) cited figures from 1850-1853 to show that schools in which 'Persian *only*' was taught were gradually declining, while Urdu teaching was increasing.[131] Long elided the fact that Persian was still far more popular than Urdu (there were 5448 students of Persian compared with 3343 studying Urdu), and that many of the Urdu schools also taught Persian.[132] In essence, multilingual teaching was becoming more and more formalised.

[130] *Report of the GCPI in Bengal for the Year 1836,* pp.7-9; This example is typical of all schools and colleges, differing according to the languages offered. E.g. BL, IOR/V/24/905-7; BL, IOR/V/24/947-50.
[131] J. Long, *Correspondence Relating to Vernacular Education in the Lower Provinces of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1855), p.5, emphasis mine.
[132] Ibid.

In 1848, James Ballantyne (1813-64), the Superintendent of the Benaras Sanskrit College and a staunch supporter of engrafting 'European knowledge on a 'superstructure of Oriental Learning', discussed the possibilities of a multilingual approach to learning. His report on the Persian examinations in Agra College concluded that the unsatisfactory performance of the students in this class could be linked to their studying English in addition to Persian. Ballantyne's report of the examinations observed that the average marks achieved by those who also took English was lower than that of students who did not study English.[133] While the figures provided by Ballantyne appeared to support the incommensurability of the two languages, in actuality they indicated that pupils who solely studied Persian belonged to families 'who by their social position are so favourably situated for acquiring it.'[134] That is to say, these students hailed from families who were traditionally literate in Persian. This background provided them with greater cultural capital and support structures (such as alternative *ustād-shāgird* relations) which enabled them to perform better. In this sense Ballantyne's report should be read alongside others which document the presence of new groups in Persian and English education, rather than assuming that English, or multilingual approaches in general, adversely impacted the acquisition of Persian.

Thus the association of Persian with a formal education, as well as the cultural capital and job opportunities it was seen to offer, meant that there was a considerable demand for the language amongst Indians. The reluctance to enrol in schools or use books which cut out Persian meant that the government was forced to offer it in both oriental and Anglo-vernacular institutions. While the support or discouragement of the language was

[133] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1847-48,* p.40
[134] Ibid.

never consistent, the state's seesawing policies effectively allowed Persian to persist in established for much longer than was originally envisaged.

4. The Impact of Colonial Policies on Conceptions of Persian: From Cosmopolitan to Classical?

Although Persian persisted in colonial and Indian educational institutions, a smooth continuity during this period cannot be assumed. The position of Persian in relation to other Indian languages, as well as the ways in which it was taught, underwent key shifts. While colonial policy reinforced the presence of Persian in some areas, and at certain points in time, at others it had an adverse impact. As a result, the presence of the language and the way in which it was taught often departed from the established norm. One example is that of the colonial school established at Sagar (in present-day Madhya Pradesh). Although the establishment was supported by the Nawabs of Bhopal, and initially interested the local elites, it seems that the students who actually attended this school were completely new to the study of Persian and Urdu.[135] The introduction of Persian and Urdu in this case significantly departed from the town's previous experience, and opened up the language to a new group, who previously may not have had access to it. The following sections will discuss the content of the colonial curricula and its possible implications for Indian students.

The Persian Curricula

Despite the inconsistencies and contradictions of colonial educational policy, there were concerted attempts to standardize the curricula as much as possible. Although this ideally applied to all types of institutions, it appears that the curricula taught at

[135] BL, IOR/E/4/790, Bundelkhund and Saugor and Nerbudda Narratives, dated 14th December 1844; *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1848-49*, p.81

‘oriental’ establishments (as opposed to vernacular or Anglo-vernacular schools and colleges) was more difficult to homogenize. Although the syllabus to qualify for centralised scholarships was set, this put forward the minimum requirements for study, rather than outlining a complete course. In terms of actual teaching, no standardized curriculum emerged between 1835 and 1857, and additional texts were chosen by individual teachers. Consequently, the textbooks taught in each institution remained unstable. The table below shows the different texts used by three colleges under the government of the North-Western Provinces in 1848 and 1851. With the exception of *Inshā-i Abū’l Faẓl* (‘Letters of Abū’l Faẓl’), no single textbook was employed consistently across all three institutions.

Table 4.1: textbooks used in three colleges in the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency in 1848 and 1851, showing the growth in syllabus due to the expansion off lithographic printing. *Inshā* works are shaded.		
1848[136]		
Agra College	**Benaras College**	**Delhi College**
Gulistān	*Gulistān*	*Bahār Dānish*
Inshā-i Abū'l Faẓl	*Inshā-i Abū'l Faẓl*	*Inshā-i Abū'l Faẓl*
Sikandar-nāma	*Inshā-i Balīg̲h*	*Sikandar-nāma*
Chār Gulzār	*Mīnā Bāzār*	*Qaṣā'id-i 'Urfī*
Inshā-i K̲halīfā	*Nahr al-Faṣāḥat*	*Sih Naṣr Ẓuhūrī*
Inshā-i Mādhorām	*Sair al-Mutāk̲hirīn*	*Inshā-i K̲halīfā*
Panj-ruq'a Ẓuhūrī		*Shabnam-i Shādāb*
Qaṣā'id -i 'Urfī		*Yūsuf wa Zulaik̲hā*
'Abdul Wasī'		
1851[137]		
Tauqi'yāt-i Kasra	*Anwarī Suhailī*	*Bostān*
'Abdul Wasī'	*Gulistān*	*Dīwān-i Nāsir*
Ak̲hlāq-i Jalāli	*Ak̲hwān al-safa*	*Gulistān*
Ak̲hlāq-i Nāsiri	*Alif Lailá*	*Inshā-i Abū'l Faẓl*
Badr Chach	*Chār Sharbat*	*Inshā-i K̲halīfā*
Chār Gulzār	*Dīwān-i Ṣā'ib*	*Intik̲hāb al-Dīwān*
Gulistān	*Hadā'iq al-Balāg̲hat*	*Jawāhir al-Harīf Qawā'id*
Inshā-i Abū'l Faẓl	*Mir'āt al-K̲hayāl*	*Kalīlā wa Damnā*
Inshā-i Mādhorām	*Munshāt Ṭāhir Wahīd*	*Mīnā Bāzār*
Qaṣā'id-i Anwarī	*Muntak̲hab al-Naḥw*	*Munshāt Tāhir Wahīd*
Qaṣā'id-i 'Urfī	*Naḥw-i Mīr*	*Nal Daman*
Sikandar-nāma	*Qaṣā'id-i 'Urfī*	*Naqliyāt*
Tauqi'yāt-i Kasra	*Sair al-Mutāk̲hirīn*	*Panj-ruq'a Ẓuhūrī*
Panj-ruq'a Ẓuhūrī	*Panj-ruq'a Ẓuhūrī*	*Qaṣā'id-i 'Urfī*
		Qawā'id-i Fārsī
		Ruq'āt-i 'ālamgiri
		Ruq'āt-i Bīdil
		Sih Naṣr Ẓuhūrī
		Sikandar-nāma
		Shabnam-i Shādāb
		Yūsuf wa Zulaik̲hā

[136] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1847-48,* pp.lxiii-lxvii

[137] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency*, for 1850-51, pp.104-15

It is unclear exactly how these books were selected, but they appear to have been the result of individual choices made by teachers and students. In the Urdu, Persian and Arabic classes at Azimgurh school, it was noted that teachers spent some time teaching from set textbooks, and devoted the remainder of their labours to teaching books 'which the parents of the pupils desired should be read at school'.[138] The books chosen resemble the traditional bureaucratic curricula of Mughal India, although the teachers also chose works of particular interest to themselves. In Delhi College, for example, many of the works taught at the Persian department reflected the interests of the teacher, Maulawī Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī (1802/3–57), who had edited or authored commentaries on many of the texts included.[139] The colonial tendency to follow a 'literary' approach to Persian meant that scientific and historical works were largely missing from the curricula, as these were now taught in the vernaculars. Within the ambit of literary works, however, there seems to have been no set colonial ideology determining the choice of books studied. Unlike the curricula in Arabic, Sanskrit, English and the vernaculars, the syllabus followed in Persian departments received little attention, since it was never seen as the main focus of study. Instead, the teachers were granted relative autonomy and, consequently, their teaching resembled that of 'bazar schools' or *maktab*s, indicating the limited influence of the state in regulating or transforming Persian education.[140]

When such discussions did take place, they focused mainly on the removal of books which were considered to be undesirable. For instance, in 1852, two narrative poems, *Maṣnawī-i Ġẖanīmat* and *Yūsuf wa Zulaiḵẖā*, were recommended for removal from

[138] *General Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal for 1840-41 & 1841-42*, p,297-8
[139] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the year 1839-1840*, p.xxiv; xxxi; M. Z. Ḥusain, *Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī ki adabī ḵẖidmāt* (Patna, 2002), p.122; Ṣahbā'ī is also discussed at length in the Epilogue to this thesis.
[140] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, 1854-55*, pp.43-8

the curriculum, since they were considered to be full of 'indecent allusions'.[141] Similarly, the fifth chapter of the *Gulistān* was also not taught, as it dealt with pederasty. Instead, either the first half of the book, or instead a select number of pages from it, was taught.[142] Comparing the books taught at colonial institutions and indigenous schools outside the Company's purview, it appears that in terms of genre, considerable similarity existed between the two.[143] Both laid an overwhelming emphasis on teaching forms of correspondence and epistolary style (*inshā*) as well as poetical works. However, many of the titles mentioned for indigenous received no attention from colonial authorities or even orientalist scholars, such as the *Maḥmūd-nāma* (on the love between Maḥmūd of Ġẖazni and his slave, Ayāz) and the late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century *Maṣnawī-i Ḥusn o 'Ishq* by Ni'mat 'Alī Ḵẖān.[144] As a result, it seems that the colonial curricula was shaped significantly by the choices made by individual teachers drawn from different districts.[145] In turn, these decisions were not made in a vacuum: in addition to the effect of the chains of transmission which were at the core of *ustād-shāgirdī*, and which had formed their own education, local teachers were also influenced by the preferences of their pupils or their parents.[146]

Despite the variations displayed, however, the scope of Persianate education was quite narrow in terms of textual genres: the curricula of all three institutions was weighted

[141] Ibid.
[142] A. Powell, 'Old Books in New Bindings': Ethics and Education in Colonial India' in D. Ali and I. Sengupta (eds) *Knowledge production, pedagogy, and institutions in colonial India* (New York, 2011)
[143] *Report on public instruction in the United Provinces, 1843/44-1846/47*, Appendix, pp.72-5; *General Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, 1852-53,* pp.xxiii-xlii; as a point of comparison over time: Adam, *Third Report on the State of Education in Bengal*, pp.64-76
[144] *Report on public instruction in the United Provinces, 1843/44-1846/47*, pp.72-4
[145] In Delhi College, for instance, Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī attracted students because of his celebrity, signalling the importance of the individual teachers within particular institutions. *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the year 1839-1840*, p.xxiv; xxxi; Pandit Ram Dayal's 'influence', in *General Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for the year 1852-3*, p.xxxi
[146] *General Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal for 1840-41 & 1841-42*, p,297-8

in favour of *inshā* texts employed for teaching forms of correspondence and epistolary style. The explanation for the imbalance lay in the negativist way in which Persian had been defined in colonial educational debates. Occupying the spaces between more rigidly defined subjects and languages, there was little knowledge that could be claimed by Persian. Science and history, for instance, were taught mainly in English and the vernaculars.[147] While those colleges with a large oriental department, such as Delhi, included works on geometry and arithmetic, these were limited to *Ḵẖulāṣat al-Ḥisāb* and Euclid, which had already been translated into Persian. As one report on the Persian curriculum explained, 'the principle […] is that modern knowledge shall be taught through the medium of […] spoken or familiar languages', while the Persian syllabus consisted of literary works to teach grammar and reading.[148] No additions were made to this mathematics curriculum, and in departments where Persian was taken with another language, these were usually eliminated altogether.[149] While few translations were undertaken into any of the 'classical' Indian languages, comparatively more effort was put into making scientific texts available in Arabic and Sanskrit, at least in the early period of colonial engagement.[150]

It is arguable that the emphasis on Persian as exclusively a language of literature allowed it to come to be valorised as a symbol of precolonial syncretism. Sudipta Kaviraj and others have warned that precolonial linguistic groups should not be taken as proto-national identities: the complex, fluid case of Persian in nineteenth-century India upholds

[147] M. S. Dodson, 'Translating Science, Translating Empire: The Power of Language in Colonial North India', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 47/4 (2005), pp.809-35

[148] *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for 1850-1*, p.221

[149] Ibid.

[150] Following Lord Auckland's Minute of 1839 which restored stipends for 'oriental' education, the Company procured Arabic translations of European books on science from Egypt. *General Report on Public Instruction in Bengal, 1843-44*, p.13; Also: Dodson, 'Re-presented for the Pandits'; Ivermee discusses the scientific Arabic curricula which Matthew Lumsden tried to introduce to the Calcutta Madrasa: Ivermee, *Secularism, Islam and Education,* pp.64-5

and extends this observation.[151] A kind of precolonial character was anachronistically bestowed on nineteenth-century Persian, which matched colonial (mis)conceptions regarding the absence of science and rationality in Indo-Persian thought. While Arabic and Sanskrit represented long-gone golden ages of the twin civilizations of Islam and Hinduism, Persian was relegated to a much narrower function in this schema. In 1828, the government had suggested that the popularity of Persian and Hindustani made them more suitable vehicles for the transmission of scientific knowledge in comparison with Arabic: by 1857, however, Persian had been excluded from this function almost entirely.

Explicitly religious instruction was also not permitted in the curricula of institutions which were government-sponsored, even though colonial education was influential in shaping religious and sectarian identities.[152] Similarly, religiously derived legal studies were dominated by English and Arabic conveyed in Sanskrit and Arabic only. Although a book on the rules of Islam was included in the Hooghly College report of 1842-3, this was a rare exception and occurred only because the Hooghly College was classified as a *madrasa*.[153] As a result, the Persian curriculum became restricted solely to literary works. This change heralded a sensibility which delineated the 'aesthetic' or the 'literary' as a category separate from the other functions of texts and languages with which they were intertwined. That is to say, particular registers of Persian became more prominent and distinct, and its expressive value for 'artistic' and linguistic, as opposed to 'scientific' production emphasized. In terms of Indo-Persian genres, the value of Persian was reduced to the genres which were strictly categorized under the heading of *adab*. History was increasingly excluded from the ambit of *adab*, since it constituted a 'useful' subject, and

[151] Kaviraj, *The Imaginary Institution of India,* pp.191-4
[152] Ivermee, *Secularism, Islam and Education;* Chatterjee, *The Making of Indian Secularism*; Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest*
[153] *General Report on Public Instruction in Bengal, 1843-44,* p.17. It is also possible that this book was reported by mistake, since spelling errors suggest the unfamiliarity of the inspector with the curriculum.

instead claimed by English or vernacular translations of English works. Despite its overlap with literary genres, History, seen as a modern subject by the state, was thus elided in the Persian curricula. Outside the colonial state, however, the study of history in Persian persisted for longer. While the state rarely patronized the production of history books in Persian after 1835, the intimate relationship between history and other *adabī* disciplines ensured the production of histories in Persian under different Indian patrons, albeit on a much reduced scale.[154]

In contrast to private establishments, those run by the colonial state seem to have only employed works which were available in print. Since little money was provided for funding the printing of Persian works, initially the majority of books were those which had been produced for the College of Fort William in its early years. As Chapter Two explained, Fort William scholars had been preoccupied with language learning, rather than following a general course of instruction. Scholarships in oriental languages, which had much more standardised requirements, also adhered to these books. The core syllabus in the mid-nineteenth century thus reflected older colonial preoccupations with letter-writing and the 'classics' as understood by early-nineteenth century European orientalists. Even in the late 1840s and 1850s, when Persian lithographic printing constituted a flourishing industry, the colonial curricula remained confined to relatively few titles.[155]

Colonial policy also had ramifications on schools which were not affiliated with the state. Here too, the ambit of Persian was restricted to the literary. While the emphasis on poetics and prosody in Persian was an existing trend in India, it was intensified during

[154] See appendix for some historical works printed in Persian. Sharif Ḥusain Qasemi also notes that historical works in Persian were widely patronised in the first half of the nineteenth century. S. H. Qasemi, 'Persian Chronicles in the Nineteenth Century', in M. Alam, F. N. Delvoye and M. Gaborieau (eds.) *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies* (New Delhi, 2000), pp.407-414

[155] See Table 4.1

this period. Vernacular schools were singled out by the Company for the distribution of teaching material dealing with science and other purportedly modern subjects, and as a result, they came to be the main transmitters of such knowledge. In the 1830s, William Adam had listed some of the Persian works employed by private teachers. These had included treatises on mathematics and other sciences authored by local *maulawī*s. Rāja Mitrājīt (fl.1777-1838) of Tikari in Bihar had also authored a treatise on agriculture in Persian. This, and a small number of other works, had been printed.[156] By the 1840s and 1850s, however, sciences (with the exception of traditional medicine) had become the domain of vernacular and English-language education. This did not mean that those literate in Persian could not access contemporary scientific knowledge – they simply did so in alternative languages. As Mitchell has explained, in the multilingual landscape of India, different languages and their registers occupied diverse functions.[157] Thus, the function of Persian was altered as the relationship between different kinds of knowledge and languages was reconfigured.

Cosmopolitan versus Classical?

This reconfiguration of Persian in colonial establishments raises the question of differences in the perception and use of Persian in India. As already noted, gravitation towards Persian as it was taught in colonial institutions did not reflect a single class bias. In many institutions, Persian attracted new social groups, although students from traditionally Persianised backgrounds were also present. While there is a lack of sources about student experiences, it is worth speculating about the possible impact of colonialism on the study of Persian in state-run educational institutions. It would seem logical to assume that those students who encountered the language exclusively in colonial schools

[156] Adam, *Third Report,* pp.72-5
[157] Mitchell, *Language, Emotion and Politics,* p.95, 120

and colleges would have been more likely to engage with Persian as a classical language. Conversely, those with alternative networks providing access to the Persianate world would have experienced it as a cosmopolitan language, which enabled belonging to a less remote, more connected, temporal and spatial literary space .

For those groups already embedded in the Persianate cosmopolis, alternative structures of authority, vested in individual teachers and scholars, continued to have more heft than colonial institutions. The range of texts taught in indigenous schools was much greater than that of colonial establishments, and indeed, was continually updated by new productions as well as the practice of keeping old letters for use in teaching *inshā*.[158] While the curricula in colonial institutions fluctuated, it was restricted to a choice from a total of about 21 works over this entire period. By contrast, in 1827, a report on indigenous education listed 59 Persian titles studied by the 1485 students in local schools around Bareilly alone.[159] By the 1840s, with the expansion of lithography, reading material seems to have expanded even more.[160] In 1851/52, the Director of Public Instruction, Henry Reid noted the presence of at least 224 different books in use in just eight towns and cities.[161] Of course, not all of these books were taught in any one school. However, as students often moved between teachers and had more flexibility with re-entering education, it is likely that their exposure to different texts was greater than in government schools. In particular, there was a greater emphasis on poetry, consisting both of *maṣnawī*s (narrative poems or romances) and *dīwān*s in Indian schools. Oral and written works were both employed. Although it is difficult to tell exactly which works were taught by specific teachers, the

[158] Reid, *Report on Indigenous Education…1851/52,* p.84
[159] BL, IOR/F/4/1170/30640, fo.587-653, Papers regarding the promotion of native education in Bengal
[160] See Appendix I.
[161] Reid, *Report on Indigenous Education…1851/52,* p.56

wider range of teaching methods and resources suggests that the range of books was considerably greater than colonial reports on indigenous schooling indicated.

Thus, traditionally Persianised groups, with cultural capital in the form of family members and acquaintances who belonged to established Persianate networks, would have had greater exposure to different texts and interpretative traditions, beyond the requirements of colonial examinations, through their social networks. As they could access relationships of *ustād-shāgirdī* and the geographical mobility enabled by Persianate connections and interests still experienced Persian as a cosmopolitan language. For instance, many students at the Delhi College engaged in personalized *ustād-shāgird* relationships and invested in building Persian-based networks outside of college. This led them to travel and find jobs based on these networks, rather than by virtue of having studied Persian at the College itself.[162]

It is likely that such students whose only mode of contact with the language was through the colonial curriculum would have been provided with a different view of Persian. That is to say, their experience of Persian in the colonial institution would have resembled a European classical education, in which Persian was seen as a source of literary and cultural values, but was not directly linked to contemporary social concerns. However, the experience of colonial education did not necessarily dominate such perceptions, and as the following chapter will show, the emergence of the Persian lithographic industry during this period drew in new groups to the Persianate world. Only after the cosmopolitan connections of the Persianate began to break down after 1857, particularly at the end of the

[162] For example, the career of Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī, discussed in the Epilogue, shows that while Ṣahbā'ī was a teacher at Delhi College, he also forged *ustād-shāgird* bonds with students at the College (after hours) and beyond. For lists of Ṣahbā'ī's students: Ḥusain, *Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī,* pp.150-70. These included students enrolled in the English part of the Delhi College also, such as Dharam Narāyan. *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for the year 1852-53,* p.xxxix

century with the rise of nationalist politics, would colonial views begin to dominate Indian conceptions of Persian, as shall be briefly discussed. Although this was a gradual process that unfolded in the long term only, it is worth noting some of the salient features of colonial institutions which undermined the cosmopolitanism of Persian even earlier, although this was largely unfelt.

One way in which colonial policy interrupted cosmopolitan practices was through the intervention in the temporal aspects of learning. In colonial schools and colleges, students' ages and the length of time which they were allowed to study, were rigidly monitored, and deployed as a gauge of ability and suitability for admission. Students who were considered too old to learn, or who had spent too much time on a particular topic, met with discouragement. On the other hand, in most indigenous institutions, the average length of time spent in studying was extremely variable, ranging from five to eighteen years.[163] In contrast, even institutions such as the Calcutta Madrasa, which claimed to follow an 'Indian' system, aimed to produce scholars in about seven years.[164] This does not mean that privately run-Persian schools did not pay attention to time: indeed, daily schedules, and the study of particular texts on different days indicate that teachers organized their teaching according to set timetables, particularly at the simpler levels of education.[165] However, the concept of learning as an ongoing activity, accessible to all ages, was considerably diminished in colonial institutions. Since literary activity was a vital mode of participating in wider networks and being cosmopolitan, those who wished to hone their poetry-writing skills beyond a knowledge of Persian for examination

[163] BL, IOR/F/4/1170/30640, fo.587-653
[164] 'Petition of the Muslim Inhabitants of Bengal'
[165] Adam, *Second Report,* pp.25-6; BL, IOR/F/4/1170/30640, fo.587-653

purposes, needed to be able to cultivate parallel relationships of *ustād-shāgirdī* which continued after their formal education at a Company school or college had terminated.

Similarly, the colonial educational system also brought about a change in the relationship between mobility and learning. The spatial management of educational institutions was an area in which colonial education differed radically from its predecessors and parallel private educational practices. Persian education in India was typically centred on single individuals, and the school was a mobile institution which was located wherever the teacher chose to practice – usually in a house belonging to a teacher, a wealthy student or patron.[166] As a result, schools could shift or disappear from a district if a teacher went elsewhere. Students also travelled to learn. By contrast, colonial establishments sought to contain students within specified spaces, and resisted the itineracy which characterised Indo-Persian learning. In 1820, for instance, the first set of reforms relating to the Calcutta Madrasa insisted on erecting a boundary wall for the institution, so that students and passers-by could be distinguished.[167] This was considered to be 'indispensably necessary for the effectual control over the exit and entrance of the students'.[168] Enforcing attendance every day also reduced the possibility of individual mobility during learning if students left an institution hoping to return.[169] In delineating the school or college as a fixed space for learning to take place, colonial institutions offered a form of Persian education that was radically cut off from its cosmopolitan context, dependent on itineracy and personal networks.

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[166] E.g. *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for the year 1852-53,* p.197. This provides the duration of existence of Persian schools in five districts. *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for the year 1854-55,* pp.xxiii-xxxi

[167] BL, IOR/F/4/708/19201

[168] Ibid.

[169] Attendance was a problem that plagued colonial officials throughout this period. E.g. IOR/F/4/1255/50501(1); On the propensity of 'Musalman scholars' to be absent or irregular: *Report of the GCPI in Bengal for the Year 1836*, p.13; *Report of the GCPI in Bengal for the Year 1843-44*, p.84

Separated from this crucial social context, colonial teaching of Persian treated it as a 'classical' subject – a foreign language learned through the perusal of the literature of its 'golden age', with no bearing on present-day concerns or incentive for further textual production in the language.[170] This classical framing of Persian also provided cultural capital to those who gained a command of the language and knowledge of its literature. However, it is suggested that this capital was qualitatively different, and was not immediately articulated. Only after 1857, when the relationship between the state and its subjects was drastically changed, and new reform movements and allies of the colonial state emerged, did the graduates of such institutions begin to occupy prominent roles in the literary landscape.[171] Indeed, it may be argued that the classical, as opposed to modern, delineation of Persian at colonial institutions set it up for its eventual rejection by reform-minded individuals in the post-1857 era. While this question is beyond the scope of the present thesis, we can briefly note that the teaching of Persian changed qualitatively after 1857. Colonial officials linked the usage of the language with Mughal power and Muslim disaffection, and deliberately sought to break the bonds which the language sustained, by unmooring it from its social contexts of usage. For instance, at Bareilly College (where the principal had been murdered during 1857), the Oriental Department was rendered 'extinct' by a ruling forcing students to attend English classes.[172] In Agra, it was suggested that a '*separate* Arabic and Persian department' be abolished, and be made dependent on English learning. This would decrease the influence of the *maulawī* and increase that of the 'European Master'.[173] In Benaras, colonial policy was made most explicit. James

[170] As Viswanathan has phrased it in the context of English literature curricula, 'The choice was *against* a kind of intellectual inquiry directed toward the present in favour of one based on the authority of established usage, historical precedent, and social convention.' Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest,* p.119
[171] Joshi, *Fractured Modernity,* pp.12-18; Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness,* pp.145-54
[172] H. S. Reid, *Report on the State of Popular Education in the North Western Provinces, for 1856/57 and 1857/58* (Benaras, 1859), pp.7-8. [Original emphasis]
[173] Reid, *Report…1857/58,* p.52

Ballantyne worked to clear the Arabic and Persian section of 'turbulent bigots' and reorganized the department so that it would be 'no longer permitted to foster Musalman fanaticism'. Instead, the Department would be devoted to training 'a superior description of Interpreters, understanding English, and disciplined in the Classical Arabic and Persian, with a view to their becoming thoroughly accomplished in Urdu'.[174] These measures sought to reconfigure the meaning of a Persian education by harnessing it to a system of 'English' values on the one hand, and by rendering it a classical language fit only for honing vernacular skills on the other.

Outside colonial institutions, however, it appears that even after 1857, Persian learning increased more in comparison to other languages.[175] While it is not possible to explore this period in any detail in this thesis, the Epilogue will examine some of the ways in which Persian remained relevant to cosmopolitans in India and Asia in the later nineteenth century.

5. Conclusion

On the level of policy, colonial interventions in education significantly altered and limited the function of Persian in India. While the ambivalence with which colonial linguistic and cultural discourse treated Persian enabled its persistence in educational institutions after 1835, it also led to the definition of Persian as an exclusively literary language. New approaches to the spatial and temporal aspects of learning, as well as the importance accorded to printed textbooks, played an important part in constraining Persianate scholarship and limiting itineracy within the colonial education system. Despite

[174] Reid, *Report…1857/58,* pp.11-12

[175] Reid, *Report…1857/58,* p.52; At the same time, 'indigenous' schools may have felt the impact of colonial policy in other ways. One colonial inspector triumphantly noted that certain 'immoral' texts like *Bahār-i Dānish* and *Yūsuf wa Zulaiḵẖā* appeared to be less commonly read. Whether this was an accurate reading of a highly variable situation is hard to tell, since it was contradicted by another inspector in the same year. Reid, *Report…1857/58,* pp.31-41

the impact of colonial policy on the character of Persian, however, the texts studied at various institutions reveal the influence of individual teachers and prevailing Indo-Persian attitudes in the construction of the colonial syllabus. The limitations and fixity of this syllabus contrasted with the texts studied at indigenous schools and colleges, which were subject to local fluctuations and pressures within India, and transmitted and experienced through *ustād-shāgird* relations and individual choices. Similarly, as the next chapter will discuss in greater detail, Persian textual production did not cease in India over the course of the nineteenth century. However, the character of Persian became more exclusively literary – and classical - as it was divested of its claims to the modern disciplines of science, history (and in colonial institutions), religious knowledge.

Chapter 5: Sustaining Authority in a Manuscript World: Persian Lithographic Printing in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

1. Introduction

The mid-nineteenth century saw the expansion of an extremely successful lithographic printing industry in India. Prior to this period, the history of printing in the subcontinent was marked for its slow and uneven diffusion, and limited appeal to Indians. Although the typographic printing press had arrived in India in the seventeenth century, its usage was mostly confined to missionary groups. After the East India Company acquired territorial and administrative control of Bengal in 1765, presses were established to cater to the needs of the growing European community in Calcutta. Associated mostly with jobbing printing and the publication of periodicals, the earliest of these presses was established in 1777.[1] It was only towards the end of the century that the Company began to print books for sale to Indians. Beginning with the Persian *dīwān* of Ḥāfiẓ in 1791, editions of poets as well as works of prose in a variety of languages issued from the Company's presses.[2] By the early nineteenth century, literary works in English were also available, and were met with enthusiasm, albeit by a small English-speaking section of the population.[3] In contrast, the success of Persian publications appeared to be less certain, even amongst regular users of the language. For instance, in 1835, arguing in favour of Anglicist education, Macaulay had referred to the low sales of 'oriental' publications to suggest that readers were no longer interested in such works, and preferred instead, to buy books in English.[4] Although Macaulay may not have been aware of it, a number of small

[1] Shaw, *Check-list,* pp.1-2
[2] Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī, *Dīwān-i Ḵẖwāja Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī,* ed. Abū Ṭālib Iṣfahānī (Calcutta, 1791)
[3] Joshi*, In Another Country*, p.38
[4] Macaulay, 'Minute', pp.161-73

private presses owned by Indians had already sprung up in Bihar and Bengal.[5] Less than a decade later, Persian printing presses in north India constituted a thriving trade, successfully drawing in Persianised professional classes as well as mercantile capital to form a flourishing industry.

As the previous chapter noted, the lithographic industry contributed to the broadening of the colonial curriculum during the mid-1840s, as Persian works were more easily and cheaply available. In addition to the market provided by the Company's schools and colleges, the industry catered to other buyers, and played an important role in maintaining and creating literary relationships. This chapter explores the complex relationships which sustained Persian print culture in north India in order to understand why different actors continued to engage with Persian in the nineteenth century, as well as the shifting meanings of this engagement. An examination of Persian printing prior to the emergence of mass-readerships permits insights into the ways in which early printed books interacted with a dominant manuscript culture, and negotiated seemingly personal relationships through print. Moreover, a large proportion of the texts published before the 1860s can be seen as the reflection of 'old literary tastes'.[6] This does not mean that the period – and particularly, the dominance of Persian within it – should be seen as either the remnants of Mughal culture or as a precursor to vernacular print spheres alone. All too often dismissed as a hangover from the past, Persian's presence in nineteenth-century India was a meaningful activity which served to structure specific social relations and attitudes towards knowledge and literature.

Despite the recent growth of interest in nineteenth-century Indian literary history, the phenomenon of Persian printing has received little attention in comparison with the

[5] Adam, *Third Report on the State of Education*, pp.73-4
[6] Orsini, *Print and Pleasure,* pp.33-4

vernacular press.[7] In India, as elsewhere, print has been seen as deeply intertwined with modernity, and the rise of mass readerships and publics. Scholars have shown how the vernacular press was harnessed in debating, promoting and resisting reformist agendas, linked in turn to the redefinition and emergence of a variety of religious and class identities.[8] Another strand of enquiry has focused on popular publishing. Francesca Orsini, Ulrike Stark and Anindita Ghosh, for example, have produced excellent studies of Urdu, Hindi and Bengali print cultures respectively.[9] These historians have offered important insights into the complex trajectories followed by texts as they crossed different audiences, scripts and spaces, as well as the ways in which languages and literary cultures were shaped by these forces. Such studies have been particularly successful in interrogating the apparent boundaries between high and low, elite and popular, commercial and literary, and oral and written genres. As Ghosh and Orsini have shown, a range of texts was made available to 'multiple and overlapping' audiences, rather than discrete readerships with monolithic interests.[10] Consequently, a rich picture of the ways in which Indians produced and interacted with an array of hybrid texts, genres and ideas has emerged.

Given the richness of this scholarship, it is worth considering what studying nineteenth-century Persian printing in India can offer. One limitation of vernacular publishing is that its trajectory necessarily pushes the period of inquiry into the second half of the nineteenth-century, when wider readerships and publics become visible. Such mass readerships are harder to claim for a cosmopolitan language such as Persian, known only to segments of the population and yet not confined to particular regions or ethnicities. This

[7] E.g. Dalmia and Blackburn (eds), *India's Literary History*
[8] F. Robinson, 'Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print, *MAS,* 27 (1993), pp.229-251; Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle Classes*; Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*
[9] Orsini, *Print and Pleasure*, U. Stark, *An Empire of Books: the Naval Kishore Press and the diffusion of the printed word in colonial India,* (Ranikhet, 2007), Ghosh, *Power in Print*
[10] Orsini, *Print and Pleasure,* p.6

chapter contributes to discussions of printing in India by showing how printing in Persian viewed readers as belonging to a connected, cosmopolitan imaginary in the absence of mass readerships. Further, it is possible that the construction of authoritative reputations on the part of publishers using strategies found in manuscript production may have helped to socialize and introduce Urdu printing also. While an examination of Urdu printing is beyond the scope of this chapter, a detailed discussion of the creation of publishing authority is provided.

Section Two provides an overview of the Persian lithographic industry, focusing on the important role played by publishers, editors and scribes in the construction and extension of Persianate textual authority in print. This was achieved through a self-conscious engagement with norms of manuscript production. Later in the nineteenth century and with the development of vernacular print spheres, these figures were relegated to the peripheries of the reading experience, as they came to be overshadowed by the figure of the author. Section Three discusses some of the works printed at Persian presses, and shows that these departed significantly from the needs and expectations of the colonial state. Such texts asserted particular identities for their producers and consumers, and signalled the different contexts in which Persian texts were significant. Finally, Section Four examines the dissemination of different kinds of printed works, underlining the overlaps between modes of print and manuscript circulation. It shows that although print attempted to reach mass audiences, it did so by drawing these audiences into the connected and personalised channels of manuscript circulation. Drawing readers in, this enabled texts to retain greater authority in an environment which was sceptical of mechanically produced and randomly-distributed knowledge.

2. The Persian Lithograph Industry in North India

The development of lithography has often been linked to the success of printing in South Asia. Printed books struggled to find a foothold in what Nile Green terms an 'anthropocentric' culture of scholarship and textual engagement – where epistemic authority was located in learned individuals, rather than the standardized form of a book.[11] As Francis Robinson has explained, printing 'struck right at the heart of Islamic authority' as it posed a threat to person-to-person transmission and texts could be multiplied 'willy-nilly' without any regulation.[12] In the context of the Indo-Persian episteme, this was not restricted to specifically religious or Islamic knowledge, but the transmission of Persianate knowledge in general. As this chapter will show, the lithographic industry had to grapple with issues of the authoritative production and circulation of knowledge throughout this period.

This section examines Persian lithographic presses in North India to show how they interacted with existing manuscript trends, and principles of textual authority and transmission. Drawing on Robert Darnton's model of the 'communication circuit' as a means of studying book history, it investigates some of the key actors who were either directly involved in, or influenced, printing activities.[13] Darnton's model has significant limitations: most relevant here is his conflation of the book with the text provided by the author. This obscures the important roles played by publishers and editors in not merely making a work accessible in print, but shaping its meaning through paratexts such as prefaces, footnotes, title-pages and advertisements. Moreover, Darnton tends to see the

[11] Green, 'The Uses of Books', pp.243-4
[12] Robinson, 'Technology and Religious Change', p.239
[13] R. Darnton, 'What is the History of Books? Revisited', *Modern Intellectual History*, 4/3 (2007), pp.493-508; for an overview of critiques of Darnton, see: D. Finkelstein and A. McCleery, 'Introduction', in D. Finkelstein and A. McCleery, *An Introduction to Book History*, 2nd edn (Abingdon, 2013), pp.7-22

history of books as a way of informing understandings about readers rather than producers.[14] This section departs from previous approaches in two respects: first, as Javed Majeed has suggested, by recognising Persian lithography as an extension of manuscript culture; and second, by focusing on proprietors and patrons, in addition to readers, as social groups to be understood through an examination of book history.[15] By examining lithographic practices, social groups involved in book production, and the routes of book circulation in India, it demonstrates that Persian printing in north India was an important means of upholding and shaping norms of respectability in the Persianate world.

The origins of the lithographic book in South Asia are fairly well-documented: Graham Shaw has traced the development of the technology to Calcutta, where it was first practiced by James Nathaniel Rind and two French artists in 1822.[16] In the years which followed, lithographic printing was soon taken up by a range of entrepreneurs, including Indian royalty, missionaries, and private individuals. The *Jām-i Jahān-numā,* an Urdu and Persian newspaper established in 1822 by Harihar Dutt in Calcutta, also began using lithographic methods. This newspaper appeared to have had strong support and patronage from British officials, and was even considered to be the 'mouthpiece' of the colonial government by commentators.[17] Another venture was the Asiatic Lithographic Company, set up by G. Wood and James Rind, which relied on the Company colleges at Fort William and Fort St. George to buy its productions.[18] It should be noted here that despite the presence of lithographic technology in Calcutta from such an early stage, Persian

[14] Ibid.
[15] J. Majeed, 'Modernity's Script and a Tom Thumb Performance: English linguistic modernity and Persian/Urdu lexicography in nineteenth-century India' in M. Dodson and B. A. Hatcher (eds), *Trans-colonial Modernities in South Asia* (London, 2012), pp.95-111
[16] G. Shaw, 'Calcutta: Birthplace of the Indian Lithographed Book' in F. Orsini (ed.) *The History of the Book in South Asia* (Burlington, 2013), pp.159-80
[17] A. F. S. Aḥmad, *Social Ideas and Social Change in Bengal, 1818-1835,* (Leiden, 1965), pp.89-90
[18] A. Chaudhury, *Indian Advertising: 1780-1950* (New Delhi, 2007), p.102

lithographic production in the middle of the nineteenth century was largely focused in Lucknow, Kanpur, Bareilly, Delhi and other north Indian centres. This was because Calcutta society was more influenced by missionary and *bhadralok* leanings towards vernacular production in Bengali (which also suited typographic methods rather than lithography). As a result, printing industries came to be dominated by lower-caste professionals (many of whom had been trained in printing by missionaries) rather than Kāyasthā and *ashrāf* groups – a point taken up later in this chapter.[19]

An easier and less cumbersome technique to master than typography, lithography was ideal for printing in Indian languages, particularly Persian, as the flowing *nastaliq* characters could be drawn directly onto the stone by a calligrapher or scribe. Since Persian characters change their appearance when joined, several combinations of founts were required for printing at typographic presses. One American missionary in India claimed to have used over eleven hundred founts to print in Persian, and complained that the results were still not perfect.[20] The need for so many characters in different combinations meant that not only was printing in Persian type very expensive, but also laborious and complicated. Similarly, producing multilingual books from a typographic press was a costly and difficult procedure, as even more combinations of fonts were needed. This task was easily accomplished at a lithographic press, sometimes by a single scribe.[21] While early lithography was costly due to the need to import suitable stones from Europe, the discovery of large deposits of lithographic stone in Kurnool (in the Madras Presidency) in 1826 soon made the technology cheaper than typographic printing, opening up the industry

[19] Ghosh, *Power in Print,* p.122

[20] J. Warren, *A Glance Backward at Fifteen Years of Missionary Life in North India* (Philadelphia, 1856), pp.47-49

[21] For example, Badr al-dīn ʻAlī Ḵẖān practiced in English, Hindi and Persian. See: M. A. Māhir, *ʻIlm al-Haruf ya Taḥqīqāt-i Māhir* (Delhi, 1932), p.155; Orsini also discusses multi-script printing: Orsini, *Print and Pleasure,* pp.14-15

to small-scale operators who did not need to rely on state support.[22] During the 1840s, several presses were operational in towns and cities, including Calcutta, Lucknow, Delhi, Agra, Bareilly, Meerut and Benaras. These presses printed books in multiple languages including Hindi/Urdu, Persian, Arabic and Bengali, and in the Devanagri as well as the Persian script.

However, financial and practical considerations were not the only – nor the most important - advantages offered by lithography. Rulers such as Nāṣir ir al-Dīn Ḥaidar of Awadh (r.1827-37) were especially drawn to the technology even in its more expensive stages, as it allowed the Persian character to be reproduced more accurately than was possible through typography.[23] Moveable type, as several scholars have noted, produced crude characters which did not appeal to readers, especially in a context in which calligraphy was particularly valued as an art in its own right.[24] Lithography, conversely, was able to replicate the appearance of manuscripts. Although illustrated books in Persian were rare, page borders, margin notes and other features of manuscripts were easily replicable in lithographic print. This was not just a question of aesthetics, but of identifying and relating to the rules of textual authority that manuscript culture embodied. It is useful, therefore, to briefly summarize the rules governing textual authority in manuscripts.

Manuscript production was a highly personalized process, in that handwritten texts necessarily entered the reading circuit through individual acts of copying. In theory, a manuscript was the product of a hand that could be traced to a specific individual. If the scribe was a reliable or learned individual, then the value of the manuscript was enhanced,

[22] G. Shaw, 'Book Design in India', *Vihangama,* 2 (1994), pp.13-14
[23] U. Stark, 'Hindi Publishing in the Heart of an Indo-Persian Cultural Metropolis: Lucknow's Newal Kishore Press (1858-1895)', in S. Blackburn and V. Dalmia (eds), *India's Literary History: Essays on the Nineteenth Century* (New Delhi, 2004), pp.251-79, 255
[24] M. van Zutphen, 'Lithographed Editions of Firdawsī's Shāhnāma: a comparative study', *Oriens*, pp.65-101, 67-8; ; Orsini, *Print and Pleasure,* pp.14-15

as the text was transmitted on his personal authority. Autograph manuscripts, produced by authors themselves, had a much higher value than copies of the original, particularly if the author was especially revered. Information about the scribe was usually contained in a colophon. Thus, manuscript transmission had its own rules of regulating authority, which functioned in a very similar way to oral chains of transmission in the Islamicate world. One example is that of a manuscript of Sa'dī 's *Gulistān,* now in the British Library. This text was copied in 1768/9 by Muḥammad Murīd bin Muḥammad Rashīd, who had transcribed it from a manuscript written by one Mian Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ. The latter, through a number of transcriptions, traced the origin back to Sa'dī 's own autograph copy. In turn, Muḥammad Murīd had copied it for the education of his son, Rashīd Muḥammad.[25] Even in a text as well-known and frequently copied as the *Gulistān*, the authority of its manuscript, determined from its scribal lineage, was still a relevant concern that influenced its worth, despite the fact that the contents of the text were probably identical with many others. The organization and condition of the manuscript, which determined the ease with which it would be read, also played an important role in the preferment of certain manuscripts over others. Such features would include the clarity of the scribe's handwriting, the durability of the materials employed, the presence of a table of contents or an index, interlinear translations or explications, and most importantly, the presence of a complete and verified text. In Murīd's manuscript, the index was added later by a different individual, facilitating the text's use as a reference work.[26] This, in addition to its connection to an autograph copy, would have made this a very valuable work.

There were multiple ways that a manuscript could be acquired. It could be bought from an acquaintance, or from a hawker or market. It could also be copied by a professional

[25] Ethe, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts,* p.682
[26] Ethe 682

scribe for a particular buyer, or by a reader in the act of reading. Manuscripts could be borrowed, lent and inherited. All these were transactions from 'one hand to another' ('*yek dast be dast*') involving individuals who were either known to the acquirer or involved in the production of the text itself.[27] In all these instances, there were many variations and discrepancies – illegibly copied scripts, incorrect or incomplete texts, forgeries, and so on.[28] Not all manuscripts provided information about their lineage, or were particularly valuable. There are countless instances of texts in which the scribal colophons are incomplete or altogether absent. However, this affected the value of the manuscript in the marketplace, as it lacked learned authority. Hence, they were not ideals to which publishers and printers aspired as they sought to establish their authority as book producers. Publishers thus had to make sure that their printed books were able to compete with manuscript producers, and able to offer the same degree of textual authority as their hand-written, individually-produced counterparts. This required attention to not only the content of the printed books, but also the individuals and processes involved in producing them.

Publishers, Editors and Scribes: Reputations and the Construction of Authority

Lithographic printing houses were usually small establishments, engaging around ten men at a time including menial labourers, such as sponge-men, coolies, peons and *bheesti*s (water-carriers).[29] Although the roles of editor and proprietor/publisher were new professions, which emerged in tandem with the lithographic industry, in the context of Persian presses these positions were dominated (like Persianate manuscript culture) by the Muslim *ashrāf* as well as Kāyastha and K̲h̲atrī scribal lineages. Many presses were family-

[27] MS Elliott 395, fos.1-2r
[28] I. Afshar, 'Manuscripts in the Domain of the Persian Language', in J.T.P. de Bruijn (ed.) *General Introduction to Persian Literature: Volume I,* (2008), pp.408-29
[29] W. A. K̲h̲ān, *Maṭla' al-'Ulūm wa Majma' al-Funūn* (Lucknow, 1873), 2nd edn, pp.19-21 [this work was first printed in 1845)

run affairs, such as the extremely successful Muṣṭafáī Press, and the Delhi Urdū Aḵẖbār Press (run by Saiyid Aḥmad Ḵẖān's elder brother, Saiyid Muḥammad, before being taken over by the former). Some publishers, like Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān (of the Muṣṭafáī Press) and Ḥājī Ḥarmain Sharīfain, were merchants, but were also well-connected in literary circles.[30] Other press-owners and editors were graduates of colonial educational institutions, and became involved in printing during their student days.[31] Dharam Narāyan, for instance, who ran a press in Malwa in the 1840s, was an alumnus of the Delhi College, while Jawāhir La'l, whose Masdir al-Nawādir Press published a Persian-Arabic dictionary in 1849, had studied at Agra College.[32] However, Dharam Narāyan and Jawāhir La'l also came from Kāyastha families, and in this sense already belonged to established literate circles. Similarly, Bīr Singh (fl.1840s and early 1850s), the Ḵẖatrī proprietor of the Gulzār-i Hamīsha-Bahār press, was the son of Budh Singh, whose manual on Persian printing indicates his involvement with the publishing industry.[33] One of the reasons why the lithograph industry found a hold in Persianate circles may be that it was able to reproduce hierarchies of elite status and reinforce the influence of the established scholarly classes.[34] It was even more common for scribes and editors to have such backgrounds, since the skills they required were the developed and refined through *ustād-shāgird* discipleship. The profession of scribes (*kātib*) and calligraphers (*ḵẖwush-nawīs*) were highly esteemed.

[30] Orsini, *Print and Pleasure,* pp.37-8
[31] *SRGNWP* (Agra, 1855), iii, p.273; M. I. Chaghatai, 'Dr. Aloys Sprenger and the Delhi College' in M. Pernau (ed) *The Delhi College: traditional elites, the colonial state and education before 1857* (New Delhi, 2006), pp.105-24
[32] *SRGNWP,* p.252
[33] *SRGNWP,* pp.259-60
[34] This is true for the Persian press at least: printing in other languages may not have been so restricted in terms of class. For colonial companies and the government, skilled printers were treated like any other form of low-paid colonial labour, as lithographic presses were installed in jails after about 1855. BL, IOR/Z/E/4/31/L166, 'Lithographic Press, Disbursement for Jabalpur Jail', 1857-58. Similarly, the Male Military Asylum trained Eurasian boys to work at lithographic presses, and the Company also attempted to 'import' Indians as 'hill-coolies' to Mauritius to work at government presses. BL, IOR/F/4/1985/87519, Dec 1841-May 1842, Hill coolies: application from Messrs Adam Scott & Co for permission to embark for Mauritius, three natives of India; IOR/Z/E/4/ 42/A2694

Similarly, editors tended to be established scholars who provided correct, authoritative versions of literary works as well as glosses and margin notes, particularly to aid readers who did not have access to teachers. As a result, in the high-ranking positions of proprietors, editors and scribes, there were few newcomers to the industry, which followed existing structures and hierarchies of Persianate manuscript production closely.

Munshī Wājid ʻAlī's 1845 compendium of nineteenth-century arts and sciences ranked different kinds of knowledge and occupations in categories ranging from the 'exalted' to the 'vile' or 'contemptible'.[35] Lithographic printing was listed in the highest category, indicating its purer status in comparison with other arts such as singing, music and cock-fighting.[36] Instead, it was placed alongside a variety of arts and crafts associated with the elite, including calligraphy, chess-playing, trade, and hunting. Thus, printing was seen as a suitable occupation for the respectable elite (*ashrāf*), from which it consequently drew much of its character and authority.

It is noteworthy that little skilled labour was required on the part of low-paid workers. The extent to which ideas about caste and social status permeated Persianised print spheres is worth speculating upon, as it seems that the exclusion of ignorant, or lowly individuals from the process of textual reproduction had a positive impact on its appeal. Unlike typography, which required specialized skills in metal-work for type-casting, and thus relied upon manual labourers and artisans such as blacksmiths, lithography allowed a straightforward relationship between the scribe and his materials.[37] Since the lithographic industry relied upon established scribal groups such as Kāyastha and Ḵẖatrī copyists (*katibs*) and calligraphers (*ḵẖwush-nawīs*), it did not threaten the survival of their

[35] Ḵẖān, *Maṭlaʻ al-ʻUlūm*
[36] Ḵẖān, *Maṭlaʻ al-ʻUlūm,* pp.19-21
[37] Ibid.

professions. While calligraphy overlapped with other *ashrāf* occupations, it constituted a specialized skill in its own right. Guild-like associations, underpinned by *ustād-shāgird* relations, produced famous practitioners of the art in centres of patronage such as Delhi and Lucknow.[38] Drawing on the cultural capital offered by scribes and calligraphers already embedded in these powerful networks, publishers were able to offer the particular transcription of a text to a much wider, and often disconnected, set of readers. The resemblance borne by lithographs to manuscripts, whereby the hand of the copyist was literally inscribed in the printed work, is one reason that the industry managed to thrive in a context which valued personalized, rather than mechanical, transmission of knowledge.[39]

The symbiotic relationship between the lithographic industry and *ashrāf* professionals is encapsulated by the case of Munshī Amīrullāh "Taslīm" (fl.1840s-50s), who worked at the Muṣṭafáī press in Awadh. Educated by his father, Taslīm belonged to a literate family from a *qaṣaba* in Faizabad (near Lucknow), and was well-versed in Arabic and Persian. A well-known Urdu poet whose *dīwān* was also published, his main employment was as a soldier in Wājid 'Alī Shāh's (1822-87, r.1847-56) army at Lucknow. However, Taslīm had also trained as a calligrapher under the tutelage of a famous *ustād*, 'Abdul Ḥaiy, and continued to practice the art while pursuing a military career.[40] During his time in the army, he became affiliated with the Muṣṭafáī Press (established in 1841) in Lucknow, and transcribed a range of works for this illustrious publishing house. The press attained great fame and popularity for the quality of its publications.[41] Out of work for some time due to the decommissioning of his battalion as well as the instability of printing businesses amidst the chaos of 1857, he soon found employment again at the newly-

[38] E.g. see entries in: Māhir, *Taḥqīqāt-i Māhir*
[39] Robinson, 'Technology and Religious Change', p.239
[40] A. H. Nūrānī, *Nawal Kishor aur un ke Ḵẖaṭṭāt o Ḵẖwush-nawīs* (New Delhi), pp.59-60.
[41] *SRGNWP*, p.300

established Nawal Kishore press in 1858.[42] Taslīm's reputation as a calligrapher is attested to by the fact that Wājid Shāh granted him a perpetual allowance for his skill, after his battalion was dismantled and his soldier's salary suspended.[43] Taslīm went on to train a number of calligraphers of a younger generation, some of whom went on to work for Nawal Kishore Press.[44] In this sense, the lithographic industry was able to accommodate and replicate, rather than endanger, existing *ustād-shāgird* relationships. The Muṣṭafáī and Nawal Kishore presses benefited from his skills and reputation, and found him to be an invaluable scribe as well as editor.[45] In turn, these publishing houses sustained Taslīm financially, particularly during a time when, due to the annexation of Awadh in 1856, and the Indian Rebellion of 1857, many *ashrāf* livelihoods in north India came under pressure.

However, textual authority did not rest on the reputations of scribes alone. While integral to the production of printed works, they were not always permanent employees, and presses tended to rely on several different scribes working on different texts over the course of a year. Instead, publishers played the most important role in mediating the relationship between the text and its readers, and indeed, the character of the press was conflated with the identity of the proprietor. As already mentioned, publishers were usually also from *sharīf* backgrounds. However, there was relatively more flexibility in this role, as the presence of merchants such as Ḥājī Ḥarmain Sharīfain and Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān suggests. Partly, this was because connections and access to wealth mattered. While some had the requisite capital to invest in the industry, others had to look to rich patrons for support.[46] Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān, for example, had no need to rely on the whims of patrons: he was a rich

[42] Nūrānī, *Nawal Kishor,* pp.59-69
[43] Ibid.
[44] Nūrānī, *Nawal Kishor,* for e.g. Pyāray La'l, p.72 and K̲h̲airatī La'l "Shagufta", p.78. For Taslīm's career at Nawal Kishore and after: Stark, *Empire of Books,* p.270
[45] Ibid.
[46] *SRGNWP,* p.401

glass merchant who was able to pour large amounts of his own money into the business.[47] In contrast, the Maṭba'-i Ṣafdarī press, situated about thirty miles west of Agra, floundered in 1852 because the assistance promised by the Māharāja Balwant Singh of Bharatpur did not materialize.[48] Although the Gulzār-i Hamīsha-Bahār press was originally started as a joint-stock enterprise by Bīr Singh in 1849, it did not find investors due to a lack of confidence in the market.[49] Indeed, the finances of most presses, and especially the smaller ones, could be easily upset: the Agra-based Jām-i Jamshed press sustained serious losses in 1851 due to the breakage of a lithographic stone and was almost forced to close down.[50] Even though it was cheaper than typography, lithographic presses required significant capital, and their survival in times of financial hardship was dependent on the support of patrons.

Given that publishers were not always from a professional group directly related to learning or knowledge-production, their reputations were crucial to ensuring that their books were considered to be authoritative and reliable. Responsible for assembling a capable team of knowledgeable editors and reliable copyists, the publisher also had to select texts worthy of publication. Presses with close affiliations with the colonial state were exceptions to this rule, as they were assured of their works being bought (usually by local schools and colleges).[51] In the case of books produced for a wider market and aimed at attracting new readers, the publisher played an important role in choosing what was to be printed. Although a wide selection of old and new works, ranging from textbooks, encyclopaedic compendiums and religious tracts to the *dīwān*s of poets and romances were

[47] Orsini, *Print and Pleasure,* pp.37-8
[48] *SRGNWP*, p.300, 400. The press was saved by 'timely, though unexpected' assistance from the Bharatpur authorities in 1853.
[49] *SRGNWP,* p.259
[50] *SRGNWP*, p.280
[51] See, for example, books sold by the Maṭba'-i Jām-i Jamshed in 1850. Of nine works printed, five were ordered by Reid, Visitor General of Schools in the NWP. *SRGNWP,*p.267

published, most publishers also ensured that works with established reputations for their moral or intellectual value were also included. For this reason, even presses which printed works mainly in Urdu or Hindi usually numbered some well-known Persian grammars or literary texts amongst their publications. As an important literary language, the presence of Persian served to enhance the status of other publications issued by the same press, as it set them within a linguistic and aesthetic framework which was already highly valued.

Introducing both readers and authors to the print market, the publisher played a pivotal role in connecting and maintaining the social contexts of transmission. This was key to ensuring that printed books were tethered to the existing framework within which knowledge was valued. As a result, it was the name of the press and often the publisher himself, rather than that of the author, which was most prominently displayed on the front cover of Persian books. Often, the address of the press would also be included along with that of the publisher as a means of further situating the book in its context of production. In many cases, the author would not even be mentioned. As a point of comparison, the publisher was not accorded the same attention in contemporary English books, where precedence was usually given to the author.[52] While this does not mean that the figure of the author was of no importance, it points to the importance accorded to processes of transmission, as well as the socio-literary settings in which texts circulated orally or in writing.

As a result, whatever their individual background, proprietors emphasized their scholarly credentials and moral virtue, and took care to dissociate themselves from materialistic ambitions. For example, Muḥammad Ḥusain of the Muḥammadī press

[52] For an overview of scholarship on authorship in the context of English: Z. Tenger and P. Trolander, 'From Print versus Manuscript to Sociable Authorship and Mixed Media: A Review of Trends in the Scholarship of Early Modern Publication', *Literature Compass* 7 (2010), pp.1035-48

claimed to make no profit from his business, even though colonial reports described him as 'well to do'.[53] Saiyid Muḥammad, the proprietor of the Delhi Urdū Aḵẖbār, which numbered several Persian works amongst its publications, also stated that he made no profit after the expenses of the press were paid, and that any excess funds were distributed amongst the poor.[54] It was rumoured that Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān had opened his highly profitable press only because he had needed to get some material printed, but was met with rudeness from Ḥājī Ḥarmain Sharīfain, whose press he had approached. Insulted, Ḵẖān decided to set up his own publishing house.[55] Thus, dignity, rather than economic incentives, was the factors which influenced his decision according to the writer 'Abdul Ḥalīm Sharar (1860-1926), whose anecdotal evidence gives us some indication of the kind of persona that Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān sought to create. While there may have been a gap between such rhetoric and reality, it is evident that proprietors had clear notions about the image they presented to their customers, even if it did not correspond with their actual financial position or motivations. Fidelity to this image was rewarded by a positive reputation, which often also found its way into colonial reports. Thus, Muḥammad Qamar al-Dīn Ḵẖān, the editor and proprietor of the Asad al-Aḵẖbār, which printed various works on Persian grammar, was known as 'a strict Mahomedan and well-read in the traditions and history connected with his religion', although he appeared to have fallen from favour amongst his customers after becoming involved in religious disputes in the early 1850s.[56] Sharar's glowing account of the early period of Persian printing – in which he emphasizes its artistic and scholarly, rather than commercial, value – reflects the success of publishers in creating an elite scholarly print culture.

[53] *SRGNWP,* p.301
[54] *SRGNWP,* p.280.
[55] Sharar, *Lucknow: The Last Phase,* p.107
[56] *SRGNWP*, p.240, 396

Such reputations were created and maintained through a variety of strategies. Within the printed book itself, title pages became sophisticated displays of the publishers' resources and reliability. Intricate calligraphic logos advertising the name of the press, coupled with Arabic verses indicating a commitment to an Islamicate sensibility, became the norm by the late 1840s. In certain instances, such as Gumānī La'l's *Srī Bhagatmāl* ('Garland of Devotees', Meerut, 1851), printed at the Jām-i Jahān-numā Press, an alternative agenda was implied by the replacement of Quranic verses with an invocation to the god Krishna on the title page.[57] However, although a different function for this devotional text was indicated, it was still couched within the norms of manuscript production in Persian works. Adhering to a particular aesthetic was an important way of providing the reader with a sense of the publisher's ideological and intellectual framework. This is evidenced in the contrast between the plainly printed books produced at state-affiliated presses, and those which sought out a more private, literary audience. As David Lelyveld has suggested, the slow shift to moveable type in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries indicated a gradual alteration in both aesthetic sensibilities and attitudes towards knowledge.[58]

[57] Gumānī La'l, *Bhagatmāl,* ed. Isrī Sahā'ī and Chaman La'l (Meerut, 1853), front-matter. See image on following page.

[58] D. Lelyveld, 'Sir Sayyid's public sphere: Urdu print and oratory in nineteenth century India' *Cracow Indological Studies,* 11 (2009), pp.237-267, pp.260-61. The link between printing aesthetics and underlying ideologies of knowledge is supported by the fact that many state-funded Persian publications, as well as the books produced by the Asiatic Lithographic Company, resembled typographic productions, highlighting different attitudes to what a 'printed book' should look like. See Appendix II for examples. Francesca Orsini suggests that in the case of Hindi/Urdu publishing, the 'familiarity' of lithographed books made them more appealing to Indian buyers. In the case of Persian, however, it appears that textual *authority* rather than familiarity, was key, since, as mentioned above, lithographed books could often resemble typography more than manuscripts.

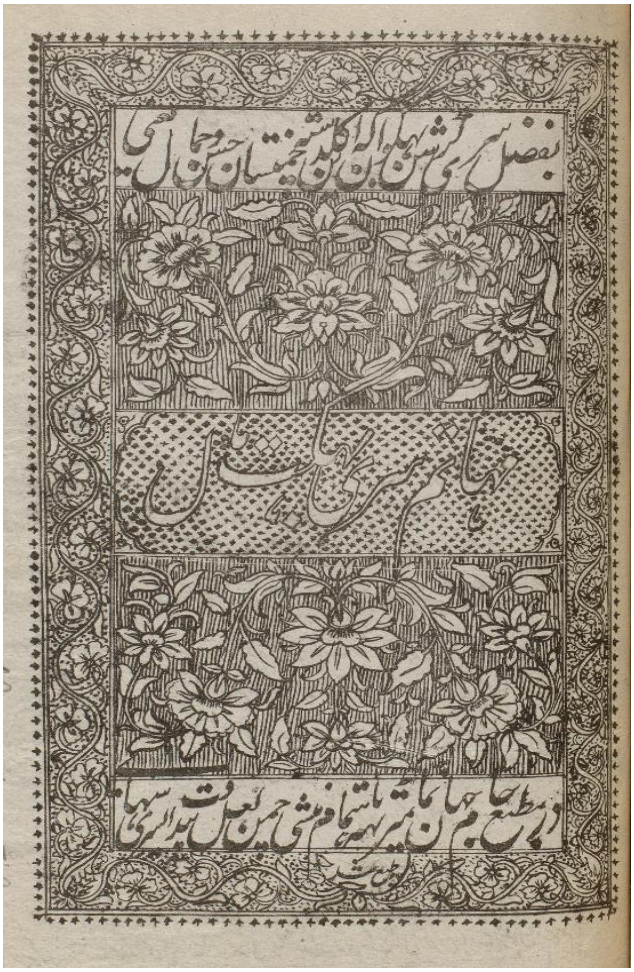


Fig. 5.1. Front cover of *Bhagatmāl* © British Library Board VT2171

Proprietors also ensured they had the last word, through the inclusion of a publisher's conclusion (*k̲h̲ātima al-ṭiba'*). Usually written in the third-person, this text could range from brief mentions of the publisher and his team, to longer explanations of the reasons for publishing a particular text. Here, authors were barely accorded much attention, if at all they were mentioned. Instead, a vocabulary of printing developed, which emphasized the piety of the publishing business as individuals produced and adorned knowledge that was sacred in itself. Beginning with lines of gratitude and praise to God, publishers took the opportunity to situate themselves in relationship to the other scholars involved in the production of a work. Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān appears to have become well-known enough to omit detailed information about his publications, but in the end-matter to his

volumes, he continued to ensure that readers knew that the publications were issued from a press owned by the son and successor (*k͟half*) of the devout Ḥājī Muḥammad Raushan K͟hān.[59] As publishers experimented with deploying different kinds of paratext to build their authority, such markers became more and more sophisticated. For instance, the Muṣṭafáī and Niẓāmī presses developed distinctive stamps and a signature to underscore the authenticity of their publications.



Fig. 5.2: Stamps and Colophons lithographed books and manuscripts (bottom right).[60]

[59] For e.g. M. Y. K͟hān, *Mir'āt al-Jamāl* (Lucknow, 1845). The title "Ḥājī" indicates a Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. In later publications from the Niẓāmī Press, owned by Muṣṭafá K͟hān's younger brother, 'Abdul Raḥmān K͟hān changed this statement to a stamp which read 'Raushan K͟hān Ḥanafi', indicating his family's commitment to a particular school of Sunni jurisprudence. See: Ḥifẓullāh, *Inshā-i Faiẓ Rasan* (Kanpur, 1868)

[60] Clockwise from top left: Muḥammad Qamar 'Alī K͟hān, *Gulzār-i Dānish* (Delhi, 1843), p.73; Ḥifẓullāh, *Inshā-i Faiẓ Rasān* (Kanpur, 1868), end-matter; Ahlī Shīrāzī, *Maṣnawī-ye Siḥr-i Ḥilāl* (1852, Lucknow), p.30; 'Dīwān-i Anwarī', copied 1849, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Special Collections Library, Isl. Ms. 283, fo.227a

The involvement of scholarly, refined or powerful individuals in printing enterprises was also made clear as well-known scribes, editors and patrons were also mentioned on the title page. However, this was not a routine activity of giving credit where it was due, and often only the publisher was mentioned. Instead, by presenting the printed work as being associated with significant figures only, the book was firmly embedded in the anthropocentric networks of knowledge and literary activity of which it was a product. As the images above demonstrate, lithographed books significantly drew upon aesthetic conventions from manuscripts. Such paratextual features adapted from manuscript practices further enhanced this effect, as they influenced readers' perceptions and worked to 'socialize' the book.[61] For instance, most lithographed books ended with a *qiṭ'a'-i ta'rīk̲h̲*, or chronogrammatic verses which yielded the year of publication. Such details ensured that lithography was elevated from being a process of mechanical reproduction to an art which was aware of Persian literary and scribal traditions. The *qiṭ'a'-i ta'rīk̲h̲* transformed the publication from a mere copy to a creative endeavour, in which poetically talented individuals were involved, and attested to the standing of the publisher who was able to bring them together. For instance, the chronogram of *Dastūr al-Mubtadī*, a work on Persian grammar, described the proprietor of the Muḥammadī Press, Muḥammad Ḥusain, as pure-hearted (*pāk-nihād*), whose bounty was expressed by the publication of the useful primer.[62]

In addition to the appearance and content of a particular book, publishers' reputations were also reinforced through channels not directly related to a specific publication. For example, in addition to being a publisher, Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān was also known as the author of a widely sold and circulated version of the *Āmad-nāma*, an introduction to

[61] Finkelstein and McCleery, 'Introduction', pp.7-15
[62] Ṣafī bin Naṣīr, *Dastūr al-Mubtadī*, ed. S. A. 'Alī (Lucknow, 1843), p.57

Persian verbs. K̲h̲ān's version, entitled *Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir* (lit. 'Choicest of the Verbal Nouns') promised committed beginners that they would have a command over Persian infinitives and their derivatives in a matter of days.[63] The work was extremely popular and was published at least eight times during the 1850s. After Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān's death, *Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir* continued to be a regularly printed work well into the twentieth century.[64] The work established Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān's standing as a Persian teacher and compiler, and also made his name widely known as it was published by multiple presses, including the Asad al-Ak̲h̲bār Press (Agra, 1850).[65] Even after the closure of a particular press, many later publications referred to the earlier editions which had already been issued, and drew upon these for textual verification, adding to the repute of the original lithographed work.

Presses which also issued newspapers (usually in Urdu or Persian) were also a way of expressing the opinions of the proprietor, who was often also the editor of the paper. Muḥammad Qamar al-Dīn K̲h̲ān's reputation as a pious man, for instance, was developed through the notices of saints, as well as articles on religious subjects, printed in Urdu in the *Asad al-Ak̲h̲bār* newspaper.[66] Finally, the fact that publishers, authors, editors and scribes belonged to the literate classes to which they catered, was key to the circulation of information about their reputations. In this sense, it is impossible to build a picture of publishing without an understanding of the oral milieus which gave printed books their value and relevance. Moving with ease between patrons and readers who also belonged to the Persianised intellectual elite, book producers engaged in social activities and relationships that helped to strengthen their credibility and popularity. In the tightly-knit networks stretching between publishers and readers separated even by time and space,

[63] M. K̲h̲ān, *Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir* (Hyderabad, 1920), p.2
[64] Ibid.
[65] M. K̲h̲ān, *Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir* (Agra, 1850)
[66] *SRGNWP*, p.240

news travelled quickly. For example, Sharar's account of the founding of the Muṣṭafáī Press, published in *Guẕashta Lakhna'u* in 1913, was based on orally transmitted information which had successfully crossed generational distances.

Many of the figures involved in the publishing business were also poets, who participated in *mushā'ara*s (poetic assemblies) which provided them with additional platforms to socialize and forge new relationships. Maulawī Hādī 'Alī, who attained prominence as an editor and calligrapher, was a recognized poet with the *taḵẖallus* "Ashk".[67] Similarly, Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān's younger brother and distribution agent, 'Abdul Raḥmān Ḵẖān "Shākir", was a well-known figure in literary circles as editor, author and poet.[68] Shākir went on to open the highly successful Niẕāmī Press, which merged with the Muṣṭafáī Press after his brother's death. While these multiple roles were not always clearly advertised in print ('Abdul Raḥmān Ḵẖān did not mention his *taḵẖallus* in his publishers' notes), they were propagated through social interactions, contributing to the overall image of the publisher and his press, and hence the authority of the printed works which it produced.

Thus, at a time when Persian typographic books met with little popularity in India, the lithographic industry was able to appeal to producers and consumers alike, attracting buyers as well as literate professionals to the industry. Vital to the success of this print form were the ways in which lithographed texts were able to forge a continuum with existing modes of knowledge transmission, and the anthropocentric values it embodied.[69]

[67] Scott Kugle notes that Hādī 'Alī was also the mentor or *ustād* of the poet Muḥsin. S. Kugle, 'Pilgrim Clouds: The Polymorphous Sacred in Indo-Muslim Imagination', *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics* 23 (2003), pp.155-90

[68] A. R. Ḵẖān, *Gulistān-i Massarrat,* (Lucknow, 1850), p.2

[69] The term 'anthropocentric' is borrowed from: Green, 'The Uses of Books', p.243

This was true not only for the material aspects of texts, but also in terms of the social groups which constituted the industry.

3. Printing Cosmopolitan Texts and Identities

The previous chapter discussed how Persian was cast as a 'classical' language in colonial curricula, as teaching mainly focused on literary texts from what Europeans saw as the golden age of Persian literature. This section shows that the kinds of texts most popular in India were often quite different to the canon valued by orientalists, and that reading tastes and practices were situated in highly localized contexts. It provides an overview of the kinds of books produced for Indian markets, and draws attention to the broad contours of lithographic publishing. Collating data from catalogues and government reports, several general trends are apparent between 1840 and 1857.[70] It is evident that the genres of *adab* dominated the publishing industry, with grammars, dictionaries, poetry, histories and model letters being the most commonly printed texts. Relatively few works on scientific subjects such as geography and mathematics were printed. The brief flurry of translation activity from of scientific books from English to Persian witnessed earlier in the century left few traces on the lithographic industry. While there were exceptions such as Shiv Prasād's *Mudun al-Faiẓ* (Meerut, 1849), a work on Indian and European methods of arithmetic for revenue officers, the majority of works on these topics were now confined to Indian vernacular languages, particularly Hindi and Urdu.[71] Colonial language policies

[70] Catalogues consulted: A. J. Arberry, *Catalogue of the Library of the India Office: Vol. 2, pt. 6: Persian Books* (London, 1937); E. Edwards, *A Catalogue of the Persian Printed Books in the British Museum* (London, 1922); A. Ali, *A Catalogue of the Persian Books and Manuscripts in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1895); O. Shcheglova, *Persoyazychnaya litografirovannaya kniga indiĭskogo proizvodstva (XIX v.)* [Persian-language lithographed book of Indian production, 19th century], (St.Petersburg, 2001); Catalogue of the Digital Library of India, http://dli.serc.iisc.ernet.in/; Computerised catalogues (on-site access only) of the holdings of Punjab Public Library, Lahore; Punjab University Library, Lahore; Government College University Library, Lahore; works mentioned in: *SRGNWP;* Mirzā Asadullāh Ḵẖān Ḡẖālib, *Kullīyāt-i Maktūbāt,* ed. and trans. Pertau Rohilla (Islamabad, 2009)

[71] *SRGNWP,* p.256,

as well as the longer-term move towards vernacularization from the eighteenth-century onwards, discussed in previous chapters, explain these trends. The exception to this rule was the presence of medical treatises and dictionaries, many of which were based on Arabic works. As Alavi has shown, an increased Arabization of medical texts occurred during the mid-nineteenth century as medical professionals sought to protect their claim to authoritative knowledge.[72]

Within the literary genres encompassed by *adab*, the selection of books favoured by north Indian presses in the nineteenth century was markedly different to the Persian writers admired by European readers, as well as the colonial curricula for Indians. Although there were some overlaps, these were limited to a handful of titles which were considered to be essential to teaching the basics of Persian. Thus, certain established works such as the thirteenth-century *Gulistān* and *Pand-nāma* went through several print runs due to their popularity in colonial and Indian institutions alike.[73] One text which was hardly mentioned in colonial reports in any detail, nor often used in government schools, but which enjoyed great popularity in print was the *K̲h̲āliq Bārī* of Amīr K̲h̲usrau of Delhi, a multilingual rhyming vocabulary which was printed at least five times between 1848 and 1850 alone.[74] However, apart from such basic language-learning texts, it appears that Persian readers in India were focused on texts which dated from the seventeenth-century onwards. '*Inshā* texts on the art of fine prose and letter-writing continued to be extremely popular throughout the nineteenth century. In this genre, eighteenth and nineteenth-century works dominated. This is unsurprising, since, as Alam and Subrahmanyam have observed, '*inshā* texts reached their peak in the eighteenth century.[75] Little needs to be added here,

[72] Alavi, *Islam and Healing*
[73] Arberry lists nine editions of the *Gulistān* and fourteen of the *Pand-nāma* (the first part of this is also known as the *Karīmā*). See appendix.
[74] *SRGNWP*, pp.237-74
[75] Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World,* p.397

except that its continued popularity indicates the importance of the genre for both official employees (particularly of princely states) as well as private letter-writers expressing relationships of friendship, patronage and kinship in the Persianate mode.

Table 5.1: Sample of Printing Output/ Works in Persian from four presses in 1849[76]

Press	Title	No. of copies	Price	Subject matter
Delhi Urdū Akbhar	*Kifāya-i Manṣūrī*	155	Rs. 4	Medical work in Arabic and Persian
	Maṣnawī-i Kāmrūp	250	Rs. 1, 4 a*	Love tale in verse
	Maṣnawī Bū ʻAlī Qalandar	250	2 a	Mystical poetry
	Badīʻ al-ʻInshā	200	Rs. 1, 4 a	Etiquette & letter-writing
Dār al-Salām (Delhi)	*Tālīf Sharīfī*	330	Rs. 1, 4 a	Medicine
	Inshā-i Ḵẖalīfā	350	4 a	Etiquette & letter-writing
	Inshā-i Fā'iq	330	2.5 a	Etiquette & letter-writing
	Bahār Dānish	400	Rs. 4	Love story (framed)
Qādiri (Delhi)	*Tafsīr-i Yūsuf*	300	Rs. 1, 8 a	Quranic commentary translated from Arabic
	Hidāyat-i Muʻallimīn	200	6 a	Instructions for teachers
	Guldasta-i Farāsat	50	3 a	Farriery
	Mufarriḥ al-Qulūb	200	Rs. 4	Medicine
	Kilīd-i Dānish	400	6 a	Ethics
	Mir'āt al-Maḵẖlūqāt	300	Rs. 1	Genealogical history of the world
ʻUmdat al-Aḵẖbār (Bareilly)	*Ḥurūf-i Tahajjī*	400	2.5 a	Persian primer
	Ḵẖalīq Bārī	200	1.25 a	Persian poetical lexicon by Amīr Ḵẖusrau
	Karīmā	200	1.25 a	Moral tales/primer
	Maʻ Muqimān	200	1.25 a	Verses on love for God
	Ta'rīḵẖ-i Nādirī	100	Rs. 1, 4 a	History of Nādir Shāh
	Ẓawābiṭ-i Tām	100	3 a	Persian verbs
	Mir'āt al-Ḵẖayāl	150	Rs. 3	*Taẕkira* of poets (composed ca. 1690)

[76] *SRGNWP*, pp.247-61

* Prices in rupees and annas

In the case of the *dīwān*s of individual poets, the continuing importance of recent and contemporary poets can be partly attributed to the pressures of patronage and literary milieus centred around courts. Contemporary poets such as Ġẖālib (1797-1869) and Mirzā Har Gopāl "Tafta" (d.1879) invested in the printing of their *dīwān*s as it improved their chances of patronage and recognition.[77] Thus, of the fourteen printed *dīwān*s of which records survive, at least five were authored by nineteenth-century Indian poets. With the exceptions of the *dīwān*s of Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī (d.1389/90) and Badr al-Dīn "Ḥilālī" Astārābādī (d.1529), the rest were the compositions of seventeenth and eighteenth-century writers. Detailed information about the numbers of publications are not available in all cases, but the limited data available suggests that around 300 copies were printed of most *dīwān*s. The two exceptions were the *Dīwān-i Nawīdī* (Kanpur, 1850) and *Dīwān-i Shāh Niyāz Aḥmad* (Agra, 1849), of which 600 and 500 copies were produced respectively. The former instance is easily explained: the work was published at the Muṣṭafáī Press which printed 600 copies of almost all its books in 1850.[78] The *Dīwān-i Shāh Niyāz Aḥmad*, however, was printed at the relatively small Qādirī press, which made the bulk of its profits from the *Ḥamail* (a small pocket Qur'an).[79] It is therefore worth considering the reasons for the relatively large project of the publication of this work. Shāh Niyāz Aḥmad (d.1834) was a Sufi saint who was well-known across north India.[80] After his death, a Sufi centre (*ḵẖānaqāh*) known as the Ḵẖānaqāh-i Niyāzīya was established in Bareilly.[81] Shāh Niyāz's influence, as well as the fact that he had a number of devoted disciples (*murīd*) who continued to expound on his teachings, explain the relative popularity of his *dīwān*. The

[77] Ġẖālib, *Kullīyāt-i Maktūbāt,* p.265. In this letter to his friend "Mikash", Ġẖālib discusses the chances of receiving monetary compensation from the new king of Awadh, Wājid 'Alī Shāh, for his recently printed *dīwān,* which had (unfortunately) been dedicated to the late king, Amjad 'Alī Shāh.
[78] *SRGNWP,* p.272, 252
[79] *SRGNWP,* p.252
[80] N. Hanif, *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis: South Asia* (New Delhi, 2000), p.293
[81] Ibid.

link with the K̲h̲ānaqāh-i Niyāzīya (which is still in existence), ensured the continued relevance of his Persian and Urdu poetry in oral and print forms. While it is possible that the owner of the Qādiri press was directly linked with the *k̲h̲ānaqāh*, and thus used the press to express his own devotion, it is unlikely that this would have been carried out with no hope of breaking even.

However, it is evident that insofar as *inshā* and poetic works were concerned, texts from the late seventeenth-century onward remained the most popular across all these genres. Far from being a democratizing force which allowed anyone to publish anything, print was subject to similar pressures as manuscript production in north India, and relied on similar networks of discipleship, readership, patronage and affiliation. This partly explains why literary productions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries remained so dominant.[82] Particular institutions – whether these were of courtly patronage for poets and *inshā* writers, or Sufi centres in other instances – played a vital role in producing and sustaining Persian literary culture in print. Such connections were reinforced by chains of discipleship, kinship and shared service between individuals. C. M. Naim has suggested that the institution of *ustād-shāgirdī* became consolidated in the context of poetic production in the early-eighteenth century in India.[83] As such, it would follow that chains of tutelage would be consequently more tightly linked and still held relevance in a time when, as the previous chapter showed, colonial education existed side by side with *ustād-shāgirdī* and indigenous schools.

[82] I have avoided using the term *Sabk-i Hindī* ('Indian Style') to denote these genres. As Chapter Three discussed, scholars have argued that the 'Indian style' is an early twentieth-century construct. However, following patronage and discipleship allows us to follow certain trends without reinforcing colonial and post-colonial geographies.

[83] C. M. Naim, 'Poet-audience interaction at Urdu musha'iras', in Shackle, ed., *Urdu and Muslims*, pp.167–173, cf. Malik, 'Muslim Culture and Reform, p.241

As the focus on poetic productions from the seventeenth century onwards indicates, Persian learning was still embedded in social relations and transmission chains which did not reflect the 'classical' approach to Persian works adopted by many European observers. Another feature of the texts published during this period which supports this view is the fact that a substantial number of translations were undertaken into Persian – that is translations from 'modern' languages, including English. Such instances unsettle the Eurocentric binary between 'high' classical and 'low' vernacular languages, and indicate the continuing use of Persian as a language in which new texts were accessed, and different identities asserted.

Looking more closely at the books printed, it is evident that the associations made with different languages and their relationship with Persian followed a loose pattern. For instance, the influence and presence of Arabic in Persian printed matter was most prevalent in grammars, medical works (*'ilm-i ḥikmat*) and books of Islamic prayer and traditions (*ḥadīṯ*). In rare instances, Urdu translations were also provided, indicating its occasional characterization as a Muslim language.[84] For the most part, however, Urdu was the second language in poetic and ethical works, such as Sa'dī 's *Gulistān* and Kāshifi's *Anwarī Suhailī*.[85] Printed translations of English works mostly consisted of official regulations concerning legal and military matters, or, in the case of Shiv Prasād's book on arithmetic, intended for the use of revenue officials in the Company's service.[86] While there were exceptions such as the account of a journey to England, *Guldasta-i Inglistān* ('Bouquet of England', 1854), which included interlinear English translations of Persian poetry, such straightforward instances of interactions with European languages in Persian literary works

[84] For e.g. Sharaf al-Dīn, *Nām-i Ḥaq* (Meerut, 1850). This was a tract on Muslim ceremonies such as marriage and hajj.
[85] Sa'dī Shīrāzī, *Gulistān* (Lahore, 1850); the bilingual *taẕkira:* 'Abdul Raḥmān "Shakir", *Gulistān-i Massarat* (Kanpur, 1851); Ḥusain Wā'iẓ Kāshifī, *Muntaḵẖab-i Anwarī Suhailī* (Agra, 1853)
[86] *SRGNWP*, p.256

were increasingly rare. However, the colonial state did exert a limited presence in Persian print through the indirect channels of Hindi and Urdu. Two short works which appeared in 1852, *Qiṣṣa-i Shamsābād* and *Qiṣṣa-i Ṣādiq K̲h̲ān* (described as 'Tale of the Dishonest Steward' and 'Tale of an Honest Zamindar' respectively), were Persian translations of Hindi and Urdu stories.[87] The originals had been written by Munshī Chiranjī La'l (fl. 1850s-70s) under the direction of Henry Stewart Reid, in order to furnish books which might counter the 'immoral tendency' of the Lucknow presses.[88] Chiranjī La'l himself also translated the Urdu version of Christoph C. Sturm's *Reflections on the Works of God in Nature* into Persian in as *K̲h̲ayāl al-Sanā'i* (Agra, 1853). Whether such attempts succeeded or not is another matter, and indeed, judging by the general trend of readers' tastes, such works appear to have been in the minority.

Reprints of works translated from Hindi, such as *Qiṣṣa-i Kāmrūp wa Latā* ('The Story of Kāmrūp and Latā', Delhi, 1849) and *Srī Bhagatmāl* appear to have found readerships more easily.[89] The *Razm-nāma*, Faiẓī's sixteenth-century translation of the Sanskrit *Māhābhāratā* into Persian, was serialized and published on the last sheet of *Urdu Jām-i Jahān-numā*, a Meerut newspaper established in 1851.[90] This addition to the current news was thought by colonial observers to attract greater numbers of Hindu subscribers to the paper.[91] It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which this correlation actually existed. While almost two-thirds of the paper's subscribers were indeed identified in 1852 as Hindu, in 1854, Hindu subscribers outnumbered Muslims only by one. Moreover, Faiẓī

[87] Chiranjī La'l, *Qiṣṣa-i Shamsābād* trans. Qamar al-Dīn K̲h̲ān (Agra, 1852); Chiranjī La'l, *Qiṣṣa-i Ṣādiq K̲h̲ān,* trans. Qamar al-Dīn K̲h̲ān (Agra, 1852)
[88] *SRGNWP*, p.390. This appears to be the same Chiranjī La'l who assisted S. W. Fallon in his dictionary project, and forms the subject of an excellent discussion in: Hakala, *Negotiating Languages,* pp.155-88
[89] *SRGNWP*, p.253, 407. Of the former, 205 of the 250 copies printed, and 100 out of the 150 printed of the latter, had been sold by the time the annual press reports were compiled.
[90] *SRGNWP*, p.284
[91] Ibid.

was also admired universally amongst the Indo-Persian literati. *Nal wa Daman,* his translation of the Sanskrit story of Nālā and Damāyanti, was integral to the Persian curricula followed by scholar-administrators throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As Alam and Subrahmanyam discuss, Faiẓī's work had its roots in a tradition of Persian interaction with other Indian vernaculars, and in turn inspired further renditions and reworkings in different languages, which emphasized and expressed different identities over time.[92] It is therefore more illuminating to look closely at the ways in which Persian works with an ostensibly (perhaps retrospectively) 'Hindu' character were printed and presented in the mid-nineteenth century.[93]

The *Srī Bhagatmāl* ('Garland of Devotees', 1853), for instance, was a collection of biographies of Vaishnava saints, which had originally been compiled by Nābhādās in Braj Bhasha, or Bhakha, in the late-sixteenth or early-seventeenth century, most likely in Raiwasa in Rajasthan.[94] The version published in 1853 at Meerut was a Persian rendition of this which had been undertaken in 1829 by Munshī Gumānī La'l Rāmpurī (fl.1820s-1830s), although it seems that it took some years to complete.[95] Gumānī La'l also authored another work after *Srī Bhagatmāl*. This was the *Riyāz-i Dil-rubā* ('Garden of Lovers'), a work which has received little attention but was briefly hailed the first novel in Urdu.[96]

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[92] Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World,* pp.204-48

[93] Not all such works yield information about readers and communities. For instance, the *Kāshī-nāma* ('Book of Benaras', 1854) dealt with Hindu beliefs and deities directly. However, its publication was ordered by Frederick Hall, a professor at the Benaras College, so the printing does not indicate the presence of any particular market, but the ethnographic interest of a colonial observer. The hand-painted illustrations suggest that it was not mass-produced in the strict sense, and only a few copies – if not just one - may have been made. Munshī Shītal Singh, *Kāshī-nāma* (Benaras, 1854).

[94] J. P. Hare, 'Garland of Devotees: Nābhādās' *Bhaktamāl* and Modern Hinduism' (Phd thesis, University of Columbia, 2011), pp.26-35; Gumānī La'l treats the *Bhagatmāl* as a work of single authorship as he takes Narāyan Dās and Nābhādās to be the same person ('Narāyan Dās urf Nābhājī', but Hare suggests two authors. Hare also refers to the language of Nābhādās as pre-modern Hindi, but I follow Gumānī La'l's reference to it as Braj. Gumānī La'l, *Bhagatmāl,* p.31

[95] *Kẖātima* of *Srī Bhagatmāl.* The first known print edition of this work in Hindi appeared over a decade later, in 1866, but manuscript versions were fairly common prior to this. Hare, 'Garland of Devotees', p.175.

[96] Ibn-e Kanval, 'Muqaddama', in Gumānī La'l, *Riyāz-i Dil-rubā,* ed. Ibn-e Kanval (Panchkula, 1990), p.5

Although he worked as an accountant, Gumānī La'l moved between at least three languages with ease, and seems to have been acquainted with the Delhi literati, including the poet of Persian and favourite pupil of the poet Ġẖālib, Hargopāl Tafta.[97]

Gumānī La'l did not translate the whole of the Braj text, but selected 107 *bhakt*s (devotees) from it.[98] While authors, editors and publishers did not always have matching agendas, in the case of the *Bhagatmāl*, it seems that the editors (who were also the publishers), made a concerted effort to facilitate the use of the book as Gumānī La'l had indicated in his own preface and conclusion to the work. Moreover, Gumānī La'l was still alive at the time of publication, working as an accountant or record-keeper in Rohtak, and in fact composed the index to the volume in 1850.[99] In this instance, then, there were considerable overlaps between Gumānī La'l and his editors' project, and the index may have been authored expressly for the publication itself. For this reason, the following account of the work takes into account Gumānī La'l's motives as much as those of the editors, as they colluded to produce the print version of the Persian *Bhagatmāl*.

More importantly, however, Gumānī La'l's work indicates the presence of a significant readership as well as an oral audience for the *Bhagatmāl*, a non-Islamic devotional text to be imbibed in Persian. 150 copies of the book were published from Meerut, of which 100 were sold in the first few months of publication.[100] These were very respectable figures; even the wealthy and prolific Muṣṭafáī press averaged about 800 copies of any single work in Persian, and numbers were usually much lower.[101] It is likely that these audiences were limited to Persianised castes (Kāyastha and Ḳẖatrī) for the most

[97] Ibn-e Kanval, 'Muqaddama', p.17
[98] For an extensive analysis of Nābhādās' *Bhagatmāl* and the devotees mentioned: Hare, 'Garland of Devotees'
[99] 'Ganesh-numā', in Gumānī La'l, *Srī Bhagatmāl,* p.2
[100] *SRGNWP*, p.407
[101] Printing press returns for 1853: *SRGNWP,* pp.387-410

part), but there is no reason to assume that the book was not of interest to some Muslim readers as well. Unfortunately, since there is no specific information available on buyers of the work, it is difficult to reach any conclusion about this question. What is clear, however, is that Gumānī La'l's Persian work indicates the presence of a significant readership as well as oral audience for a non-Islamic devotional text in Persian. Specific identities and affiliations were asserted in the consumption and production of Persian literary works, and help to explain why, at a time when vernacular languages underwent intensified expansion in scholarly and literary contexts, translation activity happened in multiple directions. Although Hindi renditions of the *Bhagatmāl* were available, Gumānī La'l's choice to translate 'up' into Persian disturbs the binary between Eurocentric formulations of the function and nature of classical and elite languages, and serves as a reminder that Persian's presence in nineteenth-century was no simplistic continuity.

Authored for an audience which did not possess expertise (*mahārat*) in Bhakha or Sanskrit, Gumānī La'l's rendition of the *Bhagatmāl* drew on the Indo-Persian *taẕkira* tradition explicitly. Following the *taẕkira* format, entries devoted to each saint began with the phrase '*ẕikr-i*' (lit. 'mention/remembrance of') and were arranged alphabetically to form a complete 'bouquet' (*guldasta*) of biographies.[102] This meant that the original order in which the biographies occurred in the Braj text was changed to follow the Persian alphabet, and that readers were able to easily locate particular *bhakt*s (devotees) that they were interested in. A lexicon (*farhang*) by Gumānī La'l was appended to the *Bhagatmāl*. Based on well-known dictionaries including the *Muntaḵẖab al-Luġẖāt* and the *Muntaḵẖab al-nafā'is*, the lexicon was offered to 'seekers of knowledge', dealing with difficult words and 'abstruse matters' of the language of the *Bhagatmāl*.[103] However, these definitions

[102] Gumānī La'l, *Srī Bhagatmāl*, p.460
[103] Gumānī La'l, 'Farhang-i Pothi Srī Bhagatmāl', *Srī Bhagatmāl*, Appendix

referred not to the original Braj of Nābhādās, but to the Persian vocabulary used by Gumānī La'l in his translation, elucidating terms or usages which might be unfamiliar to readers.

The text was also closely annotated with numbered margin notes, presumably added by the editors, Pandit Isrī Sahā'ī and Munshī Chaman La'l. The majority of these notes were redacted versions of the definitions provided in Gumānī La'l's *farhang*, or else corrected words which had been wrongly transcribed in the main body of the printed book. More detailed explanations were provided in the *farhang*. For example, in the margin notes of the *Bhagatmāl*, '*tasnīm*' was described as a 'fountain in paradise'. The *farhang*, however, elucidated that the fountain was located in the most elevated part of heaven (thus signifying closeness to the deity).[104] The margin notes and *farhang* operated rather like a simplified commentary. Although the main body of the text translated from Nābhādās occasionally deployed Hindi words such as '*āgyān*', the definition provided ('not knowing'/ignorance) was given in Persian. Such instances were exceptions, and the majority of the terms explained in the margins were Persian. As a whole, then, the context of the work provided by annotations was that of linguistic and lexical features of the Persian text, and grounded the *Bhagatmāl* within the tropes and metaphors deployed by Persian writers. This may have also been provided in order to aid readers to understand the meaning of specific Persian words, without an *ustād* to guide them. In so doing, it relocated the *Bhagatmāl* within an Indo-Islamic geography, as the reference to the paradisiacal fountain indicates.

As an appendix, the *farhang* was not possible to view simultaneously with the main body of material, suggesting that it was meant to be consulted by beginners or those with a more scholarly interest in the work, whether they read alone or with other students

[104] Gumānī La'l, 'Farhang', p.13

or teachers. In his conclusion, Gumānī La'l stressed the benefits of both reading and listening to this work, indicating its function as a text to be read and expatiated upon in public.[105] This explains the editors' choice of repeating much of the material in the *farhang* in the margin notes alongside the text, as it allowed readers to comprehend the text, and expatiate on the meanings with the aid of the notes, while reading it aloud to others. That this choice was made by the editors, who were also the publishers, suggest that the oral function of such texts was as, if not more, important as its printed form. The implications of this are particularly significant: it means that Persian may have been more widely understood than hitherto imagined, as it was offered to listeners who may not have been able to read the work, but were able to comprehend it in its spoken form. A comment by Gumānī La'l underlined this possibility: he wrote that he had translated the work into 'common' Persian (*fārsī-ye 'ām*).[106]

In the preface and conclusion to the work, Gumānī La'l's vocabulary coincided with the registers employed in Sufi texts.[107] Nābhādās and his commentator, Priyādās, were described as *'ārifān* (sagacious), while the knowledge contained in the text was termed *mā'rifat* (divine wisdom or skill) and *taṣawwuf* (mystical knowledge).[108] Similarly, Gumānī La'l compared the *Bhagatmāl* to the 'bounteous fountain' of paradise, *tasnīm*, as he wrote that 'each drop' of the book removed the 'dust' of disobedience and fatigue.[109] According to Sufi traditions, access to this paradisiacal fountain signified nearness to the divine presence, and was reserved only for those who had devoted themselves to God.[110]

[105] Gumānī La'l, *Srī Bhagatmāl,* pp.465-8
[106] Gumānī La'l, *Srī Bhagatmāl* p.6
[107] This is not a new phenomenon. E.g. M. Alam, 'World Enough and Time: Religious Strategy and Historical Imagination in an Indian Sufi Tale', in F. Orsini and K. B. Schofield (eds), *Tellings and Texts: Music, Literature and Performance in North India* (Cambridge, 2015), pp.107-36
[108] Gumānī La'l, *Srī Bhagatmāl,* p.6, 460
[109] Gumānī La'l, *Srī Bhagatmāl,* p.6
[110] M. Lings, *A Sufi saint of the twentieth century : Shaik Aḥmad al-ʿAlawī: his spiritual heritage and legacy* (Berkeley, 1971), pp.38-9

Situated thus within an Islamicate cultural landscape, Gumānī La'l's *Bhagatmāl* educated readers not only about Bhaktī saints and associated deities, but also about Persian literary practices and Sufi theology. This easy overlap between Bhaktī and Sufi registers in the context of Persian did not mean, however, that the *Bhagatmāl*'s specific Vaishnava roots were downplayed. In the main body of the translation, Gumānī La'l often chose to employ the Sanskritic word '*gyān*' to indicate the skill or learning of particular saints, rather than *mā'rifat.*[111] The Arabic invocation, 'In the name of Allāh…', which opened most Persian texts, was omitted, and in its place, Braj verses in the Devanagari script invoked Hindu deities. James Hare has noted that in Nābhādās' Braj work, a series of complex images was used to allude to Ganesh in the opening lines of the text.[112] While these may have been lost in the Persian translation, an image of Ganesh, presiding over the first page of Gumānī La'l's work in print, visually transmitted what may not have been possible to convey in writing.[113]

These features, along with the fact that the work was meant to be heard as well as read, complicate any notion that the work was merely a way of improving Persian linguistic skills, or even that this was a text only of ethnographic or historical interest, and highlight its devotional character. This performative and devotional function of the text was further emphasized by the unexpected inclusion of another feature. Following the *farhang* and the publishers' epilogue, were two pages in '*hindī*' verse (in the Perso-Arabic script), with the heading, 'Srī Ganesha-numā'.[114] This was also authored by Gumānī La'l, and included the names of the Bhaktī devotees of the *mālā,* each numbered. It was clearly meant to be sung, with each line ending with the words '*har ko sumar, har ko sumar*' ('remember each one,

[111] Gumānī La'l, *Srī Bhagatmāl,* p.14
[112] Hare, 'Garland of Devotees', p.49
[113] See image overleaf.
[114] I use the word Hindi because that is how Gumānī La'l refers to the language employed in the 'Ganesh-numā'.

remember each one').[115] The function of the *Bhagatmāl* as a work of commemoration and devotional performance even in its Persian form was thus stressed. As a reward for devotion through perusal or recitation of the book, the reader was promised an enhanced *rītī* (lit. 'way', in this context signifying auspiciousness) in his or her life.[116]

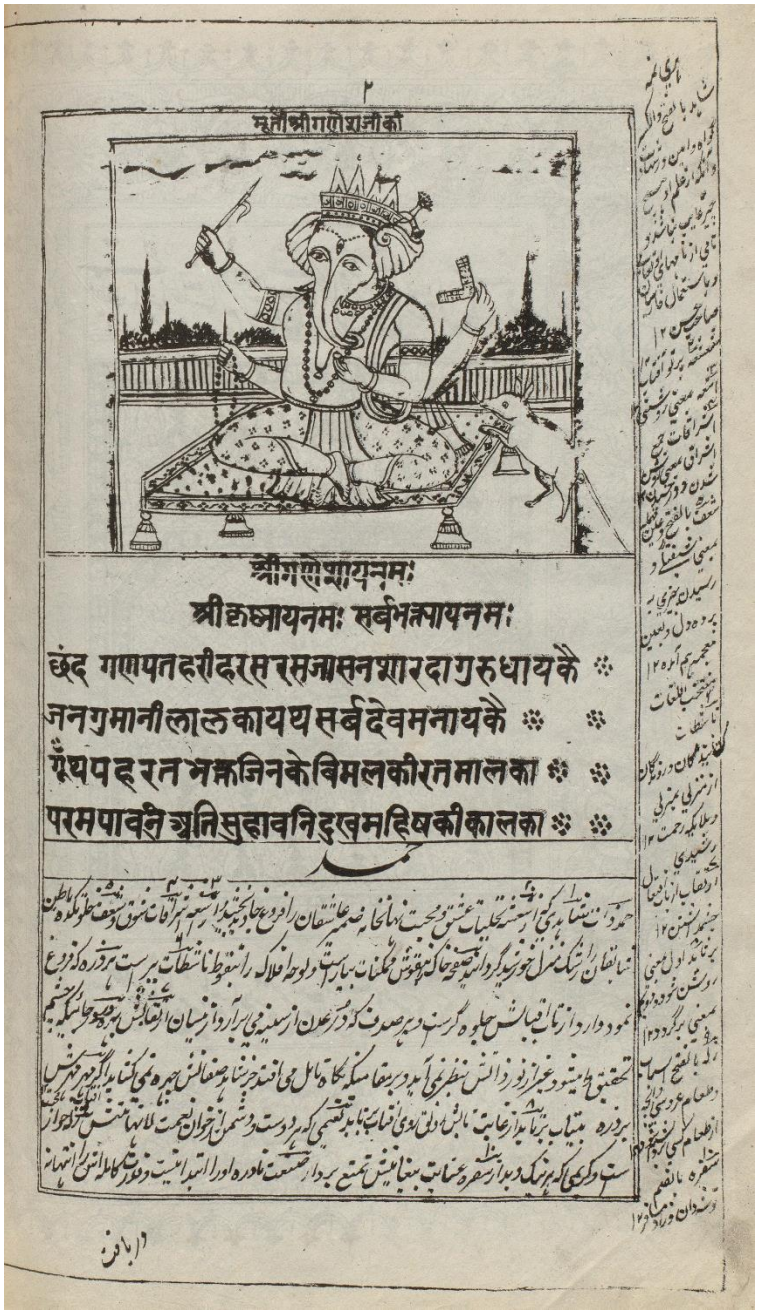


Fig. 5.3. First page of *Srī Bhagatmāl,* showing Ganesh. © British Library Board VT2171

[115] Gumānī La'l, Ganesh-numā, *Srī Bhagatmāl,* pp.1-2
[116] Gumānī La'l, Ganesh-numā, *Srī Bhagatmāl,* p.2

The Srī Ganesh-numā had by this time become part of the ritual through which Kāyastha students began their Persian education, and replaced or was recited alongside the Arabic 'Bismillāh'.[117] Along with other features of the *Bhagatmāl* – such as the lexicon – the inclusion of the Ganesh-numā suggests the function of this work as a Persian textbook. While stressing the importance of the *bhakt*s it described, it also educated readers in the language of *taṣawwuf,* or Sufi mysticism. In the context of language movements in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries, Hayden Bellenoit has suggested that the Kāyastha presence 'complicated' campaigns which championed a more 'pure form of Hindi', as they were themselves completely immersed in Persianate culture.[118] Gumānī La'l's work, and its subsequent publication by Isrī Sahā'ī and Chaman La'l, underscores the extent to which Kāyastha scholars and audiences continued to be invested in Persianate culture, even after the removal of Persian as the language of administration in 1835. If colonial policies had resulted in a new form of self-conscious awareness of communal identities, then the publication of the *Srī Bhagatmāl* in 1853 represented an attempt to preserve the cosmopolitan identity of Persian by a service group with vested interests in their access to the language. This does not mean that we should read this instance of translation as a case of easy syncretism, but rather as the assertion of a highly specific identity, which simultaneously equated the vocabularies of Sufism and Bhaktī, even as it identified them as belonging to distinct linguistic spaces. In this sense, the *Bhagatmāl* can be viewed as an attempt to produce a text which young readers and beginners could use to learn Persian while also creating an awareness of a broader Hindu community that was

[117] Reid, *Report on Indigenous Education,* p.51

[118] Bellenoit, 'Paper, Pens and Power', pp.348–72. For later nineteenth and early-twentieth changes in Kāyastha communities, see the recent work: H. J. Bellenoit, *The formation of the colonial state in India: scribes, paper and taxes, 1760-1860* (Abingdon, 2017); K. I. Leonard, *Social history of an Indian caste: the Kayasths of Hyderabad* (Berkeley, 1978)

being delineated increasingly sharply.[119] The breadth of texts produced by the Persian lithographic industry, as well as the continuing interplay between Persian and other Indian vernacular languages evidenced in such texts, underscores the dynamism and relevance of Persian to nineteenth-century individual and group identities in a time of social change.

4. Circulation: Addressing Multiple Readers

Given the overlaps between manuscript culture and lithography, as well as the ways in which printed texts may have departed from previous norms, it is worth considering the extent to which these mixed circumstances influenced the circulation of lithographed materials and how readers were imagined by book producers. Did the conditions of mechanical reproduction determine new patterns of textual circulation, or did lithographed works travel along the same routes as manuscripts? Moreover, how useful is it to think about reading publics in this context?

One of the most important difference between manuscripts and lithographic books was the relationship between readers and manufacturers, and the way in which the market was conceived of by book producers. As already noted, manuscripts entered the market through single acts of copying. In contrast, editors and proprietors of printing presses had to gauge mass markets and produce books for general sale, as well as cater to particular patrons. Certainly publishers wished to sell as many books as possible, and some, such as Muḥammad Ḥusain, confined themselves to printing only a few titles in large numbers which were assured of a market. In 1852, for instance, this press only printed eight titles, of which four were in Persian. However, over a 1000 copies of three of these works were printed, the highest being 1450 copies of Sa'di's *Bostān*.[120] In this case, the pressures of

[119] Hare speaks of the seventeenth-century Braj work as fulfilling such a role also, as it connected devotees across time and space: Hare, 'Garland of Devotees', pp.252-3
[120] *SRGNWP*, pp.300-301

finding buyers inevitably contributed to a relatively limited band of material being printed. In the same year, Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān took a different approach as he attempted to gain a wider market, publishing 22 titles with an average output of 550 copies of each.[121] In the case of less popular or established works, however, lithographic presses could not hope to replace manuscript production and circulation, and instead existed alongside it.

The ways in which different texts were circulated could vary considerably. Newspapers are an important case in point, as they departed considerably from the patterns of circulation of books and pamphlets. For one, newspapers were often exchanged between friends, so that a single copy could be read by several individuals.[122] In addition, the contents of newspapers were also discussed in private letters and meetings, ensuring that the Persian press reached a far larger audience than its buyers. While newspapers played a role in linking members of the Indo-Persian world, they were not the main source of profit for most publishing houses. Instead, publishers supported themselves from the production and sale of books, which appeared to find many more buyers and appealed to a wider spectrum of readers. To give one example, the newspaper issued by the Delhi Urdū Aḵh̲bār Press had only eighty subscribers in 1849. However, in the same year, the press printed nine books, and sold a total of 1842 copies of different works.[123] Of these nine books, four were in Persian, four in Urdu, while the last was a bilingual Arabic and Persian medical dictionary. The prices of the Persian books varied according to the number of pages they contained, and were comparable with works in Urdu. They were, however, significantly cheaper than newspapers. For instance, the cost of a month's worth of the *Delhi Urdū Aḵh̲bār* (four issues, each lithographed on a single sheet) was two rupees, while the Persian paper, *Zubdat al-Aḵh̲bār* cost one rupee. The *Inshā-i K̲h̲alīfā*, however, a sixty-two-page

[121] Ibid.
[122] E.g. Ġh̲ālib, *Kullīyāt-i Maktūbāt,* p.349
[123] *SRGNWP*, p.253

work on etiquette and correct modes of address, was sold for only four annas.[124] This difference in pricing indicates that publishers understood and responded to the ways in which different material was circulated.

It also suggests that newspapers were bought by wealthier elite, while books were aimed at a wider audience. The nature of Persian newspapers can account for this difference in readership: the information carried in many Delhi newspapers, such as the *Sirāj al-Aḵẖbār* and the *Jām-i Jahān-numā,* focused on the movements and actions of rulers and high politics. In a letter to Mirzā Aḥmad Beg "Tapan", for instance, Ġẖālib requested a copy of the Persian *Jām-i Jahān-numā* for information about the British Resident at Delhi and his movements.[125] Whether this information was of interest because Ġẖālib was hoping for some form of patronage, or whether it was for other political reasons, is unclear; however, it is evident that newspapers were sought by non-subscribers to ascertain specific information.[126] In reference to the newspaper produced at the palace in Delhi, a governmental report commented, the *Sirāj al-Aḵẖbār* has 'little in it, beyond the local news of the palace and of the king in particular; when he sleeps, eats, drinks, goes out, comes in, and the like.'[127] These seemingly private aspects of the king's life were an important form of political communication. As Pernau has commented, discussions of political or public affairs were not marked by their accessibility but by their confinement to elite private spheres.[128] While such particulars of the king's daily life played an important role in connecting the private domain of court politics with the outside world,

[124] Ibid.
[125] Ġẖālib, *Kullīyāt-i Maktūbāt,* p.349
[126] Ibid.
[127] *SRGNWP,* 241
[128] Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle Class,* pp.26-7. See also: R. Lal, *Domesticity and power in the early Mughal world* (New York, 2005)

these papers appealed mainly to well-placed individuals seeking patronage such as Ġẖālib, and nobles with vested interests in the affairs of the court.

Conversely, other printed material in Persian, such as books and pamphlets, were accessible to a larger section of the literate population. While many of them catered to the needs of colonial schools and colleges, the works published extended far beyond the prescribed curricula. Supplementary learning aids such as commentaries, dictionaries and grammars, as well as minutely annotated editions of set texts found a substantial market. It is not always possible to neatly categorize the works which issued from presses, as many books catered to different readerships and subscribed to a range of genres and functions simultaneously. As with newspapers, the dissemination and circulation of books varied considerably, depending on the circumstances of their production.

Books were often printed for particular patrons, who bought some or all of the copies issued from the press, and were responsible for their distribution. For example, over a thousand copies of *Maṣnawī-i Bu ʻAlī Qalandar* (Agra, 1851) were printed at the Asad al-Aḵẖbār press for an unnamed person who distributed them, and the proprietor had no information on how many of these were sold to readers.[129] In 1849, at the Maṭba‘ al-‘Ulūm in Delhi (loosely connected with Delhi College, but owned by the staff), a work on Persian philology, authored by a teacher at the college, was published and distributed free of charge.[130] Since only fifty copies were issued, and no profits were made, it would be logical to assume that these were dispersed amongst friends and patrons, and thus, like manuscripts, relied on personal networks for circulation. The publication of the *Kāshī-nāma* (Book of Benaras, 1854), a work which dealt with Hindu beliefs and deities, complicates the meaning of ‘mass-production’ even further. Produced at the request of

[129] *SRGNWP*, p.281
[130] *SRGNWP*, p.255

Frederick Hall (fl.1830s-50s), a professor at the Benaras College, the hand-painted illustrations demonstrate a combination of the techniques of mass-production and artisanship, as the illustrations had to be painted individually in each copy. This suggests that only a few copies – if not just one - may have been made.[131] Similar information is to be gleaned from Ġẖālib's letter to his protégé, Munshī Jawāhir Singh "Johar". Awaiting the publication of his Persian *dīwān* from Munshī Nūr al-Dīn Aḥmad's Dār al-Salām press at Delhi, Ġẖālib told Johar that the latter should present the printed *dīwān* to Saiyid Rajab 'Alī Ḵẖān on his behalf.[132] In such cases, lithographed books travelled like accelerated manuscripts, filtering through friends, patrons and students to reach far-flung, but connected, readers. In such instances, the circulation of lithographed works in Persian overlapped considerably with rules which governed manuscript dissemination and exchange. At the same time, editors and proprietors of printing presses also attempted to gauge the market and produce books for general sale, and books printed to order for particular individuals usually constituted only a small portion of the total output of the press.[133]

The speed at which texts could be disseminated across distances was dramatically increased by the mass-production of lithographic books. Governmental reports show that in 1849, between eight and ten thousand books in Persian issued from the presses in the North Western Provinces alone. This excluded newspapers as well as publications from the prolific presses in Lucknow.[134] After the Lucknow presses were exiled to Kanpur, the figures for the North Western Provinces increased further: between fifteen and eighteen thousand Persian books were published in 1851.[135] Sharar recounted how his great-uncle,

[131] Shital Singh, *Kāshī-nāma*
[132] Ġẖālib, *Kulliyāt-i Maktūbāt*. pp.309-311.
[133] *SRGNWP*, pp.237-306, 387-410
[134] *SRGNWP*, pp.247-61
[135] *SRGNWP*, pp.274-91

Maulawī Aḥmad, journeyed from Lucknow to Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan) as an agent of Ḥājī Ḥarmain Sharīfain. Taking bullock carts loaded with 'thousands of books', Maulawī Aḥmad travelled through many towns and villages, where he stopped to sell his goods. According to Sharar, his arrival was 'attended by great pomp and ceremony', as his coming had been apprehended beforehand, and he found a ready group of customers waiting at each destination.[136] Similarly, Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān was known to have 'numerous agents in all the principal towns' of the North-Western Provinces, who were responsible for the sale of his publications.[137]

It is evident that the mass production of books entailed some changes in circulation patterns, as publishers sought to expand their clientele. However, even in the case of printed books, since it is uncertain how many books were sold by any publisher in each town, it is possible that only a few copies were sold in each location and that manuscripts continued to be copied from printed works.[138] In this sense, lithographed texts could operate as originals from which manuscripts were produced, and thus fitted easily within manuscript markets. The fact that many newly-authored works continued to produce books with chronogrammatic titles, which yielded the year of their composition, supports this view. The presence of chronograms suggests that authors may have expected lithographed works to be further circulated through manuscript copying from an original print edition, particularly in places where presses or their agents were not present. Alternatively, if the year of publication differed from the date of composition, the *qiṭ'a'-i ta'rīk̲h̲* offered an alternative mode of identifying the history of the text's transmission, integral both to lithograph and manuscript culture. Thus, the print industry did not simply compete with manuscript culture and the earlier scribal roles, but interacted with it: rather

[136] Sharar, *Last Phase of an Oriental Culture,* p.107
[137] *SRGNWP,* p.390
[138] Majeed, 'Modernity's Script', p.103

than a linear transition from manuscript to print, as is often imagined, works could follow a more convoluted trajectory and return to manuscript forms.

Majeed has remarked that early Indian printing did not obey the 'imperatives of print capitalism': while this is largely true, it appears that the Niẓāmī and Muṣṭafáī presses certainly attempted to build their business around the principles of a free market, investing in relatively large print-runs and producing fairly regular numbers of titles each year.[139] However, these presses were limited in their endeavours to dominate the market since lithograph presses borrowed quite freely from each other. Copied material included content from newspapers as well as edited and annotated books and poetry. Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān and his brother were the only individuals who attempted to curb such copying activity during this early phase of printing. Although a copyright law was introduced in 1847, in reality it made registering publications very difficult, since press-owners or their agents from any province were required to appear in person in Calcutta in order to enter each book into the government registry. Clearly, copying must have been widespread for the Ḵẖān brothers to go to such lengths, and they petitioned the colonial government to make the process more convenient.[140] After the law was relaxed, the brothers obtained a formal license for their press in 1853 and registered all the works they published, and inserted a warning against duplication at the end of each book.[141] However, according to government reports, no other press owners followed suit.[142] As in the case of manuscript copying, lithographed books provided the basis for further lithographic reproduction.

Thus, circulation patterns, as well as the manner in which patrons, clients and publishers influenced what was to be printed suggest that lithographic practices in Persian

[139] Majeed, 'Modernity's Script', p.103
[140] *SRGNWP*, p.390
[141] *SRGNWP*, p.390
[142] *SRGNWP*, p.391

overlapped considerably with rules which governed manuscript production and exchange. The question thus arises, to what extent did the readers addressed by printers and editors constitute an 'anonymous' public, in the sense that they represented a depersonalised set of 'imagined' consumers? If manuscript production had meant that books travelled from hand to hand through essentially connected readers, and thus address a private world, did the dispersion of books via print reconfigure or eliminate this connectedness? A lack of sources about readers experiences from this period means that it is difficult to reconstruct the ways in which texts were received, read and valued by them. Thus, the following section briefly investigates how Persian readerships were imagined and addressed by publisher, authors and editors. One shortcoming of this approach is that the picture of reading which emerges is, of course, an idealized one, which reflected publishers' and authors' expectations rather than the responses of individual readers. Another is, as Ulrike Stark has cautioned, that the sale of Persian books did not mean that they were always necessarily read; some books may have possessed value as status markers in themselves.[143] However, thinking about the ways in which readers were imagined is invaluable to an appreciation of the ethos which underpinned literary production and consumption. Even the symbolic roles of texts and readers which are revealed are integral to understanding the shifting relationships which ensured the resilience of Persianate culture in India.

Reaching Multiple Audiences

As the previous chapter noted, new groups gained access to Persian learning at colonial institutions. Since many publishers catered to the needs of colonial educational institutions, it is safe to assume that their works reached these newcomers also. The proliferation of Urdu-Persian dictionaries during this period also supports the possibility

[143] Stark, *Empire of Books,* p.13

of new readers accessing Persian. In addition to Ḵẖusrau's *Ḵẖāliq Bārī,* a number of Persian-Urdu lexicons, often in verse (to aid pronunciation) were printed.[144] Similarly, a number of basic texts for learners of Persian, such as the *Pand-nāma* of 'Aṭṭār and Sa'dī's *Gulistān*, were printed with interlinear Urdu translations.[145] At the same time, it appears that the type of material read and published in Persian was also gradually narrowing: the colonial state's education policies meant that many 'modern' subjects taught in schools and colleges, such as geography, history and science, were increasingly being accessed in vernacular languages. As a result, the literary character of Persian was reified even as new social groups accessed works in that language.[146]

However, new readers were not simply provided with access to literary works studied in colonial schools and colleges. Works such as Munshī Brij Mohan La'l's *Siḥr-i Maḥfil* (lit. 'The Magic of Assemblies', 1854) served as aides to refined conduct in polite gatherings. Despite being aimed at upwardly-mobile readers, *Siḥr-i Maḥfil* formally addressed only two categories of readers: it claimed to have been published for the 'benefit of students and the amusement of the learned'.[147] The chronogrammatic verses to this edition were authored by the publisher himself, Ḥakīm Jawāhir La'l of the Maṣdar al-Nawādir Press at Agra, a graduate of Agra College who was partially patronized by the colonial government. While he briefly alluded to the book's function in 'making a difficult task easy', Jawāhir La'l emphasized the pleasure to be derived from the wit and delicacy of the tasteful extracts rather than their educational merits.[148] In other words, it was expected that readers would share in this delight. Indeed, in its appeal to both learners and

[144] For example: Muḥammad Sa'īd, *Lugẖāt-i Sa'īd* (Lucknow, 1848)
[145] Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār, *Pand-nāma* (Delhi, 1854)
[146] Even the Persian newspaper, *Zubdat-al Aḵẖbār,* it seems, was not read so much for the news it carried, but for the literary style of its owner and editor, Wājid 'Alī Ḵẖān. See: *SRGNWP,* p.295
[147] Brij Mohan La'l, *Siḥr-i Maḥfil* (Agra, 1854), front-matter
[148] Brij Mohan La'l, *Siḥr-I Maḥfil,* p.364

the learned, the publication attempted to bridge the gap between social groups without presuming any differences of taste or opinion.

Professing to educate readers in 'the knowledge of gatherings' ('*ilm-i majlis*), Brij Mohan La'l's book consisted mainly of excerpts from longer works. Beginning with a section on eight kinds of Persian verse, Brijmohan La'l compiled different types of prose and poetry, mainly in Urdu and Persian, and provided generous examples drawn from 'books of Persian and Hindi'.[149] A sample of Arabic poetry was also included, as well as a section of Rekhta verse, and couplets and *shlokā*s (hymns) in Persian and Sanskrit.[150] These were not arranged under particular authors, thematically: first by poetic form (*rubā'iyāt, maṣnawī,* etc.) and then by topic.[151] Beginning with verses 'in salutation and congratulation', subjects included 'to a friend, when you went to their house and waited [but] she/he did not come'. The work was also conspicuous for its lack of margin notes and annotations. These features suggest that the *Siḥr-i Maḥfil* was not intended to be read in depth, or offered as a study of particular poets' styles. Instead, the short poems and excerpts signalled that the book was to be read for pleasure, and parts memorized for use in refined conversation, as the title suggested, at assemblies and gatherings. Riddles and famous exchanges, which could be recounted for entertainment, were also included.[152] As the extensive attention given to compositions in Rekhta, as well as the occasional translation of a Sanskrit verse or phrase, suggests, such refinement was built on the appropriate usage and appreciation of Persian in multilingual contexts, which also insisted on knowledge of other languages and literatures. The work ended with a section on music, containing various *tarānā*s (melodies) and *rāg*s (airs). Together with the specimens of

[149] Brij Mohan La'l, *Siḥr-I Maḥfil*, Front-matter and p.1
[150] Brij Mohan La'l, *Siḥr-I Maḥfil*, pp.248-9
[151] Most compendiums of poetry were in the form of *taẕkira*s, which were arranged biographically under author headings.
[152] Brij Mohan La'l, *Siḥr-i Maḥfil,* p.175

prose and poetry in a range of languages, these equipped an individual with the means of recognizing different forms of speech and song that they might encounter in social gatherings and performances.

Many other printed works also made an effort to fulfil different functions and address multiple audiences simultaneously. Another example is the edition of Sa‘dī Shīrāzī’s *Gulistān,* published in 1848 at Ḥājī Muḥammad Ḥarmain Ḥusain’s Muḥammadī Press in Lucknow. On the one hand, this book was presented as the complete beginner’s guide to learning Persian, and indeed, had two short works, on the laws of orthography and dictation (*qawānīn-i imlā*), and basic Persian grammar, appended to it. On the other hand, it was also offered as an object of moral and aesthetic import: Sa‘dī ’s literary style, the ethical value of the stories, as well as the scribal and editorial skills of Hādī ‘Alī and his colleagues, were emphasized on the front cover and in the end-matter of the volume.[153] Four poets authored the multiple *qiṭ‘a-i ta’rīk̲h̲*s of the publication in order to signal their endorsement of the project.[154] Generous margins allowed for the incorporation of glosses by multiple scholars including Hādī ‘Alī, as well as material from the famous commentaries on the *Gulistān* by Muṣṭafá Surūrī (who flourished in the early sixteenth century) and Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Alī K̲h̲ān Ārzū.

[153] Sa‘dī Shīrāzī, *Gulistān,* ed. H.’Alī , (Lucknow, 1848)
[154] Sa‘dī Shīrāzī, *Gulistān,* pp.216-18

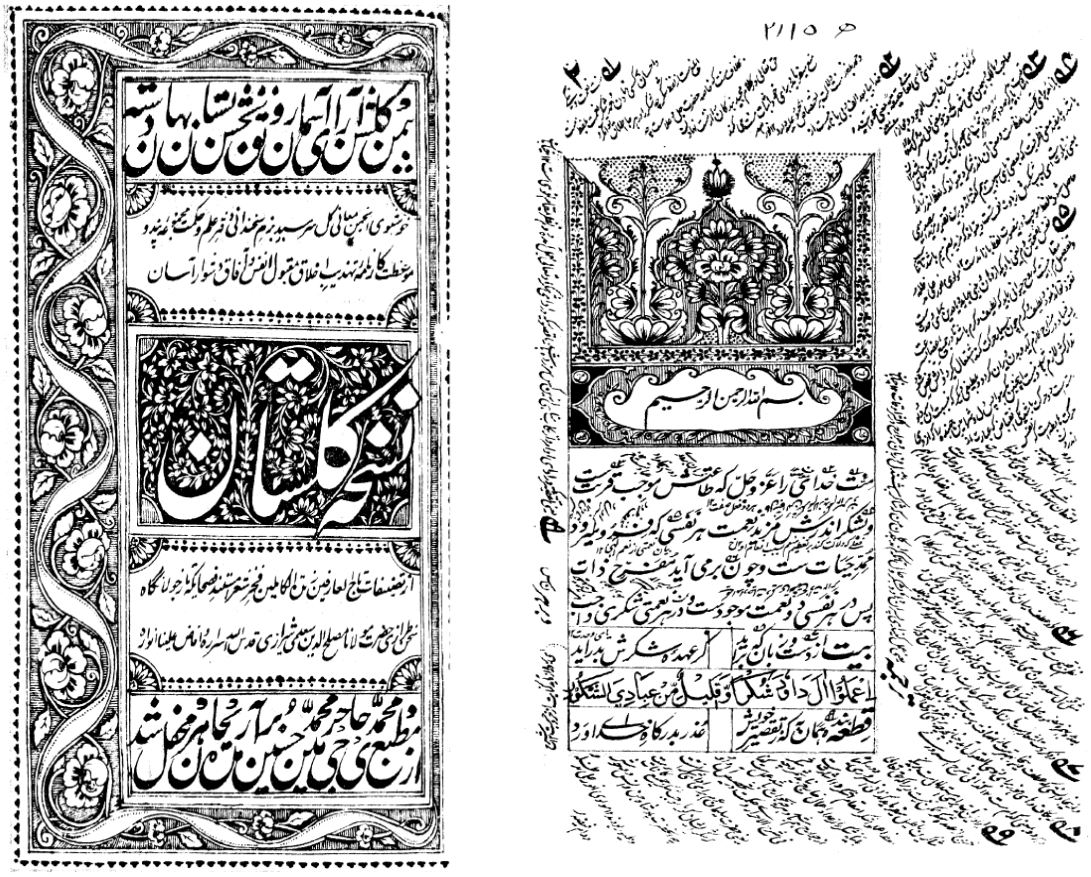


Fig. 5.4: Cover and first page of *Gulistān* [M. Sa'dī, *Gulistān,* ed. H. Alī, (Lucknow: Muḥammadī Press, 1848)]

This version of the *Gulistān*, therefore, was a special edition. It was not just for the casual student, but also for the connoisseur of fine books and the linguistic expert. Moreover, it is clear from the margin notes and the treatises on grammar and orthography that even while the book was suitable for beginners, the guidance of an *ustād* was assumed. This is because the entirety of the text was in Persian, even though the points of grammar which were explained were the absolute basics (writing and pronouncing letters, forming plurals, and so on). Without a teacher already conversant in Persian to help the student, the book was not suitable for the majority of Indians who did not grow up speaking the language. This suggests that, even in its capacity as a textbook, the work may have functioned as a teaching resource for *ustād*s and scholars, as well as a learning aid for their students.

The personal or private elements of textual production were also emphasized in this edition of the *Gulistān*. Hādī ʻAlī explained that he had only been persuaded to print this edition after repeated requests. The book had been published, then, for ostensibly private reasons. Despite the fact that wider readerships were anticipated (indicated by the statement that the work was a suitable guide for 'young and old' alike, as well as the appended work on orthography and grammar), the publication of the work was presented as an extension of its private origins.[155] Just as individual handwriting could be reproduced by lithography, so too was the personalized transmission of correct text and its explications preserved for the benefit of far more readers than a single teacher would have taught orally. In this sense, Hādī ʻAlī as editor also acted as an *ustād*, as he passed on his own authoritative knowledge to his readers, who were placed in the position of the *shāgird*. This sense of preserving the chain of epistemic authority is evident in Hādī ʻAlī's edition of Muḥammad Ḥasan Qatīl's *Chār Sharbat* ('Four Beverages', Lucknow, 1845).[156] In the conclusion to the work, Hādī ʻAlī was incorporated into a chain of transmission which linked back to Qatīl (d.1823) through his uncle, Qāẓī Ġẖulām.[157] In this instance, Qatīl was also praised at some length (although he still did not appear on the title page), since Hādī ʻAlī's own authority was amplified by his association with the author.[158] Although Muḥammad Ḥusain, the owner of the press, was praised for his efforts in publishing this work, the editor occupied centre-stage due to his relationships with both the publisher and the author of *Chār Sharbat*. Readers were positioned as all-important disciples as they received this authoritative version of Qatīl's text as relayed by Hādī ʻAlī.

[155] Ibid.
[156] I have used Stefano Pello's translation of the title. Pellò, 'A Linguistic Conversion', p.208
[157] M. H. Qatīl, *Chār Sharbat* (Lucknow, 1845)
[158] Qatīl, *Chār Sharbat*, p.85

The production of printed works in Persian was thus a collaborative enterprise, which did not offer a direct encounter between the author and the reader. Instead, the path between the printed book and its readers was populated by several individuals, most notably publishers, scribes and editors. These figures played active roles in embedding books in particular social networks. Although texts may have been increasingly accessed by independent readers without the aid of teachers or guides, publications situated books (and thus their readers) in wider anthropocentric socio-intellectual contexts. While many works contained authorial prefaces, these were (literally and figuratively) framed and contained between title pages, publishers' conclusions, margin notes and other forms of paratext that structured readers' experiences and produced culturally and socially situated books. As a result, readers were also (re)positioned to fit this schema, as they were drawn into complex relationships with texts and their mediators. In this sense, the presence of 'anonymous' reading publics was not clearly articulated, as it was assumed that readers shared the same tastes and values as book producers as they co-constructed and extended the Indo-Persian literary world in print.

5. Conclusion

Lithographic presses remained deeply embedded in the socio-intellectual and literary networks within which manuscript and oral texts also circulated. Persian lithography was manipulated by different groups such as Kāyastha professionals, merchants, Sufi devotees, poets, *ustād*s and authors to reassert their identities even as they reached out to new readers. In this sense, while lithographic printing did not mark a great caesura with previous modes of textual engagement and authoritative textual production in the Persianate episteme, it did need to negotiate changing readerships and modes of circulation. Although new readers were reached, and the technology of lithography successfully deployed in the service of Indo-Persian textual dissemination, this was not a

linear or universalizing process. As this chapter discussed, the poetic canon (and hence, literary styles) favoured by Indian readers and publishers consisted of texts from the seventeenth century onwards. In this sense, the lithographic industry responded to the demands of new and established Persianised classes, which extended far beyond the interests of expectations of the colonial state and its educational policies. On the one hand, catering to established *ashrāf* groups, lithographic books and their publishers displayed an awareness of the social relations which produced, and gave value to, different kinds of knowledge. By bringing these personal relations to the fore, publishers were able to ensure the success of print in a context in which the transmission of knowledge centred on scholarly and reliable individuals. Simultaneously, publishers also attempted to reach new readers who were geographically and socially distant from the context of literary production. However, these new readers did not come to constitute anonymous publics, but rather, were drawn into the hierarchies governing textual transmission in Persianised circles. By positioning readers in particular relationships with texts and their mediators, publishers initiated readers into conversations which were generally marked for their assumption of being limited to elite scholarly groups. Only later, with the rise of vernacular printing did this public sphere shift to more explicitly open, or unconnected, spaces. In the period under consideration, however, social mobility and the emergence of broader sets of readers did not express a break from the existing ethos. Even as publishers bridged the gap between personal transmission and mass reproduction of texts, they retained epistemic and social authority by ensuring that the 'general' remained rooted in the personal by making explicit literary relations and following norms of literary conduct (*adab*). This did not preclude the emergence of fresh literary styles or ideas, but provided at least the illusion of stability in a time of social mobility and change.

Epilogue: 'Bringing Spring to Ṣahbā'ī's Rose-Garden': Persian Printing in North India after 1857[1]

Introduction

In 1857, the Indian Rebellion swept across north India, and, a year later, the East India Company was replaced by Crown Rule, and the Mughal emperor in Delhi, Bahādur Shāh "Ẓafar" (1775-1862, r.1836-57), deposed by the colonial state. With the collapse of the last vestiges of Mughal power, the cultural and political scaffolding that had loosely determined relations between Indian powers also fell away. As Sanjay Joshi has shown, social and political life changed dramatically, and led to the appearance of a variety of middle-class reform movements as north Indians attempted to carve out new identities and relationships with their rulers.[2] In the context of literary history, Frances Pritchett, Anindita Ghosh, and others have produced excellent studies on the emergence of new aesthetic sensibilities and intellectual formations after 1857, particularly in the case of Urdu, Hindi and Bengali literary cultures.[3] No such study for Persian has been produced in the context of the emergence of 'modern' India, and it is often assumed it lost all importance with the termination of the Mughal dynasty with which it had come to be intimately associated. Serving as a reminder of the destruction of Mughal power, the history of Persian in India is seen only as a backdrop to the rise of Urdu and Hindi.[4]

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[1] This section has been published in slightly altered form: Z. Shah, 'Bringing Spring to Ṣahbā'ī's Rose Garden: Persian Lithographic Printing after 1857' in E. Boehmer, P. Mukhopadhyay, R. Kunstmann and A. Rogers (eds), *The Global Histories of Books* (Basingstoke, forthcoming in April 2017)

[2] Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*. For Muslim responses to 1857 and its aftermath: C. Bates (ed.), *Mutiny at the Margins* (Vol. v), *Muslim, Dalit and Subaltern Narratives* (New Delhii, 2014)

[3] Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness*; Ghosh, *Power in Print*; Orsini, *Print and Pleasure*; M. Pernau and H. Jordheim (eds.), *Civilizing Emotions: Concepts in Nineteenth Century Asia and Europe* (Oxford, 2015).

[4] Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*; S. Ahmed, 'Literary Romanticism and Islamic Modernity: The Case of Urdu Poetry', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 35:2 (2012), pp.434–55; R. Ahmed, 'Scripting a New

The focus on a single group of actors – in this case, the literati of Delhi and Lucknow – can be an analytical hindrance, since it obscures the changing value ascribed to Persian by other groups during the same period. The years after 1857 witnessed important shifts in the ways in which vernacular and cosmopolitan languages were positioned. Bolstered by state support in schools and colleges, vernacular languages as well as English became the main vehicles for the expression of agendas of reform, as well as new genres of popular writing. It is, however, misleading to assume that Persian just faded away. It continued to be taught in private and state-led institutions, and lithographic printing in the language flourished during the 1860s and peaked in the 1870s.[5] However, its function and significance underwent shifts, made possible by the multilingual environment in which it participated. Scientific knowledge, for instance, was mainly accessed in Urdu or English in Delhi. Urban middle classes involved in nationalist projects in these epicentres of colonial rule were keen to reject Persian, which many now saw as a symbol of Mughal or Nawabi decadence'.[6] Poetic production too, was thus heavily weighted towards Urdu. As a result, the majority of works published in Persian after 1857 were those which were taught formally in colonial institutions, consisting mainly of classical literary works geared towards the curriculum.

Elsewhere in India, however, others found Persian to be productive in the shaping of new identities and relations after 1857. Spoken across the Ottoman Empire, the Ḥijāz (Arabic-speaking lands) and Central Asia, Persian offered a medium of production that was what Orsini terms 'multi-local', in that it was rooted in the local, yet signified and contained the global, in

Identity: the battle for Devanagari in nineteenth-century India', *The Journal of Pragmatics,* 40/7 (2008), pp.1163-83

[5] O. P. Shcheglova, 'Lithography ii. In India', *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* online edition, 2009, available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/lithography-ii-in-india (accessed on 10 March 2017); Although many presses and businesses had suffered in the immediate aftermath of the Rebellion, the publishing industry made a quick comeback. *SRGNWP*, (Calcutta, 1858), pt. xxii, p.43

[6] Joshi, *Fractured Modernity,* p.8

addition to providing access to global ideas and connections.[7] This was not merely through the circulation of particular books, but due to the notion that book production in Persian was a globally significant act, mapping specific locations and individuals on to a wider geography. Rubbing shoulders with the vernaculars with which it shared space, Persian had the capacity to transform local sites into cosmopolitan spaces which reached beyond India and the boundaries of the colonial state. Choices to engage with Persian literary works were made by multilingual elites as individuals and groups asserted particular, yet cosmopolitan, identities for themselves as they displayed and honed their consciousness of the global through their deployment of Persian.

This chapter examines the publication of the works of Imām Baḵẖsh "Ṣahbā'ī", a scholar at Delhi College who was murdered by British soldiers during the Rebellion. Although Ṣahbā'ī was largely forgotten after his death, his works received fresh interest in 1878, when they were collected by his students and published at the Maṭba'-i Niẓāmī Press at Kanpur and the Lucknow-based Nawal Kishore Press.[8] Publishing the complete works of an author with interests as wide-ranging as Ṣahbā'ī's was an unusual (and expensive) decision. Unlike classical works and textbooks used in the colonial classroom, Ṣahbā'ī's writings did not serve any particular curricula, consisting of poetry, treatises, commentaries and letters. As a result, commercial or educational interests do not adequately explain the publication of his corpus. Instead, the case of Ṣahbā'ī suggests that the presence of Persian after 1857 can be explained by two distinct forces. The first of these was the resilience of *ustād–shāgird* relations. Far from being outmoded, the highly personalised relations of *shāgirdī*, along with patronage, played an important role in the choices made by printers and editors, and therefore underpinned the

[7] Orsini, 'How to Do Multilingual Literary History?'

[8] It is not certain whether the second volume of Ṣahbā'ī's *Kullīyāt* was issued from the Niẓāmī press; the only surviving edition was published at the Nawal Kishore Press: Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt-i Ṣahbā'ī* (Lucknow, 1880), ii.

reproduction of Persian texts. The institution of *ustād-shāgirdī,* rooted in person-to-person transmission of knowledge as it enshrined knowledge and authority in mobile individuals. The Persian printed book was thus made global through the itineracy of its producers and readers.

Second, the publication of Ṣahbā'ī's works provided an opportunity for members of the Persianate world to forge new relationships and identities. Uncovering these requires a geographical shift: located mainly in the princely states, Ṣahbā'ī's ex-students and their new patrons capitalised on the vocabulary of gentility, friendship and *shāgirdī,* offered by Persian writings, to assert their cosmopolitanism and build ties with the wider Islamic world.[9] Throughout, it becomes clear that traditional relationships of patronage and discipleship not only enabled print modernity, but also allowed access to global conversations.

Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī: Life, Works and Relationships

Born into a family of well-known poets and scholars, Imām Baḵẖsh "Ṣahbā'ī" (1802/3–57) was a familiar figure in pre-Mutiny Delhi. Tracing his paternal lineage back to the companion of the Prophet Muḥammad and caliph, 'Umar (579-644), and his maternal ancestry to the saint 'Abdul Qādir Jilānī (founder of the Qadriyya order of Sufis) 1078-1166), Ṣahbā'ī belonged to a respectable and well-born (sharīf) background. His brother, Pīr Baḵẖsh, had been connected with the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar Shāh II (r.1806-37) in Delhi, while the Rekhta poet "Rind" was his nephew.[10] Ṣahbā'ī himself was close to the royal family as tutor to some of the Mughal princes. Despite these influential contacts, Ṣahbā'ī's early career was a difficult one. He had trouble finding patrons and employment and taught the children of wealthy families in order to earn an income. Through this, he forged an early connection with the Delhi College, first as the tutor to the nephews of Nawab Ḥāmid 'Alī Ḵẖān, a patron of the

[9] Princely states were indirectly administered by the British colonial state in India, as they were ruled by Indian royalty and thus had a certain amount of autonomy.
[10] 'Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt-i Ṣahbā'ī,* ed. Dīn Dayāl (Kanpur, 1878), i, p.811

institution, and then, in 1841, as a Persian teacher at the College.[11] Ṣahbā'ī's reputation as a Persian poet and teacher was already widespread, and his 'great celebrity' drew many new students to the college.[12] Ṣahbā'ī remained at Delhi College until his untimely death in 1857, when he and his sons were shot by British forces on suspicion of being involved in the Rebellion.

Although little has been written on Ṣahbā'ī in English, his contributions to Urdu literature have ensured that his legacy has survived in that language.[13] But while his three Urdu works were commissioned by his Delhi College patron, Felix Boutros (Principal from 1841-5), Ṣahbā'ī's Persian scholarship began prior to his employment at the College and occupied him for his entire career. Ṣahbā'ī's first known works date to the 1830s, and his Urdu biographer, Ẕākir Ḥusain, claims that he began authoring books in Persian in 1828.[14] These included panegyrics for patrons, as well as textbooks and treatises on subjects ranging from philology and calligraphy to riddles.[15] Word-puzzles were Ṣahbā'ī's passion, and his expertise in this art earned him the sobriquet of *mu'ammāi* ('the riddler'). Ṣahbā'ī also wrote a number of commentaries on famous Persian works including Nūr al-Dīn Ẓahūri's *Panj-ruq'a* ('Five Letters') and *Sih Naṣr* ('Three Prose Pieces') and Ni'mat ''Alī Ḵẖān's *Ḥusn o 'Ishq* ('Beauty and Love'). Since it is unlikely that all of his works survived, a complete account of Ṣahbā'ī's writings is not available. Indeed, some works are only assumed to have existed because their prefaces and conclusions had been compiled in a separate volume.[16] Nonetheless, it is evident

[11] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the year 1839-1840*, p.xxiv. Ḥāmid 'Alī Ḵẖān was the son-in-law of Nawab I'timād al-Daula of Lucknow who had bequeathed a sum of money to the Delhi College. Ḥāmid Alī Ḵẖān was also a patron of the Shia community of Delhi. Koch, 'The Madrasa of Ghaziu'd-Din Ḵẖān at Delhi', p.21

[12] *Report of the GCPI of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, for the year 1839 –1840*. p.xxxi

[13] His Urdu works were: *Intiḵẖāb-i Dawāwīn* (Selections from *dīwān*s; 1842); *Qawā'id-i Ṣarf wa Naḥw-i Urdū* (Rules of Urdu Grammar; n.d.); *Tarjumah-i Hada'iq al-Balaḡẖat* (Translation of Shams al-Dīn Faqīr Dahlawī's eighteenth-century work on Persian prosody and rhetoric; 1842)

[14] Ḥusain, *Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī,* p.122

[15] For example, *Risāla-i Ḥarf-i Fārsī* ('Treatise on Persian Letters'): Ṣahbā'ī*, Kullīyāt* , i, p.101

[16] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, pp.53–219 (under the heading '*Bayāẓ-i Shauq Payām*')

that Ṣahbā'ī was a prolific prose writer who authored at least twenty-eight separate works, as well as a *ṣāḥib dīwān* (author of a collection of poems).[17] The range of his works establishes him as a scholar deeply immersed in the Indo-Persian intellectual tradition, and indicates the breadth and depth of his learning.[18]

Ṣahbā'ī's initial forays into print coincided with his years at the Delhi College and the expansion of the lithographic press. One of the earliest of his Persian works to be published was the *Sharḥ-i Sih Naṣr-i Ẓuhūrī* ('Commentary on the *Sih Naṣr* of *Ẓuhūrī*'), issued in 1844 from the Saiyid al-Akhbār Press in Calcutta. Not all of his works were sent to the press during his lifetime, and some were circulated only in manuscript. For instance, during Ṣahbā'ī's lifetime, his *Risāla dar Naḥw-i Fārsī* ('Treatise on Persian Grammar') was printed at Indore's Holkar Press in 1849. Few of his Persian books were published by the Delhi College's official press, the Maṭbaʿ al-ʿUlūm, which suggests that the priority of this press was to produce textbooks and translations in Urdu, even though it was run by private individuals rather than the colonial state.[19] Conversely, independent publishing houses such as the Saiyid al-Aḵẖbār and the Muṣṭafāī Press took more interest in Ṣahbā'ī's writings. Given the likelihood that some of Ṣahbā'ī's works did not survive the violence and destruction of 1857, it is, however, impossible to compile a comprehensive list of his writings, the first editions of which were printed during the 1840s and 1850s.

After Ṣahbā'ī's death, his students took up the project of publishing their teacher's surviving works. The teacher–pupil bonds forged during Ṣahbā'ī's lifetime were fundamental to the persistence of Ṣahbā'ī's Persian works after 1857, and need to be examined in greater

[17] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, pp.237–98
[18] Naim, 'Shaikh Imam Bakhsh Sahba'i', pp.145–87
[19] Some of these works, such as *Risāla Qaul Faiṣal* were distributed for free, indicating that they received patronage, and not seen as a viable source of profit by the College press. *SRGNWP*, (Agra, 1855), iii, pt.xil, p.255

detail in order to understand their significance. C. M. Naim describes Ṣahbā'ī as an 'extraordinary' teacher, who was remembered fondly by his students at the Delhi College, including the well-known mathematician and historian, Maulawī Ẕakā'ullāh (1832-1910).[20] However, many of Ṣahbā'ī's most important relationships with his students were forged outside the college, in alternative institutional contexts such as *ustād-shāgirdī* and *mushā'ara*s. Nawab Amīr Ḥasan K̲h̲ān "Bismil", for instance, was a resident of Calcutta who admired Ṣahbā'ī's work and took advantage of his advice through letters and the exchange of books. In addition, Ṣahbā'ī also taught his own sons, nephews and the sons of his friends. Indeed, it was due to his involvement in the education of his own sons that Ṣahbā'ī first began to write the commentaries which were later used as textbooks and published.[21] His eminence as a scholar of Persian (*fārsī-dān*) is signaled by the fact that he was tutor to some of the Mughal princes, including Mirzā Shāhruk̲h̲, Bahādur Shāh's son.[22] He also corrected the verses (in both Persian and Rekhta) of a number of budding poets who attended elite gatherings.[23]

From Ṣahbā'ī's letters, it is evident that even those students who had first encountered Ṣahbā'ī during their years at Delhi College enjoyed relationships with him that extended far beyond the classroom. Although colonial educational establishments certainly succeeded in catering to newly-literate groups, they also drew in members of older scribal classes. These students continued to forge relationships based on the *ustād–shāgird* model, at least when their mentor also belonged to the traditional literati. For example, one of Ṣahbā'ī's students, Dīn Dayāl, belonged to a Kāyastha family from Delhi, and his father, Har Dayal Singh, had also been a *munshī*.[24] Dīn Dayāl's relationship with Ṣahbā'ī followed the pattern of the traditional

[20] Naim, 'Shaikh Imam Bakhsh Sahba'i', p.152
[21] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, pp.114–17
[22] Ḥusain gives a list of 57 individuals who he believes were students of Ṣahbā'ī's at one point or another. Ḥusain, *Imām Bak̲h̲sh Ṣahbā'ī,* pp.50–70. Pernau notes that Sir Saiyid Aḥmad K̲h̲ān's work was also influenced by Ṣahbā'ī: Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle-Classes,* pp.160-1
[23] Ġ̲h̲ālib, *Kullīyāt-i Maktūbāt*, pp.295–6
[24] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, p.5.

apprenticeships that poets and members of the clerical class adopted, as he went on to obtain the position of Ṣahbā'ī's *talmīz-i rashīd* (the foremost of pupils).[25] Dharam Narāyan was another Kāyastha student who became Ṣahbā'ī's pupil while attending English classes at the Delhi College.[26] After graduating from the college, Dīn Dayāl went on to obtain a job in the Bhopal Agency. Dharam Narāyan found an occupation in Indore as a headmaster of the state-supported Indore School, where he taught English, and also edited the *Mālwā Akhbār* newspaper.[27] However, as Ṣahbā'ī's letters reveal, they remained in contact with their *ustād* in Delhi.

The institution of discipleship remained highly personalised during this period, valuing affection (*nawāzish*), loyalty (*iḵẖlāṣ*) and service (*ḵẖidmat*) to the *ustād,* as opposed to the increasingly distant, examination-based system practiced in colleges and schools. The intimacy between *ustād* and *shāgird* is evident in Ṣahbā'ī's letters to his students. Although they varied in content, Ṣahbā'ī almost always expressed his yearning to see his students again, as he wrote with emotion of the pain of separation (*judā'i*) and his desire for meeting or reunion (*wiṣāl*).[28] These letters were compiled by Ṣahbā'ī in a notebook (*bayāẓ*) of miscellaneous prose, and thus were intended to serve as models.[29] Apart from providing examples of correct language usage, these epistles educated readers about different kinds of relationships a scholar-poet should cultivate with friends, patrons, students and teachers. While there does not appear to be any record of the letters received by Ṣahbā'ī, his own letters to his *ustād*, 'Abdullāh Ḵẖān 'Alawī, give an indication of the relationship he would have expected. Some of these letters were written while Ṣahbā'ī was searching for a living in Mainpuri (in present-day Uttar

[25] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, p.149
[26] Dharam Narāyan was also the editor of the Urdu journal, *Qiran al-Sa'adain,* issued from the Delhi College press. M. I. Chaghatai, 'Dr. Aloys Sprenger and the Delhi College' in *The Delhi College,* pp.105-24
[27] *SRGNWP* (1855), p.260; *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, for the year 1852-53,* p.xxxix
[28] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, p.150.
[29] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, pp.53–219.

Pradesh), and also referred to the sorrow of being distant from ʻAlawī.[30] The high standing occupied by the *ustād* is evident, as Ṣahbā'ī compared ʻAlawī influence or *sāya* (lit. shadow) to the auspicious shade cast by the *humā*, the mythological bird which appears in many Persian literary works. Indeed, Ṣahbā'ī wrote that if ʻAlawī's shadow was to fall upon the wings of the *humā*, the latter would benefit.[31] Similarly, Ṣahbā'ī described the act of writing to ʻAlawī as a transgression, as it entailed an unworthy student daring to lift his gaze to meet that of his superior.[32] It is evident that the *ustād-shāgird* relationship was acutely hierarchical as well as intimate: the *shāgird* earned the affection of the *ustād* through obedience and devotion.

The ornate prose used by Ṣahbā'ī and his contemporaries played an important role in maintaining the formality as well as the intimacy of relationships between students, teachers and social equals: composing such letters required effort and time, and signified the value of the relationship for the writer.[33] Different languages, and the idioms they employed, enabled specific modes of sociability and indicated particular relationships. While Ṣahbā'ī termed a letter he received from his student a *nawāz-nāma* (letter of affection), he called his own epistle to ʻAlawī an *ik͟hlāṣ-nāma* (letter of loyalty).[34] To his patron, Nawab Ḥaidar Ḥasan K͟hān, a nobleman of Shahjahanabad, however, Ṣahbā'ī wrote a *niyāz-nāma*, or petition, and hoped in return for a letter of favour or bounty (*ʻināyat-nāma*) in one instance, and a *nāma-i ashfāq* (ʻletter of kindnesses') in another.[35] This nomenclature signalled the operative function that a

[30] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, pp.140–49.
[31] Ibid. The reference to the *huma* can also be read as a reference to 'Alawī's spiritual guidance: the *huma* had the ability to bestow kingship on those who came under its shade as it flew across the world, but this 'kingship' can also be interpreted as the attainment of spiritual and/or intellectual heights.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Indeed, Ġ͟hālib, whose Urdu letters became famous for their informality, claimed that he only began to write in a plain style because he did not have the time to express himself in more complicated idioms. The majority of Ġ͟hālib's Persian letters, however, remained intricately composed, even when they were addressed to close friends.See: Ġ͟hālib, *Kullīyāt,* p.324
[34] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, pp.141–97
[35] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, p.160. N.B. *'Ināyat-nāma* can also mean certificate, but in this case, Ṣahbā'ī is referring to a letter from his patron.

particular letter was meant to perform in the absence of personal contact, that is, affirm loyalty, plead for patronage, and so on.

In some cases, Ṣahbā'ī's letters would do no more than simply express a single sentiment; for example, that he felt the pangs of separation keenly. Even while no opportunity presented itself to bridge this distance and meet, great importance was placed on the effort spent in expressing such a sentiment eloquently and formally. To borrow a term coined by Liz Stanley in another context, the Persian letters written by Ṣahbā'ī and his contemporaries acted as 'epistolary gifts', functioning as objects of exchange in a system based on the valuation of the labour of writing and expectations of reciprocity.[36] Choosing to employ a complicated idiom of Persian to convey such sentiments signalled the exclusivity (and hence intimacy) of particular relationships. As a result, Ṣahbā'ī's intricately constructed missives performed a social function that was far from irrelevant in its day. Relationships between fellow poets, patrons, students were tight-knit and close, and bridged generational as well as geographical divides. The closeness of the bonds forged, as well as the reciprocal aspect of the student–teacher relationship, ensured the survival of Ṣahbā'ī's works after his death.

The Publication of the *Kullīyāt*: Forging Fresh Relationships through Print

When Ṣahbā'ī died in 1857, most of his works remained unpublished. Two or three years later, his student Dharam Narāyan, who was based in Indore at the time, discovered the manuscript of *Risāla Qaul Faiṣal* ('The Decisive Word') in the possession of Pandit Ajodhīyā Prashād "Mubtalā", another ex-student of Ṣahbā'ī, then based in Gwalior.[37] *Qaul Faiṣal* was an evaluation of the eighteenth-century debate between Ārzū and Ḥazīn regarding the capacity

[36] L. Stanley, 'The Epistolary Gift, the Editorial Third-Party, Counter-Epistolaria: Rethinking the Epistolarium', *Life Writing,* 8/2 (2011), pp.135–52. In this piece, Stanley draws on Marcel Mauss to study the letters of the South African novelist, Olive Schreiner. Although Stanley's analysis of the 'epistolarium' does not deal with the Persianate world, these insights are certainly relevant for an understanding of nineteenth-century Indo-Persian networks and styles of correspondence, and the sometimes baffling lack of 'content' they displayed.
[37] Naim, 'Shaikh Imam Bakhsh Sahba'i', p.171

of Indians to compose Persian poetry, and had been written by Ṣahbā'ī around 1851.[38] Another old student of Ṣahbā'ī's, Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain "Hijr", was also stationed in Indore as a civil judge.[39] It is likely that Dharam Narāyan and Hijr were acquainted with each other since they had shared Ṣahbā'ī as an *ustād* in Delhi. When Dharam Narāyan decided to publish *Qaul Faiṣal*, he sought the assistance of Hijr and Pandit Har Narāyan, and the work was printed from Kanpur in 1861.[40]

Ṣahbā'ī's networks of students ensured that his work was preserved and reached a larger audience. By the time the first volume of *Kullīyāt-i Ṣahbā'ī* ('The Complete Works of Ṣahbā'ī') was published in 1878, as we shall see, these networks had become even more widespread. The *Complete Works* were issued in two volumes. The first, which is the focus of this chapter, was published at the Maṭba'-i Niẓāmī Press, and the second in 1880, from Nawal Kishor Press.[41] The initiative for this formidable venture was taken by Munshī Dīn Dayāl. In the preface to the first volume, Dīn Dayāl wrote that he had acquired Ṣahbā'ī's manuscripts from the libraries of Ṣahbā'ī's other disciples (*talāmīẕ*), namely Dharam Narāyan, Hijr and Baldev Singh.[42] Many of these men now occupied influential positions. Dīn Dayāl was *mīr munshī* to the Bhopal Agency at the time that Ṣahbā'ī's *Kullīyāt* was printed, while Dharam Narāyan had progressed to become *mīr munshī* to the princely state of Indore. He was also well-known in colonial educational circles for his translations of English textbooks into Urdu.[43]

Dīn Dayāl's success in manipulating Indo-Persian networks to publish Ṣahbā'ī's *Kullīyāt* is particularly significant as it occurred after 1857, when, as Frances Pritchett has

[38] This debate has been the subject of much recent interest. Kia, *Contours of Persianate Community*; Dudney, *A Desire for Meaning.*
[39] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, p.204.
[40] Naim, 'Shaikh Imam Bakhsh Sahba'i', p.172.
[41] Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt-i Ṣahbā'ī,* ed. Dīn Dayāl (Kanpur, 1878), i; Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt-i Ṣahbā'ī,* ed. Dīn Dayāl (Lucknow?, 1880), ii
[42] Dīn Dayāl in Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, p.5
[43] *Report on public instruction in the United Provinces, 1847/48-1850/51*, p.67.

argued, 'the old world of the Indo-Muslim elite' was destroyed.[44] In Delhi, as Pritchett has shown, literary tastes were reformed and aligned with a new sense of modernity, focused on productions in English and Urdu, rather than Persian.[45] Within this framework, men like Ṣahbā'ī did not hold much more than a symbolic merit, as they represented an obsolete paradigm which, unlike the new writing, was perceived to be unnatural, artificial and unnecessarily complex. A consideration of dynamics at work in the publication of Ṣahbā'ī's *Kullīyāt* can help to account for this. While the 'old world' may have been disenfranchised, and indeed, became the subject of diverse internal reformist agendas, it still evoked a set of values and relations for many. Although an aesthetic and ideological shift occurred amongst the Delhi literati, the dispersion of students of the traditional masters across different parts of India ensured the survival of Persianate networks. Thus, when initiatives such as Dīn Dayāl's were taken, a node of literary activity formed, as diverse individuals coalesced around the project. Relationships, modes of interaction and literary interests that may have been dormant in other activities in which the individuals participated, were reawakened. For instance, Dharam Narāyan worked solely in English and Urdu; even if his activities as chief *munshī* in Indore may have required him to read older Persian documents from time to time, the colonial administration now operated in English and the vernaculars only. However, retaining contacts with fellow students prompted him to publish Ṣahbā'ī's *Qaul Faiṣal*, and also become involved in Dīn Dayāl's enterprise when the latter decided to collect all of Ṣahbā'ī's lost works.[46]

The prose and poetry thus collected were corrected for publication by Nawab Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan K̲h̲ān (1832–90), the controversial Islamic scholar and influential

[44] Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness,* p.28; Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle-Classes,* pp.84–5
[45] Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness,* p.154.
[46] Naim, 'Shaikh Imam Bakhsh Sahba'i', p.171; Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, p.5.

consort of Bhopal's monarch, Shāhjahān Begam (r. 1844–60; 1868–1901).[47] As *mīr munshī*, Dīn Dayāl had extremely close ties with Bhopal's ruling family and its employees. These were evidenced by the multiple patrons and commentators from this state who contributed short *taqārīẓ* (reviews) which were appended to the publication.[48] The *taqārīẓ* consisted mainly of expressing admiration for Ṣahbā'ī's scholarship, and praise of Dīn Dayāl, who had performed a heroic deed with his efforts to collate Ṣahbā'ī's writings.[49] Of the seventeen writers included, at least eleven were connected to Bhopal, either because they were resident there, or because they occupied official positions in its administration.[50] In addition to Hijr and Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Ḵẖān, these men included Saiyid Nūr al-Ḥasan Ḵẖān and Saiyid ''Alī Ḥasan Ḵẖān, the Nawab's two sons, as well as 'Mumtāz al-daula' Mīr Muḥammad 'Abdul Ḥaiy Ḵẖān, the Nawab's son-in-law. A number of other commentators based in Bhopal were also included, such as Maulawī A'ẓam Ḥusain Ḵẖairābādī and Saiyid Amjad 'Alī "Ashharī" (1852-1910).[51]

[47] Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Ḵẖān was erroneously labelled a Wahhābī, although he was a proponent of the Ahl-i Ḥadīṣ school of thought. S. Alavi, 'Siddiq Hasan Khan (1832–90) and the Creation of a Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the 19th century', *Journal of the Economic and Social history of the Orient*, 54:1 (2011), pp.1–38.
[48] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, pp.771–809.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.

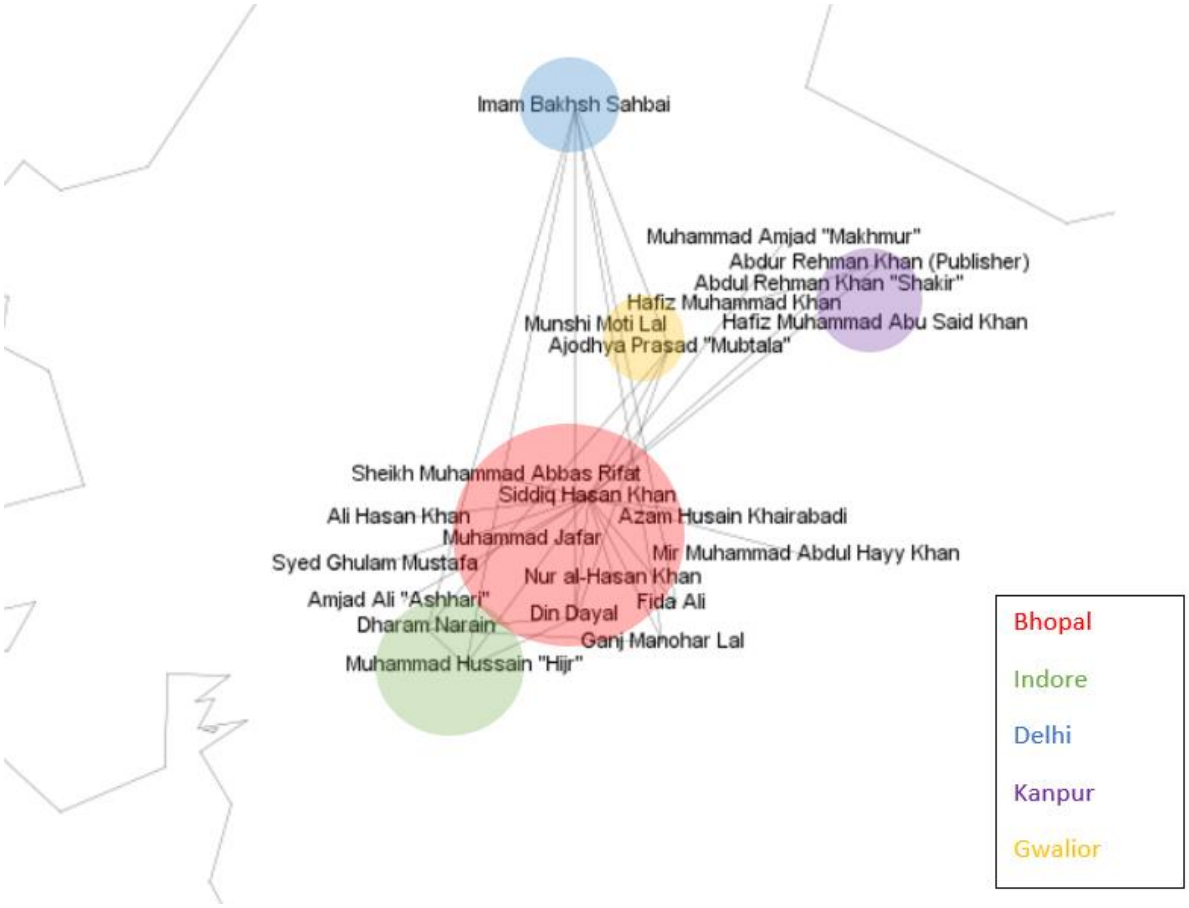


Fig. 6.1: Map of north India, showing the connections of the individuals involved in the publication of Ṣahbā'ī's works.

It is evident that the Nawab and Dīn Dayāl were the centres around which these individuals were clustered; some were not affiliated with Ṣahbā'ī at all. In his own *taẕkira*, Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan did not mention any personal relationship with Ṣahbā'ī in his brief notice of the poet.[52] This highlights how powerful Persianate social networks remained at this point. Mobilised first through Dīn Dayāl, a host of influential men belonging to the Indo-Persian elite, including rulers, bureaucrats and members of the *'ulamā*, responded to the project of preserving and reviving an old master's works. These men themselves belonged and participated in other circles and projects too. While Dharam Narāyan was a producer of textbooks which conveyed European knowledge in Urdu, Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan, was an influential propagator of Islamic

[52] S. H. Ḵẖān, *Sham'-i Anjuman* (Bhopal, 1876), p.262.

reform and strove to connect Indian Muslims with their counterparts in the Ottoman Empire and the Ḥijāz. If Dharam Narāyan represented a class of Persianised Indians who had been somewhat Anglicised through their colonial education and roles as translators of English textbooks, Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan was to be regarded with increasing suspicion by the colonial state.[53] The links that connected both with Dīn Dayāl and Imām Baḵẖsh Ṣahbā'ī were those generated by literary knowledge and a shared commitment to the ideals of Indo-Persian gentlemanly refinement. Saiyid 'Alī Ḥasan K̲h̲ān, one of the Nawab's sons, was only thirteen when he wrote his *taqrīẓ* for the edition of the *Kullīyāt*, and represented a younger generation that had also been drawn into these multifaceted networks through Dīn Dayāl's relationship with Ṣiddīq Ḥasan K̲h̲ān.[54]

Hayden Bellenoit has observed that, even in the late-nineteenth century, Kāyasthas clung to their Persianized customs 'cultivated over generations'.[55] Even as men like Dīn Dayāl and Dharam Narāyan adapted their skills to the changing demands of the post-1857 era, their continued engagement with Persian signalled their legitimacy as a professional group suited to bureaucratic positions. This does not mean, that the move to print Ṣahbā'ī's work was motivated by material concerns alone. As Dīn Dayāl explained, he saw his efforts in collecting and publishing Ṣahbā'ī's works as an act of remembrance and service to his mentor, the 'wine' of whose intellect he had been privileged to 'drink' as a student.[56] In acknowledging their debts as Ṣahbā'ī's *shāgird*s, Dīn Dayāl and Dharam Narāyan successfully embedded themselves within the knowledge economy of Persian. As a result, the positions of both men in relation to other Indo-Persian elites and professional groups was successfully defined and reinforced.

[53] Alavi, 'Siddiq Hasan K̲h̲ān', pp.33–4. To an extent, Dharam Narāyan can be usefully compared with Maulawī Karīm al-Dīn: Powell, 'Scholar Manque or Mere Munshi?' However, unlike Karīm al-Dīn, Dharam Narāyan was successful in building a reputation for himself in Persianate circles.
[54] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, pp.773–4.
[55] Bellenoit, 'Paper, Pens and Power', pp.348–72.
[56] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, p.5.

In this sense, Persian provided access to alternative paths of affiliation, and allowed employees like Dīn Dayāl to court the patronage of influential figures like Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan K̲h̲ān. For all the individuals involved, the publication provided an opportunity to reinforce this gentlemanly identity, and to demonstrate their appreciation of a literary style which seemed now to belong to a past age. As Seema Alavi has demonstrated, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan also manipulated these networks to his advantage, when he sought to forge links with global Muslim communities. Acutely aware of his 'Indo-Persianate cosmopolitan gentleman legacy', Ṣiddīq Ḥasan used it to cultivate relationships with traders and scholars from the Middle East.[57] Two years before the publication of the *Kullīyāt*, the Nawab had authored and published his own *taz̲kira* of Persian poets, *Sham'-i Anjuman*, indicating his desire to establish a refined and literary persona for himself.[58] Although the Nawab was a well-known scholar, he was for all intents and purposes an outsider in Bhopal, as he arrived in the state as a perfume-dealer before his marriage to Begam Shāhjahān, the ruler of the princely state.[59] Indeed, he was treated with disdain by Begam Shāhjahān's family on account of this.[60] His interests in establishing himself as a patron by engaging in a project close to the hearts of men like Hijr and Dīn Dayāl, who occupied important positions in Bhopal's administration, may have led him to become involved so deeply in this venture, and also provided him with an additional platform to display his respectable lineage and education.[61] In so doing, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan tapped into Ṣahbā'ī's own aesthetic and associational vocabulary in his *taqārīz̲*.[62] Employing metaphors and turns of

[57] Alavi, 'Siddiq Hasan Khan', pp.15–17.
[58] K̲h̲ān, *Sham'-i Anjuman*
[59] C. Preckel, *The Begums of Bhopal,* (New Delhi, 2000), p.133.
[60] B. D. Metcalf, 'Islam and Power: The Making and Unmaking of a Muslim Princess', *American Historical Review,* 116/1 (2011), pp.1–30.
[61] Dīn Dayāl had read out the important declaration conferring the status of Nawab upon Ṣiddīq Hasan K̲h̲ān after his marriage to Shāhjahān Begam. Shāhjahān Begam, *The Taj-ul Ikbal Tarīkh Bhopal, or, The History of Bhopal,* trans. H.C Barstow, (Calcutta, 1876), p.157.
[62] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt,* i, pp.771–2.

phrase used by Ṣahbā'ī, he emphasised the importance of scholarship, *ustād-shāgirdī* and patronage.

Beyond individual literary and political aspirations, the publication of the *Kullīyāt* was also part of a longer process of state-building in Bhopal. Under Shāhjahān Begam and her predecessor, Sikandar Begam, symbols of Mughal dominance were appropriated and harnessed in the cause of 'princely self-fashioning'.[63] An important aspect of this was the patronage of literary production, as Bhopal sought to present itself as an asylum for scholars and artists dislocated from structures of patronage after 1857.[64] Hannah Archambault has noted that this attempt to carve out a distinct identity for Bhopal in north India resulted in the isolation of the state from its neighbouring territories.[65] However, the printing of the *Kullīyāt* belies this assertion, as scholars from neighbouring states such as Gwalior and Indore were drawn into the production and circulation of the work. Moreover, it is significant that the work was not published from the official Shāhjahānī Press of Bhopal, but was sent to Kanpur for printing. This allowed the Bhopal monarchy to extend its patronage and influence to the Maṭba'-i Niẓāmī Press, with whom it had established links in the early-1860s.[66] Managed by 'Abdul Raḥmān K̲h̲ān "Shākir", the younger brother of Muṣṭafá K̲h̲ān of the Muṣṭafáī Press, this well-known publishing house was an important player in the north Indian print industry. The chronogrammatic verses yielding the year of publication (*qiṭ'a'-i ta'rīk̲h̲*) to the edition were composed by Shākir's son, Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad K̲h̲ān. In this sense, patrons, editors and publishers were provided with the opportunity to further their reputations and to build relations

[63] H. L. Archambault, 'Becoming Mughal in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of the Bhopal Princely State', *Journal of South Asian Studies,* 36/4 (2013), pp.479–95.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid. Also: Shāhjahān, *Taj-ul Ikbal,* p.85. Shāhjahān Begam mentions that during her visit to Kanpur, she received many invitations from eminent personalities in the city. However, the only one accepted was from 'Abdul Raḥmān "Shakir", the proprietor of the Niẓāmī Press.

that spanned north India, connecting princely territories with their counterparts under direct rule.[67]

At the same time, the publication of Ṣahbā'ī's *Kullīyāt* was not just an insulated exercise in patronage and commemoration. Dīn Dayāl was hopeful for new readers, as he stressed the fact that these works were ideal for teaching young learners difficult works in an easy style, as they had been written in a way that children could understand without the aid of an *ustād*.[68] This remark is significant, as it suggests that Dīn Dayāl was appealing to a different generation, and possibly, social strata, which was more inclined towards self-learning. This indicates that Persian continued to offer a form of social mobility and enhancement for upwardly mobile Indians who were not necessarily entrenched in the old systems of *ustād–shāgirdī*. While established elites may have moved away from Persian to an extent, the language still occupied an important position in the aspirations of newly-literate classes. The fact that the *Kullīyāt* was published at a commercial press, with access to large markets across north India, reinforces the impression that Ṣahbā'ī's writings were deemed to have a wider appeal.

Conclusion

This case study of Ṣahbā'ī's literary legacy opens up a set of important geographical and generational relations which characterised the post-1857 reproduction and circulation of Persian works in print. The institution of *ustād–shāgirdī* underpinned and enabled the transmission of Ṣahbā'ī's works across time and space, as his students played an integral role

[67] In the context of Arcot, and Mysore and Baroda, Kevin Schwartz and Manu Bhagavan have respectively made the argument that Indian rulers sought to assert autonomy over culture because this was the only arena in which they could exert power. As Bhagavan says, this allowed for modernity to be rooted in the 'local' rather than the colonial. However, the explanation offered in this section goes beyond arguments of asserting cultural autonomy to showing how transcolonial and transregional linkages could be forged. Schwartz, 'The Curious Case of the Carnatac', p.539; M. Bhagavan, *Sovereign Spheres: Princes, Education and Empire in Colonial India* (New Delhi, 2003)

[68] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, p.809.

in preserving and publishing the writings of their *ustād*. The dynamics of *ustād–shāgirdī* colluded with the global ambitions of men such as Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan K̲h̲ān, as well as the market offered by the aspirations of newly-literate classes. As a result, a unique form of print modernity was produced. Like all versions of modernity, that represented by the lithography of Ṣahbā'ī's *Kullīyāt* was hybrid: a particular mixture of the old and the new, and the public and the private. The works of a pre-1857 Persian scholar of Delhi were gathered and collated by students based in Bhopal and Indore in the 1870s, and printed by a commercial press in Kanpur, on the outskirts of Lucknow. The particular temporalities and geographies brought into existence by Dīn Dayāl's venture allow insight into the reasons why Persian continued to be of value to specific groups in India. Still a source of prestige, Persian offered a uniquely cosmopolitan yet intimate vocabulary for the building of new relations. Kāyastha professionals, students, and patrons capitalised on this to assert identities that harnessed the values of the 'old world' even as they were realigned in new socio-political configurations.

That this activity was centred in Bhopal is especially significant, as it highlights the different attitudes to Persian in a princely state which possessed a tradition of Islamic reform and sought to establish its own autonomy, in comparison with cities such as Delhi and Lucknow, which had come under direct British rule.[69] As an intellectual who had been killed by the British during the Rebellion, it is tempting to see Ṣahbā'ī as occupying a particularly significant place in the Indo-Persian imagination, and although this was not made explicit by any of the contributors to Dīn Dayāl's edition, the preface stated that Ṣahbā'ī had been treated unjustly by his time.[70] Similarly, the Arabic scholar, Shaiḵ̲h̲ Muḥammad 'Abbās Ri'fat, referred to Ṣahbā'ī's death as a martyrdom (*shahādat*) in his *taqrīẓ* to the *Kullīyāt*.[71] Barbara

[69] In 1856, the Nawabs of Lucknow were deposed and Awadh came under direct British rule. For a history of Islamic reform in Bhopal: Preckel, *The Begums of Bhopal*
[70] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, p.4.
[71] Ṣahbā'ī, *Kullīyāt*, i, p.780.

Metcalfe has noted that after 1857, many Muslims from Delhi had relocated to the Ḥijāz, where their intellectual activities thrived, and indicates that Ṣiddīq Ḥasan K̲h̲ān was in contact with them. Involving himself in the publication of the works of an old Delhi master, killed in the Rebellion, would have been a strong signal of his ideological leanings as well as his literary skills. At the same time, it would be misleading to view the publication of Ṣahbā'ī's *Kullīyāt* as being particularly Islamic in nature, and indeed, Dīn Dayāl's presence (in addition to other non-Muslims) complicates any such notion. The investment of Kāyasthas in the production of the *Kullīyāt* highlights the fact that due to the resilience of *ustād–shāgird* networks, Persian continued to wield the power of bringing together individuals from diverse religious, professional and ideological backgrounds.

Finally, this case study underscores the importance of the itinerant nature of Persianate networks, and draws attention to the unstable centres of Persian patronage and production in a rapidly changing society. While we cannot find mass-readerships for such literature, nodes of intense literary activity and printing formed and shifted as scholars and students traversed the Indo-Persian world and were attracted to new centres of patronage such as Bhopal. Indeed, the private and the public were deeply intertwined as even works which Ṣahbā'ī had initially authored only for his sons were filtered through personal relationships between students and patrons, and finally published for upwardly mobile classes.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the significance of Persian learning in Britain and India during the period of colonial expansion under the East India Company, from 1757 to 1857. It has sought to situate Persian in its wider social context in north India, and understand the significance and function of the language during a period which is typically described in terms of the decline of the Persianate world. It is clear that Persian remained an important language in India during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In investigating the reasons and nature of the survival of Persian in India during this period, this thesis asks two broad, though linked, sets of questions. The first concerns the impact of Company rule on Persianate culture in South Asia, in a context when 'modern' forms of knowledge transmission, such as colonial education and Indian print cultures emerged. The second concerns the changing status of Persian during a period when attitudes to language and identity (and the relationship between the two) underwent crucial changes. In order to answer these questions, this thesis has examined a range of primary sources which shed light on linguistic interactions involving Persian in colonial India. These include published and unpublished writings of various orientalists, East India Company records dealing with education and printing, as well as Persian and Urdu printed books, translations and *taẕkiras* produced in India during the period of study.

First, this thesis has argued that Persian played an active (as opposed to passive) role in the construction of scholarly identities and interactions in India during the period of colonial rule. Even as significant changes in knowledge transmission were effected by the development of colonial education and Indian print culture, Persian found space within these new sites of knowledge transmission associated with Indian modernity. Throughout this period, usage of Persian provided access to a broader episteme which remained relevant to literary activities and regulated claims to scholarly and individual authority in individual interactions as well as textual production. The experience of colonial rule had a limited impact on the study and

significance of Persian in India for much of this period, although the engagement with Persian played an important role in the development of modern European linguistic thought at the turn of the century.

Second, it is argued that in the early to mid-eighteenth century, it was possible for both Britons and Indians to interact with Persian as a cosmopolitan language, in that it was seen as a language which enabled mobility of different kinds and the ability to interact with a host of 'strangers'. By the end of the period studied in this thesis, however, Persian had started to lose some of this cosmopolitan status, particularly from the point of view of colonial observers, as it began to be seen as a classical language in the European sense of the term. This was a result of orientalist scholarly strategies which emphasized the literary character of Persian (in opposition to its practical usage) as well as an emergent view of languages as being linked to territorially bound identities. In this schema, Persian was seen as being simultaneously foreign and classical. However, this change was barely visible from the Indian perspective, and indeed, constituted a never-complete process, as the shifting geographies of Persianate interactions, rooted in individual and social interactions, ensured that the language continued to have multiple significations for different groups with varying needs of spatial and social mobility.

In making these arguments, this thesis has suggested a reappraisal of the ways in which the relationship between Indian modernity and cosmopolitan cultures - such as the Persianate - is conceived, as it demonstrates the continued importance of Persian in the creation of cosmopolitan identities enacted at multiple sites throughout this period. Rather than viewing Persian as the surviving representative of Mughal power, and hence the antithesis of colonial modernity, a more complex, socially-motivated understanding of the Indian and colonial engagement with Persian is advocated. Recognizing the social underpinnings of Persianate literary culture in India allows us to understand the presence of Persian in India as an active, rather than a passive, phenomenon, which structured, and was enacted through, cosmopolitan

relationships and behaviours. Textual production and participation in Persianised circles allowed individuals to access networks across the Persianate world, enabling social and spatial mobility. Moreover, understanding Persian in its social context in India, and recognizing the variety of spaces, languages and groups it interacted with, challenges any neat categorization of the language as classical or foreign to India, in opposition to vernacular or indigenous languages.

The main reason for the continuing usage of Persian in India during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was that it offered access to a set of broader networks which linked scholars and literati across the Indo-Persian world. These networks represented an epistemic space which held relevance in the period studied, as a set of rules which determined the nature of authoritative aesthetic and intellectual production. Governed by particular rules of scholarly and literary conduct, the taxonomy of Persianate authority was deeply intertwined with individual and collective learned identities. As Chapter Three showed, scholarly authority was judged by a set of factors which included relations of kinship, friendship and discipleship, personal and family histories of migration, in addition to personal temperament and individual literary qualities. These markers of authority remained important throughout the nineteenth century, even when colonial education and the expansion of lithographic printing fundamentally altered the practical contexts in which textual study and exchange took place. Printing and education opened and reached new markets for Persianate knowledge, enabling texts to be circulated across less connected and more dispersed segments of society.

However, these new forms and institutions of knowledge transmission were drawn into, and supported, existing epistemological structures rather than positing a break from them. Relationships of *shāgirdī*, kinship and socio-literary decorum determined interactions in the lithographic industry and bestowed legitimacy on both new readers and new ways of accessing texts. In colonial educational institutions also, it was possible for teachers to build relations of

ustād-shāgirdī with their students. Not only did this resist the imposition of standardized curricula from the top down (as suggested in Chapter Four), but it also allowed for new relationships and geographies to be forged on the basis of norms of Persianate sociability and sensibility, as the case of Imām Bak̲h̲sh Ṣahbā'ī and his students demonstrates. In this sense, the anthropocentric bases of literary and scholarly authority survived late into the nineteenth century and were integrated into modern institutions and technologies, such as print, that would otherwise be expected to have had the effect of anonymizing knowledge transmission.

The vitality and autonomy of Persianate networks in India stands out even more sharply when placed in the context of the pressures of colonial rule. As the first two chapters of this thesis showed, orientalist activity in India was by no means a homogenous or stable enterprise. Over the course of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the contradictions inherent in orientalist endeavour in a colonial environment gave rise to scholarly strategies and arguments which dismissed Indo-Persian intermediaries as unreliable, and failed also to acknowledge Indian intellectual labour. Despite this, for much of the nineteenth century, Persian remained significant in India's linguistic landscape, even though state patronage was hardly extended to activities in the language. In this sense, Persianate literary and linguistic spaces were largely sustained by private individuals through textual production, exchange, and the building of literary relationships. These findings suggest that Persianate networks were able to function well even without state support, and indeed, appeared to thrive in the absence of a strong state. As Farhan Nizami has argued in the context of *madrasa* education in north India, and Farina Mir has shown for Punjabi, the distancing of the colonial state may have permitted, rather than hindered, the life of Persianate spaces.[1] As Chapter Three showed, over-reliance on colonial patronage could be detrimental to the creation and survival of literary legacies, as

[1] Nizami, 'Madrasahs, Saints and Scholars'; Mir, *The Social Space of Language*

Indian scholars became reduced to 'native informants' and low-status teachers. Colonial patronage failed to adequately support Persian scholars or literary production, and as a result, also had little impact in reconfiguring epistemic authority in the Persianate world.

None of this is to say that Persianate scholars were somehow isolated from the rest of Indian and colonial history, nor that the experience of colonial rule had no impact on Persian scholarship or vice versa. For one thing, Persianate culture had always flourished in multilingual and multi-ethnic contexts, and in this sense, Persianised identities were not forged at the expense of others, but were themselves multi-layered and context-dependent. Many of the individuals discussed in this thesis interacted with and took part in literary activity in Urdu, Braj and other Indian languages. The majority of texts discussed at length also operated as markers of multilingualism, since they contained elements of Arabic, Urdu/Hindi, Braj and even Sanskrit. The range extended beyond these South Asian languages, as many Persianate scholars also worked closely with the colonial state, even (like Dharam Narāyan, for instance) in the capacity of English teachers who produced textbooks and translations of European works. A particularly good example of the multiple convolutions texts could undergo is the case of C. C. Sturm's (1740-86) *Reflections on the Works of God in Nature,* the English translation of which was rendered into Urdu before being turned into Persian by a Company *munshī*, Chiranjī La'l.[2] However, these multiple associations did not preclude belonging to Persianised networks, and indeed, provided necessary nodes where activity in Persian could interact and overlap with other languages and interests. It was this overlapping and connecting of disparate individuals and interests, grounded in different contexts, which permitted Persian to behave as a cosmopolitan language in the first place.

[2] See Chapter Five.

As a cosmopolitan language which sustained transregional interactions, Persian offered the potential for spatial and social mobility to most Indians who participated in Persianate spaces throughout the nineteenth century. Even if individuals did not actually travel across physical space (although they usually did), Persianate literary production conceptually and theoretically connected Persianised individuals in India to their counterparts in the rest of the Persian-speaking world. Literary activity in Persian constituted entering into a dialogue with Persianate literary culture, past and present, and hence temporally and spatially anchored individuals into the geography of the Persianate world. In contrast, as the Company began to behave more in accordance with (emergent ideas about) national interest, and simultaneously to see itself as an alien in India, it withdrew from treating Persian as a cosmopolitan language of trade and itineracy. Instead, Persian came to be viewed as a 'classical' language, or as a language that had long since declined and hence constituted an object of study according to specific rules. As Chapter Two argues, this sense of alienation enabled the study of Persian as an objective enterprise, and contributed to the development of European 'linguistic modernity' and the conceptualization of language as an abstract phenomenon. It is significant for our understandings of the counter-flows of colonial rule that these developments – in the context of Persian at least – were articulated earlier and more strongly by orientalist scholars in India than in Britain. In this sense, the engagement with Persian was not a simple interaction with a 'dead' or static language, but a fraught enterprise which enabled specific developments in European intellectual history.

Even for metropolitan and colonial orientalists situated in Britain and India, the engagement with Persian had produced divergent results. Certain features now associated with linguistic modernity, such as the conception of language as an abstract and objectified phenomenon, developed in the colonial context as a result of socially-produced imperial anxieties and experiences of alienation in India. Such changes do not seem to have emerged in

the metropolitan context until much later. In Britain, orientalist attitudes towards Persian at the turn of the nineteenth century displayed a remarkable continuity with their university-based predecessors whose main interest had been the study of the Bible. In one area, however, there was a degree of overlap between colonial and metropolitan practices at the end of the eighteenth century. This was the tendency (generated by still-developing textual and scholarly strategies) to focus on Persian as a classical language. Although there were some variations, broadly speaking this classical period was seen as ending in the seventeenth century, in line with contemporary attitudes about Mughal decline and the relationship between language and the history of particular ethnicities and civilizations.

By the early nineteenth century, feelings of alienation in India, and the loss of eighteenth-century colonial cosmopolitanism, also produced a view in which languages were seen as being more firmly tied to territorial and religious identities. As Travers has explained, 'Eurasian cosmopolitanism' became marginalised with the rise of a powerful 'imperial patriotism' at the turn of the nineteenth century.[3] This enabled the conceptualization of Persian as being inherently foreign to India. However, despite efforts to abolish Persian after the official replacement of the language with English and Indian vernaculars after 1835, the difficulty of neatly categorizing Persian according to colonial categories privileging a relationship between language and singular identities meant that Persian was effectively evaded in colonial educational discourse. As a result, it survived the turn towards Anglicist and vernacular education policy and continued to be taught in colonial institutions throughout the nineteenth century.

To the extent that colonial educational policies were effective in standardizing any part of Persian language study, they reflected the 'classical' conception of Persian held by most

[3] Travers, 'The Connected Worlds of Haji Mustapha', pp.302-3, 330

nineteenth-century orientalists, discussed in the first two chapters of this thesis. However, Persian teaching was underpinned and influenced by personalized relationships and foundations of knowledge which were connected to social relationships, colonial policy had little impact at this early stage. In terms of the curriculum followed only at the level of the minimum qualifications necessary for centrally-managed scholarships was any standardization possible. Similarly, even as religious identities became more reified, the case of the *Bhagatmāl* suggests that these more exclusive identities found the space and the motivation to be articulated in Persian. However, colonial conceptions of Persian did narrow the curriculum, even if it did not homogenize it. Since sciences and 'modern' subjects such as history were taught in the vernaculars and English at colonial institutions, and Arabic and Persian seen as the languages of Indian religion, the literary character of Persian was reified over this period. Simultaneously, colonial policies also privileged certain linguistic relationships over others – for example, a deep link between Persian and Urdu was established to the exclusion of all other linguistic transactions. These measures contributed, in the long term, to the perception of Persian as a literary, classical language that was not indigenous to India. However these were slow changes, and did not manifest themselves until much later in the nineteenth century.

The state's deliberate attempts to actively sever the study of Persian from its social contexts after 1857, discussed in Chapters Four and Five, suggests that specific, albeit limited, changes began to be effected in the study of the language. As a language which appealed to upwardly mobile groups, Persian had already – in theory - come to function as the 'classical' component of colonial Indian education in the mid-nineteenth century. In this sense, the (never complete) recasting of Persian in opposition to vernacular cultures was itself a process through which the language became viewed through a fundamentally modern lens. This was shaped in part by colonial orientalist practices and educational policies which sought to reconfigure the

relationship between vernacular and classical languages, and which expressed a Eurocentric conception of the 'classical' as disconnected from the present by a historical rupture.

It is suggested that very gradually, Persian literary culture began to be seen as a phenomenon belonging to the distant past, as it became disconnected from the present through the dislocation and severance of the relationships which underpinned literary activity in the language. In other words, if the status of Persian as a cosmopolitan language stemmed from its stranger-like ability to connect individuals, spaces and temporalities, the reorganization of the transmission of Persianate knowledge in colonial institutions resulted in a shift from the cosmopolitan status of Persian to a classical conception of the language. In this latter view, the Persianate past would be cut off from its links to the present which it had maintained through literary and scholarly relationships. This resulted in a view of Persian as belonging to strange and remote past capable of the kind of objective study, resembling that of the classical 'dead' languages of Europe. However, these were sluggish processes, of which only the beginnings can be glimpsed in the period studied in this thesis.

In sum, this thesis argues that Persian's presence in colonial India went beyond offering mere cultural or symbolic capital. Instead, participation in the Persianate world constituted an active and dialogic process, which demonstrates the relevance and dynamism of Persian in India during this period. Persian helped shape different forms of modernity for Indian and colonial actors alike, as it contributed to the creation of European linguistic modernity, and had an important presence in colonial curricula and Indian print cultures. This said, this thesis has revealed more lacunae than it has possibly filled: further promising avenues for research include more detailed studies of linguistic transactions between Persian and other Indian languages, particularly translations of vernacular texts into Persian. Studying the ways in which texts and languages may have gained or lost meaning and circulation through such transformations would shed more light on the cosmopolitanism offered by Persian during

colonial rule, and refine an understanding of how different vernacular spheres overlapped with and shaped Persianate cultures. Analysing Persian in the multilingual context of India emphasized in recent scholarship, rather than a 'dead' presence in this landscape would significantly enhance our understanding of vernacular literary cultures in the modern era. Other areas which require further study are the ways in which the itinerant nature of Persianate networks may have crossed with, and even possibly gained support from, structures imposed by colonial rule (and vice versa), such as the patterns of mobility offered by civil service. While this thesis has paid attention to the contexts and modes of learning Persian in relation to texts, sites of oral engagement with Persian, such as shrines, courts and performative spaces such as *musha'ara*s, also deserve further scrutiny. Defying binaries such as classical/vernacular and indigenous/foreign, the presence of the Persian in colonial India prompts us to rethink the tools and conceptions with which we approach languages.

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Appendix I: Selection of Works Printed from Lucknow and Kanpur, 1840-55*

* Due to space constraints and for reasons of clarity, only those titles with complete information about place and year of publication are included. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

Work	Author	Year	Place
Majma‘ al-Jawāmi‘	Muḥammad Ḥusain K̲h̲ān	1840	Lucknow
G̲h̲iyāṣ al-lug̲h̲āt	G̲h̲iyāṣ al-Dīn Muḥammad	1841	Kanpur
Muntak̲h̲ab al-Kalām	Ḥaidar ‘Alī	1841	Lucknow
Shajarat al-Amānī	Muḥammad Ḥasan Qatīl	1841	Lucknow
Rauẓāt al-Aḥkām	Saiyid Ḥusain	1842	Lucknow
Panj-ruq‘a	Irādat K̲h̲ān	1843	Lucknow
Risāla-i Kubrá	Mīr Saiyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī	1843	Lucknow
Dastūr al-Maktūbāt	Naunidhī Rāy	1843	Lucknow
Ḥusn o ‘Ishq	Ni‘mat K̲h̲ān “A‘ālī”	1843	Kanpur
Sikandar-nāma	Niẓāmī Ganjawī	1843	Lucknow
Risāla-i Kubrá	Mīr Saiyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī	1844	Lucknow
Ṣarf-i Mīr	Mīr Saiyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī	1844	Lucknow
Mak̲h̲zan al-Fawā’id	Muḥammad Fā’iq	1844	Lucknow
Mak̲h̲zan ' al-Fawā’id	Muḥammad Fā’iq	1844	Lucknow
Dīwān-i Nawīdi	Nawīdī	1844	Lucknow
Dastūr al-Mubtadī	Ṣafī bin Naṣīr	1844	Lucknow
Inshā-i Tāhir Wahīd	Ṭāhir Wahīd	1844	Lucknow
Qaṣā’id-i ‘Urfī	‘Urfī	1844	Lucknow
Risāla-i Abdul Wāsi'	Abdul Wasī‘ Hansawī	1845	Lucknow
Bahār-i ‘Ajam	Amānat ‘Alī	1845	Lucknow
Qiran al-Sa‘dain	Amīr K̲h̲usrau	1845	Lucknow
Qaṣā’id-i Badr Chach	Badr Chach	1845	Lucknow
Niṣāb al-Ṣibyān	Farahi	1845	Lucknow
Badī‘ al-‘Aja’ib	Ibn Ḥasan	1845	Lucknow
Inshā-i Khalīfā	K̲h̲alīfā Shāh	1845	Lucknow
Ruq‘āt-i Bīdil	Mirzā Bīdil	1845	Lucknow
Dīwān-i G̲h̲anī	Muḥammad Ṭāhir G̲h̲anī	1845	Lucknow
‘Iqd-i Ṣuraiyā	Mumtāz	1845	Lucknow
Majma‘ al-Sana’i	Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad	1845	Lucknow
Al-Qaul al-Ṣawāb	Rukn al-Dīn Muḥammad	1845	Lucknow
Tarjībband-i Ma Muqīman	Mīr Saiyid ‘Ala’ al-Dīn Wisālī	1845	Lucknow
Maktūbāt-i Abū’l Faẓl	Abū’l Faẓl “Allami”	1846	Lucknow

Ruq'āt -i 'Ālamgīr	Aurangzeb	1846	Lucknow
Qāf-nāma	Ġẖulām Sarwar	1846	Lucknow
Tuḥfat al-Mushtāq fi bayān al-nikāh wa'l-sadāq	Ḥasan 'Alī	1846	Lucknow
Nairang-i 'Ishq	Muḥammad Akram "Ġẖanīmat"	1846	Lucknow
Baḥr-i Mauwāj wa Naṣr Mumtāz	Mumtāz	1846	Lucknow
Dīwān-i Nāṣir 'Alī	Nāṣir 'Alī	1846	Lucknow
Shakaristān-i Ḵẖayāl & Ḵẖẇān-i Ni'mat	Ẕauq	1846	Lucknow
Nal Daman	Faiẓī	1847	Lucknow
Dīwān-i Ḥilālī	Ḥilālī	1847	Lucknow
Ṣanam-kada	Ḥusain Shāh "Ḥaqīqat"	1847	Lucknow
Badī' al-Ḥisāb	Rajab 'Alī Beg	1847	Lucknow
Maṣnawī-i Mihr o Māh	Sa'ādat Yār Ḵẖān "Rangīn"	1847	Lucknow
Hada'iq al-Balāġẖat	Shams al-Dīn Faqīr Dahlawī	1847	Lucknow
Sāqī-nāma	Ẕuhūrī	1847	Lucknow
Bahār Dānish	'Ināyatullāh Kanbu	1848	Lucknow
Ruq'āt-i Lakshmī	Lakshmī Narāyan	1848	Lucknow
Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir	Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān	1848	Lucknow
Kāristān	Munīr al-Dīn	1848	Lucknow
Muḥāraba-i Kābul wa Qandāhār	Munshī 'Abdul Karīm 'Alawī	1848	Kanpur/Lucknow
Maṣnawī-i Siḥr-i Ḥilāl	Qabūl Muḥammad	1848	Lucknow
Majālis-i Rangīn	Sa'ādat Yār Ḵẖān Rangīn	1848	Lucknow
Intiḵẖāb-i Dīwān-i Ṣā'ib	Ṣā'ib	1848	Lucknow
Nishtar-i Ġẖam	Aḥmad 'Ali	1849	Kanpur
Yūsuf wa Zulaiḵẖā	Jāmī	1849	Kanpur
Ruq'āt-i Lakshmī	Lakshmī Narāyan	1849	Lucknow
Ta'rīḵẖ -i Panjāb	Munshī Abdul Karīm 'Alawī	1849	Lucknow
Shabnam-i Shādāb	Ẕahīr al-Dīn Tafrishī	1849	Kanpur
Bā-gosh-i Jān Shanīdan ast	Aḥmad 'Alī	1850	Kanpur
Haft Ẕābita	'Alī Naqī Ḵẖān	1850	Kanpur
Bīsar-nāma	Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār	1850	Kanpur
Pand-nāma	Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār/Sa'dī	1850	Kanpur
Dīwān-i Mīr Yār 'Alī	Mīr Yār 'Alī	1850	Lucknow
Dastūr al-Inshā	Muḥammad Fai'q	1850	Kanpur
Dastūr al-Ṣibyān	Naunidhī Rāy	1850	Kanpur
Dīwān-i Nawīdi	Nawīdī	1850	Lucknow
Nahr al-Faṣāḥat	Qatīl	1850	Kanpur
Rasā'il-i Tuġẖrā	Tuġẖrā Mashhadī	1850	Kanpur
Gulistān-i Masarrat	Abdul Rahman Shākir	1851	Kanpur
Zubda't al-Naṣā'iḥ	Abdul Rahman Shākir	1851	Kanpur
Risāla-i Abdul Wasī'	Abdul Wasī' Hansawī	1851	Kanpur
Bahār-i 'Ajam	Amānat 'Alī	1851	Kanpur
Ruq'āt-i 'Ālamgīr	Aurangzeb	1851	Kanpur
Pand-nāma	Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār /Sa'dī	1851	Kanpur
Bahār-i Dānish	'Ināyatullāh	1851	Kanpur
Inshā-i Khalīfa [Jāmi' al-Qawānīn]	Ḵẖalīfā Shāh	1851	Kanpur

Maḵẖzan al-Fawā'id	Muḥammad Fai'q	1851	Lucknow
Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir	Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān	1851	Kanpur
Hidāyat al-Nūr	Muḥammad Sa'dullāh	1851	Kanpur
Badī' al-Ḥisāb	Rajab 'Alī Beg	1851	Kanpur
Dīwān-i Maḵẖfī	Zeb al-Nisā' "Maḵẖfī"	1852	Kanpur
Qawā'id-i Fārsī	Maulawī Raushan 'Alī	1852	Lucknow
Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir	Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān	1852	Kanpur
Dastūr al-Maktūbāt	Naunidhī Rāy	1852	Kanpur
Shajarat al-Amānī	Qatīl	1852	Kanpur
Bostān [Nuskha-i sahīh-i Bostān]	Sa'dī	1852	Lucknow
Masā'il	Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz	1852	Kanpur
Dīwān-i Waqār	Waqār	1852	Kanpur
Jāmi' al-Fawā'id	Yūsufī	1852	Lucknow
Nal Daman	Faiẓī	1853	Lucknow
Maṣnawī-i Shām-i Shabistān	Faẓl 'Azīm	1853	Lucknow
Ruq'āt-i Jāmi	Jāmī	1853	Lucknow
Wāqa'i-i Kohistān	Muḥammad Faẓl A'ẕam	1853	Lucknow
Qawā'id-i Fārsī	Muḥammad Ḥusain	1853	Lucknow
Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir	Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān	1853	Kanpur
Ruq'āt-i Amānullāh	Amānullāh Ḥusaini	1854	Kanpur
Muntaḵẖab-i Maṣnawī-ye Ma'nawī	Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī	1854	Kanpur
Tuḥfat al-Mu'minīn	Muḥammad Mu'min	1854	Lucknow
Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir	Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān	1854	Kanpur
Irshād-nāma	'Abbās 'Alī "Shohrat"	1855	Kanpur
Dīwān-i Maẕhar	"Maẕhar"	1855	Kanpur
Ṣifwat al-Maṣādir	Muḥammad Muṣṭafá Ḵẖān	1855	Kanpur
Dastūr al-Maktūbāt	Naunidhī Rāy	1855	Kanpur
Gulistān	Sa'dī Shīrāzī	1855	Kanpur

Appendix II: Examples of lithographic printing and calligraphic styles resembling typography

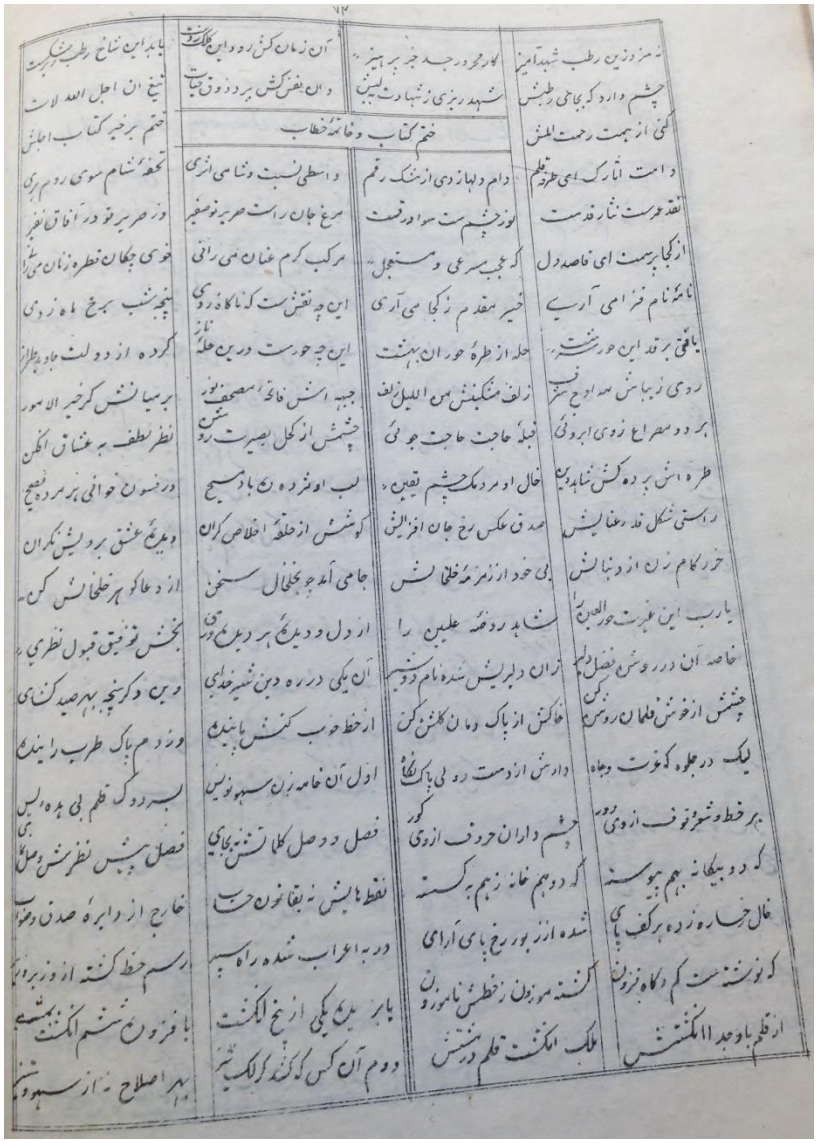


Fig. A. Page from Niẓāmī Ganjawī, *Sikandar-nāma,* (Calcutta, 1828), lithographed by the Asiatic Lithographic Company

و یقین حاصل بود که این وقایع کماهی و این حقایق کما ینبغی در
افراد واقعهٔ واقعه نویسان ومکاتبب دوستان که بهندوستان
بهشت نشان مرسل گردیده مثبت نگشته لهذا این بی مقدار
که از حصار آن سفر کثیرالاخطار از حین توجه بمهم آشام
تا هنگام ارتحال نواب خجسته فرجام بدار السلام شامل راه
یافتگان شبانروزی در مجلس خاص بود با وجود تفرق بال
وتشتت حال بندی از ان احوال وانموذجی از ان ملال
و برخی از خصایص آن ملک وافر کلال و بعضی از اوضاع
آشامیان بدفعال و سکنه جبال آن محال بعد از ارتحال
نواب غفران مال مرقوم خامه صدق مقال بر سبیل استعجال
ساخت و از اطناب و تطویل در عبارات واکثار و تلفیف
در استعارات وایراد الفاظ مغلقه واتیان کلمات غیر مانوسه
که مخل طبایع و مخیل ضمایر است احتراز و اجتناب واجب
شناخت تا بنظر افاضت مآثر اشراف واعیان واکابر
واصاغر هندوستان بل کل جهان رسیده موجب ازدیاد
ثقه ایشان بر فضل ملک منان وافزونی بصیرت در عواقب
امور دوران گردد از انکه مطمح خاطر با مغل مصادقی و با
هندوستانی معاندتی و مطمح نظر محمدت یکی و مذمت دیگری نبوده

Fig. B. Typographed page from: Amin Ḵẖān, *Ta'rīḵẖ-i Assām* (Calcutta, 1851)