Colonizing Persian:

A Historiography of Persian-language

Decline through Pedagogy in South Asia

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بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ

عَلَّمَ الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

Who taught by the pen -

Taught man that which he knew not.

(96:4-5)

Table of Contents

Abstract

This thesis investigates the decline of Persian in South Asia through pedagogy. It examines the history of elementary Persian-language pedagogy in India from the late pre-colonial period until its demise during the colonial period. It reconstructs the indigenous pre-colonial pedagogy and analyses it educationally and politically, explaining how children learned Persian and how indigenous pedagogical practices contributed to maintaining Indo-Islamic power and culture. It examines educational policies which contributed to the decline of Persian in South Asia and how the colonial government increased its control in Persian-language education. Lastly, it reconstructs the colonial pedagogy of Persian and analyses divergences from indigenous pedagogy, arguing that colonial pedagogy of Persian served to further colonial power and diminish the value of Indo-Islamic society and the Persian language. It argues that Persian was colonized and employed as a tool to further colonial power.

Cette thèse étudie le déclin du perse en Asie du Sud à travers la pédagogie. Elle examine l'histoire de la pédagogie persane du premier degré en Inde à partir de la fin de la période précoloniale jusqu'à sa chute durant la période coloniale. Elle reconstruit la pédagogie précoloniale indigène et l'analyse sur le plan éducatif et politiquement, expliquant comment les enfants apprenaient le perse et comment les pratiques pédagogiques indigènes contribuaient à maintenir le pouvoir et la culture Indo-Islamique. Elle examine les politiques éducationnelles qui ont contribué au déclin du perse en Asie du Sud et comment le gouvernement colonial a augmenté son contrôle sur l'éducation de la langue persane. Finalement, elle reconstruit la pédagogie coloniale du perse et analyse les divergences de la pédagogie indigène, soutenant que la pédagogie coloniale du perse servait à avancer le pouvoir colonial et diminuer la valeur de la société Indo-Islamique et la langue persane. Elle affirme que le perse a été colonisé et employé comme outil pour avancer le pouvoir colonial.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Persian established a strong presence in South Asia as early as the 12th century with the apparition of Islamic empires which espoused the language. Since then Persian has lived a lengthy history in South Asia; it reached its apogee there under Mughal patronage and eventually saw its demise under British rule during the period of colonial governance. Persian was a courtly language of discourse. But, as an elite language of governance, literature, communication, and often religion, it was not the natively spoken tongue except for a minute minority of the population. Therefore, as a non-native language, it usually necessitated learning through instruction, and was often learned to the point of being internalised as the primary language of written and literary expression. However, once its teaching was discontinued, as eventually came to be the case under colonial education, it ceased to maintain its elevated status and ultimately virtually vanished in usage and comprehension.

To make sense of the decline of Persian-language instruction and therefore Persian in South Asia, this thesis examines the history of elementary Persian-language pedagogy in India from the late pre-colonial period, through to the course of its decline during the colonial period, and until its demise towards the end of the colonial period. The first chapter reconstructs its pre-colonial pedagogy, offering insight into how young boys were taught Persian in addition to how pre-colonial indigenous pedagogy contributed to maintaining Persian along with other values and markers of elite Indo-Islamic culture which supported and aggrandised the power which elite society held. The second chapter then examines the ways in which the colonial government grappled with questions of language education, increased their control in the domain of education across India, and implemented policies that led to the rise of English and vernacular education along with the consequent demise of Persian-language instruction. Finally, the third chapter

examines colonial Persian-language pedagogy, the ways in which it diverged from pre-colonial and indigenous pedagogy, and how these changes eliminated Persian-language usage and dismantled the values and markers of elite Indo-Islamic society, thereby constraining the power which both the Persian language and the elites who espoused it as their language held in India. Essentially, it investigates how Persian was colonized and used as a tool to further colonial power.

The reconstruction of pre-colonial Persian-language pedagogy has been primarily accomplished through the cross-referencing of reports by colonial educators from different regions of India to extract commonalities across syllabi and methods. It relies primarily on extracts from material regarding indigenous education in Persian schools from the reports of Reverend William Adam who was a surveyor of the state of education in Bengal during the 1830s, as well as a report on indigenous education by Henry Stuart Reid who was Visitor General of schools and eventually the first Director of Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces[1] during the early 1850s, and also writings on indigenous education by Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, principal of the Government College Lahore and an important figure in Punjab's educational history. This is in addition to analyses of important elementary pedagogical works used by indigenous instructors. The research has drawn upon Muzaffar Alam's discourses on the politics of Persian in pre-colonial Hindustan to analyse the ways in which pre-colonial Persian-language pedagogy contributed to the maintenance of elite power.

To understand colonial perceptions of language education, Anglicist and Orientalist debates, and the development of vernacular language education, this article has utilised significant work in the field by Tariq Rahman, who has written on the history of language pedagogy in

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[1] This presently coincides primarily with the state of Uttar Pradesh and some surrounding regions.

Pakistani and Indian Education for multiple languages. It also gathers information from Anglicist and Orientalist writing by colonial officers to give insight into their perspectives. The research undertaken has relied upon further colonial educational reports and reports from colonial education commissions to examine directives and measures taken to increase control in Indian education, language pedagogy, and Persian-language instruction.

Finally, to analyse the colonial pedagogy of Persian and in order to reconstruct the syllabi of government schools and colonial attitudes on Persian pedagogy, this thesis primarily examines colonial reports from the North Western Provinces on education and the Indian Education Commission on textbooks. It draws on scholarship by Avril Powell and Krishna Kumar to understand criticisms of pedagogical and literary works on the basis of morality by colonial educators. Lastly, this dissertation examines how colonial perspectives compare with indigenous scholars regarding the place of Persian in South Asia and how they situate Indians within the larger context of the Persian cosmopolis or Persophonia.

Literature Review

Muzaffar Alam's article, *The Culture and Politics of Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*[2] is essential to understanding the cultural and political history of Persian within South Asia prior to the impacts of colonialism. It demonstrates the relationship which Persian held with power and empires within South Asia, in addition to how it connected India within the larger frame of the Persophonia or *'Ajam* which stretched into Central Asia and even into the Balkans. It addresses the very relevant historical issue of Indian confidence in Persian and the development of what has

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[2] Alam, Muzaffar. "The Culture and Politics of Persian in Precolonial Hindustan." In *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*, edited by Pollock, Sheldon. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 131-198.

been labelled as *Sabk-i-Hindī* which has been falsely represented as an Indian style. He examines the role of the development of distinct Iranian identity under Safavid rule and how Persian came to be identified as the language of the Iranian plateau and how Iranians attempted to consolidate authority in the Persian language. Instead of celebrating Indo-Persian literature as part of Greater Iran or *'Ajam*, Indo-Persian literary culture was subordinated to that of Iran, even though Mughal Persian culture dominated the literary culture of the Persophonia for a significant portion of Persian literary history and Iranian literati found patronage there at a time when they were being persecuted in Safavid Iran. He discusses the role of Persian beyond the court and literary culture into the administration and into non-Islamic communities, in particular the Kayasths and Khatris. He provides information on Persian education in the Mughal Period and educational reforms under Akbar. Persian, he argues, was the perfect language to build an empire in India due to its cosmopolitan nature and aided in creating a Mughal political ideology that served its diverse and heterogeneous social and religious reality. He briefly mentions British recognition of the danger which Persian posed to its colonial project and the imposition of English. His article is helpful in understanding the political and ideological significance and associations which Persian held in pre-colonial India. It provides us with a frame of reference to comprehend how colonial measures dismantled that power.

Tariq Rahman's works[3] are instrumental in making sense of the development of English and vernacular education in South Asia. Some of his scholarship intersects with studies of pre-colonial Persian pedagogical history in India. He has written on vernacularisation and the history of colonial language debates, especially amongst Orientalist and Anglicist factions of the British. He has applied these histories to understanding the development of vernacular education, but this

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[3] They shall be cited later as they are referenced.

study uses them with reference to eradicating Persian language education. Timothy Allender's book on colonial education in the Punjab[4] provides valuable information regarding the establishment of government schools in addition to the results of colonial undertakings in that region which failed to accomplish the mass education that they attempted to realise. He demonstrates the case that European administrators were responsible for educational decline.

Krishna Kumar has written on the subject of colonial perceptions of what constituted proper education, colonial attempts to create the ideal citizen through education, and the politics associated with the measures they implemented in order to achieve those goals.[5] Avril Powell has written on questions of morality and ethics by colonial educators regarding works which were considered 'immoral.'[6]

Original Contribution

The main contribution of this thesis is explaining the decline of Persian in South Asia. There are many factors which contributed to its decline, but the most important factor in the decline of any language, especially one that is not a native language, is education. Currently, scholarship on the decline of Persian in South Asia has been focussed on the decline of confidence in Indo-Persian writing and the realm of literary culture, which is relevant to understanding the decline of the language as a whole. However, it cannot be considered in any way the deciding factor. Languages have remained in multiple contexts, including ones in which they were considered

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[4] Timothy Allender. *Ruling Through Education: The Politics of Schooling in the Colonial Punjab*. (Elgin: New Dawn Press, 2006).

[5] Krishna Kumar. *Political Agenda of Education: A study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas, Second Edition*. (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005).

[6] Avril Powell. "Old Books in New Bindings: Ethics and Education in Colonial India." in *Sengupta I., Ali D. (eds) Knowledge Production, Pedagogy, and Institutions in Colonial India.* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 199-225.

bastardised, corrupted, or inferior to variations in another region. Therefore, this thesis is essential in explaining the decline of Persian in South Asia through pedagogy, a subject which has heretofore remained unstudied. This thesis contributes original research regarding the alteration, colonization and employment of Persian education as a tool for developing colonial power and for eradicating Persian in South Asia. It compiles and provides diverse sets of information to analyse the syllabi and methods of both pre-colonial and colonial elementary Persian-language education. Finally, it explains the reasoning for pedagogical practices from educational and political perspectives in applicable instances, in order to relate power dynamics and social significance to pedagogical influences.

Chapter One: Late Pre-Colonial Elementary Persian Language Education

Today when we think of Persian-language education in the Indian Subcontinent, it is a subject largely confined to the realm of higher education institutions. However, this was not always the case; in the past, it was common for young children to begin and conduct their education in Persian.[7] Having been the language of bureaucracy, literature, epistolary composition, and often religious study (along with Arabic), Persian, though not a vernacular in the Indian subcontinent, was essential in gaining access to a certain strata of society. Thus, young Muslim and Hindu boys were often sent off to schooling in Persian, in order to gain employment and partake in elite society, especially through literary and *sharīf*[8] culture. It formed a part of attempting to gain ascendancy in a society where Persian-language education was heavily valued, since it held a privileged position as the language associated with Indo-Islamic rulers and the elite which surrounded them. Such was the value of Persian and the legacy of Indo-Islamic rule that the gaining of ascendancy continued to hold promise after the waning of political power by the elite. Therefore, students first embarked upon learning to read and write the alphabet. They began reading and memorising certain poetic and prose works, often beginning with multilingual versified vocabularies. Their reading was at first accomplished simply through formal reading of written characters which did not entail active efforts in understanding their reading material. Readings of works would then be repeated with their translations which were memorised, so as to build their understanding and vocabulary. They also learned grammar, especially with regards to verbal morphology. However, the depth of their grammar education seemed to vary. Eventually, they underwent training for chancellery work and composition through the reading of works on epistolary composition. After

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[7] Persian-language education was common, in the sense that where education was available, not that Persian was commonly studied, since the general population remained largely illiterate.

[8] *Sharīf* is literally understood as honourable, but there are parallels with the notion of British gentlemanly culture.

the arrival of the British East India Company, business and correspondence continued to be conducted in Persian for a period of time. This resulted in a need for British officers to be educated in Persian. Eventually, as the East India Company grew more powerful, there were active efforts to undermine the presence of Persian in India and to replace it with English alongside the vernacular languages. As a result, the education of Persian was transformed.

This chapter engages in understanding the pedagogical norms of elementary Persian-language education and Persian schools prior to their transformation by colonial influence. These norms served to create an education which aided in inculcating students with learning and values that supported and aligned with the prevailing elite Indo-Islamic culture. In this culture, knowledge of certain standard works on poetry as well as skills in epistolography and poetic composition were highly valued. These skills and knowledge were markers of elites and having them aggrandised one's refinement and eliteness. This chapter examines teaching materials, methods, and philosophies employed during this period. It provides an analysis of elementary Persian-language learning for children. This is achieved through analyses of books, teaching schedules, and forms of instruction. This study demonstrates that elementary materials used for pedagogy, though occasionally different, on the whole shared a large number of essential works across regions in India, consisting primarily of classical literature and some purely pedagogical works, with grammar books largely excluded from the curriculum. This is accomplished by performing a comparative analysis of curricula mentioned in British colonial archival documents in different regions. In addition, it is shown that a large amount of the learning was memorisation based and that while writing was privileged, the oral component of learning factored largely in elementary Persian Language acquisition. The research demonstrates that this was accomplished through phonetic training, reading without meaning, recitation, and using voice a medium of

instruction. I contend that each of these practices served to solidify values and markers of elite Indo-Islamic culture, which contributed to maintaining the power and exclusivity which elite society held. Finally, it is shown that this pedagogy does not fit neatly into any Western philosophies or methods of language pedagogy, but that it demonstrates aspects of both the Grammar-Translation method of language teaching and that of the Reform Movement which succeeded it.[9]

Brief Background on Persian in South Asia

Before we delve into the pedagogy of the language, Nabi Hadi's *History of Indo-Persian Literature* will be useful to provide a brief history of the Persian language and its users in South Asia, to contextualise the position of the language, its method of arrival, and reasons for its instruction. The development of Persian language presence and prestige in India began with the invasion by the Turkic Ghaznavids in the 12th century.[10] First establishing their court at Lahore, the Ghaznavids developed the city's reputation as a literary centre.[11] This later shifted to Multan and Delhi when the Ghorids conquered them. Once the Delhi Sultanate was established in 1206, there was an immigration of many poets and scholars from Persia and Central Asia, many of whom were fleeing Mongol rule. As Delhi grew, Persianate rule took a stronger hold in India under the slave dynasty. Northern India was invaded and sacked by Timur, which caused Delhi's importance to decline after two centuries of prestige.[12] It was after this that the Sayyads and Lodis ruled, during which members of elite Hindu castes, such as Brahmins, Kayasths, and Khatris began

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[9] This is in order to differentiate it from colonial language pedagogy which fell more clearly into the Grammar Translation method and is discussed in the third chapter.

[10] Nabi Hadi. *History of Indo-Persian Literature*. (New Delhi: Iran Culture House, 2001), 1.

[11] Ibid., 4.

[12] Ibid., 110-11.

to adopt Persian on a large scale as their share in administration grew.[13] They were provided the impetus to learn the language, because it led to opportunities for increased communication, connections, employment in the bureaucracy, and ascendency in the elite which was being formed on the model of Indo-Islamic rule which espoused Persian as its language. After this period, Indian Persian began to develop its own character as new terminology was coined and new idioms were created for Indian administrative purposes.[14] Northern India was considered part of the Perso-Islamic world or *'Ajam*, cities like Delhi and Lahore held places in its cultural landscape like Herat and Bukhara.[15]

Eventually, one of the Timurids, Babur, would come to take the place of the Lodis, and would become *Pādshāh* in Delhi, as opposed to his predecessors who as Sultans were nominally tributaries to the caliphs.[16] This marked the beginning of the Mughal Period and renaissance of Persian literature in India[17] which reached a climax under Babur's grandson Akbar.[18] For the first time under Mughal rule, Akbar declared Persian to be the official language of administration at all levels, developing the importance of Persian beyond literary and courtly culture.[19] Akbar, in his religious tolerance, attempted to understand other faiths and made efforts to have Hindu works translated into Persian.[20] The knowledge of scholars was further developed, and their writing in Persian spanned across multiple disciplines.[21] Poetry became the most valued of the arts, and many poets along with masters of other disciplines were weighed in silver for their contributions

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[13] Ibid., 184-85.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Alam, *Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*, 134.

[16] Hadi, *Indo-Persian Literature*, 231-32. This meant that the authority of the *Padshāh* was terminal as opposed to the Sultan's who derived their authority from the Caliph.

[17] Ibid., 236.

[18] Ibid., 259.

[19] Alam, *Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*, 162.

[20] Hadi, *Indo-Persian Literature*, 265-66.

[21] Ibid., 266-67.

by the time of Jahangir and Shah Jahan.[22] The majority of litterateurs were of Iranian origin as they did not find patronage in their homeland.[23] As an increasing number of poets flowed from Iran to India, the same was not true of the reverse.[24] Consequently, Safavid Iran experienced a decline of literary activity and potential.[25]

Eventually, once Shah Jahan's son Aurangzeb acceded to the throne, the grand patronage of poets by the Mughals took a steep decline.[26] Since Aurangzeb was not as fond as his predecessors of artists including poets who engaged in vices such as the drinking of wine and was more absorbed with the many problems of administration and war,[27] his attention was not focussed on litterateurs.   However, poets still found patronage from the nobility at provincial centers.[28] In Aurangzeb's time, the categories of Persian speaking emigrant writers, their second and third generation descendants, and writers of purely Indian origin became more visible, although distinction in their writing could barely be noticed.[29] Notions that one group was superior or inferior in writing due to ancestry are contrary to historical evidence. Eventually Mughal power began to subside due to extensive expenditures on war in the Deccan, the emergence of new powers, and the sack of Delhi. The largest of these new powers was the British, who slowly gained strength in India, and began warring with the Mughals and other powers. Ultimately, after multiple military struggles and strategic diplomacy, the British were the new commanders. Although they originally continued utilising Persian, in 1837 the educational reforms pronounced under the

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[22] Ibid., 309-10.

[23] Ibid., 311.

[24] Ibid., 312. To apply some anachronistic terminology, it would be known as 'brain drain' in today's terms.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., 405.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., 407.

influence of *Macaulay's Minute on Education*,[30] written two years earlier, spelled the beginning of the end to over six hundred years of Persian language use in South Asia. It propagated educating Indians in English and discontinuing any education in Arabic and Sanskrit. However, it made no direct mention of Persian. English superseded Persian's position in India in administration, law, and education.[31] However, Persian language education was still widespread for a period of time in the decades following these reforms.[32] It is this period which I use as the basis to understand elementary Persian language education for children.

In terms of Persian language educational history in South Asia, there is little information for the pre-Mughal period. But, some references indicate that Persian was a medium of elementary education according to Ghulām Muhī ud-Dīn Sufi in his book on the evolution of the curriculum in Muslim educational institutions.[33] Although Arabic was the primary medium of theology, philosophy, and the sciences, Persian served as the *lingua franca* of the court. Many educational institutions were religiously affiliated and known under the categories of *madrasāt*, *makātib*, or *jāmi'āt*.[34] However, there were often individual teachers or noblemen who would undertake the education of students either of their own accord or by hiring a scholar.[35] A large volume of poetry and translations reinforced Persian as a medium of instruction. Records show that the works of Sa'dī and other prominent poets were often studied by royalty and nobles.[36] Syllabi of the Persian

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[30] T.B. Macaulay. "Minute on Education" in *Bureau of Education - Selections from Educational Records, Part I (1781-1839).* Edited by H. Sharp. (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1920), 107-117.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ghulām Muhī ud-Dīn Sūfī. *Al-Minhāj, Being the Evolution of Curriculum in the Muslim Educational Institutions of India.* Iad Oriental Series, No. 44. (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1977), 34.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid., 52, 53, 57, 63.

curriculum are given by Sufi from the manuscripts of *Khulāsat ul-Makātib*[37] and the legend of *Hīr Rānjah*.[38] The details of these syllabi will be provided later in this article.

For the Mughal period, Alam writes that under Akbar, certain educational reforms took place:

> Akbar's educational reform pertained in the first place to the learning of the Persian alphabet and basic vocabulary. Children were no longer to spend much time on the alphabet, as had been the earlier practice. After learning and practicing the shapes and names of the letters, they were required to commit to memory some Persian couplets or moral phrases and thus gain a sense of the ethos of the language at a very young age. Then they studied the prescribed curriculum, which included ethics (akhlāq), arithmetic (hisāb), notations peculiar to arithmetic (siyāq), agriculture (falāhat), measurement (masāhat), geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, household economy (tadbīr-i manzil), the rules of government (siyāsat-i mudun), medicine, logic, mathematics (riyāzi), and physical and metaphysical (tab'ī and ilāhī) sciences.
> At the advanced level, works of the classical masters were studied in order to acquire proficiency in Persian composition and poetry.[39]

This would have been the elite education available at the time, but it was not the case for the majority of later Persian schools which did not contain many of the subjects mentioned. Students were more focussed on gaining employment which primarily required skill in composition and occasionally accounting.

Late Pre-Colonial Persian Pedagogy Reconstruction

In attempting to understand the configuration of pre-colonial Persian pedagogy in the Indian Subcontinent, we are obliged to do a certain amount of reconstruction. Among the most useful documents in this process are *Adam's reports on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar, Submitted to the Government in 1835, 1836, and 1838,*[40] which are the earliest detailed reports. They were written by the Reverend William Adam, a missionary educationist who was

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[37] Ibid., 76.

[38] Ibid., 109.

[39] Alam, *Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*, 163

[40] Rev J. Long and William Adam. *Adam's reports on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar, Submitted to the Government in 1835, 1836, and 1838*. (Calcutta: Home Secretariat Press, 1868).

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asked by the government to report on the state of education in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa.[41] He

resigned in 1839, but his approximately 400 page report goes into detail on the various vernacular

schools in the towns and villages of Bengal and Bihar, primarily in the Bengali, Sanskrit, Persian,

and Arabic languages.   It describes the state of the schools, their instructional methods,

demographics of students and instructors, the remuneration for instructors, and the pedagogical

materials utilised among other details. While most of the report is irrelevant to this study, it does

provide significant insight into Persian-language education at the time.

Adam did not create his 1835 report based on his own observations and authority, drawing

instead from five principal sources: The Buchanan Reports, records of the General Committee of

Public Instruction, Hamilton's East India Gazetteer, Missionary/College/School Reports, and a

memoir compiled by the Searcher of Records at the India House.[42] Adam mentioned limiting the

geographical scope of his report to Bengal due to the fact that the materials for the purpose of

creating such a report existed in a very dispersed state.[43] They had accumulated to such an extent

that other collected material was reserved for future reports[44] which were, unfortunately for this

study, never completed. He was later commissioned to survey Bihar also, and along with Bengal

he began his own personal investigation into the state of indigenous education in these regions.

He mentions his research methodology in the introduction to his 1838 report, originally attempting

to travel to each of the villages himself, but he eventually employed locals to aid him. They

surveyed their own local areas by visiting schools and households and reported back to him.[45]

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[41] Ibid., 93.

[42] William Adam. *Report on the State of Education in Bengal*. (Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1835), 4.

[43] Ibid., 3

[44] Ibid.

[45] William Adam. *Third Report on the State of Education in Bengal; including some account of the state of education in Behar and a consideration of the means adapted to the improvement and extension of public instruction in both provinces*. (Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1838), 2-9.

Thus, it is partially on the authority of the observation completed by these sources which affords us information pertaining to the instruction and curriculum of the Persian schools of the region. This would narrow our scope to Persian pedagogy in Bengal and Bihar. However, I will discuss the details for other provinces in other reports.

Another helpful document is the *Report on Indigenous Education and Vernacular Schools in Agra, Aligarh, Bareli, Etāwah, Farrukhābād, Mainpuri, Mathura, Shāhjahānpūr for 1850-51 by Henry Steward Reid.*[46] This report is similar in scope and methodology to Adams's report and, in fact, does mention Adam's report in certain instances but covers a region in the former United Provinces.

In the case written by Adam of the Persian schools in Nattore, a sub-division of Rajshahi District in Bengal; four Persian schools are mentioned in this district.[47] Looking into the schooling process of a student initiated into the school, we find the following steps. A student began his[48] education at the age of 4 years, 4 months, and 4 days.[49] Although this is the "correct" age, few students began before the age of 7 according to Reid.[50] Normally, a ceremony where the family and friends are invited was held. In this ceremony the child was dressed in their best clothes and was taught to pronounce the alphabet, the opening of the Qurān, some verses of the fifty-fifth surah of the Qurān (*Surat ur-Rahmān*), and the whole of the eighty-seventh surah (*Surat ul-A'ala*) in succession.[51] This task was largely completed by repeating after the pupil's teacher. However, if

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[46] Henry Stuart Reid, *Report on Indigenous Education and Vernacular Schools in Agra, Aligarh, Bareli, Etāwah, Farrukhābād, Mainpuri, Mathura, Shāhjahānpūr for 1850-51* (Agra: Secundra Orphan Press, 1852).

[47] William Adam. *Second Report on the State of Education in Bengal. District of Rajshahi.* (Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1836), 23.

[48] Students were almost exclusively male. There are some rare reports of female education, but usually this occured within the home, and those making reports on education were not able to gain significant access to these spaces for their studies as it was considered inappropriate.

[49] Ibid., 24.

[50] Reid, *Indigenous Education* , 51.

[51] Adam, *Second Report*, 24.

the child did not comply, then the pronunciation of the *Basmala*[52] sufficed, and his education was

understood as commencing on that day.[53] This introduction was not limited to Muslims, members

of the Hindu scribal caste, Kayasths, were also known to partake in the same ceremony.[54]

The oral component, developing a sound pronunciation, and the ability to listen well was

emphasised at the debut of a student's education. If the student commenced school at a very young

age, he was made to repeat the Persian words for simple things such as "foot" or "hand".[55] Once

he reached the age of 7, he was taught the alphabet, with the forms of the letters presented visually

and their names orally, tracing their outlines which the teacher had written on a board[56] and

repeating them until the forms and names connected in the student's mind.[57] Reid wrote:

> He next goes over the letters, with the number of "dots" above, or below the letter in the following
> manner, "*Alif khali, Pe[58] ke niche aek nuktah, Te ke upar do nukte, Se ke upar tīn nukte, jīm ke pet men aek*
> *nuktah, &c. &c.*"[59] The force of the several orthographical signs (*airāb*, or *harakāt*) are next learnt, as "*Alif*
> *zabar a, Alif zer i, Alif pesh u, Be zabar ba, Be zer bi, be pesh bu,*" &c. The power of "tanwin" is then
> explained, as "*Alif do zabar an, Alif do zer in, Alif do pesh un,*" &c.[60]

He added:

> The simple letters and orthographical signs being mastered, the teacher proceeds to practise the
> scholar in the rudiments of spelling and of joining single letters, so as to form syllables, in the following
> manner: "Be alif zabar ba, be be zabar, bab; be be zer bib; be be pesh bub," &c. The combinations of the
> "airāb" with the letter be is termed " bābat;" with the rest of the letters, takhtī, as te kī takhtī, jim kī takhtī,

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[52] This is the action of pronouncing *b-ism il-lāh* (In the name of God).

[53] Ibid.

[54] Karen Leonard. "Kayasths." In *Encyclopedia of India*, edited by Stanley Wolpert, Vol. 3. (Detroit: Charles
Scribner's Sons, 2006), 22-23.
> The men participated fully in the various Muslim and Mughal court cultures developing throughout India
> since medieval times. They typically learned Arabic, Persian, or Urdu from Muslim clerics and began their
> education with a *bismillah* ceremony, like Muslims in those days. Sometimes the men's names reflected
> their competence and membership in India's medieval bicultural synthesis: Iqbal Chand, Jehangir Pershad,
> or Mahbub Karan. However, in their domestic life the Kayasths subscribed to high caste Hindu regulations
> governing social intercourse and life-cycle rituals.

[55] Reid, *Indigenous Education,* 51.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Adam, *Second Report*, 24.

[58] "Be" should be written here.

[59] This is translated from Hindustani as: "Empty Alif, one dot below Be, two dots above Te, three dots above Se,
one dot in the stomach of Jīm, etc."

[60] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 52.

&c. Should the teacher be efficient, and the boy diligent, he will have gone through the above in the first month or six weeks.[61]

He was then made to read the thirtieth section of the Qurān aloud, of which the surahs are short and are often employed during the five obligatory prayers.[62] The Qurān was useful in his learning, since all the diacritical markings were made apparent so that the correct pronunciation be readily visible, but the meaning of what the student was reading was wholly unknown to him.[63] Once the student had completed this section, he was then introduced to a Persian work known as the *Pand-nāma*[64] composed by Sa'dī,[65] also known by the name *Karīmā*.[66] It is a relatively short collection of rhyming couplets on morality.[67] Like the Qurān, the work was not used for comprehension but rather for the purpose of instructing reading and pronunciation according to Adam.[68] This demonstrates that correct pronunciation and reading skills were at first more important than meaning.   The system of education attempted to internalise the sounds of the language into the student's mind before he ascribed semantic value to the phonology. In other words, before the student was attaching semantic meanings to sounds, the emphasis was placed on correctly pronouncing that which they were reading. But, they were attaching meanings of value and morals to sounds. This way of learning reading linked the importance and the value of reading the Qurān to that of Persian works. Making errors in reading the Qurān was considered a grave sin, as it was considered corrupting the revelation of God. However, while making errors while reading a work of Persian poetry could not hold the same value as the religious scripture, this form

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[61] Ibid.

[62] Adam, *Second Report*, 24.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Sa'dī. *Karīmā*. (Lucknow: Naval Kishore Press, 1894).

[65] Adam, *Second Report*, 24.

[66] Ibid,. This is due to *Karīmā* being the first word which the work begins with, a common form of calling books or chapters.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

of reading education served to elevate the value which selected works of Persian poetry held in students minds. This furthered creating respect for works which the elite associated themselves with, and therefore aligned with creating respect and value for the elite themselves who would be considered knowledgeable in its understanding and recitation. Adam says that the teaching of these books imparted no moral education, since the meaning was not taught.[69] This implied that students were not imparted ethical or moral teachings. However, some nearly 60 years after Adam, Leitner, who wrote his own reports about Persian education in Punjab, decried Adam's claims of the lack of moral education conveyed by these works as idle asserting.[70] He defended his refutation with evidence that the words of these moral works remained on the lips of the students for their lives, since the *Pand-nāma*, a work on morality, was usually memorised during this time, and was later quoted often at occasions where its use was relevant.[71]

Memorisation was also important at the beginning of a student's elementary education in Persian. He was taught how to write letters and join them correctly for various syllables. According to Adam, the student was then taught to write Persian, Arabic, and Hindi names, especially ones for which the writing or pronunciation was difficult.[72] The next book used was the *Āmad-nāma* which pertains to the forms of verbal conjugation in Persian.[73] We shall address the employment of this book more thoroughly later. However, it suffices to know that the varying forms of the verbs were recited back to the teacher frequently, and through repetition they were memorised.[74]

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[69] Ibid., 26-27.
[70] G. W. Leitner. "Semi Classical Indigenous Education" in *Asiatic Quarterly Review*. 1895. IX Nos. 17 & 18 (Jan-April 1895): 202
[71] Ibid., 202-203.
[72] Adam, *Second Report,* 25.
[73] Ibid., 24.
[74] Ibid., 25.

Together, the memorisation of works and reading before attaching conscious semantic knowledge served to create what Pierre Bourdieu labeled *habitus*.[75]   The Qurān had large importance attached to memorisation, since it was considered that even memorising without understanding would have a beneficial effect on the one memorising, and was a worthwhile pursuit which would reward the memoriser, protect from evil, and develop virtue.[76] Similarly, memorising selected poetic works in Persian, which reflected the values of the elite was intended to have the effect of developing good morals in the mind, or sowing the seeds of virtue whose roots would remain planted before and after the fruit of meaning appeared.   Therefore, this also served to cement the virtue of the elite since they were the ones who espoused the culture in which those values were found.   Indeed, before children understood that which they were memorising, they were being primed for connection with the elite through memorisation, a class which they strived to be amongst, and memorisation too, provided them a certain ascendancy in society. Additionally, memorisation aided students in storing and sharing works in a society where printed works were uncommon and manuscripts were not owned by all.

Eventually, the student was introduced to works with the purpose of understanding, the first such work was usually the *Gulistān*,[77] a composition of primarily prose, also composed by Sa'dī. It was then followed by the *Bustān*,[78] a verse work by the same author.[79] Leitner wrote that

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[75] He defines it as permanent, durable manners of being which can drive people to resist and oppose certain forces. Pierre Bourdieu. Les Usages Sociaux de la Science : Pour une Sociologie Clinique du Champ Scientifique. (Versailles: Quae, 2013), 22.

[76] The promise of heaven and bringing 10 people with one for *huffāz* (people who have memorised the Qurān) was often motivation for encouraging children to memorise. It was also considered that carrying the Qurān in one's mind and reciting it correctly would protect one from evil.

[77] Shaykh Abū-Muhammad Muslih al-Dīn bin Abdallāh Sa'dī Shīrāzī. *The Gulistan (rose Garden) of Sa'di : Bilingual English and Persian Edition with Vocabulary.* Translated by W. M Thackston. (Bethesda, Maryland: Ibex, 2008).

[78] Sa'dī, and Sajjād Husain. *Būstān-i-Sa'dī-yi-Mutarjam*. (Dehli: Sab Rang Kitāb'ghar, 1960)

[79] Ibid.

both contained significant moral lessons and they were usually first read without translation or attention to meaning.[80] The reading was then repeated and translated for meaning, but not necessarily idiomatically.[81] Instead, translations were given word by word, without attention to preserving the style or idiom.[82] Kumar argues that this type of translation was given because the meaning was not perceived as residing personally in the mind of the reader, but was something that was contained in the text, the same for all to read.[83] Adam goes on to state that the students were required to memorise many of the new words or passages they encountered.[84] Short sentences for the purposes of common affairs of life were also taught. Elegant penmanship was also considered important and therefore three to six hours a day were spent on developing good handwriting.[85] Students showed their progression through the use of changing pens from thicker to more fine ones and writing surfaces from board to pasted paper to single-fold paper.[86] The students then progressed to works such as *Yūsuf o Zulaykhā*, *Laylā* o *Majnūn*, and the *Sikandar-nāma*.[87] Adam's 1836 report did not deliberate further upon the texts, only mentioning that the student was also taught the different styles of address, the forms of correspondence, and petitions, among other parts of his course of Persian instruction. However, we do encounter other works and information in his 1838 report and a number of other sources which shall be discussed later.

Alternative beginnings to education in Persian reading included the usage of a multilingual versified vocabulary in Arabic, Persian, and early Hindawī, known as the *Khāliq Bāri*[88] which is

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[80] Leitner, *Semi Classical*, 203

[81] Ibid.

[82] See note 102 for an example.

[83] Kumar, *Political Agenda*, 56

[84] Adam, *Second Report*, 26.

[85] Ibid., 25.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Amīr Khusraw, *Khāliq Bāri*, (Naval Kishore Press, 1870-71 (1287 H).

attributed to the most famous Persian-language poet of India, Amīr Khusraw.[89] However, this attribution is debated, as mentioned by Walter Hakala in his article "On Equivocal Terms."[90] According to him, it is quite likely that the *Khāliq Bārī* was added to by multiple people and he contends that the work in its entirety does not belong to Amīr Khusraw.[91] Although, it is likely that a core portion of the text does date to within a dozen years of Khusraw's death in 1325.[92] In the education report prepared by Reid for 1850-51 of indigenous schools in the region primarily concerning the former United Provinces, it was mentioned that the *Khāliq Bārī* was more popular as a first work than the *Pand-nāma*, with the former primarily having been read in the villages and the latter in city schools.[93] The usage of this book in reading as Leitner mentions, disputes the notion held by some scholars that students learned the texts without meaning.[94]

The beginning of the work is written:

> khāliq(A) bārī(A) surjan-hār(H), wāhid(A) ēk(H) bidān(P) kirtār(H)
> rasūl(A) payghambar(P) jān(H) basīth(H), yār(P) dōst(P) bōlē(H) jā(H) īth(H)
> ism(A) Allāh(A) khudā(P) ka(H) nānōn(H), garmā(P) hē(H) dhūp(H) sāya(P) hē(H) chāōn(H)[95]

> *[Creator creator creator, one one know God (know to be one God)*
> *Messenger messenger know messenger, friend friend keep saying friend*
> *name of God God's name, heat is heat (of the sun) shadow is shadow]*

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[89] Leitner, *Semi Classical*, 202.

[90] Walter N. Hakala "On Equal Terms: The Equivocal Origins of an Early Mughal Indo-Persian Vocabulary." in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25, no. 2 (2015): 217. doi:10.1017/S1356186314000480.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 52. I believe the reason that a multilingual versified vocabulary would be read in villages as an introductory work rather than the *Pand-nāma* is probably because the reach of Persian in everyday life in villages was less than that of in cities and therefore required increased instruction in vocabulary.

[94] Leitner, *Semi Classical*, 202.

[95] Khusraw, *Khāliq Bārī*, 1. Here, in parentheses, the origin of the word has been provided with A for Arabic, P for Persian, and H for Hindi. The Arabic words used here are commonly found in Persian.

He argues that if the student had mastered[96] the *Khāliq Bārī* then he will have certainly developed some basis in the vocabulary of Persian.[97] This would prove beneficial for some general comprehension as the student progressed to read the works of Sa'dī at first and other authors later. However, Reid wrote that students seldom read beyond four or five pages of the *Khāliq Bārī* and that this usually took three months.[98] Therefore, it is uncertain as to whether the entirety of the work is mastered in each region, but it is understood that the students master at least four to five pages of the work over the three months of studying it. Multilingual versified vocabularies known under the genre of *nisāb* were utilised as pedagogical works in Mughal India. In particular, they began to be written increasingly in response to the need for more pedagogical materials once the Mughal Emperor Akbar required that all documents of the bureaucracy were to be written in Persian.[99] The genre was originally created for the learning of Arabic through Persian,[100] but it came to be useful in the learning of Persian through other languages also. They came to be written in multiple Indian languages and were used especially in smaller sub-imperial centres.[101] Other works in the *nisāb* genre include the *Ajay Chand Nāma* which is mentioned by Hakala as having its chapters being named after the rooms of various palaces, so that a child could recall verses by going through the rooms of the different palaces as a memory aid.[102] There is also the *nisāb Badī ul-'ajā'ib* which is quantified as being read in twenty-eight schools in Reid's report, which makes

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[96] Mastery here is understood as memorisation and the ability to understand and translate a work.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 53.

[99] Hakala, *On Equal Terms*, 224.

[100] Hāfiz Mahmūd Khān Sherānī. "Bachchōn kē ta'līmī nisāb" in the *Proceedings of the Idara-I-Maarif-I-Islamia, First Session Held at Lahore 15th and 16th April, 1933*. (Lahore: Ripon Press: 1935), 54.

[101] Ibid., 225.

[102] Ibid., 218-19.

it the second most read in the genre after the *Khāliq Bārī* which was noted as being read in four-hundred and thirty-three schools.[103]

The following is an overview of the schedule of the school day employed in pre-colonial Persian education. The pedagogical structure and configurations of time allocation will be considered prior to concentrating on particular linguistic competencies. The school hours, at least in Rajshahi district, were generally taken to be from six in the morning to nine at night.[104] According to Adam, in the morning they first revised the previous day's lessons, after which they proceeded to a new lesson, which was read, memorised, and repeated back to the instructor.[105] At approximately noon they took a break for lunch for an hour and returned to school to work on writing for two hours.[106] They then returned to reading, memorising, and repeating a new lesson.[107] This new lesson however was taken from a different genre of literature than the one in the morning, with one having been prose and the other in verse.[108] In this way the students were able to read both the *Gulistān* and the *Bustān* or the epistles of Abu l-Fazl and the *Sikandar-nāma*.[109] The letters of Abu l-Fazl are important since the primary motivation for many students was to obtain bureaucratic positions where chancellery training was necessary. Therefore, studying these letters was essential to the employment and future financial means of many students. Additionally, since Persian was primarily a literary language, skill in composition was the most sought after objective. Students then left to play an hour before the close of the day.[110]

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[103] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 178.
[104] Adam, *Second Report*, 26.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid.

In the evening, they returned to repeat the lessons of that day multiple times, until they had been perfected.[111] After preparing for the next day, they then left. Thursdays were devoted to the revision of old lessons and Fridays there was no school as it is a sacred day for Muslims.[112] A very similar schedule was corroborated by Leitner[113] and Reid.[114] Reading would take place from six to eleven in the morning, writing from one to four in the afternoon, and reading again thereafter until six or seven in the evening, with those who had not completed their reading sometimes being kept until nine.[115]

Regarding reading, one of the four skills essential to language learning, a large amount of memorisation was central in the academic instruction of these pupils. The extent of their comprehension of these memorised works is not fully known. Although Hindustani was not a written medium of instruction, it was understood that it was used as an oral means of instruction in most places. Leitner wrote that texts were first read without translation (*bēma'nī*) and after with translation (*bā-ma'nī*).[116] The translation would have taken place in their own vernacular, which was often Hindustani, but, depending upon the region, could also have been Bengali, Punjabi, or another one of the many vernaculars. For example, Reid wrote:

> The boy reads no longer by rote, but the meaning of every word is literally explained. Little or no endeavour is made to teach the idiom of the language. They read, and give the Urdu translation as follows: "*Padshahi ra Shanidain.[117] Padshahi ke mani, aek Badshah, ra ke mani tain, Shanidain ke mani suna main ne —aek Padshah ke tain suna main ne*.[118]

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[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Leitner, *Semi Classical Indigenous Education*, 201.

[114] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 55-56.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Leitner, *Semi Classical Indigenous Education*, 202. *bēma'nī* is literally translated as "without meaning" from Persian and *bā-ma'nī* as "with meaning."

[117] This is a typo and "Shanidain" should be "Shanidam"

[118] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 53. The Urdu is translated to English as: "*Padshahi ra Shanidam. Padshahi* meaning one emperor*, ra* meaning to*, Shanidam* meaning I listened — One emperor to I listened." The English syntactical order here is incompatible with that of Persian and Urdu which are more similar.

Thus, the initial texts, which were memorised and mastered along with their translations, must have contributed significantly towards the vocabulary of the student and developed an understanding of the different uses of various words. As students progressed in their syllabi of texts, which they first read *bēma'nī*, they must not have been perfectly innocent of its meaning as Leitner argues.[119] Having developed a solid foundational vocabulary in mastering some of the *Khāliq Bāri* and the *Pand-nāma*, they would have had an idea of what they were reading in the *Gulistān* and the *Bustān*, even if they did not fully comprehend during their first reading. After this, once they had read these works *bā-ma'nī*, their difficulty in reading future texts would have decreased, and continued to decrease as they read more works. In the *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1843-44*, a certain Fink writes,

> Sadi's works are read in so many schools from a notion long, and now universally, prevalent, that the study of them makes the subsequent career of the student easy and rapid. Hence they are put into the hands of the scholar as soon as he has mastered the alphabet.[120]

This furthers the idea that mastering these texts advanced the student significantly. Their reading of texts would eventually no longer have been *bēma'nī* if they understood most of what they were reading.

Their reading utilised a more encompassing approach to language learning than the silent reading which most people are accustomed to today. It activated two of the four other skills required in language learning, namely oral production, and oral comprehension. In having to read texts, memorise them, read them aloud, and listen to corrections by their instructor, they were learning through different mediums and strengthening all their language skills. In addition,

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[119] Leitner, *Semi Classical Indigenous Education*, 203.

[120] C.C. Fink. "Appendix I: Circular to Local Committees" in *General Report on Public Instruction in the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency for 1843-44*, (Agra: Agra Ukhbar Press, 1844), lxiii.

prosody could have been internalised such that students would have been able to recognise metres and develop a natural rhythm, had they ever elected to write their own poetry. Recitation is not completely oral production, especially if the mind is not conscious of the semantics behind the utterances. However, as the students progressed in their education, they became increasingly aware of that which they recited, and were therefore aware of the meaning.

Recitation of the different forms of verbs in *Masādir-i-Fārsī ya'nī Safwat ul-Masādir*[121] (The Verbs of Persian meaning the Choicest of Verbs), more commonly known under the name *Āmad-nāma* and usually used along with the *Khāliq Bārī*, should have facilitated the mind and the tongue's ability to produce correct language as it had been trained repetitively in this manner. Persian is not a heavily inflected language, most of its inflection is found in tense and mode of verbs, with other markers for possession, plurality, definiteness, the vocative, the accusative case, and sometimes the genitive case. With the exception of verbs, the other inflections can be taught relatively quickly. Therefore it is rather simple to teach Persian grammar as compared to another more heavily inflected language like Arabic or Sanskrit which were also learned in the same regions and sometimes the same school. Grammar shall be discussed further at the end of this chapter.

The *Āmad-nāma* was the first book that students encountered which can be considered a pedagogical work, as opposed to the other works which were not strictly used for teaching. It treats an important aspect of Persian grammar: verbs. It contains two tables which demonstrate the active conjugations of the verb *āmadan*,[122] from where its name, *Āmad-nāma*, is derived. It then contains a table with the active (*ma'rūf*) and passive (*majhūl*) forms of the verb *āwardan*,[123]

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[121] Muhammad Mustafā Khān, *Masādir-i-Fārsī* (Lucknow: Naval Kishore Press, 1882).

[122] Muhammad Mustafā Khān, *Masādir-i-Fārsī*, 1-2.

[123] Ibid., 2-3.

which, unlike the intransitive (*lāzim*) verb *āmadan*, is transitive (*muta'addī*) and can therefore be utilised to demonstrate the passive conjugations. The conjugations are given for the following: preterite (*māzī mutlaq*), present perfect (*māzī qarīb*), pluperfect (*māzī ba'īd*), past imperfect (*māzī nātamām*), past subjunctive (*māzī ihtimālī*), past optative (*māzī tamannāī*), aorist (*muzāri'*), present indicative (*hāl*), future (*mustaqbal*), imperative (*amr*), prohibitive (*nahī*), the active participles (*ism fā'il*), and the passive participles (*ism maf'ūl*). The conjugations are given for the third person (*ghāib*), the second person (*hāzir*), and the first person (*mutakallim*) for both the singular (*wāhid*) and the plural (*jam'a*). After the table of these two verbs, an alphabetical list of 187 infinitives (*masādir*) is given,[124] alongside each infinitive (*masdar*), the meaning of the infinitive (*ma'nī-yi-masdar*) in the vernacular, the verbal noun (*hāsil-i-masdar*), the causal infinitive (*tarīq-i-ta'dīya*), the conjugation of the third person singular in the preterite and the present, the singular imperative, the schematic (*qiyāsī*) active participle, the active participle(s) based on usage (*samā'ī*), and the passive participle is included. In the copy cited, a fourth edition print for colonial schools, this was followed by 18 points which contained an explanation in the vernacular, Hindustani, of certain concepts.[125] There is an explanation of transitive and intransitive verbs, how to form the various conjugations, and in some explanations, examples are included. Finally, an alphabetical table of another 114 infinitives is included.[126]

The usage of this book primarily included memorisation and repetition. Leitner wrote:

> The pupil then studies the "Dastur-us-sibian," an easy "letter-writer," followed by the "Amadnama," exhibiting the forms of conjugating the Persian verbs which are read to the master, and by frequent repetition committed to memory, a far better plan, in learning languages, than beginning with the rules and exceptions of grammar, as the pupil has already a stock of phrases in his mind to which he can apply some of the rules.

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[124] Ibid., 4-18.
[125] Ibid., 18-22.
[126] Ibid., 22-31.

This clarifies the method of employment for the *Āmad-nāma*, with the verbs *āmadan* and *āwardan* taking the example forms in Persian for verbal conjugation. The teacher explained the verb tense and provided translation. He read the scale aloud and had the students repeat after him. Students memorised these verb tables or scales (*gardān*) by reading and reciting them repeatedly. Once students had memorised the large scales of morphology (*sarf-i-kabīr*) for *āmadan* and *āwardan* along with the explanation on how to form them, they were then able to conjugate any of the other 301 infinitives which they would have found in the book. This was done by memorising the infinitive and the aorist for each verb, which was found in the tables listing the shortened scales of morphology (*sarf-i-saghīr*) and substituting the endings for the verbs from *āmadan* and *āwardan* when reciting the *sarf-i-kabīr*. Similarly, they then knew the meaning of any non-compound verb they encountered. Like the students of Arabic who had memorised passages of the Qurān, they too recalled passages from the *Pand-nāma* for the various usages of different verbs. During the course of instruction, the teacher or master explained the meaning of the verb tenses, their translations into the vernacular, and how they were used. This was how students learned the morphology of verbs.[127]

Once students had mastered the *Khāliq Bārī*, *Pand-nāma,* and the *Āmad-nāma*, they mostly completed their practical understanding of Persian grammar. Therefore, one may understand their rapid progression through vocabulary acquisition and learning literary usages and forms. As students read and mastered the *Gulistān* and *Bustān* and moved on to other works, there were few words which they encountered in their reading which they did not understand. Literary criticisms and commentaries then became useful if they were available to the student.

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[127] This method is still in use in *madrasas* today, especially for the study of Arabic.

This article has elucidated the development of competency in reading comprehension. It shall now expound on the instruction of written expression. The instruction of writing was simultaneously conducted with the teaching of the alphabet, through the writing of letters, joining of letters, and writing of syllables and names as mentioned earlier. The average time to complete this process took approximately 2 months.[128] During the reading of primary works such as the *Khāliq Bārī* or the *Pand-nāma*, the student was required to spell out the letters of each word,[129] and he also wrote out short sentences in the afternoons.[130] Students practised dictation during the reading of the *Gulistān*, *Bustān*, works on epistolary composition such as the *Inshā'-i-Mādhōrām*, and poetical works such as *Yūsuf o Zulaykhā.*[131] The teacher read a passage aloud, and the student wrote it out or wrote out what he had read that day.[132] In the afternoons of those days, the student practiced the drafting of letters, petitions, or if more advanced, he composed verses for the criticism of his teacher.[133] The students used works on composition as exemplars and guides for their own writing styles. If the student had begun studying at the age of seven, then at this point the student reached the age of twelve or thirteen and read the *Bahār-i-Dānish*, the *Sikandar-nāma*, and a work on epistolary composition over a period of two years.[134] In the village schools the students rarely proceeded, for if the student had read this far and was able to write in or translate from his vernacular to Persian, then the student's education was considered to have been completed.[135] Advanced students read the letters of Abu'l Fazl, *Panj Ruka'āt-i-Zuhūri*, and *Masnawī-yi-*

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128 Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 52.
129 Ibid., 53.
130 Leitner, *Semi Classical*, 203.
131 Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 53.
132 Ibid., 54.
133 Leitner, *Semi Classical*, 203.
134 Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 54.
135 Ibid.

Ghanīmat.[136] For those who continued with their Persian education, they read the works which were commonly read during the Mughal period. For those who read beyond that, they found no scarcity of works, the breadth of Persian literature was never ending.

Sufi says the texts used for study in the time of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb are mentioned in a manuscript named *Khulāsat ul-Makātib* which is dated to 1688.[137] These texts span the fields of literature, history, and ethics. Some of the same works are mentioned in Leitner's article which has been cited earlier. Nonetheless, Sufi presented an altogether more comprehensive syllabus of the pre-colonial Persian curriculum in his book on the evolution of the curriculum in the Muslim educational institutions of India. A table organising the works which he mentions is found below:

Prose and Composition	Poetry	Fiction	History	Ethics
(1)Badā'i ul-Inshā' (or Insha'-i-Yūsufī), (2)Prose works of Mullā Jāmī and Mullā Munīr, (3)Letters of Abu'l Fazl. (4)Handbook of Shaikh 'Ināyat ul-Lāh, Secretary to Shāh Jahān, (5)Bahār-i-Sukhan by Shaikh Muhammad Sālih. (6)Letters of Mullā Munīr, (7)Epistles of Shaidā and Mullā Tughrā', (8)Story of Lāl Chand, (9)Līlāvatī translated by Shaikh	By Mullā Jāmī: (1) Yūsuf o Zulaykhā (2)Tuhfat ul-Ahrār (3)Nuzhat ul-Abrār By Nizāmī: (4)Sikandar-nāma. (5)Makhzan ul-Asrār (6)Haft Paikar (7)Shīrīn Khusraw (8)Lailā Majnūn By Amīr Khusraw: (9)Qirān us-Sa'dayn (10)Matla' ul-Anwār (11)I'jāz-i-Khusrawī (12-16)Dīwāns of Shams-i-Tabrīz,	(1)Tūtī-nāma of Nakhshabī, (2)Anwār-i-Suhailī of Husain Wā'iz Kashifī, (3)'Iyār-i-Dānish of Shaikh Abu'l Fazl, (4)Bahār-i-Dānish of Shaikh 'Ināyat ul-Lāh.	(1)Zafar-nāma of Sharaf ud-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, (2)Akbar-nāma of Abu'l Fazl, (3)Iqbāl-nāma-i-Jahāngīrī, (4)Ta'rīkh-i-Fīrōz Shāhī, (5)Razm-nāma (translation of the Mahabharata), (6)Shāh-nāma of Firdausi	(1)Akhlāq-i-Nāsirī, (2)Akhlāq-i-Jalālī, (3)works of Sharaf ud-Dīn Manīrī, (4)Nuzhat ul-Arwāh, (5)Masnawī of Maulānā Rūm, (6)Hadīqah of Sanā'ī

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[136] Ibid.

[137] Sufi, *Al Minhāj*, 76.

Faizī.	Zahīr-i-Fāryābi, Sa'dī, Hāfiz, and Sā'ib. (17-21)Qasā'id of Badr-Chāch, Anwarī, Khāqānī, 'Urfi, and Faizī			

Another 18th century syllabus which Rahman provides is found in a 1766 manuscript[138] of the legend *Hīr Rānjhā* which was written by Wāris Shāh. The works included in the syllabus are: *Ma'ārij un-Nubuwwat*, *Har Karan*, *Nām-i-Haqq*, *Khāliq Bārī*, *Gulistān*, *Būstān*, *Bahār-i-Dānish*, *Tūtī-nāma*, *Rāziq Bārī*, *Munsha'āt Nisāb*, *Abu'l Fazl*, *Shāh-nāma*, *Wāhid Bārī*, *Qirān us-Sa'dayn*, and the *Diwān-i-Hāfiz*.[139] Many of the same works are mentioned by Alam.[140]

Many of the same works are found in Adam's 1838 report. However, his report, having covered many districts, demonstrates the varying additions which are found in certain districts. The number of schools using a work or students reading a book is not given. The following are samples from his reports:

For Murshidabad he wrote:

> The following works comprise the course of Persian reading, viz. the *Pandnameh*; *Gulistan*; *Bostan*; *Payindeh Beg*, embracing forms of epistolary correspondence; *Insha-i-Matlub*, containing forms of correspondence and contract; *Joseph and Zulaykhā*, the history of Joseph; *Asafi* consisting of odes; *Secandar Nameh*, poetical history of Alexander the Great ; *Bahar-i- Danish*, tales ; and *Allami*, consisting of the correspondence of Shah Akber, Abulfazl, &c. &c. About one-half of the Persian teachers limit their

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[138] Tariq Rahman. *A History of Language-Learning among the Muslims of South Asia*. (Lahore : Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2012), 135.

[139] Sufi, *Al-Minhāj*, 109.

[140] Alam, *Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*, 163

> Texts prescribed at this stage were Shaykh Sā'dī's classics, *Bustān* and *Gulistān*, for literary prose and verse; and for ethics, *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* of Khvājah Nāsir al-Dīn Tūsī and its later recensions: *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* of Jalāl al-Dīn Davvānī and *Akhlāq-i Muhsinī* of Mulla Husain Va'iz al-Kāshifī. From these texts the students were expected to learn about the good and bad qualities of human beings, socially approved etiquette and moral values, principles and norms of family organization, and state politics. For history, the students generally read about Islam, Mongols, and Turks in Central Asia and Persia in Khvāndamīr's *Habīb al-Siyar,* Mīrkhvānd's *Rauzat al-Safā*, and Hamdullāh Mustaufī's *Tārikh-i Guzīdah*. Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī's *Zafar-nāmah* was prescribed for an appreciation of Timur's achievements. Later, Abu al-Fazl's *Akbar-nāmah*, together with his works on *inshā'* (draftsmanship), also figured as essential readings.

instructions to the Bostan and Gulistan; and the other works are more or less taught by the remaining number.[141]

For Birbhum he added:

> In addition to nearly all the works already enumerated, the following are included in the course of Persian reading in this district, viz. *Amadnameh* on the conjugation of verbs; the formal reading of the Koran; *Tutinameh* or tales of a parrot; *Ruqäat-i-Alamgir*, the correspondence of Alamgir; *Insha-i-Yusafi*, forms of epistolary correspondence; *Mulatafa*, a collection of letters exhibiting different styles of penmanship; *Toghra*, an account of Cashmir; and the poems of *Zahir*; of *Nasir Ali*; and of *Sayib*.[142]

In Reid's report one finds a long list of books divided by subject, including the number of schools utilising each book and the number of students.[143] The following are the most read books in the combined areas of Agra, Aligarh, Bareli, Etāwah, Farrukhābād, Mainpuri, Mathura, and Shāhjahānpūr: in grammar, *Alif-be* and *Āmad-nāma*; in lexicology, *Khāliq bāri*; in epistolary composition, *Dastūr us-Sibiyān, Inshā-i-Madhō Rām, Inshā-i-Khalīfāh, Inshā-i-Dilkushā, Inshā-i-Abu'l Fazl,* and *Ruqa'āt-i-Ālamgīr*; in prose works, ethical and narrative, *Gulistān, Bahār-i-Dānish,* and *Mufarrah ul-Qulūb*; in poetry and compositions in verse, *Karīmā (Pand-nāma),*

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[141] Adam, *Third Report*, 64-65.

[142] Ibid., 66. He mentions the following titles under Burdwan on p. 69:

> *Tis Takhti*, a spelling-book; *Fārsī Nameh* or *Sirab Dhoka*, a vocabulary ; *Insha-i-Herkern*, forms of correspondence ; *Nal Daman*, translation from Sanscrit of a love-story ; the poems of *Urfi*, of *Hafiz*, of *Wahshati*, of *Ghani*, of *Badr*, and of *Khakani*, the last including both the *Tahfut-ul-Irakin* and *Kasaid-i-Khakani* ; *Waqaia Nyamat Khan Ali*, an account of the campaigns of Aurungzebe ; *Hadikat-ul-Balaghat*, a grammar of rhetoric ; *Shah Nameh*, Firdusi's national poem ; and *Kuliyat-i-Khosro*, the works of Khosro.

South Bihar pp. 72-3:

> *Mamaqima*, an elementary work; *Nisab-us- Subyan*, a vocabulary; *Sawal Jawab*, dialogues ; *Bhagaivan Das*, a grammar ; *Insha-i-Madho Ram, Insha-i-Musallas, Mukhtasar-ul-Ibarat, Insha-i-Khurd, Mufid-ul-Insha, Insha-i-Munir, Insha-i-Brahma*n, and *Murad-i-Hasil*, forms of correspondence ; *Alqab Nameh*, on modes of address ; the poems of *Hilali* and *Kalim* ; *Zahuri*, an account of one of the kings of the Deccan ; *Kushaish Nameh* and *Kisseh Sultan*, tales ; *Nam-i-Haq* names and attributes of God; *Gauhar-i-Murad*, on the doctrines of Islam; *Kiranus Saadin*, a poem by Khosro; and *Mizan-ut-Tib* and *Tiba-i-Akber*, on medicine.

Tirhoot p. 75:

> *Mahmud Nameh*, an elementary work ; *Khushhal-us- Subyan*, a vocabulary; *Nisab-i-Musallas*, a dictionary; *Mahzuf-ul-Haruf, Jawahir-ut- Tarkib*, and *Dastur-ul-Mubtadi*, on grammar; *Mufid-ul-Insha*, *Fyz Baksh*, *Mubarik Nameh*, and *Amanullah Hossein*, forms of correspondence ; the poems of *Fahmi* ; and *Ruqäat-i-Abulfazl*, the letters of Abulfazl."

[143] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 177-183. The list is rather lengthy and therefore its full contents are not included and may instead be perused at the reader's discretion. However, I mention the most frequently utilised books.

Bustān, Mā-muqīmān, Mahmūd-nāma, Yūsuf o Zulaykhā, Masnawī-yi-Ghanīmat, and *Sikandar-nāma.*[144]

These sources clarify which works were most common and prevalent across the regions of Bengal, Bihar, and the former United Provinces. After cross-referencing the syllabi provided, the following works are each found in Adam's, Reid's , and Fink's[145] reports as being read and used for teaching: *Āmad-nāma*, *Dastūr us-subiyān*, *Inshā-i-Madhō Rām*, *Inshā-i-Abu'l Fazl*, *Ruqa'āt-i-Ālamgīr*, *Gulistān*, *Bahār-i-Dānish*, *Karīmā (Pand-nāma)*, *Bustān*, *Mā-muqīmān*, *Mahmūd-nāma*, *Yūsuf o Zulaykhā*, *Masnawi-Ghanīmat,* and *Sikandar-nāma*. Therefore, these works are understood as forming the basic syllabus for the average Persian-language student for that period in India.

Analysing Pre-Colonial Pedagogical Practices

This section considers pre-colonial pedagogical practices in these schools, and the theoretical framework which surrounds them. Their pedagogy does not clearly align Western language teaching philosophies and methods which were dominant at the time, and it differs in certain respects, especially regarding grammar and the oral component of education. Their method of learning contains many elements of the pedagogical method known as the Grammar-Translation method of learning which was the dominant method of language instruction and philosophy in Europe until the mid-19th century.[146] This method "views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and

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[144] Ibid.

[145] Fink, *Public Instruction*, lxi. The full list of books with the number of schools in which each book was found to be read is found on pp. lxxxii-lxxxvi

[146] Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge Language Teaching Library. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 6.

syntax of the foreign language."[147]   As we have seen in the usage of the *Āmad-nāma,* much of the elementary education consists of memorising morphology. In addition, in the Grammar-Translation method, "vocabulary selection is based solely on the reading texts used, and words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization."[148] The usage of the *Khāliq Bārī*, *Pand-nāma*, and other works partially serve this purpose. The Persian schools did not utilise dictionaries or bilingual word lists since printed materials were not in circulation, but the words and translations are instead memorised orally, which serves the same goal. Finally, in this method, "the student's native language is the medium of instruction. It is used to explain new items and to enable comparisons to be made between the foreign language and the student's native language."[149] This is evident earlier given the vernacular, usually Hindustani, was utilised to impart Persian and to explain that which is not understood. However, the Persian schools did not follow the Grammar-Translation method in some aspects, the most important being the lack of explicit grammar instruction and the heavy oral component. In the Grammar-Translation method "little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking or listening."[150]

As we have discussed earlier, the Persian language was first imparted through developing a thorough phonetic understanding of the language which was connected to the visual aspect of its writing. The idea of emphasising proper pronunciation is a theory which arrived in western language pedagogy far later under the Reform Movement of the 1880s, which was driven forth by practical minded linguists.[151] It advocated "phonetic training in order to establish good

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[147] Ibid., 5.
[148] Ibid., 6.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid.
[151] *Approaches and Methods*, 9-10.

pronunciation habits."[152] One of the prominent practical minded linguists mentioned earlier was the German scholar Wilhelm Viëtor who espoused this method and believed, along with other reformers, that the spoken language is primary and that this should be reflected in an oral-based methodology. The reformers believed that learners should hear the language first, before seeing it in written form, and that translation should be avoided, although the native language could be used in order to explain new words or to check comprehension.[153] The Persian schools we have studied diverge from this method greatly, as emphasis was not on spoken language, but translation into the vernacular was important. However, Persian teachers valued the oral medium of the literary language and correct pronunciation, thus an oral-based methodology was heavily utilised by them, but it was one which specifically privileged the visual representation of the language. Unlike the reformers, pre-colonial pedagogy demanded that learners should see the language first before hearing it. This is evident in students reading *bēma'nī* to develop solid reading and pronunciation before delving into the semantics of that which they were reading. This privileging of the written expression of language in the Mughal Empire has been discussed by Matthew Melvin-Koushki.[154] He asserts Abu'l Fazl, Grand Vizier of the Mughal Emperor Akbar and chief architect of the new Mughal imperial culture, as arguing for writtten expression to be the "secret bearer of speech"[155] and superior to speech:

> Abū l-Fażl is manifestly relying on a specifically Timurid lettrist doctrine to this end. Following Ibn Turka, either directly or via Davānī, he asserts the letter to be a form of light emanated by the divine essence down through the four levels of being, from most occult to most manifest—the only cosmological model that explains the epistemological-ontological superiority of writing to speech: for only writing engages vision, that faculty of light, that highway to heaven.[156]

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[152] Ibid., 9.

[153] Ibid., 10.

[154] Matthew Melvin-Koushki. "Of Islamic Grammatology: Ibn Turka's Lettrist Metaphysics of Light" in *Al-ʿUṣūr al-Wusṭā* 24 (2016): 42-113

[155] Ibid., 92.

[156] Ibid., 93.

The idea of writing as being a privileged locus of language to be decoded is reflected in the way students learned Persian through deciphering the characters into sounds and eventually into meaning. It is also visible in the fact that the focus of Persian education was not to develop eloquent speech, but rather eloquent composition. Learning how to read and write without meaning formed the beginning of a child's education. Students spent multiple hours a day on calligraphy. Hence, epistolography formed such a central focus of pre-colonial language education, not only for the employment opportunities it provided, but because those opportunities formed part of an imperial culture which privileged writing. The true evaluation of whether a student had succeeded in his Persian-language education was his skill in drafting a letter. Often was the case that once a student was deemed to be able to draft a good letter, his studies no longer needed further pursuit. There was respect given to manuscripts which were taken great care of, additionally symbolising the value which writing carried. Paper was also not as easily accessible and therefore while the oral language could be accessed by anyone willing to listen and memorise, the medium of writing itself was limited to the elite and was a symbol of power.

However, while recognising the privileged position of writing from an ideological perspective of elite culture, we cannot discount the value that orality held in the classrooms. As with the Qurān, being able to recite correctly and memorising works to be recited back to one's teacher each day formed an immense portion of a child's learning. Children who were too young to learn to read and write were taught simple words orally. There was a great importance placed upon the sounds of language themselves. Kumar asserts that in a pre-print society oral transmission held large importance, since part of the value derived from the texts was being able to share the text and to store it, which was often in an oral medium, and that the sound of the text

was no less important than its meaning.[157] While the overall evaluation of a student may have been his ability to write a good letter, his everyday evaluation included memorising and recitation alongside dictation. Translations which were provided to the student were not provided in written form, but rather orally and unidiomatically by teachers to be memorised. This conveys that while Persian letters may have been privileged and intended to be associated with Persian sounds. It was Urdu or other languages whose orality carried the semantic transfer for those letters and sounds. This reinforced the value of Persian as an elite language of power, worthy of being written, unlike Urdu or other vernacular languages which were more suitable in the realm of oral expression.

Regarding grammar, it should be taught using an inductive method according to the reformers.[158] They contended that the explicit principles of grammar do not need to be taught and then applied as in the Grammar-Translation method. Rather, students should learn grammar by seeing examples and discovering the rules of grammar through usage. It is a more intuition-based approach to the language. It seems that grammar was not explicitly taught in most schools. Of the books read in the Persian Schools, few were classified under Grammar in Reid's report. Those mentioned that were widely read in over 250 schools, were the *Āmad-nāma* which we discussed and *Alif-be*.[159] *Masdar-i-Fuyūz,*[160] written in Urdu and completed by Nazīr ad-Dīn Hasan Shā'iq in 1811-12[161] was read in 22 schools and is the next most read in the grammar category. Like the *Āmad-nāma* it also includes a table of verbs, but dispenses with most unnecessary additional columns and only includes the infinitive, the meaning of the infinitive in Hindi, and the aorist, from which the other declensions can be derived. This verb table contains over 350 infinitives,

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[157] Kumar, *Political Agenda*, 55.

[158] Ibid., 9-10.

[159] I was unfortunately unable to obtain a copy of this work to analyse.

[160] Nazīr ad-Dīn Hasan Shā'iq Quraysh Hashimī. *Masdar-i-Fuyūz*. (Kanpur: Munshi Naval Kishore, 1883)

[161] M. I. Waley. *Supplementary handlist of Persian manuscripts, 1966-1998*. (London: British Library, 1998), 35.

which is over 50 more than the *Āmad-nāma*. However, this table comprises a small portion of the book, a mere 13 of its 90 pages. The book must certainly be considered a grammar, for the majority of its composition deals with not only the morphology, but also provides detailed explanations of syntax. This detailed level of syntax would be commonly studied in the Arabic schools.

In addition to these works, there were other grammar works which were written earlier in Persian and read in the Persian Schools. *Risāla-yi-'Abd ul-Wāsi' Hānsawī*[162] also known by the name *Qawā'id-i-Zabān-i-Fārsī* written by 'Abd ul-Wāsi' Hānsawī, whose earliest manuscript in Aligarh Muslim University dates to 1734-35[163] was read in twelve schools in Reid's report,[164] and according to Arthur Dudney it was probably the most popular Persian primer of the eighteenth century.[165] It draws from earlier sixteenth and seventeenth century works, in particular the *Farhang-i-Jahāngīrī* [166]and the *Farhang-i-Rashīdī*,[167] which Dudney mentions.[168] The *Farhang-i-Jahāngīrī* was a dictionary completed by Jamāl ud-Dīn Husayn Injū Shirāzī in 1608-09 whose *muqaddima* (preface) deals primarily with grammar and was often copied separately.[169] The *Farhang-i-Rashīdī* was another dictionary completed by Shaykh 'Abd ur-Rāshid Tattawī in 1654 which drew heavily from the *Farhang-i-Jahāngīrī*[170] and also contains a *muqaddima* mostly pertaining to grammar.[171] Another grammar work read in fifteen schools in Reid's report,[172]

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[162] 'Abd ul-Wāsi' Hānsawī. *Qawā'id-i-Zabān-i-Fārsī*. Parliamentary Library of Iran, Tehran.

[163] Arthur Dudney. "Persian Language Education in Mughal India from *Qasbah* to Capital" in *Early Modern India: Literatures and Images, Texts and Languages*, Ed. Maya Burger & Nadia Cattoni (Heidelberg: CrossAsia, 2019), 86.

[164] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 177.

[165] Dudney, *Persian Language Education in Mughal India*, 84.

[166] Jamāl ud-Dīn Husayn Injū Shirāzī. *Farhang-i-Jahāngīrī*. Parliamentary Library of Iran, Tehran.

[167] Shaykh 'Abd ur-Rāshid Tattawī. *Farhang-i-Rashīdī*. Parliamentary Library of Iran, Tehran.

[168] Dudney, *Persian Language Education in Mughal India*, 86.

[169] Charles Ambrose Storey. *Persian Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey, Volume III Part 1*. (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 27-28.

[170] Ibid., 35.

[171] Ibid., 35.

[172] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 177-78.

known as *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī* or *Risāla-yi-Rōshan 'Ali*, was written by Rōshan 'Ali Jaunpūrī whose oldest manuscript noted by Charles Ambrose Storey dates to 1769-70.[173] The beginning of *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī* mentions the *Farhang-i-Rashīdī* also.[174] These treatises on grammar remained read well into the 19th century. In terms of grammar they treat a diverse array of subjects including the alphabet, syntax, phonology, conjugations, pronouns, and affixes. It is unlikely that elementary students would be using this as a foundation to gain understanding and knowledge of Persian. However, more advanced students who had been reading for some time could draw benefit from these works with respect to grammatical understanding and gain knowledge on subjects such as the history of Persian and its dialects, but they would be able to be proficient users of Persian without studying these grammars.

One must consider why grammar was largely excluded from the Persian curriculum of most schools. If one takes the summation of the number of schools reading more serious grammar books in Reid's report to be 68,[175] then in total the number of schools reading treatises on grammar is a quarter of those reading the *Āmad-nāma*. And, if one assumes the total number of schools to be nearly equivalent to the number of schools where the most read of all books in Reid's report, the *Gulistan*, which was read in 824 schools,[176] then not even a tenth of the schools were reading grammar. This signifies that only a small minority were undertaking more serious grammar instruction, at least from books. Fink writes regarding the Persian schools that:

> Even grammar is not studied because it is dry and demands attention and thought: on this branch of learning the ignorance of teachers is lamentably great. Few can teach books which they themselves have not read, and fewer still have any knowledge of even the simplest rules of etymology. One of the consequences of this deficiency is, that the teachers translate the daily lessons to their pupils verbatim and without any regard to the idiom of the Urdu [...] None of the mental faculties, except that of memory, are invigorated by the daily exercise of the school. Indeed there is nothing in the method of instruction calculated

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[173] Storey, *Persian Literature Volume III Part 1*, 127.

[174] Rōshan 'Ali Jaunpūrī. *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī*, (Lucknow: Naval Kishore Press, 1879), 2.

[175] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 177-78.

[176] Ibid., 181

> to draw them out; the teacher merely translating every boy's lesson to him, and that verbatim, and the scholars contenting themselves with committing those translations, together with the lessons to memory.[177]

The excessive nature of these words since his contention is not wholly true since, as mentioned earlier, some schools were teaching grammar books, although they still remained a minority. However, one can understand how Persian grammar would be given little importance during instruction time. Perhaps, this is due to the nature of the language which is far more similar in structure to the native vernacular than Arabic, and whose grammatical principles may be ascertained through inductive reasoning. Both Hindustani and Persian are subject-object-verb (SOV) languages where the order of the sentence generally follows the pattern as provided in the name. Additionally, Hindustani and Persian often have flexible word order. There are no markers for gender in Persian, which renders lerning simpler. Therefore, it would not have been necessary to explain the grammar in great detail. This would not have been the same case with Arabic. However, *Masdar-i-Fuyūz*, which does treat grammar heavily, does so in a manner similar to the study of Arabic grammar. It uses similar terminology to Arabic and classifies structures as they would be formed in Arabic also, and unlike the other grammar works mentioned, explains them in Urdu which was the vernacular for many. Additionally the purposes for which Arabic and Persian were learned were disparate. Arabic was first and foremost learned in South Asia for religious purposes, primarily reading the Qurān, in addition to works of Hadīth and books. Making an error in the understanding and interpretation of the Qurān would be far more grave than an error while reading Persian. The influence of Arabic pedagogy may be witnessed in Persian schools. In the same way that students of Arabic usually first learn how to read the Qurān without any understanding, students of Persian would do the same. Although it was usually the Qurān that Muslim students first began to read, the same exercise of *bēma'nī* reading was also applied to

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[177] Fink, *Public Instruction,* lxiii-iv

Persian with the *Pand-nāma*. However, the same was also true of Sanskrit schools where it was told of the students:

> They first learn the Devanagari alphabet. This is accomplished in two months. They next read the Amarosh, learning it off by heart, without understanding the meaning, which occupies them for nearly a year and a half. Next the boy takes up the Saraswati, a Sanskrit work on Grammar, half of which he learns by heart in about six or nine months.[178]

This shows that the philosophy behind reading *bēma'nī* was not limited to the Islamic languages, but that it was also present in Hindu modes of learning and language pedagogy. But, as Reid also wrote, grammar was studied for Sanskrit. This is further evidence showing the special nature of Persian language study which excluded extensive grammar studies. However, the morphology of verbs was given importance, so explicit grammar instruction was not altogether excluded. It is possible that even though grammatical treatises were made available as early as the beginning of the 17th century, the outreach of imperial culture was so grand that it never sought to grammaticalise Persian-language education on a wide-scale since doing so would entail that Persian was not a formative language of elite Indian society. Generally speaking, unless there is a sufficient diglossia between literary and spoken registers of a language, grammar is often not taught for one's own language. The developers of Arabic grammars were often Persian, similar to Persian grammars in India. Not studying grammar would therefore indicate that Persian was a language which belonged to those who studied it and that it was not a foreign language. This naturally would be an elite marker since Persian was considered to be their language, and those who did not study its grammar therefore belonged to that elite or at least strove to consider themselves a part of it. Alam says that Persian was something approaching a first language for many Indians who appropriated and used Perso-Islamic expressions.[179] It is not apparent that this

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[178] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 59.

[179] Alam, *Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*, 166.

was applicable to all members of Persian-studying society since there was a minority already taking up grammar study. For this reason, it is possible that as education spread to larger portions of society or as time progressed since changes in pedagogy and tradition are sometimes slow, we may have seen Persian grammar study grow and spread to those members of society who did not see themselves as including Persian as part of their cultural milieu. But, since British colonial educators eventually grammaticalised Persian language education, we cannot be certain of how that scenario would have unraveled without foreign intervention.

Thus, with respect to grammar instruction, elementary Persian-language instruction strayed further from the Grammar-Translation method of teaching since explicit grammar instruction was usually not given importance with the exception of the morphology of verbs. In other aspects of grammar learning it was closer to the inductive method of the Reform approach to language learning. Though pre-colonial Persian language schools shared many elements of the Grammar-Translation method, in addition to elements of the Reform Movement's ideas, except their usage precedes that of the Reform Movement's. Thus, we may not easily categorise this pedagogy by Western pedagogical theory. But, it is important to situate the placement of pre-colonial pedagogy in Western pedagogy for this article, because it shall be compared to the colonial pedagogical interventions based upon Western pedagogy which succeeded it.

It may be difficult to understand the components and principles of pre-colonial elementary Persian language education at first glance. Their usage of literary works for elementary instruction and emphasis on memorisation may seem foreign to many Persian language learners of today, but they served a distinct purpose which was to maintain the values, exclusivity, and grandiosity of elite Indian society. Persian education is later broadly demolished in India, along with the teaching philosophies, values, and culture that came with its language instruction. With Persian language

hegemony overthrown and focus given to the vernacular tongues, one may never truly know what it would have been like to sit in a Persian school of the past, nor how it fit into a Persophile milieu. A more comprehensive study of the syllabi is required in the future, especially those works which more advanced students read. However, through perusing some of the books which students learned from, understanding how they spent their hours in the classroom, learning how their teachers imparted education to them, why they imparted it through specific practices, and what these practices served to achieve outside the classroom, this chapter has taken one step further in understanding pre-colonial elementary Persian language education.

Chapter Two: Persian Language Decline through Educational Policy

Persian, a once widespread medium of education, eventually came to be severely diminished in South Asia over the course of a century. Macaulay's *Minute on Education* is often seen as the catalysing force behind a turning point for language education and policy in India. It was written by Thomas Babington Macaulay and asserted the supremacy of English and Western culture and held oriental learning in contempt. This contempt stemmed from early Anglicists, Evangelists who held value in divine law based in Christian learning and morality, and saw Indian culture and learning as offending this morality and a barrier to its implementation. Later, this contempt emanated from preventing and offending British morality which was not only based on Christian morality and divine law, but British sovereignty, law, and morality. The Governor-General at the time, William Bentinck, resolved that funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone. He also subsequently replaced Persian with the Indian vernaculars at the lower levels,[180] whereby English would be utilised as the language of higher courts and education for elites,[181] and the vernaculars would replace Persian at other levels of law and education. These changes are attributed to Macaulay's *Minute on Education* and some have taken his words to be the opinion of all Englishmen, but they were in fact part of a larger Anglicist movement against the Orientalist status quo to establish English language and culture in India to the detriment of indigenous languages and cultures.[182] The development of and shift to Anglicist ideology was a result of a desire to remove barriers that Orientalist policy and perspective placed on British power and values, increased perception of

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[180] Tariq Rahman. *Language and Politics in Pakistan*. (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 37.
[181] Ibid., 42.
[182] Ibid., 33.

British sovereignty in India, and their identification as sovereigns whose rule should reflect positive law rather than natural law. Once Persian had been dethroned, various educational policies were enacted to encourage schooling in the vernacular languages. However, many were not drawn to colonially administered or aided schools due to their lack of Persian language education, since vernacular languages were not considered as having value. The British, realising this, eventually reintroduced Persian to their schools to entice parents, but they made changes to the native curriculum or produced their own books for Persian language learning. This chapter focusses on the development and struggle between Anglicist and Orientalist factions of the colonial power in India, the motivations behind the removal of Persian, and how these changes were realised through education policy. It examines the influence of government policies on the value and control of Persian language education. It argues that these policies were instrumental in eradicating the indigenous schools which espoused Persian and established their own government schools which would take their place and take control over Persian language education. This is in addition to funding schools which operated under the direction of government education policy. This chapter argues that the colonial government later marginalised Persian language education after taking control, which led to its demise.

Anglicists and Orientalists

In order to understand the struggle between the Orientalists and the Anglicists, one should first understand the development of the Orientalist perspective which held ground in India and was the prevailing ideology until Anglicist power gained traction and eventually overtook it. It is widely accepted from Edward Said's work *Orientalism* that the scholarly study of the East by the

West allowed for empires to increase their power and control.[183] This idea primarily holds true for the Orientalists in India, but is not completely correct. Some Orientalists in India not only appreciated but also adopted Indian modes of living.[184] The Orientalist attitude which was partly based upon late medieval and Renaissance ideas of an Orient with fabulous wealth and esoteric knowledge changed as European military and technological superiority grew and Orientalists became convinced of European superiority.[185] However, they were still convinced of India's previous glory and thought they could regenerate it through a scholarly reconstruction of India's past.[186] While they too wanted to use their powers to consolidate the empire, their Orientalist policies disrupted the Indian intellectual tradition less than that of the Anglicist policy which succeeded it.

The first Governor-General of India, Warren Hastings, whose tenure lasted from 1774 to 1785, was a proponent of indigenisation as a means of governance and held Orientalist views.[187] These views included cultivating the Indian classical languages, which they considered to be Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic, so as to conciliate the indigenous intellectual and cultural elite. This was in addition to learning the vernacular languages in order to control the indigenous population more efficiently.[188] For the first purpose, the Calcutta Madrasa, the Hindu colleges for Nuddea and Tirhoot, and the Benares and Calcutta colleges were established.[189] The intention behind the establishment of these seminaries was to win over the loyalty of Muslim and Hindu religious

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[183] Edward Said. *Orientalism*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

[184] Tariq Rahman. *A History of Language-Learning among the Muslims of South Asia*. (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2012), 145.

[185] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 25.

[186] Ibid.

[187] Ibid., 26.

[188] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 26.

[189] Ibid.

figures, and this intention was repeatedly presented as a defence of their establishment.[190] The learning of vernaculars to control and understand the indigenous population was first instituted through the proposal of establishing a Persian Chair at the University of Oxford by Hastings in order for future bureaucrats to be educated in Persian and Hindustani before their arrival in India.[191] Though the professorship was not created, the education of vernaculars to British officials was realised through the establishment of Haileybury college at Herford,[192] Fort William College in Calcutta, and finally a system of language proficiency examinations for civil and military officers which continued until the end of British rule.[193] Haileybury College was established in 1806, remaining open until 1858 and educated generations of British civil servants in Persian as well as other languages present in India such as Urdu, Telugu, Arabic, Bengali, and Marathi before they arrived in India.[194] Fort William College which was founded in 1800 by the then Governor-General Lord Wellesley[195] was a more important institution in terms of the impact of its orientalist studies and publications. He justified the importance of the institution in one of his letters dated to 1802, he writes:

> If The Court should ultimately abolish this institution, it is my fixed and unalterable resolution to propose to Parliament, immediately after my return to England, a law for the restitution of an establishment which I KNOW to be absolutely requisite for the good government of these possessions. So convinced am I of the necessity of this institution, that I am determined to devote the remainder of my political life to the object of establishing it, as the greatest benefit which can be imparted to the public service in India, and as the best security which can be provided for the welfare of our native subjects...Without such a system of discipline and study in the early education of the civil service, it will be utterly impossible to maintain our extensive empire in India.[196]

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[190] Ibid.

[191] Rahman, *A History of Language Learning*, 141-42.

[192] Ibid., 142.

[193] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 27.

[194] Rahman, *A History of Language Learning*, 142.

[195] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 27.

[196] Robert Rouiere Pearce. *Memoirs and Correspondence of the Most Noble Richard Marquess Wellesley, VOL II.* (London: Richard Bentley, 1846), 214-15.

This excerpt is a testament to the Orientalist dedication to maintaining institutions of orientalist study and scholarship for the reason of consolidating empire. It demonstrates the perspective which other Orientalists propagated, namely that of advancing studies of the native populace and their languages for good government. Its final sentence perpetuates the Orientalist claim that Orientalist study is a requisite to empire, and that without such study, it would not be possible.

Two years later in a letter addressed to Wellesley by a teacher of the college, we find the teacher praising the students and what they accomplished with the knowledge of the languages which they acquired:

> They are not students who prosecute a dead language with uncertain purpose, impelled only by natural genius or love of fame; but having been appointed to the important offices of administering the government of the country in which these languages are spoken, they apply their acquisitions immediately to useful purposes, --- in distributing justice to the inhabitants,--- in transacting the business of the state, revenual and commercial,---and in maintaining official intercourse with the people in their own tongue, and not as hitherto by means of an interpreter. [...] this institution will break down that *barrier* (our ignorance of their language) which has ever opposed the influence of our laws and principles, and has despoiled our administration of its energy and effect.[197]

The teacher raised the relevant consequences of Orientalist learning: distributing justice, completing business transactions, and very importantly, breaking the barrier between the British and the indigenous peoples, such that British laws and principles may be spread within India. This barrier was perceived by some Orientalists to be a delicate subject, and that an imbalance or force of power would alienate the natives and could upset the precarious balance of power.[198] This was the defence of conservative Orientalists when a rebellion broke out in Vellore in 1806 and it was blamed on undue interference with Indian culture through pamphlets.[199]

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[197] Ibid., 222-23.
[198] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 27.
[199] Ibid.

As part of their efforts in attempting to understand and control India, Persian learning formed an important part of the curriculum in the East India Company. It was taught at Haileybury, Fort William College, at private institutions such as the London Oriental Institute, and by private individuals such as *munshis* who tutored those who wanted to gain knowledge in the Persian Language.[200]

In contrast to the Orientalist perspective, the Anglicist perspective viewed Indian learning with inferiority and advocated for European and English learning as a means of consolidating empire. It not only viewed Indian learning as inferior to learning in England and Europe, but according to prominent Anglicist, James Mill, it was also inferior to that of mediaeval Europe.[201] It thus considered Indian knowledge and learning as having little value. While acquiring Indian knowledge may have proved useful for trade thus far, and was necessary in order to achieve the goals of the British, which had been primarily economic, this was not sufficient for Anglicists. Antony Anghie argues that there was a shift in Europe during the late 18th century from natural law which was based upon the principle of a universal capability to reason, which established an overarching morality and law of all nations, and was not subject to jurisdiction.[202] Therefore under the Orientalists, while Indian practices and laws may have been different from those in Britain and considered as incorrect, they were still considered to be adhering to natural law and universal morality. Early Orientalists in India were not in the same position as Anglicists in the 19th century. They required Indian knowledge in order to carry out their trade and develop connections to establish political and economic power for the East India Trade Company. The period that

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[200] Rahman, *A History of Language Learning*, 142-44.

[201] Rahman, *Language and Politics of Pakistan*, 25.

[202] Antony Anghie. *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law*. Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 20.

Anglicist perspectives were developing coincided with the consolidation of power by Orientalist forces within India. There was a shift to positive law from natural law in the late 18th century which no longer placed the universal reason as being sufficient for law, but rather positioned sovereign states and the laws which they created as the foundation of the entire legal system.[203] Instead of being bound to an overarching morality of natural law, states were now bound only to the laws they created under positive law.[204] Since the British East India Company consolidated significant power, their presence was shifting to being a sovereign power within India. Therefore, applying the principles of positive law, Anglicists contended that they were bound to the laws which they created. Anglicists argued that Indian learning would not be permitted in England, therefore it should not be encouraged in India.[205] This therefore demonstrated the perception of British sovereignty as extending to India. However, the morality espoused by positive law did not arrive *ex nihilo*, it was a result of natural law, human law, and divine law. Along with natural law, divine law was seen to be among the laws governing people. It is not in positive law, but instead in divine law where we find the motivation for early Anglicist perspectives. Divine law for early Anglicists was guided by Christian morality. Indian society being primarily Hindu and Muslim was therefore seen as immoral in the eyes of Anglicist representations of divine law, and therefore, it was subject to be 'remedied' by the sovereign power. It was once the British became this sovereign power that later Anglicists felt compelled to argue for the application of this perspective of divine law through the power of positive law.

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[203] Ibid., 43.

[204] Ibid.

[205] Alissa Caton. "Indian in Colour, British in Taste: William Bentinck, Thomas Macaulay, and the Indian Education Debate, 1834-1835," *Voces Novae: Vol. 3,* 16. (2018), 7.

      It was not acceptable to offer an education Englishmen themselves would not tolerate, or to have a separate education for the English in India and an inferior education for the natives

For many Anglicists, imperialism through British education and culture was then seen as part of their moral duty.[206] The first pressure of Anglicists against the prevailing discourse of the Orientalists came from the Evangelists of the 'Clapham Sect' of William Wilberforce.[207] A director in the East India Company who was an admirer of Wilberforce, Charles Grant, discussed using either the vernacular or English to impart education in his work *Observations*.[208] We find some interesting observations which provides us with an understanding of early Anglicist perspectives in his fourth and final chapter which is titled: "Inquiry into the Measures which might be adopted by Great Britain, for the Improvement of the Condition of her Asiatic Subjects, and Answers to Objections." The title itself, supports the notion the Anglicists had a moralising duty which they held towards their "Asiatic Subjects." Indeed, if that were not sufficient evidence, he commences his chapter with the following:

> WE now proceed to the main object; of this work, for the sake of which all the preceding topics and discussions have been brought forward, — an inquiry into the means of remedying disorders, which have become thus inveterate in the state of society among our Asiatic subjects, which destroy their happiness, and obstruct every species of improvement among them.[209]

He suggests that it would be more rapid and easy for English teachers to learn the native languages and then impart education, but that it would be more effectual for the Indians to learn English and less confining.[210] This, he argues, is because the students would be confined to the teacher's deciphering of material, and only when the teacher deciphers it. But, if the students were taught English, then they would be able to decipher all writings for themselves at all occasions. He provides the example of Persian which was introduced by the 'Mahomedans', and considers

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[206] Ibid., 26.

[207] Ibid., 25, 28.

[208] Charles Grant. *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Britain, Particularly with Respect to Morals and the Means of Improving it.* Cambridge Library Collection - Perspectives from the Royal Asiatic Society. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[209] Grant, *Observations*, 146.

[210] Ibid., 149.

introducing the language of the conquerors as an obvious method of assimilating the people to them.[211] He hopes that what was done with Persian can be replicated in many ways by English:

> The introduction of English in the administration of the revenue, in judicial proceedings, and in other business of government, wherein Persian is now used, and the establishment of free-schools for instruction in this language, would ensure its diffusion over the country, for the reason already suggested, that the interest of the natives would induce them to acquire it.[212]

He mentions how printing could diffuse English in ways that Persian was never able to.[213] He goes over some of the benefits of virtues which could be acquired through reading in English, but ultimately arrives at his main point which is that of religion:

> But undoubtedly the most important communication which the Hindoos could receive through the medium of our language, would be the knowledge of our religion.[214]

The Evangelist nature of his Anglicist perspective becomes more detailed in the tens of pages which succeed the opening to his discourse on conversion. This nature may form a part of the early Anglicist perspective, but to verify whether religion remained a primary motivator must be further observed. There were concerns that Indians educated in English could give rise to English liberty and English forms of government, but Grant argued that Christian values would subdue ideas of revolution, and that what had happened in America would not be repeated as the people and context were wholly different.[215] This is assuming that divine law would prevail. The British parliament opposed the idea that schoolmasters and missionaries should be sent to India in 1793 when Wilberforce proposed a bill at the instigation of Grant, and cited the same objections as mentioned in the concerns earlier. Namely, education would give modern ideas of French Revolution, and it would be the end of the empire in India as had been the case in America.[216]

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[211] Ibid., 151.

[212] Ibid.

[213] Ibid., 152

[214] Ibid., 154.

[215] Ibid., 179-196

[216] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 29.

Therefore, Grant, Wilberforce, and those who shared their perspectives remained in the minority. However, Grant did manage to have Haileybury College established where James Mill's *The History of British India* was compulsory reading, and where young civil servants would be anglicised before they went to India.[217] Therefore, Anglicists and their power began to grow.

The Anglicists would see their power realised after the accession of Lord William Bentinck to the position of Governor-General of India in 1828. Bentinck allegedly told James Mill before leaving England, "I am going to British India, but I shall not be Governor-General. It is you that will be Governor-General."[218] James Mill himself was not an Anglicist and considered vernacular education to be more useful.[219] However, his perception of Indian knowledge as inferior had great influence on the minds of those who eventually came to power. Bentinck was receptive to the ideas of the champions of Anglicism, especially Charles Trevelyan who battled for its supremacy before Macaulay came to India.[220] Trevelyan was an ardent supporter of introducing English to the natives and removing Persian, as can be witnessed from his writings.[221] He was also in favour of developing the vernacular languages, lessening the control of the *maulvis* and *pundits*, and removing the monopoly of learning which was held by Brahmins. He considered Persian learning and literature to not be useful and believed that it would be better replaced by English. English would serve as a better medium of conveying British morality according to him. Bentinck devised his own plan of education which was Anglicist in nature. After the work of Trevelyan and other Anglicists led to the Anglicists forming a majority in the committees of public instruction,

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[217] Ibid.

[218] Eric Stokes. *English Utilitarians in India*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 51.

[219] Ibid., 57.

[220] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 32.

[221] Charles Trevelyan, *On the Education of the People of India*. (London: Longman, 1838).

Trevelyan wrote to Bentinck, informing him that his national plan of education's introduction was now completely prepared for.[222]

Macaulay was considered by many to be the crowning stroke to the defeat of Persian in India, but his ideas were not novel. His arrival in India was highly recommended to Bentinck by Grant.[223] First, a member of the Executive Council of the Governor General and later, the President of the General Committee of Public Instruction, it was there that Macaulay made his impact on education. His famous *Minute on Education* was written in 1835, and it asserted the superiority of European learning and literature while disparaging native languages, literatures, and oriental learning, especially that of Sanskrit and Arabic.[224] He proclaimed that vernacular languages did not possess sufficient capability to encapsulate Western sciences and learning, and that it would not be possible to translate into them. Therefore, he reasoned that it would be best if the natives of India were taught English, and that all funds given to Oriental education and printing should be diverted towards English. His criticism was primarily on Sanskrit and Arabic, and he made no mention of Persian. But, it was precisely Persian which ended up bearing the brunt of the consequences from the reforms which he desired.

Bentinck followed Macaulay's minute by expressing his agreement: "I give my entire concurrence to the sentiments expressed in this minute."[225] Macaulay's ideas are not novel. They do not present any argument which has not been previously presented by earlier Anglicists such as Trevelyan.[226] Even still, his minute is given large importance due to the fact that Bentinck gave

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[222] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 32-33.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Macaulay, *Minute on Education*, 109.
[225] Ibid., 117.
[226] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 33.

his verdict in favour of the Anglicists after reading it. The important points of his verdict[227] were the following:

1. The object of the British Government should be to promote European science and literature among the natives, that all funds employed on education should be for English alone.

2. No native learning school should be abolished, but only existing, not new students and professors, should receive stipends.

3. No funds should be appropriated for the printing of Oriental works, and all funds created as a result of these reforms should be repurposed towards the education of English literature and science.

Anglicist reforms did not sweep over British educational policy in India immediately, and Bentinck's pronouncements did not go without opposition. Some of the Orientalists wrote against the events which transpired. Important among them was H.T. Prinsep who first wrote a memorandum[228] and later a minute[229] against that of Macaulay. It seems that change was gradual, because Prinsep noted the opposition which was still present to Anglicists in his diary.[230] Beyond educational reforms, while English went on to replace Persian in the highest levels of the judiciary, there had been disagreements between the Anglicists and the Orientalists with regards to what action to take for the other levels of the judiciary and bureaucracy. Some Anglicists wanted the

[227] William Bentinck. "Resolution of the 7th March 1835" in *Bureau of Education - Selections from Educational Records, Part I 1781-1839*. Edited by H. Sharp. (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1920), 130-31.

[228] H.T. Prinsep. "Note dated the 15th February 1835, by H.T. Prinsep" in *Bureau of Education - Selections from Educational Records, Part I 1781-1839*. Edited by H. Sharp. (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1920), 117-129.

[229] H.T. Prinsep. "Minute by H.T. Prinsep, dated the 20th May 1835" in *Bureau of Education - Selections from Educational Records, Part I 1781-1839*. Edited by H. Sharp. (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1920), 134-39.

[230] H.T. Prinsep. "Extract from the Diary of H.T. Prinsep" in *Bureau of Education - Selections from Educational Records, Part I 1781-1839*. Edited by H. Sharp. (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1920), 132-134.

complete abolition of Persian and for it to be replaced with English. This was the position of those such as Trevelyan, who, in a letter to Bentinck, states his motivation behind such an ambition:

> The abolition of the exclusive privileges which the Persian language has in the courts and affairs of court will form the crowning stroke which will shake Hinduism and Mohammadanism to their centre and firmly establish our language, our learning and ultimately our religion in India[231]

Bentinck, nonetheless, recognised the political inexpediency of imposing English at all levels, even if desirable, and he sided with another prevalent opinion, the same as that of James Mill. Namely, it was politically most expedient for Persian to be replaced by the Indian vernaculars.[232] It was inexpedient because the government's control of the education domain was still limited, and while there was sovereignty, the fear of revolt from imposing English completely remained.

Therefore, the Resolution of the Governor-General-in-Council for September 4th 1837 replaced the language of judicial and fiscal proceedings of Indians from Persian to the Indian Vernaculars.[233] This was a change resented by the Orientalists such as Prinsep who preferred for law courts to record proceedings uniformly in Persian across districts.[234] This naturally removed some of the impetus for certain people to be educated in Persian, especially those who were attempting to attain employment through it. Anglicists such as Trevelyan rejoiced at Persian having been removed, who remarked that it disappeared from the collector's office in Bengal at the end of the month as if it had never been used.[235] This also indicated the end of the cultural ascendancy of Muslims who had been traditionally associated with the Persian language, and some

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[231] Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, 36.
[232] Rahman, *Language and Politics of Pakistan*, 36-37.
[233] Ibid., 37.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid.

saw this as a deliberate step towards doing away with Muslim rule,[236] but because Persian was replaced by the vernaculars including Urdu which was categorised as a Muslim language and not English, the case is nuanced. This eventually led to the rise of various identities and the rise of nationalistic ideas among different ethno-linguistic groups, which might have been the intention of the British under a divide and conquer policy. This is not mentioned explicitly as a policy, but was a suggestion by certain officers, such as Raverty who suggested forming corps according to nationality[237] in the military and developing rivalry so that the corps could be used against each other if the need arose.[238] It removed the uniting factor of Persian as an elite *lingua franca* which spanned multiple Indian regions and beyond India into the Persophonia. Neither Urdu nor any of the other vernacular languages retained the amount of power which Persian held.

Shifting to Vernacular Education

Persian was removed in some domains as a result of British policy, but it took longer to eradicate it completely from all the other domains where it still remained strongly present. As the British began to push for English language education, they did not abolish Persian language education, even though it was removed from the judicial domain. Persian language education was still entrenched in the native system of education, schools in northern India used Persian as the medium of instruction, and it would be nearly impossible to remove it.[239] Persian also formed a large part of colleges of Islamic learning or *madrasa* education, which the British first patronised with the funding of their own *madrasas*. However, British policies were eventually changed to marginalise Islamic learning, as we saw earlier when they removed their funding from institutions

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[236] Ibid.

[237] Here understood in the sense of ethnolinguistic groups, such as Pathans, Sikhs, etc.

[238] Ibid., 38.

[239] Rahman, *A History of Language Learning*, 151.

of Islamic learning. Just as administrative proceedings were shifted from Persian to the vernaculars, the British desired to do the same with education. One British administrator mentions that an attempt to establish vernacular schools would fail:

> The Persian has so long been cultivated in Sind, for its literature, as well as on account of its being the language of official records and accounts, that any present attempt to establish schools where the Vernacular only is taught would probably fail; while the combination of the two is likely to lead to the study of Sindee, now not learnt at all, but which will become popular by degrees, as the language is more and more used in the transaction of official business.[240]

This same sentiment could be applied to many of the schools in northern India where students were not often taught the vernacular through explicit instruction, but rather learned Persian and used it in their written communications, records, and literary endeavours. Though many administrative positions requiring Persian may have ceased to exist, members of society literate in Persian did not, and it still held its position as a language of prestige, especially among Muslim members who held the language as part of their history and heritage. The idea of combining Persian with a vernacular language would later prove successful in eradicating Persian.

The vernacular languages were not seen as something worth being studied; in the 1850s Muslims had "a strong objection to receive instruction in 'Oordoo', which they regarded as an unformed and unphilosophical language."[241] Persian was also considered essential in order to learn Urdu, and this was the prevalent idea during the same period.[242] Even though Urdu was now being used in the courts of much of northern India, it was a Persianised Urdu, which meant that Persian education was ordinarily still required in order to read and write administrative

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[240] Ibid., 153.

[241] Ibid, 218.

[242] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 105.

documents.[243] In Reid's report we find the following regarding an experiment to teach solely in Urdu in 1852:

> 314.—Failure of the attempt to teach Urdu without the aid of Persian.—In the Tahsili schools, the attempt has been made, and till now has been persisted in, to introduce Urdu to the entire exclusion of Persian. A year's experience, however, forces the conviction that the experiment should be, for the present, abandoned. Many will not come near our schools, who would gladly attend, were Persian also taught.[244]

This was characteristic across multiple schools. British officials wanted to increase enrollment in government schools, in which they also desired to achieve their goal of increasing education in the vernacular. They had strong reservations regarding the native schools, which they did not consider to be imparting any useful knowledge by way of their equally dispensable teachers. Multiple British educational reports decry similar sentiments as articulated by Reid:

> We have also seen that the knowledge imparted is of a most unpractical nature; that the Sanskrit student wastes years in collecting an useless store of words ; that the Persian scholar spends eight or nine years, on an average, in acquiring a slight smattering of a language, all but dead—as far as this country is concerned. In Hindi schools, the memory alone of the scholar is exercised. He leaves school with his mind filled with a vast store of the Multiplication Table.[245]

They realised accordingly that their schools and their effort to make vernacular education widespread would only be successful if they introduced Persian to the schools so that students would begin enrolling in them, instead of attending the private schools in the cities and villages across the country which they considered to be providing a subpar education.

To understand the motivation behind teaching the vernacular languages such as Urdu instead of what they considered to be classical languages such as Persian, we must examine where this conceptual distinction originated from and why vernacular languages were preferred. Pritipuspa Mishra argues that colonial characterisations of languages as vernacular or classical

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[243] Rahman, *A History of Language Learning*, 154.

[244] Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 113

[245] Ibid., 118.

stem from debates in England in which questions regarding the language of administration were raised.[246] These debates stem from Romantic notions of natural language in continental Europe and the rise of standardised dialects of Vulgar Latin or other languages in European nations as the language of governance along with the nation building projects which accompanied them. Dialects of governing cities were chosen to become standardised and academies were created to uphold their standardisation. It was reasoned from the debates in England that language ought to be accessible and drew from earlier writings which perceived language as something both intimately personal and communally shared.[247] According to Mishra:

> Vernacular came to mean a very specific thing when literary figures of this period sought to separate it from Latin as well as from French. In this period, vernacularization involved the mapping of spoken language on to the written language of the middle elite and in doing so the language sought to rise beyond its vernacularity to take up a position as a national mother tongue that was always in competition with both other mother tongues and vehicular languages. In this period, the status of English as a vernacular was founded on the notion that it was the common tongue commonly spoken by the lower classes, as well as between the common people and the elite who had access to other classical languages as well. Also part of this vernacularization was a stronger investment in the idea of it as a mother tongue, which established a visceral connection between the speakers and the language.[248]

The strong connection which she speaks of is the same strong connection which came to be important in eighteenth-century debates, whereby popular access to an understanding of law was central to the possibility of proper governance.[249] English which was seen as the vernacular in England, came to be seen differently in the context of the Irish. Irish was considered to be the vernacular and English the vehicular language.[250] Irish was not considered to be suitable for

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[246] Pritipuspa Mishra. *Language and the Making of Modern India: Nationalism and the Vernacular in Colonial Odisha, 1803–1956*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 36.

[247] Ibid., 39.

[248] Ibid.

[249] Ibid., 37.

[250] Ibid., 40.

teaching the colonised that which the colonisers wanted to teach, it therefore had to be improved,[251] which would be the same mentality which would be applied to certain languages in India.

Colonial officers saw Persian and Sanskrit as languages already possessing knowledge, but that their knowledge was incorrect, and that these languages were beyond their control to change. They figured that the development of the vernacular languages would solve this ignorance, developed by the colonial officers to imbue the population with western knowledge, which they could use to govern more easily. Because of this, people had to be taught their own languages.[252] It created a shift from languages associated with place in the pre-colonial period to an idea of language associated with people, where there was not previously the affective notion of the 'mother tongue.'[253] Urdu and other vernacular languages became tools of the colonial state as a way of developing various nations within a state ruled by them. Since the vernacular languages were not previously used as mediums of delivering advanced concepts of knowledge, the colonial state could imbue these languages with western concepts since they were the ones creating the educational systems for these languages. But, because the vernacular languages often did not span beyond the newly created linguistically national boundaries demarcated by the colonial state, another language would be required for inter-regional communication, English. In this way, the colonial state encouraged monolingualism for many Indians who should speak, learn, read, write, and be governed in a single language, with the exception of the elite who were granted the opportunity to learn English with the hope that they would convey western ideas back to their

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[251] Ibid.

[252] Although, this was often not the case where it became complicated for the colonial administration to try and teach too many native languages in which case one language was often chosen for large swathes of land such as Urdu in the Punjab where it was not the native language of most inhabitants.

[253] Ibid., 47.

monolingual peers.[254] This diverged greatly from the pre-colonial past where notions of 'mother

tongue' and national identity were not strongly developed. Additionally, people did not have the

notion that a single language should be multi-purpose or that some languages even held the

capability to be used for all purposes, this was a concept imported via the colonial state. Instead

they used multiple languages for varying and sometimes exclusive purposes. This came from

western notions that languages are linguistically and lexically equivalent,[255] which was rarely ever

the case, and became problematic when they tried to use one language to fulfil the purpose of

others. This was evident when Urdu was trying to replace Persian and yet in judiciary documents,

Persian words were still being used. This too was a problem that was recognised and was the

motivation behind teaching Persian and Sanskrit as 'classical' languages in order to repair the

deficiencies which the vernacular languages held. This was a result of viewing vernacular

languages as aberrations of the classical languages, a concept which has analogous perspectives in

the standardisation of Vulgar Latin with respect to Latin. However, because the Indian classical

languages were considered to carry incorrect knowledge, it was important that the content of those

languages be filtered during their instruction. The colonial state did not desire for the instruction

of Persian to coincide with concepts that went contrary to their western perspectives. Therefore,

as will be discussed in the third chapter, they colonised Persian-language education by teaching it

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[254] Ibid., 42.
> This opens up the possibility for the future development of the Indian vernaculars through the influence of
> English. And that is precisely what Macaulay hoped that his "brown sahibs" could achieve. They could
> serve to filter Western knowledge that resided in English into the Indian vernaculars. In arguing for the
> creation of a new class of Indian men who were Indian in "blood and colour" but English in "tastes,
> manners and distinction," Macaulay was not just arguing for the creation of a class of intermediaries for the
> administration of the Indian empire, he was also hoping to create a class of people across India who were
> tasked to reform, modernize, and empower Indian vernaculars to become languages that could do what
> English was able to do due to centuries of influence from Greek and Latin.

[255] See Walter Hakala. *Negotiating Languages*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017) for more information
on the differences between colonial and indigenous notions of lexicology.

in a certain form and only after the student had already formed their *habitus* in their Urdu education.

To attribute the rise of Urdu entirely to the colonial state would be incorrect. Urdu had already been displacing Persian as a literary language independently of the British. While the British may have suggested Urdu to be a lowly vernacular language which arose from the army camps[256] as Shamsur Rahman Faruqi demonstrates, it was already a language of courtly conversation and literary activities in the 18th century.[257] In the realm of administration and governance however, it did not pose a threat to Persian which was uniformly used across multiple regions in India, unlike Hindawi in which Urdu was included and varied from region to region.[258] Urdu still remained confined to few literary and communicational purposes, even as it was gaining traction. It was due to the colonial government that it developed beyond these limitations.

Increasing Colonial Control in Education

This section will address how the British increased government control and influence in the realm of education during the 19th century, and how in doing so, they exerted their control over language education, which included control over Persian language education and its eventual demise. An important document in understanding how the British increased their control in education is Wood's Educational Despatch[259] which was issued in 1854. It outlined how the

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[256] Shamsur Rahman Faruqi. "Unprivileged Power: The Strange Case of Persian (and Urdu) in Nineteenth-Century India." in Annual of Urdu Studies 13 (1998), 15. Urdu is a word of Turkic origin, meaning camp and attributed by the British as being the language of the army camp.

[257] Ibid., 16, 20. It is important to note that the language was not completely standardised or called Urdu until the late 18th century.

[258] Alam, *Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*, 168.

[259] J. Oliphant et al. "Wood's Educational Despatch, Despatch from the Court of Directors of the East India Company, to the Governor General of India in Council, --- (No. 49, dated the 19th July 1854)" in *Colonial Education and India 1781-1945 Volume II*, ed. Pramod K. Nayar. . (New York: Routledge, 2020), 1-25.

British would proceed. with their plans for education for much of the following decades. The despatch recommended establishing a Department of Public Instruction in each of the five provinces,[260] three of which were already existing in Bengal, Bombay, and Madras. However, new departments were intended for Punjab and the North Western Provinces. The despatch emphasised the following goals: raising the moral character of the natives of India,[261] educating the natives for the purpose of economic benefit, skills development, and the produce of British labor,[262] and extending the diffusion of European knowledge.[263] Again, the goals here for education are to morph a class of people towards being suitable for British benefit and governance. The type of education they hope to offer is one which expands colonial power. It did not necessarily hope to achieve these goals through English language education and recognised the impediments posed to learning by foreign language acquisition, although it did mention that English language education should be available where there is a demand for it, along with careful attention to the study of the vernacular language.[264] The following was written in the Despatch: "It is neither our aim nor our desire to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country."[265]

Wood's Despatch considered English language education to be the most perfect medium for education, but desired to cultivate the far larger classes through vernacular education as it believed it would be able to reach a far larger population.[266] Expanding on this goal of reaching the larger population, the despatch aimed to impart correct elementary knowledge to the great mass

[260] Ibid., 4-5.
[261] Ibid., 1.
[262] Ibid., 2.
[263] Ibid.
[264] Ibid., 3-4.
[265] Ibid, 3.
[266] Ibid.

of the people.[267] However, it recognised the difficulty in achieving this task on its own due to the

enormous population and cost to the government, which would render scaling their current system

of colleges and schools unsupportable.[268] Consequentially, it proposed utilising the then present

machinery of indigenous education to achieve their goal of mass education, but with the incentive

of a "grants-in-aid" system.[269] Their system was to be based on: abstinence from interference in

religious instruction in assisted schools, giving aid to schools which impart a 'good' secular

education,[270] agreeing to government inspection and any conditions laid down for grants, and

charging their pupils a fee, even if small.[271] Establishing a secular education would diminish the

power which current teachers and elite held, since most education was religiously affiliated. It

also called for the establishment of universities in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, scholarships for

the best students so they may be rewarded for excelling, and schools for the training of teachers to

improve their quality.[272] Finally, it emphasised the importance of providing vernacular school-

books for the advancement of European knowledge.[273] This shall be expanded upon in the third

chapter by discussing the books for learning Persian which were supplied to government aided and

government schools.

Policy is a useful framework to understand the British method, but one must consider the

case of the North Western Provinces to understand how the British increased their influence in

education in tangible terms. It is during the 1850s that the development of mass education and

government schools truly began to take hold. Beyond the universities, colleges and Anglo-

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[267] Ibid., 12.

[268] Ibid.

[269] Ibid., 13.

[270] This also entails ignoring any religious instruction which is given. See point 56 on p.14 of ibid.

[271] Ibid.

[272] Ibid. 17.

[273] Ibid.

vernacular schools, there were two types of vernacular schools which were more directly related to the spread of mass education: the *tahsīlī* and *halqabandī* schools. The *tahsīlī* schools were a 'secondary vernacular' school which were introduced in 1850.[274] The following description of education in the *tahsīlī* schools is provided in a provincial committee report:

> The course of instruction will consist of reading and writing the vernacular languages, both Urdu and Hindi accounts and the mensuration of land according to the native system. To these will be added such instruction in geography, history, geometry, or other general subjects conveyed through the medium of the vernacular languages as the people may be willing to receive.[275]

They were supposedly not originally intended to rival the indigenous schools, but as years passed, these schools and the number of students enrolled in them increased to the detriment of indigenous schools which decreased both in number and in enrollment accordingly. The *halqabandī*[276] schools began as an experiment in 1851 and were 'primary vernacular' schools that were placed in the most central village of a cluster of four or five villages.[277] Reading, writing, a little arithmetic, mensuration, and geography were the subjects taught.[278] In 1854 there were 758 *halqabandī* schools and about 17,000 students in them in addition to 4,688 students in the *tahsīlī* schools,[279] but by 1862 there were 84,392 students in the *halqabandī* schools and 14,935 students in the *tahsīlī* schools.[280] Combined, the number of students was 99,327 in the government vernacular schools which was over 50% more than the 61,474 students attested to in the indigenous

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[274] *Report by the North Western Provinces and Oudh Provincial Committee*. (Calcutta: The Superintendent of Government, 1884), 17.

[275] Ibid.

[276] *Halqabandī* comes from the words *halqa* meaning 'circle' and *bandī*, here meaning 'arrangement'. The following definition is provided in the dictionary by Platts: "Arrangement of villages in circles or groups (for village accountants, schools, &c.); a concentric division of villages, &c.; of or pertaining to such an arrangement of villages, &c."

[277] *Report by the NWP and Oudh Provincial Committee*, 18.

[278] Ibid.

[279] Ibid.

[280] Matthews Kempson. *Report on the Progress of Education, in the North Western Provinces, For the Year 1861-62*. (Allahabad: Government Press, 1862), 25.

schools[281] according to the new Director of Public Instruction for the North Western Provinces, Matthews Kempson. Although, it is likely that the number of students attending indigneous schools which is provided in the report is lower than the actual amount due to problematic surveying practices.

The large growth in the number of schools and students enrolled in them is a testament to the growth of British influence over education. As more students enrolled in government run schools, the government was able to control and influence what the literate population was learning. This included which languages they were learning and using. However, there continued to be reservations on the part of many parents in sending their children to the government schools, because of the lack of Persian language instruction. This was already indicated by Reid in 1853 as mentioned previously. Addressing this reservation on the part of parents in his 1863 report, Kempson mentioned:

> I hope that the usefulness of these Schools will be largely increased by the introduction of Persian into the course of study, through I doubt whether the Class who refuse to send their sons to Government Schools because Persian is *not* taught will be more ready to do so when their objection is removed[282]

The following year his insight yielded benefit, and he quoted one of the inspectors in the 1864 report regarding the *tahsīlī* schools testifying that parents were content with the introduction of Persian to the schools and the increase in enrollment which resulted from its introduction to the curriculum:

> The consequence is a large increase in the number of boys, which increase is, however, partly due to the introduction of Persian in schools where the teachers are competent to instruct in the element of that language ... With reference to the study of Persian, the Inspector says --- "Increased attention to the study of language is bringing our Tahsili Schools more into favor. People were under the impression, and it was not without foundation that Arithmetic and Geography, which they themselves neither understood nor valued, were all that was taught in them; but seeing that scholars come forth able to write well and quickly, and with a

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[281] Ibid.

[282] Matthews Kempson. *Report on the Progress of Education, in the North Western Provinces, For the Year 1862-63*. (Allahabad: Government Press, 1863), 16.

knowledge of Grammar, they are satisfied that what they consider a good education is to be obtained in them, and begin even to think there may be some good in the other subject the study of which is so strongly insisted on. Persian, as a means of strengthening the Urdu, has, with your sanction, been introduced into schools where there were teachers qualified to give instruction in the language, and good results have already followed."[283]

Naturally, this resulted in a further decrease in the number of indigenous schools where students were being sent to learn Persian, since the government schools absorbed their students. Even in 1870 there were continued efforts being made at the improvement of Persian education to entice more of the groups who previously disliked the course of instruction to attend government schools.[284] This eventually moved control of Persian language education from the hands of indigenous schoolmasters to those in the government schools. It is important to note that Persian is only being taught to strengthen Urdu and to increase enrollment.

It was not only the North Western Provinces where the control over education was shifted from indigenous school systems to government ones. A similar process was employed in Punjab, where Leitner argues that the educational measures enacted by the government worsened the availability of education to the mass population, decreased the educational standards, and that "the true education of the Panjab was crippled, checked, and nearly destroyed."[285] The educational department in Punjab attempted a similar system of mass education as was carried out in the North Western Provinces, but the language they had chosen for vernacular instruction was Urdu in the Persian script. This was not a native language of a people of the province of Punjab except for people in Delhi. However, it was widely understood by Muslims and some Hindus according to Leitner. The *halqabandī* system did not endure there, but government schools did include Persian

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[283] Matthews Kempson. *Report on the Progress of Education, in the North Western Provinces, For the Year 1863-64*. (Allahabad: Government Press, 1864), 22.

[284] Matthews Kempson. *Report on the Progress of Education, in the North Western Provinces, For the Year 1870-71*. (Allahabad: Government Press, 1871), 30-31.

[285] Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner. *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab Since Annexation and in 1882*. (Patiala: Languages Department Punjab, *1971*), i.

as a part of the curriculum. In the other three provinces of Bombay, Madras, and Bengal, a concerted effort was not made to include Persian as part of the curriculum of most government vernacular schools. Although, it remained available for study at institutions of higher learning in these provinces, such as the colleges and universities. The Muslim population in these provinces formed a minority, with the exception of Bengal where it was exceptionally large. This later led to complaints of Muslims, in expressing that they were alienated from education in government schools as Muslims were required to be good Persian scholars in order to be respected in society,[286] and thus would be unable to attend the government schools. This is evidence that though institutional power may have been removed for Persian, it still held power as an elite language within Muslim society, and that learning it was still required for ascendancy within that community. In fact, as proof of this phenomenon, with the exception of the North Western Provinces and Awadh, in all provinces, the proportion of Muslims students to the total number of students was far less than that of the proportion of Muslims in the entire population in 1872.[287]

As English and vernacular schooling became more common, as a result of government measures, there were some discrepancies between demographics which were more easily brought under the influence of government education as compared to those populations which preferred to continue with indigenous education systems. A difference is noticed in the readiness of Hindus and Muslims to turn to government and English schooling and away from Persian schools. Hindus were generally more apt to turn to government schooling, and they had not developed an attachment to Persian as a language forming a part of their identity. Even the 'scribal caste' of Kayasths who learned Persian and hand long histories of Persian learning in their families and

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[286] *Report of the India Education Commission*. (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1883), 500.
[287] Ibid., 484.

seemed closest to the Muslim and Mughals from whom they adopted many practices,[288] were among the first to adopt English, as they saw their purpose as associating with the elite which had become the British.[289] Similarly, Brahmans were among the first to adopt English also.[290] Muslims, who had mostly monopolised the profession of Persian teachers whether in *makātib* or *madrasāt*, were less likely to be welcoming of government influence in education, and often looked upon it with contempt. In Kempson's 1869 report, an inspector mentioned that "The Musalmans especially do not like the Government course of study."[291] Thus, Muslims were brought under the influence of government schools more slowly than that of their Hindu counterparts. The government course of study was to the detriment of Indo-Islamic culture and morality, therefore it is natural that Muslims were wary of it.

Religious figures and scholars were often wary of government influence in education, as it was a domain which was often dominated by them. This was particularly relevant in the case of Persian schools where the Quran or Arabic was also taught. In the Report of the Education Commission of 1882, the following is noted regarding elementary indigenous schools:

> Owing to the strong religious tendency of the maktabs and Gurmukhi schools, they have less readily lent themselves to the influence of the Departments than the Hindu schools. The patshalas have accordingly been

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[288] Leonard, *Kayasths*, 22-23.

[289] Ibid.

> Members of an urban literate caste wherever they appear in India, the Kayasths seem to have always reflected a close association with the ruling power. This was true under the Mughals, when a number of outstanding Kayasths attained very high rank in the Mughal empire, and true under the British in British India, when Kayasths were among the first to learn English and continue their administrative service. [...] In the past, Kayasths have sometimes been criticized for this adaptability, most often in connection with their service to the Mughals (it is said that they are like a cat on a wall, they can fall to either side), but Kayasths are not the only caste or caste cluster notable for its adaptability to ruling powers, and sometimes men said to be Kayasth are actually Khatri or Brahmo-Khatri, castes with similar names and traditions. In fact, Kayasths, like many other upwardly mobile individuals or castes in Indian history, exemplify flexibility and adaptability.

[290] Kumar, *Political Agenda*, 37

[291] Matthews Kempson. *Report on the Progress of Education, in the North Western Provinces, For the Year 1869-70.* (Allahabad: Government Press, 1870), 84.

largely incorporated into the State systems, while the Muhammadan and Sikh schools have remained outside them.[292]

Others were worried that government schools would not impart the same moral education as was found in their native schools, where religion often formed the basis for moral instruction. The government schools, attempting to propagate a secular education, were often devoid of these religiously guided moral principles. As Leitner mentions, this made parents wary of sending their kids to government schools, should they return without good manners, morals, and etiquette.[293] Likewise, many from the upper classes of both Muslims and Hindus were unwilling to turn towards government education because they did not believe that it imparted instruction upon principles that would meet their requirements or wishes, and disliked allowing "their sons to go to school with the common herd."[294] Neither did they have a need for advancement in types of employment which required government education as they were already wealthy enough to continue subsisting from their professions. Therefore, they could continue sending their children to schools which they considered to be imparting a good education. This was because they were among the classes that could still retain and perpetuate power through Persian, along with the morals and values espoused by a Persian education. Lower classes who were seeking advancement through government employment were more eager to take up government education because they offered ascendancy to a power which they did not currently hold and would be unable to access with indigenous education.

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[292] *Report of the India Education Commission*, 64.
[293] Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab*, viii.
[294] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1869-70*, 84.

The Demise of Persian Language Education

Finally, this section deliberates upon how Persian Language education was eliminated through educational policy changes. With growing control from the government in the domain of Persian language instruction as a result of an increased number of government schools and enrollment within them, one is forced to consider how Persian language instruction eventually left these government schools, and how the local *makātib* eventually died out. The Hunter Commission of 1882, created to review the progress of education in India, made a number of recommendations in order to achieve progress in the domain of education. Recognising that many Muslims were unwilling to turn to government education, just as with other groups which were not well represented in education or government education, they included a special section for "Muhammadans" in their list of recommendations.[295] The recommendations are both important in attracting more Muslims to government schools, and decreasing the importance of Persian as a language of elementary education. Points 4-7 of the subsection on "b - Muhammadans" in "681. (7). Recommendations regarding classes requiring special treatment"[296] are related to language and include the following recommendations:

> 4. That Hindustani be the principal medium for imparting instruction to Muhammadans in primary and middle schools, except in localities where the Muhammadan community desire that some other language be adopted. 5. That the official vernacular, in places where it is not Hindustani be added as a voluntary subject, to the curriculum of primary and middle schools for Muhammadans maintained from public funds, and that arithmetic and accounts be taught through the medium of that vernacular. 6. That, in localities where Muhammadans form a fair proportion of the population, provision be made in middle and high schools maintained from public funds for imparting instruction in the Hindustani and Persian languages. 7. That higher English education for Muhammadans, being the kind of education in which that community needs special help, be liberally encouraged.[297]

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[295] *Report of the India Education Commission*, 597-98. Also accessible in: "'Recommendations', in *Report of the Indian Education Commission*" in *Colonial Education and India 1781-1945 Volume II*, ed. Pramod K. Nayar. (New York: Routledge, 2020), 109-110.

[296] Ibid., 597.

[297] Ibid., 597-98.

This proclaims that Persian should not have been given any place in government aided schools except perhaps in middle and high schools where Muslims formed a fair proportion of the population. Additionally, it is imposing Hindustani as the language which Muslims should learn. In the same subsection are other recommendations including scholarships for Muslims students, employment for Muslims teachers and inspectors, and that special sections of future annual reports be devoted to "Muhammadan education."[298] These are to entice more Muslim students to government schools, and away from indigenous schools or lack of education. With Persian being removed as a language of elementary instruction from government schools and not holding much need by this time as a language of employment, Persian was fairly removed from the realm of government elementary education. A 1914 educational report on Punjab said that, although Persian was a part of studies ten years earlier even in rural schools, it is now entirely omitted except where there is a definite local demand for it.[299] In Bengal, Persian was eventually omitted from the school course by the Governor General where he desired for Urdu to take its place in adding to 'Muhammadan' culture, as Persian did 50 years prior.[300] This desire was imbued with the identification of Persian and Urdu as Muslim languages by colonial educators. Their attempt to characterise Urdu as the inheritor of Persian, was to limit it to Muslims, and therefore limit its power to them while they propagated other vernaculars elsewhere such as Hindi for Hindus since it would be inconvenient for them to unite Indians under an elite language other than English. This had the effect of Urdu being sidelined by many non-Muslim members of society, and further contributing to its Muslim identity. Later reports do not provide much information on Persian as a language of elementary instruction. Discussions of Persian education in later reports were mostly

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[298] Ibid.

[299] Tariq Rahman. "Decline of Persian in British India." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 22, no. 1(1999), 59.

[300] Ibid., 58-59.

confined to higher level education at universities, colleges, and high schools. They treat Persian education as a classical language study, and not as the living practical language of written communication that Persian once held in India.

Persian remained as a language of elementary education in the local *makātib* as mentioned. But, after the recommendations of the Hunter Commission, the control of primary education was handed over to local boards, and many indigenous schools came under their purview but this supposedly gave them "a great set back and [they] began to fade away from the scene."[301] There was a 50 percent increase in enrollment in government schools from 1882-1902,[302] and it was said that "the indigenous schools were also made to die a natural death."[303] The following statistics are mentioned in one article on primary schooling in British India, indicating the demise of indigenous schools:

> From 1855 to 1882, the number of private indigenous schools declined by almost 50 per- cent from 49,524 to 25,166, while government and aided schools increased to 89,005 by 1882 (see India, Report). By 1917 less than 10 percent of pupils were enrolled in private indigenous schools.[304]

The change of control to the local boards was intended to promote indigenous education wherever it served the purpose of secular education,[305] since "Local boards, whether municipal or rural are likely to sympathise with the indigenous system where it is valued by the people."[306] But, the schools were not greatly aided except by the system of payment by results, which a majority of the

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[301] Ram Nath Sharma and Rajendra Kumar Sharma. *History of Education in India*. (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2000), 123.

[302] S.P. Ruhela. *India's Struggle to Universalize Elementary Education*. (New Delhi: MD Publications, 1996), 2.

[303] Ibid., 3.

[304] Latika Chaudhary. "Determinants of Primary Schooling in British India." *The Journal of Economic History* 69, no. 1 (2009), 275.

[305] *Report of the India Education Commission*, 585.

[306] Syed Nuruallah and J.P. Naik. *History of Education in India During the British Period*. (Bombay: Macmillan, 1951), 400.

indigenous schools did not receive and were allowed to die out. In *History of Education in India During the British Period*, the following was written regarding the death of the indigenous schools:

> By the beginning of the twentieth century, the problem of the indigenous schools ceased to exist. In provinces where they were incorporated into the educational system, they became an integral part of the system itself and hence lost their "indigenous" character that was so well described by the Indian Education Commission. On the other hand, they died of sheer neglect or competition in provinces where they were deliberately treated as the 'untouchables' in the caste system of the Education Department.

This would explain the dying out of the Persian schools, which was inevitable given that Persian was not being used for many practical purposes at this time. Employment opportunities where Persian was required were extremely limited, and other languages had taken their place. Indeed, there was a popular saying in Hindustani which still persists to this day, "*parhē Fārsī aur bēchē tēl*",[307] which demonstrates the impracticality of learning Persian with respect to employment. Centuries ago, Persian was taught mostly in *madrasas* attached to mosques. But, once non-Muslims also took to the language, the schools which taught them were no longer attached to mosques. However, in the face of rising British influence it seemed that there were very few non-Muslims taking to the study of Persian. The only place outside of higher secular education where Persian education continued to find support were among the Muslims in the *madrasas*, since they were among the institutions which resisted colonial education most. It still remains in some *madrasas* today. Although, it is nowhere as widespread as it was previously and the syllabus and character of the education has changed. Persian there too had to battle with Urdu which became the rising language of Islamic education in India. There was reform which was being undertaken during the British Rule which motivated the *'ulamā* to remove many of the works in the pre-colonial syllabus which included content that was erotic, related to love, or used wine or the beauty

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[307] It is translated as: Studied Persian, sold oil. This saying demonstrates that Persian language skills gained during education were not applicable to the available professions.

of adolescent boys as metaphors.[308] This was similar to the change which was occurring in the secular institutions of the colonial government which was removing the same works for similar reasons. This will be discussed further in the next chapter. The censoring of works slowly removed the major corpus of Persian literature within *madrasas*. This was naturally emblematic of the change of attitudes in *madrasas* towards the importance of Persian language and literature, and indicated that the teaching of Persian was retained mostly for the reading of religious texts and commentaries as well as to keep a link with past scholarship and intellectual tradition. It was learned as a dead language and not as a living one.[309]

While Persian still persists in some few traditional centres of learning and higher educational institutions, the average student in India is unlikely to recognise the privileged place and immense sway which Persian education once held in South Asia. Along with other systems of indigenous learning, it was dismantled by the colonial government which slowly increased its control over the domain of education and learning in the Subcontinent. Through policy it decreased the power Persian held in society by making it less employable and by promoting English and Hindustani to usurp the power gap left in its place. Eventually, through lack of practicality, employability, and necessity, the demise of Persian language education and nearly complete eradication of elementary Persian language education was certain to take place. Wherever it remains is mostly where Persian is sought for the purpose of knowledge, pleasure, or in few circumstances for foreign relations. It is unlikely to disappear completely anytime soon as South Asian history of the previous millennium is closely intertwined with the once living language, now mostly relegated to hundreds of thousands of unread manuscripts, glossed over

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[308] Rahman, *Decline of Persian in British India*, 59-60.
[309] Ibid.

inscriptions, and incomprehensible musical compositions. This chapter demonstrates that the

mystery of these cultural artefacts is easily attributed to British interventions. If history is any

indicator however, nothing remains permanent.

Chapter Three: Colonial Persian Pedagogy

Colonial educators had their own ideas of curricular material for government schools and government aided-schools. Many of their notions of a sound or suitable education diverged from indigenous educational philosophies in South Asia. Much of their understanding was influenced by educational practices which were already found in Britain at the time, and it was considered that they should therefore be adopted for an Indian audience. Some mainstay subjects which figured prominently in elementary colonial education included: reading, writing, arithmetic, history, and geography. These subjects were in addition to second, third, or multiple language learning courses which were made available to the students. It was generally found, with the exception of some schools, that the vernacular would be the main focus of reading and writing instruction. As for further language instruction, English was at first the main focus of second language education, but as mentioned previously, Persian came to be one of the languages made available for instruction along with Sanskrit or sometimes other languages, depending on the region of India. In this chapter, the focus is on understanding the pedagogical practices of colonial educators in elementary Persian-language education. The chapter begins by reconstructing the colonial curriculum based on colonial educational reports. Then, it proceeds to analyse differences and divergences from indigenous pedagogical practices. Finally, it examines how these differences contributed to Persian-language decline in South Asia. It argues that the colonial curriculum recycled or reused works which were used in indigenous schools, but that they excluded many works which were related to composition (*inshā'*), as well as works or parts of works which they considered having immoral or erotic content. Additionally, this article contends that they increased the focus on grammar education, shifted towards printed materials rather than manuscripts, taught the language as a classical language more for comprehension than

composition, and focussed heavily on translation with the primary objective of developing Urdu. It asserts that the shift of teaching Persian as a classical language and not as a first or living language, the express intent of designing the curriculum so as to function as a means to increase power in the educational domain, and the distancing of Persian from its cultural and religious milieu through changes in teaching contributed to its decline. Lastly, it considers the divergent perspectives between the British and indigenous scholars regarding the position of Persian in South Asia and of Indians in the Persophonia.

Colonial Elementary Persian Language Syllabi

Since members of the British East India Company had arrived in India, British administrators required proficiency Persian in order to conduct their business. They often hired *munshis* to educate them in Persian, who often did so using the traditional indigenous curriculum. Some of this curriculum found its way into colonial ideas on how Persian ought to be taught to school children, but much of the philosophy of colonial language educators came from Britain. This resulted in the employment of new pedagogical practices from colonial educators in the education of the Persian language for elementary school children. This section presents the syllabus used to educate elementary language learners, before discussing particular pedagogical works.

In a report on language education in the North Western Provinces,[310] the following curriculum is noted for the *tahsīlī* schools: there were a total of five classes or grades with the 1st class being the highest; class 5 - *Tashrīh ul-Hurūf*, class 4 - *Khāliq Bārī*, class 3 - *Karimā* and

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[310] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1869-70*, 30.

Selections from the *Bustān*, class 2 - Selections from the *Gulistān* and *Ruka'āt-i-Ālamgīrī*, class 1 - Selections from *Anwar Suhaylī* and the letters of *Abu'l Fazl*.

In the *zila'* [311] or district schools of the North Western Provinces, there were a total of 10 classes, and Persian studies began in the seventh year[312] where they formed a continuation of Urdu studies whose classes ceased after the sixth year,[313] after having been present since the 10th class, unlike Hindi which was present in all classes.[314] This replacement of Urdu with Persian is evidence that colonial educators still recognised the strong importance of Persian learning to develop strong skills in Urdu, even as they attempted to replace it with Urdu. Arabic and Sanskrit studies were also made available beginning in the 3rd class. The following curriculum was noted for Persian for the *zila'* schools: Class 4 - *Muntakhabāt-i-Frsi Part I*, *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī* 1st Half; Class 3 - *Muntakhabāt-i-Fārsī Part II* first half, *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī*; Class 2 *Muntakhabāt-i-Fārsī Part II* second half, *Qawā'id-i-Faārsi*.[315] The College classes included the same curriculum as the *zila'* schools.[316] The *tahsīlī* and *halqabandī* schools followed the same curriculum with the addition of a few works in their final year.[317]

In the 1878 *Report of the Committee Appointed to Examine Textbooks in Use in Indian Schools*[318] there is a plethora of information on the various books used to educate Persian as well

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[311] This is spelled as 'zillah' in many of the colonial reports.

[312] Class 4 to Class 1

[313] Class 10 to Class 6

[314] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1870-71*, 82A-83A.

[315] Ibid.

[316] Ibid., 81A.

[317] Ibid., 92A. Added to the curriculum are *Hadā'iq ul-Balāghat*, *Akhlāq-i-Nāsirī*, *Qasīda-i-Khāqānī*, and *Inshā Tāhir Wāhid*. Translation to and from Urdu is mentioned.

[318] *Report of the Committee Appointed to Examine Textbooks in Use in Indian Schools*. (Calcutta: Home Secretariat Press, 1878).

as other languages. The village school curriculum, comprising the lower years of the town school Persian-language curriculum, will first be described.

The village school had a total of 5 classes. Class 5 - The child was taught to write the alphabet. Class 4 - The child learned Urdu through a primer which contained the alphabet and simple stories and fables. Class 3 - The student continued their Urdu learning with lessons on biography, history, grammar, etc. Class 2 - An Urdu poetical reader was introduced. Persian instruction begins here with a book known as *Gulzār-i-Dabistān*, and the conjugation of Persian verbs were learned.[319] Class 1 - The Urdu poetical reader was continued. A Persian Letter Writer was used.[320] A Persian Grammar written by Maulvi Abd ul-Haqq was used.[321]

The Town School was divided into 7 classes with the lower 5 classes covering the same curriculum as in village schools. Class 2 - *Bustān*, chapters IV and VII,[322] *Nigār-i-Dānish*[323] chapters I and III. Urdu poetical reading was continued. Class 1 - "In this class any standard Persian works are used, as the Sikandar Namah, Akhlaq-i-Mohsini or the Diwan-i-Hafiz."[324] Urdu poetical reading was continued. The Anglo-Vernacular Schools contained 6 classes. In the second class chapters I to XXI of *Akhlāq-i-Muhsinī* were taught and the first class read selections provided by the Calcutta University.[325]

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[319] No book has been mentioned here for instructing conjugation.

[320] The title of the book is not mentioned, but the following is: "The book is popular, and the letters are unobjectionable. The author is a Kayuth by caste, and Muhammadans deride the style. The book they would prefer is Ruqaat-i-Alamgiri, but this book is too difficult for village school boys." Ibid., 318.

[321] Ibid., 315-8.

[322] It is mentioned that the chapters selected are "unobjectionable." Ibid., 318.

[323] "the Nigar Danish is simply selection. from the Ayar-i-Danish, a version of the Anwar-i-Suheli." Ibid.

[324] Ibid., 319.

[325] Ibid., 321-2.

Other books were mentioned in the same report in an appendix. It is pertinent here to note that Persian is classified under "Foreign modern languages" along with English.[326] Readers included *Muntakhabāt-i-Fārsī Parts I & II*.[327] Under grammar we find *Sarf-i-Saghīr*, *Safwat ul-Masādir*, and *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī*.[328] Lexicology is comprised of *Nisāb-i-Khusrau*[329] and *Farra-yi-Fārsī*.[330] No titles were mentioned under the categories of: primers, composition,[331] calligraphy, and prosody.[332] In Mysore the following books were mentioned as being used for reading: *Akhlāq-i-Mohsinī*, *Anwar-i-Suhaylī*, *Būstān*, *Divān-i-Hāfiz, Divān-i-Ghanī, Divān-i-Nāsir Ali, Gulistān, Gulzār-i-Dabistān, Hikāyat Latīfa, Karīmā, Miftāh us-Salāt, Nām-i-Haqq, Sikandar Nāma, Takmīl ul-Īmān*, and *Yūsuf o Zulaykha*.[333] In grammar there were: *Chahār Gulzār, Chihal Sabak, Qawā'id-i-Fārsī, Masdar-i-Fuyūz, Sarf-i-Hasan 'Alī, Tāj ul-Qawā'id, Tahqīq ul-Qawānīn, Atāliq-*

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[326] Ibid., 230. Other classifications include: Vernaculars - Urdu and Hindi, Indian classical language - Sanskrit, and Foreign classical language - Arabic.

[327] Ibid., 235-6. They are Persian Anthologies consisting of selections in prose and verse.

[328] Ibid., 236. They are all noted as useful grammars, but the latter is mentioned as a very useful grammar.

[329] This is a revised edition of the *Khāliq Bārī*.

[330] Ibid. Both of the lexical works are mentioned as unfavourable as class books but useful for beginners.

[331] It is mentioned that one should refer to the readers as they contain excerpts from works on composition.

[332] The reason for the lack of works on prosody may be understood by viewing the opinion found in Kempson's 1970 report:

> So far as the 2nd School Class is concerned, the teaching of Aruz (Prosody) is not only unnecessary but useless. The knowledge of this subject is required only to an extent that may enable the student to read verses of well-known and common metres harmoniously, and to hesitate at discordant measures. But this much knowledge of the subject need not be imparted or acquired, seeing that the bounteous Author has denied but to few the faculty of distinguishing whether such and such a verse is harmonious or inharmonious. Subtler discriminations connected with elision, the beauties of the Qafiya, or the like, cannot of course be discovered by this intuitive faculty, but an acquaintance with them is scarcely necessary to students. He who is intended for a poet, and not one whose only object is to understand verses, need know subtleties of the kind, and I am sure it is the latter and not the former accomplishment Government wish their students to attain. And, then, it will be observed that treatises on Aruz are replete with a technology which is most foreign, and anything but easy to commit to memory. Those who learn Aruz as a task cannot possibly be expected to remember all the technicalities for even two or three years. All they will recollect in the end which will be of use to them will be the same intuitive faculty —the rest of the aquired technology being retained in the mind only as long as it is before the eye. Aruz, then, might with advantage be replaced by some Persian work, like the Intikhabi Nadir Nama, written by a Persian, and calculated to give the readers a zest for the language." Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1869-70*, 101-2.

[333] *Report of the Committee to Examine Textbooks*, 297.

i-Fārsī, Dastūr us-Sibyān, Inshā-i-Bahār-i-Bēkizan, Inshā-i-Harkaran, Inshā-i-Sibiyān, and *Irshād Nāma*.[334]

Many of the works mentioned in the syllabi above may be readily recognised from the pre-colonial syllabus as indicated in the first chapter. However, while it may seem that these were the same works, there is a departure from the way these works were presented to students in indigenous schools of the pre-colonial past and that of their colonial educated counterparts. Before discussing these changes, the reasoning behind them, and their effects on education, an analysis of the more prominently featured books in government schools shall be presented. Three texts which feature prominently in the government schools include: *Gulzār-i-Dabistān, Muntakhabāt-i-Fārsī Parts I & II*, and *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī*.

Gulzār-i-Dabistān[335] (The Rose Garden of School) is an elementary book designed for beginners in Persian language learning, who have already learned the alphabet and know how to write. It first begins by demonstrating simple grammatical constructions and asking the student to pay attention to the differences. The instructions are provided in Urdu. There is no translation given, but it is assumed that the teacher provided one orally. It builds to simple sentences which are practical and able to be used in everyday life. Many of the sentences appear to have no visible thematic connection between them. Footnotes are occasionally provided in Urdu. As opposed to overtly explicit grammar instruction, it singles out a specific grammatical concept such as plurality, tense, mood, possession, etc., and asks the study to observe the differences. Afterwards, the student is introduced to some dialogues. The dialogues have been criticised for being in

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[334] Ibid., 302-3.
[335] Shivanarāyana, *Gulzār-i-Dabistān*. (Lucknow: Naval Kishore Press, 1884).

unidiomatic language.[336]   Part two of the book contains 81 short tales, each tale usually not

comprising more than a few lines with the longest taking up almost a page.

  Muntakhabāt-i-Fārsī Part I[337] (Selections of Persian) is a Persian anthology which

contains excerpts from many of the same works we are familiar with from the pre-colonial

curriculum.   Originally created for the use of British officers studying Persian, it includes

selections from the *Pand-nāma* and the *Gulistān*, two works previously used by elementary

students in indigenous schools.   It also includes, however, stories and extracts from *The Persian

Moonshee*,[338] written for British officers, and from the *Tuzukāt-i-Tīmūr* (Ordinances of Timur).

The second volume[339] mostly contains entries on composition.   The selections were supposedly

drawn up by Reid for the Calcutta University.[340]

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[336] The language is considered by Major St John to be following the Khurāsāni dialect which he considers to be
inferior.

> The fact is that lndo-Persian scholars ignore the immense difference (as great as in English) that exists
> between the spoken, the narrative, or epistolary and the poetical languages of Iran; while our North· West
> frontier men mistake the barbarous patois of Afghanistan for the real article current in Persia itself. Indian
> Munshis have told me that there are two Persian dialects, one Irani and the other Khurasani, and that the
> latter having been preserved with greater purity is the better of the two. This is of course the same argument
> that makes Americans boast of speaking better English than Englishmen and Canadians purer French than
> Parisian. There are at least two vowels ~ and ;; which cannot be transcribed by the Arabic alphabet; and
> the hard ye as in 'sher' "a lion" is absolutely strange to a Persian tongue, though used in Afghanistan and
> Beluchistan… As for pronunciation there is no reason, if modern Persian is to be taught at all, why the best
> pronunciation of Persian, that of Shiraz or Isfahan, should not be adopted.
> *Report of the Committee to Examine Textbooks*, 110-1.

He offers corrections and critiques of expressions and vocabulary. His words are exemplary of the attitude of many
towards Indo-Persian peculiarities as being inferior, this is an attitude which would be applied to other works also,
such as those in composition. Additionally, his comments provide insight into the perception of dialect hierarchies
within the Persophonia which shall be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

[337] *The Persian Reader or Select Extracts from Various Persian Writers Vol. I: Muntakhabāt-i-Fārsī.* (Calcutta:
School Book Society Press, 1835).

[338] Francis Gladwin. *The Persian Moonshee*. (London: Wilson and Co., 1801). The relevance to British officers is
provided at the beginning of the book in an advertisement: "Of the importance, and even the absolute necessity, of a
knowledge of the ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, to every Gentleman employed, or to be employed, in the service of
the Honourable EAST INDIA COMPANY in Asia"

[339] *The Persian Reader or Select Extracts from Various Persian Writers Vol. II: Muntakhabāt-i-Fārsī.* (Calcutta:
School Book Society Press, 1824).

[340] *Report of the Committee to Examine Textbooks*, 297. The description found of the book and the year in which it
was originally published leads me to believe that it is possible that there were multiple editions of this book, since
Reid was the supposed compiler. There is another work with the same title compiled by Munshī Pyārē Lāl for

The *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī* by Rōshan 'Alī Jaunpūrī came to feature prominently in a number of schools and the various prints and manuscripts which are able to be found are a testament to its popularity. One may recall it being used in the pre-colonial indigenous curriculum as discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation. It contains 22 pages of information on vocabulary, letters, etymology, infinitives, conjugation, and other grammatical rules, often supported with examples from prose and poetry.

Changes in Pedagogy by Colonial Administrators

The pedagogical changes can be divided into certain categories. There were ideological changes as to how and why Persian should be taught. These ideological changes were subsequently reflected in the books selected to teach Persian. Changes in pedagogical methods also formed a part of additions to the colonial pedagogy. It has previously been established that Persian learning was expanded with the motivation of attracting classes of society currently attending indigenous Persian schools. This section elaborates upon the intended educational goals of colonial educators and their markers of proficiency: good grammar and translation abilities. It examines the inclusion of increased grammar instruction and books into the curriculum, which aligned with achieving their markers of proficiency. Additionally, it discusses the ways in which certain books were eliminated from the curriculum of Persian study in colonial schools, either for

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Major Holroyd who was Director of Public Instruction in Punjab. We know from p.235-6 of this report, that "Part I contains good selections calculated to teach the language and improve the morals." Since colonial administrators were appreciative of the morals of the *Pand-nāma* and the *Gulistān*, this fits correctly. The second volume is critiqued:

> Forms of address, however, and models of letter-writing form the Panj Ahang and Rakaat-i·Katil and Bahar-i-Ajam should be substituted for those in the 2nd section. Part II. has not been well selected, the selections from the Ruka-a.t-i-Alamgiri and Tarikh·i-Padshahan-i-Ajam should be suppressed; the former as not displaying any power of composition, and the latter as containing mythical narratives.

being considered 'immoral', 'flowery', aberrant because they were written by Indian authors, or because they were considered irrelevant to the purposes which colonial educators intended for their students. Finally, this section remarks upon certain changes in methodology, including the practices of graded classes and standardised examinations.

Since one of the main complaints of colonial reports regarding the Persian education in indigenous schools was a lack of grammar education, it was something which they aspired to rectify in their own schools. In Kempson's 1870 report one inspector notes:

> Those called Persian are really popular, and attended by all sorts of people who can afford to have this luxury. Here Grammar is never taught[341]. The chief aim is to acquire a proficiency in composing epistles in as flowery and laboured a style as is possible. It cannot be called composition, it is merely joining studied sentences, phrases, or words together; but, unfortunately, the text-books are very objectionable. 'Mahmudnama,' 'Mamuqima,' 'Zulekha,' 'Bahardanish,' are all such books,[342] and with 'Karima,' 'Amadnama,' «Khaliqbari,' 'Dasturussibiyan,' 'Inshakhalifa,' 'Insha Madhoram,' 'Gulistan,' 'Bostan,' 'Sikandarnama,' and 'Abul Fazl,' form the course of a Persian School. As no Grammar is taught, and the memory only is exercised, it takes a tremendous time to get through all these books, generally seven or eight years, and yet to no good purpose.[343]

In order to improve upon what they consider was problematic, they introduced the following changes:

> In Hindee Schools we simply want just now to introduce ' Ganit-Prakash,' Parti., and 'Barnamala,' and in Persian, ' Qavaid-i-Fārsī,' ' Muntakhabat-i-Fārsī,' and ' Miftahul Adab,' in place of ' Bahardanish,' and similar erotic books. These books have successfully been introduced in the advanced Oordoo classes of our Tehseelee and Hulkabundee Schools, but there are many difficulties yet in the way to make the scheme universally popular and accepted [...] in several places, like Chatara, Mahomedabad, &c, 'Bahardanish ' has been replaced by 'Anvari Suheli,' that Grammar has been introduced, and that the formation of Persian classes on sound principles in our advanced Oordoo Tehseelee Schools like Nizamabad and Jianpore, has set a very salutary example to be followed by many an Indigenous School teacher.[344]

Thus, it is evident that two of the things which they wanted to change was the teaching of grammar and the reading of certain books which they considered immoral. For the purpose of grammar *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī* seems to have fulfilled the intended objectives of colonial educators, or

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[341] This echoes the complaint mentioned earlier in Fink's report in the first chapter.
[342] This will be expanded upon shortly.
[343] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1869-70*, 87.
[344] Ibid., 88.

occasionally other works such as *Masdar-i-Fuyūz* and the *Āmad-nāma*. Lack of good grammar was often criticised in reports during examinations also, showing the emphasis they placed on evaluating it.[345]

Though not mentioned in the previously quoted passage, other than grammar, translation was also important to the curriculum. It formed a part of the pedagogy that students should be able to translate into Urdu or vice-versa, and was considered to be one of the most important tests or methods of examination. This sentiment is expressed by the Persian examiner in the following passage from Kempson's report:

> It is, moreover, necessary that Arabic and Persian students be required to translate into those languages. It is but proper that a man who in Arabic can understand Divani Himasa and Tarikh-i-Yamani, or in Persian exercises his genius in the complexities of Momin Khan, should be so far conversant with those tongues as to be able to express his ideas in a plain and correct style. In fact, there is no better linguistic test than translation.[346]

This valorisation of grammar and translation as markers of proficiency which should be examined, is repeated by another examiner the following year:

> Most of the boys know their text-book in grammar; in the Persian language thoroughly well. Their Persian translation was not, however, so good; but, considering the whole amount of their ability in the Persian language, and also the fact that they translated the passage given to them in different ways from one another, their defect in this respect, may not, perhaps, be considered as very great.[347]

The reason the examiner makes that final remark is because one of the critiques of indigenous school children and their teachers is the 'word-for-word' translation system.[348] But, it is also noted that the examiner says that students studying Persian privately, which is assumed to be with

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[345] Ibid., 101. It was also criticised in Punjab. See William Holroyd. *Report on Popular Education in the Punjab and its Dependencies for the Year 1875-76*. (Lahore: W. E. Ball, 1877), 39, 62.

[346] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1869-70*, 101.

[347] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1870-71*, 10A.

[348] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1869-70*, 21.

indigenous educators, are superior scholars of Persian than those studying in the government colleges.[349]

While translation formed an important part of pre-colonial pedagogy, many translations were memorised by heart and translating was never one of the main foci of education as it was not the goal of students to become proficient in translation. The goal of colonial educators was to make students proficient in the vernaculars. Persian and Arabic were therefore not viewed as living languages to be used primarily for their own purposes, but rather as languages to be used to strengthen a student's proficiency in Urdu, as that was the main object.[350] Therefore, there is a large focus on being able to translate from Persian to Urdu, and developing good expression and translation in Urdu. The focus of learning Persian grammar and language is then a tool of the colonial machinery to strengthen their project of developing the vernacular languages, and not Persian which they desired to remain a relic of the past. The intention is not for students to be competent users of Persian, but passive recipients of a past culture which they desire to mold in their own way with the propagation of the vernaculars. They recognised the inability for students to be proficient Urdu users without receiving education in what was effectively its literary mother, Persian. Were it not for this, colonial educators might never have been interested in teaching Persian in the first place. In fact, it was not until they recognised their students of Urdu losing out in the contest of proficiency to students of indigenous Persian schools that they began to teach Persian as a means to defeat the indigenous schools and assert supremacy.

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[349] Ibid.

[350] Ibid.

> The word-for-word translation system of the moonshees is to blame for this. They do not require written translations of Arabic and Persian authors. The attention of the teachers of Arabic and Persian has been drawn to this defect again, and it has been put to them very distinctly that the enrichment and development of the Vernacular should be a main object.

Grammar and translation being markers of language proficiency was a divergence from what colonial educators considered the goal of indigenous schools to be as cited earlier: "The chief aim is to acquire a proficiency in composing epistles in as flowery and laboured a style as is possible."[351] There is some truth in this statement, given that the purpose of education was often largely motivated by employment, and therefore, there was a direct practicality of being able to compose well rather than translate well. But, practicality in terms of employment was not the only reason that students studied Persian. In order to be a respected member of Muslim or even Kayasth communities, one needed to learn Persian proficiently in order to interact with many levels of the culture. While memorisation of large passages of texts seemed unimportant to colonial educators and a waste of time, it held large cultural value and weight to those who were learning it and aided in forming the *habitus*. There is the story mentioned by William Arnold, director of education in the Punjab, of a 13 year old student who had little understanding of Persian being lured and murdered under the pretext of having the *Bustān* read out to him.[352] As Krishna Kumar mentions:

> Obviously, a text which could be used to entice a boy by someone who wanted to murder him had great cultural significance. Reading aloud from it was a source of pleasure and satisfaction, even if its meaning could not be comprehended[353]

Having memorised an important text and being able to recite correctly held value in those communities. Colonial educators such as Arnold who must have been aware of this, did not give importance to the cultural significance of learning by memorisation, or for that matter to the

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[351] Ibid., 87.

[352] J.A. Richey(ed.). *Selections from Educational Records, Part II, 1840–1859*. (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922), 290.

> The great object is to teach a boy to read the Gulistan and Bostan, and the lad who will read a page of either in a fluent sing-song without understanding a word, has received an education which fully satisfies both his teacher and parents. Little as the words of Sadi are understood by these boys, there is no doubt that they are much enjoyed. In one of the too frequent cases of child murder with robbery of ornaments, the victim a lad of 13, was enticed out by his murderer a youth of 18, on the pretext of having the Bostan read to him.

[353] Kumar, *Political Agenda*, 57.

cultural value which certain works held. This was certainly because they needed to detract from the value of Persian to achieve their goals and not to increase it.

Next is the second major divergence from pre-colonial pedagogy which was the removal of works by colonial educators. First were the works which were considered immoral or erotic, and did not find their way into the colonial curriculum. Although they were favoured across the indigenous Persian schools, these works included *Bahār-i-Dānish*, *Yūsuf o Zulaykha*, and parts of the *Gulistān* and the *Bustān*. Powell discusses this in her article where she mentions the numerous instances of colonial educators considering the works as 'abound with indecent allusions', 'immoral', or 'erotic.'[354] Drawing from reports mentioned earlier, these morally disparaging remarks were found in nearly every report.[355] Kumar argues that colonial officers equated immorality as ignorance.[356] Colonial officers believed that the ignorance should be corrected and that what they perceived as correct knowledge would contribute to making the student a better and more moral member of society, one which would be beneficial for the government. While the first

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[354] Powell, *Old Books in New Bindings*, 205. Although, she does note in her article the small minority of voices which found benefit in these works and did not categorise them as such.

[355] In *Report of the Committee to Examine Textbooks*, 296-7 regarding the *Bustān*:
> The 3rd chapter "on sexual love" discusses subjects which are quite unfit for school boys.

Gulistān:
> Chapters 5 and 6 at least are unfit for school reading, but the book might be retained if an expurgated edition were used.

Yūsuf o Zulaykha:
> Chapter 1. is a voluptuous descrip. tion of Zalikha'. beauty, including all parts of her body, and is in the highest degree indelicate. The work as a whole is quite unfit for a school book, but selection. of great beauty and unobjectionable in character might be made from it. It is a great favourite with Muhammadans.

In Leitner, *Semi-Classical Indigenous Education*, 203:
> The Bahar-danish, which is so emphatically condemned in the Educational Reports, is no doubt, as many classical and semi-classical writings of Europe, of " a questionable morality," as stated by one Inspector, or rather of "unquestionable immorality," if its introduction is referred to.[...]that it can be profitably printed or photo-zincographed without it,[...]it seems rather hard to pass such a censure on a masterpiece of Inayatulla,

In Reid, *Indigenous Education*, 54:
> Bahar-i-Danish, the style and idiom of which are regarded as the best models of composition, while the tone of the book is highly objectionable.

Kempson has already been mentioned earlier.

[356] Kumar, *Political Agenda*, 35.

two works mentioned were removed from colonial syllabi, Sa'dī's works were retained, sometimes as expurgated editions which did not include chapters that colonial educators considered objectionable. This desire to remove immoral content stems from the importance colonial educators attached to developing sound moral instruction as one of their objectives. The consideration of these texts as immoral and the desire to remove them, stems from the 'civilising mission' which Margrit Pernau discusses.[357] Colonial educators saw it as part of their duty to impart sound moral instruction,[358] but according to them, this education also had to be secular. This is perhaps due to the fresh memory of the 1857 revolt, which Pernau says led to the devaluation of a civilising mission through education and conversion.[359] The revolt made clear to the British that religion was a sensitive issue which should not be meddled with in India. Therefore, since morals based on Protestant Victorian ideals could not be easily achieved in vernacular education, the next best alternative was secular. This, however, was considered by Leitner and others to have the opposite effect.[360] Since indigenous education was often intertwined with religious education, morality was often considered as being imparted through religion, especially for Muslims in the case of Persian schools where they often began their education with the reading of the Qurān and went on to read books which contained information on prayer,[361] stories and morals drawn from religion. These religious books were also not included in

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[357] Margrit Pernau. "Teaching Emotions: The Encounter between Victorian Values and Indo-Persian Concepts of Civility in Nineteenth-Century Delhi." in *Sengupta I., Ali D. (eds) Knowledge Production, Pedagogy, and Institutions in Colonial India.* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 227-247.

[358] This is perhaps stemming from a notion of positive law as previously mentioned.

[359] Ibid., 235.

[360] Leitner, ,viii.

  Nor has the system which produces few scholars been more successful in producing gentlemen. The Lieutenant-Governor desires that the department take especial care that the good manners natural to Oriental youth are not lost at school. This matter has hitherto been neglected. If the result of sending boys of good family to school is, as is now often the case, that they return pert, conceited, and studiously rude and familiar, it is no wonder that parents desire to educate their children at home.

[361] For example: *Miftāh us-Salāt*, *Nām-i-Haq*, *Takmīl ul-Īmān*.

government schools, of course. Thus, colonial reforms deprived students with connection to morality as based in their communities, as well as their culture.[362]

Two other genres receive far less attention in government schools, *nisāb* and *inshā*. The *nisāb* genre whose particularity must not have coincided with that of English education, was probably left out due to it not corresponding to their ideas of a suitable textbook,[363] since there was not an equivalent genre of multilingual versified vocabularies in Britain. Additionally, students learned from it by memorising the verses, something which, as we have seen earlier, colonial educators did not emphasise upon.

Works on *inshā* were diminished for three main reasons. The first being that composition in Persian was not the objective of colonial Persian education, students were not being trained for jobs that would require such a skill. Those jobs had been removed by the government. Secondly, colonial educators perceived the style in Indian works on *inshā* to be "flowery and laboured"[364] or as one report describes them as containing "instructions in the art of composition and letter-writing in the Native inflated style."[365] These disparaging remarks of course stem from the devaluation which Shamsur Rahman Faruqi discusses of Indo-Persian which was present in the 19th century by Indians, British, and Iranians.[366] The returning of this devaluation back to Indians via the

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[362] Ibid., vii.
>   Much as our Indian system of education has, in spite of its imperfections, undoubtedly done, it cannot be said to have given culture, one of the highest marks of ' education.'

[363] As mentioned in a note earlier, the *Nisāb-i-Khusrau* which was a revised edition of the *Khāliq Bārī* was noted as not being suitable as a class book in the report on textbooks, but noted as useful for beginners. This categorisation is somewhat perplexing, and in some ways seems contradictory.

[364] Kempson, *Report on the Progress of Education 1869-70*, 87.

[365] *Report of the Committee to Examine Textbooks*, 303.

[366] Faruqi, *Unprivileged Power*, 3-30. and Rahman, *A History of Language Learning*, 146-7. Both argue that the devaluation of Indo-Persian was started by Indians themselves and spread on to the British, but there were certainly parallels which one could draw between the British and Iranians as found in *Report of the Committee to Examine Textbooks*, 110.

selection of works for Indian students by colonial educators further perpetuated the notion that Indo-Persian was inferior, and in order to create good Urdu, one could not draw from Indo-Persian and instead had to draw from Iranian Persian. This did not hold true for their selection of grammar books like *Qawā'id-i-Fārsī* which drew from a history of Indian scholarship on Persian lexicography and grammar. This was because the early lexical and grammatical works on Persian themselves originated from India. Finally, there was no desire on the part of colonial educators for the 'flowery', 'laboured', and 'inflated' style to find its way into Urdu composition since the Urdu which they were trying to fashion into popularity was to be distanced from its Indo-Persian past, despite the historical reliance on Persian which they proved unable to escape.

The contents of syllabi themselves have now been discussed, but the medium in which they were presented remains to be examined. In the development of a textbook culture by colonial educators and the attempt to standardise the books used for educating Persian, it was natural that they should also attempt to ascertain a supply-chain for furnishing these books. This change brought about an increased use of printed materials as opposed to the manuscripts which students in indigenous schools were accustomed to. The famous Nawal Kishore Press was the printer of many books used to educate Persian in government schools, along with the government's own presses and other private presses. Printed material was easier to mass produce and better for widely disseminating standardised material over manuscripts. This meant that scribes and students were no longer required to painstakingly copy manuscripts, which sometimes led to transcription errors, but it also removed the personal connection which students would have with manuscripts. This loss of richness in variety of manuscripts meant removing the authority from individuals and placing it in the hands of printers. With the wider dissemination of materials, works were made more accessible to the population, especially vernacular works which hordes of students were

required to purchase. Thus, in many ways there was a shift commencing regarding the importance of calligraphic education and the value of scribes.[367] Additionally, the power of colonial educators to disseminate material was greatly increased because of the shift to print culture which permitted the shift to textbook culture in the first place.

Finally, one should examine the shift in pedagogical methods from indigenous schools. The pedagogical methodology for government schools closely aligned with the Grammar-Translation Method which was mentioned earlier.[368] It was a translation of pedagogy applicable to classical languages such as Latin and Greek in Britain being applied to Persian. Students were taught grammar and then worked on translating passages from Persian to Urdu and occasionally vice-versa, but the emphasis was translation to Urdu. Students in indigenous schools used to translate too, but not with a focus on translating in idiomatic Urdu, whereas the importance of expression was the primary goal of government schools. The necessity of learning to read, especially by reading *bēma'nī* was discarded with since students were already expected to know how to read by the time they were learning Persian. In fact the whole idea of reading *bēma'nī* was puzzling to colonial educators and they didn't really consider it reading or education. Kumar argues this is because colonial notions of reading were a result of post-Reformation ideas in which unless a text meant something to the reader and exercised an intellectual influence on the reader, it was not considered to have any education.[369] She asserts that it was after the introduction of the printing press that it was possible for people to distinguish between a religious text as a sacred symbol and the interpretations of a text.[370] While Persian poetical texts were not sacred in the

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[367] See Amanda Lanzillo. "Translating the Scribe: Lithographic Print and Vernacularization in Colonial India, 1857–1915" in *Comparative Critical Studies 16.2-3 (2019): 281–300*

[368] See the first chapter's section on pre-colonial pedagogical practices.

[369] Kumar, *Political Agenda*, 53.

[370] Ibid.

same sense of religious texts, they still did hold significant cultural value as mentioned earlier. The introduction of technology which changed indigenous understandings of what reading ought to be, had only arrived recently.

Persian was no longer the first language of instruction, but rather something to enrich and enhance Urdu education. The memorising of passages prior to learning their meaning was removed also. Persian was being taught as a second or foreign language, not with a focus on expression, but rather on comprehension. It was not being taught as a language to be used in one's daily life. While the oral component of learning featured prominently in indigenous schools as a means of teaching and regular evaluation which was undertaken nearly each day, there was a shift to written expression for evaluation in government schools with the introduction of standardised exams. The standardised exams and the idea that students should proceed in graded classes was a change in structure from indigneous schools. Previously, students would read works and progress to another work once their teacher saw fit, there was no idea of marks. If a student was not proficient enough in a work according to their master, then that student did not advance. Students were now expected to have a certain timeline as for when they would complete certain works, and they would have to go through their textbooks at an established pace along with the other students in their class. The individual nature of a student's education was now removed. Progressing at one's own pace, leaving their studies for a certain period to assist the family with work, or attending to matters was no longer easy. Students were now placed in a competition with students from other localities, vying for scholarships and entrance into higher education. In many ways this encouraged students to work hard and and progress on a set timeline, but it removed the flexibility which was retained in indigenous schools. This structure of education naturally conformed to a distribution of time which was suitable for the needs of the government, since it

made feeding students into higher education, and later into government service more efficient and easy. In some ways this could be seen as emblematic of education being created to serve the wants of the empire and not the wants of the students. However, indigenous systems of education like the madrassas which sprung out from Deoband, also adopted similar measures of graded classes and examinations. But, the graduates of their schools were not intended to serve the administrative machinery or educational goals of the government.

Pedagogical Influence on Persian Decline

The previous chapter already explored how the British eradicated Persian through policy in educational administration, but this section re-examines how changes in pedagogy contributed to its decline. The important points to note are with regards to understanding why colonial officers introduced Persian, how their pedagogy shifted to accommodate those changes, and why those changes made Persian decline. It seems counterproductive to teach a language which espoused values and knowledge that went contrary to those which the colonial officers were trying to spread. Persian was introduced for a few reasons:

1. To compete with indigenous Persian schools in terms of enrollment by enticing parents to send their children to government schools, where they would be inculcated with the values and knowledge colonial educators desired to instill them with.

2. To compete with indigenous schools in terms of quality of Urdu, because even though Persian schools did not explicitly aim to teach Urdu, their students were often favoured in terms of Urdu style and composition over those students who were the products of government schools where they only learned Urdu and no Persian.

3. To facilitate the development and spread of Urdu as a language so that it would inherit the cultural value of Persian and would therefore decrease the power which Persian had in society.

Therefore, the pedagogical shifts which occurred were intended to reflect this change, the teaching of Persian was made such that the primary goal was not for students to be proficient users of Persian, but rather proficient users of Urdu. The grammaticalization of Persian represented it as no longer being a language which belonged to Indians. The study of grammar entailed developing a skill which would be used to decode and analyse a foreign language, a skill which colonial officers and educators themselves needed to develop in order to understand Persian according to their perspective. This perspective, which colonial educators held for Persian being a foreign language, was therefore passed onto Indians. Presenting Persian as a foreign language served to rupture the ties Indians held with the language and with the elite who garnered the language as their own by presenting them as foreigners as well. Additionally, presenting it as a Muslim language served to detract from the heterogeneous nature it previously held that allowed various religious and social groups to have a *lingua franca*.

For colonial educators, proficiency in comprehension and translation was important, but composition in Persian was not, especially not in the 'native style' which they denigrated. The type of writing which was a marker of elite culture was now being presented as aberrant. In its place, colonial educators attempted to develop Urdu, a language previously considered unfit for writing by men, except in some cases related to literary activity, to no longer remain in the realm of speech, but to be worthy of the privileged position assigned for writing. In fact, their teaching of Urdu as a first language of study, was a way of subverting the power and control that Persian and therefore the elite held in society. They portrayed both Urdu and Persian as 'Islamic'

languages, so that Urdu could be considered the inheritor of the elite value which Persian held in society, and attempted to develop it as a replacement language, albeit not completely filling the power vacuum whose most elevated ranks they desired for English to enjoy. Through this they could in some measure disconnect the power and past which Persian held in society, a language which they associated with the elite who were in opposition to them, one which was the perfect language to build an empire in India due to its cosmopolitan nature which had previously helped create a Mughal political ideology that served its diverse and heterogeneous social and religious reality.[371] In many places where Urdu was not the vernacular such as Punjab, it was still taught and presented as the inheritor, but in other regions, the teaching of other vernaculars served to fragment the elite society which was previously able to communicate using Persian as its *lingua franca*. This would help to form multiple new linguistic identities, forming groups that would be easier to divide, control, pit against each other, and unite under the umbrella of English, the new elite language of power. It would help the British to be the arbiter among Indians. This eventually backfired with Urdu and Hindi contributing to the partition of India and the inability of the British to effectively unite the myriad groups they divided the empire into. Nevertheless, English remains the uniting colonial linguistic legacy as the language of power until today.

In the creation of syllabi there was an active attempt to distance it from its milieu by removing Indo-Persian works, religious works, and there was an effort made for it to only provide the type of moral education which coincided with Victorian sensibilities as a tool of its *mission civilisatrice* in India. This casting of literary works by colonial educators as immoral, served to denigrate the elite Indo-Islamic society which previously espoused these works and devalue the morals which they held. They painted the pre-colonial societal elite as morally corrupt and posited

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[371] Alam, *Persian in Precolonial Hindustan*, 188.

themselves as the saviours. This moral corruption propagated by them would find its way into *madrasa* education later. Literary education in Persian that was once diverse and included works labeled as 'immoral' by colonial educators, would become confined to a meagre number of works, with the purpose of developing vocabulary and not engaging intellectually, effectively dislocating *madrasa* students from their cultural and literary past. Colonial educators did not emphasise the memorising of passages, such that the value which the recitation of those works held would eventually fall out of the literary consciousness and communal memory of a society that held the value of even incomprehensible poetry to be a worthwhile refinement. This would destroy the forming of a *habitus* which was conditioned into pre-colonial learners of Persian and had maintained the value of elite society. Teaching Persian as a language long after Urdu had already been taught, removed the opportunity for Persian to form part of the *habitus*, since it would be excluded from the childhood of many learners, they could not identify it as part of themselves or their culture as easily. Removed from one's identity, the motivation to learn it and the values it carried would be greatly diminished, instead it could be replaced with the sort of *habitus* and values which the British desired to instill through the guise of Urdu.

Finally, when they achieved their goal of defeating the indigenous schools in enrollment and no longer had a need for elementary Persian-language education as a means of consolidating power over education, itself a means of consolidating empire, they merely dropped it from the curriculum. Thus, as far as government education was concerned, Persian was left aside by colonial educators to be studied by the few who chose to pursue it in institutions of higher learning as a classical language. It was a language whose power they had successfully curtailed, whose connection with the inhabitants they had erased, and whose scattered and fragmented replacement language(s) could not pose a threat to English or its power.

Persian in South Asia and Indians in the Persophonia

As understood from the previous section, the colonisers did not envisage a position for Persian in South Asia other than a language of foreign study. They considered Indian works and Indian usages as aberrations of "the real article current in Persia"[372] and there were multiple indigenous writers who held similar positions. However, without falling into anachronistic nationalistic considerations, there were other contrary and sometimes more nuanced approaches to the position of Persian in South Asia and South Asian users of Persian. This section first considers the origins of colonial understanding of Persian foreignness in South Asia which informed their perspective of Indian inadequacy in the language. It then proceeds to indigenous accounts regarding perception of South Asian usages of Persian and the position of India in the Persophonia.

As discussed in the second chapter, the politics of vernacular language were strong influences in British perceptions of language use. With the tendency of European societies towards monolingualism, and building nation-states upon the foundation of languages, it was natural that they would transplant their perspectives onto the linguistic landscape of South Asia. With English as their literary language and vernacular, they viewed all other languages they learned as foreign or classical, which held ground in their largely monolingual society, but the problems of this perspective became apparent when applied to the multilingual societies of South Asia. Their perspective of necessity for one to have a mother-tongue was apparent in censuses conducted by the colonial government. As Arthur Dudney has argued, it forced people across the Subcontinent

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[372] *Report of the Committee to Examine Textbooks*, 110-1.

to engage with a European sense of how language works: a single mother tongue with a name.[373] People did not previously identify the languages they used for various purposes with the categories used in colonial descriptions of language: mother-tongue, vernacular, classical, etc. A literary language which was not spoken in the home was not necessarily considered foreign or classical at the time. The categories of language were different from British categories and they were adapted to the multilingual milieu. It was natural for the British to then consider that since English was the native tongue of people in Britain, they should be the most proficient in the language, which for them was both spoken and literary. The native speaker, to them, dictates the course of the literary language, and the literary languages which developed in Europe were the consequences of vernaculars appropriated for literary usage, a feat only capable according to them by native speakers. Accordingly, they would see specific groups of native speakers of Persian such as those from Isfahan or Shiraz as best in Persian, while discounting the authoritative or linguistic value of other speakers of Persian. Similarly, English for Indians, could only be a foreign language in which they would be non-authoritative and secondary to those where the language is spoken daily and originates, which placed them in the position of linguistic authority. Naturally, Persian was a cosmopolitan language at the time, but they could find no fitting counterpart in their own linguistic sphere. Latin had been a cosmopolitan language for them, but it was not their sole literary language, nor did Latin have a base of native speakers. Indeed, unless one considered a speaker of Vulgar Latin to be a native speaker of Latin, which was the literary tongue, being a speaker of Vulgar Latin did not necessarily entail a reified position as a writer in Latin. There are certainly differences, because the degree of diglossia was not equivalent for Latin, Persian, and their vulgar or spoken counterparts. However, there was no true equivalent to Persian in the British-European

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[373] Arthur Dudney, "A Desire for Meaning: Ḳhān-i Ārzū's Philology and the Place of India in the Eighteenth-Century Persianate World," PhD diss., (Columbia University, 2013), 292.

sphere. Therefore, in addition to trying to make sense of the linguistic landscape of South Asia by conducting linguistic surveys where mother-tongues were identified and distinguished, no data was taken by them regarding the knowledge of other languages, because it did not fit into the mold of their perceptions of monolingual linguistic identity. According to them, a person belonged to a single language, and that one language belonged to a group of people which included that person. Consequently, they believed that an Indian could not belong to Persian and Persian could not belong to Indians. It is the reason for their distinction of Classical Persian from Indo-Persian, the former being preferred and the latter aberrant according to them. It is also why they focussed their efforts on 'developing' the vernacular languages, and replacing a language which they perceived as having no sense of belonging in South Asia with their own, English. They succeeded in diffusing their perspective which now prevails in South Asia as people came to attach language with identity.

There were others who did not hold the same linguistic worldview as that of the British, yet also held the position of Indian inferiority in Persian. There is the example of Mirzā Qātil, a late 18th and early 19th century Khatri poet and intellectual whom Stefano Pellò has written about.[374] In his work *Shajarat ul-Amānī* (The Arbor of Fidelity)[375] he suggested that the imitating (*muqallid*) speakers of Persian must properly follow the *ahl-i-zabān*[376] in the correctness of their language, but that they must be aware of differences between quotidian usage (*rōzmarra*) or conversation (*muhāwara*) and that of a generally correct Persian.[377] Rather than using the traditional divisions of Persian into *pārsī*, *pahlawī*, and *darī*, he instead divided the language into

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[374] Stefano Pellò. "A Linguistic Conversion: Mirza Muhammad Hasan Qatil and the Varieties of Persian (ca. 1790)". In: Pellò, S. (ed.) Borders: Itineraries on the Edges of Iran, Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari (Eurasiatica - Quaderni di Studi su Balcani, Anatolia, Caucaso, Iran e Asia Centrale 5, 2016), pp. 203-240.

[375] Muḥammad Ḥasan Qatīl. *Shajarat ul-Amānī*. (Kānpūr: Maṭbaʻ-i-Shuʼla-yi-Taur, 1865).

[376] This word is literally translated as 'people of the language,' with the language here referring to Persian. It is sometimes translated as 'native speakers,' but this would not carry the true meaning of the word which is not a neutral socio-linguistic descriptor as shall soon be shown.

[377] Ibid., 13. Pellò, *A Linguistic Conversion*, 209-10.

the Persian of Iran, the Persian of Turan,[378] and eventually the Persian of the Indians (*fārsī-yi-ahl-i-hind*).[379] Qātil's primarily geographical attributions for eloquence in Persian and his usage of *ahl-i-zabān* were relatively ideologically novel. His attributions reflected declining Mughal power and had geographical basis for eloquence, but geography was only one of multiple genealogies in the past and not the sole criterion for eloquence in Persian, as reflected in the famous dictionary mentioned in the first chapter which was written by Injū Shirāzī, the *Farhang-i-Jahāngīrī*, a prestigious model to late-Mughal literati. Injū's preface to his dictionary, containing a grammar and history of the Persian language, did not include the use of *ahl-i-zabān* which is a term that arises as a late-Mughal coinage indexing anxiety in Mughal litterateurs regarding the decline of Mughal sovereignty and increased competition for literary patronage.[380] Injū provided more material on the non-geographical and non-ethnic explanations on the criteria for Persian eloquence, such as ritual, prophetic, and Quranic precedents.[381] Qātil mentioned that Indians who are not imitators or companions of Iranians have two types of Persian: one being their written language which is different from the quotidian usage of the language but is correct, and the second being the natural Persian in which they in express the language by words shared with the Indian language without verification (of their meanings) in Persian.[382] He considered the latter wrong and very ugly, providing examples to further his point. These new usages of Persian words in India were not valid according to him, because unlike the people of Iran and to a lesser extent

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[378] Ibid., 211-12.

[379] Qātil, *Shajarat ul-Amānī*, 16.

[380] Prashant Keshavmurthy has indicated this, in revisions to this dissertation.

[381] Injū Shirāzī, *Farhang-i-Jahāngīrī*. 5-8. He writes regarding the permissibility of praying in Persian if one does not know Arabic, that the Prophet spoke words in Persian, that God did not send down prophets except in the languages of peoples. He also uses *Imāmī* precedent with Zayn ul-'Ābidīn priding himself on the star of two moons, with his father (Arab) being the sun and his mother (Persian) being the moon.

[382] Ibid., 16-17.

Turan, Indians could not be original (*asl*) and coin their own usages, but must rather be imitators.[383]

He clarified his hierarchy of Persian prestige which the Indian may use to discern whom to imitate from in his work *Nahr ul-Fasāhat* (The Stream of Eloquence).[384] While both Turanian and Iranian Persian were acceptable as an authoritative precedent (*sanad*), he ranks the Persian of various regions in order from least to most authoritative: Turanian, Azerbaijani, Khurasani, Shirazi, and Isfahani.[385] But, while he created regional hierarchies, he argued that even people from lower classes or servants of those regions were masters of the language and could be sources of imitation, although he did concede that the errors of their poets may not be followed.[386] He did not extend this social equality in authority of the language to Indians, where he saw the practices of low class *munshīs* as reprehensible. In discussing epistolary composition and prose, he noted that Indians did not use affectations when writing in this genre, which was acceptable and correct for him if bookish, but he still found problems with their inability to distinguish between the Persian of Iran and Turan, in addition to artificial and non-artificial language.[387] He attributed this to the diversity of migrants from Persian speaking lands present in India.[388] Thus, through his writings he explicitly demonstrated his perception of Iranian Persian, in particular Isfahani Persian as most authoritative and worthy of emulation.[389] While he did not place Indian Persian within the realm of authoritative language, qualifying Indian users of Persian to be imitators, he did situate Indian Persian within the context of the larger Persophonia. He implicitly placed himself in an elevated

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[383] This is a similar logic to the prescriptive grammar rulings of the present day in which new usages by linguistically colonized states are often ruled as incorrect, although they may be considered descriptively correct by modern linguists.

[384] Muḥammad Ḥasan Qatīl. *Nahr ul-Fasāhat*. (Kānpūr: Nawal Kishore Press, 1874).

[385] Ibid., 41-42. Pellò, *A Linguistic Conversion*, 223.

[386] Pellò, *A Linguistic Conversion*, 223.

[387] Ibid. 226-27.

[388] Ibid.

[389] For further understanding of how Qātil's conversion to Shiism may have influenced his linguistic perspectives see Pellò, *A Linguistic Conversion*, 228-35.

category because of his awareness of Iranian and Turanian linguistic practices and variations, in addition to the Indian Persian particularities which he admonishes. In this way he attempted to establish himself as the model Indian user of Persian, setting an example for how Persian ought to be used and taught in India.

Qātil's discussion of Persian authority was situated within the context of a larger debate regarding the authority of Indian users of Persian which itself stemmed from a debate regarding the prestige of the novel Safavid-Mughal poetic style known as *tāza gōyī* (Speaking Anew).[390] Prashant Keshavmurthy succinctly describes the style:

> This style derived its name from its predominant trait of playing on the reader's awareness of the aforementioned classical canon to evoke new topoi, new logics of intertextual relation and new metaphors and syntax.[391]

The innovation used in this style to connect to classical tropes was not welcome by all, and what was primarily a debate regarding style also coincided with debates regarding the ability of Indians to innovate in Persian. It is important to note here that *tāza gōyī* which was later improperly named *sabk-i-hindi* (Indian style) in the early 20th century, did not originate in India, nor did it have anything inherently Indian about it other than the fact that India was the major literary centre for Persian in the Persophonia, and it therefore found fertile ground there during its peak popularity.[392] This misnomer has resulted in some poorly framing the debate regarding *tāza gōyī* as nationalistic, a contest between Iranian and Indian aesthetics, but that would not be an apt since

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[390] Prashant Keshavmurthy. *Persian Authorship and Canonicity in Late Mughal Delhi: Building an Ark*. (New York: Routledge, 2016), 2. I have used Keshavmurthy's non-literal translation of the term here. His literal translation is "Speaking the Fresh" or "Speaking the New." It has also been referred to as "Fresh Speech" in Dudney, *A Desire for Meaning*, 148.

[391] Keshavmurthy, *Persian Authorship*, 2.

[392] Dudney, *A Desire for Meaning*, 158-60.

it is better framed as a debate between the style of the Ancients (*mutaqaddimīn*) and the *tāza gōyī* of the Moderns (*muta'akhkhirīn*).[393]

Nevertheless, debates surrounding *tāza gōyī* coincided and overlapped with debates on the authority of Indians in Persian. Although later nationalistc debates on this subject in the late colonial and post-colonial periods inform us regarding another aspect of Persian language authority, this section instead considers the ideas found in the early-mid 18th century writings of Sirāj ud-Dīn 'Alī Khān-i-Ārzū, described as "the most prolific and arguably most influential Indo-Persian philologist of the early-modern period" and "a rigorous theoretician of language."[394] In responding to critiques[395] of *tāza-gōyī*:

> [Ārzū] marshaled his commentaries and dictionaries to demonstrate that literary language conformed to concepts of linguistic purity and efficiency even as it was susceptible to shifts from place to place and from period to period. It was therefore not geographical or political affiliation, as Ḥazīn had claimed, but a hard-won pedagogical training in these universal or trans-temporal and trans-spatial criteria and their spatio-temporally local constituents, a training he showed himself to have undergone and himself offered, that qualified a balanced and linguistically pure speaker. If Speaking Anew was practiced by such an aesthetically and ethically cultivated subject, it was as legitimate a literary practice and as worthy of esteem as the older exemplars of the tradition.[396]

Returning to the geographic question we are concerned with, Ārzū notes that it is not the origin of the writer which is important, but rather his pedagogical training since the realm of Persian literature belongs not to native speakers or *ahl-i-zabān* and they are not the proprietors of its domain. He envisages Persian as a cosmopolitan language whose standards are defined by its masters who are trained in its tradition and are permitted to issue authoritative precedent even if they are novel. He writes:

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[393] Ibid., 152.

[394] Ibid., see Abstract of Dudney's article.

[395] See Dudney, *A Desire for Meaning*, 148-215 and ———. "Sabk-E Hendi and the Crisis of Authority in Eighteenth-Century Indo-Persian Poetics." *Journal of Persianate Studies* 9, no. 1 (2016): 60–82.

[396] Keshavmurthy, *Persian Authorship*, 143-44.

it is a fact that (*ba-tahqiq peyvast keh*) the most eloquent of languages is the language (*zabān*) of the court (*ordū*) and the Persian of that place is respected, but a dialect (*zabān-e khāsa*) of other places is not accepted in poetry or belles lettres (*enshāʾ*). The poets of every place (for example, Khāqāni was from Shirvān, Nezāmi from Ganjah, Sanāʾi from Qazvin, and Khosrow from Delhi), all composed [literally "spoke"] in the established (*moqarrar*) language and that was none other than the language of the court.[397]

As for the question of local influence in Persian language usage, in his aesthetic theory, local usages are by definition ineloquent Persian, but he differentiates between truly local usages and universal usages which are dominant in certain regions.[398] However, he does allow for Indians to modify Persian usage, with the qualification being that they are sufficiently trained. But, he does not limit the scope to a particular geography or origin, nor does he exempt anyone, including native speakers, from needing to be properly trained in order to change poetic usage. As for the introduction of non-Persian words (including words of Indic origin) into Persian, he only permits master poets to do so.[399]

As the political power of Mughal India waned, the place Persian held in India and the place India held in the wider Persophonia was disappearing with it. Ārzū made convincing arguments at the peak of Indo-Persian literary activity regarding the equivalent and sometimes superior authority of properly trained Indians in Persian across the Persophonia. As Indo-Islamic political decline began to ensue, Qātil envisaged a place for Indians in Persian that was inferior to the *ahl-i-zabān*, but as part of that demographic of Indians, he still perceived a position which Indians could attain within the Persophonia, and he had ambition for what Indians could achieve in Persian. The British eventually saw no suitable place for Persian in India, and no place for Indians in Persian. Although, this was moreso a result of political motivations to place India within the Anglophonia than the linguistic ideological considerations which resulted in Indians turning to the

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[397] Dudney, *Sabk-E Hendi*, 74.
[398] Ibid.
[399] Ibid., 75.

newly standardised vernacular languages. And, through the use of a Persian devoid of its political significance, disconnecting Indians from their own literary heritage, and dissociating India from its once essential position within the Persophonia, it succeeded in achieving its political and linguistic ambition.

Conclusion

Persian, a language whose education was once intended to serve the cultivation of young boys into the elite Indo-Islamic society which its existence and learning supported, existed no more. Instead, after increased control in the domain of education, colonial educators replaced that Persian with one intended to serve the empire and colonial machinery. The colonized Persian would aid in attracting students to government schools and away from indigenous learning, morals, and values. It would help in developing Urdu, the colonial project language which would facilitate the imposition of English by appeasing the populace with the illusion of elite cultural retention forged by colonial patronage and selection, but instead resulted in a significant disconnection from history. Urdu, though literarised already, had been limited to certain literary activities and communicational purposes. The implementation of it on a large scale and the extension of its usage beyond literary purposes was the result of the colonial project which sought to propagate Urdu as the cultural inheritor of Persian and displace the usage of Persian. The displacement facilitated English in occupying the upper echelons of the power vacuum left by Persian's departure in the political, judiciary, bureaucratic, and higher educational domains. This was in addition to English taking the place of Persian in inter-regional communication.

The intended purpose of this thesis was to understand how Persian which remained the elite language for centuries could be dismantled and whose history could be forgotten in a country where thousands upon thousands of Persian manuscripts remain unread because there are few who are capable of reading them and are therefore left to rot. Whether Persian would have remained a literary *lingua franca* in India had the British not colonized it remains a question one cannot answer. Persian was the language which allowed Indians to communicate beyond their borders, it allowed them to interact with a Persianate world which stretched westward until the Balkans.

English has replaced Persian as the elite language and has allowed Indians to communicate with an even larger world as a result of British colonialism across the earth and the rise of the United States of America.

English could not however be the receptacle of Persian from a literary, cultural, and historical perspective. For this, Urdu has become the primary inheritor, but without the complete power and prestige which Persian held. Even in Pakistan, where it is the national language, it must still compete with English in many domains. In India, it has been confined to existing primarily as a religiously affiliated language, one which is used by Muslims, a by-product of colonial characterisations of Persian and Urdu as Islamic languages which seeped into the Indian consciousness, and contributed to the partition of India. Hindi, Bengali, and sometimes other languages have replaced Persian where English hasn't been able to.

It is hoped that this thesis will aid future studies of Persian-language pedagogy in India. Increased examination of advanced pedagogical materials, indigenous accounts of learning,[400] and other colonial reports[401] will prove beneficial in developing further understanding of Persian-language pedagogy in South Asia. I pray that the reader forgive me for any ignorance and errors and that we may all be increased in knowledge.

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[400] Accounts which I have unfortunately been mostly unable to access, and whose investigation extends beyond the scope of this dissertation. It is likely that many exist in manuscripts rotting away in South Asian libraries.

[401] Most of which have not been digitised and were also inaccessible for this thesis project.

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