

# THE COLONIAL CONSTRUCTION OF HINDUSTANI

1800-1947

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## Abstract

Considerable research has been done on the impact of English in India but despite the fact that, for a century and a half, almost all British civil and military officers had to learn Hindustani, almost nothing has been written on its importance to the colonial state. The small amount of literature has focused on a few particular aspects, either the very early Gilchrist years or specifically on the textbooks themselves. This study uses a wide range of archival materials relating to the British learning of the Hindustani, together with the textbooks and grammars they produced and memoirs of those who had to learn the language, both to tell the story of the British Hindustani 'enterprise' comprehensively, and to reveal its relationship to colonial state power. The initial premise was that Hindustani was the 'cement' which held the empire together. As to be expected, however, over such a long time frame the evidence revealed considerable changes in the perceived importance of Hindustani to the colonial state and links made by many scholars between language and colonial power are in this particular case, shown to be dubious. The study, in looking at an area hitherto unresearched, contributes to the knowledge and understanding of the role of an indigenous *lingua franca* in the colonial context and sheds new light on its 'fate' in the Indian context.

## Declaration

I affirm that this thesis is entirely my own composition, represents my own original research and has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signed

Alison Safadi

*In Memory of*  
*Geoffrey Barnsby*  
*(1926-2012)*

*and*

*Ralph Russell*  
*(1918-2008)*

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## Abbreviations

CUP	Cambridge University Press
EIC	East India Company
FWC	Fort William College
HP	High Proficiency
HS	Higher Standard
HSS	Hindi Sahitya Sammelan
IOR	India Office Records
KAR	King's African Rifles
Ki-KAR	simplified Swahili used in the King's African Rifles in Kenya
LS	Lower Standard
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
NWP	North Western Provinces (formerly Conquered and Ceded and later United Provinces)
OIOC	Oriental and India Office Collections
OUP	Oxford University Press
P	Passed Interpreter's Examination
PH	Passed Hindustani
PWA	Progressive Writers Association
RUJ	Roman-Urdu Journal
UP	United Provinces (of Agra and Awadh)

## Glossary

<i>amla</i>	Indian court officials
<i>arzi</i>	petition, (also written as <i>arzee</i> , <i>urzi</i> , <i>urzee</i> )
<i>bhasha</i>	sometimes <i>bhakha</i> , meaning simply language, but often associated with <i>Braj</i>
<i>Braj</i>	a dialect of Hindi spoken in the Braj area, sometimes Brij
<i>Dakkhini</i>	Southern variety of Hindustani/Urdu spoken in the Deccan
<i>Devanagari</i>	see <i>Nagari</i>
<i>dhobi</i>	washer
<i>griff/griffin</i>	someone new out to India from England
<i>hamal</i>	a houseservant who did dusting etc
<i>Hindi Sahitya Sammelan</i>	Hindi Literary Conference
<i>Hindustani Prachar Sabha</i>	Society for the spread of Hindustani
<i>kachchahri</i>	court
<i>khari boli</i>	a dialect of Hindi spoken around the Delhi area on which Hindustani was based
<i>memsahib</i>	form of address for British women in India
<i>kitmudgar</i>	properly <i>khidmatgar</i> , a servant who acts as a waiter
<i>misl</i>	body of documents for a (particular) court case
<i>muharrir</i>	from the Arabic, a writer or scribe
<i>munshi</i>	originally a clerk, but later used for a teacher of Indian languages
<i>Nagari</i>	script used to write Hindi, associated with Sanskrit, also <i>Devanagari</i> , <i>Nagri</i> , <i>Nagree</i>
<i>Nagari Pracharini Sabha</i>	society for the propagation of <i>Nagari</i> script
<i>Nagree/Nagri</i>	see <i>Nagari</i>
<i>naql</i> pl. <i>naqliyat</i>	short narratives related at the oral examination by <i>sepoys</i> for officers to translate into English.
<i>nuckul</i>	see <i>naql</i>
<i>pucka,/pukka</i>	literally 'ripe', but used to mean 'proper' or 'the real thing'
<i>qaumi zaban</i>	Urdu for national language
<i>rashtrabhasha</i>	Hindi for national language
<i>sahib</i>	form of address used for British men in India, from the Arabic for 'friend'
<i>sarishtedar</i>	head-clerk in offices of the British administration
<i>sarkar</i>	lord, sir, used both as a form of address to British officials and for the government
<i>sepoy</i>	Infantry soldier in the Indian army
<i>shikasta</i>	the handwritten 'running' Persian script, a kind of shorthand used in the courts
<i>sowar</i>	Indian cavalry officer
<i>subedar</i>	highest rank Indians could achieve in the Indian army
<i>Urdu</i>	Persianized form of <i>khari boli</i> . Literally meaning 'camp' and used in the phrase <i>zaban-e-Urdu-mu'alla</i> the language of the imperial court. <i>Urdu-e-mu'alla</i> was used to refer to the city of Shahjahanabad
<i>zaban</i>	language



## CHAPTER 1

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### OF HISTORY AND HINDUSTANI

#### INTRODUCTION

‘...wie es eigentlich gewesen.’

*Leopold von Ranke*

#### **1.0 Introduction: A Linguist Amongst the Historians**

The idea for this thesis grew out of a fascination with the grammars and text-books the British produced to teach themselves Hindustani. As an Urdu graduate and language teacher, they appealed to me as documents which traced changes, both in the language itself, and in language teaching methodology. As a tentative historian, their appeal was as documents of social history, reflecting the changing attitudes of the British towards India and Indians over the course of a century and a half. The large number of grammars, produced between 1796 and 1947, suggested that Hindustani was of great importance to the running of the British Indian Empire; that it was, in effect, the cement which held it together. The colonial archive (official and unofficial) revealed that the British Hindustani enterprise was, indeed, vast, but a wider examination of the subject led to several revisions of the original premise.

#### **1.1 Situating the Study: Colonialism and Language(s)**

The ‘linguistic turn’ which has recently influenced much scholarship in the social sciences has focused on the importance of language as a means of theoretical analysis, rather than on the role of particular languages in shaping history; social, cultural, intellectual, economic and political. Language was of major importance to colonial powers in terms of administration and control. It also embodied ideologies which were diffused through the education of the colonized. Different colonial powers adopted differing policies with regard to which languages should be used for particular purposes.

Initial French policy of was one of assimilationism, based on the ideas of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, which emerged from the revolution. It posited that through a knowledge of the French language and western education, the colonized would become *evolués* (civilized) and therefore entitled to the rights of all Frenchmen. Shortage of manpower and its high cost made such a policy difficult to sustain. It also encountered opposition from those who believed it would lead to the ultimate demise of colonialism. By the 1890s it had been replaced by a policy of associationism, which argued that the cultures of the colonized were inherently different and had to develop at their own pace, but were, nonetheless, worthy of respect. Even after assimilationism had been displaced as official policy, however, it remained an ideal to be aspired to. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Judge, *French as a Tool for Colonialism*, Berkeley, Institute of European Studies. 2005, 5-15. <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/6t22342r> Accessed 20.1.10.

Belgian policy in the Congo was diametrically opposed to that of the French.<sup>2</sup> Whilst paying lip-service to the idea that Africans should learn the language of the colonizer, in practice this was frowned upon. There was a fear that they might gain access to European works of literature and science, leading them, ultimately, to challenge the rulers. Whereas the French sought to turn Africans into Frenchmen, the Belgians sought to keep them firmly in their place by restricting them to Swahili, thereby also debarring them from high positions in the colonial administration.

As latecomers to colonialism, the Germans were in the invidious position whereby many inhabitants in their colonies spoke English, or, at least, a pidgin version of it. To counter this, the use of German was encouraged, and in Togo, and other areas of West Africa, it was imposed as the language of the administration. The desire to spread German was, however, moderated by the awareness that it was a double-edged sword. Some Germans shared the Belgian fear that knowledge of their language would lead to the overthrow of colonialism. In German East-Africa, this led to a difference of opinion between the metropolitan and colonial governments.

The British approach was, as with much of their colonial policy, frequently contradictory. Macaulay's notion of creating of a 'class of persons Indians in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect' foreshadowed, partially, the French policy of assimilationism. Whereas French policy potentially applied to all Africans, however, the small élite envisaged by Macaulay perhaps reflected the class-ridden nature of British society. Although English was imposed in the administration, the courts, and education, it was restricted to the higher echelons, thereby limiting access to western education to the privileged. At the lower levels, such as primary education and in the lower courts, the vernaculars were encouraged.

The position of various *linguas franca*, in the various colonial contexts, was an ambiguous one. In the context of the nation-state, Laitin has argued that, since their boundaries rarely coincide with state boundaries, they

...serve crucial communication functions but are not especially useful to state builders as a symbol of a national communications network. Also, these languages do not have the status of the vernaculars and are often considered of low value. Rarely is there a social group that seeks to promote their use in official domains.<sup>3</sup>

Although the colonial context is somewhat different, Laitin's argument is worth bearing in mind as the story of Hindustani unfolds.

## 1.2 Review of Related Literature

In the South Asian context examinations of the importance of the role of language have focused, almost entirely, on English and the continuing legacy of its imposition on Indians.<sup>4</sup> The impact of English in India was, ultimately, profound, but it was impossible for the British, especially in the

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<sup>2</sup> See Johannes Fabian, *Language and Colonial Power* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986)

<sup>3</sup> David Laitin, *Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992) 75.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Suleri, Viswanathan, Pennycook, Errington. See bibliography.

early 19<sup>th</sup> century, to impose it on the majority, or even a significant minority, of Indians. It was therefore necessary for them to learn Indian languages, in particular, the already-existing *lingua franca* they labelled Hindustani. The British Hindustani enterprise, has merited very little historical attention to date. Studies on the language itself have generally focused on the much-disputed linguistic origins of Urdu-Hindi, on the Urdu-Hindi controversy which developed from the 1860s onwards, and on the issue of Hindustani in the context of the problem of a national language for an independent India<sup>5</sup>

A monograph by Bhatia charts the development of ‘Hindi’ grammars, including indigenous first language grammars and non-British European grammars. In a brief and problematic description of Hindi, he states that historically it was ‘synonymous with Hindui, Hindawi, Rexta, and Rexti’ and ‘in recent times’ is ‘popularly known as Hindi’. He then asserts that ‘the terms Urdu and Hindustani are also used to refer to this language’.<sup>6</sup> Having made no distinction between the terms ‘Urdu’, ‘Hindi,’ ‘Hindustani’, ‘Hindawi’ or ‘Rekhta’, Bhatia labels *all* the grammars he discusses as Hindi. The fact that the titles of many of the works he examines actually contain the word ‘Hindustani’ or ‘Urdu’ (or both) receives no explanation or discussion. Although many Hindustani and Urdu grammars are included in the earlier sections of the book, interestingly, (especially considering his earlier statement that Urdu and Hindustani were ‘other terms’ for the language he is writing about) once Bhatia arrives at the ‘Golden Age’ of Hindi grammars, Hindustani and Urdu grammars are conspicuous by their absence. Setting these issues aside, the book’s focus is very much on the linguistic side of the grammars, and provides virtually no insight into the historical, social and political contexts in which they, and the teaching and learning of Hindustani by the British, are situated.

Two very different monographs deal, in detail, with the work of John Borthwick Gilchrist. The first by Kidwai<sup>7</sup> deals generally with ‘all things Gilchrist’, whereas Steadman-Jones<sup>8</sup> after a very useful broader introduction, focuses primarily on the philological aspect of Gilchrist’s work. The only publications on the British learning of Hindustani to go beyond Gilchrist are two articles, one by Peter Friedlander and the other by Tariq Rahman. Friedlander examines a number of textbooks written between 1772 and 1947 which he divides into three periods.<sup>9</sup> The purpose of the early grammars, he argues, was purely pragmatic; to enable officers to command their men. With

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<sup>5</sup> For example, Rai (Amrit ) Rai (Alok) Trivedi, Rayashree and Hasnain, King, Rahman, Faruqi, Dalmia, Orsini. See bibliography.

<sup>6</sup> Tej K. Bhatia, *History of the Hindi Grammatical Tradition* (Leiden: E.J Brill, 1987) 9. *Hindui* and *Hindawi* are two spellings of the same term and ‘Rexti’ is not a term for Hindi but a form of poetry written in the language of women. It is also not clear what is meant by ‘this language’ as he does not define it.

<sup>7</sup> Sadiq-ur-Rahman, Kidwai, *Gilchrist and the Language of Hindoostan* (New Delhi: Rachna Prakashan, 1972)

<sup>8</sup> Richard Steadman-Jones, ‘Colonialism and Grammatical Representation: John Gilchrist and the Analysis of the ‘Hindustani’ Language in the late Eighteenth and Early 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries’ (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> Peter Friedlander, ‘Hindustani textbooks from the Raj’, *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Centre for Language Studies, University of Singapore, 2006, 39-56.

Gilchrist, the study of literature became incorporated into the learning of Hindustani which, he maintains, created 'a tension' between Hindustani as a literary language and its use as a *lingua franca* of ordinary people. In the final period, after World War I, he suggests the textbooks came full circle and returned to their initial pragmatic purpose of enabling army officers to communicate with their men. Whilst he touches on some interesting ideas regarding the changing motivation of the British and the changing relationship between British and Indians, these are not explored in any detail. Rahman's article,<sup>10</sup> rather than looking in detail at the grammars, focuses instead, on the learning of Hindustani by the British, under themes such as *Instruction and Evaluation, Hindustani in the Imperative Mode, Code-switching Among Old India Hands, The Learning of Hindustani by British Men, The Learning of Hindustani by British Women, and The Learning of Hindustani by British Children*. The article, though using some interesting source material, merely skims the surface of the subject, and its lack of historical context, inevitably, leads to some doubtful conclusions.

The appropriation, in the African context, by various colonial powers of another *lingua franca*, Swahili, has been documented in various works such as, for example, Johannes Fabian's work on the Belgian Congo, Ann Brumfit's, Michelle Moyd's and Katrin Bromber's works on German East Africa, and more general works such as those by Whiteley and Laitin.<sup>11</sup> The aim of this thesis is to provide a similar understanding of the role of Hindustani in colonial India. In attempting this it does not seek to fill a gap in the 'facile mode' of 'Lucy Lacuna and Philius Fillagap',<sup>12</sup> but rather, having located the silences in the existing literature, it goes some way towards answering, questions hitherto unasked.

### 1.3 Of Methodology

Much recent South Asian historiography has focused on 'the fragment', rejecting the idea of a historical narrative. It has been argued that this has led historians 'to replace processual forms of representation with complex 'freeze' images of particular historical situations or with a largely unconnected series of such images', resulting in 'kaleidoscopic compositions of disjointed pieces'.<sup>13</sup> The present study has covers the period from 1800-1947. It is not, therefore, 'a breathtaking sweep' of ten years nor even the 'foolhardy adventurism' of twenty,<sup>14</sup> but rather the 'daredevil lunacy' of a

<sup>10</sup> Tariq Rahman, 'British Learning of Hindustani', *Pakistan Vision* Vo.1 8, No. 2, January- July 2008. This is now a chapter of a monograph, *From Hindi to Urdu* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011). Bernard Cohn also devotes a section to Hindustani in his article, 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> Fabian, op. cit., Ann Brumfit, 'Rise and Development of a Language Policy in German East Africa', *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika*, 2, 1980, Michelle Moyd, 'Language and Power, Africans, Europeans and Language Policy in German Colonial Tanganyika', unpublished MA Thesis, University of Florida, 1996, Katrin Bromber, 'German Colonial Administrators, Swahili Lecturers and the Promotion of Swahili at the Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen in Berlin', *Sudanic Africa*, Vol.15, Language in Africa, University of Bergen, 2004, Wilfrid Whiteley, *Swahili, The Rise of a National Language* (London: Methuen, 1969) and *Language in Kenya*, (Nairobi: OUP, 1974), Laitin, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Bernard Cohn, *An Anthropologist Amongst the Historians* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012) 33.

<sup>13</sup> Ravi Ahuja, *Pathways of Empire* (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2010) 22.

<sup>14</sup> Cohn, *Anthropologist*, 33.

century and a half. This was dictated by the topic itself. 1800, with the establishment of Fort William College, signalled the beginning of the colonial state's official interest in Hindustani. 1947, rather than being merely 'a magic chronological threshold', marks the demise of that interest, with the demise of the colonial state itself.

The long time frame has significant advantages, enabling not only the story of the British Hindustani enterprise to be comprehensively told, but also permitting the examination of gradual long-term shifts in purpose and emphasis, as well as the identification of key points of change. Perhaps more interestingly, however, it reveals certain strands and discourses which remained surprisingly constant. Corfield's idea of 'a loosely-braided three-dimensional history' in which the three strands of 'continuity', 'gradual change' and 'turbulence' 'combine and intertwine continuously, though not necessarily evenly within time'<sup>15</sup> is, therefore, a more helpful conceptual framework than a simple binary of 'continuity' and 'rupture'.

To render such a long narrative intelligible requires a chronological order to be followed as far as possible. The study also seeks to go beyond that narrative, and (without being teleological) to identify patterns which emerged over the course of the period, for which 'the temporal order of things matters'.<sup>16</sup> Chapters and sections of chapters are themed, but within them an attempt has been made to maintain the chronology. The aim, therefore, is to 'do history historically', avoiding 'story-plucking', 'leapfrogging legacies', and 'time flattening'.<sup>17</sup>

Central to both the narrative and to such historical enquiry are the sources of evidence, which, like the time frame, were largely dictated by the topic itself. The major primary source for such a study is, inevitably, the colonial archive, both official, in the form of the India Office records, and unofficial, in the form of the text-books and grammars, memoirs, and even satirical and (semi)fictional writings. In recent years a historical approach based on archival evidence has been criticized, on the grounds that the archive is limited by the 'silences and absences' within it, and cannot be seen as 'transparent',<sup>18</sup> or even that it is rather 'a fantasy of knowledge collected and united in the service of state and Empire'.<sup>19</sup> Since this thesis relies heavily on archival evidence, it is, perhaps, necessary to address such charges. An apparent naïvete on the part of historians has, allegedly, led to 'an uncritical acceptance of the archive as a primary source'.<sup>20</sup> As Eaton points out, however, careful historians have always been aware of the 'complex webs of power relations in which texts are always enmeshed', and have considered the possibilities of different readings of

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<sup>15</sup> Penelope Corfield, *Time and the Shape of History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007) 211.

<sup>16</sup> Ahuja, *Pathways*, 9-10.

<sup>17</sup> Frederick Cooper, Postcolonial Studies and the Study of History, *New Imperial Histories Reader*, ed., Howe, (London and New York: Routledge, 2010) 78-79.

<sup>18</sup> Tony Ballantyne, 'Archive, Discipline, State: Power and Knowledge in South Asian Historiography', *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, 3, 1, June 2001, 89-90.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive* (London, New York: Verso, 1993) 6.

<sup>20</sup> Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001) 306.

such texts.<sup>21</sup> The colonial archive seems, by its critics, to have been in some strange way personified as a monolithic whole, embodying the intentions of the colonial state from the beginning of British rule in India to its end. This encourages the writing of history backwards, ascribing intentions to earlier records based on subsequent events and knowledge. The archive, unlike colonial historiography, was not written for posterity, but consists of working documents. These undoubtedly reflect the thinking of their time, but they span nearly two hundred years, and should not, therefore, be homogenized.

This said, in many respects, the issue of the ‘transparency’ of the colonial archive poses fewer problems for the present study than for those researching issues in the Indian context. An examination of the British learning of Hindustani, and its importance to the colonial state, inevitably scrutinizes the colonial *through* the colonial. This does not imply writing from, or privileging, the colonial perspective, but it renders unnecessary, attempts to read the archive ‘against the grain’ or to subject it to ‘discourse analysis’. The British officials who produced the documents relating to the British learning of Hindustani were writing to each other on matters of day-to-day importance. As such they are remarkably candid, frequently revealing conflict, tension and dissension within ‘the colonial state’. The unofficial archive, is even more frank, at times helping to fill gaps in the official documentation. Such sources of evidence have not been taken at face value, but it is not necessary to ‘go behind and beneath’ them to find what is *not* hidden.<sup>22</sup> Perhaps rather than focus on the dangers of an archive supposedly complicit with colonialism, it would be more fruitful to caution against those of the secondary literature. These are twofold; firstly the tendency of some scholars to select their evidence in order to support their arguments, rather than derive their arguments from the evidence they have found, and, secondly, a tendency to write uncritically ‘off the back’ of other secondary works, especially those which have acquired an ‘iconic’ status.

Collingwood, contended that ‘the historian must re-enact the past in his own mind’, in order to bring the past into the present.<sup>23</sup> Some postcolonial scholars, apparently, regard any intervention by the historian in the past as ‘inherently illegitimate, a kind of complicity’.<sup>24</sup> Without such intervention, however, it is difficult to know how history can be written at all. The present study has attempted to turn the ‘noise’ of ‘fragmentary and fractured empirical sources’ into coherent voices,<sup>25</sup> and in so doing has, hopefully, enabled the past to provide some intelligible answers to the questions it has constructed.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Richard Eaton, (Re)imag(in)ing Otherness: A Postmortem for the Postmodern in India, *Journal of World History*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2000, 78.

<sup>22</sup> Dirks, *Castes*, 306.

<sup>23</sup> R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973, 282)

<sup>24</sup> David Washbrook and Rosalind O’Hanlon, ‘After Orientalism’, ed., Chaturvedi, *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (London, New York: Verso, 2000) 198-199.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

### 1.4 Of Theory

The word 'construction' carries ideological baggage. Its use in the title of this thesis requires clarification as I seek to distance myself from certain other writers.<sup>27</sup> It is used here in two very specific senses, one metaphorical and one concrete. The former refers to the theoretical construction the British put on the *lingua franca* they identified, according to which they defined, delineated, codified and systematized it under the name of Hindustani. This construct of the language, first enshrined in Gilchrist's grammar, was subsequently used to inform the construction of the physical apparatus necessary for them to learn it, in the concrete form of institutions, examination syllabuses, and a plethora of dictionaries, grammars and textbooks.

In writing on any aspect of South Asian history, it is impossible to ignore the influence of Said (and through him Foucault), and the consequent tendency 'to ascribe virtually unlimited domination to ruling forms of power knowledge' which are then extended in 'a curiously unhistorical and essentialist' way to all historical periods.<sup>28</sup> Sarkar has argued

In the Saidian framework ... the focus remains relentlessly on colonial domination alone. ...the dominant assumption is of a kind of total rupture or tabula rasa, with colonialism completely remoulding such indigenous structures, making them dependent or derivative.<sup>29</sup>

Peter Van de Veer, has described Said's notion that 'colonialism and orientalism created the reality within which Indians had to live', as 'an orientalist fallacy' which 'simplifies the intricate interplay of Western and Indian discourses'.<sup>30</sup> Insisting as Dirks does, on 'the overriding significance of colonialism',<sup>31</sup> runs the risk of portraying it as 'the only true actor in modern Indian history'.<sup>32</sup> Words like 'imagine', and 'invent' are all too familiar, the danger being that all history 'that preceded the advent of those who did the imagining and inventing' disappears'.<sup>33</sup> With regard to Hindustani, the argument that it was 'invented', or 'imagined' by the British cannot be sustained. The construction they put upon it and the way in which they codified and systematized it, certainly altered the concept of what precisely constituted the language. However, the pre-colonial history of the *khari boli* dialect spoken around Delhi, and its Persianized form, known as Hindi or *rekhta* by those who used it, is well established. Even the term 'Hindustani', chosen by the British as a label for the linguistic construct they had packaged up, though rarely used in the pre-colonial Indian context, was not a colonial 'invention' but a borrowing.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> For example Dirks.

<sup>28</sup> Sumit Sarkar, 'Orientalism Revisted', ed., Chaturvedi, *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, London, New York: Verso, 2000, 242.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Peter Van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994) 21.

<sup>31</sup> Dirks, *Castes*, 304.

<sup>32</sup> Eaton, (Re)imagi(n)ing, 66.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 71-72.

<sup>34</sup> See also Washbrook's arguments, 'Orients and Occidents', in Winks, ed., *Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 604.

While not wishing ‘to ride two horses at once’, by marrying conflicting theories,<sup>35</sup> the present work has, where appropriate, used various theoretical ‘building blocks’.<sup>36</sup> The work of Canadian linguist Robert Gardner on motivation and Bourdieu’s concepts of ‘linguistic habitus’ and ‘bodily hexis’ provided useful insights into individual officers’ learning of Hindustani. Another concept of Bourdieu, that of ‘linguistic capital’ and Wittgenstein’s notion of language as a game, were helpful in analysing the relationship of Hindustani to colonial state power, as were underlying Gramscian concepts of linguistic hegemony. David Ludden has suggested that the, supposedly indissoluble, link between knowledge and power in Foucauldian/Saidian frameworks, can usefully be separated in order to address certain questions regarding the influence of Orientalism.<sup>37</sup> Theories based on this knowledge/power relationship underly the works of Johannes Fabian and, following him, Michelle Moyd.<sup>38</sup> In the context of Swahili in the Belgian Congo, and in German Tanganyika, there is certainly some justification for this. The appropriation and knowledge of the language in those contexts was, indeed, a source of power to the colonial regimes. In examining the British learning of Hindustani and its importance to the colonial state in India, this study seeks to re-examine, and unpick a little, the relationship between linguistic knowledge and colonial power.

### **1.5 Summary of Chapters**

Chapters Two and Three examine the construction, physical and theoretical, of the British Hindustani enterprise. Chapter Two traces the development of the examination syllabuses and literary set texts, and examines the plethora of grammars and text-books which were produced to enable officers to pass the required examinations. Chapter Three examines the confusions and contradictions inherent in the theoretical construct of Hindustani. Chapters Four and Five document the learning of Hindustani by the British. Chapter Four examines the ongoing problem of individual officers’ motivation to learn the language, despite the professed necessity of acquiring a high level of competence in it, and the attempts, through a policy of rewards and sanctions, to remedy this. Chapter Five seeks to explicate the failure of such attempts through an examination of factors that could be termed ‘learner variables’. Chapter Six moves on to examine links between Hindustani and colonial state power. Chapter Seven examines arguments regarding the origins of the Urdu–Hindi controversy and the role of Fort William College, and then moves on to discuss why nationalist attempts to make Hindustani the ‘national’ language of an independent India failed.

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<sup>35</sup> Washbrook and O’Hanlon, ‘After Orientalism’, 216.

<sup>36</sup> Ahuja, *Pathways*, 24.

<sup>37</sup> David Ludden, *Oriental Empiricism*, ed., Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter Van der Veer, *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993) 252.

<sup>38</sup> This also underlies Gilmour’s, *Grammars of Colonialism*.



## CHAPTER 2

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FROM BAGH-O-BAHAR TO KHwab-O-KHAYAL  
THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HINDUSTANI TEACHING APPARATUS

‘Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt’

*Wittgenstein*

## 2.0 Introduction

Wittgenstein’s remark seems particularly apt when applied to the British Hindustani enterprise, as it speaks not only to the fact that, without expanding their language borders, the British could not expand their world to understand India and Indians and thereby rule them, but also to the fact that they decided what constituted the boundaries of the language, boundaries which, themselves, consequently formed the limits of their knowledge and understanding of it.

For any colonial power it was imperative to find a means of communicating with the people they had ‘conquered’. Robert Clive, allegedly justified never having learnt an Indian language by asserting, ‘Why if I had, I should not have conquered India; the black knaves would have led me astray by their cunning advice; but as I never understood them, I was never misled by them’.<sup>1</sup> Refusal to learn the languages, however, necessitated the use of ‘native’ interpreters of whom the British developed an increasing distrust. As early as 1797, the Court of Directors stressed the need for its ‘Servants’ to learn the language in order to be able ‘to transact public business without the aid of a Native Interpreter’.<sup>2</sup>

The focus of the 18<sup>th</sup> century British was on the classical languages, Persian, Sanskrit and Arabic. By 1800, they were turning their attention towards the ‘vernaculars’, notably, Hindustani. Faced with the plethora of regional languages, its utility lay in the fact that it was an already-established *lingua franca*, spoken over much of the area which, at that time, constituted British India. It was, therefore, the obvious choice as a medium of communication with their Indian subjects. Statements emphasizing its geographical versatility occur frequently in the colonial archive, and in the Hindustani text-books and grammars produced by the British. In his ‘Public Disputation’ of 1802, William Butterworth Bayly, one of the first students at Fort William College declared, ‘Nearly from Cape Comorin to Kabool... few persons will be found in any large villages or towns ... who are not sufficiently conversant in the Hindoostanee; and in many places beyond the Ganges this language is current and familiar’.<sup>3</sup> With only minor changes to the geographical referents, Lewis Ferdinand Smith, in 1813, referred to it as ‘a tongue which is understood from *Hurdwar* to *Cape Comorin* and from *Lahore* to *Chittagong*’,<sup>4</sup> and in 1845 Duncan Forbes observed, ‘Throughout the extensive empire

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Ferdinand Smith, ed., Duncan Forbes, *Translation of the Bagh o Bahar* (London: W. Allen, 1851) vi.

<sup>2</sup> Extract Public Letter to Fort St George, May 1797, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>3</sup> Reproduced in Sandford Arnot, *Grammar of the Hindustani Tongue* (London: Parbury Allen and Co, 1831) Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, *Bagh o Bahar*, vi.

of India, from *Cape Comorin* to *Kashmir*, and from the *Brahmaputra* to the *Indus*, the Hindustani is the language most generally used.<sup>5</sup>

During the last two decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the East India Company surgeon, John Gilchrist, set about systematizing and codifying Hindustani in dictionaries and grammars according to his theoretical construction of it.<sup>6</sup> In his 1815 speech at the Public Disputations at Fort William College, the Acting Visitor, Edmonstone, observed

The nice and intricate rules, which govern the construction of the Hindoostanee Language; the peculiarities which distinguish that Language; the elegance, the variety and the power of which it is susceptible were brought to light by the long and arduous labours of Dr Gilchrist ... The knowledge which, prior to that æra, the Servants of the Company in general attained, of a Language so extensive in its use and application, and so intimately connected with every branch of the administration of this Empire (necessity), naturally corresponded with the obscurity which prevailed until dispelled by the philological labours of the author of the Hindoostanee Grammar and Dictionary, and by the progressive operations of the College.<sup>7</sup>

In 1824, the Orientalist H.H. Wilson observed that Gilchrist had not only rescued Hindustani from the hands of incompetent teachers but had

... reduced it from the state of an unfixed, fluctuating dialect to regular permanent consistence. Before his time the Hindustani language existed only in the precarious condition of conventional use... The value of the article thus successfully redeemed from the operations of chance and time is unquestionable.<sup>8</sup>

Nearly half a century later, in his 1872 grammar, John Dowson commented that Hindustani grammar had been 'developed and reduced to a system by Englishmen, or under their supervision'.<sup>9</sup>

Gilchrist's construct of Hindustani was an all-inclusive one, encompassing the entire *khari boli* continuum from a highly-Persianized style at one end, to one almost devoid of Persian at the other.<sup>10</sup> His preference, however, was for the 'middle ground' of that continuum.<sup>11</sup> With the theoretical construct in place, all that remained was for the British to physically construct the apparatus necessary to learn it, in the form of teaching institutions<sup>12</sup>, examination syllabuses, grammars and textbooks. In 1893, Sarah Jeannette Duncan, the wife of a Bengal Civilian, described the purposes of the examination system instituted by the Raj.

<sup>5</sup> Duncan Forbes, *Hindustani Manual* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1845) 1.

<sup>6</sup> For detailed accounts of Gilchrist and his work see Kidwai (1972), Cohn (1985), Lelyveld (1994), Steadman-Jones (2007)

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Roebuck, *Annals of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1819) 466.

<sup>8</sup> Horace Hayman Wilson, 'Preface to Roebuck's Oriental Proverbs', 1824, ix-xiii reprinted in *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. V, October 1882, No. 53, 19. Emphasis added.

<sup>9</sup> John Dowson, *A Grammar of the Urdu or Hindustani Language* (London: Kegan Paul Trench Trubner & Co., 1908) ix. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1872.

<sup>10</sup> Rather than, as has recently been suggested, merely his 'preferred middle level. Orsini, Francesca, ed., *Introduction Before the Divide*, Hyderabad, Orient Blackswan, 2010, 3-4.

<sup>11</sup> Gilchrist's construction of Hindustani links with idea of displacing the native speaker, by subordinating the competence of native speakers to that of a colonial linguist. Rachael Gilmour, *Grammars of Colonialism*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006) 110-111.

<sup>12</sup> There is a wealth of material dealing more generally with such institutions. For FWC see for example, Das, (1978) *Sahibs and Munshis* and Kidwai, (1972) *Gilchrist and the Language of Hindoostan*. For Haileybury see Monier Williams (1894) *Memorials of Old Haileybury*, Farrington, (1976) *Records of the East India College, Haileybury, and other Institutions*, and Andrew Hambling, (2005), *East India College at Haileybury*.

For the furtherance of a good understanding between the sahibs and the Aryans who obey them and minister unto them, the Raj has ordained language examinations. This was necessary, because neither a Gurka nor a Bengali will comprehend you if you simply swear at him. He must be approached through a rudimentary medium of imperative moods and future tenses. Therefore the institution of the Higher and Lower Standard, and much anguish on the part of Her Majesty's subalterns.<sup>13</sup>

This chapter provides the framework of the development of the British Hindustani teaching apparatus. The first section examines the, initially rather piecemeal, establishment of examination systems for civil and military officers,<sup>14</sup> and traces the gradual moves to standardize them across the three Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras. Section 2 examines the grammars and textbooks<sup>15</sup> produced, by both British and Indian writers, between 1796 and 1947, keeping in mind two opposing contentions; that of Cohn, that the British Hindustani enterprise was part of the colonial acquisition of knowledge and hence power,<sup>16</sup> and that of Friedlander that the production of the grammars and textbooks did not form part of a consistent 'orientalist' project.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.1 Institutions and Examination Syllabuses

From the 1790s the Court of Directors had stressed the need for its employees to become proficient in 'the country languages',<sup>18</sup> but there had been no regular system of teaching and learning resulting in a 'desultory mode of Study' reliant solely on 'native Moonshees'.<sup>19</sup> In 1798, Gilchrist offered to give daily lessons in Hindustani to the junior 'Servants' of the East India Company, in return for the *munshi* allowance to which they were each entitled. The Government of Bengal, deeming the offer 'highly beneficial', accepted with alacrity and ordered the newly arrived 'Writers' stationed in Calcutta to attend Mr Gilchrist for twelve months at the end of which an examination would be held 'in such mode' as might be 'judged expedient'.<sup>20</sup> In May 1800 the Court of Directors approved both Gilchrist's employment and Wellesley's 'more extensive plan' to open a college for young Writers of the Company.<sup>21</sup>

The establishment of Fort William College in 1800, and the accompanying edict that, from 1801, no civil servant of the Company would be deemed qualified for the public service until he had passed an examination in two Indian languages,<sup>22</sup> heralded the beginning of the systematic learning of Hindustani. In recognition of its importance it was given its own department. In 1803, however,

<sup>13</sup> Sara Jeannette Duncan, *The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1893,) 227.

<sup>14</sup> The two contexts are treated together, chronologically, as they were always closely linked, with many military officers spending almost their entire careers in civil employ.

<sup>15</sup> The use of 'text book' in the Hindustani context is ambiguous. Originally it meant the literary set texts which were also sometimes referred to as 'test books'. It later meant the (grammar) book from which the language was learnt.

<sup>16</sup> Bernard Cohn, 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996)

<sup>17</sup> Friedlander, 'Hindustani Textbooks', 53.

<sup>18</sup> President's Minute, Extract Fort St George Public Consultations, November, 1790, IOR/F/4/300/6934 and Extract Public Letter to Fort St George, August, 1791, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>19</sup> Letter from the Governor-General-in-Council to the Court of Directors, August 1802, IOR/H/488

<sup>20</sup> Extract Public Letter from Bengal to the Court of Directors, December, 1798, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>21</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bengal, from the Court of Directors, May 1800, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>22</sup> Extract Public Letter from Bengal to the Court of Directors, December, 1798, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

the 'Honorable Court of Directors', less than impressed on receiving a bill for £250,000, ordered the college closed immediately,<sup>23</sup> protesting that they had 'no idea' that Wellesley had envisaged 'such an extensive Establishment' and had 'only meant to sanction the principles on which Mr Gilchrist's Seminary was instituted, as leading to the acquirement of a more intimate and general knowledge of the common Hindostanny'.<sup>24</sup> They ordered, 'the re-establishment of Mr Gilchrist's seminary' in Bengal and that students from other Presidencies should be 'returned thither by the first convenient opportunities'.<sup>25</sup> Their decision was based, in part, on the favourable report they had received from the committee which examined the 'Gentlemen' who had attended Gilchrist's seminary. This noted that many of the students had 'manifested a knowledge of the Hindoostanee language', which greatly surpassed their expectations, 'as to its extent, and its correctness, both with respect to grammar and pronunciation'.<sup>26</sup> In his response to the Court of Directors, Wellesley agreed that the seminary had been successful and praised Gilchrist accordingly. He nevertheless made clear that, in his opinion, it was the more disciplined institutional atmosphere of Fort William College which was largely responsible for the great progress now being made by the junior servants of the Company.<sup>27</sup> His threatened resignation prevented the Court of Directors from carrying out their intentions to close the college completely, but it was subjected to severe retrenchments and its remit was limited to the teaching of Oriental languages.

It is easy to assume that there is a long tradition of examinations, given the importance now attached to them all over the world. In 1800, however, no such systems existed in either Britain or India. Wellesley's decree that all officers needed to pass a language examination, in order to be deemed qualified for the public service, necessitated the implementation of a formal system. Gilchrist had divided the students at his seminary into four classes according to their level of proficiency. They were 'examined partly on general questions of grammar' and partly according to the separate forms of examination Gilchrist had prescribed for each class.<sup>28</sup> The Hindustani teaching materials in 1800 were limited to Gilchrist's dictionary and grammar. As head of the newly-founded Hindustani department at Fort William, an urgent priority for Gilchrist was to produce suitable materials for the students, both to learn from, and be examined in. He, therefore, set out with the aid of Indian *munshis* and *pundits*, to create a body of such materials.

The method of learning Hindustani was firmly based on the classical approach to language learning, that is, one firmly rooted in reading and translating literary set-texts. As his grammar

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<sup>23</sup> In reality it was as much for political reasons as Wellesley's plan to allocate writers to a Presidency after passing the examinations at the College was seen as a challenge to the patronage of the Court of Directors.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from the Court of Directors to the Governor General in Council, Fort William, Public Department, London, January 1802, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>25</sup> For Madras and Bombay they suggested establishing separate institutions to teach Indian languages.

<sup>26</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 5.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from the Governor-General-in-Council to the Court of Directors, August 1802, IOR/H/488

<sup>28</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 3.

demonstrates, Gilchrist was well aware of the existing canon of ‘Hindustani’ poetry,<sup>29</sup> but this was not considered suitable for teaching young ‘Writers’ the language. What was needed were works, specifically tailored to the needs of the students, in straightforward prose. To this end, Gilchrist produced a number of new works himself, and also commissioned the translation of texts from Persian, *Braj*, Arabic, and Sanskrit.<sup>30</sup> The all-inclusive nature of his construct of Hindustani required works to be produced in both Persian and *Deva Nagari* scripts in a variety of registers; Persianized, (*Bagh o Bahar*) mixed (*Baital Pachisi* and *Sinhasan Battisi*) non-Persianized *khari boli*, (*Prem Sagar*) and, since ‘Hindee’<sup>31</sup> was subsumed under ‘Hindoostanee’ in the same department, even works in *Braj Bhasha* and *Awadhi*.

From 1801, written examinations in Hindustani, mostly annual, but occasionally bi-annual were put in place. Each student was publicly examined and classed according to his respective proficiency. The comparative proficiency of students was determined by ‘exercises in writing and by written answers to questions proposed in writing by the examiners’.<sup>32</sup> The first such examination, held on 23 June 1801, required students to decline the second personal pronoun and to translate passages into Hindustani in *Nagari* and Persian scripts.<sup>33</sup> The reports on the written examinations, starting in 1801, divided the students into three classes and listed them in rank order. In addition to the written examinations, there was a grand public ‘Disputations’ ceremony at the end of each year. At the first of these, in 1802, the Hindustani Disputation, pronounced by William Butterworth Bayley, was entitled *The Hindoostanee Language is the most generally useful in India*.<sup>34</sup>

At the Public Disputations each year, the Visitor, usually the Governor-General of Bengal, gave a speech and distributed prizes and honorary rewards. By 1803, ‘Degrees of Honour’ were also being conferred on the best students, usually the top three in each language. In his Visitor’s speech that year, Wellesley commented positively on the progress in the Hindustani classes, noting that the comparative proficiency of students ‘exceeded that of 1802’.<sup>35</sup> The Hindustani Disputation of 1805, entitled *The Oriental Languages are studied with more success in India than in England*, reflected both the ongoing controversy regarding Fort William, and the proposed establishment of a college for young Writers in England.<sup>36</sup> By the time the following year’s Disputations took place, the East India Company College at Hertford, later Haileybury, was a reality. The Visitor, George Hilario Barlow, emphasized, however, that it was ‘not intended to supersede the College of Fort William’,

<sup>29</sup> Indians referred to the language of this poetry not as Hindustani but as Hindi or *Rekhta* (mixed).

<sup>30</sup> For a list of Hindustani publications produced at Fort William College see Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, Appendix E, 168-170 and Frances Pritchett’s website <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00urdu/baghobahar/BBFORTWM.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> It was never clear at FWC whether what was labelled ‘Hindee’ was purely *khari boli*-based or if included other dialects.

<sup>32</sup> Educational Establishments in India and England, Statutes of the College of Fort William, IOR/H/488.

<sup>33</sup> Exercises: College of Fort William, 1802, Unprinted Ms. OIOC cited in, Rahman, *Hindi to Urdu*, 204-5.

<sup>34</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 15.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

but rather to support its efficiency by giving young writers ‘an earlier acquisition of the rudiments of the Oriental Languages’.<sup>37</sup>

By 1807, in the military context too, Hindustani examinations were being developed. At Cuddalore the ‘Gentlemen Cadets’ had been studying the language under the supervision of Lieutenant Stewart. In April 1807, the Commander-in-Chief Madras, Lieutenant-General Cradock, visited Cuddalore with the Persian Translator, Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, for the purpose of ‘undertaking a Strict examination’ of the cadets who were deemed by the Commanding Officer, Captain Pollock, to have acquired sufficient proficiency to allow them to join their battalions.<sup>38</sup> The 85 cadets examined were, as at Fort William, divided into classes and put in rank order. According to Pollock’s report

The Gentlemen from 1-34 inclusive have made a very considerably proficiency and can translate from Hindostanee into English and from English into Hindostanee with much facility without assistance of a Dictionary, they have likewise made some progress in speaking. The Gentlemen from No 35 to 51 inclusive have made less tho’ considerable progress and can translate from English into Hindostanee and vice versa with the assistance of a Dictionary, they have likewise made some progress in speaking. The Gentlemen from No 52-85 have for many months paid unremitting attention to the Study and though they have made a less proficiency yet in some instances this must be attributed to less retentive memories...<sup>39</sup>

Munro’s report to the Commander-in-Chief provided information as to the nature of the examination the cadets underwent.

The Gentlemen of the 1<sup>st</sup> Class were required to translate into English a difficult Hindoostanee Fable which they had not previously seen. On submitting their translations to me they were desired to read the original aloud and were questioned regarding the Constructions and Idioms of the Language. Passages from the regulations of the Army were then given to them for the purpose of being translated into Hindoostanee. They made translations in my presence without assistance from one another or from books. The Gentlemen of the Class read the Hindoostanee with fluency, their translations were in general correct and they displayed considerable knowledge of the Construction of the Language. Although from want of practice they cannot as yet speak the Hindoostanee with fluency, yet the knowledge they have acquired of it will enable them to attain facility of speaking with readiness whenever opportunities of practice shall be afforded to them. ... Nearly the same mode of examination was observed with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class. A less difficult composition was given them for translation into English and they were allowed the assistance of a Dictionary and Grammar. Some of them declined this Assistance and the whole of them read the Hindoostanee and made translations into English and Hindoostanee with tolerable correctness. They require practice only to speak the language with fluency. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Class were required to read Hindoostanee dialogues and translate them into English. This Task they performed with considerable facility. Practice in speaking will enable the Gentlemen of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Class, with the knowledge they already possess, to carry on the usual communications with the Sepoys but it would be desirable that they should continue the regular study of the language for some time longer.<sup>40</sup>

By December 1807 examinations in Madras were being put on a more regular footing. To further encourage the study of Hindustani by the Gentleman Cadets, Lieutenant-General Cradock, proposed offering a reward of 500 Pagodas. The Court of Directors agreed on condition that the cadets were able to satisfy the authorities of their competence in the language through

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 107-8.

<sup>38</sup> Extract Fort St George Military Consultations, June 1807, Board’s Collections 291/6567.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

examination. In 1807, the Madras authorities wrote to the Court of Directors informing them that examinations would, in future, take place twice a year, in January and June, and that rewards would be given only to candidates who could 'read and write the Hindostanee, Translate from English into Hindostanee and from Hindostanee into English with facility and speak the Hindostanee language with fluency'.<sup>41</sup>

By 1809 Madras Civilians, too, were subject to examinations on a regular basis, conducted by a committee set up for the purpose. At these examinations students were required

...to translate Extracts from approved authors into English: to translate English into Hindoostanee; to carry on a conversation in that language which each had made the object of his study; due attention was paid during the progress of the examination to the parsing of the language and the students were required to resolve into their elementary parts certain sentences selected for the purpose and to account for their construction on grammatical principles.<sup>42</sup>

The committee's report on the examinations of November 1809 stated

...the English and Hindostanee translations of Mr Campbell and Sir James Home as well as the comparative skill they displayed in conversing ... fairly entitle us to think them before all their other competitors in those languages. Of these gentlemen Mr Campbell has unquestionably attained the greater proficiency; his translations were made without the aid of a Dictionary or other Book of reference. ... With regard to Messrs Dickinson Jessup, Wish, King and Haig, they appear as yet to have advanced but a short way in the knowledge of the Hindostanee; of these however Messrs Jessup and Wish have made the greater progress. The translations of these two Gentlemen, both English and Hindostanee possess nearly equal merit. Mr Jessup's may perhaps be considered the better of the two, but neither can converse. The English translations of the three other Gentlemen may be classed with those of Messrs Jessup and Wish; on their partial and broken Specimens of Hindostanee translation, it is unnecessary to remark; and they are all equally incapable of conversing.<sup>43</sup>

At the Fort William Public Disputations of 1810, the Acting Visitor, Lieutenant-General George Hewett, spoke in glowing terms of the progress made by students such as Prinsep and Holt Mackenzie and emphasized the benefits of studying Hindoostanee (and Bengali) at Fort William College rather than Haileybury. Since these languages were 'vernacular', it offered the 'practice of living tongues' and students were 'surrounded by, and living with, learned men, Native and European.'<sup>44</sup> In contrast he dismissed the courses of language study at Haileybury as merely 'preliminary'.<sup>45</sup> In his 1812 Visitor's speech, Minto acknowledged that the progress young civilians made at Hertford had an 'influence in accelerating the labours' of Fort William College, but nevertheless termed it 'inconsiderable'<sup>46</sup> noting that, when tested on their arrival in India by the College professors, only four out of sixteen appeared to have attained even 'an elementary and very moderate acquaintance with any of the Asiatic languages'.<sup>47</sup> At the 1813 Disputations, he again observed that the knowledge of Oriental Languages acquired at Hertford College, had been 'very

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<sup>41</sup> Extract Military Letter from Fort St George, December 1807, Board's Collections 291/6567

<sup>42</sup> Extract Fort St George Public Consultations, December 1809, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 249.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 253.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 312-3.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 311.

slender'.<sup>48</sup> Allowing that 'the elementary knowledge' gained there resulted in 'abridging the period necessary' for civilians to qualify at Fort William,<sup>49</sup> he nonetheless emphasized that the preparatory studies at Haileybury did not 'produce any considerable or competent proficiency'.<sup>50</sup> In 1814, Lord Moira noted that the star student of the year, Mr Stirling, had made considerable progress in Hindustani and Persian at Hertford and during the voyage to India.<sup>51</sup> Moira emphasized, however, that Stirling was 'the only instance of any Student having arrived from Hertford, with a knowledge of the Languages beyond mediocrity'.<sup>52</sup>

This 'mediocrity', can be partially attributed to the fact that, at Haileybury, there were, initially, no language examinations at all. The Principal, Le Bas, writing in 1843, recorded that during the first eight years of the College's existence a student received a Certificate if 'he got through without doing anything bad enough to merit expulsion'.<sup>53</sup> From 1813, however, tests were introduced and in 1814, in order to further focus the attention of students, Sir Charles Wilkins was brought in to examine them.<sup>54</sup> The examination required students to write the character 'in a fair and legible hand', to have a thorough acquaintance with terms of grammar and to read, translate, and parse an easy passage.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, at the East India military college at Addiscombe, by 1814, students were required to be able 'to write the two Characters in which the Hindustani is usually expressed in a fair and legible hand', to have 'an acquaintance with the terms of Grammar as expressed in the Hindustani Language; a competent knowledge of the rudiments of the Language as expressed in Mr Shakespear's Grammar; the ability to read, translate, and parse some easy passage in Hindustani and to repeat from memory some easy dialogue as introductory to the habit of conversing in the Language'.<sup>56</sup>

At Fort William the examinations and Disputations continued virtually unchanged until the late 1820s. By the 1830s, however, as a result of the constant retrenchments ordered by the Court of Directors, the college had all but ceased to exist. The professorships were abolished in 1831 and from 1835 there were no longer any residential students. A staff of 'floating' *munshis* was retained and students were required to engage them privately and attend the 'college' for examinations which were held monthly. Meanwhile, the other presidencies were continuing to develop their own examination systems. In Bombay, by 1821, a committee had been set up to 'examine the Junior Servants of the Company' as to the proficiency they had made 'in the Hindoostanee Language'.<sup>57</sup> On arrival in Bombay, they were notified that they had to pass an examination in Hindustani before

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 362.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 363.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 362.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 363.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 406-7.

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Hambling, *The East India College at Haileybury 1806-1857* (Haileybury: Noble Books, 2005) 42.

<sup>54</sup> Michael Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004) 124.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Seminary Committee Reports, 1814, quoted in Fisher *Counterflows*, 126.

<sup>57</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bombay, June 1823, IOR/F/4/709/19245.



being eligible for a post. As in Calcutta, it was left to them to study for it and decide when they wished to present themselves for examination. In June 1821, a second committee recommended that a 'Moonshee' should be employed 'for the purpose of assisting in the preparation of exercises, and attending the Committee at the periodical examinations' and should also be 'placed at the disposal of the Committee for examining candidates for the situation of Interpreter to Native Corps'.<sup>58</sup>

From the correspondence between various Bombay officials, in 1821, it is apparent that the standard of difficulty varied considerably, depending on individual examiners, and whether the examinations were taken at the Presidency or at an out-station. Accordingly the examining committee were asked to provide more details of the actual tests. Their response revealed a lack of clarity as to their exact purposes. Despite having been setting and marking the examinations for some time the Committee complained

We have laboured under a peculiar difficulty in not having been made acquainted with the exact degree of proficiency in the native languages which the Honorable the Governor-in-Council considers as a requisite qualification for public Employment. We have, therefore, assumed ... that the Gentleman should possess such knowledge of the Language ... as would enable him to transact any public business, *not without the assistance of a Native* but without the probability of his either being imposed upon or misled by the Native so employed.<sup>59</sup>

The tests then in place to meet this requirement comprised

Translating from English into Hindoostanee a Dialogue and two Stories in familiar language. The Gentleman examined is allowed to retire into an adjoining room and to perform these exercises at his leisure. But the other exercises are performed extempore and consist in reading and translating into English two dialogues, three common Stories and a page or two of one of the Prose Class Books of the College of Calcutta; in translating into Hindoostanee questions on various subjects proposed viva voce by the Committee and in conversing with a Moonshee. During these different exercises we have also paid attention to the Gentleman's acquaintance with the General rules of Hindoostanee Grammar.<sup>60</sup>

If, however, the requirement was that a civilian should be able to 'transact all Magisterial and Judicial and Revenue duties', *without* the aid of an Interpreter, then, in the Committee's opinion, such tests 'would not be at all adequate' and it would be necessary<sup>61</sup>

...to ascertain that the Gentleman could translate readily and intelligibly from English into the language in which he is examined, and vice versa letters and petitions on business and extracts both from Judicial proceedings which have actually taken place and from the Regulations of Government and that he could converse with the Natives on all subjects without embarrassment.<sup>62</sup>

They made it clear, however, that, in their opinion, 'so great a degree of proficiency' could not possibly be attained by a person who had 'only resided six or twelve months in the Country even with the assistance of the previous knowledge of the language which he may have acquired at

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<sup>58</sup> Extract Bombay Public Consultations, May 1821, IOR/F/4/709/19245.

<sup>59</sup> Extract Bombay Public Consultations, January, 1821, IOR/F/4/709/19245. Emphasis added

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

Haileybury College'.<sup>63</sup> The outcome of these consultations was firstly that, in future, examinations were to take place at the Presidency, and secondly it was clarified that candidates should be able 'to hold conversations on all subjects' not involving technical legal and revenue terms, *without* the aid of an interpreter.<sup>64</sup>

Differing standards in the examinations were causing equal concern in the Bombay military. As in the civil context, examining committees at out-stations, were often less rigorous than those at the Presidency. This resulted in certain officers being appointed as 'Interpreters to Battalions' who were not duly qualified. In Bengal, however, Interpreters were required to pass 'an examination in the Hindoostanee Language before a Committee of competent officers'. who would then forward a report of the examination, and a certificate stating their opinion of his competency to conduct the duties of an Interpreter to a General Court Martial' to the Adjutant-General. Whilst this was enough to render an officer eligible to hold the situation, he was also required to undergo a further examination at Fort William.<sup>65</sup> In 1823, the precise nature of the examinations officers had to undergo was clarified, and the first detailed examination syllabus for the military in any Presidency was published in Bengal General Orders.

In August 1824, Government of Bombay decided to establish a permanent examination committee. On their arrival, 'Writers' were now to be immediately sent 'up Country', unless they wished to present themselves for examination, in which case they would be permitted to remain at the Presidency.<sup>66</sup> In December 1824, the committee proposed that the examinations should be revised. The new examinations required *viva voce* translation from Hindustani into English, from prose books not familiar to the candidates and from letters and petitions', written translations from English into Hindustani of a 'Tale' or similar narrative and of a letter and petition and a section of two of Government Regulations, and *viva voce* translation from English into Hindustani of a dialogue, or of questions and answers proposed by the examiners. Candidates also needed to be able to converse with 'a tolerable degree of fluency' so that they could 'carry on an intercourse with the Natives on all common Commercial, Revenue and Judicial subjects without the assistance of an interpreter'.<sup>67</sup>

In Madras too, further developments were taking place in both the civil and military contexts. In 1828, a report was published of the examinations of civilians carried out at Fort St George. It stated

In Hindoostanee a rather difficult paper was given to Mr. Cathcart for translation into English. His version of this, as well as his Hindoostanee exercise, contained several errors; but most of them were of little importance and the general sense of the originals was very correctly expressed. He read and

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Extract Bombay Public Consultations, February, 1821, IOR/F/4/709/19245.

<sup>65</sup> Extract Bengal General Orders, February 1823, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>66</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bombay, 21 September 1824, IOR/F/4/1015/27842 NB It wasn't until 1866 that in Bengal the regulation keeping civilians in Calcutta till they had passed was abolished.

<sup>67</sup> Extract Bombay Public Consultations, 22 December 1824, IOR/F/4/1015/27842.

explained a short story readily and accurately. In conversing, he understood all that was addressed to him, and replied correctly and with little hesitation.

Mr Arbuthnot is second to Mr Cathcart on the list of Hindoostanee students. He selected for translation into English an easier paper than that which was taken by the latter gentleman, and, with the exception of three short passages, his version is perfectly correct; but his translation into Hindoostanee was not quite so well executed. He read a story off-hand with facility, and, excepting three of four words, explained it accurately. He speaks the language with propriety, and he understood all that was addressed to him.

Mr Prendergast, in his Hindoostanee examination, first translated an easy paper; but, at his own request, one of more difficulty was afterwards given him. His translations evince a degree of proficiency very creditable to him considering the short period that he has been attached to the college, and with the exception of two or three short passages, the general meaning is correctly given. He did not attempt to translate into Hindoostanee. In conversation he understood much of what was addressed to him.<sup>68</sup>

By 1828, military examinations in Madras were also becoming more stringent. Concerned that certain posts were still being filled by unqualified officers, it was decreed that all regimental staff officers who had not yet passed an examination in Hindustani must do so post haste, and examining committees were assembled to conduct them and prepare detailed reports.<sup>69</sup> The examinations duly took place in April 1829, and to the dismay of the Commander-in-Chief, the reports prepared on them revealed an 'almost total deficiency' in many officers' knowledge of the language, resulting in the tightening up of examination procedures and the dismissal of a number of officers.<sup>70</sup>

In the Bengal army, by 1833, 'quite strict' examination procedures were in place. According to Major Archer, Aide-de-Camp to Lord Combermere, the Commander-in-Chief, candidates for the Interpreter's examination were required to have

1<sup>st</sup>. a well-grounded knowledge of the principles of grammar; 2<sup>dly</sup>, to possess a colloquial knowledge of the "Oordoo" and "Hindooe," to enable him to explain with *facility* and at the *moment any order* in those dialects, and to *translate* reports, letters *from them into English*; 3<sup>rd</sup>, to be able with facility to render the "Bāgobahar" in "Oordoo," the "Prem Sāgur" in "Khurreebole," and the "Anwar i Soheilee" <sup>71</sup>into English; 4<sup>th</sup>, to be able to write the modified Persian character of the "Oordoo" and the "Dēo Nagree" of the Khurreebole," and this is to be ascertained by a *written translation* into Hindoostanee (in both characters) of certain general orders. <sup>72</sup>The Interpreter, fifthly, should be able to read and translate the Shekust (or broken hand of the Persian); and finally he should be acquainted with the ordinary forms used by the natives of India, in their "intercourse and correspondence towards superiors, equals and inferiors." <sup>73</sup>

By January 1839, a lower level test, the P.H. (Passed Hindustani) had also been prescribed 'for the Hindoostanee Examination of Military officers' in Bengal.<sup>74</sup> It stipulated

Candidates shall be required to read and translate correctly the "Bagh O Bahar and the Bytal Pucheese, the former in the Persian, and the latter in the Deva Nagree character, and further, to make an intelligible and accurately written translation into Hindoostanee, of an English passage in

<sup>68</sup> *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, Vol XXV, January to June 1828, (London: Kingsbury, Parbury & Allen, 1828) 232-233.

<sup>69</sup> Extract Fort St George General Orders, September 1828, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Anwar-i-Sohailee* was in Persian which was required at this time as part of the examination.

<sup>72</sup> The confusion of terms is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>73</sup> Major Archer, *Tours in Upper India Volume II*, (London: Richard Bentley, 1833) 225-6.

<sup>74</sup> The rules for this test were re-published in General Orders in 1844.

an easy narrative style, this translation to be written in a legible hand in both the Persian and Deva Nagree characters. A colloquial Knowledge of Hindoostanee being deemed an object of primary importance, the proficiency of a candidate will be tested on that point before the grant to him of a certificate of competency by the examiners.<sup>75</sup>

In England, under the influence of Malthus, a more rigorous set of examinations was also being put in place at Haileybury. From 1840, progress was monitored by a 'Monthly Test' and a monthly report was produced indicating students' progress by the initials G=Good Gt=Great P=Progress L=Little Progress. After four terms at Haileybury, students were sent to their respective Presidencies in India, where they were required to complete their language studies. Unlike Madras and Bombay, where only those who were ready to present themselves for examination remained in the Presidency, those destined for Bengal were kept in Calcutta until they had passed the necessary examinations.<sup>76</sup> Although Fort William College was not finally abolished until 24 January 1854, by the time George Campbell arrived in Calcutta, in 1842, the college was merely a 'fiction'. Young civilians hired native instructors privately and went up to the 'college' only for the monthly examinations.<sup>77</sup>

Fort William continued, however, to exert influence over the fortunes of both civil and military officers in Bengal. In July 1851, new rules for the Interpreter's examination were issued to station committees in order to 'insure a more uniform and satisfactory test of proficiency'. Committees were to be assembled on 10 January and 10 July each year and were to be composed of one officer of the Civil Service and of two or more military Officers. Although the committees would continue to conduct the examination, the written examination papers, and a report on the oral examination, were to be forwarded to Fort William College where the college examiners would decide on the candidate's proficiency.<sup>78</sup> From October 1851, the written exercises for the examination were also printed by the college, and the college examiners set the 'Exercises for the Oral Examination'.

In 1856, new rules were published for the language examinations of Bengal civilians. Those allotted to the Lower Provinces were required to qualify in 'Bengalee and Oordoo' and those destined for the North Western Provinces in 'Persian and Hindee'.<sup>79</sup> Failure to pass in the first language within four months and in the second within seven meant removal from Calcutta and the completion of their studies 'at a Station in the Interior'.<sup>80</sup> Failure to pass in two languages within

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<sup>75</sup> William Nassau Lees, *Guide to the Examinations at the College of Fort William*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860) XVIa -XVIIa.

<sup>76</sup> Prior to the establishment of Haileybury students remained 3 years at FWC. Later they were only required to stay as long as necessary until they passed in two languages.

<sup>77</sup> George Campbell, *Memoirs of my Indian Career* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893) 13.

<sup>78</sup> Nassau Lees, *Guide*, XIXa.

<sup>79</sup> At this point the civil examinations at all levels were labelled as *Oordoo* and *Hindee*. For the military the lowest level was labelled *Hindoostani*. It is not specified what is meant by *Hindee* but the specimens in the book produced in 1860 by Nassau Lees are *khari boli* Hindi.

<sup>80</sup> Fort William Home Department, *Rules for the Examination and Control of Newly Appointed Members of the Bengal Civil*, 25 July 1856. IOR/V/27/211/18.

eighteen months meant removal from the Service. There were three levels at which civilians could be examined, qualification, high proficiency, and degree of honour. The test of qualification required

1. Construing with readiness and accuracy from the under-mentioned books:-  
**Oordoo.** Bagh-o-bahar and Ikhwan-us-Safa  
**Hindee.** Prem Sagur
2. Translating in to English with accuracy a passage, in an easy narrative style, not taken from the test books.
3. Translating intelligibly and with accuracy of Grammar, into the language in which the examination is held, an English paper of an easy narrative style.
4. Translating in like manner a paper of English sentences.

The tests for high proficiency and degree of honour also required ‘construing with readiness and accuracy’ from the set-texts which were listed as

<b>High Proficiency</b>		<b>Degree Of Honour</b>	
<i>Hindoostanee</i>	1. Bagh-o-bahar	<i>Hindoostanee or</i>	1. Bagh-o-Bahar
<i>Or Oordoo.</i>	2. Ikhwan-us-Safa	<i>Oordoo</i>	2. Ikhwan-us-Safa
	3. Gooli Bakawullee		3. Khirad Afroz
	4. Baital Pachisi		4. Kaliyati Souda
			5. Prem Sagur
<i>Hindee.</i>	1. Rajniti	<i>Hindee</i>	1. Prem Sagur
	2. Prem Sagur		2. Sabha Bilas
	3. Bagh-o-bahar		3. Ramayan, by Tulsi Das
			4. Bagh-o-Bahar <sup>81</sup>

It can be seen that, at the higher levels, *Bagh-o-Bahar* and *Prem Sagur* are very strangely listed under both *Hindee* and *Oordoo*. The 1856 rules were subsequently updated slightly in 1859 when the period within which civilians had to pass was extended to seven and thirteen months respectively. More importantly, the anomalies in the 1856 set-texts had been removed. The list now read

<b>High Proficiency</b>		<b>Degree Of Honour</b>	
<i>Hindoostanee</i>	1. Ikhwan-us-Safa		1. Nasr-i-Be-Nazir
<i>or Oordoo.</i>	2. Nasr-i-Be-Nazir		2. Fisanah-i-Ajaib
	3. Araish-i-Mahfil		3. Dewan Atash (1 <sup>st</sup> half)
			4. Koliyati Souda - Extracts
<i>Hindee.</i>	1. Rajneeti		1. Rukmini parinaya
	2. Prem Sagur		2. Sabha Bilas
	3. Vidyankur		3. Ramayan, Tulsi Das
			4. Ram Geetaboli <sup>82</sup>

In 1854, after many years of being merely a ‘fiction’, the College of Fort William finally ceased to exist and became the Board of Examiners, with a skeleton staff of a Secretary, some ‘native’ assistants and a librarian. Following the abolition of the patronage system and the introduction of competitive examinations for the civil service, the decision was taken, in July 1855, that Haileybury, too, should close. The last intake, which included John Beames, was in 1856 and

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Nassau Lees, *Guide*, Va-VIIa.

the college closed in 1858. The existence of Haileybury and Fort William College had ensured a certain consistency in the development of the civil examinations across the three Presidencies. The military examinations were less centralized, leading to greater variation in the tests prescribed in each Presidency. The post-mutiny army reforms, following the Peel Commission report of 1860, sparked major changes. As far back as 1837, a Governor-General's Order had stipulated that all officers eligible for 'Staff' situations, or 'Civil Employ', must pass an examination in Hindustani, but, twenty years later, there were still doubts as to whether this was being properly adhered to.<sup>83</sup>

In July 1857, the Court of Directors wrote to the Government of India Military Department in Bengal recommending that no officer should be promoted without having passed an examination in Hindustani. Consultations with Bombay and Madras followed. In February 1858, the Governor-in-Council, Bombay, submitted his response to the Government of India Military Department. He observed

The existing system of the different Presidencies in this particular is not uniform; in Bengal there are three degrees, viz., the colloquial, required for all Military duties from the lowest to the highest; the Staff, which is demanded from all officers prior to removal from regimental duty; and the Interpreter's which alone qualifies for that particular Office, and is also specially required for the Commissariat. In Bombay there are only two degrees viz., the colloquial as in Bengal; and the Interpreter's which is demanded equally as a qualification for the humblest Staff or detached situation, as for the highest and for the office of Interpreter anywhere. ...the Interpreter's examination is an unnecessarily severe test of qualification for all Staff Officers; ...the plan adopted in Bengal and Madras of having three standards of proficiency may be the best.<sup>84</sup>

In a Minute of 1860 Charles Trevelyan, then President of Madras noted that in Madras there were five separate examinations in existence; the first to qualify for the 'Command of Company', the second for an 'Adjutancy', the third for 'Staff Employ', the fourth for a 'Regimental Interpretership' and the fifth an intermediate examination to establish that 'creditable progress' in consideration of which the reward of 180 Rupees, entitled *munshi* allowance was paid. Both Trevelyan, and the Commander-in-Chief Madras, felt that two standards of examination were sufficient; the first to be for 'Troops and Companies' and the second for 'Interpreters', 'Regimental Staff', and all 'Detached Employment', civil or military. Trevelyan suggested that the standard should be 'of the nature of that which Civilians have to pass before they can be employed', and should include 'a sound grammatical knowledge of the language; acquaintance with a moderately sized text book, ability to render from English with tolerable ease; and the capability of carrying on a conversation on any given subject with some freedom and attention to idiom'. The second standard should be 'at least equal to the Interpreter's examination' and 'should be sufficient to secure that power of readily speaking, reading, and writing the language' which would enable officers satisfactorily to discharge any duties that might be entrusted to them.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Nassau Lees, *Guide*, XVIa.

<sup>84</sup> Government of Bombay Military Department to the Government of India Military Department, February 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

In June 1860, Trevelyan's minute was submitted to the Board of Examiners for their opinion. Before forwarding it to the Bengal and Bombay authorities, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Nassau Lees added the 'Rules regarding Military Examinations' currently in existence in Bengal. He noted

...the tests at this Presidency are not the same in number or nature as those at Madras. Exclusive of the examination for troops and companies (which is simply colloquial, and not conducted by the Board) we have but two ordinary standards – the Hindoostanee or P.H. (Passed Hindoostanee) and the Interpreter's or P., (Passed Interpreter's) examinations. The P.H. test is less severe than the Madras Interpreter's test; the Interpreter's is more severe than any of the Madras examinations.<sup>86</sup>

He advocated having a single examination for the whole Army which would open the door to all staff appointments, and retaining, if necessary, the 'Interpreter's Examination' purely as a qualification for the post of Regimental Interpreter.<sup>87</sup> The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Rose, and the President of the Board of Examiners, felt, however, that it was 'premature' to discuss changes to the examinations until the reorganization of the army had been completed.<sup>88</sup> The Government of India agreed to postpone the discussion but forwarded the proposals of the Madras Government, and Nassau Lees' Minute, to Sir Charles Wood at the India Office.<sup>89</sup> Wood felt the matter should be considered at once 'in connection with the re-organization of the Establishment' and requested that the Government of India should give it their careful attention.

The consultations had revealed the need for a standardisation of the existing examinations in the three Presidencies and, in 1861, a 'Special Committee' was set up to revise them. In a letter to the Committee, Major General Birch, Secretary to the Government of India, stated

...the want of uniformity in existing tests has become a serious inconvenience now that the services of Officer on Staff employ are less restricted than formerly to their own Presidency. ...the colloquial examination which every Officer must pass before he can hold the charge of a Troop or Company, varies greatly in its character at different stations, and is not calculated to ensure that amount of knowledge of the language which every Officer employed with Native troops should possess.<sup>90</sup>

He proposed that the standard of the colloquial examination should be raised and that officers should possess

...a fluent and correct colloquial knowledge of Hindoostanee, to be ascertained by viva voce examination and in conversation with an uneducated Native, joined to sufficient acquaintance with the written language to enable the candidate to read an easy book and to write legibly from dictation in both the Persian and Deva Nagree characters. ... This though more than is now required for a colloquial examination, would be much below the present standard qualifying for Staff employ, for which either the Interpreter's examination somewhat modified, or such other examination as the Committee may recommend, and the Government approve, might be substituted.<sup>91</sup> ... the Interpreter's examination should not be less stringent than it is now, and to pass it an accurate

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<sup>86</sup> Nassau Lees, Minute, July 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300. The test in place for the 'Military Hindoostanee Examination' was that which had been laid down in a General Order of 28<sup>th</sup> April 1844, and the tests for the Military Interpreter's Examination had not altered since they were put in place in 1823.

<sup>87</sup> Nassau Lees, Minute, July 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300/.

<sup>88</sup> Minute by the President of the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, June, 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>89</sup> Government of India Military Department, to the India Office, October, 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>90</sup> Government of India, to the Special Committee, December 1861, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

grammatical and idiomatic knowledge of the language, and power to read and write fluently, should be required.<sup>92</sup>

This laid the groundwork for the introduction of the best-known and most enduring of the compulsory Hindustani examinations, the Lower and Higher Standard. To promote even greater uniformity, Birch suggested that the Special Committee should recommend test-books to be adopted in all three Presidences, on which the Presidency Governments would be required to comment before a final decision was taken.<sup>93</sup>

In January 1862, the Governor-General-in-Council ordered the setting up of a committee in Calcutta to prepare rules for the revised military examinations. It was to liaise with officers from Madras and Bombay to ensure uniformity across the three Presidences.<sup>94</sup> In August 1862, Nassau Lees circulated the draft rules for the new examinations to Madras and Bombay. It was proposed to adopt two standards.<sup>95</sup> The first was to be for 'Officers on duty with Native Troops' or employed in any capacity that 'brought them into contact with the Natives of the country'. The tests proposed were:

- I. Reading fairly, and afterwards construing with accuracy not less than half an octavo page of each of the following books.
  - (1) A book of Selections from original Hindoostanee works, written in an easy narrative style and in the printed Arabic characters about 100 pages.
  - (2) Ditto in the Deva Nagri characters.
- II. Conversation with the Examiners or with Natives on subjects relating to the duties of the examinee, or likely to occur in the ordinary course of business or every-day life.

The second standard was for admission to the 'Staff Corps' and for 'Civil Appointments' and required officers to undergo the following tests.

- I. Reading fluently, and construing readily and with accuracy, not less than an ordinary octavo page of each of the following books:-
  1. The Bagh o Bahar
  2. Selections from the Prose of the Prem Sagur
- II. Translating accurately, and with correctness of idiom and grammar, not less than half of an ordinary octavo page of English into Hindoostanee in the Persian character; and an equal amount in the Deva Nagri characters. The former, to assimilate as nearly as possible, the style of the Bagh-o-Bahar, and the latter that of the Prem Sagur.
- III. Reading fairly and explaining readily and correctly, manuscripts written in both the Persian and Deva Nagri characters.
- IV. Conversing with the Examiners or Natives, with fluency and with such correctness of pronunciation and idiom, as to be at once perfectly intelligible. The Proceedings of Courts Martial, Courts of Enquiry or Inquest may be used for this purpose.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Letter from Major General Birch, Secretary to the Government of India, December, 1861, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>94</sup> Report of the Special Committee to the Secretary to the Government of India, (n.d.) 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>95</sup> They also suggested a 3<sup>rd</sup> standard, equivalent in level to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hindustani standard, but for other vernacular languages, of which Hindi was listed as one. It is not clear again what was meant by Hindi.



In September 1862, the Bombay Examining Committee, although generally approving the proposals, suggested substituting *Ukhlaq-i-Hindi* and *Tota Kahani* for *Bagh-o-Bahar*. They remarked that *Prem Sagur* was 'a book unknown' in the Bombay Presidency, but were willing to trial it in place of the 'obscene' *Baital Pucheesi*.<sup>96</sup> The response from Madras to the proposals was also generally positive, but, despite the Government of India's evident desire for total uniformity across the military examinations, they proposed that, for Madras officers, the reading exercise in *Nagari* should be abandoned in favour of the 'reading of an ordinary Native letter. The 'Selections' proposed as the test-book, although deemed generally suitable for providing a solid general knowledge of the language, were also held to be inadequate in terms of preparing a candidate 'for deciphering or comprehending a report in the written character and in the dialect of Southern India'. The letter further argued that, since the 'Hindi dialect' and the *Nagari* script were not used in Madras, it was, 'inexpedient' to insist on their acquisition, given that a only very small proportion of Madras officers would ever need them'.<sup>97</sup>

The report of the Special Committee, at the end of 1862, summarised the responses to the proposals from Madras and Bombay. The Committee conceded that, had the tests been applicable to officers serving in Madras alone, they would have hesitated to recommend the adoption of Hindi and *Nagari*, however they noted

The Officers of the Madras Army ... are eligible for employment and are liable to be called upon to serve in all parts of India, and we concur with the Government of India in attaching very great importance to the maintenance of a single and invariable standard of examination in the Hindustani language which is to open the door to staff employ to Military Officers throughout the country.<sup>98</sup>

They also argued that 'an acquaintance with the Hindi dialect' would greatly contribute to the acquirement of a better knowledge of Hindustani.<sup>99</sup> Standardisation was, in their view, paramount. They observed

...looking to the widely extended territories in India over which the Military Forces of Her Majesty serving under the Indian Government are scattered, the altered and daily altering circumstances of the country consequent on the rapid extension of Railway communication and other causes and the relation which standard Hindustani as the lingua franca of India must always bear to the Government, its European Military Officers, and the people, it is of the highest importance that the standard of examination in that language should be one and the same throughout the three Presidencies.<sup>100</sup>

The Committee's proposals were published in General Orders in October 1863 and were as follows:

#### **FIRST STANDARD**

The OBJECT of the first Standard is to ensure that Officers passing it shall have acquired such a knowledge of the Hindustani language as shall enable them efficiently to discharge their Military or professional duties when serving with Native troops.

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<sup>96</sup> Majors Coley and Bacon, Bombay, to Nassau Lees, 15 September 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>97</sup> Major Touch, Madras, to the Special Committee, 23 October 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>98</sup> Report of the Special Committee to the Secretary to the Government of India, (nd) 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

To this end candidates will be tested as to their ability to read and translate passages from easy Hindustani books written in the Persian and Deva Nagri characters; and to speak and interpret on common or professional subjects, so as to understand and to be understood by, any ordinary uneducated Native of India.

## SECOND STANDARD

The OBJECT of the second Standard is to insure that Officers passing it shall have acquired such a knowledge of the Hindustani language as shall qualify them so far as that language is concerned, for general employment of the Staff, and for admission to the Staff Corps.

To this end candidates will be tested as to their ability, - 1<sup>st</sup>, to read and construe passages in books of ordinary difficulty in Urdu and Hindi; 2<sup>nd</sup>, to make accurate and idiomatic written translations from English into Hindustani in both the Persian and Deva Nagri characters; 3<sup>rd</sup>, to read and translate petitions, native letters, &c., in Urdu and Hindi; 4<sup>th</sup>, to converse with educated or uneducated Natives of India.

With this order, Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani were born; examinations that were to remain in place, virtually unchanged, for the next 50 years and, in a revised version, until 1947.

In 1875, Jarrett, who had succeeded Nassau Lees as Secretary to the Board of Examiners, compiled a volume containing the latest Government Orders regarding the tests for Civil and Military Officers in Bengal. For civilians, the rules remained unchanged from 1863 and the military rules revealed only minor changes. At Lower Standard, it was now specified that the colloquial test should consist of not fewer than 10 and not more than 15 questions, and questions 'tending to puzzle a candidate' were to be avoided. The remarks of the committee were to be expressed as 'excellent', 'very good', 'good', 'tolerable', 'indifferent', 'very indifferent', 'bad', and 'very bad'. The Lower Standard texts prescribed were the story of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dervish and King Azad Bakht from *Bagh-o-Bahar* and the first ten stories from *Baital Pachisi*. The syllabus was identical to that of October 1863, except that the proposal for a book of easy 'Hindustani Selections' in Persian and *Nagari* scripts had never materialized. At Higher Standard the tests in place were identical in every respect to those laid down in October 1863.

Despite the desire of the Government of India to standardise the Hindustani examinations across all three Presidencies, the recommendation of the 1862 Committee that *Nagari* script should apply to Madras, was not implemented. In 1874, Jarrett explained

The respective standards of examination in each Presidency were laid down with regard to the peculiar circumstances and various conditions of language which characterise them severally and are applicable to officers according to the Presidency in which they are employed. The omission of *Nagari* from the Madras examination is no concession of a privilege to officers of that Presidency, but was made in view of the unsuitableness of that language to a part of the country where it was not in use.<sup>101</sup>

This decision, however, generated ambiguities when officers transferred Presidency. In 1874, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners insisted that officers, when transferred, must pass the tests specified in the new locality. In 1882, however, the Government of India decided the Madras test had the same validity in the other two provinces, and that officers in either military or in civil

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<sup>101</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners to the Adjutant-General, Calcutta, September 1874, IOR/P/1661.

employ, should not be required to undergo any further tests.<sup>102</sup> In 1884, there was further controversy over the Madras examinations when the Hindustani Examiner attempted to have *Dakkhini* recognized as separate dialect for the examinations.<sup>103</sup> This prompted Jarrett to recommend to the Government of India that ‘it would be advisable to require that all examinations in Hindustani in Madras and Bombay... should be conducted strictly according to the standard and procedures obtaining in Bengal’.<sup>104</sup> In October 1885, having examined the test books and examinations syllabuses in place there, the Government of India, notified Madras that it must, in future, conform to the Bengal rules for examinations in Hindustani.<sup>105</sup>

In 1888, the rules for examination in Hindustani for the Bengal Presidency were revised and were subsequently made applicable to the Bombay Presidency in 1889. These revisions are worthy of note as two crucial details in the syllabuses had changed. The first was with regard to terminology. Urdu and Hindi, as opposed to Hindustani, were now used. Secondly, Urdu (and *Bagh-o-Bahar*) were designated for Lower Standard, and Hindi (and *Prem Sagar*) for Higher, the two together still constituting Hindustani, but with the implication that Hindi was more difficult than Urdu.<sup>106</sup> In 1894, another round of army reforms which saw the abolition of the presidential army system and the amalgamation of the three staff corps, was accompanied by a revision of the Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani examinations. At this point, the Government of India noted that the Madras examinations were ‘not as difficult as the corresponding examinations in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies’,<sup>107</sup> as they did not include the *Nagari* script or *Prem Sagar*. The choice was either to reimpose these elements or to remove them altogether. Deciding that the former course was ‘not desirable’, the Government of India ruled that Hindi should be ‘eliminated from the Higher Standard tests,’ and the examinations should be in Urdu only. Having also considered the suitability of the existing tests, they proposed that ‘both examinations being in Urdu, the Lower Standard should be a stepping-stone to the Higher’.<sup>108</sup> The proposed examination for Higher Standard now consisted of the following:

- Written translation of half a page of the *Bagh o Bahar* into English
- Written translation of English into Urdu
- Reading and translating an Urdu manuscript
- Conversation with an educated native, special attention being paid to pronunciation

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<sup>102</sup> Government of India Military Department, to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 4 July 1882 and Government of India to the Officiating Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 16 October 1882, IOR/P/1661.

<sup>103</sup> This opened a whole can of worms when it was discovered that for years Madras had been conducting the HS exams in *Dakkhini* and had even got a *Dakkhini* version of *Bagh-o-Bahar*. Neither Jarrett nor the Government of India were aware of this and were not impressed. Madras was subsequently ordered to adopt the standards used in Bengal.

<sup>104</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners to the Government of India, Calcutta, 31 July 1884, IOR/P/2259.

<sup>105</sup> Government of India to Government of Madras October 1885, IOR/P/2508.

<sup>106</sup> These rules did not apply to Madras, however, which examined in Urdu only.

<sup>107</sup> Government of India, to the Board of Examiners Calcutta, 10 October 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

The Government of India requested the Board of Examiners to favour them with their suggestions regarding the form of the Lower Standard, but noted that the examination should include 'exercises in rendering English into written Urdu, which should, however, be of the 'simplest character'.<sup>109</sup> Ranking, (who had succeeded Jarrett in 1894) and the Board of Examiners approved the suggestions for Higher Standard and recommended an almost identical set of tasks for Lower.

A viva voce translation from the Bagh-o-Bahar into English  
A written translation of a simple piece of English into Urdu  
Reading a simply written manuscript  
Conversation of a simple character  
(with special attention to the candidate's power to give clear and intelligible directions on matters connected with his duties, and to elicit information for purposes of reconnaissance etc.)<sup>110</sup>

The revisions were approved by the Secretary of State for India in August 1895 and were implemented from 1 October that year.

Although the Lower and Higher Standard examinations remained in place, in some form, for much of the time until 1947, the Hindustani examination syllabuses underwent more changes in the final fifty years of British rule than in the previous nearly a century. The changes affected content, script, format, marking, skills and, of course, the set texts. In 1898 there was more discussion of replacing *Bagh-o-Bahar* as the text book for the Lower and Higher Standard examinations in what was now officially deemed Urdu. Ranking offered to compile a new test book and, in 1898, published *Selections from the History of India for Examinations by the Lower and Higher Standard in Urdu*, known in Urdu as *Waqi'at-i-Hind*.<sup>111</sup> The change of text-book did not prove a success, however and, by February 1901, an order had been issued that *Bagh-o-Bahar* would be re-introduced as from 1 October that year. Curiously, given that Ranking, who had prepared the *Selections* was, at this time, its Secretary, the Board of Examiners, when asked to report on proposed revisions to the Lower and Higher Standard examinations, deemed the *Waqi'at-i-Hind* 'quite unsuitable as a text-book', and remarked that it had been 'the cause of failure of many candidates since its introduction'.<sup>112</sup>

In June 1903 the Government of India wrote to the Board of Examiners informing them that 'the question of the suitability of the present system of military examinations in Urdu' had, once again, engaged their attention.<sup>113</sup> As a result of continuing pressure from the military authorities, the Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani examinations underwent radical changes, removing the literary/scholarly aspects and rendering them tests of practical colloquial competence. Since it was also believed that the High Proficiency test was 'so severe as to attract those only who intend to

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners, to the Government of India Military Department, Calcutta, 22 December 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>111</sup> India Proceedings Part B, January, 1898, IOR/P/5416.

<sup>112</sup> Government of India Military Department to the Adjutant-General in India, Simla, 15 June 1901, IOR/P/6112.

<sup>113</sup> H.H.Risley to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 8 June 1903, IOR/P/6576.

make a serious study of the literary language', it was proposed that a lower test, to be called the Proficiency should be introduced as the first in the literary series.<sup>114</sup> The aim was to encourage a scholarly approach, but without candidates having to undertake 'so elaborate a course of study' as that demanded by High Proficiency.<sup>115</sup> Thus two separate series of examinations were put in place. In 1903 the Board of Examiners drafted proposals for the new Proficiency examination which it stated, 'should form the connecting link between the purely practical obligatory test on the one hand and the literary examinations, High Proficiency and Degree of Honour on the other'.<sup>116</sup> As usual the wheels turned slowly and it wasn't until July 1907 that it was finally introduced.

The question of the new set text-book for the Lower and Higher Standards, however, still remained. Ranking, offered to prepare one in two parts, Part I for Lower and Part II for Higher Standard, consisting of 'selections from well-known Hindustani works of simple character and of different styles'.<sup>117</sup> The Government of India, decided, unilaterally, however, to adopt a translation of Baden-Powell's *Aids to Scouting* which, they said, fulfilled all the requirements of the lower standard military examination.<sup>118</sup> In September 1906, despite objections from the Board of Examiners, the Government decided that the new rules for Lower and Higher standard Hindustani should be made applicable to *civil* officers with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1906.<sup>119</sup> In the meantime it had been brought to the attention of both Phillott<sup>120</sup> and the Government of India that the translation of *Aids to Scouting* contained a large number of errors. Enclosing a corrected specimen page, Phillott wrote to the Government of India expressing the opinion that it was not only impossible to correct them all but the book itself was unsuitable. In August 1907 the Bombay Government wrote to the Government of India recommending that *Aids to Scouting* be permanently discontinued.<sup>121</sup> They enclosed a letter from the Civil and Military Examination Committee, Bombay, unequivocally condemning it as 'a most unsuitable book as a text-book for candidates whether civil or military' as well as the translation being 'hopelessly bad'. It was clear that the Government had little choice other than to replace the text and, in October 1907, they wrote to the Madras and Bombay Examination Boards regarding the question of 'substituting some more suitable works' for *Bagh-o-Bahar* and *Aids to Scouting*.<sup>122</sup> Their recommendations for the new Lower Standard text-book were that, 'it should be in idiomatic colloquial language such as would be easily understood by the

<sup>114</sup> Govt. of India Finance Department to Secretary of State for India, December, 1905, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>115</sup> Secretary of State for India to the Governor-General-of-India-in-Council, 9 March 1906, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>116</sup> Ranking to the Government of India Home Department, 25 November 1903, IOR/P/6809.

<sup>117</sup> Secretary of the Board of Examiners, 25 November 1903 to Government of India, IOR/P/6809.

<sup>118</sup> Govt. of India Home Department to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 4 January 1905, IOR/P/7501.

<sup>119</sup> Government of India Home Department to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 17 September 1906, IOR/P/7316. Emphasis added.

<sup>120</sup> Phillott took over from Ranking as Secretary to the Board of Examiners in 1905.

<sup>121</sup> Government of Bombay to the Government of India Home Department, 22 August 1907, IOR/P/7593.

<sup>122</sup> Government of India Home Department to the Governments of Madras/Bombay, 7 October 1907, IOR/P/7593.

partially educated; its subject should not be uninteresting; the print should be large and clear; it should be carefully punctuated.<sup>123</sup> For Higher Standard they proposed that the text-book should be 'a work of somewhat greater length and difficulty' and suggested an edited down version of the *Rusum-i-Hind* from the Punjab Educational Series, which they described as 'a continuous narrative of Indian village life'.<sup>124</sup> They asked the Board of Examiners Madras and the Civil and Military Examining Committee Bombay 'to make definite proposals in consultation with each other and the Board of Examiners Calcutta' for the selection of new and more suitable text-books for both the higher and lower standard examinations for civil officers in Hindustani.<sup>125</sup> Although all three Boards of Examiners agreed that the existing text-books were unsuitable, they had differing views as to what should replace them. The Government of India proposed the adoption of the *Rusum-i-Hind* for the Higher Standard, whilst Phillott suggested that a compilation of parts of Holroyd's *Punjab Series* together with the *Rusum-i-Hind* would be more appropriate. The Bombay Examinations Committee proposed the *Qisas-i-Hind*<sup>126</sup>, and the Hindustani Examiner Madras proposed a book of translations into Hindustani of 'a series of letters, essays or day sketches written in English by officers of all branches of the service, faithfully depicting actual life scenes'.<sup>127</sup> Phillott, and the Bombay Examiner, strongly opposed the latter proposal on the basis that a translation from English into Hindustani was undesirable.

In view of such divergent opinions, the Government of India decided, in September 1908, that 'the work of preparing the compilation should be entrusted to a small committee, consisting of the Examiner in Hindustani Madras, and the Secretaries to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, and the Civil and Military Committee Bombay'.<sup>128</sup> Having collected 'suitable selections of passages for both text-books',<sup>129</sup> the Committee members were to circulate them to one another for criticism before meeting to make a final decision as to which to include. Significantly, Phillott had left India in May, having been granted 13 months leave and Peart, later to succeed him as Secretary, was officiating. In January 1909, the Committee submitted its report to the Government of India, recommending parts of the *Punjab Urdu Readers Series* for Lower Standard and extracts from Nazir Ahmed's *Chand Pand* and *Mir'at ul'Urus*, Sarshar's *Fasana-i-Azad*, *Rusum-i-Hind* and Azad's *Qisas-i-Hind* for Higher. They also proposed that half of the Higher Standard text-book should be lithographed

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Selections from the history of India, written by Azad, for schools.

<sup>127</sup> Board of Examiners Madras to the Government of Madras, 27 February 1908, IOR/P/8156.

<sup>128</sup> Government of India to the Governments of Madras and Bombay, 5 September 1908, IOR/P/8156.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

and half in printed type.<sup>130</sup> In March 1909 the Government of India accepted the Committee's recommendations 'in their entirety'.<sup>131</sup>

In November 1909, after nearly 18 months away, Phillott returned to India. In mid-September 1910, despite having already printed a thousand copies of the new Lower Standard textbook, the Government of India had a change of heart deciding that it was 'desirable to secure uniformity in the textbooks prescribed for both civil and military officers'.<sup>132</sup> New books were prepared for both Standards by Phillott. The Lower Standard volume was entitled the *Urdu Rozmarra* and the Higher Standard *Khwab-o-Khayal*, the first section of which consisted of Phillott's translation into 'simple colloquial Urdu' of *Sepoy to Subadar*.<sup>133</sup> The revised rules for the examinations and the details of the textbooks were implemented for the military from 1 July 1911, and were applied to civil servants from 1 October 1911.<sup>134</sup> The continual arguments and frequent changes of mind which had begun in 1903 appeared, finally, to have been resolved.

The outbreak of World War One, however, saw the suspension of the compulsory Lower and Higher Standards for its duration. A colloquial examination was introduced for officers new to India to be passed within a period of 3 months. It was purely practical test, which involved no set textbooks, and reading and writing 'if taught at all'<sup>135</sup> was in Roman-Urdu. The introduction of such an examination, though temporary, set a precedent and had a lasting influence on the outlook of the military as to the type of Hindustani examinations officers should be required to undergo. Lower and Higher Standard were re-introduced in 1919, but by 1920 further changes were being discussed, ostensibly to bring Hindustani into line with other foreign language examinations undertaken by the military, but also in a bid to raise standards, which had fallen considerably during the war years. In 1922 the Government announced

For the various language qualifications required under regulations for special appointments, the following will be substituted: The Preliminary for the lower and higher standards; the 2<sup>nd</sup> class interpretership for the Proficiency test; and the 1<sup>st</sup> class interpretership for the high Proficiency test.<sup>136</sup>

The *substance* of the Preliminary Examination was little different from Lower and Higher Standards and, apart from the addition of *The Great War*, the set-texts too remained very similar. The new system, however, had certain important differences. Lower Standard had, from 1895, been a stepping-stone to Higher Standard. The acceptance in 1903, that the Lower and Higher Standard military examinations should be purely practical and professional, had led to the introduction of

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<sup>130</sup> President of the Higher and Lower Standard Textbooks Committee to the Government of India, Home Department, 25 January 1909, IOR/P/8156.

<sup>131</sup> Government of India, Home Department to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, 5 March 1909, IOR/P/8156.

<sup>132</sup> Government of India, Home Department to the Government of Punjab, Education Department, 15 September 1910, IOR/P/8697.

<sup>133</sup> Phillott, *Khwab o Khayal* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1914) xiii.

<sup>134</sup> India Army Order No. 22, 15 February 1911, IOR/P/8697.

<sup>135</sup> Languages Native, No. 17188, Simla, 15 May 1917, IOR/L/MIL/7/7327.

<sup>136</sup> Indian Regulations relating to the study of foreign and Indian languages, March 1922, IOR/ L/MIL/7/7331.

another stepping-stone to the literary series in the form of the Proficiency examination. Both the new Preliminary Examination and the Interpretership, however, were single examinations, thereby removing the intermediate steps previously deemed so necessary.

After only two years of the new syllabus being in force, it was discovered that 300 officers had not yet passed the Preliminary, 200 of whom were nearing the end of the three year period in which they were permitted to do so. As a solution the Government of India Army Department decided, in November 1924, to introduce an 'Urdu Qualifying Examination' as a 'temporary measure to be reconsidered after one year'. They stated that it was 'equivalent and alternative to the Preliminary Urdu Examination'.<sup>137</sup> Two significant features of the new examination, however, were that it did not require a knowledge of Persian script, and that the content was limited to what was deemed necessary for professional military purposes. The Secretary of State for India reluctantly sanctioned the approval of the examination for one year in 1924, and again in 1925 and 1926 for two further 'temporary' years. In February 1927, the Government of India requested that it should be retained 'as a permanent measure',<sup>138</sup> to which the India Office, again reluctantly, agreed.

By 1931 the new syllabuses had, once again, been deemed unsatisfactory and the Government of India wrote to the India Office informing them that it had decided 'to re-introduce, with effect from 1 January 1932, the Lower and Higher Standard examinations in Urdu, in place of the ... Urdu Qualifying Examination and Preliminary Urdu Examination'.<sup>139</sup> A new text book, entitled *Our Sowars and Sepoys*, was prepared for Lower Standard. It consisted of conversations between an English officer and Indian officers from various 'races' explaining their 'peculiarities'. For Higher Standard, the first section of *Khwab-o-Khayal*, consisting of Phillott's translation of *Sepoy to Subadar*, was retained. A significant feature of the new examination was that script was once again made compulsory but, for the first time, officers were offered the choice of taking the examination in either Persian or *Nagari*. *Our Sowars and Sepoys* was published in both scripts, and a *Nagari* version of *Khwab-o-Khayal* was also produced, entitled *The Text book for Higher Standard Urdu in Nagari Script*. The Proficiency and High Proficiency, however, were not re-introduced, instead the Interpretership, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class, was retained. What now existed was a strange amalgamation of two types of examination. There were no further changes to the Hindustani examination syllabuses until 1939, when there were slight revisions to both standards, notably the removal of the 'reading and translation of an easy manuscript' for Higher Standard, with effect from April that year.<sup>140</sup> With the outbreak of World War II later the same year, the Elementary Urdu examination was introduced. An Army Instruction of November 1939 stated

<sup>137</sup> Government of India Army Department Instructions, No. 1047, Delhi, 4 November 1924, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>138</sup> Government of India to the Military Department India Office, 3 February 1927, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331. Throughout this period the Preliminary continued to exist as a voluntary examination but few officers took it.

<sup>139</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 14 May 1931, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>140</sup> India Army Orders, 2 January 1939, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.



...the retention examination ... for officers will be suspended for the duration of the war. ... Higher and Lower Standard Urdu examinations will continue to be held on a voluntary basis. Elementary Urdu examinations in Roman script will be held quarterly as option examinations for those who have not passed Higher or Lower Standard. These examinations will start on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1940 and continue for the duration of the war.<sup>141</sup>

## 2.2 Grammars/Text-Books, Methodology and Authors

To enable British civilians and military officers to pass the designated examinations, teaching materials were required. This led to the production of a vast number of Hindustani grammars and text-books.<sup>142</sup> A work frequently cited in articles discussing the British learning of Hindustani is George Hadley's 1772 grammar of 'Moors'.<sup>143</sup> As its title makes clear it did not conform to the construct of Hindustani later proposed by Gilchrist. It is noteworthy, however, in two respects. Firstly, it was this work which Gilchrist initially studied, and which provoked him into undertaking his own work to demonstrate that Hindustani was not a 'jargon'. Secondly, after providing a basic descriptive grammar, Hadley offered his readers dialogues on a variety of topics which ensured the work's continued popularity, and formed the pattern for many subsequent works. Gilchrist was disparaging about Hadley's grammar. On his arrival in India he tells us

I ... sat resolutely down to acquire what was then termed the Moors, and was of course referred to Hadley for the first rudiments of my new studies, but fortunately, being a week or two after attended by an excellent Moonshee, he insisted on my unlearning what little I had picked up from that gentleman.<sup>144</sup>

At this point, Gilchrist was introduced, by his friend Captain John Rattray, to the works of Sauda which dispelled any idea that Hindustani was merely a 'corrupt jargon'.<sup>145</sup>

It was with Gilchrist's 1796 Hindustani grammar that the language was comprehensively codified and systematized according to his theoretical construct of the language.<sup>146</sup> It is a large quarto volume, and Gilchrist's description of the grammar intersperses grammatical points with pieces of advice and frequent excerpts from the poetry of Mir, Miskin, Dard and Sauda.<sup>147</sup> In the first section he also paid considerable attention to the importance of accurate pronunciation warning his readers that if they were unable to attain this from reading his instructions, they should 'apply to their teacher that they may not persist in confounding' words such as *khoon* blood, with *koon* the anus!<sup>148</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Army Instructions India, New Delhi, 14 November, 1939, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>142</sup> Text-book in this section means a book to learn the language; they cannot all be referred to as grammars because not all of them did set out the grammar.

<sup>143</sup> George Hadley, *Grammatical Remarks on the Practical and Vulgar Dialect of the Indostan Language Commonly called the Moors* (London: T. Cadell, 1772) The title of the revised version of 1801 included the word *Jargon*.

<sup>144</sup> John Borthwick Gilchrist, *Hindustani Dictionary* (Calcutta: Stuart and Cooper, 1787) vii.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> This had begun earlier with the dictionary but the grammar was published in its entirety in 1796.

<sup>147</sup> John Borthwick Gilchrist, *Grammar of the Hindustani Language* (Menston, Scholar Press, 1970) 84.

(1<sup>st</sup> ed.1796)

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 29

In 1798, Gilchrist published *The Oriental Linguist or Easy and Familiar Introduction to the Popular Language of Hindoostan*. This was radically different from the earlier scholarly grammar, containing an 'extensive vocabulary', some 'plain and useful' dialogues, tales, poems, to which were added parts of the Articles of War. In 1800, he published the *Anti-Jargonist* which he described as 'partly an abridgement of the Oriental Linguist' but 'greatly altered and improved'. The small section of dialogues contained basic phrases such as 'make the tea' and 'clean my shoes well', apparently lending weight to the school of thought which insists that the British only ever used the imperative mood.<sup>149</sup> Gilchrist, however, clearly expressed his dislike of the use of such dialogues and the unfortunate tendency of learners, who, he said, seemed 'to be all bent on acquiring the language of Hindoostan at once, by the dronish medium of dialogues alone'.<sup>150</sup> Against his own judgement, he therefore 'accommodated them with a few'.<sup>151</sup> In a preface, later added to the 1787 Dictionary, he articulated this even more forcefully stating that he had 'intended to have given a collection of dialogues' but that 'real experience' had convinced him 'of their pernicious consequences and inefficacy'.<sup>152</sup> In 1804, under pressure both from the constant reprinting of Hadley's work, and public demand, Gilchrist produced a separate volume of *Dialogues*. Yet again, however, he expressed his disapproval of learners' predilection for them, complaining, 'In spite of every thing which can be urged against the premature use of dialogues ... almost every learner insists on their utility, and adopts them accordingly with a pertinacity which no arguments can overcome'.<sup>153</sup>

Gilchrist's works dominated the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and his construct of Hindustani formed the basis for subsequent generations of grammar and text-book writers but by the 1820s they were more or less obsolete. By 1813 his grammar was out of print succeeded by that of John Shakespear. Shakespear was Professor of Hindustani at the Royal Military College, Marlow, from 1805 and, from 1809, at the cadet college at Addiscombe, where he remained until his retirement in 1829. His grammar differed, in many respects, from that of Gilchrist.<sup>154</sup> It uses Persian rather than Roman script, and *Nagari* is also carefully explained. Almost half the book is an 'Appendix' containing one of the stories from *Baital Pachisi*, in both *Nagari* and Persian scripts, followed by an English translation. Finally, after a list of 'some of the most useful verbal roots' there are some rather beautiful samples of alphabet and script in both Persian and *Nagari*.<sup>155</sup> Dialogues and Romanization are both conspicuous by their absence. Shakespear's Grammar ran to 6 editions

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<sup>149</sup> Cohn's essay *The Command of Language and the Language of Command* focuses almost entirely on Gilchrist's dialogues in order to make its arguments.

<sup>150</sup> See Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism*, 192-217 for a discussion of Gilchrist's attitude to dialogues.

<sup>151</sup> John Borthwick Gilchrist, *The Anti-Jargonist* (Calcutta: Ferris and Co, 1800) 5.

<sup>152</sup> Gilchrist, *Dictionar*, lxviii.

<sup>153</sup> John Borthwick Gilchrist, *Dialogues* (Edinburgh: Walker and Greig, 1809) ix.

<sup>154</sup> See Bhatia 87-90, for grammatical/philological differences.

<sup>155</sup> John Shakespear, *Grammar of the Hindustani Language* (London: Cox and Bayliss, 1826) 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1813.

the final one being in 1855.<sup>156</sup> This included a separate section on *Dakkhini* grammar and 5 pages of ‘short sentences’ followed by a ‘Verbal translation and Analysis’. Although some of these sentences are similar to those found in dialogues (‘Come, take off my boots’ and ‘Bring some Sherbet’) their purpose is not (merely) to provide ‘useful’ phrases, but to explain precisely the grammatical structure of the sentence to the learner.<sup>157</sup>

The 1820s saw the publication of three further grammars; that of ex-Bengal Civilian, William Carmichael Smyth in 1824, that of the Reverend W. Yates, in 1827,<sup>158</sup> and that of the Orientalist William Price in 1828.<sup>159</sup> The grammars of Smyth and Price both seem to be retrogressive steps from Shakespear.<sup>160</sup> Carmichael Smyth’s can, in fact, hardly be called a grammar since the actual grammar section runs to only sixteen pages, followed by 95 pages of vocabulary and 104 pages of ‘Dialogues’. The whole work is in Roman script, which he justified on the grounds that many people going to India

...never will have occasion to acquire more than a colloquial knowledge of the Hindoostanee, which I think no person will dispute, can be much more readily and easily attained by Europeans in the character to which they are already familiarised, than in one to which they are totally strangers.<sup>161</sup>

Price’s work used Persian script, and included ‘Selections Persian and Hindoostanee’ and a section of ‘Familiar Phrases and Dialogues’. These are remarkable for their grammatical inaccuracy, often using the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular form of the verb, irrespective of the pronoun (*tum hai*), having no regard for gender of nouns, even of people (*tumharā maan*), and completely ignoring the use of the oblique case (*ka sath*).<sup>162</sup>

In the 1830s two grammars were published, one by Sandford Arnot, a former pupil of Gilchrist, and another by the Scottish Orientalist Robert Ballantyne. Arnot’s Grammar, first published in 1831, although claiming to be ‘self-instructing’, consisted mainly of a reference grammar, to which were appended an assortment of reading passages from St John’s Gospel, and William Butterworth Bayley’s 1802 essay.<sup>163</sup> Although a second edition, edited by Duncan Forbes, was published posthumously in 1844, it was produced specifically for the use of the London Oriental Institution, was not widely used in India. Perhaps its most interesting feature is an essay, co-written

<sup>156</sup> In 1845 Shakespear published *An Introduction to the Hindustani Language* a compendium of his earlier works with the addition of some longer dialogues, and short stories in Persian and *Nagari* script with detailed grammatical explanations.

<sup>157</sup> Shakespear, *Grammar*, 125-129

<sup>158</sup> Yates, William, *Introduction to the Hindoostanee Language* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1827).

<sup>159</sup> Not be confused with William Price, Assistant Professor of Hindustani at FWC 1813, Professor of Hindustani 1823-30.

<sup>160</sup> In a dig at Gilchrist Price observed that Hadley had ‘considerably more merit’ than he had been ‘allowed to possess’.

<sup>161</sup> William Carmichael Smyth, *Hindoostanee Interpreter* (London: J M Richardson, 1824) ii- iii.

<sup>162</sup> William Price, *New Grammar of the Hindoostanee Language*, (London: Parbury and Allen, 1828)

<sup>163</sup> Arnot, *Grammar*. Arnot was Assistant Editor of the *Calcutta Journal* but was sent back to England on the orders of Lord Amherst after being involved in a court case. He and Duncan Forbes, another former pupil of Gilchrist, took over the running of the London Oriental Institution in 1826 after Gilchrist’s professorship was revoked by the Court of Directors.

by Duncan Forbes in 1828, on the 'Hindoostanee Language'. Ballantyne's 1837 grammar, written for the use of Scottish Naval and Military Academy, is a slim volume containing the usual descriptive grammar. It is distinguished however, by an appendix of 'Exercises in Hindustani Syntax', in the form of translations of grammatical points and of short tales. A 'Key' to these was later published in 1847. In 1840, Ballantyne published *Hindustani Selections*, containing passages for translation practice, and, in 1843, *The Practical Oriental Interpreter*, which provided hints on the art of translating into Hindustani and a set of practice translations.<sup>164</sup> Despite the fact that Ballantyne was the first to focus on getting the learner to produce grammatical sentences, his grammar was limited to one edition.

Duncan Forbes, a contemporary of both Arnot and Ballantyne, and later Professor of Hindustani at King's College London, achieved far greater success. His 1845 *Hindustani Manual* borrowed heavily from previous authors<sup>165</sup> and contained the usual reference grammar and 'miscellaneous dialogues'. It was, however, the first 'pocket-sized' Hindustani text-book, and contained a section entitled 'progressive lessons and exercises', which allowed the learner to begin with simple sentences and build up to more complex translation into Hindustani. In 1846, Forbes published a grammar. Unlike the manual, which was entirely Romanized, it was mainly in Persian script, and contained a section on *Nagari* and reading selections in both scripts.<sup>166</sup> Forbes' grammar and manual, taken together, contained almost all the methodological elements of previous grammars and text-books. They also exhibited a mismatch between the unscholarly approach of basic dialogues (manual), and the literary-scholarly approach of reading selections from *Araish-i-Mahfil* and *Khirad Afroz* (grammar). Forbes' works dominated the market for several decades. The grammar was still being reprinted in the 1880s, and the manual, which went into 24 editions, was being used well into the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1847, Captain Edward Cox published a work entitled *The Regimental Moonshi*. It was a 'course of reading' rather than a grammar, written specifically for 'Officers and Assistant Surgeons on the Madras Establishment',<sup>167</sup> to assist them 'in acquiring a knowledge of the dialect spoken by the Sepoys of that Presidency'. Cox observed that the (mainly Hindu) *sepoys* of the Madras army seldom knew anything of Hindustani before they enlisted, and then only acquired a slight knowledge from hearing it spoken, 'hence their incorrect mode of expressing themselves'.<sup>168</sup> He stressed that it was necessary for officers to be familiar with this 'peculiar style' spoken by the

<sup>164</sup> James Ballantyne, *Grammar of the Hindustani Language* (London: Cox and Son, 1838). Ballantyne also had a keen interest in Hindi and in 1839 published *Elements of Hindee and Braj Bhakha Grammar*.

<sup>165</sup> See Friedlander *Hindustani Textbooks*, 47-48.

<sup>166</sup> Forbes also made a significant contribution to the literary set-texts publishing a new Persian-script edition of *Bagh-o-Bahar* in 1846, an edited version of Lewis Ferdinand Smith's English translation in 1851, and a Romanized edition in 1866.

<sup>167</sup> Also specifically for Madras, in 1808 Charles Stewart had published a Hindustani grammar as spoken in the Carnatic for use at Cuddalore and a short anonymous grammar was published in Madras in 1842, based on Gilchrist and Shakespear, but with modifications to reflect the differences in grammar in the south.

<sup>168</sup> Edward Cox, *The Regimental Moonshi* (London: Wm. H. Allen and Co, 1847) vii.

men.<sup>169</sup> The book's contents, consisting of a section of general dialogues, a section on military affairs, *sepoys'* letters and reports, *naqls* and field exercises, were specifically designed to assist officers to pass the required military examination. Also in 1847, the Orientalist, Edward Eastwick, published his *Concise Grammar of the Hindustani Language*.<sup>170</sup> Eastwick had joined the Bombay army in 1836, but was forced to return to Europe due to ill health and, in 1845, was appointed Professor of Hindustani at Haileybury. His grammar is, indeed, concise, and contains no dialogues or exercises, merely a few pages of *naqliyat* at the end.

No new works were produced until 1858, when, believing that one was needed 'at the present crisis', the Sanskritist, Monier Williams, published *An Easy Introduction to the Study of Hindustani*.<sup>171</sup> The major part of the work is a reference grammar, which was 'founded on a minute analysis of the Bāg o Bahār'.<sup>172</sup> Aside from the grammar section, it contained 'Selections in Hindustani',<sup>173</sup> consisting of various short fables, the parable of the prodigal son, an extract from *Ikhwan us-safa*, and another from Miskin's elegy. In format, as well as content, therefore, the book had hardly moved on from the Gilchrist era. The last two sections contained a vocabulary and a set of dialogues. The latter included the question, 'Do many Englishmen speak Hindustani well?' and the rather telling answer, 'Through want of leisure or indifference few gentlemen are acquainted with this language'.<sup>174</sup> In the preface, Monier Williams stressed that the 'distinctive feature' of his grammar was 'the exclusive employment of English letters to express Hindustani words' in order to 'make the language of Hindustan more attractive to Englishmen generally'. *Practical Hindustani Grammar*, published in 1862, was almost identical to the *Easy Introduction*, except that the reading selections and vocabulary were presented in Persian script.<sup>175</sup>

It was ten years before the next British grammar appeared. In 1872, John Dowson, Professor of Hindustani at University College, London, and, until 1877, at the Staff College, Sandhurst, published his *Grammar of the Urdu or Hindustani Language*. Dowson's work is purely a reference grammar, with no exercises, dialogues, useful sentences or vocabulary. The appendix, however,

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Edward Eastwick, *Concise Grammar of the Hindustani Language* (London: James Madden, 1847). Eastwick also produced translations of both *Prem Sagar* and *Bagh-o-Bahar*. Eastwick's brother, William, was also in the Bombay army and later became a director of the East India Company. He learnt Hindustani from Munshi Lutfullah whose biography Eastwick edited and published in 1858.

<sup>171</sup> The same year he produced *Rudiments of Hindustani Grammar* for the use of students at Cheltenham College, and in 1860 published the *Hindustani Primer*.

<sup>172</sup> Monier Williams was Professor of Sanskrit at Haileybury and later Boden Professor of Sanskrit in Oxford. It is curious that he chose to base his grammar on a work nearly 60 years old whose language was already outdated.

<sup>173</sup> These were provided by Professor Cotton Mather of Addiscombe College

<sup>174</sup> Monier Williams, *Easy Introduction to the Study of Hindustani* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts, 1858) 219-220.

<sup>175</sup> Monier Williams, *Practical Hindustani Grammar* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1862)

contains sections on *Nagari* and on ‘Arabic Words in Hindustani’, and a very useful and interesting section on *Shikasta*.<sup>176</sup>

In 1873, Captain W.R.M. Holroyd, of the Bengal Staff Corps, later Director of Public Instruction in the Panjab, published *Tas-hil ul Kalam or Hindustani Made Easy*. Its format was the reverse of some of the earlier grammars, starting with 54 lessons of ‘English and Hindustani Exercises’ followed by a ‘Concise Grammar’. It then provided ‘Exercises for Translation into Hindustani’ based on the 54 lessons and, finally, an ‘English to Hindustani Vocabulary’. The entire work was in Roman script. Holroyd contended that while officers might be able to read and translate the set texts, they were often unable to carry on a conversation in Hindustani or translate idiomatic sentences from English. The emphasis of his work, therefore, was on getting them to be able to translate *into* Hindustani with facility.<sup>177</sup>

The same year, what was then, and perhaps remains, the most accurate and scholarly of the British grammars was produced by John Platts, who had been Inspector of Public Instruction in the Central Provinces, and Headmaster of Benares College, before leaving India due to ill-health. On his return to England, he was appointed Persian teacher at Oxford in 1880, and worked as an examiner for the Civil Service Commission. Like Dowson’s, which it quickly supplanted, Platts’ work is purely a reference grammar. In it, he not only acknowledged that he had made ‘free but not unfair use’ of the grammars of his British predecessors, but, more unusually, ‘of those published in recent years by native scholars’.<sup>178</sup>

In 1886, Frederick Baness, a member of the Survey of India, published a *Manual of Hindustani*, which was the antithesis of Platts’ scholarly approach. Part I is a one page ‘Key to Pronunciation’, Part II contains 12 pages of ‘Concise Grammar’, Part III, ‘Phrases in Common Use’, mostly in the Imperative starting with ‘Give me some wine’. By far the largest part of the work is the English-Hindustani vocabulary. The book is entirely in Roman script and is reminiscent of much earlier works such as Forbes’ Manual.<sup>179</sup> In 1887, another work, aimed specifically at officers studying for the Lower Standard in Madras, was published. Its author, Atwill Curtois, an officer in the Madras cavalry, criticised the existing grammars as being, ‘mostly old, and difficult to obtain, and ... too deep and intricate for a beginner, who, consequently, will not face the toil requisite to master their contents’.<sup>180</sup> He acknowledged that he had taken most of the grammatical section from Forbes’s grammar, to which he added a section of 251, somewhat random, ‘Sentences’, a section containing ‘Easy Stories’ translated into ‘the Hindustani used in Southern India’, and finally an English-

<sup>176</sup> John Dowson, *Grammar of the Urdu or Hindustani Language* (London: Trübner and Co., 1872) xii.

<sup>177</sup> William Holroyd, *Tas-hil ul Kalam or Hindustani Made Easy* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1873) v.

<sup>178</sup> John Platts, *Grammar of the Hindustani or Urdu Language* (London: Sampson Low Marston and Company, 1873) ix.

<sup>179</sup> In 1877 Baness also produced a translation of *Prem Sagar* and, in 1880, a Romanized version of it.

<sup>180</sup> Atwill Curtois, *Manual of the Hindustani Language as Spoken in Southern India* (Madras: Higginbotham and Co., 1887) i.

Hindustani vocabulary. All sections (except the sentences, which are in Roman script only) are in Persian and Roman script.

In 1889, George Ranking, then Surgeon-Major in the Bengal Medical Service, and, from 1894, Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, published *Talim-i-Zaban-i-Urdu*. It too was specifically designed to help officers pass the examinations. According to Ranking, there was no book from which a candidate for Government Examinations could obtain ‘the means of acquiring the requisite knowledge of Hindustani’. He emphasized that he did not wish to assist ‘cramming, but to ‘render the process as easy as is possible’.<sup>181</sup> Part I of the book consists of colloquial sentences, mostly military or medical, Part II is a concise grammar, Part III contains exercises in reading manuscripts (*arzi*), and Part IV, passages for translation in English and Hindustani. It ran to six editions, and although the first edition used only Persian script, by the third it been expanded to include the ‘Alphabet in the Hindi character’ and examples of *Nagari* manuscript.<sup>182</sup> Part I had become the grammar section, all parts were accompanied by Roman transliteration, and the manuscripts (*arzi*) had been translated into English.<sup>183</sup>

Also in 1889, a volume appeared ‘written at the request of ladies’.<sup>184</sup> Its author, John Tweedie, a member of the Bengal Civil Service, wished to ‘make the book a thoroughly practical one’ which provided the grammatical structure and words which were ‘actually in daily use’. Although it used only Roman script, the book marked a departure from previous works in that each of the lessons focused on a particular point of grammar, introduced specific vocabulary for it, and then provided translation exercises from, and into, Hindustani. Although, as far back as Ballantyne, various authors had included what they designated ‘Exercises’, this was the first time anything had approached the method which later became the staple of foreign language text-books. The volume also included a section of reading passages and, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition onwards, a glossary from Hindustani to English and vice versa. Unsurprisingly, given its user-friendliness, it went to five editions, the last in 1915.

In 1890, Kempson, formerly Director of Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces, and subsequently Teacher of Oriental Languages at Cambridge, and Professor of Hindustani at the Royal Staff College, published a work on similar lines to Tweedie’s, except that it used the Persian script. Kempson was aiming to promote ‘a scholarly and appreciative cultivation of the most important of the Indian Vernaculars *ab initio*’, and maintained that the method was that currently being used in Public schools.<sup>185</sup> Parts I and II of the book consist of progressive exercises in grammar and translation from and into Hindustani. Part III contains a selection of reading passages in English

<sup>181</sup> George Ranking, *Talim-i-Zaban-i-Urdu A Guide to Hindustani* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1889) v.

<sup>182</sup> This conflation of script and language is recurrent and problematic in both British and Indian writings.

<sup>183</sup> George Ranking, *A Guide to Hindustani* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1897).

<sup>184</sup> John Tweedie, *Hindustani as it Ought to be Spoken* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1893) x.

<sup>185</sup> Simon Matthews Kempson, *The Syntax and Idioms of Hindustani*, (London: Crosby Lockwood & Son, 1906) iii.

for translation into Hindustani. What is noteworthy about Kempson's 'Selections' is that many of them were taken from two contemporary Indian authors, Nazir Ahmed and Raja Siva Prasad. Kempson extolled the virtues of Nazir Ahmed's *Taubat-un-Nasuh*,<sup>186</sup> and the first section of passages for translation consisted of Fables which were, he tells us, 'adapted from the original Hindustani of Nazir Ahmed'. The second section consisted of extracts from Siva Prasad's *History of India Part II*.<sup>187</sup> Finally, Kempson's work came with a 'Key' the object of which was 'to enable the learner to correct his own attempts at translating from the English'.<sup>188</sup> Captain R. Percy-Smith's work of the same year had a mainly military and medical thrust.<sup>189</sup> It harked back to earlier practical and was a rather confused affair. It included a short reference grammar, lessons in reading, (consisting of short sentences to be learnt by heart), and an English-Hindustani vocabulary. There were then sentences demonstrating how to turn English into Hindustani, and examples of forms for Courts Martial.

In 1892, Captain A.N. Phillips published a work 'for the use of Candidates for the Higher Standard'. It was to be used 'concurrently' with works such as Kempson and Holroyd as it did 'not profess to teach the first principles of grammar' but rather focused on 'rendering assistance those who wished to learn Hindustani idiomatically and as spoken by the Natives'. Phillips provided his readers with idioms on general subjects, family relationships, and legal and official phrases. He also included Hindustani proverbs and extracts from the text-books *Ikhwan us-Safa*, *Araish-i-Mahfil* and *Taubat un-Nasuh* which, he maintained, 'all should read who wish to acquire a real mastery of the language'.<sup>190</sup>

In 1895, Lt-Colonel Arthur Octavius Green, ex-Interpreter with the Royal Engineers, published *A Practical Hindustani Grammar*.<sup>191</sup> Coincidentally, Phillips revised this work and afforded the author 'most valuable suggestions and assistance'. Green wished to write a Hindustani Grammar on the lines of Emil Otto's Grammars.<sup>192</sup> The lessons in the book first explain points of grammar with examples. There are then translation exercises (from Hindustani into English and vice versa) to practise these points, followed by vocabulary and a conversation. The work also contained the story of King Azad Bakht and a section of manuscript letters in Urdu script. The main body of the book was in Persian script but there was an appendix devoted to *Nagari*, containing reading

<sup>186</sup> While Director of Public Instruction, Kempson had encouraged Nazir Ahmed to write this and his earlier work *Mirat-ul-Urus* for prize money. See Naim, *Prize-winning Adab*.

<sup>187</sup> Kempson had translated Part I of this under the title *History of Hindustan* published in 1889-90 by Newal Kishore and Pincott translated Part II.

<sup>188</sup> Ballantyne had produced a 'Key' much earlier but this was an isolated occurrence. Kempson's format and the addition of the 'Key' became standard in many subsequent works.

<sup>189</sup> R. Percy-Smith, *Urdu Grammar* (Calcutta: Newman and Co., 1890).

<sup>190</sup> A.N. Phillips, *Hindustani Idioms* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1892) v-vi.

<sup>191</sup> Arthur Octavius Green, *Practical Hindustani Grammar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895).

<sup>192</sup> Otto published his *Conversational German Grammar* in 1856 in an attempt to replace the work used mostly in England for learning German, Ollendorff which had been around since the early 1840s. Ollendorff based his method of repetitive exercises on that of Jean Manesca (1820s). It is clear that a debate on methodology for teaching European languages had been going on for a long time in Europe yet this seemed not to affect Hindustani grammars until the 1870s i.e Kempson onwards.



selections from *Baital Pachisi* and *Prem Sagar* as well as manuscripts. A 'Key' to all the exercises was published the same year in a separate volume. Although quite a useful work it made only one edition.

In 1902, Captain C.A. Thimm produced two small volumes, *Hindustani Self-Taught* and *Hindustani Grammar Self-Taught*.<sup>193</sup> The former consisted merely of lists of vocabulary, arranged under topic headings, followed by a section of 'Conversational Phrases and Sentences', similarly arranged. The latter is an odd compilation, showing no sign of the methodological advances made by Tweedie, Kempson and Green. The 'Simplified Grammar' section is followed by what are termed 'Exercises' but which, in fact, are merely reading passages in Roman script on random topics including the history and geography of India, the Lord's Prayer and Kipling's *Shiv and the Grasshopper*, accompanied by literal English translations. Part III, entitled 'The Vernacular', is no less random, comprising 'Urdu Penmanship', a few pages of phrases/sentences on unconnected topics, and a few more of extracts from *Bagh-o-Bahar* and *Baital Pachisi*. There is then a 'Key' to the extracts and, finally, a short vocabulary section English-Hindustani, masquerading under the title of 'Dictionary'. Inexplicably, there were at least five editions of this work, the fifth appearing in 1916.

In 1906, some thirty years after publishing *Tas-hil ul Kalam*, Holroyd produced a volume entitled *Hindustani for Every Day*. Despite being published so much later than his other works, it did not benefit from the work of Kempson and others, but was reminiscent of the earlier era of text-books. It was arranged in three parts, 'Pronunciation', 'Grammar and the Construction of Sentences', and the 'Application of the Persian Character to Hindustani'. The second part, consisting of 33 chapters, was by far the longest. Each 'chapter' presented a point of grammar, some vocabulary and a set of so-called 'Exercises', which were merely sentences in Roman-Hindustani, with a side-by-side English translation. At certain points, the sentences were arranged in pairs of questions and answers between an Englishman and an Indian. Holroyd explained

Such sentences are so arranged that if those on the left side of the page be covered, the English version of the Englishman's utterances and the Hindustani version of the Indian's utterances will be presented to view, and these the student should learn to translate at sight. The former are confined to modes of expression that he will find frequent occasion to employ himself; the latter included many phrases and expressions that it is essential to understand, as they are of constant occurrence and afford some indication of an Indian's habit of thought, though it is unnecessary to commit them to memory, as they are never employed by Europeans.<sup>194</sup>

The learner was, therefore, expected merely to memorise sentences, as in the older text-books, rather than develop his own ability to translate into Hindustani through practice of progressive grammatical exercises.

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<sup>193</sup> C.A. Thimm, *Hindustani Self-Taught/Hindustani Grammar Self Taught* (London: E. Marlborough and Co., 1902).

<sup>194</sup> William Holroyd, *Hindustani for Every Day* (Lahore: Rai Sahib M. Gulab Singh and Sons, 1906) i.

In 1907, Major F.R.H. Chapman, Instructor in Hindustani at the Royal Military College Camberley, published a volume entitled *How to Learn Hindustani*,<sup>195</sup> which he described as ‘designed specially for the use of candidates for the Lower and Higher Standard Examinations’. Part I is a reference grammar and Part II consists of exercises on the principal rules of syntax. Each ‘Exercise’ begins with an explanation of a particular grammatical point, followed by a set of vocabulary and sentences for translation from Hindustani to English and vice versa. Part III contains ‘Exercises for Translation’ (into Hindustani) and a vocabulary. Part IV consists of a very useful section on reading manuscripts where thirty petitions in *Shikasta* are provided, with a corresponding printed version and English translation, together with a vocabulary of words frequently occurring in such petitions. Part V contains ‘Useful Phrases’ on a variety of topics, some general, some military and medical, and Part VI contains ‘Proverbs and Idioms’.

The appointment of Douglas Craven Phillott, as Secretary to the Board of Examiners, ushered in the final few years of British interest in the production of Hindustani text-books. Phillott wrote several Hindustani text-books starting with *Hindustani Stepping Stones* in 1908. This, he said, was ‘intended to supplement Forbes’ Manual and to be used in conjunction with it’.<sup>196</sup> Phillott had a keen interest in methodology, and was particularly impressed by the Rosenthal method, which set a great deal of emphasis on listening.<sup>197</sup> He also took a diametrically opposed view to Holroyd, who saw the sentences that Englishmen would need to use, and those Indians would use, as different. Phillott believed that ‘to talk Hindustani, or to translate it’, it was ‘first necessary to think like a Hindustani’. This, he said, could only be achieved ‘by first, constantly talking with natives, and, secondly, by reading their colloquial language’.<sup>198</sup> *Hindustani Stepping-Stones* was followed in 1909 by *Hindustani Stumbling Blocks*,<sup>199</sup> which was less a text-book, than a work designed to explain difficult points in the syntax and idioms of Hindustani. In 1910, Phillott published the *Hindustani Manual*,<sup>200</sup> an expanded version of *Stepping Stones*, which he had made ‘complete in itself’ rendering reference to Forbes’ Manual unnecessary. He again emphasized the practical elements of the work, stating that no word or phrase had been used in it that his, ‘uneducated but intelligent’, illiterate Punjabi bearer did not understand. The *Manual* saw two further editions, in 1913 and 1918. Before leaving India in 1912, Phillott published three further works; in 1911, *The Right Word in the Right Place*, an

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<sup>195</sup> F.R.H.Chapman, *How to Learn Hindustani* (1907, London: Crosby, Lockwood and Son, 1907). He also published *A Pocket Vocabulary* in 1904, followed by *A Hindustani Reader for Beginners* and, in 1910, *A Hindustani Reader for Military Students*. The two *Readers* differ only in minor respects, the military volume including a selection on military readings rather than a section on *Bagh-o-Bahar*.

<sup>196</sup> D.C.Phillott, *Hindustani Stepping Stones* (Allahabad: Pioneer Press, 1908) i.

<sup>197</sup> He particularly admired the use of gramophone records in language learning, leading him to the observation ‘A Munshi, who soon tires, is not a good substitute for a gramophone, but still he is the best substitute available’. *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>199</sup> D.C. Phillott, *Hindustani Stepping Stumbling-Blocks* (London: Crosby Lockwood and Son, 1909)

<sup>200</sup> D.C. Phillott, *Hindustani Manual* (Calcutta: Calcutta School Book and Useful Literature Society, 1910)

English-Hindustani Vocabulary for Higher Standard and Proficiency Candidates,<sup>201</sup> and, both in 1912, *Khazina-e Muhawarat*, or Urdu Idioms,<sup>202</sup> and *Hindustani Exercises for the Proficiency and High Proficiency*.<sup>203</sup>

With Phillott, the British interest in the production of Hindustani grammars and text-books effectively ceased and, for the last 35 years of the 'Raj', the British learnt Hindustani, almost entirely, from Indian-produced works.<sup>204</sup> Indians had long been involved on the periphery of the British Hindustani enterprise in this way. There had been a few isolated offerings in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century such as Muhammad Ibrahim Maqbah's *Tuhfa-e-Elphinstone*, (1823) and Maulavi Imam Baksh's *Grammar of the Urdu Language* (1849).<sup>205</sup> From the late 1850s onwards there was a trickle of Indian works including, *A Collection of Idiomatic Sentences in English and Hindoostanee* by Ghoolam Hoosain (1858), Ghulam Muhammed's *Colloquial Dialogues in Hindustani* (1858), Hydur Jang Bahadoor's *Key to Hindustani*, (1861), and *Hindustani Made Easy* by Henry T. Khadurbuksh, (1876) and in 1886, Dina Nath Deva published his *Hindustani Grammar*.

From the late 1890s, and increasingly during the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the trickle became a rivulet of works written mostly by (regimental) *munshis*, and aimed specifically at those trying to pass the Lower and Higher Standard examinations. In 1895, Munshi Narayan Das produced *A Help to Candidates for Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani*. It was in both Persian and *Nagari* scripts. Part I consisted of 40 somewhat random lessons, and Part II consisted of exercises for translation into Hindustani mostly taken from Lower and Higher Standard past papers. Part III contained a vocabulary and Part IV provided examples of petitions in *Shikasta*, with some vocabulary given in English. In 1898, Jawahir Singh, R.H.A *munshi* at Amballa, published *The Urdu Teacher*.<sup>206</sup> In format it resembled Holroyd, rather than the more modern works, introducing points of grammar followed by example sentences, in Persian and Roman script, with an English translation. It then provided passages for translation into Urdu with notes to help the student, and a final section consisted of manuscript petitions with a translation of the 'Hard Words' occurring in them. In 1899, Maulavi Laiq Ahmad published *The Urdu Self-Instructor* which was similar in approach. It began with the alphabet, followed by a vocabulary of 'useful words' a very brief synopsis of grammar, dialogues on different topics in Persian and Roman script with English translations, some short Urdu tales with translations, a section on proverbs and idioms, and some examples of *Shikasta* petitions. In 1901, Munshi Jawahir Singh produced *The Candidates' Aid*, designed to help those preparing for the Lower and Higher Standard examinations with translation into Hindustani.<sup>207</sup> It

<sup>201</sup> D.C. Phillott, *An English-Hindustani Vocabulary* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1911)

<sup>202</sup> D.C. Phillott, *Khazina-e Muhawarat* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1912).

<sup>203</sup> D.C. Phillott, *Hindustani Exercises for the Proficiency and High Proficiency* (Calcutta: B. K. Dass, 1912).

<sup>204</sup> In 1911, the missionary George Dann, produced a work for beginners and St. Clair Tisdall produced a grammar on the Gaspey-Otto-Sauer method. Neither was aimed at those taking examinations.

<sup>205</sup> It is not clear if these were intended to be used by British officers but there is no evidence that they ever were.

<sup>206</sup> Jawahir Singh, *The Urdu Teacher* (Amballa: The Empress Press, 1898).

<sup>207</sup> Munshi Laiq Ahmad, *Urdu Self-Instructor* (Delhi: Ansari Press, 1899).

contained past papers for prose translation and colloquial sentences from 1894-1901, with notes to assist students and a selection of *arzis* with some vocabulary given in English.

The first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the publication of a number of small volumes by disparate individuals, such as *Thirty Lessons in Hindustani* (1904) by T.A. Najm, *Hindustani at a Glance* (1904) by R.P. De, *Hindustani Conversation* (1907) by Wazir Chand, *The Hindustani Conversation* (1908) by Jafar Shah (Regimental Munshi West Yorkshire Regiment), *Hindustani Grammar* (1909) by Munshi Kashi Nath, (1<sup>st</sup> Connaught Rangers) and *Hindustani Simplified* by S.B. Syed (1909). All of these, with the exception of Kashi Nath's grammar were purely in Roman script. The second decade saw more of the same, with the publication of *Modern Colloquial Hindustani* (1914) by J.R. Abdul Hakim, *The Modern Hindustani Teacher*, (1916) by Aziz-ur-Rahman (Garrison Munshi, The Fort, Delhi), and *Hindustani Without a Master*, (1917) also by S.B. Syed. All were, again, in Roman script and, apart from *The Modern Hindustani Teacher*, which provided explanation of grammatical points and exercises to practise them, they offered a merely phrase book approach of topic-based vocabulary lists, and 'useful' phrases and sentences. Such works had no scholarly pretensions and few showed any signs of the influence of the new language teaching methodology exhibited by British grammars from Tweedie and Kempson onwards. Nevertheless, some, such as *Hindustani Simplified* and, more especially, *Modern Colloquial Hindustani*, enjoyed considerable popularity.<sup>208</sup>

When, in 1918, Akmal Ali observed, 'Most of the books on Hindustani are the work of European scholars. Indian teachers of the language ... have not been enterprising enough',<sup>209</sup> his statement still had some truth. In 1917, however, with the publication of Haidari's *The Munshi* and Saihgal's *Hindustani Grammar*, the writing of Hindustani text-books entered a new phase. Both these works were aimed, as their front covers unequivocally stated, at candidates for the Lower and Higher Standard (and Colloquial) examinations and both, initially, had a military focus. Although the order in which they presented grammatical points differed slightly, there was a good deal of similarity between the two volumes. Over the next thirty years, both went through numerous editions, which were regularly revised and updated to take account of the changing examination syllabuses. Already by 1918, Saihgal's *Grammar* had a second edition and *The Munshi* was into its third.

The 1918 edition of *The Munshi* was in six parts; Part I pronunciation, Parts II and III grammar, Part IV exercises to be translated into Hindustani, Part V, unseen passages for translation into English, and Part VI vocabulary. There was also an appendix on 'Hindustani in Military Lines'. The grammar sections were divided into lessons introducing specific grammatical points, with vocabulary and examples, followed by exercises for translation from and into Hindustani. Haidari, was the Urdu Instructor at the Young Officers' School of Instruction in Ambala, and claimed that he

<sup>208</sup> The former made 6 editions by 1928 and the latter became the work recommended by the Government of India for the Colloquial examination during WWI. It was still being published in 1943.

<sup>209</sup> Akmal Ali, *First Lessons in Hindustani Grammar* (Calcutta: published by the author, 1918) v.

had 'read and used most of the works on Hindustani' and found them wanting. Some of them, 'contained no exercises at all' and others were 'not carefully graduated'.<sup>210</sup> *The Munshi* represented a definite advance in terms of practicality, user-friendliness, and in meeting the purpose for which it was written.

The 1918, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Saihgal's *Grammar* was arranged on similar lines to the 1918 edition of *The Munshi*; Part I 'Pronunciation', Part II 'Grammar', Part III 'Military Exercises', Part IV, 'Unseen English Exercises', Part V, 'Unseen Urdu Exercises', Part VI, a 'List of Feminine Nouns and Words Similar in Form', and Part VII, 'Vocabulary'. Though dealing with them in a different order from *The Munshi*, his grammar section, similarly introduced a grammatical point in each lesson, and then provided vocabulary and examples and exercises for translation from and into Hindustani. The major difference was that where Haidari used Persian script, Saihgal used Roman.<sup>211</sup>

In the first few editions of both works the military emphasis was very evident. The title page of Saihgal's 1<sup>st</sup> edition stated that it was 'Specially adapted for Instruction in Military Schools and Colleges'.<sup>212</sup> Up to and including the 6<sup>th</sup>, 1922, edition of *The Munshi*, Haidari continued to include the 'Military Appendix', but by the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of 1931 it had been removed. Saihgal's, 1930, 5<sup>th</sup> edition still included 'Miscellaneous Military Exercises' in Part IV, but from the 6<sup>th</sup> edition onwards these were also omitted in favour of more general passages. Friedlander's article makes much of the fact that a passage regarding Queen Victoria, and her learning of Hindustani, had been replaced in the 1940s editions of *The Munshi* by one on Japanese and Chinese military strength.<sup>213</sup> This is, however, the *only* passage in the entire work with this type of content. Although the exercises contain occasional references to army matters, the topics are mostly general, and often both random and mundane, including sentences such as 'I don't believe him he always tells lies' and 'He takes a bath once a month'.<sup>214</sup>

From the 1930s both *The Munshi* and Saihgal's *Grammar* further increased their emphasis on the examinations. As seen in 2.1, the changes to the syllabuses in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were frequent. In the preface to the 1921, 24<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Munshi*, E.S. Harcourt, Officiating Secretary to the Board of Examiners, noting that the 'question of substituting Preliminary and Interpreters' Examinations for the Lower and Higher Standards' was 'under contemplation', expressed the opinion that *The Munshi* would 'prove equally useful to candidates

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<sup>210</sup> M.A.Haidari, *The Munshi* (Ambala: Haidari's Oriental Book Depot, 1918) viii. Friedlander's contention that none of the earlier grammars attempted a 'graduated lesson-by-lesson introduction of grammatical forms mixed with exercises to practice (sic)' is, however, untenable. His article makes no reference at all to the works of John Tweedie and Kempson, both of whom did exactly this. See Friedlander, *Textbooks*, 52.

<sup>211</sup> Moolchand Saihgal, *Hindustani Grammar* (Subathu: published by the author, 1918). Saihgal was Urdu Instructor at the Officers' School of Instruction, Subathu.

<sup>212</sup> Saihgal, *Hindustani Grammar* Vol.1 (Lahore: Punjab Steam Press, 1917).

<sup>213</sup> Friedlander, *Textbooks*, 53.

<sup>214</sup> Haidari, *Munshi*, 1942, 84-85

studying for these new forms of examination'.<sup>215</sup> By 1931, however, the preface to the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Munshi* observed

During the last few years, the changes in the system of the Hindustani Examinations have been so drastic that the previous edition of the book has been rendered absolutely inadequate to meet the present day requirements, and the fact has obliged the author to exert himself in bringing out this new edition of ("The Munshi," with almost a radically different substance, so as to make it really serviceable by adapting it to the needs of the new system of examination.<sup>216</sup>

By 1932, Saihgal, too, had taken account of the changes and the 6<sup>th</sup> Roman edition of the *Grammar* claimed to have been 'completely revised' with 'many alterations in the text'.<sup>217</sup> It did not tie itself as closely as *The Munshi* to the examination syllabuses, however, nor did it provide past papers. By the time the 1936, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, was published the examinations had changed yet again, with the re-introduction of Lower and Higher Standard. The difference between the Lower and Higher Standards, regarding the literary text-books, had always been a question of quantity rather than difficulty<sup>218</sup> and, similarly, no attempt had been made to differentiate between the grammar necessary for each standard. Saihgal's 7<sup>th</sup> edition, however, was divided into two volumes, the first for the Lower Standard and the second for Higher. It also contained a supplement of forty sets of sentences for oral translation by the Higher Standard. Unlike *The Munshi*, however, even later editions did not include past examination passages for written translation. In 1936, Saihgal published a separate volume, in both Urdu and *Nagari* scripts, entitled *Saihgal's Graduated Exercises*. This included past examination papers, *arzi*s in both scripts and, for unseen translation, selections from *Fauji Akhbar*, also in both scripts.

A distinctive feature of Saihgal's grammar, from the 6<sup>th</sup> edition onwards, was that it was published in three different scripts separately, Roman, Urdu and *Nagari*. All editions, of *The Munshi* however, are in Persian script with Romanization for pronunciation, except the 10<sup>th</sup> edition, of 1936, which is in *Nagari*. Haidari gives no reason, for this, but the re-introduction of the Lower and Higher Standard, in 1932, offered candidates a choice between Persian and *Nagari* script, so, without this edition, the *Munshi* would have been less suitable for those officers who wished to opt for the examination in *Nagari*. Despite the fact that all other editions of the *Munshi* used only Persian script, however, the work remained enormously popular, perhaps indicating that the vast majority of officers continued to take the examination in the Persian script.

With the further changes to the examinations wrought by the Second World War, Saihgal again revised and updated his grammar. In 1940, Major Gifford, Secretary to the Board of Examiners, said of the 9<sup>th</sup> Roman-Urdu edition, that he could 'confidently recommend it to officers studying for

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<sup>215</sup> Haidari, *Munshi*, 1922 vii.

<sup>216</sup> Haidari, *Munshi*, 1931, ix. The book was intended to meet the needs of the British Service Officers' Urdu Test, the Urdu Qualifying Examination, the Urdu Preliminary Examination, and the Lady's Vernacular (Hindustani) Examination.

<sup>217</sup> Saihgal, *Grammar*, 1932, ii.

<sup>218</sup> The two chapters of *Bagh-o-Bahar* prescribed for LS contained more difficult language than some of the rest which was required for HS.

the Urdu Elementary Examination'. The significant thing, about both Haidari and Saihgal, is how closely their grammars were tied into the examination syllabuses at all times. Both also, increasingly, had government recognition and approval. The 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> editions of *The Munshi* were styled the 'official text-book for Cadet Colleges, Quetta and Wellington, Officers' School of Instruction, Ambala and Subathu'. From the 8<sup>th</sup> edition onwards, it was described as being 'officially recommended for examinations in Urdu'. The 9<sup>th</sup> edition proudly tells us that it had been officially recommended and successfully used, between 1917 and 1927, for Lower and Higher Standard, (including Colloquial and Commercial), Ladies' Vernacular, Preliminary, Urdu Qualifying and British Service Officers' Urdu Test. It then stated that it was 'officially recommended in the new scheme (1931-32)' for the re-introduced Lower and Higher Standards. Haidari, himself, in the preface to the 9<sup>th</sup> edition pointed out that *The Munshi* had 'always come forward with a new edition, brought up-to-date, for the benefit of the pupils' to keep pace with 'the changes at intervals, in the scheme of Hindustani Examinations.'<sup>219</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Saihgal's grammar noted that it had been 'prepared for the Lower, Higher and Colloquial Examinations'. By the 6<sup>th</sup> edition it had been 'officially recommended for examinations in Urdu', and by the 11<sup>th</sup> edition it was 'Officially recommended for the Lower and Higher Standard Examinations in Urdu and Nagri by the Government of India, Army Head-Quarters, Simla'. Interestingly, none of the British grammars had ever had this kind of government endorsement.

In addition to *The Munshi*, Haidari produced a number of other works. In 1918, he published *The Instructor*, designed for those who wanted to pass the colloquial examinations. It was entirely in Roman script and had a military focus. In 1923, he produced *Selections from Fauji Akhbar for the Preliminary and Interpreters Examinations*. 1930 saw the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *The Army Urdu Teacher*, aimed specifically at those taking the British Service Urdu Test. The *Urdu Manuscript*, containing a selection of *arzis* both lithographed and in *shikasta* was first published around 1931 and saw four editions and was followed by *Oral Exercises* and *Haidari's Book of Advanced Exercises*.<sup>220</sup> In 1938, he published *Hindustani without Grammar*, a work designed to 'smooth the Mem-sahib's Path towards a little fluency in Urdu'.

Towards the end of his article, *Textbooks from the Raj*, Friedlander argued that, although there were other grammars contemporary with Saihgal and Haidari, 'almost all stuck closer to the earlier format of teaching Hindustani as if it were basically a classical language'.<sup>221</sup> In reality, the grammars and text-books, which emerged between the end of World War I and 1947, (whether British or Indian), were about as far removed from the 'classical' approach as it was possible to get.

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<sup>219</sup> Haidari, *Munshi*, 1932, iv. As well as being 'for the benefit' of pupils, both Haidari and Saihgal had a lucrative business concern going. Both had their own publishing houses – Haidari's Oriental Book Depot and Moolchand Saihgal and Sons.

<sup>220</sup> It is difficult to trace the dates of the first editions of some of these works. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the *Urdu Manuscript* was 1933 and the 4<sup>th</sup> 1942. The *Army Urdu Teacher* saw a 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in 1939 and a 4<sup>th</sup> in 1944.

<sup>221</sup> Friedlander, *Textbooks*, 53. Emphasis added

It is perhaps useful to look at them in two groups, Indian and British. Taking the Indian works first, in 1918, Akmal Ali, Urdu lecturer at the School of Instruction for Officers, Bangalore, published *First Lessons in Hindustani Grammar*. Part I was a grammar, divided into 70 lessons, with sentences in English and Hindustani to illustrate the points being learnt in each lesson. Part II was a vocabulary and Part III consisted of exercises for translation from and into Hindustani (in Roman script), mostly to practise various verb forms. The content had a military focus, especially in the exercises. It owed little to the 'classical' approach and was written 'merely for the purpose of helping those who have not much time to devote to the language and yet wish to acquire a fairly grammatical knowledge of it'.<sup>222</sup>

In 1919, A.T. Shahani produced two small volumes. The first, *Europeans' Guide to Hindustani*, was a general work, aimed at giving the student a working knowledge of the language within one month. It was divided into two parts. Part I contained a grammar section, divided into 36 lessons, each presenting a grammatical point, giving example sentences, in Roman-Urdu and English translation, followed by a 'Reading Lesson' in Roman script, and a translation exercise from English into Hindustani. The second section consisted of 'Useful Sentences', mostly on general topics, but with separate sections on medical and military phrases. Section three contained a vocabulary, and a 'Key' to the exercises and reading lessons. Part II had two sections, the first consisting of 50 easy stories with translations and notes, and the second of 'Conversational Sentences'. Shahani's second work was *Hindustani Military Colloquial*. Though shorter, Part I was on very similar lines to the *Europeans' Guide*. Part II consisted of sentences, in English and Roman Hindustani, on military topics and Part III was a strange concoction of more general sentences, vocabularies (military and general), English words understood by Indians, 'Pigeon' (sic) terms, and a 'Key' to the exercises and reading lessons.

Also in 1919, *The Modern Hindustani Scholar or the Pucca Munshi*, a more substantial work, using Persian script, was produced by Munshi Thakardass Pahwa. Its contents can best be described the author's own words.

It is divided into three parts... The first part treats of grammar in graduated lessons, most of which are followed by two exercises, (one from English into Hindustani and the other from Hindustani into English) and a set of useful colloquial sentences. The exercises are, of course, on the rules in the lesson immediately preceding them... The second part consists of miscellaneous advanced exercises ... which have been very carefully selected and arranged. ... The third part is meant to provide the student with a ... substantial collection of Idiomatic and Military Sentences... In the whole book no word that is not commonly used, finds any place... In short, I believe that the Lower and Higher Standard candidates will find it eminently useful ... It also fully answers the requirements of the present Military Colloquial examinations.<sup>223</sup>

It is a comprehensive volume but, perhaps because of its size and expense,<sup>224</sup> it only made one further edition in 1936.

<sup>222</sup> Akmal Ali, *First Lessons in Hindustani Grammar*, (Calcutta: published by the Author, 1918) v.

<sup>223</sup> Munshi Thakardass Pahwa, *The Pucca Munshi* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1919) iii.

<sup>224</sup> It cost Rs10 compared with Rs5 for Haidari and Saihgal.



In 1926, Kishinsingh published a more modest volume also with the word 'modern' in its title. It too owed little to the classical approach. The author noted that the 'elementary rules of grammar' had been 'explained very concisely' and claimed that 'almost every sentence in the exercises' would be 'found to be of practical use'.<sup>225</sup> Part I contained 32 lessons each introducing a grammatical point, relevant vocabulary, examples and exercises for translation from and into Hindustani. Part II contained miscellaneous exercises and Part III Reading lessons. Both English-Hindustani and Hindustani-English vocabularies were provided at the end. The entire work was, like those by Shahani, in Roman script. Like the *Pucca Munshi* it ran to only one more (revised and enlarged) edition in 1928.

In 1933, Munshi Siddiq-ul-Hassan Khan published yet another work with the word 'modern' in its title, *The Jadid Hindustani Teacher*. In it the 'rules on a particular point of grammar' were not 'presented in a bunch, but in a gradual slow manner'. The author was also keen to point out that due regard had been paid to the current examination requirements explaining, 'Besides the Urdu script, I have used the Devanagri (Hindi) script as well, the option of which has quite recently been allowed to candidates for such examinations'.<sup>226</sup> This book is of interest as it was the first, and only one, to incorporate both scripts into one volume, in order to cater for the new requirements. Part I, introduced both alphabets and provided some basic reading exercises. Part II consisted of 49 lessons with some innovative exercises to accompany them. They not only had the usual translation from and into Hindustani, but there were also questions on grammar, and, in later chapters, sentences which contained errors to be corrected, and gap-fill exercises.<sup>227</sup> Part III consisted of, mostly military, 'Useful Sentences', Part IV contained a collection of handwritten letters, in both *shikasta* and *Nagari*, and Part V was a vocabulary to Parts III and IV.

In 1937, a volume appeared entitled *Roman-Urdu A Comprehensive Study in Hindustani* by one R.N. Sharma.<sup>228</sup> Parts I and II contained the usual lessons introducing grammatical points, followed by examples and the exercises from and into Hindustani, for which a separate 'Key' was provided. Part III consisted of short stories, dialogues, conversational phrases and vocabulary. The author stressed that the 'oral or conversational side of the language' was the 'most essential part'. *Roman-Urdu*, however, was not particularly user-friendly and it did not make a further edition. In 1943, Wajid Ali published *The Practical Hindustani Grammar*, designed to cater 'progressively for the the British Service Officers' Urdu Test, and the Elementary, Lower and Higher Standard Examinations'. Like Sharma's, this work emphasized the importance of the spoken language. The book was divided into three parts, each geared to a specific examination, the first two required only Roman script,

<sup>225</sup> Kishinsingh, *Modern Hindustani Instructor* (Calcutta and Simla: Thacker Spink & Co., 1928)

<sup>226</sup> Siddiq-ul-Hassan Khan, *Jadid Hindustani Teacher* (Allahabad: Modern Printing Works, 1933) iii. Ralph Russell used this book when he began learning Urdu in 1942. *jadid=modern*

<sup>227</sup> In MFL teaching giving students incorrect sentences to correct is now frowned upon, but gap-fills are staple fodder.

<sup>228</sup> R.N.Sharma, *Roman-Urdu* (Cawnpore: published by the author, 1937)

but Part III dealt with Urdu script, and Part IV consisted mainly of passages for Higher Standard. As in all the aforementioned works, each lesson dealt with a grammatical point, introduced some new vocabulary and provided exercises in translation. In addition, 'Subjects for Conversation' and 'Questions to be asked by the teacher and answered by the student', were given at the end of each lesson. The focus of the content, as to be expected at that point in World War II, was heavily military.

Although the British involvement in the production of grammars and text-books effectively ended in 1912 with the work of Douglas Craven Phillott, there was something of a coda to it. In the late 1920s there were two more works. In 1928, a government publication, compiled by the General Staff in India appeared.<sup>229</sup> It was entitled *The Army Roman Urdu Manual*, and was aimed specifically at officers preparing for the Urdu Qualifying Examination and the British Service Officers' Urdu test. The timing is perhaps significant, as this was only a year after the former had been made permanent and the latter had been first introduced. It was not a grammar, nor even really a text-book, but contained the syllabuses for both the examinations, followed by chapters containing hints on the study of Urdu', rules for transliteration into Roman-Urdu,<sup>230</sup> practice sentences for both examinations, and some conversational exercises on military matters.

In 1929 Captain H. Stanley published a volume entitled *Spoken Hindustani*. The author emphasized the importance of acquiring the spoken language without sacrificing grammatical correctness. The first part was a grammar section, divided into Models A-M, which explained particular points, but had no exercises to practise them. The second part, entitled 'More Oral Practice', was reminiscent of the Holroyd approach of giving sentences in English with their Hindustani equivalent. There was also an English-Roman Urdu glossary. The author favoured the 'direct method' of language instruction and placed an emphasis on acquiring idiomatical correctness, warning against such errors as '*tamam rat girje ke gaz men soya*' for 'he slept all night in the church yard. It gained little currency and did not make a second edition.<sup>231</sup>

No further British works emerged until World War II, when the introduction of a new examination for 'the duration' saw a short final flurry of British activity.<sup>232</sup> The works were entirely military and were directed at the newly introduced Elementary Urdu examination. In 1941 Major J. Willatt produced *A Textbook of Urdu in the Roman Script* designed for the Elementary Urdu and British Service Other Ranks' Tests.<sup>233</sup> *Urdu Military Vocabulary*,<sup>234</sup> published the following year by Captain H.L.

<sup>229</sup> General Staff in India, *The Army Roman-Urdu Manual* (Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch, 1928)

<sup>230</sup> Both examinations used only Roman script.

<sup>231</sup> Captain H. Stanley, *Spoken Hindustani* (Poona: Scottish Mission Industries Ltd., 1929) v. *gaz* = a yard in length.

<sup>232</sup> A work which does not fit with the military wartime offerings but which was first published in 1943 is Harley's *Colloquial Hindustani*. This was a general grammar with a somewhat more scholarly approach and is the first to use Firth's transliteration system.

<sup>233</sup> J. Willatt, *Textbook of Urdu in the Roman Script* (London: Oxford University Press, 1941).

Phillips, was designed to be 'a supplement' to Willatt's work, providing 'useful additions' in vocabulary. Although entitled a 'vocabulary', it consisted of reading exercises in Roman-Urdu to be translated, followed by a section of longer reading passages and an Urdu-English vocabulary. In 1942 Major W. Turner produced *Guide to Military Urdu and the Elementary Examination*. This, however, was not a new or original work but merely an extended and revised version of Shahani's earlier *Hindustani Military Colloquial*, to which a selection of specimen papers, for the Elementary Examination, was appended. Further editions came out in 1944 and 1945. According to the author, the aim of the book was 'to teach colloquial Urdu as rapidly as possible with a minimum of formal grammar'.<sup>235</sup> In 1944 R. Johnston's *Pass That Urdu Test*<sup>236</sup> was published. It had started life 'as an attempt to help doctor newcomers to India to learn enough Hindustani for wartime duties in an Indian Medical hospital'. It saw only one edition but is remarkable both for its strange system of Roman transliteration and its humorous illustrations. With the publication in 1946, of Captain H. Catchpole's, *Elementary Urdu*, the production of Hindustani grammars by the British ceased.<sup>237</sup>

### 2.3 Summary

Over the course of a century and a half, the British devoted a great deal of time and energy to the construction of their Hindustani 'enterprise'. The examination system, which had developed in a piecemeal way until the 'mutiny', was gradually standardized. Such standardisation was frequently associated with army reforms, particularly in the early 1860s and in the mid-1890s. In 1895, the theoretical construct of Hindustani as the entire *khari boli* continuum using both scripts, changed with the removal of Hindi and *Nagari*. Although change was very slow during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw frequent alterations both to the literary set-texts and to the format of the examinations themselves. The content of the examinations, especially during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was based on a 'size matters' approach of quantity rather than difficulty. Tests were specified in terms of being 'not less than a page of octavo', or simply 'short' or 'longer' passages which were 'easy', 'more difficult' or 'difficult. There was no indication of what such terms actually meant. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century when percentages were introduced, candidates' performance, too, was judged subjectively and often comparatively, rather than with any degree of criterion referencing.

The text-books and grammars followed the trend of the examinations. The early grammars were generally reference grammars, often with extracts from the set-texts and dialogues appended. During the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, there was an increasing trend to provide progressive lessons and exercises, often with a 'Key', reflecting changes in language teaching methodology, from the classical text-based approach to a more practical one. Until the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the grammars were written almost entirely by the British themselves. From 1917,

<sup>234</sup> Captain H.L. Phillips, *Urdu Military Vocabulary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1943).

<sup>235</sup> Major W. Turner, *Guide to Military Urdu and The Elementary Examination* (Karachi: Educational Publishing Co., 1942) i.

<sup>236</sup> R. Johnston, *Pass That Urdu Test!* (Bombay: Thacker and Co, 1944).

<sup>237</sup> Captain H. Catchpole, *Elementary Urdu* (London: Luzac & Co., 1946).

however, Indian grammars dominated the market. It is difficult to 'periodise' the grammars, as Friedlander has attempted to do, as they were extremely eclectic in their content and presentation throughout the period. Although, from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there is a trend towards 'dumbing-down', this began, not, as Friedlander suggests, from 1917, but from 1903, when the government accepted the military demands for examinations to be purely practical and professional.<sup>238</sup> Friedlander's other contention that the grammars 'do not show any consistent Orientalist project'<sup>239</sup> also fails to convince. Whilst he is correct in asserting that the grammars 'reflect the many individual voices of their authors', those very authors were, as shown above, (almost) all directly connected to the colonial state and its Hindustani enterprise. Some (Gilchrist, Shakespear, Arnot Forbes, Arnot, Eastwick, Monier Williams Dowson,) were employed in teaching institutions, others (Holroyd, Kempson, Platts) were employed in various provincial education departments, and others (Ranking, Chapman, Phillott, Willatt, Turner, Phillips) served in the Indian army. The colonial state may not have commissioned the textbooks, but a market for them existed only because of the compulsory examinations imposed by that state. Cohn's contention that the enterprise was part of a 'colonial project' has, therefore, some substance, but his linking of that project with colonial power through linguistic knowledge, is, as will be seen in Chapter 6, much less convincing.

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<sup>238</sup> The idea of them coming 'full circle' is also a bit odd as the grammars were now being written by Indians rather than the British.

<sup>239</sup> Friedlander, *Textbooks*, 39.

## CHAPTER 3

### HOW DO I DEFINE THEE? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS. THE COLONIAL CONSTRUCT(S) OF HINDUSTANI

‘...nothing in India is identifiable,  
the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear or to merge in something else.’

EM Forster

#### 3.0 Introduction:

In answer to a query on Hindustani on H-Asia, Sumit Guha quoted Lewis Carroll.<sup>1</sup>

“The name of the song is called ‘Haddocks’ Eyes.’”

“Oh, that’s the name of the song, is it?” Alice said, trying to feel interested.

“No, you don’t understand,” the Knight said, looking a little vexed. “That’s what the name is called. The name really is ‘The Aged Aged Man.’”

“Then I ought to have said ‘That’s what the song is called?’” Alice corrected herself.

“No, you oughtn’t: that’s quite another thing! The song is called ‘Ways And Means’: but that’s only what it’s called, you know!”

“Well, what is the song, then?” said Alice, who was by this time completely bewildered.

“I was coming to that,” the Knight said. “The song really is ‘A-sitting on a Gate’: and the tune’s my own invention.”<sup>2</sup>

This, however, provides only a partial parallel with the problem of Hindustani. In terms of the profusion of *names* for the language, (*Rekhta, Khari Boli, Hindee, Hindoostanee, Oordoo*) it is apt, but the problem with Hindustani was not merely one of appellation, but of substance. What actually constituted Hindustani remained a matter of confusion and contradiction during the entire colonial period.

Chapter 2 examined the ‘construction’ of Hindustani in the concrete sense of the physical apparatus that was constructed in order to learn the language. This chapter looks at the metaphorical ‘construction’ of it, that is, the theoretical construct of Hindustani. The contention is not that the language *itself* was created or invented by the British,<sup>3</sup> but that, starting with Gilchrist, they delineated it, then codified and systematized it, turning it into ‘a bounded entity’, located in dictionaries, grammars and complex examination syllabuses.<sup>4</sup> Inherent in this construct from the outset were problems of definition and terminology. The first section examines the inconsistencies in the theoretical British construct(s) of Hindustani and the resulting problems of definition in the writing of scholars and linguists. The second section demonstrates how such inconsistencies and contradictions were translated into the practical apparatus of the examination syllabuses that civil and military officers had to follow.

<sup>1</sup> Thread: ‘Nathuram Godse’s position India’s national language’, H-Asia, <http://www.h-net.org/~asia/> Accessed 8.1.11.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis Carroll, *Through the looking glass* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1897) 175.

<sup>3</sup> The style of the language they produced, however, was an artificial one intended for a particular audience of foreign language learners, as opposed to language generated by native speakers for native speakers.

<sup>4</sup> David Lelyveld, ‘Zuban-e-Urdu-e Mu‘alla and the Idol of Linguistic Origins’, *Annual of Urdu Studies*, 9, Madison, 1994, 57.

### 3.1 The Difficulties of Definition

John Gilchrist has, by many writers, been credited with ‘coining’ the term Hindustani but pre-colonial records indicate that it existed centuries before the establishment of British rule.<sup>5</sup> In 1526, the first Mughal emperor, Babur, wrote of his meeting with the Lodi chief, Daulat Khan, ‘I ... ordered a person well acquainted with Hindustani to interpret my words to him’.<sup>6</sup> There is, however, no way of knowing what language was meant here by Hindustani. Elsewhere in the *Babur-Nama* the term is used purely as an adjective meaning ‘Indian’, so Hindustani can only be taken to mean ‘Indian language’.

That some kind of *lingua franca* existed in India, and was known to the British and other Europeans, nearly 200 years before Gilchrist developed his construct of *Hindoostanee*, is evident from early accounts of travellers. Edward Terry, describing Thomas Coryat’s visit to India, between 1612 and 1617, tells us that Coryat stayed in Agra, ‘till he had gotten to his Turkish and Morisco or Arabian languages some good knowledge in the Persian and Indostan tongues’. ‘Indostan’, he tells us was ‘the vulgar language spoken in East-India’.<sup>7</sup> Terry described ‘Indostan’ as ‘a smooth tongue, and easie to be pronounced which they write as wee to the right hand’.<sup>8</sup> The language he was referring to was, therefore, written in *Nagari*, or a variant thereof, rather than Persian script. During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries there were frequent references to a language or ‘jargon’ called Moors but again, what exactly was meant by this is unclear as Hadley’s attempt at definition reveals.

The pure Hindoe is a distinct language, not derived as many think, from the Persian, though there are such a multitude of words adopted therefrom, that it is an error very natural to fall into ... the present Hindostanee ... is a jargon of Arabic, Persian, Tartars and Hindoe. ... Why the Hindoe has been called Moors and the people Moormen is not so easy to decide...<sup>9</sup>

The complex, fluid language situation of late 18<sup>th</sup> century North India was one the British struggled to understand. As with so many other fluid situations in India, they felt a need to define it within a familiar framework, and therein lie the roots of the problem. The source of the contradictions and confusions which were perpetuated throughout the colonial period, are, to be found in Gilchrist’s original construct. Explaining the choice of the term Hindustani, he observed that Hindostan was ‘inhabited chiefly by Hindoos and Moosulmans’ who could, along with their language, be described ‘under the general, conciliating, comprehensive term of Hindoostanee’.

This name of the country being modern, as well as the vernacular tongue in question, no other appeared so appropriate as it did to me, when I first engaged in the study and cultivation of the language. That the natives and others call it also *Hindee*, Indian, from *Hind*, ... cannot be denied; but as this is apt to be confounded with *Hinduwee*, *Hindoo,ee*, *Hindvee*, the derivative form from *Hindoo*, I adhere to my original opinion, that we should invariably discard all other denominations of the popular speech of this country, including the unmeaning word Moors, and substitute for them

<sup>5</sup> Tariq Rahman, *From Hindi to Urdu* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011) 32-33.

<sup>6</sup> Annette Beveridge, Trans., *Babur-Nama in English*, Volume II (London: Luzac, 1922) 459. The present author checked the original Turki to ensure the word Hindustani was used.

<sup>7</sup> William Foster, ed., *Early Travels in India* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921) 284.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 309.

<sup>9</sup> Hadley, *Compendious Grammar*, x. The language of his grammar also exhibited mixed forms, some closer to Eastern dialects of Hindi and even verging on Bengali.

*Hindoostanee*... Hinduwee I have treated as the exclusive property of the Hindoos alone; and have therefore constantly applied it to the old language of India, which prevailed before the Moosulman invasion; and in fact, now constitutes among them, the basis or groundwork of the *Hindoostanee*, a comparatively recent superstructure, composed of Arabic and Persian, in which the two last may be considered in the same relation, that Latin and French bear to English : while we may justly treat the *Hinduwee* of the modern speech or *Hindoostanee*, as the Saxon of the former.<sup>10</sup>

In his *Dialogues*, of 1804, however, although Gilchrist uses ‘Hindoostanee’ in the English translation, in the actual Hindustani, he consistently uses the word ‘Hindee’, reinforcing his statement that ‘Hindee’, rather than ‘Hindoostanee’ was the term used by Indians.<sup>11</sup> He was also aware of the term ‘Rekhtu’, which he described as ‘that mixed dialect also called Oordoo or the polished language of the Court’.<sup>12</sup> Although Gilchrist settled on the term Hindustani, the very existence of these other terms was, from the outset, a potential source of confusion.

Gilchrist’s definition of the language was even more problematic. He argued that there were three styles of Hindustani, the highly-Persianized Court style, the middle style of educated men, and the rustic style of the ‘Hindawi’.<sup>13</sup> The style he favoured was the middle one, which was Persianized but not excessively so, and it was this that he aimed to promote in his works.<sup>14</sup> The basis for the language was *khari boli*, a dialect of Hindi spoken around the Delhi area, which had developed into a literary form with a superstructure of Persian and Arabic vocabulary. It was used both by the Mughal Court and as a *lingua franca* by ordinary people over large areas of Northern India and the Deccan, having been spread by Mughal armies and their followers. It was, still however, a comparatively new language, one whose parameters were not yet set and whose development was not complete.

Gilchrist’s construct of Hindustani was the entire *khari boli* continuum,<sup>15</sup> as it existed in 1800, including both Perso-Arabic and indigenous vocabulary and written in either Persian or *Nāgarī* script. Gilchrist’s belief, that *khari boli* was descended from *Hindawi*, which he seemed to equate with *Braj Bhasha*, resulted in a somewhat permeable ‘fuzzy’ area at the non-Persianized end of the continuum, and an uncertainty as to how non-*khari boli* dialects of Hindi, particularly *Braj*, related to Hindustani. Far from attempting to divide the language into two separate parts along Hindu-Muslim lines, Gilchrist’s construct was an all-inclusive one and it was ultimately its very inclusiveness which was to prove so problematic. In particular, the insistence that Hindustani could

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<sup>10</sup> Gilchrist, *Grammar*, 4.

<sup>11</sup> Gilchrist, *Dialogues*, iii.

<sup>12</sup> Gilchrist, *Grammar*, 261

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix 1 for Gilchrist’s models of Hindustani.

<sup>14</sup> It has been suggested that Gilchrist’s hierarchy of styles was the reverse of that of Insha who saw the urban speech of Delhi as setting the standard. See Javed Majeed, *Jargon of Indostan*, ed., Burke and Porter, *Languages and Jargons* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995) 196-197.

<sup>15</sup> His construct was not, as has been suggested by Orsini, ‘the preferred middle level’. It was the *whole* continuum. He merely *preferred* the middle level. Francesca Orsini, ed., *Before the Divide* (Hyderabad, Orient Blackswan, 2011) 3-4.

be written in either the Persian or *Nagari* script presented problems both for the British in learning the language and later in the Indian context.<sup>16</sup>

The British construct of Hindustani was, therefore, flawed from its very inception and the confusion and uncertainties in Gilchrist's original definition were echoed by his contemporaries and perpetuated and exacerbated by his successors. In his Disputation of 1802, William Butterworth Bayley noted that the language he had 'specified by the name of Hindoostanee', was also 'frequently denominated Hindee, Oordoo, and Rekhtu' and was 'compounded of the Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit or Bha,k,ha, which last appears to have been in former ages the current language of Hindoostan'.<sup>17</sup> From the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, other contradictory definitions were emerging. In 1803, Henry Colebrooke asserted

Hindustani ... comprises numerous dialects from the *Orduzabán*, or language of the royal camp and court, to the barbarous jargon which reciprocal mistakes have introduced among European gentlemen and their native servants. The same tongue, under its more appropriate denomination of *Hindí*, comprehends many dialects strictly local and provincial.<sup>18</sup>

This suggests Hindustani and Hindi are synonymous, and Urdu is one of its varieties, something which did not accord with Gilchrist's formulation. In 1811, the 'Head Moonshee' of the Hindustani department at the Fort William College had produced a collection of *Meer Tuqee's* poetry, which it described as being 'composed chiefly in the Oordoo, or Hindoostanee language',<sup>19</sup> thus providing a very early example of the conflation of Urdu and Hindustani, which would become increasingly common in the later 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1813 John Shakespear partially returned to Gilchrist's definition.

The *dialect* most generally used in India ... is called Urdu (camp) or Urdu zaban (camp language), which seem to have been its first and most appropriate appellations: but, it is also termed, *Rekhta* (scattered), on account of the variety of *languages* interspersed in it;... it is moreover called Hindi and Hindustani. ... The groundwork of it appears to be Hindawi ... or the existing *dialect* of the district of *Braj*, called *Braj Bhakha* ... the Musalman invaders and rulers incorporated a great number of Persian, Arabic, Turkish and other words; thus forming the modern Hindustani. Such being the various sources from whence it is derived, it is found written in the Persian or Arabic as well as in the Devanagari or proper Indian characters.<sup>20</sup>

Although like Gilchrist he regarded the basis of Hindustani to be *Braj*, he equated it with *both* Hindi and Urdu rather than seeing the two together as making up Hindustani.

In his 1827 grammar, the Baptist missionary, William Yates, put forward a very different definition maintaining

... the Hindustani or Urdu differs essentially from the Hindi or Hindui, the former being derived principally from the Arabic or Persian, and the latter from the Sanscrit. ... the strange admixture of

<sup>16</sup> The contention that Gilchrist identified 'language with script' is difficult to sustain as Gilchrist advocated the use of both scripts and in his own works favoured Roman. See Orsini, *Before the Divide*, 3-4.

<sup>17</sup> William Butterworth Bayley, *Public Disputation in the Hindoostanee language*, held at the Government House in Calcutta, 6 February, 1802, reprinted in Arnot, *Grammar*, 103.

<sup>18</sup> Henry Colebrooke, 'On the Sanscrit and Pracrit Languages', *Asiatic Researches*, Volume the Seventh, London, 1803, 230.

<sup>19</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 286.

<sup>20</sup> Shakespear, *Grammar*, 1-2. Emphasis added.



them that frequently obtains ... have led some to the erroneous conclusion, that they are the same language; whereas the Urdu is peculiar in its application to the Musalman population in every part of India, while the Hindui applies only to the Hindus in the Upper Provinces.<sup>21</sup>

Here we see another example of the conflation of Hindustani and Urdu, but more strikingly, *Hindi* and *Hindui*, (or *Hindawi*) which had been carefully distinguished from each other by Gilchrist and Shakespear, are also conflated, but without clarification of what, exactly, the term denotes. The 'Reading Lessons' in the book, Yates informs us are all in 'pure Hindustani without that admixture of Sanskrit words which is sometimes admitted.'<sup>22</sup> Gilchrist, though distinguishing between the styles favoured by Hindus and Muslims, nevertheless included both in the umbrella term of Hindustani. In Yates, however, we see an early forerunner of the much later equation, Hindi=Hindu, Urdu=Muslim.

In 1828, two of Gilchrist's ex-pupils, Arnot and Forbes, wrote a detailed essay on the origins and development of Hindustani, the very first paragraph of which appears to completely contradict Yates' conflation of Hindustani and Urdu.

The very name *Hindoostanee*, or *Hindee*, implies the wide range of territory over which it is more or less known. The other dialects of India ... are confined to particular provinces; whereas the Hindee denotes the Lingua Franca, or general language of the country...<sup>23</sup>

They went on to explain, that after the Muslim invasions of India, 'the necessary intercourse between the conquerors and the conquered gave rise to a new language, at once elegant and simple, like a Grecian structure on a Gothic base'.<sup>24</sup> Claiming that it was formed in 'almost equal proportions' from Arabic and Persian on the one hand and Sanscrit on the other they maintained, 'it would naturally follow that the language of the Mussulmans', to which the terms 'Hindoostanee, Hindee, Urdu, and Rekhta' were applicable, 'would abound with words and phrases from the Persian and Arabic'.<sup>25</sup> Turning their attention to Hindus they continued

Such of them as speak the *Hindoostanee*, or rather the *Hindoowee* (the term generally applied to the dialect of the Hindoos), are much more sparing in the use of words from the Arabic or Persian in lieu of which they borrow freely from the Sanscrit, or its offspring dialects. ...The main difference between the *Hindoostanee* and the *Hinduwee* consists in the use of the nouns and adjectives, the verbs being for the most the same in both.<sup>26</sup>

Arnot and Forbes were, apparently, using 'Hindee' in the sense that Gilchrist did in his *Dialogues*, and as Indians frequently did themselves, to refer to the language Gilchrist called *Hindoostanee*. Whereas Yates had equated 'Hindi' and 'Hindui', Arnot and Forbes made a distinction between them but, nevertheless, implied that they were both based on the same dialect. Whether the 'Hindoowee' referred to here means *Braj* is not clear.

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<sup>21</sup> Yates, *Introduction*, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added. Any notion of Hindustani as 'pure' given its inherently mixed nature is oxymoronic in itself. The suggestion that its 'purity' would be tainted by the addition of Sanskrit words is deeply ironic in the light of later arguments that the 'purity' of *Hindi*, lay in its Sanskrit-derived vocabulary

<sup>23</sup> Sandford Arnot and Duncan Forbes, 'An Essay on Hindustani', 1828, in Arnot, *Grammar Appendix*, 13. Emphasis added.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

Frederick Shore's 1830s *Essay on the Hindostanee Language* argued that Hindustani could be 'subdivided into numerous dialects' all of which had the same 'groundwork'.

First, the high or Court Hindostanee: this contains several varieties as spoken at Dehlee, Lucknow, Hyderabad ... each of which displays a great infusion of Persian and Arabic words. Second, the low Hindostanee spoken by the common people: this inclines more to the old Hindee and has been less adulterated: its dialects are numerous often varying in contiguous districts.<sup>27</sup>

Rather than viewing 'Hindee' as another (Indian) word for Hindustani, (as Gilchrist, Arnot and Forbes did), Shore equates 'old Hindee' with 'Hindui/Hindawi'. His last sentence implies that he is using 'Hindostanee' as a catch-all term to include, at the common level, non-*khari boli* Hindi dialects. Yet the contention that 'the groundwork is the same in all', including the Hindustani of the Court, carries quite the opposite implication.

In 1833, Major Archer offered the following definition.

'Oordoo', or camp language, is a mixture of Arabic, Persian, and Hindooee... 'Hindooee' is the primitive language of the country, nearly related to the Sacred Sanscrit. 'Khurreebole' is another name for the 'Hindooee'.<sup>28</sup>

*Khari boli* is finally mentioned, but Archer equates it with 'Hindooee', which for Gilchrist was the old language of the Hindoos, or *Braj*, from which *khari boli* had (perhaps) developed. Hindustani is not mentioned at all here, yet a few pages later Archer observed, 'Why the Persian has not been discarded, and either the English or *Hindoostani*, which is the colloquial language of all India, substituted, and which is understood by Hindoo and Moslem, is a matter best known to the Court of Directors'.<sup>29</sup> From this we are left wondering what precisely is meant by 'Hindoostani' and how it relates to 'Oordoo', 'Hindooee', and 'Khurreebole'. From the assertion that is understood by 'Hindoo and Moslem' it could be inferred that 'Hindoostani'='Oordoo'+ 'Hindooee'/'Khurreebole'. This is similar to Gilchrist's over-arching construct, but 'Hindooee (*Braj*) and 'Khari Bolee' have now, seemingly, been equated.

In a letter of 1834, forming part of a controversial exchange of views with Charles Trevelyan, John Tytler wrote

Mr Trevelyan tells us that the vernacular language of the Delhi students is Hindostanee. It would be desirable to know what that language is: the natives are quite unacquainted with it, - they know no such language as Hindostanee. ... What Europeans mean by it is, I believe, the Rekhtu or Oordoo. Now this Rekhtu is composed ... from three sources, Arabic, Persian and old Hindee, which last may be the mother, sister, or daughter of Sanskrit.<sup>30</sup>

Here we are back to Yates' conflation of Urdu and Hindustani and the final sentence suggests that the British understanding, as to the precise familial relationship of 'old Hindee' (presumably *Hindui/Hindawi*) with Sanskrit, had not progressed since Gilchrist.

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<sup>27</sup> Frederick Shore, *Essay on the Hindostanee Language*, n.d. Papers of the Hon. Frederick John Shore, IOR/H/790 1822-1858 Scraps from my notebook 7, 507-11. From where it occurs in the papers the essay is probably early 1830s.

<sup>28</sup> Archer, *Tours*, 226.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 322. Emphasis added.

<sup>30</sup> Monier Williams, ed., *Original Papers*, (London, Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts, 1859) 51.

In the preface to his 1836 *Dictionary* Joseph Thompson explained that he had chosen the term 'Oordoo' because Hindustani properly signified 'a native of Hindoostan', while the term 'Oordoo' was 'invariably used to express that mixed language called *Rekhtuh, Oordoo and Hindee*'.<sup>31</sup> This is a return to the use of 'Hindee' as another appellation for, and equivalent with, 'Oordoo'. Thompson implies that, although he does not choose to use the term Hindustani, he sees it as synonymous with Urdu.

By 1845, Duncan Forbes had altered his definition significantly from the one he and Arnot had used previously, now asserting

Hindustani consists of two dialects: that of the Musulmans, commonly called the *Urdu* or *Rekhta*, and that of the Hindus, called *Hindi*. The former abounds in words and phrases from the Persian and Arabic; the latter confines itself to words of native origin, or words borrowed from the Sanskrit. As the two dialects however, follow, in the main the same grammatical rules, they are understood here to be both included under the general name Hindustani, which means, *par excellence*, the language of Hindustan.<sup>32</sup>

Two important points emerge here. First, despite the very clear separation of the two 'dialects' along Hindu-Muslim lines, Forbes is adamant about the all-inclusive nature of Hindustani. Second, he has replaced the term 'Hindooee' (*Hindawi*), which he and Arnot had previously used to designate that form of the language currently spoken by Hindus, with 'Hindi', which he had previously equated to Hindustani. Although he does not explicitly mention *khari boli*, Forbes' comment that the two dialects follow the same grammatical rules, implies that he is referring to Hindi with a *khari boli* rather than *Braj* or other base.

In his 1847 grammar, Edward Eastwick returned to the conflation of Hindustani and Urdu. He observed that Hindustani was 'a sort of lingua franca', which originated in the camps of the Mughal emperors and was used by the 'foreign soldiery of those princes' to communicate with the peasantry of the surrounding country, hence its name '*Urdu Zaban, or camp language*'.<sup>33</sup> He then clearly separated Hindi from Hindustani stating

The groundwork, both of *Hindi and Hindustani*, is without doubt... the Hindawi, the language of Canoj, the ancient metropolis of Northern India. It is still spoken in the district of Braj... Hence it is also called Braj Bhakha.... It will be seen that Hindi is a more ancient and original language than Hindustani which can hardly date earlier than the thirteenth or fourteenth century.<sup>34</sup>

Eastwick, apparently equated 'Hindawi' with *Braj Bhasha* or 'Canoji' which he saw as the basis of both Hindi and Hindustani. What 'Hindi' signified is unclear.

Monier Williams, writing in 1858, stated that of the spoken languages of India

...the most general is Urdu or Hindustani, the mixed and composite dialect which has resulted from the fusion of Hindi, the idiom of the Hindus, with the Persian and Arabic of the Musalman invaders. Hindustani is ... the common medium of communication between Musalmans throughout all India.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Joseph Thompson, *English and Oordoo School Dictionary* (Serampore: printed for the author, 1836) vii-ix.

<sup>32</sup> Forbes, *Manual*, 1.

<sup>33</sup> Eastwick, *Concise grammar*, i-iii.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Monier Williams, *Easy Introduction*, iv.

His equation of Urdu and Hindustani is, by this time, not a new one, but again it is unclear what is meant here by 'Hindi'. He does not distinguish between the older version of the language and the current form, nor does he explain how *Braj Bhasha* or *khari boli* fit into the picture.

Aloys Sprenger, in an 1858 article on 'Early Hindustany Poetry' further muddied the waters with his definition.

The terms Hinduy and Hindi in these two passages mean the language in use among the Musalmans of India. I need hardly say that the terms Zubane Urdu, court language and Shi're Rekhta are very modern. The former of these terms is but very rarely used by natives of India and the latter is already obsolete, the usual term even now applied to the language and poetry which we call Hindustani is Hindy, and always has been Hindy.<sup>36</sup>

His use here of 'Hinduy' as 'the language in use among the Musalmans of India' is the antithesis of Gilchrist's use of *Hindui/Hindawi*, as the language of the Hindus. Like Yates, he has done exactly what Gilchrist sought not to do, and confused the terms Hindi and Hindui.

As the equation of Urdu with Hindustani became increasingly accepted, it began to be reflected in the titles of grammar books. John Dowson's 1872 work is entitled *A grammar of the Urdu or Hindustani language*.<sup>37</sup> Like Monier Williams, he linked Hindustani with Muslims.

The Urdu language, commonly called Hindustani, is a language formed by an admixture of the Arabic and Persian of the Muhammadan conquerors with the Hindi or vernacular language of the conquered Hindus. It is everywhere the language of the Musulmans ... This language is written in the Arabic alphabet. But vast numbers of Hindus are more or less ignorant of the Arabic and Persian of the Urdu, and employ native Hindi and Sanskrit words instead; these people use the Deva-nagari alphabet.<sup>38</sup>

Dowson included a short chapter on *Devanagari* which, he maintained, provided all that was necessary 'to read such books as the *Baital Pachisi* and *Singhasan Battisi*', which, as far as grammar and construction were concerned, he designated Urdu rather than Hindi.<sup>39</sup> Hitherto the difference between Hindi and Urdu had been seen by grammar book writers as being merely a matter of vocabulary. Whilst Dowson argues that it is their *grammar and construction* which make them Urdu, earlier writers, such as Forbes and Arnot, had stressed that the two literary variants of Hindustani were *grammatically* identical. For Dowson's comments to make sense, Hindi would have to be based not on *khari boli*, but on another dialect such as *Braj*.<sup>40</sup>

In Volume I of his 1872 *Comparative Grammar*, John Beames defined Hindi as

...that language which is spoken in the valley of the Ganges and its tributaries... Throughout the whole of this vast region, though the dialects diverge considerably, one common universal form of speech is recognized, and all educated persons use it. This common dialect had its origin apparently in the country round Delhi ... and the form of Hindi spoken in that neighbourhood was adopted by degrees as the basis of a new phase of the language, in which ... a large quantity of Persian and Arabic and even Turkish words found a place...<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Aloys Sprenger, 'Early Hindustany Poetry', *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, No III, 1858.

<sup>37</sup> A year later Platts reversed the title calling his book 'A Grammar of the Hindustani or Urdu Language.'

<sup>38</sup> Dowson, *Grammar*, xiv. Unlike Gilchrist, Dowson *does* link language and script.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Baital Pachisi* was also listed for the *Hindi* section of the Lower Standard Hindustani examination.

<sup>41</sup> John Beames, *Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages of India*, (London, Trübner and Co., 1872) 31-32.

Regarding Hindustani, he informed us

Hindi stands pre-eminent, whether it be that form of Hindi which relies principally upon indigenous sources for its words, or that other widely employed form which has incorporated the flower and grace of Persian and Arabic nouns, and which is called sometimes Urdu, sometimes Hindustani.<sup>42</sup>

This leaves no doubt, that Beames, too, equated Hindustani with Urdu. It is also evident that he is referring to Hindi as a 'catch-all' living language of which Hindustani/Urdu is a variant form, thus almost reversing Gilchrist's construct of Hindustani all-encompassing construct of Hindustani.

By the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the equation of Hindustani with Urdu had come to stay. In 1873, Holroyd observed that the purpose of his grammar was 'to enable the student to acquire ... a colloquial knowledge of the *Hindustani or Urdu* tongue'.<sup>43</sup> In his *Grammar* of the same year Platts informed his readers that '*Urdu, or Hindustani*, though a composite language', was 'derived mainly from the Hindi'.<sup>44</sup> What constituted Hindi is, again, not made clear. William Wakefield, an army surgeon who served in India between 1874 and 1876, went a stage further arguing that 'Hindustani or Urdu' could not be considered 'an Indian language proper' but was 'merely a corrupt form of Hindi'.<sup>45</sup> Yet again, what exactly 'Hindi' denotes is not touched upon.

Frederic Drew in a lecture to the Society of Arts in 1878 took the view that after the Muslim conquest of India

... there sprung up a mixed dialect, of which Hindi was the foundation, but which contained very many Persian words, and Arabic words as well ... This new language was called Urdu (from the Turki word for *camp*), and now is also commonly called Hindustani. It is clear that the foundation and structure of the language being always Hindi, there may be any degree of admixture of the Persian words ... and therefore, they may be said to be a gradual passage from the most Persianised Urdu down to the old Hindi. *Hindustani may be taken to denote the medium dialect*, that which now is acquiring such a wide extension.<sup>46</sup>

Aside from the fact that 'Hindi' and 'old Hindi' are used here without any clarification, Drew maintains that Urdu is called Hindustani but along the continuum from 'most Persianised Urdu down to the old Hindi' Hindustani is the 'medium dialect'. Logically, therefore, Urdu is the 'medium' dialect. But, if as he maintains Urdu can also be highly Persianized, it cannot be the 'medium' dialect, ergo it is *not* Hindustani. In the next sentence, however, he openly equated Urdu and Hindustani, stating, 'When the British came to Bengal they did not at first adopt for their purposes this Urdu, or Hindustani'.<sup>47</sup>

Alfred Lyall's 1880 *Sketch of the Hindustani Language*, examined the question of the relationship between Urdu, Hindi and Hindustani in some detail. Interestingly, given the increasing

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 33. Emphasis added.

<sup>43</sup> Holroyd, *Tashil-ul-Kalam*, 10.

<sup>44</sup> Platts, *Grammar*, 1.

<sup>45</sup> William Wakefield, *Our Life and Travels in India* (London: S. Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1878) 221.

<sup>46</sup> Frederic Drew, 'Possibility of Applying the Roman Alphabet Generally to the Languages of India', *Roman Urdu Journal* Vol. I, No. 2, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, July, 1878, 10. Emphasis added.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 4-5. Emphasis added.

trend to equate Urdu and Hindustani, Lyall appeared to revert back to Gilchrist's original overarching construct. He noted

...the various forms of the language are by native authors called by different names, and it may be doubted whether the name Hindustani is ever used except under European influence. The dialect written in the Persian character, largely stocked with Persian words and phrases and spoken chiefly in towns and by Musalmans or Hindus imbued with Persian culture, is known as Urdu, a name said to be derived from *Urdu-e-Mualla*, or royal military bazaar outside the fortified royal palace at Dehli. This language when used in poetry is called *Rekhtah* ... On the other hand, that form of Hindustani which employs the Deva-nagri character or varieties of it, and is used chiefly by Hindus, is denominated by Europeans Hindi, and by the natives generally (in its literary form) *bhasha* or *bhakha*...<sup>48</sup>

According to this description, rather than Hindustani being a variety of Hindi as proposed by several of the writers quoted above, Hindi is a variety of Hindustani. Observing that Hindi was merely an Arabic adjective, Lyall argued that it should be applied to any form of Hindustani, rather than just that used by the Hindus, and he asserted that it was in fact 'used by native authors in this sense'. He went on to explain that there were many varieties of Hindi and that on the boundaries of the Hindustani-speaking area it shaded off 'almost imperceptibly into the cognate dialects'.<sup>49</sup> Amongst these dialects of Hindi, however, he included not only *Braj*, *Kanauji*, *Awadhi*, and *Bhojpuri*, but also 'High Hindi' which, he said 'agrees in its grammatical structure with Urdu, but where the latter recruits its vocabulary from Persian prefers to borrow from Sanskrit'.<sup>50</sup> This clearly implies that 'High Hindi' is a dialect of Hindi, which is, in turn, a variety of Hindustani. The inclusion of a number of other dialects under *Hindi*, which, itself, he included as part of *Hindustani*, confuses the issue further. Having originally stated that Urdu was that form of Hindustani that had been Persianized, he now suggested that the over-arching Hindustani, in which he previously included non-Persianized Hindi dialects such as *Braj*, is *itself* Persianized. Perhaps subconsciously, he too, equated Hindustani with Urdu.

The last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw more publications which used the terms Urdu and Hindustani completely arbitrarily. In 1889, Ranking, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, published a grammar entitled *Talim-i-zaban-Urdu*, subtitled in English, *Guide to Hindustani*, and, in his 1893 grammar, Kempson, included a section on 'The origin of the Urdu or Hindustani language'.<sup>51</sup> In his work of 1895, Octavius Green, appeared to return to the inclusive construct of Hindustani stating

The Hindustani language is a composite language... there are two main dialects, that of the Hindus called Hindi, abounding in Sanskrit words, and that of the Musulmans called Urdu, abounding in words and phrases from the Arabic and Persian. Hindi is written in the Devanagari alphabet ... and Urdu in the Persi-Arabic alphabet.<sup>52</sup>

In an apparent contradiction of himself he continued

<sup>48</sup> Charles Lyall, *A Sketch of the Hindustani language* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1880) 2.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Kempson, *Syntax and Idioms*, xiii.

<sup>52</sup> Octavius Green *Practical Hindustani*, 3

...there is, in a measure, a great difference between Hindi and Urdu and they should not be confounded together under the common name of Hindustani. I know that many people who ought to know better are in the habit of believing that these two languages are practically the same, only written in a different character.<sup>53</sup>

The undefined use of the words 'language' and 'dialect' perhaps confuse the issue here. Although Green's statements are superficially contradictory, they could be taken to mean that Urdu and Hindi *are* two dialects of an over-arching Hindustani language, but they are sufficiently different from each other that *each one* should not be referred to just as Hindustani.

The dawn of a new century brought no greater clarity. In 1901, the Reverend Hooper, acknowledging that there was 'considerable perplexity among foreigners' as to what was meant by Hindustani laid down 'clearly' what he meant by the term. It was, he said, the language of the area known as Hindustan but

...the language of that part, which *is therefore called "Hindustani"*, has spread over a much larger area. In Bengal, ... the term "*Hindi*" is used for the same thing, but as this word has acquired in "Hindustan" proper a different meaning ... we will continue to employ the term "Hindustani" in the way in which it is employed by the vast majority of natives. ...Hindustani then being the language of so enormous a territory, is split up into a very large number of dialects, which are so excellently dealt with by Dr Kellogg in his Grammar...<sup>54</sup>

Leaving aside for the moment the fact that the 'natives', did *not* refer to 'it' as Hindustani, Kellogg's grammar is, of course, *not* a grammar of Hindustani but of *Hindi*, including all the various non-*khari boli* dialects. Observing that 'only English people' used the words Urdu and Hindustani as synonyms, Hooper went on to argue that what differentiated Urdu from 'all other Hindustani' was first, that its grammar was that of 'only one dialect', and secondly, that it used by preference, 'a vast number of Persian and Arabic nouns'.<sup>55</sup> As to what constituted Hindi, it was 'all that Hindustani which is not Urdu'. It included, 'all the other dialects of Hindustani as well as the one adopted by Urdu' and 'even that dialect if bereft of the Persian and Arabic words used in it', was included in Hindi.<sup>56</sup> Hooper was using Hindustani not merely to designate the entire *khari boli* continuum but as Kellogg used Hindi, an umbrella term, covering all the related dialects of Northern India. He went on to insist however

...the difference between Urdu and Hindi is only relative; it can never be absolute. In other words, they are not two languages, but only two forms of the same language. This true even when Hindi is used in the wider sense including all the dialects of Hindustani; much more, then, is it true of literary and polite Hindi, which uses the same grammatical forms as Urdu.<sup>57</sup>

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century knowledge of linguistics had moved on dramatically since Gilchrist's time, as is apparent from the 'monumental', and extremely influential, linguistic survey undertaken by George Grierson between 1894 and 1928. Grierson was widely regarded as an excellent linguist but even he had some difficulty in defining Hindustani. He began with the assertion

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 257.

<sup>54</sup> Reverend W. Hooper, *Helps to the Attainment of Hindustani Idiom* (London: Christian Literature Society for India, 1901) 3. Emphasis added.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 8

As a *dialect of Western Hindi*, Hindostani presents itself under several forms. These may first of all be considered under two heads, viz., Vernacular Hindostani, and the Literary Hindostani. ...Literary Hindostani is the polite speech of India generally, and may be taken as the vernacular of educated Musalmans throughout northern India .... Literary Hindostani is so widely known, and of such importance, that it must necessarily be taken as *the standard dialect of Western Hindi*.<sup>58</sup>

From this he appears to be equating Hindustani with *khari boli*. He continued

The word 'Hindustani' was coined under European influence, and means the language of Hindostan. ...Literary Hindostani, as distinct from vernacular Hindostani, is current, in various forms, as the language of polite society, and as a *lingua franca* over the whole of India proper. ... It is true that, especially in the larger cities, the Urdu form of Hindostani is the only vernacular of educated Musalmans, ... It grew up as a *lingua franca* in the polyglot bazaar attached to the Delhi court, and was carried everywhere in India by the lieutenants of the Mughal empire. ... its simple grammar and enormous vocabulary have rendered it able to fill the need which has always been felt in such a polyglot tract as India for a *lingua franca*. It has also received in at least two of its forms, considerable literary cultivation. It has several recognised varieties, amongst which may be mentioned Urdu, Rekhta, Dakhini and Hindi.<sup>59</sup>

With this statement, Grierson appears to have completely contradicted himself. Having started with the premise that Hindustani is a *dialect* of Western Hindi, he has now, somehow, reached the conclusion that Hindi is a *variety* of Hindustani. He then set out a definition of Hindustani, Urdu and Hindi thus

We may now define the three main varieties of Hindostani as follows:- Hindostani is ... the *lingua franca* of India, capable of being written in both Persian and Deva-nagari characters, and without purism, avoiding alike the excessive use of either Persian or Sanskrit words when employed for literature. The name 'Urdu' can then be confined to that special variety of Hindostani in which Persian words are of frequent occurrence, and which hence can only be written in the Persian character, and, similarly, 'Hindi' can be confined to the form of Hindostani in which Sanskrit words abound, and which hence can only be written in the Deva-nagari character. These are the definitions ... proposed by the late Mr Growse, and they have the advantage of being intelligible while at the same time they do not overlap. Hitherto all the three words have been very loosely employed.<sup>60</sup>

In view of Grierson's own lack of clarity there is a certain irony to this final sentence.

In his 1907 grammar, Major F.R.H. Chapman, paraphrased Grierson stating

Hindustani, the *lingua franca* of India is a composite language, derived from Sanskrit Arabic and Persian. It has several recognised varieties, of which the principal are Urdu and Hindi. Urdu is that form of Hindustani which is written in the Persian character, and which makes a free use of Persian (including Arabic) words in its vocabulary. Hindi is that form of Hindustani in which Sanskrit words abound, and which can only be written in the Deva-nagari character.<sup>61</sup>

Although Chapman suggests Hindustani was derived directly from Sanskrit rather than *khari boli*, we are back here to an over-arching construct similar to Gilchrist's, in which Urdu and Hindi are two literary styles of Hindustani. This no longer accorded, however, with the British theoretical construct of Hindustani. As seen in Chapter 2, Hindi and *Nagari* had been removed from the examination syllabuses in 1895. From that point on, for the British, both at a theoretical and practical level, Hindustani and Urdu were one and the same. From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century,

<sup>58</sup> Grierson, Linguistic Survey, Vol. 9 Part 1, 42. IOR/V/27/920/16. Emphasis added

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 43-44. If in the first statement he is using Hindi as a 'catch-all' and in the second he is merely referring to 'High Hindi' this would not present a contradiction.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>61</sup> Chapman, *How to Learn Hindustani*, 1.



this equation of Hindustani and Urdu was the dominant one. Captain Thimm's 1902 work reflected this noting, 'Hindustani or Urdu is the language most widely spoken in India'.<sup>62</sup>

Indian authors, too, whether Hindu or Muslim, almost always equated Hindustani and Urdu. In his 1904 book, R.P. De declared, unequivocally, 'Hindustani is the same as Urdu'.<sup>63</sup> Abdul Hakim, in his work of the same year stated

*Urdu is a mixture of several languages ...Lately it has become quite the premier language throughout many of the provinces of Hindustan, hence its name has developed into Hindustani... the purest Hindustani is spoken in Delhi and Lucknow. The words and phrases used in this book will generally be such as are used in pure Urdu....*<sup>64</sup>

Akmal Ali's 1918 grammar referred to books that had been written with a view to 'facilitating the acquirement by Europeans of the Urdu or Hindustani language'.<sup>65</sup> *The Pucca Munshi*, of 1919, explained to its readers, Hindustani or Urdu is, relatively speaking a language of recent origin'.<sup>66</sup> The introduction to the 1942 edition of the best-selling grammar, *The Munshi*, began with the statement, 'Hindustani or Urdu, the *lingua franca* of India, is a language composed of Arabic, Persian and Hindi words'.<sup>67</sup> The use of the phrase 'Urdu or Hindustani' made it apparent that these were two names being used for the same language. This was not always clear from their titles. R.N. Sharma's 1937 work is entitled *Roman-Urdu: A Comprehensive Study in Hindustani* and the 1942 edition of *The Munshi* is subtitled: *A Standard Hindustani Grammar. Officially recommended for Examinations in Urdu*. To the uninitiated, this would read as if a grammar of one language was being used to study for examinations in another. It is a mark of how widely accepted the equation of Hindustani and Urdu had, by this time, become that such titles were commonly found and invariably went unexplained.

From the 1920s onwards the issue of script began to add to the confusion. In his 1921 Hindi grammar, Edwin Greaves claimed that, 'Hindustani might, with some measure of fitness, be used of one class of literature affected by certain writers who employ a vocabulary which is largely Urdu, but have the works printed in Nagari character'.<sup>68</sup> The 1935 edition of *The Munshi* added a further twist proclaiming itself to be: *A Standard Hindustani Grammar: Officially Recommended for Examinations in Urdu in Hindi Script*. The 1944 edition of the set textbook *Khwab-o-Khayal*, described itself as the *Official Text-Book for the Higher Standard Examination in Urdu in Nagari Script*. Such examples completely contradicted those such as Dowson who had insisted that Urdu could only be written in Persian script and that Hindi could only be written in *Nagari*.

### **3.2 The Terminological Confusion in Practice**

The confusion and contradictions inherent in the theoretical construct of Hindustani inevitably also impacted on the examination syllabuses. An early example of this can be seen in the Bengal

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<sup>62</sup> Thimm, *Grammar*, 6.

<sup>63</sup> R.P. De, *Hindustani at a Glance* (Calcutta: Dey Bros, 1909)5.

<sup>64</sup> J.R. Abdul Hakim, *Modern Colloquial Hindustani* (Allahabad: Pioneer Press, 1918) xvii. Emphasis added.

<sup>65</sup> Ali, *First Lessons*,v.

<sup>66</sup> Pahwa, *Pucca Munshi*, 10.

<sup>67</sup> Haidari, *Munshi*, (1942 edition)

<sup>68</sup> Edwin Greaves, *Hindi Grammar* (Allahabad: Indian Press, 1921) 1.

General Orders, of May 1823, which set out the knowledge and tests for the qualification in Hindustani for the Office of Regimental Interpreter. They were required to demonstrate ‘the ability to read and write with facility the modified Persian character of the Oordoo and the Devi Nagree (sic) of the Kurree Bolee.’<sup>69</sup> This was to be tested by, ‘written Translations into Hindoostanee in both characters of selected orders or Rules and Regulations’, and reading and translating ‘the Bagh-o-Bahar in Hindoostanee’, and ‘the Prem Sagur in Khurree Bolee’.<sup>70</sup> The terminological confusion here is immediately apparent and it is difficult to unpick what is actually meant by Hindustani. ‘Kurree Bolee’ appears to refer to the non-Persianized version of what, supposedly, is the overarching language of Hindustani. ‘Hindoostanee’ is used, at one point, to refer purely to the Persianized form of the language and is, seemingly, used synonymously with ‘Oordoo’, and yet the requirement to translate into ‘Hindoostanee’ into both characters, implies that both the ‘Devi Nagree’, (used for the ‘Kurree Bolee’) and the modified Persian character, are part of Hindoostanee. We therefore have the equation ‘Oordoo’+‘Kurree Bolee’=‘Hindoostanee’. In the reading test ‘Hindoostanee’ and Kurree Bolee’ are separated. ‘Kurree Bolee’ here is being used to mean non-Persianized *Khari Boli*-based Hindi in *Nagari* script, rather than the dialect on which Hindustani was grammatically based.<sup>71</sup>

The standardisation of the syllabuses in the early 1860s, presented an opportunity to rationalise the terminology, but, as this section will demonstrate, this did not happen. The Special Committee set up in 1862 to prepare new draft rules for military examinations in Hindustani, expressed some hesitation, ‘in adopting the Hindi dialect of the Hindoostanee language in a test applicable to the Madras Presidency’.<sup>72</sup> Although this appeared to subscribe to the overarching construct of Hindustani, in direct contradiction, the tests they proposed for the High Proficiency examination listed ‘Hindi’ and ‘Hindoostanee’ separately, thereby equating Hindustani with *Urdu*. The Draft General Order of 1863, implementing the Committee’s recommendations, did nothing to clarify the issue. The requirements of the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Higher) Standard, demanded that candidates should be able to ‘read and construe passages in books of ordinary difficulty in *Urdu and Hindi*; ...make accurate and idiomatic written translations into *Hindustani* in both the Persian and Deva Nagri characters; ... read and translate petitions, native letters &c., in *Urdu and Hindi*; ... converse with educated or uneducated Natives of India.’<sup>73</sup> Whether the final task was to be done in Urdu, Hindi or Hindustani was not specified. The High Proficiency examinations, were listed separately as Urdu and Hindi. Effectively, at the higher literary level, therefore, Hindustani ceased to exist in any

<sup>69</sup> Extract Bengal General Orders, 27 May 1823, IOR/L/MIL/7/1139.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> In the regulations for the Bengal civil examinations there was a conflation of ‘Hindoostanee’ and ‘Oordoo’ as contrasted with ‘Hindee’. Fort William Home Department, *Rules for the Examination and Control of Newly Appointed Members of the Bengal Civil Service* 25 July 1856. IOR/N/27/211/18

<sup>72</sup> Secretary to the Special Committee to Captain Touch of the Madras Staff Corps and Majors Coley and Major Bacon, Bombay, 8 August 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>73</sup> Draft General Order 737, October 1863, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300. Emphasis added.

practical sense. Whilst at a lower level Hindustani was practicable as an all-inclusive construct, at any higher level it was chimerical.

In a Minute of January 1864, Charles Trevelyan, referring to the proposed adoption of Hindustani as ‘the common medium in Military life for all India’ observed, ‘a mistake has, in my opinion, been made in proposing to establish a distinction between Oordu and Hindi. There is one common language which is spoken in our Camps and Bazars, and is understood by everybody more or less, high and low, in town and country’.<sup>74</sup> Two paragraphs later, however, when referring to the objections of the Madras army to the inclusion of ‘the Hindi dialect’ and *Nagari* script in the new standards devised in 1863, he stated

Oordu has been extensively introduced through the Mahomedan Soldiery of Hyderabad and Mysore, and latterly through our own Military; but Hindi has no existence south of the Nerbudda. The objections of the Madras Officers are, therefore, quite sound. The waste of time which would be caused by every Officer having to learn a *new language* and character, would not be compensated by any advantage that might be gained...<sup>75</sup>

It is not clear how he reconciled the idea of ‘Oordu’ and ‘Hindi’ being ‘one common language’ with that of Hindi as a ‘new language’.

A letter of 1881 from the Government of North Western Provinces, to the Government of India stated, ‘the vernacular of the common people is Hindi, of which Urdu is only a cultivated and Persianized form.’<sup>76</sup> The 1883 Higher Standard Hindustani examination paper of Lieutenant Bayliss of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion East Surrey regiment, suggests something radically different, however. Sections 5 and 6 of the examination required translation into *Hindustani* in Persian script, and into *Hindi* in *Nagari*. Given that the paper, in its entirety, was entitled *Hindustani*, this, logically, leads to the equation Hindustani+Hindi=Hindustani or, algebraically,  $A+B=A$  hence  $B=0$ , paradoxically rendering Hindi non-existent. Of Urdu, there was no mention at all.

The correspondence generated by the ‘*Dakkhini* Affair’ of the early 1880s provides a good illustration of the confusion of terminology embedded in the examinations. In May 1884, the Hindustani Examiner Madras, Lieutenant-Colonel Baynes, wrote to the Adjutant-General of the Presidency, urging the necessity for the Madras dialect of Hindustani to be recognised in General Orders as a distinct dialect in order ‘to remove the confusion arising from it being confounded with Urdu or Hindi’.<sup>77</sup> His letter was forwarded to the Government of India, who, in turn, forwarded it to the Board of Examiners. In his response to the Government of India, the Secretary to the Board, Jarrett, rejected the claim that *Dakkhini* was a distinct dialect, and accused Baynes of making ‘a distinction between Hindustani and Urdu’, which, he said, was ‘untenable’.<sup>78</sup> In an attempt to

<sup>74</sup>Minute by C. E. Trevelyan, 28 January 1864, IOR/L/MIL/7/ 7300.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added.

<sup>76</sup> Secretary to the Government of NWP, to the Secretary to the Government of India, 16 October 1880 IOR/L/PJ/6/39.

<sup>77</sup> Examiner in Hindustani, Madras to Adjutant-General Madras, 16 May 1884, 1 IOR/P/2259.

<sup>78</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners to the Secretary to the Government of India Calcutta, 31 July 1884, IOR/P/2259.

clarify this he put forward his definition of Hindustani. He described it as a *lingua franca* arising from a fusion of Indian vernaculars and the ‘northern speech of the conquerors of Hindustan’ but then muddied the waters stating, ‘The basis of this fusion is undoubtedly *Hindi*, to which the term *Hindustani* may be also loosely applied, but the sanction of usage has restricted its employment very generally to the common vernacular of the country which is *Hindustani* or *Urdu*.<sup>79</sup>

In a letter of December 1884, to Baynes, Jarrett admitted that the terms Hindustani and Urdu were, in Bengal, ‘used indifferently for the same language’<sup>80</sup> and then paraphrased his earlier statement to the Government of India.

[T]hough Hindustani may be loosely applied to Hindi, of which Hindustani or Urdu is by some philologists considered a dialect ... yet the term Urdu is not so applicable, denoting with precision the *lingua franca* generated by the grafting of the speech of the northern conquerors of Hindustan on the vernacular Hindi.<sup>81</sup>

As seen above, this implies that Hindi can be *called* Hindustani but Hindustani (or Urdu) is actually a dialect of Hindi and thereby a dialect of itself. Remarkably, Jarrett denied that ‘the careless use of a double appellation for the one language’ was a source of confusion.<sup>82</sup> He maintained that it did not matter which of the terms was employed, as those concerned with the question were aware that they denoted ‘the same speech’.<sup>83</sup> This did not accord very well with his later assertion that ‘in the higher and lower standards in Bengal, a knowledge of *Hindi as well as of Urdu*’ was required and that ‘the term Hindustani’ was ‘large enough to cover both’.<sup>84</sup> The anomaly here is the same as that on Lieutenant Bayliss’s Higher Standard certificate. If Urdu *equals* Hindustani how can Urdu *plus* Hindi also equal Hindustani?

In a letter of January 1885, to the Adjutant-General Madras, Baynes located precisely the contradictions in the official British terminology, and the resulting confusion, that Jarrett was so anxious to deny.

The Persian adjective “Hindustani” has been arbitrarily adopted by us as the generic appellation of those hybrid speeches which arose from the fusion of Arabic and Persian with the indigenous languages of Hindustan, but by careless usage, it is employed erroneously as synonymous with Urdu, which is only a species of Hindustani; as synonymous with Hindi, a vernacular of Hindustan from which Urdu sprung; as the appellation of a special lingual test to show that it comprises Urdu and Hindi; and that the standard of proficiency required in each of those languages taken *conjointly* is lower than that demanded in each of them *separately*. Lieutenant Colonel Jarrett, in his letter ... does not consider these conflicting usages of the term Hindustani calculated to create misconception as to its signification.<sup>85</sup>

Alluding to the Government Proceedings of 1882, which stated that High Proficiency in Urdu or Hindi *included* High Proficiency in Hindustani, Baynes, with irrefutable logic, noted, ‘it is difficult to

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. Hindi=Hindustani, but Hindustani=Urdu ergo Hindi=Urdu!

<sup>80</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners to the Examiner in Hindustani Madras, Calcutta, 5 December 1884, IOR/P/2508.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added.

<sup>85</sup> Examiner in Hindustani Madras, to the Adjutant General Madras Army, 10 January 1885, IOR/P/2508.

conceive how Hindustani can be included in Urdu, when Urdu is a species of Hindustani, or when, as admitted by Lt Col Jarrett, Urdu and Hindustani are regarded as synonymous appellations'.<sup>86</sup>

By 1895, arguments over the conflation over Hindustani and Urdu were academic as the revisions to the military examination syllabuses had rendered them identical. In 1898, Ranking, who had succeeded Jarrett as Secretary to the Board of Examiners, produced a book entitled *Specimen Papers for the Lower and Higher Standard Examinations in Hindustani*, the preface of which referred to 'the papers set for the Higher and Lower Standard Examinations in Urdu'.<sup>87</sup> It was not until 1903 that there was an attempt to standardise the terminology. During the discussions concerning further changes to the Lower and Higher Standard military examinations, the Board of Examiners recommended that

...in all official documents relating to these examinations, they should be referred to as examinations by the Lower and Higher Standards in *Hindustani* instead of in *Urdu*, as is done at present. The use of the term "Urdu" which is of a somewhat high-flown character gives rise to an impression on the part of candidates and their teachers, that the former are required to be acquainted with something better than the ordinary every-day speech of the Hindustani-speaking people.<sup>88</sup>

The Government of India accepted the Board's recommendation that Hindustani should be the official term used, nevertheless, both parties continued to use the terms arbitrarily and interchangeably. The Lower and Higher Standard Papers set by the Board of Examiners between March 1903 and July 1904, for example, were entitled 'Lower or Higher Standard *Hindustani*' but beneath the title, the instruction to candidates read, 'Translate into *Urdu*'.<sup>89</sup> Similarly, an India Office letter of 1905, regarding the introduction of the new Proficiency examination in Urdu, stated, 'At present there are the following examinations in *Urdu or Hindostani* open to Civil and Military Officers ... Probably *Urdu* has been selected for the new examination as the most widely spoken of the Indian vernaculars'.<sup>90</sup>

In 1906, the Government of India officially endorsed the proposal to substitute the term Hindustani for the Lower and Higher Standard examinations in Urdu.<sup>91</sup> Despite the supposed standardisation, however, the interchangeable use of the terms Urdu and Hindustani continued. An extract from the Proceedings of 1911, detailing the languages spoken by gazetted medical officers in Madras, perhaps best exemplifies the absurdity that often resulted from the dual nomenclature. Three officers were listed as being qualified in Hindustani alone and another three were listed as follows:

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> G.S.A.Ranking, *Specimen Papers for Examinations in Hindustani* (Calcutta:Thacker and Spink and Co,1899) Emphasis added.

<sup>88</sup> Officiating Secretary to the Board of Examiners to the Secretary to the Government of India Home Department, July 1903, IOR/P/6576.

<sup>89</sup> Memorandum from the Commanding Officer Madras, to the Adjutant-General in Simla, 26 August 1904, IOR/P/6809.

<sup>90</sup> India Office Minute 7 December 1905, IOR/L/PJ/6/742. Emphasis added.

<sup>91</sup> Government of India Army Department, to the Adjutant General in India, Fort William, 19 March 1906, IOR/P/7316.

C.M. Thompson: *Urdu and Tamil*,  
T.E. Watson: *Hindustani (Urdu)*  
R.K. Mitter: *Hindustani, Urdu and Persian*.<sup>92</sup>

The introduction of the Urdu Preliminary examination, in 1922, saw a reversal of the 1906 decision to employ the term Hindustani for the lower level examinations. In the correspondence of 1924-1927, between the Government of India and India Office, regarding the introduction of the Urdu Qualifying Examination as an alternative to the Preliminary examination, both examinations were officially entitled Urdu. When, in 1932, the Lower and Higher Standards were re-introduced, they too were officially entitled Urdu rather than Hindustani.<sup>93</sup> It would seem that Urdu had finally become the officially accepted term. Nevertheless the arbitrary use of both terms continued, as an India Office Minute, of 14 May 1931, demonstrates. It referred to the proposal 'to reintroduce from January 1 1932 the Lower and Higher Standard *Hindustani*' and noted that 'one of the most important changes' was 'the re-introduction of the *Urdu* or Nagri script'.<sup>94</sup> From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the British had increasingly used Hindustani to mean the register of Urdu that they themselves learnt. By World War II this was received wisdom. Ralph Russell, himself an officer in the Indian Army between 1942-5, noted that in his time, 'What the British meant by Hindustani was Urdu'.<sup>95</sup>

### 3.3 Summary

Gilchrist's original construct of what constituted Hindustani was inherently confused and flawed. This hinged mainly on his misunderstanding of the origins of Hindustani and *khari boli* as being in *Braj* and at the non-Persianized end of the *khari boli* continuum the question of where and how *Braj* fitted was always hazy. This confusion, concerning what precisely constituted Hindustani, was perpetuated by subsequent authors of Hindustani grammars and text-books and others writing on the subject. The two main definitions put forward by them were mutually contradictory. It was either seen as an over-arching all-inclusive language encompassing the entire *khari boli* continuum, or it was equated with Urdu. Since *khari boli* was simply a dialect of Hindi and Urdu was Persianized *khari boli*, this rendered Urdu (and therefore Hindustani) a dialect of Hindi.

A clear definition of Hindi, Urdu, *khari boli*, and Hindustani and the relationship between them was never systematically addressed by the British and the confusion became embedded in the examination syllabuses. In the early part of the century, the examinations frequently used *khari boli* not as the dialect on which Hindustani was based, but to mean the non-Persianized part of Hindustani in *Nagari* script. There was no concerted attempt on the part of either scholars or officials to standardise a definition of Hindustani. The British, in practical terms, as can be seen from the content of the grammars and text books, had always gravitated towards the Urdu end of

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<sup>92</sup> India Proceedings IOR/P/8697 1911.

<sup>93</sup> Government of India Army Department to the Military Dept India Office, 23 April 1931, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>94</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 14 May 1931, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331, Emphasis added.

<sup>95</sup> Personal conversation with Ralph Russell, 14 February 2008.

the continuum, and, by 1895, the issue had become academic as it was decided to exclude Hindi and *Nagari* from the examinations syllabuses. This changed the theoretical construct and Hindustani and Urdu became synonymous as, in some people's minds, they had been for years. This didn't totally remove the confusion, however. In his 1921 Hindi grammar, Edwin Greaves admitted that the terms Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani were 'used very loosely by many writers and speakers' and concluded that possibly there were no definitions which would 'compel general acceptance'.<sup>96</sup> The continued failure to arrive an accepted definition indicates that the British felt no need to do so.

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<sup>96</sup> Greaves, *Hindi Grammar*, 1.

## CHAPTER 4

IN PURSUIT OF THE UNSPEAKABLE  
THE LINGUISTIC CHALLENGE

‘Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen.’

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the challenges that the learning of Hindustani presented to the British. The first section documents three recurrent, intertwined and often conflicting, discourses in the colonial archive, which began in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and continued into the 1940s; the first of the necessity of acquiring a high degree of proficiency in the language for purposes of both practical and hegemonic control, the second of concern that it was not being learnt well enough, and the third of a ‘Golden Era’ when relationships between the British and Indians, and the level to which they learnt Hindustani had, supposedly, been much better. The second section examines the problem of officers’ motivation to learn the language and the resulting culture of instrumentalism and cram. The third section discusses the way in which the colonial state attempted to improve the competence of its officers in Hindustani through a complex policy of ‘Rewards and Sanctions’, which, like the discourses, began in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued until the end of the colonial period. The final section examines the reality of the *sahibs’* Hindustani.

#### 4.1 The Discourses of Necessity and Concern and the Myth of the Golden Era

By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Court of Directors had recognized the necessity of acquiring a good command of Hindustani and other Indian languages.<sup>1</sup> In 1797 they underlined ‘the absolute necessity of this acquirement’ to enable their servants ‘to execute the duties of their various Stations with honor to themselves and advantage to the Company’.<sup>2</sup> In 1802 they reiterated this, stating that a knowledge of ‘Hindostanny’ was ‘necessary for the transaction of business in all Offices.’<sup>3</sup> In 1806, the Commander-in-Chief, Madras, Lt-General Cradock, stressed that Hindustani was ‘an *essential* acquirement for every Officer in India.’<sup>4</sup>

On one level the necessity of learning Hindustani was a purely practical one; to enable civil servants and magistrates to deal with office work and court cases, and to ensure that army officers, commanding Indian soldiers, were able perform their duty efficiently. But there was also the idea that a good command of the language was important in establishing good relationships with Indians. The Commander-in-Chief, Madras, Lt-General Cradock, believed that the creation of a regiment of ‘*sepoy boys*’ at Cuddalore, and the ‘necessary intercourse of the Gentlemen Cadets with

<sup>1</sup> Very often they referred rather vaguely to ‘the country languages’ or in the singular (usually, but not always, signifying Hindustani) ‘the language of the country’.

<sup>2</sup> Extract Public Letter from the Court of Directors to Fort St George, 9 May 1797, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>3</sup> Court of Directors to the Governor-General-in-Council, 27 January 1802, IOR/F/4/300/6934

<sup>4</sup> Extract Military Letter from Fort St. George, 24 October 1806, IOR/L/MIL/5334/345.



these Boys in the course of duty', would 'considerably facilitate the cadets' acquirement of a practical knowledge of the Languages of India' and of the habits and Customs of those they [were] ultimately destined to Command.<sup>5</sup> The mutiny at Vellore, in July 1806, perhaps also increased the perceived need to acquire a good knowledge of Hindustani for more than narrowly functional purposes. A letter from the Court of Directors in May 1807, although not overtly referring to this event, apparently alludes to it.

It has been represented to us that the deficiency in the knowledge of the languages of the Country prevalent among the Officers of the Native Army may have operated as another cause of the absence of confidence between the European Officers and their troops. We are aware of the injurious effects which this ignorance on the part of the European Officers is likely to produce, and which we are informed prevails to a great extent.<sup>6</sup>

In 1810, the Governor-in-Council, Madras returned to the practical purposes stressing that a competent knowledge of Hindustani by all young Officers and Gentlemen Cadets was 'considered necessary to enable them to discharge in a proper manner the Military duties expected of them in the course of their Service'.<sup>7</sup> In his 1815 speech to the students at Fort William College, Lord Edmonstone, emphasized the importance of acquiring a written knowledge of the language, to avoid having to rely on interpreters.

A facility in writing the Languages of the country, in their proper character, will be found not only extremely convenient, but highly important. ...in the various departments of the Public Service, occasions may frequently arise when the agency of an Amanuensis would expose important interests to hazard.<sup>8</sup>

The following year, Lord Moira, too emphasized the practical necessity, remarking, 'scarcely a day will occur that you will not find a facility of reading and understanding Persian and a colloquial knowledge of the Hindoostanee, indispensable to the transaction of business'<sup>9</sup> and in August 1819, the Governor-General impressed on students at Fort William the necessity of 'cultivating sedulously', the Hindoostanee language.<sup>10</sup> In 1820, Gilchrist warned of the 'many evils which result from a very imperfect knowledge or absolute ignorance of the hindoostanee', and observed that 'no mistake could be more fatal' than, as some men 'absurdly' conceived, that there was 'no necessity for a European learning the most prevalent of all the country languages'.<sup>11</sup>

There was an ideological as well as a practical aspect to the perceived necessity of Hindustani. In his 1825 address at Fort William College, Lord Amherst impressed upon students that

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<sup>5</sup> Extract Fort St George Military Consultations, 9 May 1806, IOR/L/MIL/5334/345.

<sup>6</sup> Extract Political Letter to Fort St George, 29 May 1807, IOR/L/MIL/291/6567. A century later Lord Curzon similarly observed, 'It is upon the contentment of the army that if an emergency ever arises the stability of our position in India must in the main depend, and, therefore, any means that you can adopt by which the officer can know his men and win his way to their hearts is a matter which ought not to be lost sight of. House of Lords Debate, 27 September 1909, Hansard.

<sup>7</sup> Extract Madras Code of Pay Regulations, October 1810, IOR L/MIL/5/390.

<sup>8</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 442-443.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 504.

<sup>10</sup> *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, 1820, 78-80.

<sup>11</sup> John Gilchrist, *Hindee-Roman Orthoepigraphical Ultimatum*, (London: Black, Kingsbury, Parbury and Allen, 1820) xi.

to understand and be understood by the bulk of the people, was 'a positive duty' which they could not neglect without dishonour to themselves, unfaithfulness to the government, without discredit to their own country and injustice to India.<sup>12</sup> Such notions of duty, honour, faithfulness, credit, and justice were central to the ideology of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century British in India, which sought to legitimize British rule. A good command of the language was crucial in order to convince Indians of the benefits of that rule, and thereby facilitate it. In 1828, John Briggs advised young men going out to India, that in order to remove the 'veil of distrust' existing between the British and Indians they must 'instantly procure a moonshy, or tutor, and apply studiously to the acquirement of the Hindoostany tongue' which as the language 'most generally in use throughout India', should be acquired as the channel of communicating their wants, and of obtaining information.<sup>13</sup>

The perceived necessity of Hindustani led, by the 1820s to it being made a precondition for army officers. In January 1822, a regulation was passed in Madras General Orders prohibiting officers from taking charge of troops and companies until they had 'made sufficient progress in the Hindoostanee language to explain orders to those placed under their Command'.<sup>14</sup> In 1828, the Commander-in-Chief, Bengal, similarly directed that no 'Subaltern Officer' should have the command of a troop or company unless he had acquired 'a competent knowledge of Hindoostanee', without which, 'his intercourse with the men placed under his command' could not be carried on 'in a manner satisfactory to him or to them, or beneficial to the service'.<sup>15</sup> In 1829, the Governor of Madras observed that without a knowledge of Hindustani the Company's Officers could 'never be considered qualified for the efficient discharge of their various and important duties'.<sup>16</sup> In 1838, the Commander-in-Chief, Henry Fane, stated that no officer should have command of troops or charge of a company without 'competent knowledge' of Hindustani and that those holding the post of adjutant should have 'considerable knowledge of the Hindoostanee language'.<sup>17</sup>

In 1842 Henry Kerr returned to the idea of establishing good relationships with Indians but also stressed both the practical advantages stating, 'An accurate acquaintance with the language, and correctness in speaking it, are necessary to endear an officer to the sepoy. ...a young man loses a vast fund of useful information by being unable to converse with the sepoy'.<sup>18</sup> In 1857, Max Müller quoted Trevelyan's, rather similar, views which saw competence in the language as

... an indispensable preliminary to understanding and taking an interest in native races as well as to acquiring their goodwill and gaining influence over them. Without it officers charged with important public affairs ... live in a state of chronic irritation with the natives which is extremely adverse both

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<sup>12</sup> *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Miscellany*, Vol. 21, January-June 1826, London, Kingsbury, Parbury and Allen, 218.

<sup>13</sup> John Briggs, *Letters Addressed to a Young Person in India* (London:John Murray 1828) 50.

<sup>14</sup> Extract Fort St. George General Orders, January 1822, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>15</sup> Extract Bengal General Orders, August 1828, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>16</sup> President's Minute to the Court of Directors, Madras, 25 September 1829, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Kerr, *Advice*, 66.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

to the satisfactory transaction of business and to the still more important object of giving to the people of the country a just impression of the character and intentions of our nation.<sup>19</sup>

As time went on the perceived necessity of learning Hindustani well did not diminish. Writing in 1893, Hobbes, a retired civilian asserted that it was ‘essential to all who live in the country’.<sup>20</sup> In 1928, the Army Roman-Urdu Manual published an extract from the Chief-of-the-General-Staff’s letter expressing his Excellency’s views ‘on the urgent necessity for an increased knowledge of Urdu throughout the army in India.’<sup>21</sup> This was echoed in 1931 by Major Boyle, Secretary to the Board of Examiners who stressed that it was ‘essential to all officers of the Indian army’.<sup>22</sup>

Recognition of the necessity of the language did not, however, guarantee that it was acquired to the desired standard. From the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was an ever-present discourse of concern that officers, both civil and military, were learning Hindustani insufficiently well to carry out their duties effectively. The committee who examined the students who had attended Gilchrist’s seminary in 1799, while pleasantly surprised by the level achieved by many of them, nevertheless noted that there were others whose progress was ‘very inconsiderable’.<sup>23</sup> In his report on the first Hindustani ‘examinations’ held at Cuddalore in 1807, the examiner, Captain John Munro, observed of a number of cadets, ‘I regret to have occasion to report that although they have been several months at Cuddalore they all betrayed the greatest ignorance of the first rudiments of the language’.<sup>24</sup> In an 1823 Minute his, more august, distant relative, Major-General Thomas Munro expressed concern that

though many officers of the army are sufficiently acquainted with that language for carrying on their ordinary duties, very few of them have such a knowledge of it as would enable them to interpret to a court-martial; and it would therefore, at most stations, be difficult, if not impossible, to find a committee capable of deciding whether an officer was sufficiently versed in Hindoostanee to be eligible for the office of interpreter.”<sup>25</sup>

In 1827, the Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, Lord Combermere, was ‘sorry to find that the number declared duly qualified fell short of what he had anticipated, and was forced to extend to them a further probationary period, after which he hoped that ‘few would be found unequal to the task assigned’.<sup>26</sup>

The results of the 1829 Hindustani examinations in Madras forced the Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant-General G.T. Walker to acknowledge

... it is but too apparent from the recent examinations in Hindustani that not only the Regimental but even the Staff Officers of Regiments with very few exceptions are deficient in that perfect knowledge

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<sup>19</sup> Philindus, Letter No. 1 to *The Times*, in *Correspondence Relating to the Establishment of an Oriental Institution in London*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1858) 4-5.

<sup>20</sup> Retired Civil Service Officer, *Reminiscences of Seventy Years, Life, Travel, and Adventure*, Vol. 1 (London: Elliot Stock, 1893) 367-8.

<sup>21</sup> General Staff, *Roman-Urdu Manual*, i.

<sup>22</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 1931, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>23</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 6.

<sup>24</sup> Extract Fort St George Military Consultations, 20 April 1807, Board’s Collections 291/ 6567.

<sup>25</sup> Gleig, *Munro*, 362.

<sup>26</sup> Extract Bengal General Orders, 1 August 1827, Board’s Collections 1139.

of the Native Language which is absolutely required for the performance of their Duty and that by far the great proportion may be held to be entirely ignorant thereof.<sup>27</sup>

The Governor of Madras, S.R. Lushington, subsequently visited a number of military stations to ascertain the extent of the problem, and observed that the ignorance of the language amongst the army's officers disqualified them from 'maintaining that friendly intercourse with the Native Officers and men ... so essential to mutual good understanding and to the preservation of the affections of the Native Army'<sup>28</sup> and warned that it would be the 'the seed of great permanent Evil' if they did not ensure that they could 'maintain an intercourse which was instructive and agreeable to both Parties'.<sup>29</sup>

There was concern in Bengal, also, that even the post of Regimental Interpreter, was being filled by officers who lacked the high level of competence which, by definition, it required. In 1834 Frederick Shore asserted, 'such is the scanty knowledge of Hindostanee among the military officers, that at this moment there are no less than nine regiments in which not a single subaltern is fit for the office'.<sup>30</sup> Nearly two decades later the *East India Army Magazine* published an article alleging that many interpreters had been introduced into the Army who were 'unfit for the important duties they might be called upon to perform'. It expressed concern that 'the present colloquial examinations qualifying for the latter charge were a farce and mockery' and that 'laxity and incompetence on the part of examiners' was contributing to the problem.<sup>31</sup>

The British lack of competence in Hindustani and hence lack of 'intercourse' with Indians, was cited by some as one of the causes of the mutiny. This generated new concerns about improving officers' learning of it. Trevelyan, writing as Indophilus to *The Times*, declared, 'it should not be left ... to the discretion of a young man whether he will pass in the native languages or not. The power of understanding his men and of rendering himself intelligible to them should be considered an indispensable qualification'.<sup>32</sup> Even the lessons of the 'mutiny' failed however, to bring about the desired improvement. In August 1896, the Government of India wrote to the Board of Examiners informing them that it had been brought to their notice that 'the number of Indian Civilians who have passed by the High Proficiency Standard' had 'declined very much in recent years',<sup>33</sup> and, in 1899, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners observed, 'Officers nowadays are rather apt to underrate the importance of a competent knowledge of Hindustani, and to lose sight

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<sup>27</sup> Commander-in-Chief Madras to the President of Madras, 15 May 1829, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>28</sup> President of Madras to the Court of Directors, 25 September 1829, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Frederick Shore, *Notes on Indian Affairs*, Vol. 1 (London: John W. Parker, 183,) 29.

<sup>31</sup> Anonymous, 'Suggestions For An Improved System of Examinations in the Native Languages', *East India Army Magazine and Military Review*, Vol.1, Calcutta, R.C. Lepage & Co., 1853, 92.

<sup>32</sup> C.E. Trevelyan, *The Letters of Indophilus to the Times*, London, Longman, Green, Brown, Longmans and Roberts, 1858, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Government of India to the President of the Board of Examiners, August 1896, IOR/P/4961.

of the fact that the wider the knowledge of the vernacular an officer possesses the greater will be his influence with his men'.<sup>34</sup>

The concern continued into the twentieth century. In 1909, in a House of Lords debate regarding Oriental languages, Lord Curzon suggested that standards, which he described as already 'ludicrously low' were being 'lowered from year to year' to the point where they were 'almost worthless'.<sup>35</sup> The pressures of World War I led the Chief-of-the-General-Staff to issue special instructions for the tuition of new officers arriving in India. He observed, 'It is certain that if these officers are left to their own devices the desired results will not be attained within any reasonable time, if at all'.<sup>36</sup> In 1922, the question of the standard to which Hindustani was being learnt by British officers was raised in the House of Commons. On being asked whether the introduction of the new Preliminary Urdu Examination had resulted in a lowering of standards, the Secretary of State for India insisted that the general standard of the examination had not been lowered, but acknowledged that the 'standard of knowledge of the vernaculars attained by junior officers of the Indian army' had been for some time 'recognised to be inadequate'. Pressed by Sir J.D. Rees's direct question, 'Is the present knowledge of young officers adequate or inadequate?', he was forced to admit, 'It is inadequate.'<sup>37</sup> The subsequent 'dumbing-down' of the examinations in 1924, with the introduction of the Urdu Qualifying Examination, induced further concern, leading the Government of India to re-introduce the Lower and Higher Standard examinations in and to introduce a re-qualification examination for Interpreters. The India Office commented

The Military Authorities in India appear to be greatly concerned regarding the standard of knowledge of Indian languages in the Army in India. Quite recently the Govt of India submitted a proposal to re-introduce the lower and higher standard examinations in Urdu ... the Government of India now submit a proposal for the introduction of an interpretership requalification examination... They state that this proposal is designed to encourage officers... who have qualified as 1<sup>st</sup> class Interpreters ... to keep up their knowledge of the languages. The number of 1<sup>st</sup> class Interpreters in Indian languages is not large and it may be that the proposal is also designed to ensure that a minimum number of fully qualified interpreters are (sic) always available.<sup>38</sup>

The constant rhetoric of declining standards led to the notion of a 'Golden Era' when the British had, supposedly, spoken Hindustani with far greater proficiency, partly due to, and partly resulting from, a closer and more harmonious relationship between themselves and Indians. In a Minute of 1829, following the disastrous Hindustani examinations in Madras, the Commander-in-Chief alluded to the many creditable examinations of former days,<sup>39</sup> and the Governor, S.R. Lushington, expressed his conviction that 'the more friendly treatment which Native Officers

<sup>34</sup> Ranking, *Specimen Papers*, preface.

<sup>35</sup> House of Lords Debate 27 September 1909, Hansard

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1909/sep/27/oriental-languages> accessed 15/1/2012.

<sup>36</sup> Chief of the General Staff, Languages Native, No. 17188, 15 May 1917, IOR/ L/MIL/7/7327.

<sup>37</sup> Hansard, House of Commons Debate, 28 February 1922,

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/1922/feb/28/british-officers-linguistic-tests> accessed 15/1/2012.

<sup>38</sup> India Office Military Department Minute 14 August 1931, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>39</sup> Commander-in-Chief Madras, to the President of Madras, 15 May 1829, Board's Collections 1139.

received in former times from their European Superiors arose principally from the more perfect knowledge which the latter possessed of the Native Languages'.<sup>40</sup>

The notion of a 'Golden Era' became deeply embedded in the British psyche and was frequently referred to during the introspective naval-gazing following the 1857 uprisings. The writer of a letter of 1858 to *The Times* observed

After a full century of possession the complaint has been heard that the representatives who hold this empire for us nowadays know less of the native dialects than those who built it up in the bygone time. The traditionary nabob ... and the more recent "old Indian" ... could speak with the natives, and therefore sympathised with them more than the cadet who in these days of the overland route goes to India scarcely feeling that he has left England, and who counts the weeks till he shall obtain furlough or leave the country for ever.<sup>41</sup>

In his letter to *The Times*, Philindus, also harked back to a 'Golden Era' and linking the decline in language learning to the 'mutiny'.

It was the ignorance of the language which created a feeling of estrangement, mistrust, and contempt on both sides. ...In former times there were always (among the civilians particularly) a few eminent men who had acquired a thorough knowledge of the spoken dialects... The presence of any one of these men at Delhi or Lucknow would have been worth a regiment. ... During the last 20 years however the prosecution of Oriental studies has been systematically discouraged...<sup>42</sup>

In 1861, Major General Birch, Secretary to the Government of India, claimed there was 'no longer among the passed Officers the old proportion of fluent and correct colloquial knowledge or of accurate scholarship'.<sup>43</sup> In a letter to the Special Committee of 1862, Lieutenant-General Mansfield attributed the 'want of fluent colloquial scholars in the Military Services' to the 'altered habits and customs of the English in India during the last few years'.<sup>44</sup> In a Minute of 1864, General Napier argued that it was necessary for officers 'to take an interest in the country, its people and language' in substitution for the 'familiar and social intercourse, which the changed condition of Europeans in India has dispelled'.<sup>45</sup>

The author of *Sepoy to Subadar*,<sup>46</sup> writing in 1873, also subscribed to the theory of a 'Golden Era'. The hero, Sita Ram Pandey, referring to his early days in the Bengal army, lamented

The sahibs then could speak our language much better than they can now and mixed more with us. The officers have now to pass (the P.H. or P.), still they do not understand our language so well although they have to read books. ... I have seldom seen a Saheb who could read a book or a letter after he had been before the committee. ...I have lived to see great changes in the Saheb log. I now have seen that many officers only speak to their men when obliged, and evidently show that it is irksome to them, and try to get rid of them as soon as possible. One Saheb told me he never knew what to say. The Sahebs always knew what to say, and how to say it, when I was young.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>40</sup> President's Minute to the Court of Directors, Madras, 25 September 1829, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>41</sup> Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 210-11.

<sup>42</sup> Philindus, *Correspondence*, 1-2.

<sup>43</sup> Letter of Secretary to the Government of India, 23 December 1861, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>44</sup> Lieutenant-General Mansfield to Special Committee, n.d.1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>45</sup> Papers Relating to the Examination of Military Officers in Oriental Languages, October 1863, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>46</sup> Although purported to be the memoirs of an old Indian subedar of the Bengal army, written in 1860, it is unlikely that it is authentic. See Safadi, 'Sepoy to Subadar', *Annual of Urdu Studies* No. 25, 2010, 42-65.

<sup>47</sup> Douglas Craven Phillott, *Annotated English Translation of Khwab o Khayal* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1914) 15-16. This is an exact reproduction of J.T. Norgate's 1873 edition of *Sepoy to Subadar*.

In a House of Lords debate of 1909, Curzon too harked back to a ‘Golden Era’ of linguistic proficiency, stating ‘with regret’ his belief that

...the number of British officers, whether civil or military, in India who do not speak the vernacular with any facility or fluency is immensely greater than it was fifty years ago, and decidedly and regrettably greater than it was when I first visited India twenty-five years ago. I believe that the number of British officers who devote themselves to anything like a serious study of the literature of the country is diminishing year by year. ... The number whom I was able to recommend for honours in seven years could be counted on the fingers of the two hands. That was not so fifty years ago, and even less was it so 100 years ago.<sup>48</sup>

That there was a ‘dumbing-down’ of the requirements of the Hindustani examination syllabuses, which began in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, (ironically on Curzon’s own watch!) picked up speed during the First World War, and continued at a breakneck pace from the mid-1920s onwards, is indisputable. The question is, when, and *if*, a ‘Golden Era’, had ever existed. Each successive generation seemed to think there had been a time when the British had a much better knowledge of Hindustani, yet tracing this back, the ‘discourse of concern’ is seen to date from the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It seems, therefore, that such a ‘Golden Era’ was merely a ‘myth of the good old days’<sup>49</sup> which existed only in the British imagination, a myth which was perhaps as ‘perverse and delusive’ as that of close harmonious relationships with Indians.<sup>50</sup>

#### **4.2 Problems of Motivation: Instrumentalism and Cram**

Given the supposed necessity of the language, (and many years spent in a potential immersion language learning context),<sup>51</sup> the question arises as to *why* so many British officers apparently failed to acquire a high level of competence in Hindustani. The colonial archive (official and unofficial) attributes much of the problem to officers’ own individual lack of motivation. It is helpful at this point, therefore, to examine briefly the role of motivation in language learning.

In 1959, the Canadian linguists, Gardner and Lambert, proposed a construct which they called *integrative* motivation, where the language learner has a desire to identify with, and become accepted as part of, another ethnolinguistic group. They contrasted this with the concept of *instrumental* motivation, where the learner is motivated to learn for utilitarian purposes, such as education or employment.<sup>52</sup> This construct has been modified and extended by a number of other scholars involved in second language acquisition research, but perhaps the most helpful model, in

<sup>48</sup> House of Lords Debate 27 September 1909, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1909/sep/27/oriental-languages>. Accessed 15/1/2012. In support of this assertion Curzon quoted Ranking’s claim that the knowledge of the native languages possessed by British officers in native regiments had diminished ‘by thirty or forty per cent in the last twenty or thirty years’.

<sup>49</sup> Philip Mason, *Matter of Honour*, (London: Macmillan, 1974) 178.

<sup>50</sup> Christopher Herbert, *War of no Pity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008) 35.

<sup>51</sup> The British learning of Hindustani fell between the acquisition-learning distinction proposed by Stephen Krashen. Although they were in a potential immersion acquisition context, with Indian teachers as models, they followed a learning methodology. For an explanation of the acquisition-learning distinction see Stephen Krashen, Stephen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, (New York, London: Prentice Hall International, 1987) especially 10-11.

<sup>52</sup> Diane Larsen-Freeman, and Michael Long, *Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research* (London and New York: Longman, 1991) 173.

the context of the British learning of Hindustani, is that proposed by Bailey in the diagram below, which situates integrative and instrumental motivation within an intrinsic/extrinsic motivation continuum.<sup>53</sup>

	intrinsic	extrinsic
integrative	L2 learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture	Someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons
instrumental	L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilizing L2	External power wants L2 learner to learn L2

Figure 5: Intrinsic/Extrinsic & Integrative/Instrumental Continuum  
(Bailey 1986, cited in Brown 1994, 156)

Even supposing an earlier ‘Golden Era’ *had* existed, in the context of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century colonial India, the British generally had little desire to integrate with Indians and Indian culture. *Integrative* motivation (either intrinsic or extrinsic) was, therefore, unlikely to have any significant bearing on their learning of Hindustani. The discourse of necessity in the colonial archive, and the colonial state’s consequent insistence on officers passing the compulsory civil and military examinations, would, however, suggest the presence of a powerful *extrinsic* instrumental motivation. The prospect of promotion, and the pecuniary rewards attached to passing such examinations, would also indicate the presence of *intrinsic* instrumental motivation.

There were, undoubtedly, some officers who exhibited such motivation to learn the language well. Alexander Burnes, later political agent in Kabul, spent two months studying Hindustani with Gilchrist in London, prior to his departure for India, and continued his studies on board ship. On arrival in India he made it a rule to converse with his servants only in Hindustani.<sup>54</sup> On the 8 December 1821 he wrote in his journal

Ever since I ordered my servant to address me in Hindoostanee I find my improvement very great, and I am persuaded that there is no method more effectual in acquiring the language than the one I am at present pursuing, for it unites the theoretical and the practical.<sup>55</sup>

At the beginning of May, 1822, Burnes went up for an examination in Hindustani and passed for an interpretership. ‘I was so delighted,’ he wrote, ‘that I could scarcely contain myself.’<sup>56</sup> Captain Albert Hervey, of the Madras army, also took his studies seriously. In May 1835, he took leave to study for the examination in Hindustani.

I remained in my ... quarters at Poonamullee, hard at work with a moonshee, but I shortly after removed down to Madras ... And here I began in real earnest. I had two moonshees in my pay, and worked hard from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon. One moonshee kept me translating from Hindustanee into English, and the other *vice versa*. This I continued until the middle of July, intending to go up for an examination at the College early the ensuing month.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, (New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1994) 156-7.

<sup>54</sup> Sir John Kaye, *Lives of Indian Officers* Vol. II (London: W.H. Allen and Co. 1889) 9.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

<sup>57</sup> Albert Hervey, *Ten Years in India*, Volume II, (London: William Shoberl, 1850) 198.



Before his departure for India in 1842, Richard Burton took lessons with Duncan Forbes in London and managed, despite Forbes' broad Scotch accent, to learn 'a little Hindustani'. On the voyage out to India he read all the Hindustani books available on the ship and talked to 'native' servants. Once arrived in India he 'devoted eight or ten hours a day to a desperate tussle with Hindustani; and so fierce was his ardour that two munshis barely kept up with him'. His efforts paid off and, in 1843, he passed first of twelve in the Hindustani examination.<sup>58</sup> Sir Owen Tudor Burne, who set out for India in August 1857, also determined to master the language during the voyage. He and Thomas (later General) Lyons prosecuted their studies 'in the Futtock shroud' and, on arrival at Calcutta, were 'able to pass what was called the "Little Go" in the language, then an essential qualification for the Staff'. Burne continued to work at Hindustani 'in order to attain the higher standard and in the spring of 1861 went to Calcutta. By August, he had passed 'what was called the Fort William College examination'.<sup>59</sup>

From the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, it was evident that not all young officers, either civil or military, had this level of motivation or dedication. At Fort William College, in 1810, Lord Minto drew attention to the fact that there were three students who had 'made no progress ... in a period of nearly three years'.<sup>60</sup> In the same year it was noted at Addiscombe that there was ... a general disinclination and inattention of the Cadets to the study of Hindustanie'.<sup>61</sup> In 1829, the Commander-in-Chief Madras expressed his concern at 'the general inattention to the study of the Native Languages at present manifested by the Officers of the Army'.<sup>62</sup> Albert Hervey also drew attention to the approach of some officers (and *munshis*) less well-motivated than himself.

... he [the munshi] comes to give lessons, or he does not come at all; he talks and laughs instead of teaching, and wastes time which ought to be spend in the occupation for which he is paid; the student, careless about progress, and too glad, probably, to chat and amuse himself, instead of learning, encourages the teacher, and there the two sit for hours together in perfect idleness.<sup>63</sup>

George Campbell, writing in 1853, asserted that at Haileybury the majority acquired 'next to nothing that is practically useful, except the Oriental alphabets'.<sup>64</sup> In his satirical account of British life in India published in 1858, Atkinson commented that the attention of officers was 'not unfrequently (sic) diverted by the intrusion of bottles of beer, soda-water and brandy'.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Georgiana Stisted, *True life of Capt Sir Richard F Burton* (London: H.S. Nichols, 1896) 32.

<sup>59</sup> Owen Tudor Burne, *Memories* (London: Edward Arnold, 1907) 15 and 36.

<sup>60</sup> Fort William Public Disputations, 1810, IOR/H/489.

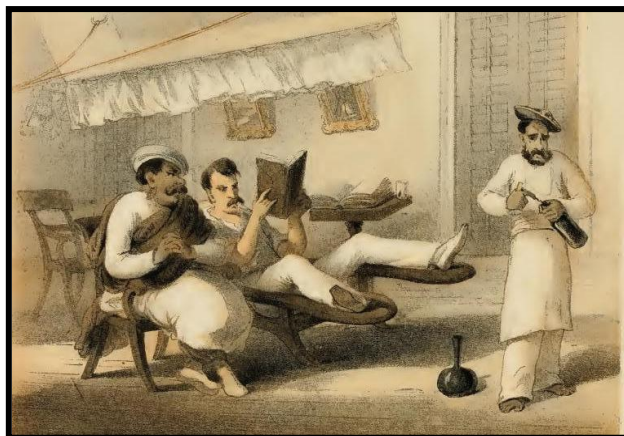
<sup>61</sup> Fisher, *Counterflows*, 126.

<sup>62</sup> Minute of the Commander-in-Chief, Madras, 1829, Board's Collections, 1139.

<sup>63</sup> Hervey, *Ten Years*, 203.

<sup>64</sup> George Campbell, *Modern India* (London: John Murray, 1853) 264.

<sup>65</sup> George Francklin Atkinson, *Curry and Rice on Forty Plates* (London: John B. Day, 1858).



(Curry and Rice on Forty Plates Plate 22: Our Moonshiee)

John Beames, who was in Calcutta the same year, tells us that ‘After an elaborate *chota haziri* which included claret, the young civilians would go to their rooms and work at the languages until 12. During this time the munshis appeared and read with them for one hour daily’.<sup>66</sup> For G. Graham, a Bengal Civilian, who was in Calcutta in the early 1860s

...the study of Hindustani and Bengali ... was a very dreary business; and it really was an effort to devote attention to them at all. A little real work would have enabled me to pass the examination in each language in two months, or four months altogether, whereas I lingered in Calcutta for ten, and some of my contemporaries for eighteen.<sup>67</sup>

In his 1898 booklet, proffering advice on the study of Hindustani, Captain (later Sir Thomas) Wolsley Haig, suggested that a typical lesson would go as follows.

The Munshi comes to him at say, at one o’clock, and leaves him at three. There is probably no impatience on the student’s part to begin work. He lights a cigar or cigarette, orders a peg perhaps, talks casually for a short time to the Munshi in English and then sets to work in a leisurely manner with the text-book. Interruptions, when they occur are probably made the most of... The student cannot be called idle; he is more “casual” than idle...<sup>68</sup>

The 20<sup>th</sup> century brought no improvement. In 1919 Major Benson-Cooke admitted that even the officers who managed to acquire some kind of colloquial facility were often ‘too lazy or indifferent’ to devote sufficient time to study and preferred ‘to go out shooting to sitting indoors with a munshi’.<sup>69</sup> As late as 1941, a Government booklet admitted that examination results, and a detailed study of candidates’ work, strengthened ‘the impression that many set about their studies very light-heartedly’. It described the average officer’s approach to the study of Hindustani in terms startlingly similar to those of Hervey nearly a century earlier.

The young officer arriving in India is told to get down to his Urdu and so engages a teacher, commonly called a ‘munshi’. After the necessary preliminaries he finds that he has to prepare for an examination, and then begins the daily grind over grammar and the reading of the text-book. He does translations, learns words, and, if the afternoon is not too hot, engages in a desultory sort of conversation in which neither side takes much interest. There are mumbling pauses, interspersed

<sup>66</sup> Beames, *Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961) 80-81

<sup>67</sup> G. Graham, *Life in the Mofussil* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1878) 26.

<sup>68</sup> Thomas Wolsley Haig, *Hints on the study of Urdu*, (Allahabad: Pioneer Press, 1898) v.

<sup>69</sup> Benson-Cooke, Major G. ‘Higher and Lower Standard Hindustani Examinations’, *Journal of United Service Institution of India*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 214 January 1919, 98.

with 'er-s', while the teacher, in English, corrects grammar; the thread of the discourse is lost; boredom supervenes, and the stated hour comes at last to a welcome end. It is needless to say that the hour has been wasted, and very little Urdu has been learnt.<sup>70</sup>

It has been argued that many Indians, rather than seeing English and western education as having any intrinsic merit or interest, regarded them as mere stepping stones to employment<sup>71</sup>. There is a curious parallel here with the British learning of Hindustani. Many British officers viewed it as no more than a hoop through which they had to jump in order to gain a more lucrative or interesting appointment. In 1858, the Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army observed that, 'To obtain employment away from the dull routine of Regimental duty the Officers of the army would pass an examination in Chinese, or any other obtruse science, if the Home Government should think it fit to order it'.<sup>72</sup> Nearly a century later passing the examination remained the main objective. In the preface to his 1943 text-book Wajid Ali observed

...officers and other ranks learn Urdu for two reasons; firstly to pass a prescribed examination, secondly to acquire sufficient fluency to enable them to speak to and understand the people with whom they come in contact. It is unfortunate that "the Exam" is generally considered the more important.<sup>73</sup>

In theory, therefore, officers had strong motivation to learn the language well, in order to be able to carry out their duties effectively and to be eligible for promotion. In practice, however, this tended, in the case of many officers, to degenerate into instrumentalism and cram. In an 1881 report to the Government of India, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, Major Jarrett, concluded

The gentlemen who attend the ... examinations have no ambition to be scholars. They seek to get over a pass standard which is compulsory for their professional advancement with the maximum amount of speed and the minimum of knowledge... The best teacher with them is not the best scholar, but the best crammer...<sup>74</sup>

A similar criticism was voiced the same year by Munshi Jwala Nath, who, in a letter to the Board of Examiners, observed that the majority of officers were not inclined to learn the language thoroughly and asserted, 'Their aim is only to pass the standards, and after they have done so, they never take the trouble of improving their imperfect knowledge'.<sup>75</sup> In 1889, Ranking noted that 'cramming' was 'at the bottom of the failures' which were 'so common'.<sup>76</sup> In 1898, Wolseley Haig noted the tendency of officers to both to 'cram' grammatical rules, and to 'skim through long passages of the text-book with the assistance of a "crib" laid open beside it'.<sup>77</sup>

Certain officers, in their anxiety to pass the examinations, as quickly and easily as possible, resorted to dishonest methods. The young officer in a satirical poem by 'Aliph Cheem', paid his

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<sup>70</sup> Board of Examiners, *Practical Approach to Urdu Study* (Simla: Issued by the General Staff, 1941)1-2.

<sup>71</sup> Sanjay Seth, *Subject Lessons* (Durham and London: Duke Press, 2007) 22-33.

<sup>72</sup> Commander in Chief Bombay to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay Military Department, 20 January 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>73</sup> S.M.Wajid Ali, *Practical Hindustani Grammar* (Roorkee: published by the author, 1943) ii.

<sup>74</sup> Board of Examiners, Calcutta, to the Government of India, 6 April, 1881, IOR/P/1661.

<sup>75</sup> Munshi Jwala Nath, to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, 1 June 1881, IOR/P/1661.

<sup>76</sup> Ranking, *Tashil ul Kalam*, v.

<sup>77</sup> Wolseley Haig, *Hints*, vii.

*munshi* 50 rupees to bribe the brigade clerk to get a copy of the translation paper, and to bribe the *sepo*y with whom the he had to converse in the examination to use a ‘nuckul’ he had practised in advance.<sup>78</sup> C.T. Buckland’s account of the examinations at Fort William College indicates that such instances of such cheating did, indeed, take place. Although the majority passed on their own merits, he observed that there were some ‘whose idleness and negligence’ compelled them, at the last moment, to have recourse to obtain help from their *munshis* who,

...had a great prophetic power of anticipating the particular passages in the text-books, and the particular papers for translation which would be used at any coming examination. Or it if turned out that they had been mistaken when the day of examination came, they were usually in attendance within reach of the examination hall, and mysteriously entered into some electro-biological or theosophical communication with their pupils, if any of these were nervous or doubtful of their own powers.<sup>79</sup>

Outright cheating aside, officers found other ways of getting through the examinations without necessarily acquiring the requisite knowledge. The author of an 1853 article suggesting improvements to the examination system observed,

...the writer can remember a case wherein a candidate of doubtful proficiency being about to go up for examination his wife(!) made it a particular request to the convening authority that an Officer belonging to the Station, of known acquirements, but said to be a strict examiner, should not be placed on the Committee. The lady’s request was complied with; others known to be of ability inferior to the Officer in question were appointed, and the candidate passed.<sup>80</sup>

Another ruse to try to pass as easily as possible was exposed in 1884, by H.S. Jarrett, then Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta. He noted, ‘officers serving in Bengal are now in the habit of presenting themselves for examination in the other Presidencies, more especially in Bombay, where it is believed that pass certificates may be more easily secured’.<sup>81</sup> In 1922 a cavalry officer, Colonel Western, described how he managed to pass the Hindustani examination.

I worked for the examination in India and I discovered that a good many of the exercises set for translation from English into Hindustani were taken from a book called, I think Dowson’s Exercises. Adalat Khan was then the Government Examiner and the Munshi of best repute in India. I perceived that the selections left in Dowson’s Exercises of about the required length were quite few so I sent them to Adalat Khan and procured from him high-class translations of these pieces which I thoroughly mastered. To my great relief, when the examination papers were opened by the Board of Officers who presided over the examination, I saw the piece set for translation from English into Hindustani was one of these pieces.<sup>82</sup>

Although showing some enterprise, this still relied on ‘cramming’ translations done by someone else rather than developing a real knowledge of the language.

A predictable consequence of ‘cramming’ was that officers frequently forgot much of what they *had* learnt, once the compulsory examination had been passed, and the desired appointment secured. In 1858, the Governor of Bombay contended that ‘not one in ten of the passed Interpreters

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<sup>78</sup> Walter Yeldham, *Lays of Ind* (London: Thacker and Co., 1905) 37-9.

<sup>79</sup> C.T. Buckland, *Sketches of Social Life in India* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1884) 86.

<sup>80</sup> Anonymous, *Suggestions*, 92.

<sup>81</sup> Board of Examiners to the Government of India Calcutta, 31 July 1884, IOR/P/2259.

<sup>82</sup> J. Western, *Reminiscences of an Indian Cavalry Officer*, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd 1922) 195.

of the Army ever retains ... more than a colloquial knowledge of the language'.<sup>83</sup> In 1893, Sarah Jeannette Duncan, the wife of a Bengal civilian, remarked that although the Raj attached 'rather more credit' to Higher Standard Hindustani than to Lower Standard, the difference between them was, in fact, 'nominal' as officers forgot them 'with equal facility'.<sup>84</sup> In 1905, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners admitted, 'in most cases, an officer gives up all oriental studies immediately on passing his examination, and speedily forgets the little he has learnt'.<sup>85</sup>

#### **4.3: Attempted Remedies : Rewards and Sanctions**

Concern over officers' motivation gave rise to repeated attempts, through a complex system of rewards and sanction, to improve it. In 1790, the Court of Directors had instituted a *Munshi* allowance by way of encouragement. By 1797, however it was clear that it was failing to motivate officers to acquire the necessary proficiency. The Court, therefore, agreed to the suggestion of the Madras Government to offer a reward of 1000 Pagodas, but made certain conditions.

We are concerned at being obliged again to notice the little proficiency made by our Junior Servants in acquiring the Country Languages notwithstanding the allowance made to them as an encouragement. ...we should not hesitate to adopt the plan you propose by granting a handsome reward in the manner you have pointed out provided you can effectually guard against the misapplication of such reward, by bestowing it on none but such as shall be able to transact public business without the aid of a Native Interpreter.<sup>86</sup>

Rewards were not purely monetary. On gaining a competent knowledge of Hindustani officers were also eligible for promotion, often to a more lucrative or interesting post. A letter of 1811, from the Court of Directors to Madras, containing orders applicable to all three Presidencies stated

We are decidedly of opinion that no officer should be appointed to any Staff Situation whatever unless he have (sic) previously acquired a knowledge of the Hindoostanee Language, which is the vernacular Language of Hindoostan, and more or less spoken and understood throughout the Deccan. The means of acquiring this Language are now much facilitated, and it is so obviously both the duty and the interest of all Our Servants, at all the Presidencies to attain a knowledge of it, that We desire you will hereafter consider a competent acquaintance with it, to be an indispensable qualification in every Candidate for a Staff Appointment.<sup>87</sup>

The prospect of a reward, in either form, however, was apparently insufficient to induce all of the 'Company's Servants' to take their study of the language seriously. In addition to the 'carrot' there was also a need for the 'stick'. In 1810, Lord Minto warned the students at Fort William College

...those who shall be found disqualified at their Fourth Annual Examination, by want of proficiency in two Languages, shall be dismissed from the College as incapable of benefiting by the instruction it affords; and suspended the service, as entirely deficient in the qualifications it requires, ... and if the Court of Directors approves they will be dismissed completely'.<sup>88</sup>

In 1814, the Government of Bengal wrote to the Court of Directors, outlining their proposed sanctions for any cases of 'confirmed neglect' or 'confirmed idleness' on the part of students. These

<sup>83</sup> Minute by Commander-in-Chief Bombay, n.d. 1862, Board's Collections 164, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>84</sup> Duncan, *Memsahib*, 227.

<sup>85</sup> Board of Examiners to Government of India Home Department, 1905, IOR/P/7051.

<sup>86</sup> Extract Public Letter to Fort St George, 9 May 1797, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>87</sup> Extract Military Letter to Fort St George, 23 January 1811, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>88</sup> Speech of Lord Minto at Fort William College, 1810, IOR/H/489.

included, limiting the allowances of students to 300 rupees per month until they had qualified in two languages, and the institution of a rule whereby any student of the College not reported qualified for the Public Service at the second annual examination after his entrance into the College would be ‘immediately removed ...and appointed junior assistant at some distant station’.<sup>89</sup> In his 1815 speech at the College Disputations, Lord Edmonstone named, as disqualified, five students who had not passed in the required time.<sup>90</sup>

According to Nassau Lees, such rules were, supposedly, still in force in 1857. If a young writer failed to pass the examinations within six months of arrival in Calcutta, he would be ‘removed from the metropolis to study at some station in the interior’, and if he failed to comply ‘with the expectations of Government in eighteen months’, he would be sent back to England.<sup>91</sup> According to George Campbell, however, such sanctions were not always carried out. He maintained

There is a myth, that those who don’t pass within the limited time will be sent back again to England and a tradition that they have been so sent in former days; but in Bengal, at least, I believe that there has been no such instance in the memory of the present generation. All happen to pass at the last moment.<sup>92</sup>

For young civilians, a competent knowledge of Hindustani was a prerequisite for their appointment,<sup>93</sup> and in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was, to some extent, provided through their compulsory attendance at Fort William and Haileybury, and after the introduction of competition, at universities during their probationary year of study in England. The military situation was less structured, consequently army officers seemed more in need of material encouragement than their civilian counterparts. In 1805, an exchange of military letters to and from Bombay attributed the apparent ‘decline in the Army of the Study of the Country Languages’ to ‘the abolition of the languages Money’.<sup>94</sup> In an attempt to improve matters it was reinstated. In Madras, as in Bombay, the institution of financial rewards was, from the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, seen as a necessary incentive. In 1807 such rewards were limited to three; a first prize of 450 Pagodas, a second of 300 and a third of 250. The Adjutant-General and Quarter-Master-General, at the time, considered it preferable that such rewards ‘should be given to a few Gentlemen who excel than that an indiscriminate remuneration should be made to all who attain a more limited knowledge of the

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<sup>89</sup> Extract Public Letter from Bengal to the Court of Directors, 23 June 1814, IOR/F/4/488.

<sup>90</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 454.

<sup>91</sup> William Nassau Lees, *Instruction in The Oriental Languages Considered* (London: Williams and Norgate 1857)16.

<sup>92</sup> Campbell, *Modern India*, 270.

<sup>93</sup> The particular languages to be studied depended on the Presidency to which they were assigned, but they were also required to pass in Hindustani, to approximately Higher Standard level, within 15-18 months of their arrival in India, for most of the period under study.

<sup>94</sup> Extract Military Letter to Bombay 30 January 1805 and Extract Military Letter from Bombay, 23 July 1805, IOR L/MIL/5/390.

language'.<sup>95</sup> The obvious consequence of such a policy was that the few who were already motivated to learn would gain the rewards, leaving little inducement for the majority.

In 1810, therefore, there was a change of policy. It was decreed that every young officer 'found on Examination to have acquired a competent knowledge of the Hindoostanee', would receive an honorary Reward of Pagodas 500.<sup>96</sup> To ensure they did so within a reasonable period, a time limit of three years was imposed.<sup>97</sup> The policy was short-lived, however. The Court of Directors, always conscious of expense, decided that the prospect of promotion should, in itself, constitute a sufficient inducement. In 1814, the Court of Directors directed that the system of financial rewards to the Madras army for the study of Hindustani should be discontinued. In an attempt to persuade them to reverse their decision, the Commander-in-Chief, and the President of the Committee for Examining Students, wrote explaining the necessity of its continuation.<sup>98</sup> Their arguments went unheeded, however, and the Court of Directors finally abolished rewards for attaining proficiency in the language in 1818. In 1823, the Governor of Madras, Sir Thomas Munro, expressed his views on the subject.

...We cannot say that there is no encouragement to the study of Hindoostanee, when we know that it opens the road to almost every staff-appointment. Some immediate or certain pecuniary aid would no doubt increase the encouragement, and produce a greater number of students; but still we find that, without this aid, it has a very great effect... besides the incitement held out by the new office of regimental quartermaster, there is the additional one of knowing that an acquaintance with the Hindoostanee language will now form an essential part of the qualifications for many other staff-employments..<sup>99</sup>

Although not willing to revive the system of monetary rewards without the sanction of the Court of Directors, the issue was sufficiently important that Munro felt it might be advisable 'to bring it again to the notice of the Honourable Court'.<sup>100</sup> While accepting that the prospect of promotion should, in *theory*, be enough to motivate officers to learn Hindustani well, he clearly recognized that, in *practice*, it was not. In the absence of pecuniary rewards, the only way to make officers take their study more seriously was to insist that the same qualification which had previously only been for all required for the post of Regimental Interpreter was necessary for *all* staff appointments. He acknowledged

The chance of obtaining the appointment of interpreter is not of itself a sufficient inducement for a young officer to incur the expense and the labour of studying a language which he finds he can do without; but the inducement might be rendered more effectual by carrying into execution the instructions of the Honourable Court, that a competent knowledge of Hindoostanee shall be an indispensable qualification in every candidate for a staff-appointment.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Extract Military Letter from Fort St George, 24 December 1807, IOR/L/MIL/5/6567.

<sup>96</sup> Extract Minute of Sir George Barlow, to Fort St George, 9 October 1810, IOR L/MIL/5/390.

<sup>97</sup> Extract Madras Code of Pay Regulations 9 October 1810, IOR L/MIL/5/390.

<sup>98</sup> Extract Military Letter to Fort St George, 4 February 1818, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>99</sup> Minute on the Study of the Native Languages, 7 November 1823 reproduced in Gleig, *Munro*, 365-7.

<sup>100</sup> Gleig, *Munro*, 363-4.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

Without such a requirement, only a small number of officers were likely to study the language seriously. The reinstatement of the financial reward, he argued, would induce more to do so.

...the number of officers who acquire a moderate knowledge even of Hindoostanee is very inadequate to the demand of the service, and that stronger motives than now exist are requisite, in order to procure a sufficient supply. There are two ways of effecting this; one is by providing moonshees and books for the students; the other is by reviving the donation of five hundred pagodas; the donation has this advantage, that while it is the cheapest (sic) of the two, it is paid only for proficiency; in the other case, the expense is the same whether there be proficiency or not.<sup>102</sup>

In the civil context, the Government of Bombay opted for more of a 'stick' approach to the problem. In 1821, they informed the Court of Directors that the young writers, who had arrived that season, had been made aware that 'promotion in the service and consequent increase of their salaries would entirely depend on their passing the requisite examination in the Hindustanee language.'<sup>103</sup> Four years later, in another letter to the Court of Directors, they observed that the exclusion 'from official emolument' until they had acquired a competent knowledge of the language essential to the discharge of their duties', would be sufficient to induce all young civilians to make the necessary exertions'.<sup>104</sup>

Whilst such measures may have worked with civil officers who were higher paid, and often had a classical education, they did not prove as effective with army officers. In May 1825, the Bombay military authorities expressed concern that younger officers were being discouraged from undertaking the necessary study for the post of Interpreter. Not only was there the considerable expense involved in obtaining books and paying a *munshi*, but the prospect of getting an Interpreter's post was slim, as most of the posts were already filled. Anxious to improve the situation the Governor-in-Council and the Commander-in-Chief agreed that every officer passed an examination in Hindustani would be allowed to draw 'a sum of thirty Rupees per month... to enable him to defray the expense of a Moonshee'.<sup>105</sup> Following the practice at Fort William College, the Bombay Government had also instituted 'pecuniary prizes' for civilians, and recommended to the Court of Directors that this should be extended to the military as an inducement to study. The Court again, insisted, however, that the prospect of promotion was, itself, sufficient. They informed the Bombay authorities

The Office of Regimental Interpreter and Quarter Master, which is a staff appointment and is conferred ... upon those Subaltern Officers who have distinguished themselves by their knowledge of the Native Languages, is in our opinion an adequate inducement to young Officers whose time is less absorbed by Official duties, than that of the Civil Servants, to devote a sufficient portion of their attention to these studies.<sup>106</sup>

In September 1828, in order to 'encourage' officers to become proficient, the *munshi* allowance of 30 Rupees, previously sanctioned in Bombay, was extended by the Governor-General-

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bombay, 11 June 1823, IOR/F/4/709/19245.

<sup>104</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bombay, 21 September 1825, IOR/F/4/1015/27842

<sup>105</sup> Extract Military Letter from Bombay, 1 May 1825, Board's Collections 1139.

<sup>106</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bombay, 21 September 1825, IOR/F/4/1015/27842



in-Council, to *all* subaltern officers who had obtained certificates ‘of having acquired the degree of proficiency required by the Regulations of the Service in the Hindoostanee language’.<sup>107</sup> The same month the Commander-in-Chief, Madras, took the opposite approach, warning that ‘such Regimental Staff Officers as have not already passed an examination in Hindoostanee, would be required ‘to appear before Competent Committees ... between 1<sup>st</sup> March and the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1829’ and that those Officers declared unqualified would be ‘removed from their respective situations’.<sup>108</sup> After the examinations the Madras Government immediately ‘named and shamed’ two officers, for ‘neglecting to apply themselves to the study of the Hindustanee Language’, and the Governor-in-Council was ‘pleased to remove those Officers from their Staff Appointments as disqualified for the discharge of the duties thereof’.<sup>109</sup> In May the same year, when the reports on the examinations were published, four more officers were removed from their respective staff appointments having been found ‘unfit for these situations from the want of a sufficient knowledge of the Hindoostanee language’.<sup>110</sup> Walker, attributed the problem to two key factors. The first was ‘the want of zeal and application in the Officers themselves arising from the absence of sufficient encouragement to exertion, combined with the hope of escaping with impunity the various Penalties of Neglect’. The second, he suggested, was that officers had been aided and abetted in gaining posts without a knowledge of the language by their commanding officers, who had, ‘represented Officers to be perfectly efficient’ who were, in fact, ‘altogether ignorant of the languages.’<sup>111</sup>

From Walker’s analysis it would seem that neither rewards nor sanctions had been effective up to this point. His proposed remedies, nevertheless, continued the ‘carrot and stick’ approach. Hopeful that ‘a strong impression’ would be made by the dismissal of the officers named in the report, he suggested that ‘the stimulus of fear would be sufficiently afforded by the rigorous enforcement of the Regulations depriving all Officers of the Command of Troops and Companies who are incapable of conversing with their Men’. Such ‘rigorous enforcement’, however, presented its own problems, as Walker then tellingly admitted, ‘Unfortunately so general is the state of ignorance that it will rarely happen that others sufficiently informed will be found to replace them’. Arguing that the ‘strongest stimulus to human exertion’ was ‘the absolute certainty of some stipulated reward’ his ‘carrot’ involved the proposed reinstatement of the pecuniary award abolished some twenty years earlier.<sup>112</sup>

Aside from the vacillation between offering and not offering monetary rewards, there were other inconsistencies in the application of the various rewards and sanctions policies. Although the Court of Directors, and the regulations of the service, decreed that no officer could obtain a staff

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<sup>107</sup> General Orders by the Governor General in Council, 26 September 1828, Board’s Collections 1139.

<sup>108</sup> Extract Fort St George General Orders, 12 September, 1828, Board’s Collections 1139.

<sup>109</sup> Extract Fort St George, 3 April 1829, Board’s Collections 1139.

<sup>110</sup> Extract General Order Fort St George, 12 May 1829, Board’s Collections 1139.

<sup>111</sup> Commander in Chief Madras, to the President, May 15 1829, Board’s Collections 1139.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

appointment without passing the requisite examinations in Hindustani, Albert Hervey, drew attention to the fact that

... the greater number of the officers at present on the staff, and holding some of the highest, most influential and most important situations in almost every department, have not passed any examination, and know little or nothing of the languages; and yet we are told, before we quit home, that unless we do study and master the languages, we *cannot* get a staff situation.<sup>113</sup>

Field-Marshal Roberts' account supports Hervey's contention that the rules were not always consistently applied. In 1856, he had been hopeful of getting the post of Quarter-Master General, but the Governor-General refused to confirm his appointment since he had not passed the prescribed examination in Hindustani. Although such a rule existed, he tells us that 'it had seldom been enforced', and certainly not in the case of 'acting appointments'.<sup>114</sup>

A further inconsistency was highlighted in a Minute of February 1858, by the Governor of Bombay, who pointed out that the rewards for passing examinations were not always commensurate with the level of language required. Whilst the Interpreter's examination, was the hardest of the three, (Colloquial, Staff, Interpreter's) the pay of an Interpreter was less than that of many staff appointments. As a result only officers with a 'natural talent for languages' would take the trouble to qualify themselves for the post of Interpreter, and other officers would not waste the time in 'cramming for this examination'.<sup>115</sup> The same year, a Bengal army officer, Robert D. Gibney made a similar point.

...men now-a-days will not take the trouble of studying hard ... for two years when the adjutancy is the best (sic) paid of the two, and only requires a man to pass the little go; besides all the civil appointments up here are given indiscriminately to men whether they have passed the P. or the PH, and to men of a certain standing, who never did pass at all.<sup>116</sup>

The President of Madras similarly argued that since the only privilege attached to the Interpreter's examination was that it qualified officers for a Regimental Interpretership it was neglected for the sake of the Adjutant's examination which was better paid, and for the Staff examination which opened the door 'to a large and much coveted class of Military and Civil appointments'.<sup>117</sup> Like the Bombay civil authorities in 1821, and the Madras military in 1829, he advocated a more rigorous use of sanctions to try to improve officers' knowledge of the language. In his opinion, one year was sufficient to pass the required examination and failure to do so should result in dismissal. He argued

One or two examples will show that the Government is in earnest; after which the habit will become fixed and young men will learn the languages as they learn their drill instead of deferring it till they have some prospect of getting a Staff appointment. This is the ordinary practice at present; and the result is that the majority never seriously undertake the study of the languages...<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Hervey, *Ten Years*, 207-8.

<sup>114</sup> Frederick Roberts, *Forty-one years in India* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1897) 25-26.

<sup>115</sup> Minute of the Governor of Bombay, 20 February 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>116</sup> Robert Gibney, *My Escape from the Mutinies in Oudh*, Vol. 1 (London: Richard Bentley, 1858) 109.

<sup>117</sup> Minute by the President of Madras, 18 April 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

Neither the President of the Board of Examiners, nor the Reverend Krishna Mohun Banerjea, a member of the Board, agreed that such a course would be effective in the military context. Banerjea argued

Such a rule works very well in the civil service in which there are sure prizes, in the way of lucrative situations, to reward industry and application. No such sure prizes can be looked for in the Military service, and the consequence may be a diminution of applications for commissions...<sup>119</sup>

In his opinion it was preferable to stimulate language study among Military Officers 'by hopes of reward rather than the fear of penalties' in the form of pecuniary incentives. The Secretary to the Board, Nassau Lees, whilst rejecting the idea of dismissal of those who failed to pass within a given time, was not convinced, however, that rewards alone 'would suffice for the mass' and advocated using what he saw as the 'powerful levers' of denial of all leaves and other privileges, and ineligibility to all Staff situations in order to work reform.<sup>120</sup>

Banerjea echoed the Governor of Bombay in pointing out the anomaly in the military promotion system which acted as a disincentive for officers to pursue their studies beyond the lowest compulsory level.

the Hindoostanee, or as it is technically called the P.H. Test (Passed Hindustani) is far too low for the wide door it opens for all kinds of Civil and Political appointments. By passing that easy test a Military Officer becomes eligible for appointments which are not opened to Civil Servants before they have passed in two languages... On the other hand the Interpreter's Test is not rewarded by any advantages at all corresponding to its severity...<sup>121</sup>

Nassau Lees suggested, 'the office of Regimental Interpreter should be better paid, or some other means adopted of inducing Officers to give a little more attention to these studies than just barely sufficient to enable them to "scrape" through the Examination for the General Staff, or Civil Employ'.<sup>122</sup> He agreed with Banerjea's criticism that the Lower Standard qualified officers for the highest Staff appointments and highlighted the short-sightedness of such a policy.

No preference has, of late years, been shown to Officers who have passed by the Interpreter's or Higher Standard. The arrangement is obviously anomalous; and the result has been what might be anticipated. The number of candidates for Examination by the Higher Standard has reached the minimum. The Indian Government is at this moment embarrassed. More than one half if not two thirds of the Officers who are now performing the duty of Regimental Interpreter have not passed the examination prescribed for that situation. For the Military Prize Examination (Rs 1000) we have, I may say, no candidates at all.<sup>123</sup>

The 1862 Special Committee, similarly, blamed the decrease in the number of officers taking the Interpreter's examination on the fact that it had been withdrawn as a qualification for employment in the Civil, Political and Commissariat Departments of the Government. This meant that few were willing 'to undergo the hard study' necessary to master the language, seeing it as a 'waste or an unnecessary expenditure of time and labor' (sic) since they could gain a staff appointment merely

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<sup>119</sup> Minute by the Reverend Krishna Mohun Banerjea, 30 June 1860, IOR/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>120</sup> Minute by Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 3 July 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>121</sup> Banerjea, Minute, 30 June 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>122</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 3 July 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

by passing ‘the lowest test in Hindustani’.<sup>124</sup> Even more worryingly, it was clear from the statistics that a very large number of officers had not passed any examination at all. In 1862, only 598 out of 2251 officers of the Bengal Army, below the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, had passed the P.H., and a mere 111 had passed the Interpreter’s examination. As regards the efficacy of pecuniary rewards, the Committee, took the same view that the Court of Directors had taken many years earlier observing

We do not think that any pecuniary rewards beyond the usual Moonshi allowance should be attached to passing an examination in Hindustani. Eligibility to hold Staff employ in India will always prove a stronger inducement to pass examinations in that language, than any money reward which the Government could properly offer.<sup>125</sup>

The question of the *level* to which officers should have to study, in order to be eligible for particular appointments, was one which engendered considerable debate and disagreement. The initial recommendation of the 1862 Special Committee, chaired by Nassau Lees, was that officers should pass a revised version of the Interpreter’s examination to be eligible for staff appointment. This was strongly opposed by General Mansfield, Commander-in-Chief Bombay, who deemed it ‘highly inexpedient’. He insisted that

...to enforce the system of standard recommended by Professor Lees, is to insist that any Officer, before he is eligible for ordinary Staff employ, shall have passed an Interpreter’s examination in Hindoostanee. This, I conceive, to be far more than is required by the necessities of the service, while it will have the effect of inevitably excluding many otherwise excellent Officers from employment. ...the encouragement of great proficiency in the Native languages ... can only be done by holding out corresponding advantages for the consideration of Officers.<sup>126</sup>

He instead advocated raising the pay of Interpreters and restricting certain appointments, such as those of Cantonment Magistrate and Judicial Employ under Government and Political Agencies, to officers who had passed the Interpreter’s examination in Hindustani.<sup>127</sup>

With the introduction of Lower and Higher Standard in 1863, the decision was made that Higher Standard would qualify officers, in all three Presidencies, for an appointment on the Staff. The short-sightedness of a policy which did not require officers to pursue their study of Hindustani beyond this level became apparent in the final quarter of the nineteenth century. The conditions of service required officers on the staff, or in civil employ, to pass Higher Standard Hindustani. The Presidents of the Boards which examined them were required to have passed High Proficiency. Since no posts existed for which High Proficiency was required, there had been a year on year drop in the numbers of officers taking it, with only 5 officers doing so between 1890 and 1894.

#### NUMBER OF INDIAN ARMY OFFICERS PASSING HIGH PROFICIENCY (URDU OR HINDI)

1870	1875	1880	1885	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894
11	10	6	7	2	2	1	0	0

<sup>124</sup> Report of the Special Committee to the Secretary to the Government of India, (n.d.) 1862, IOR/L/MIL7/7300.

<sup>125</sup> Report of the Special Committee (nd) 1862, IOR/L/MIL7/7300.

<sup>126</sup> Minute, Commander in Chief Bombay, n.d.1862, IOR/L/MIL7/7300.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

As a result, by the early 1890s, considerable difficulties were being encountered as a result of the 'paucity of qualified officers to conduct examinations by the Higher Standard in Hindustani.' In September 1892, and again in June 1893, the General Officer Commanding Assam reported that 'no qualified President was available' to examine the candidates for Higher Standard. In July 1893 Rawalpindi district experienced similar problems and in May 1894 Assam again was unable to find anyone to preside over the Examining Board. In September 1894 both Rawalpindi District and Sirhind District had no president available, and, in October 1894, Quetta reported the same problem. A list of qualified officers was drawn up, and it was found that there were 25; 4 were on leave, 7 were in Civil Employ, hence unavailable, and 1 was the Secretary to the Board of Examiners.<sup>128</sup> There was, consequently, an attempt to induce officers to qualify by the High Proficiency. The reward was raised from Rs1000 to Rs1500, the time limit in which officers could pass was extended from ten to twenty years, and the the fees for conducting the Higher Standard examinations were increased from Rs 32 to Rs 100.<sup>129</sup>

The military authorities, (foreshadowing the dumbing-down of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) suggested that officers who, themselves, had passed only by the Higher Standard (and that probably 20 years earlier) should be allowed to act as Presidents of Examining Boards. The Government of India were unconvinced of the wisdom of such a course. In a letter to the Board of Examiners they acknowledged, with true British understatement, that the number of officers who were qualified to examine at Higher Standard was 'inconveniently small',<sup>130</sup> and asked for advice as to how to remedy the situation. They then sought the Commander-in-Chief's opinion as to the 'measures which should be taken to encourage officers to study' making it clear that, in their view, the remedy for the 'inconvenience' was to increase the number of qualified officers rather than to lower the qualification required.<sup>131</sup>

The Adjutant-General subsequently solicited the views of a number of senior military officers as to the reasons why officers were not taking the High Proficiency examination.<sup>132</sup> His enquiries produced a variety of responses which all pointed to the lack of any real incentive to do so. Brigadier Kinloch from Peshawar argued that those who passed High Proficiency Urdu were 'utilized to examine candidates for Higher Standard Hindustani' for which they received 'very

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<sup>128</sup> Adjutant-General in India, to the Government of India Military Department, 15 October 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>129</sup> Government of India Military Department to the Home Department, Simla, 21 October 1895, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>130</sup> Government of India Military Department to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 5 December 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>131</sup> Government of India Military Department, to the Adjutant-General in India, 2 February 1895. IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>132</sup> There was an interesting parallel in the civil context. In August 1896 Government of India wrote to the Board of Examiners that it had been brought to their notice that the number of Indian Civilians who had passed the High Proficiency in Hindi and Urdu had declined very much in recent years.

inadequate remuneration to compensate for the trouble'.<sup>133</sup> Colonel Swinley from Rawalpindi expressed the view that High Proficiency was not of any professional use and officers who took the examination did so 'merely for the sake of the reward'.<sup>134</sup> He was extremely pessimistic about the chances of increasing the numbers taking it stating that 'nothing would induce officers to work for High Proficiency' as it only qualified them to sit as Presidents of Higher Standard Boards'.<sup>135</sup> Major-General Viscount Frankfort, in Lahore, suggested that the reward of 1000 rupees was insufficient in itself, since most of it was spent on fees to *munshis*. Like the others he felt that officers gained little by passing, and even attracted the punishment of being sent all over, both their own and neighbouring districts, 'to sit as President of Higher Standard Boards for a paltry fee'. In his view there was 'only one appointment open to a proficient linguist', that of Secretary to the Board of Examiners'.<sup>136</sup>

There is a certain irony in this observation, as the Government of India Military Department had, by October 1895, decided that one possible solution would be for the Secretary to the Board of Examiners to make a tour from Calcutta, twice a year, to conduct the examinations.<sup>137</sup> This, they argued, would not only resolve the problem of the lack of suitably qualified officers, and reduce the call on military officers to act as Presidents of examining boards, but might also serve to improve the conduct of the examination itself.<sup>138</sup> Although this appeared to be a viable solution, the desire of officers to pass as quickly and easily as possible caused it to backfire. In 1901, Ranking's report on the scheme made it clear that it was not a success. Few officers were putting themselves forward for examination, and, of those who did, just 40% passed.<sup>139</sup> The Board suggested that the unwillingness of officers to attend probably 'arose from an idea that the examinations held by the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, were likely to be more searching and thorough than those held by ordinary committees'.<sup>140</sup> By July 1901 the tours had been discontinued.

A year later, the number of officers qualified by the High Proficiency had not increased and the problem of finding suitably qualified officers to act as Presidents of Higher Standard Examination Boards remained unresolved. In another attempt to remedy the situation, the Government of India proposed the introduction of a new, lower level, literary examination, the Proficiency, for both Civil and Military officers. A reward of Rs750 was allocated to this, which, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners felt 'would offer a sufficient inducement to officers to qualify by the test, and would be at the same time a reasonable recompense for the labour involved in

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<sup>133</sup> Replies to the Adjutant-General's letter February 1895, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Government of India to the President to the Board of Examiners, 31 October 1895, IOR/P/4750.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Government of India Home Department to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 18 July 1901, IOR/P/6112.

<sup>140</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners, to the Government of India Home Department, 1 November 1902, IOR/P/6576.

preparation for the examination'.<sup>141</sup> In December 1905, the Government of India outlined its proposals for the new examination to the Secretary of State for India.<sup>142</sup> An unsigned India Office Minute of the same month summarised them thus

The High Proficiency examination was too difficult and did not offer sufficient inducement to officers to carry on their studies beyond the point required to give them a good practical knowledge of the language. They ... now propose to institute an examination in Urdu, to be called the "Proficiency" examination, which will be intermediate between the "Higher Standard" and "High Proficiency", in the hope that such an examination will lead to officers, civil and military, carrying on their studies beyond the point reached with the "Higher Standard" It is proposed to fix the reward for passing this new examination, if passed within 10 years of residence in India, at Rs 750 for Military or Rs 500 for Civil Officers, being half the amounts allotted to the High Proficiency standard.<sup>143</sup>

The author of this minute, however, questioned the efficacy of such rewards and expressed doubts about a policy which aimed at officers acquiring the language to a higher level, without the existence of any appointment for which this was required. He observed

...money rewards for passing examinations in Indian languages exercise but a small influence in promoting their study, ... if the Government of India wish to secure a wider knowledge than the minimum which is now possessed, the only way to effect this will be to demand as a qualification for office or promotion that an officer shall pass by some standard or other.<sup>144</sup>

The *draft* despatch to the Government of India of March 1906 reflected this stating

... I am inclined to doubt whether the scheme will satisfactorily accomplish the aim which Your Excellency's Government have in view. I understand that, as a rule, money rewards for passing examinations in Indian languages are not found to exercise a very great influence in furthering their study; and it appears to me that you desire to secure a wider knowledge than the minimum which is now possessed could probably only be adequately realised by demanding as a qualification for certain appointments that an officer shall have passed by a prescribed standard. I leave it to Your Excellency to consider whether it is desirable and practicable to give any additional stimulus of this nature to the study of Urdu or of other Indian vernaculars."<sup>145</sup>

Inexplicably, however, the official reply actually *sent* to the Government of India, omitted the whole section quoted above, the very section which had got to the heart of the problem. With no post for which it was required, the new examination would still be entirely voluntary and therefore the number of officers sufficiently motivated to study for it would, inevitably, remain small.

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century wore on the ineffectiveness of the rewards and sanctions policy became ever more striking. In 1924, when it was 'discovered' that there were two hundred 'unpassed' officers nearing the end of their permitted three year period for passing the Preliminary Examination the sanction, should have been dismissal from the service. Since the Government of India could ill afford to lose such a large number of officers, however, the decision was taken, instead, to introduce a new 'Urdu Qualifying Examination', which required only Roman script and

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<sup>141</sup> Secretary of the Board of Examiners, 25<sup>th</sup> November 1903, to the Government of India Home Department, IOR/P/6809.

<sup>142</sup> Government of India Finance Department, to the Secretary of State for India, 7 December, 1905, IOR/L/PJ/6/742.

<sup>143</sup> India Office Minute (handwritten and unsigned) front cover sheet of documents is dated 7 December 1905, IOR/L/PJ/6/742.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> India Office, Draft Despatch, Public No. 32, 9 March 1906, IOR/L/PJ/6/742.

military vocabulary. The discussions within the India Office regarding the monetary rewards involved are revealing. Officers passing the UQE were entitled to a reward of Rs150 as opposed to the Rs200 for the Urdu Preliminary Examination. Nevertheless, they were still entitled to the full Rs 200 *on top of this*, if they then went on to pass the Preliminary Examination.<sup>146</sup> Despite what appeared to be a potential extra cost, the Government of India argued that the new test would actually *save* money as very few officers were expected to bother with the Preliminary once they had passed the UQE. The Financial Secretary at the India Office concurred estimating that ‘only about one officer in ten’ would go on to take the Preliminary.<sup>147</sup>

The question of monetary rewards arose once more in the early 1930s. In 1931, the Government of India wrote to the India Office suggesting that a ‘requalification examination’ carrying a reward of Rs 300 should be introduced for 1<sup>st</sup> Class Interpreters, in order to encourage them to keep up their knowledge of the language. An India Office Military Department Minute questioned the efficacy of such rewards, and was scathing both about officers’ motivation and the attempts of the military authorities in India to improve it.

In the last few years a policy of perpetual spoonfeeding seems to have been adopted by the Army Department in regard to the study of languages. No officer of the Indian Army seems to be expected to have sufficient zeal or initiative to study languages on his own account.<sup>148</sup>

The India Office refused, initially, to sanction the policy, but eventually allowed themselves to be persuaded on the grounds that it would be ‘good value for money’ if it ensured a sufficient number of fully qualified officers was available, both to act as Interpreters, and to conduct the Higher Standard examinations.<sup>149</sup> They conceded

...it is necessary to have a cadre of qualified examiners consisting of officers who have passed, and after due interval, re-qualified in the Interpreters’ Examination. This cadre is required for the purpose of conducting the Higher and Lower Standard examinations at the various military centres in India.<sup>150</sup>

#### **4.4 Levels of (in) Competence – The Sahibs’ Hindustani**

In a now iconic essay, Bernard Cohn asked, rhetorically, how well the British learnt Hindustani. His answer

I would *speculate* ... that the majority knew only very restricted and specific codes, which were adequate to specified contexts such as running their households, dealing with their subordinates in the courts and offices, and in giving orders in the military.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Government of India Army Department Instructions, 29 January 1925, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>147</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 23 February 1925, IOR/MIL/L/7/733.

<sup>148</sup> India Office Military Department Minute 14 August 1931, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>149</sup> India Office Military Department Minute 10 November 1931, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331. It is possible that officials would have been aware of the problems of the 1890s regarding examiners for HS, but as it was forty years earlier is not possible to conclude this definitively.

<sup>150</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 4 November 1931, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>151</sup> Bernard Cohn, ‘The Command of Language and the Language of Command’, *Subaltern Studies* Volume IV. (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985) 314. Also in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge* (New Jersey: Princeton, 1996) 43- 44.



Ascertaining how well ‘the majority’ of the British learnt Hindustani is difficult in the absence of either oral or written evidence. The sources which might be thought to provide information as to levels of proficiency, such as the grammars and text-books, the examination syllabuses, and the accounts of officers themselves, are problematic. The text-books only provide information as to the content and difficulty of *what* officers were required to learn, rather than *how well* they learnt it. Similarly with the examination syllabuses, while it is possible to trace the gradual ‘dumbing-down’ of the examination requirements, in terms of grammar, vocabulary and literacy, it is not possible to deduce how well officers were actually able to speak or write the language at any particular time. The presence of the literary set-texts in the syllabuses does not indicate that British officers had a good literary command of the language. The tendency to ‘cram’ and subsequently forget anything not strictly practical, meant little real understanding of such texts was developed. The examinations also provide no clue as to officers’ spoken fluency, idiomatic use of the language, or pronunciation. Nor is it safe to assume, that what they managed to learn in order to pass the examination, on one specific occasion, was the level that they retained. Memoirs, and direct personal accounts of their learning offer little more help as they are entirely subjective, usually just giving a vague description such as George Campbell’s ‘rough but effective’ facility in,<sup>152</sup> or Sir Edmund Cox’s ‘exceptional’<sup>153</sup> knowledge of Hindustani.

The archival evidence (both official and unofficial) indicates, however, that, from the outset the British command of Hindustani was frequently less than ‘exceptional’. Arnot, writing in 1831, noted that in Calcutta and Bombay, the British communicated with their servants in a ‘simple dialect’ of Hindustani ‘stripped of its genders, inflections &c., having the pronunciation of the words smoothed down so as to suit English organs of utterance and hearing’.<sup>154</sup> An undated essay by Frederick Shore focused on, ‘Anglo-Hindustani’ which he described as a ‘jargon’ with a considerable quantity of broken English

...eeked out by abuse, oaths, thumps and kicks. ... Its use is confined at present to the English population, and their servants and dependants; and comprises nearly as many dialects as there are individual Englishmen in India: for of the majority of these each speaks a dialect understood solely by himself and his servants. ...when the servants get a new master, they have too often a new dialect to learn.<sup>155</sup>

In 1835, Shore observed, that after acquiring ‘just sufficient of the jargon’ to make known their daily wants’, some Europeans, at the end of months, or even years, had not ‘advanced one step in the acquisition of the vernacular language’.<sup>156</sup>

In a letter of 1857 to *The Times*, Max Müller quoted Lieutenant-Colonel Sleeman’s views on British officers’ spoken Hindustani.

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<sup>152</sup> Campbell, *Memoirs*, 28. Campbell admitted that he ‘never became a polished scholar’ since his ‘grammar was defective’ and his ‘genders nowhere’.

<sup>153</sup> Edmund Cox, *My Thirty Years in India* (London: Mills and Boon, 1909) 54.

<sup>154</sup> Arnot, *Grammar*, Appendix 16-17.

<sup>155</sup> Shore, *Essay on the Hindostanee Language*, IOR/H/790.

<sup>156</sup> Shore, *Notes*, Vol II, 498.

Military officers seldom speak to their sepahes and native officers about anything but the sports of the field; and as long as they are understood they care not one straw in what language they express themselves. The conversation of the civil servants with their native officers takes sometimes a wider range; but they have the same philosophical indifference as to the language in which they attempt to convey their ideas; and I have heard some of our highest diplomatic characters talking without the slightest feeling of shame or embarrassment to native Princes ... in a language which no human being but themselves could understand.<sup>157</sup>

According to Nassau Lees, writing in 1857, passing the examinations was not, in itself, an indication that an effective command of the language had been acquired. When a young civilian ‘passed’, the Board of Examiners reported to Government that he was ‘qualified for the public service’. This meant, however, that whilst he was ‘capable of reading particular books, and writing with certain accuracy exercises’, he was ‘incapable of understanding one spoken word of any oriental tongue, or of himself directing even a witness to be brought into his Court.’<sup>158</sup> Three years later Nassau Lees drew attention to the poor pronunciation of his fellow-countrymen, asserting that ‘*Sahibs*, under the impression that they are speaking elegant Oordoo’, would ‘fly into a rage’, and ‘call their servants ... all sorts of hard and ugly names, because they *will* not understand them’.<sup>159</sup>

An anonymous civil servant, writing in 1861, admitted that while the ‘technical phrases of the courts’ were soon acquired, ‘together with the power of giving orders intelligibly’, very few civil officers ever gained ‘anything like a thorough knowledge of the language’.<sup>160</sup> In 1862, the artist Colesworthy Grant described the Hindustani spoken by many British in Calcutta as ‘a very imperfect jumble...a little of everything, and that everything cruelly mangled.’<sup>161</sup> He observed

Comparatively, very few persons trouble themselves to acquire more of the language than is sufficient for the commonest colloquial purposes. ... I have met with persons who, after residing in India for twelve years were unable to ask even for ‘a glass of water;’ ...It is amusing to listen to persons whose knowledge of the language you may happen to know is extremely limited, and who, having had some mortifying failure of a commission, or disagreement with a servant, assure you how “particularly” they explained to him their wishes; and in proof that he “cannot understand his own language,” detail you in very choice English an address, which when literally rendered from the original was probably wrapped in some disjointed flourish, that, perpetrated in England by any poor foreigner would have set a parish of little boys in a roar. Such is about the proficiency to which two thirds of the Europeans living in Calcutta attain in Hindoostanee, and this ... many appear to consider all that is requisite.<sup>162</sup>

Some of the British were aware that their inability to speak Hindustani correctly had potentially disastrous consequences. Owen Tudor Burne quotes an incident which allegedly took place during the 1877 Imperial Assemblage. A Colonel of a Native Regiment, new to his work and ‘not well acquainted with shades of accent’ insisted on addressing his regiment in their own language. Confusing *sūar* (pig) with *sowār* (trooper) and *billa* (medal) with *billi* (cat) he reportedly

<sup>157</sup> Philindus, *Correspondence*, 3.

<sup>158</sup> Nassau Lees, *Instruction*, 17-18.

<sup>159</sup> Nassau Lees, *Guide*, XV.

<sup>160</sup> An ex-competition wallah, *The Indian Civil Service as a Profession*, Macmillan’s Magazine, Vol IV, May-October 1861, 260.

<sup>161</sup> Colesworthy Grant, *Anglo-Indian Domestic Life*, (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1862) 9.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 92-93.

said, 'Pigs! The Queen Empress has sent me a number of cats, which I now distribute among you.'<sup>163</sup> While Burne regarded this story as 'almost too good for implicit credence', he related another similar near-disaster he, himself, apparently witnessed on the occasion of Lord Canning's first Darbar as Viceroy in November 1861. Canning delivered an address to the Princes who were to receive the Star of India, with the 'dignity and choice of language for which he was noted'. He thanked them for their support during the mutiny and stressed the importance of abolishing female infanticide, of building roads and railways in their territories and of moving on in the paths of virtue and civilization. His 'fine address' was 'unfortunately translated ... by the then Foreign Secretary, who was an indifferent Hindustani scholar'. According to Burne's recollection the translation went as follows, 'Lord Sahib fermata hai, Salaam. Tum log badzat hai. Chokri mat maro. Rasta banao. Chalo. Bas. Salaam'. Canning stood in 'mute surprise at his long and graceful speech being translated in such tiny sentences', and muttered, 'Certainly Hindustani must be a very comprehensive language'. The day was saved by 'a clever Baboo of the Foreign Office' who was 'put up to do the real translation'.<sup>164</sup>

In 1887, Lt-Colonel Atwill Curtois noted that examination candidates frequently used 'inappropriate words', and that their pronunciation was 'very bad.'<sup>165</sup> In his satirical book of 1892, Edward Hamilton Aitken, (like Nassau Lees some four decades earlier), did not see *passing* the examinations) as proof of competence. He maintained that Indians gave up as hopeless, 'the strange sounds addressed to them' by the young *sahib* who had just passed his Higher Standard.<sup>166</sup> Aitken's irate 'Griff' provided an example of the kind of 'broken' sentences formed by many British, telling the unfortunate *hamal*, 'Ham roz roz hukm day, Tum roz roz hukm nay, Ooswasty lukree.'<sup>167</sup> The following year, Sara Jeannette Duncan, the wife of a British Civilian, devoted a chapter of her novel, *Simple Adventures of a Memsahib*, to the British learning of Hindustani. She noted

The memsahib's Hindustani is ... not perfectly pure, entirely apart from questions of pronunciation, which she regulates somewhat imperiously. This is because she prefers to improve it by the admixture of a little English; and the effect upon the native mind is quite the same. ....She makes her own rules, and all the natives she knows are governed by them... Her constructions in the language are such as she pleases to place upon it; thus it is impossible for her to make mistakes.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Burne, *Memories*, 36. (misquoted somewhat in Cohn 'Representing Authority in Victorian India', 204, ed., Hobsbawm, *Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) Cohn also omits to mention Burne's doubts about the veracity of this story.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 40-41. 'The Lord Sahib says Greetings. You people are a bad lot. Don't kill girls. Build roads. Ok, that's all. Greetings'. Although it also uses the 'tum' rather than the more polite 'aap' form you would expect when addressing princes, this does not single out Indians for disrespect as he also uses the singular verb when referring to Canning!

<sup>165</sup> Curtois, *Manual*, i.

<sup>166</sup> Edward Hamilton Aitken, *Behind the Bungalow* (Calcutta: Thacker and Spink, 1892) 98.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 65. 'Every day we order give, every day you order no/not, therefore stick.'

<sup>168</sup> Duncan, *Memsahib*, 228.

Duncan went on to observe that, despite the existence of the Higher and Lower Standard examinations, there was ‘less difference between the Hindustani of Anglo-Indian ladies and Anglo-Indian gentlemen than one would expect’. The *sahib* was

...pleased to use much the same forms of speech as are common to the memsahib, and if he isn't understood he will know the reason why. The same delicate autocracy pervades the sahib's Hindustani as characterises most of his relations with his Indian fellow-subjects. He has subdued their language, as it were, to such uses as he thinks fit to put it, and if they do not choose to acquire it in this form, so much the more inconvenient for them. He can always get another kitmutgar.<sup>169</sup>

In 1898 the Officiating Secretary to the Board of Examiners made cutting criticisms of the standard to which many officers spoke Hindustani observing

Most of us know, and some of us know to their cost, the man who “can speak all right”... For my part I do not know what such conversationalists mean by “speaking all right”... Their speech consists principally of catch phrases from some *patois* or other, vilely pronounced... The result is amusing or heart-rending according to the frame of mind of the listener.<sup>170</sup>

He argued that the goal of learning the language was to attain a level where an officer could ‘converse in the language with fluency and ease if not with elegance’ and be able to ‘rapidly translate his English thoughts into Urdu’ in a ‘tolerably grammatical’ and ‘tolerably idiomatic’ manner. He admitted however that ‘even this degree of proficiency’ was ‘not often attained’. In 1907, Sir Charles Eliot, also acknowledged that the tendency of the majority of the British, to learn only the bare necessities of the language, resulted in ‘an ungrammatical jargon, consisting chiefly of malformed imperatives’. He contended that officers with any degree of linguistic scholarship numbered only a few, and were chiefly to be found in special departments devoted to education or science.<sup>171</sup> Writing in 1909, Douglas Craven Phillott, (like Nassau Lees and Aitken before him) again cast doubt on the fact that passing the examinations offered proof of officers’ competence, asking ‘How many candidates who pass the Higher Standard in Hindustani can talk fluently?’<sup>172</sup>

This apparent ‘inability’ of many officers to speak Hindustani well was a problem that endured until the very end of British rule. A 1940s Government of India booklet admonished officers that they needed to ‘accept the fact once and for all’ that Urdu was a foreign language, not a garbled form of English.<sup>173</sup> Echoing Colesworthy Grant some eighty years earlier, it went on to warn them that ‘a perfectly correct Urdu sentence pronounced in an English way’ might ‘fail to convey any meaning to Indian ears’, with the result, that the Indian would then be blamed for being ‘a fool’ for not understanding his ‘own language’.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 229-30.

<sup>170</sup> Wolseley Haig, *Hints*, 10.

<sup>171</sup> Eliot, (sic) Sir Charles, *Through India: Letters to the Westminster Gazette*, November 1907-January 1908, 50.

<sup>172</sup> Board of Examiners Calcutta, to the Board of Examiners, Madras, 28 November 1907, IOR/P/8156. Phillott interestingly compares this with the fact that those who took HS Pashto *did* speak it fluently.

<sup>173</sup> Board of Examiners, *Practical Approach*, 4.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 7.

In a curious reversal, however, even those British who were either unwilling or incapable of learning to speak the language with any degree of correctness, liked to embellish their English with it. In 1837, Shore observed scathingly.

A man constantly tells you of his having had a good *dour* after a jackal, till his horse could barely *chull*, being regularly *tukgia*. ... I have generally observed that those who know least of Hindostanee are the most keen to introduce what little they do know into their English discourse.<sup>175</sup>

In 1864, G.O Trevelyan drew attention to the consequences of this ‘custom’.

Anglo-Indians are, *naturally enough* wont to interlard their conversation with native words... The habit is so universal that a Governor-General fresh from home complained in a published order that he could not understand the reports of his own officials.<sup>176</sup>

Duncan, provided a similar example of the gratuitous use of Hindustani words in English, this time from the *memsahib’s* perspective.

One of her *kitmutgars* had been giving her trouble – she was afraid he was a bad *jat* of man – he was turning out a regular *budmash*. He attended to his *hookums* very well, but he was always getting into *golmals* with the other servants.<sup>177</sup>

The satirical verse of G.O. Trevelyan’s fictional ‘Competition Wallah’ would also have been quite incomprehensible to any British person who had not lived in India.

When from the *palkee* I descend  
 Too weary to rejoice  
 At sight of my *Mofussil* friend,  
 I cry with feeble voice,  
 Ere yet within the genial tub  
 I plunge my clammy brow  
 ‘*Qui hye*, Mahommed, brandy *shrub*,  
 ‘*Belattee pawnee lao!*’

As from *Cutcherry* home I spin,  
 Worn with the ceaseless rout  
 Of *mookhtars* quarrelling within  
 And *omedwans* without,  
 My servant catches from afar  
 The mandate, ‘*Juldee jao!*  
 ‘Hello there! Brandy, *kitmutgar*  
 ‘*Belattee pawnee lao!*’

It has been suggested that this British use of Hindustani in their English involved the ‘explicit intent of mockery or injury’, but even if this were so, it would only apply to situation where they were speaking to Indians.<sup>178</sup> It is understandable that some vocabulary which has a different shade of meaning from the English or no exact English equivalent would creep into the speech of the British

<sup>175</sup> Shore, *Essay on the Hindostanee Language*, IOR/H/790 1822-1858, 507-11.

<sup>176</sup> George Otto Trevelyan, *The Competition Wallah* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1864) 165.

<sup>177</sup> Duncan, *Memsahib*, 232.

<sup>178</sup> Devyani Sharma, ‘Hindi in British English’ R. Kothari and R. Snell ed., *Chutnefying English*, (New Delhi: Penguin, 2011) 9-11. Rank and file soldiers in British regiments did not have to take the examinations which were compulsory for officers commanding sepoy. They therefore, ‘picked up’ the language and often spoke a ‘hideous Hindustani’ rather like that of Steel’s John Ellison. Flora Annie Steel, *Voices in the Night* (London: Heinemann, 1900) 110 and 115.

in India, but quite why they chose to scatter their speech with it totally unnecessarily when talking to each other is puzzling.<sup>179</sup>

#### 4.5 Summary

The utility of Hindustani as a *lingua franca* generated a discourse of the necessity of learning it well from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was, however, accompanied from the outset by a second discourse, one of concern that it was not being learnt to the necessary or desired standard. This, in turn, spawned a third discourse, that of a notional 'Golden Era', when the British had learnt Hindustani to a much better level, linked to the idea of a time when closer, more harmonious relationships had existed between the British and Indians. Since all three discourses originated in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued, intertwined until the end of British rule, this suggests that the so-called 'Golden Era' existed only in the British imagination, and that there never had been a time when the majority of officers had a real mastery of Hindustani.

The apparent necessity to acquire a high level of command in the language, in order to perform their duty effectively, should, in theory, have acted as a powerful instrumental motivation for officers to do so. Yet, in practice, they seemed to lack such motivation, often approaching their studies very half-heartedly. A culture of instrumentalism and cram was created, whereby officers (especially in the military) sought to pass the compulsory examinations with as little effort as possible and, as soon as they had jumped through the required hoop, promptly forgot anything they did not use on a day-to-day basis.

The monetary rewards offered to improve officers' motivation were low, often only covering the cost of a *munshi* and text books and therefore proved insufficient to induce officers to take their studies beyond the compulsory level. Although, in theory, promotion depended on a competent knowledge of Hindustani, there were few posts which, in practice, required a high level of competence. Positions on the staff could be gained by passing only the compulsory examinations such as Higher Standard. The sanctions, while present in theory, were often, in both civil and military contexts, inconsistently applied and therefore carried little real weight. The fact that, along with the discourses of necessity, concern and the 'Golden Era', policies of rewards and sanctions were constantly being discussed from the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through to the 1940s, strongly suggests that they were at no point particularly successful.

The admissions by the British themselves, often in the form of memoirs, or satirical writings, coupled with the ever-present discourse of concern in the official archive, offers compelling evidence that many of them (as Cohn speculated) did not acquire a high level of competence in Hindustani. However, although it is probably true to say that only a very small

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<sup>179</sup> This is different from the rank and file soldiers who were trying in a very basic way to communicate with Indians. It is almost like being part of a club.

minority of civil or military officers never became accomplished scholars,<sup>180</sup> until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were required to learn Persian and Nagari scripts, to study literary set texts in both of them, and to decipher *arzis* in *Shikasta* and handwritten *Nagari*. However badly they did so, this was far from being Cohn's 'restricted code'. Based on the examples available, it would seem that there was a continuum. The likes of Bayley, Burton, Beames and Phillott would have been at the very top end, with hard workers such as Hervey, Burne, Bruce Hay, coming next, followed by those who like George Campbell had a 'rough but effective' facility, and gradually moving down to those who did the bare minimum, and spoke something approaching the stereotype of Anglo-Hindustani.

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<sup>180</sup> The India Proceedings between 1874 and 1922 make a monthly note of those passing High Proficiency or Degree of Honour and the numbers are indeed small as the table in Section 4.3 indicates.

## CHAPTER 5

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# THE BEASTLY URDU EXAM AND THE BEASTLY BAGH-O-BAHAR HOW IMPERATIVE WAS HINDUSTANI?

'Our languages are a reflection of ourselves'

*MK Gandhi*

### 5.0 Introduction

There is compelling evidence that the proficiency of many officers in Hindustani, fell far short of the ideals expressed in the discourse of the colonial archive. The question is why was there a lack of motivation to learn the language well and why, despite constant attempts, did the colonial state appear unable to remedy the situation? This chapter examines various factors which impacted on individual officers' learning of Hindustani. Section 1 examines, firstly, the idea that a special linguistic aptitude was needed and then looks at the effect that British attitudes towards India and Indians had on their learning of the language. The second section discusses how the inappropriateness of the curriculum, particularly in the form of the anachronistic and archaic literary set texts, impacted negatively on officers' learning of Hindustani. The final section examines, how various factors, including the spread of English in education and the administration, affected the perceived necessity for the British to acquire a high level of competence in Hindustani.

### 4.2 Aptitude and Attitudes

An explanation quite frequently put forward for the 'inability' of many officers to achieve a high level of competence in Hindustani, was, that in order to do so, a special linguistic aptitude was needed.<sup>1</sup> In 1858, the Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, expressed the view that not all officers possessed such aptitude, arguing

A talent for acquiring languages is as much a gift, as is a taste for music, painting or any other accomplishment, and without that talent, no amount of study will render a man a linguist, whilst with it no stringent orders are necessary to induce an Officer to pursue it.

Not only did he see acquiring a language as a 'talent', it was apparently rather a dubious one, as he believed that 'the expert horseman and keen sportsman' was 'generally the best practical Soldier' and that language study was incompatible with 'manly pursuits'. He thought it preferable to 'encourage a young Officer in the pursuit of healthy outdoor occupations and amusement' which developed 'his bodily as well as his mental faculties' rather than in 'sedentary in-door employment, such as a study of languages involves'.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Robert Napier, writing in 1864, also saw language learning as a gift and argued that if officers were required to pass the Higher Standard, it might 'deprive the Staff Corps of some valuable Officers having an aptitude for Colloquial acquirements, but not gifted with a capacity for

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of aptitude in second and foreign language acquisition, see, for example, Larsen-Freeman and Long, *Introduction*, 167-172.

<sup>2</sup> Commander-in-Chief, Bombay to the Government of Bombay Military Department, 20 January 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.



learning a foreign language grammatically'.<sup>3</sup> The belief that officers needed a special linguistic aptitude to learn Hindustani well was an enduring one. In an article of 1919, Major Benson-Cooke suggested

To become sufficiently proficient in a foreign language to be able to appreciate its literature requires ... a real bent for languages, a peculiar disposition which is not often found in the average man. For those who are fortunate enough to possess this ability there are the further examinations in the language, the rewards for which enable a student to pursue his *hobby*, with the added prospect of profit at the end of it.<sup>4</sup>

In 1922, Colonel J.S.E. Western remarked that it was 'strange how sparsely the linguistic talent seems to be distributed amongst the English people',<sup>5</sup> and in 1941, a booklet produced by the Board of Examiners, Simla, warned, 'There are very few, if any, short-cuts to linguistic proficiency, and the attainment of an easy idiomatic fluency in Urdu is the prize won only by the gifted few.'<sup>6</sup>

Whilst the supposed need for a special linguistic *aptitude* may have provided many British officers with a convenient excuse for their failure to develop a good command of the language, of far greater import were their *attitudes* to India and Indians.<sup>7</sup> It is commonly accepted that British attitudes towards Indians underwent major changes during the 1820s and 1830s, but it is notable that the attitudes of both students and staff towards the Indian *munshis* employed at Haileybury and Addiscombe, during the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were already quite disparaging.<sup>8</sup> It has also been argued that at Fort William college there was 'a relationship of *sahibs* and *munshis*', and that disrespect towards, and mistreatment of the latter by students was not uncommon.<sup>9</sup>

Sir Charles Wilkins, who was the Visiting Examiner between 1807-1836, at both Addiscombe and Haileybury, clearly had little confidence in the abilities of the *munshis* employed there asserting

The Natives however are but of little consequence... for whatever may be their Abilities, the Listlessness and Indifference, peculiar to the Asiatick Character, render them incapable of making the Exertions necessary in a Teacher for maintaining the order and authority in the Class and conquering the tedium of teaching the dull and reluctant Pupil, as well as the clever and willing.<sup>10</sup>

In 1816, Charles Stewart, professor of Persian and Hindustani at Haileybury, claimed such was 'the prejudice of Young Men again the Tuition of a Native of India' that 'only the few steady ones' derived any benefit from his lectures'.<sup>11</sup> As far as the authorities of both colleges were concerned, the experiment to employ Indian teachers proved to be more trouble than it was worth, and was, therefore, not to be repeated. According to Fisher

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<sup>3</sup> Draft General Order 737, October 1863, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>4</sup> Benson-Cooke, 'Higher and Lower Standard', 98. Emphasis added.

<sup>5</sup> Western, *Reminiscences*, 101.

<sup>6</sup> Board of Examiners, *Practical Approach*, 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> It is widely accepted in language acquisition research that attitudes towards the target language culture and people have a significant impact on the success of learners. See for example Colin Baker, *Attitudes and Language* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1992) and Larsen-Freeman and Long, *Introduction*, 175-184.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004) 112-132.

<sup>9</sup> Sisir Kumar Das, *Sahibs and Munshis* (Calcutta: Papyrus, 2001) 123.

<sup>10</sup> College Committee Reports, quoted in Fisher, *Counterflows*, 131.

<sup>11</sup> College Committee References, quoted in Fisher, *Counterflows*, 124.

The college authorities had decided that the alleged disruption these Muslim Indian men had on a student's moral education outweighed their linguistic advantages as 'native speakers. ... [i]t was British ideology rather than the lack of Indian scholars that prevented their further employment.<sup>12</sup>

Further evidence to suggest the existence of negative towards Indians in Britain prior to the 1820s, can be found in the address of the Chairman of the Directors at Haileybury, in 1817. He cautioned students against prejudice 'against the Natives from difference of Color, of Language, of manners and customs' and 'against letting their minds be prepossessed by the reports which of late years had been industriously circulated in [Britain] to their prejudice'.<sup>13</sup> His warnings apparently had no long term effect. By 1856, when John Beames began his studies at Haileybury negative attitudes towards Indians had become institutionalized there. Despite the fact that many of the students were sons of civil and military officers, and had been born in India, Beames noted

India was not talked of or thought of ... nor did we as a rule care or know or seek to know anything about it. ... Even the study of Oriental languages ... was carried on as though we had no personal interest in the countries in which those languages were spoken, and no attempt was made to practise talking them or to acquire any practical familiarity with them. If at any time one wanted to know what sort of place India was, or what one's future life or work there was to be like, it was impossible to find anyone who could give the requisite information, though three of the Professors, Eastwick, Ouseley and Leith had spent many years in that country. All we knew was that it was 'beastly hot' and that there were 'niggers' there...<sup>14</sup>

Whilst prejudices against Indians undoubtedly existed prior to the 1820s and 1830s, it is undeniable that those decades wrought significant changes. The advent of steam reduced both the time and danger involved in the journey between the two countries and British officials increasingly began to view their life in India as temporary. As England became relatively nearer, the outlook and habits of British officers changed. In 1832 Frederick Shore observed

... It is not at all uncommon in society to hear a young man, who has been only a year or two in India, who is totally ignorant of the native character or even language, beyond a little Anglo-Hindoostanee jargon, say, that he "hates the natives;" and insist that they have not a single good quality but almost every bad one. ... One of the expressions very commonly used, and meant as one of dissatisfaction, is, "Oh, he is fond of the natives!" ... To treat the natives civilly - to study their language, manners, and customs - all these seem ... in the estimation of many of the English in India, to be degrading to their dignity.<sup>15</sup>

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a sense that the prestige and status of the British in India, and hence the continuation of their rule, rested upon the ability speak Hindustani well. In 1820, Gilchrist asserted that *sepoys* would 'pay proportionate respect to the person who speaks their vernacular speech, the most or the least like a gentlemen' and that, particularly in the cavalry, a British officer who happened to be 'a mere jargonist' would be exposed 'to the contempt and ridicule of the troopers under his authority'.<sup>16</sup> In 1825, Lord Amherst, impressed upon students at Fort William College the desirability of being able to address an Indian 'in a language that he

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<sup>12</sup> Fisher, *Counterflows*, 131.

<sup>13</sup> College Committee Minutes quote in Fisher, *Counterflows*, 125.

<sup>14</sup> Beames, *Memoirs*, 63-4.

<sup>15</sup> Shore, *Notes*, 10-13. This essay was written in March 1832.

<sup>16</sup> Gilchrist, *Ultimatum*, xiii-xiv.

himself would not be ashamed to use.<sup>17</sup> Frederick Shore, writing in 1837, suggested that if an Englishman spoke ‘broken Hindustani’ the native would answer him ‘in a careless way’ thus indicating a lack of ‘proper’ respect for the ruler.<sup>18</sup> In 1842, Henry Kerr, quoting Shore, observed, ‘no native servant can ever believe a foreigner ... to be a gentleman, nor will he really respect him, unless he can speak Hindoostanee as one of their own native gentlemen would’.<sup>19</sup> It has been argued that the need to speak Hindustani ‘like a native’ generated ‘an inherent anxiety’ regarding potential loss of face.<sup>20</sup> The colonial context, unlike that of the nation-state, produced the anomalous (and potentially embarrassing) situation where the dominant group, the colonizers, had (with regard to Hindustani) a smaller amount of ‘linguistic capital’, than the colonized.<sup>21</sup> To acquire sufficient ‘linguistic capital’ to have the ‘authority to speak’ and to avoid any embarrassing loss of face and prestige, it was necessary for the British to acquire a proficient, sophisticated command of the language, as near as possible to the level of a native speaker. During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, this anxiety regarding the acquirement of such ‘linguistic capital’, and the need to speak the language ‘like a gentleman’, gradually disappeared from the colonial discourse.

The huge expansion in British territory of the 1840s and 1850s, culminating in the annexations of Sindh, Panjab and Awadh, increased their confidence as ‘superiors and conquerors’. With confidence came an arrogance<sup>22</sup> which was, at least partially, responsible for a diminution in the perceived need to learn Hindustani well. During the feverish introspection following the ‘mutiny’, the ‘ignorance of the native languages’ was seen as a reason for the lack of ‘intercourse’ with Indians, which, in turn, was cited as a contributory factor to the uprisings. A letter to *The Times* of 1858 stated.

One of the greatest difficulties with which we have to contend in the government of India arises out of the fact that there we are, in a peculiar sense, aliens in language. It is surely a curious result of bringing England nearer to India,<sup>23</sup> that it should be the means of severing the Englishman from the

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<sup>17</sup> Governor-General’s Address to Students of Fort William College 1825, *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, Vol. 21, 1826, 218.

<sup>18</sup> Shore, *Notes* Vol.1, 27.

<sup>19</sup> Kerr, *Advice*, 56.

<sup>20</sup> Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism*, 41. Tariq Rahman maintains that such anxiety was ‘confined to the highest British officials’ and that ‘ordinary English people - secure in knowledge of imperial power and racial superiority - deliberately made linguistic mistakes to show their contempt for the language’. Rahman, *Hindi to Urdu*, 212-213. I would disagree with this. As shown, in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century British officials needed to speak to educated and influential Indians and this generated a perceived need to speak the language well and hence an anxiety. Although this later changed, and, as I have argued, there was an arrogance which led to them not learn it well, this is not the same as deliberately making mistakes. The arrogance led them not to care whether they learnt it correctly or not – not to learn it correctly and then deliberately make mistakes. Whilst they may well have had contempt for Indians and Hindustani, most spoke it badly because they had no need to speak it well, rather than out of a desire to show contempt.

<sup>21</sup> Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 17-19.

<sup>22</sup> Mason, *Matter of Honour*, 175.

<sup>23</sup> It has been argued that as a result of time-space compression ‘spatial disparities are heightened as relative distance is “annihilated” between certain places at the cost of others’. Ahuja, *Pathways*, 65. Extending this to social relationships as well as spaces, the ‘time-space compression’ which occurred as a result of steam travel, while bringing India closer to Britain in terms of time, simultaneously had the paradoxical effect of distancing Britons socially from Indians.

native, of widening the vast gulf that separates the European from the Indian. Yet such is the fact, and it is to our ignorance of the native dialects, it is to the want of intercourse which that ignorance involves, that we must in great measure attribute the tremendous surprise with which we had to face the mutiny of last year.<sup>24</sup>

If increasingly negative attitudes and arrogance were part of the causes of the rebellion, one of its effects was to deepen the lack of British trust in Indians, and to harden the unfavourable British perceptions of them which had developed over the course of the previous several decades. The hysterical outpourings of the British press, during and after the ‘mutiny’, the totally disproportionate British reprisals, and the subsequent flood of late 19<sup>th</sup> anti-Indian ‘Mutiny novels’, indicate that, despite the rhetoric of needing to learn Hindustani better in order to build bridges, the gulf between the British and Indians was continuing to widen. In 1860, Nassau Lees, Secretary to the Board of Examiners Calcutta, drew attention to, ‘the isolated position of Europeans in India, and the present insurmountable obstacles to their associating on terms of familiar equality with the natives of the country’.<sup>25</sup> In the same year he elaborated the problems this posed in acquiring the language.

Europeans in India labour under very great disadvantages in acquiring a knowledge of the native languages. They do not – indeed, for many obvious reasons, they cannot associate with the people of the country on terms of such intimacy, as foreigners would in any country of Europe. Differences of creed, habits, manners, position, education civilization ... all, place an insuperable barrier between them, that cannot, at present, be effectually broken down ...<sup>26</sup>

In 1862, Lieutenant-General Mansfield, Commander-in-Chief, Bombay observed

... intercourse with the natives of both sexes – as also attachment to India, her customs and oriental existence generally – has undeniably been on the wane since the introduction of Steam Navigation has reduced the time occupied by a passage to England from four or five months to three or four weeks. India is no longer the home it was considered by the British Official classes. All the spare time and spare rupees are consequently spent in, or saved, for, England instead of India.<sup>27</sup>

His sentiments were echoed by Monier Williams in 1878.

... Englishmen, by reason of a concurrence of changed conditions, are certainly living in India more like strangers ... who have no abiding resting-place there. Increased facilities of communication between Europe and Asia, which ought to have drawn the two races closer together, have only tended to widen the separation between them. In former days it was not uncommon for a civilian or military officer to remain a quarter of a century in India without going home. He had then time and opportunity to identify himself with the people ... now if he only has three months’ leave he rushes to England ... that he may spend six weeks in the old country.<sup>28</sup>

The culture of ‘splendid isolation’ was one which increased during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1919, Major Benson-Cooke observed that on long route marches young officers talked ‘solely with another of their kind’ or rode ‘in solitary state on their ponies, bored and longing for the march to be over’.<sup>29</sup>

Major-General Sir Charles Dalton, who served in the Indian army in the 1940s, remarked, ‘We had

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<sup>24</sup> Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 210-11.

<sup>25</sup> Minute by Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 3 July 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>26</sup> Nassau Lees, *Guide*, v.

<sup>27</sup> Minute of Commander in Chief Bombay, (n.d.) 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>28</sup> Monier Williams, *Modern India and the Indians* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1891) 221-2.

<sup>29</sup> Benson-Cooke, ‘Higher and Lower Standard’, 99.

absolutely no intercourse with the Indians except the servants. The Army and the Civil Service were completely in a world apart. We were British and they were Indians and never the twain shall meet'.<sup>30</sup>

From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the development of theories of racial inferiority and superiority further affected British attitudes towards India and Indians. Although such theories had been in existence much earlier,<sup>31</sup> the publication in 1859, of Darwin's, *On the Origin of Species*, heralded a new era, in which they, apparently, received the backing of 'scientific' evidence. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the British had deemed themselves superior by virtue of possessing superior technology and scientific knowledge. Indians were inferior because their, previously sophisticated, culture had stagnated. By bestowing on them the gift of enlightened western knowledge, they were, however, believed capable of attaining a level of culture and morality on a par with that of the British. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the view of Indian inferiority as temporary and rectifiable, moved increasingly towards the notion that they were *inherently* racially, culturally and morally inferior, a state which was, therefore, unalterable.

By 1877 the term 'Social Darwinism' had made its appearance in Europe, and from the 1880s onwards, 'Scientific Racism', was attracting increasing support. Linked to this, theories of craniology sparked publications such as those of Herbert Risley.<sup>32</sup> In the Indian military, in particular, such theories were espoused by the handbooks written for British officers describing the various 'races' of Indians. Rice's 1887 article, *Our Native army in Bengal*, is an example of the stereotyping that arose. Pathans although they had 'the qualities which go to make up an ideal soldier' were also described as 'dirty in their habits ... seldom if ever taking a bath' whereas the Panjabi Mohammedans lacked 'force of character and independence'.<sup>33</sup>

The British belief in the innate inferiority of Indians inevitably influenced their view of Hindustani itself. In 1893, a retired civilian, R.G. Hobbes, described it thus

Hindustanee at best is a barbarous idiom; ... Jacquemont well describes it when he calls it a complication of "nasal sound, which scarcely differs in anything from a balked sneeze," and "guttural taken second hand from the Arabs, which require throats of rusty iron, parched with thirst," to enunciate. It gives you no key to the secrets of a valuable literature, and its acquisition is only advantageous as it exercises the faculties, and enables you to form some idea of what is going on around you.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Dalton, Major General Sir Charles, Interview n.d. *British Voices from South Asia* <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/exhibits/e-exhibits/india/intro.htm> Accessed 23.6.10.

<sup>31</sup> For example those of Carl Linnaeus and Georges Cuvier in the 18<sup>th</sup> century which put white races at the top, yellow in the middle and black at the bottom.

<sup>32</sup> Herbert Risley, *The People of India* (London: Thacker Spink and Co., 1915).

<sup>33</sup> H.C.P. Rice, 'Our Native Army in Bengal', *Macmillan's Magazine*, Vol. LV. London, Macmillan and Co., 1887, 70-71.

<sup>34</sup> Retired Officer, *Reminiscences of Seventy Years*, Vol. 1 (London: Elliot Stock, 1893) 367-8. Jacquemont adds that even when you overcome these difficulties you are left with a patois containing no literature which is of no use outside the country where it is spoken. Victor Jacquemont, *Correspondance de V. Jacquemont* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1861) 99-100.

Colonel Lord, who joined the Indian army in 1915, was more succinct, simply labelling it ‘a rotten language’.<sup>35</sup> Much later, recalling his Urdu classes in the army in 1942, the Urdu scholar, Ralph Russell sympathised with the *munshi* ‘who had the thankless task of teaching Urdu to unenthusiastic British officers most of whom didn’t see why they should waste time and effort on this inferior language’.<sup>36</sup>

Linked to concepts of scientific racism and the inherent inferiority of Indians, was the belief that they were ‘essentially different’ from the British and therefore impossible to understand.<sup>37</sup> In 1873, James Routledge, editor of *The Friend of India* and correspondent for *The Times of India*, wrote

A favourite expression among a class of our countrymen in India is, “You never understand the native character: when you have been five years in the country, you think that you perfectly understand it; when you have been ten you doubt that you do so; when you have been twenty, you are quite satisfied that you do not understand it in the least.”<sup>38</sup>

An Indian Police Official, T. C. Arthur, writing in 1894 observed, ‘very few of us get to know anything of the masses of natives, their habits, their modes of thought, their inner lives. Betwixt us and them “there is a great gulf fixed”’.<sup>39</sup> Some twenty years later, Anderson and Subedar similarly observed that very few of the officials running India ‘ever acquired any satisfactory insight into the habits, customs, or languages of people they were sent to govern’.<sup>40</sup>

As the century wore on, knowing and understanding Indians became seen not only as less important, but, in a complete reversal of earlier views, as distinctly undesirable. A true understanding of the Indian mind and character would call into question the ‘essential difference’ between ruler and ruled.

‘Knowing the Oriental’ was essential in order to control the Orient. Knowing the Oriental too well weakened that epistemological and political barrier whose function was to keep people, rulers and ruled, in their proper places. Ignorance, and a protestation that the East was fundamentally unknowable, might be a strategy for avoiding too assimilative a contact, and too symmetrical a dialogue, with it’.<sup>41</sup>

There was, therefore, a self-imposed limit to British knowledge, a limit which rendered Indians ‘essentially unknowable’.<sup>42</sup> Men such as Kipling’s fictional policeman Strickland, who ‘stepped down

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<sup>35</sup> Colonel Lord, 124<sup>th</sup> Baluchistan Infantry 1915, Interview 2 July 1975, by Professor Ellinwood. <http://www.karachi.s-asian.cam.ac.uk/archive/audio/interviewlistl.html>. Accessed 15.8.10.

<sup>36</sup> Ralph Russell, *Findings Keepings* (London: Shola Press, 2001) 205. Emphasis added.

<sup>37</sup> See Said’s discussion of the Earl of Cromer and knowledge of Egyptians, Edward Said *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 2003) 38-9.

<sup>38</sup> James Routledge, ‘Our Present Position and Probable Future in India’, *Macmillan’s Magazine*, London, MacMillan and Co., 1873, 122.

<sup>39</sup> T.C.Arthur, *Reminiscences of an Indian Police Official* (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, 1894) 101.

<sup>40</sup> G. Anderson and M.Subedar, *Expansion of British India 1818-1858* (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd, 1918) 115.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>42</sup> Douglas Kerr, ‘Not Knowing the Oriental’, *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 5, 2 December 2003, 36.

into the brown crowd and was ‘swallowed up’,<sup>43</sup> and his real-life counterpart, Richard Burton<sup>44</sup> went beyond this limit, thereby abolishing the ‘prestigious distance’ which sustained British authority.<sup>45</sup>

Extending the concepts of ‘knowing Indians’ and ‘essential difference’ to language, if the British spoke Hindustani fluently, accurately, and idiomatically, with good pronunciation and intonation - in other words like Indians did - this would, inevitably, erode such difference. It was, therefore, something to be avoided.<sup>46</sup> The perceived need to preserve the ‘essential difference’ between ruler and ruled, which necessitated the reflection of a very British ‘self’, rendered speaking ‘perfect Hindustani’ not only extremely difficult, but extremely undesirable. This, perhaps, goes some way to explaining why, despite hearing the language around them every day, they frequently pronounced it so badly. The Roman-Urdu Journal of 1880 commented

As a rule Englishmen bring the pronunciation of all foreign languages to their own insular standard. However thoroughly they may master a foreign literature there is generally something in their speech which *betrays their nationality*. The words sa-t and sath sound as different ... as the words seven and sixty to ours; yet not one Englishman in ten thousand can distinguish with certainty one of these sounds from the other.<sup>47</sup>

Speaking imperfect Hindustani with English pronunciation was, perhaps, not as the editors of the *Journal* suggested, a question of the British ‘betraying their nationality’ but of preserving the ‘essential difference’ between themselves and Indians, whether deliberately or subconsciously. This contention is borne out by the perception of children’s native-speaker-like acquisition of Hindustani as a vice rather than a virtue. In his Anglo-Indian’s Vade Mecum, E.C.P. Hull tells us

The acquaintance of English children with the vernacular tongues, cannot, in my opinion, be too strongly deprecated; ... such acquaintance will interfere with their proper cultivation of, and purity of accent in, their mother tongue; give a *disagreeable, whining intonation, and a nasal enunciation*. Some parents ... point with pride to Johnny’s or Charley’s progress in ... Hindustani; but there is in truth no real cause for congratulation. Far better to keep them totally ignorant at their age of so muddy a stream, which, if required, can be much *more correctly and intelligently* learned in after-life on their return to India after an English education.<sup>48</sup>

For learning ‘more correctly and intelligently’ we can perhaps substitute ‘more Britishly’. Once children had safely developed a British linguistic *habitus* and were, therefore, immune to acquiring anything approaching Indian pronunciation and intonation, it was safe for them to learn Hindustani.

## 5.2 An Inappropriate Curriculum

A further barrier to the acquisition of a high level of proficiency in Hindustani by British officers lies in the content and nature of the examinations they were required to undergo. According to

<sup>43</sup> Rudyard Kipling, ‘Miss Youghal’s Sais’, *Plain Tales from the Hills* (London: Penguin, 1994) 29.

<sup>44</sup> See 6.1 for Burton’s own views on this.

<sup>45</sup> Kerr, ‘Not Knowing’, 43.

<sup>46</sup> Added to this the British ‘linguistic habitus’ and ‘bodily hexis’ would have militated against them acquiring the language to anything like the level of a native speaker. Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009) 12-17 and 81-89.

<sup>47</sup> Editorial, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol III, No 22, March 1880, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 5-7. Emphasis added.

<sup>48</sup> E.C.P.Hull, *European in India* (London: C. Kegan Paul & Co, 1878) 141. Emphasis added.

Peter Friedlander, the ‘most remarkable thing about the development of the teaching of Hindustani during the Raj period was the way in which it revolved around a tension between language and literature’.<sup>49</sup> Such a ‘tension’ is manifested in the mismatch between the literary/scholarly approach of the examination syllabuses and the practical needs of civil and military officers on the ground. This mismatch originated in the classical approach to language learning, (originating from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), based on the study of literary texts. The Hindustani texts compiled at Fort William College in the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were all of a literary nature, and the word literature, as opposed to language, appears frequently in much of the early documentation of both Fort William and Haileybury. In a letter of 1806 to the Government of Bengal, the Court of Directors noted that students at the new East India Company college would be enabled ‘to acquire a competent knowledge in Oriental Literature’ and in the same letter they expressed their desire to ‘afford all suitable encouragement to natives versed in Oriental Literature’ to attach themselves to Fort William College.<sup>50</sup>

The literary/scholarly approach had a certain logic in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as it accorded well with the idea of gaining a sophisticated knowledge of Hindustani, in order maintain British status and prestige in the eyes of Indians. Such an attainment was seen as

...fitting them for a more easy and perfect performance of their ordinary professional duty, and qualifying them for occasions which the Military Service frequently presents, of conducting important affairs, requiring both personal and written intercourse with Native Chiefs and Princes, qualify them also, to undertake, with great advantage to the Public, and with much honor and benefit to themselves, Political deputations and commissions, not immediately connected with their Military functions.<sup>51</sup>

Despite such lofty ideals, the literary/scholarly approach accorded less well with the practical needs of the majority of British officers, either civil or military, and it was not long before it began to attract criticism. In 1817, when Robert Walker, a student at Fort William College, was on the verge of being dismissed from the College for ‘confirmed idleness’, he wrote to the College Council explaining that his failure was, in fact, down to ill-health. His letter also contained a damning indictment of the language teaching at the college.

The Languages as taught in the College would have been utterly unintelligible in other Districts as well as where I was employed to which may be imputed the cause why so many reputed excellent Oriental Scholars required the aid of Interpreters.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Friedlander, *Textbooks*, 54. I would modify this argument slightly to suggest, firstly, that this was less the case in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and, secondly, that it was not so much between language and literature *per se*, but between the ideological and pragmatic purposes of learning the language.

<sup>50</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bengal, 21 May 1806, IOR/F/4/300/6934.

<sup>51</sup> Minto’s speech to students at FWC Disputations, 1813, Roebuck, *Annals*, 349.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Walker to Secretary to the College Council, 16 June 1817, IOR/F/4/580/14105.

Munshi Lutfullah’s later account of his meeting with John Shakespear at India House in 1844 bears this out. He addressed Shakespear in Hindustani and noted, ‘But alas! I found that he could not understand me, nor could he utter a word in that language in which he had composed several very useful books’. Edward Eastwick, ed., *Autobiography of Lutfullah a Mohamedan Gentleman* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1858) 389. An anonymous article in the *Calcutta Review* of 1846 classified the British into two types – those who comprehended the languages in books and those who were understood by the generality of hearers. Quoted in Das, *Sahibs*, 82.



In 1824 the Government of Bombay's suggestion to the Bombay Examination Committee that they adopt an approach similar to that used at the College of Fort William for examinations provoked a similar criticism. The Committee's priority, was that civil servants should be able to converse with 'a tolerable degree of fluency in speaking' so that they would be 'able to carry on an intercourse with the Natives on all common Commercial, Revenue and Judicial subjects without the assistance of an interpreter'.<sup>53</sup> They therefore deemed the College's examinations unsuitable for the following reasons.

The College ... seems to direct the students attention *more to a literary than a practical knowledge* of languages. But for the transaction of public business, though it is no doubt necessary that the gentlemen examined should be well grounded in each language, still the object of principal importance is the facility with which they can carry on an intercourse with the Natives, and this knowledge cannot be acquired from books but solely from practice.<sup>54</sup>

In a Minute of 1854, William Nassau Lees, the first Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, also separated the practical from the scholarly stating, 'Fair linguistic attainments are those only which are necessary to enable a Civil Servant to perform his duties efficiently; ... If it is considered either ornamental or desirable to have Oriental scholars in the service, let encouragement be held out; ... But the two must not be confounded'.<sup>55</sup> Nearly a century later, in 1941 the Board of Examiners, Simla, regarding *military* officers, stated in remarkably similar terms

In India it is a knowledge of real Urdu that is essential; a mere academic knowledge ... is of little practical value, apart from the fact that it involves years of patient and leisurely study. No. What is expected of the Indian Army Officer is that he should acquire as soon as he can a sufficiently practical command of the language to express his thoughts in it *simply, using the fewest number of words possible, in such a way as to be immediately intelligible* to any Urdu speaker unacquainted with English.<sup>56</sup>

Central to the literary/scholarly approach were the set text-books which were produced at Fort William College in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The two most important and long-standing of these were *Prem Sagur*<sup>57</sup> and, more especially, *Bagh-o-Bahar*.<sup>58</sup> In 1846, Duncan Forbes was still full of praise for *Bagh-o-Bahar*, confidently asserting,

The Bagh o Bahar is universally allowed to be the best work that has been yet composed in the Hindustani Language. For nearly half a century it has maintained its pre-eminence as a text-book for the examination of the Company's junior servants.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Extract Bombay Public Consultations, 22 December 1824, IOR/F/4/1015/27842.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Nassau Lees, *Instruction*, 16.

<sup>56</sup> Board of Examiners, *Practical Approach*, 3. This is startlingly similar to Gilchrist's advice to young officers back in 1809: 'The Hindoostanee being naturally very concise ... as few words as possible should be used at first, to prevent bad pronunciation or worse construction from confounding the hearer and thereby defeating the speaker's wishes entirely'. Gilchrist, *Dialogues*, xlv.

<sup>57</sup> This translates as 'Ocean of Love' and is an account of various exploits of Krishna taken from the 10<sup>th</sup> book of the *Bhagavata Purana*.

<sup>58</sup> *Bagh-o-Bahar* means 'Garden and Spring'. It centres on the stories of four dervishes and King Azad Bakht, and involves many supernatural events.

<sup>59</sup> Forbes, *Bagh-o-Bahar*, i. He repeated this in the 1859 preface to the Romanized edition.

A year later, Edward Eastwick observed, 'The best specimen of Hindústání with which we are acquainted is the Bágh-o-Bahár'.<sup>60</sup> From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, *Bagh-o-Bahar* was coming under increasing fire from various quarters. Writing as Indophilus to *The Times* in 1858, Charles Trevelyan labelled it 'pedantic, puerile and licentious', and argued forcefully that, 'it should be discarded as a text-book, and manuals should be compiled more closely representing the actual language of the camp and country'.<sup>61</sup> In 1862, the Bombay Examining Board criticized its efficacy in producing an officer who could speak the language intelligibly, maintaining 'the Bagh-o-Bahar will fill his head with words and phrases, which if he ever hereafter uses, he invariably finds that he is never understood'.<sup>62</sup> They similarly objected to the fact that officers were required to translate into Hindustani in a style which should 'assimilate as nearly as possible' to the style of *Bagh-o-Bahar*, on the grounds that 'should they be called upon to make translations for the benefit of Sepoys or others of this Presidency' they would 'in following this style, be unintelligible'.<sup>63</sup> In 1864 Trevelyan repeated his criticism of both *Bagh-o-Bahar* and *Prem Sagar*, arguing

These books were written in languages manufactured by the Moonshees and Pundits of Fort William, according to certain ideal standards of former days. They are unintelligible to the body of the people, and after passing the examination, a student is still unable to communicate freely.<sup>64</sup>

Fitzedward Hall, writing in 1870, was no less scathing about *Prem Sagar* observing

...this work has been suffered to hold place, as a text-book, down to the present day. But its accidental repute is out of all proportion to its intrinsic merit. The language is not only freely provincial but affectedly puristic; much of it is antiquated, and some portion of it is obsolete. Its style, which perpetually sacrifices correctness of grammar, perspicuity, and every other characteristic of good writing, to secure a rhythmical cadence, is such as no rational being ever employed for practical purposes; and its subject matter alternates between insipid puerility and drivelling superstition.<sup>65</sup>

As for *Sinhasan Battisi* and *Baital Pachisi*, 'their pervading silliness apart', he found them 'gravely objectionable on the score of indelicacy', and suggested that they might be 'dispensed with as aids for acquiring a knowledge of the Hindi'.<sup>66</sup>

A former Bengal Civilian, G. Graham, writing in 1878, described the set texts as being selected with a view to prevent young civilians gaining a practical knowledge of the language. He observed

Hindustani and Bengali fell to my lot. In the former the "Bagh o Bahar" was our principal text-book, the language being high-flown Persian substantives and adjectives, with here and there a Hindustani verb – the delight of the "moonshees" or tutors appointed by Government, most unpractical of teachers, but useless for us learners. A thorough knowledge of the above would perhaps help me to appear to advantage in an interview with an educated Mohamedan gentleman, but would be no aid in the conduct of a criminal case or a local inquiry in a Behar village.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Eastwick, *Grammar*, ii.

<sup>61</sup> Trevelyan, *Indophilus*, 17.

<sup>62</sup> Minute by Bombay Examiners, September 1862, IOR L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>63</sup> Bombay Examiners to Nassau Lees, 15 September 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>64</sup> Minute of C.E. Trevelyan, 28 January 1864, IOR L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>65</sup> Fitzedward Hall, *Hindi Reader* (Hertford, Stephen Austin, 1870), vii.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, viii.

<sup>67</sup> Graham, *Life in the Mofussil*, 23. He arrived in India in the 1860s but doesn't specify the date.

In 1881, Pandit Jwala Nath, drew attention to the changes in the language itself and the need to provide text-books that were suitable for officers' needs.

The present Urdu differs from that used about 75 years ago; several terms and phrases then in use have now become obsolete. ... I therefore do not hesitate to say that officers will learn better from the works of modern authors than from the past. These text books must be selected in accordance with this view, in order to qualify the officers for their present and immediate requirements. It is remarkable however, that old text books have been retained for almost three quarters of a century; and though the introduction of new text books may be of expense to Government at first, immediate and beneficial results will be forthcoming and visible in the pupils who will be taught from them. ... In the Bagh-o-Bahar I find many such terms which are of little use at present.<sup>68</sup>

As is evident from the certificate (below) issued to Lieutenant Bayliss in 1883, the Hindustani examinations not only continued to revolve heavily around these 'old text-books', but also continued to demand that the translations from English into Hindustani should be in the antiquated literary style of those works.<sup>69</sup>

Proceedings of the Board of Examiners on the Examination of *Lieutenant*  
*C. G. Bayliss, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. E. S. Regt.* in Hindustani held this day  
by the Higher Standard, agreeably to Section XXIV, Bengal Army Regulations.

<i>Written—English into Hindustani in the Persian character, and in language similar to that of the <u>Bagh-o-Bahár.</u></i>	<i>Written—English into Hindi in the Deva Nágari character, and in language similar to that of the <u>Prem Ságar.</u></i>
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The military authorities had long recognized the unsuitability of such texts and when, in 1895, the examinations were revised, the Government of India Military Department, took the opportunity to ask the Board of Examiners if it would not be possible

...to have some work in thoroughly good Urdu for the study of candidates, which might for example give an account of the Muhammadan and Hindu religions, and describe the manners and customs of natives of India, instead of the Bagh-o-Bahar, which apart from its literary merits is of the smallest interest of usefulness.<sup>70</sup>

Although the requirement, that written exercises from English into Urdu, should 'assimilate' to the literary style of *Bagh-o-Bahar* was, at this point, removed, the text-book itself, remained firmly in place. The sentiments expressed by Bruce Hay, a young officer serving with a Dogra regiment, illustrate the extent to which *Bagh-o-Bahar* was disliked by those who had to study it. In his monthly letters to his father he described his experiences of the 'beastly' Urdu exam' and the 'beastly' *Bagh-o-Bahar*. On 6 September 1898 he wrote,

<sup>68</sup> Munshi Jwala Nath Pundit to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 1 June 1881, IOR/P/1661.

<sup>69</sup> Captain Eustace G. Bayliss, Certificate for Higher Standard Hindustani, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1883, Records of the East Surrey Regiment, held at Surrey History Service, Woking.

<sup>70</sup> Government of India to the Board of Examiners Calcutta, 10 October 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/7305.

Dearest Dad,

I've had an awful blow. In the Bagh o Bahar which is the book we have to do for the Urdu Lower Standard, I found out about 4 days ago I had been doing entirely the wrong show – having trusted in the Munshi – and now if I want to get the other beastly part finished I shall have to neglect Urzis and Conversation so that you probably won't see my name amongst the successful ones!

On the 4 October he wrote again,

Dearest Dad,

Had the beastly Lower Standard Exam yesterday morning but I'm sorry to say did not do particularly brilliantly, and quite expect to have failed. Pearson – my former captain – was the examining officer, and he has told me what he has given me for the subjects under his control, viz., "Good" for Conversation "Good" for Urzis and "Tolerable" for the Bagh o Bahar. I'm afraid the latter will almost certainly do for me even if the exercise doesn't...

On 2 November, he unsurprisingly, informed him, 'I'm sorry to say I have failed in that beastly Urdu Exam'.<sup>71</sup>

The same year, the Officiating Secretary to the Board of Examiners, though defending the style of *Bagh-o-Bahar* as being good, if rather archaic, Urdu, finally admitted that 'as far as its matter was concerned' it was 'unmitigated nonsense'.<sup>72</sup> In 1903, the Government of India, slightly untruthfully in the light of Eastwick's and Forbes' comments, declared

The 'Bagh-o-Bahar' has never been regarded as an ideal text-book and there is a consensus of opinion among experienced officers, both civil and military, that it does not aid candidates to acquire a good colloquial knowledge of Hindustani. On the contrary its style is inflated and its diction either obsolete or so interlarded with Persian and Arabic words as to be unintelligible to any but a highly educated native.<sup>73</sup>

In 1907, during the consultations regarding new text books for Lower and Higher Standard the Madras Examiner, Major Nethersole highlighted the negative impact that having to study *Bagh-o-Bahar* had on officers' learning of Hindustani.

The "Bagh-o-Bahar" ... has a number of words that are practically useless and totally void of interest for the ordinary student for the Lower or Higher Standard; he is therefore, I think apt to be irritated when he meets them or, at any rate discouraged...<sup>74</sup>

This continued existence in the examination syllabuses of archaic literary texts and the corresponding perpetuation of a classical teaching methodology, anachronistic in themselves, took on a flavour of 'Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen', as they became combined with modern approaches to study, such as the introduction of exercises, and changes in the language itself. The tendency of officers to 'cram' and 'forget', is, therefore, hardly surprising.

#### 4.3 The Issue of Necessity

Although the discourse regarding the theoretical necessity of acquiring a high level of competence in Hindustani dominated the (official and unofficial) colonial archive well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century,

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<sup>71</sup> Bruce Hay, Private Papers, IOR MSS EUR F333/1/1898. Atkinson, in *Curry and Rice* names his Moonshee Bagh-o-Bahar.

<sup>72</sup> Wolesley Haig, *Hints*, 8.

<sup>73</sup> Government of India Home Department to the Board of Examiners, June 1903, IOR/P/6576.

<sup>74</sup> Examiner in Hindustani Madras, to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners Madras, 30 October 1907, IOR/P/8156.

there were, as early as the 1820s, those who queried the level of proficiency which officers needed to acquire in practice. In 1821, A Bombay official, Mr Bell, observed

... all we ought to require is a competent knowledge of the language. By competent I mean such a proficiency as will enable them to transmit Public Business; more than that is not required... it is hard upon the young men to restrict them to Writers' pay for a longer period than is necessary.<sup>75</sup>

In 1826, Sir Thomas Munro, erstwhile Governor of Madras, wrote to David Halliburton

I agree with you entirely in thinking that a great deal too much importance is attached to the proficiency in the Indian language, (singular in original) and I was therefore glad to see the motion at the India House, for making all cadets pass an examination in them, rejected. An officer wants little more of the Native language than what is necessary to make his men understand him in all points of duty. Many of our best officers have merely this knowledge, and some of our best Orientalists are mere linguists, and better calculated for domines than officers.<sup>76</sup>

In 1858, the Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army, whilst acknowledging that the Regimental Interpreter should be 'a passed man', expressed the view that the majority should only be required to pass the lowest colloquial test.<sup>77</sup> In 1862, the new Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, Lieutenant-General Mansfield, asked, 'Is it fair or wise to cause all the efforts of the officers to be directed to linguistic accomplishment, which, to the great mass of them, must ever remain a *useless acquisition*, when there are so many other things to learn'.<sup>78</sup> In 1863, the Commissary General, Bombay, designated the learning of the language a 'somewhat uninteresting study', and asked whether, rather than requiring officer to pass the Interpreter's examination, the 'Staff test' might not be accepted 'as a sufficient qualification for Commissariat employ' as for all other branches of the Army Staff.<sup>79</sup> Such views were, apparently, quite prevalent. Sir Charles Eliot, writing in 1907, referred to the 'dangerous doctrine' that was 'constantly preached', that it was 'a waste of time to learn more of a language than is necessary to make oneself understood'.<sup>80</sup> In 1922, Colonel Western's advice to young officers exemplified the 'dangerous doctrine' described by Eliot. Expressing the view that the phrase *bandobast karo* took care of most things,<sup>81</sup> he recommended

When you are in Rome do as the Romans do, when you are in India learn to speak something like the Indians do. It need not be very like, even as little resemblance as the Cockney's parley-voing is to Parisian French will be enough. In fact most sahibs get along with what is little more than "Tommy Atkins" Hindustani.<sup>82</sup>

The question arises, as to how such views, which directly conflict with the discourse of necessity in the official colonial archive, acquired currency. There are several answers, the first of which can be found in another statement of Cohn's. Despite the fact that problems of

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<sup>75</sup> Extract Bombay Public Consultations, 17 January, 1821, IOR/F/4/709/19245.

<sup>76</sup> Gleig, *Munro*, 431. Halliburton had been Persian Translator in Madras.

<sup>77</sup> Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, to Government of Bombay Military Department, 20 January 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>78</sup> Minute by Commander-in-Chief Bombay, (n.d.)1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300. Emphasis added.

<sup>79</sup> Commissary General to Government of Bombay Military Department, 3 September 1863, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>80</sup> Eliot, *Through India*, 50.

<sup>81</sup> This means 'make arrangements'. G.O.Trevelyan had similarly suggested, in 1864, that the man who was 'a thorough master of the word *pucka*' might 'hold his own in any society in India'. Trevelyan, *Competition Wallah*, 22.

<sup>82</sup> Western, *Reminiscences*, 101.

communication at times did, undoubtedly, occur, it became increasingly evident that ‘the Englishman with a limited grasp of Hindustani indeed received answers to his questions’.<sup>83</sup> In an essay of March 1834, Frederick Shore maintained that the majority of civil and military officers were, ‘speaking an inferior dialect, with which they, in some degree, contrive to make the people understand their meaning’,<sup>84</sup> and he noted that ‘the quickness of native servants in acquiring the jargon of their masters’ was very remarkable’.<sup>85</sup> The *Roman-Urdu Journal* of 1878, also highlighted the fact that the, very imperfect, British learning of Hindustani was enough to get them by. It claimed

The nice distinction of sounds ... is really so much superfluous labour; and if Englishmen persist, and will persist to the end of time, in ignoring these distinctions altogether, their conversation is nevertheless sufficiently intelligible to natives for all practical purposes. Indeed the best speakers of Urdu among our countrymen are those who have the gift of going on fluently, in utter disregard of phonetic, and very often also of grammatical exigencies.<sup>86</sup>

In the preface to his 1889 work, Tweedie observed

...by far the greater number of Englishmen and Englishwomen in India speak a very peculiar language under the name of Hindustani. ... if credit is due to anyone it is due to the natives who have had the wit to understand, and the skill to acquire the dialect which they hear addressed to them.<sup>87</sup>

Duncan provides an example of the ability of Indians to make sense of the nonsensical when her *memsahib* issues the instructions, ‘*dekko, curry hazri na muncta, tiffin muncta*’.<sup>88</sup> Indian servants, she tells us, remarkably, usually managed to put together what the *memsahib* actually meant, in this case wanting curry for lunch rather than breakfast. Duncan explained how this was achieved as follows.

...the heathen mind never translates the memsahib literally. It picks the words it knows out of her discourse and links them together upon a system of probabilities which long application and severe experiences have made remarkably correct. ...The usually admirable result is misleading to the memsahib, who naturally ascribes it to the grace and force and clearness of her directions. Whereas it is really the discernment of Kali Bagh\* that is to be commended.<sup>89</sup> (\*name of the servant)

In 1898, the Officiating Secretary to the Board of Examiners, commended Indian attempts to make sense of the broken Hindustani of the British, stating, ‘No praise is too high for the politeness of the native who tries to understand such stuff’.<sup>90</sup>

Indians not only made great efforts to understand ‘the *sahib*’s Hindustani’, they also tried to ensure that he understood *theirs* by reducing their own speech to his level. Sandford Arnot, writing in 1828, tells us that although British pronunciation was none of the most correct,

<sup>83</sup> Cohn, *Colonialism*, 44.

<sup>84</sup> Shore, *Notes*, Vol. I, 25.

<sup>85</sup> Shore, *Notes*, Vol. II, 498.

<sup>86</sup> Anonymous, ‘Urdu and Roman Letters’, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6, November 1878, 23-4.

<sup>87</sup> Tweedie, *Hindustani*, x-xi.

<sup>88</sup> Duncan, *Memsahib*, 227. Literally this means ‘curry does not want breakfast, it wants lunch’.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. Joelson echoes this with regard to Swahili, ‘...the native seems to possess the remarkably uncanny gift of divining the wishes of his master, even when they are so faultily expressed as to have absolutely no meaning. F.S. Joelson, *Tanganyika Territory* (London: T., Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1920) 195.

<sup>90</sup> Haig, *Hints*, 10. Z.A. Bukhari of All-India Radio, remarked that ‘the Hindustani spoken by English people was a testament to the listener’s will and ability to understand rather than the speaker’s proficiency in the spoken language’. Bukhari. *Sarguzasht*, (Karachi, Mu ‘arif Ltd., 1966), quoted in Rahman, *Hindi to Urdu*, 211.

...their hearers were either too polite or too servile to find fault with it, and would naturally address them in the same style, in return, not merely as a compliment to the superior taste and judgement of their masters, but as thereby having the best chance of making themselves understood.<sup>91</sup>

In an essay of 1835, Shore echoed this explaining

... when addressing each other, the natives speak in their natural way, as they will to a foreigner if they know he can understand them; but if addressed by a learner in broken Hindostanee, they answer him in the same style, even to adopting the pronunciation and words which he uses, supposing that he will not understand them unless they do so. <sup>92</sup>

In 1862, Colesworthy Grant similarly observed, 'The native will murder the vernacular, partly in ignorance, and partly in order that the European may be able to understand him'.<sup>93</sup> In 1909, Douglas Craven Phillott, noting the same phenomenon in the army, commented, 'When *sepoys* talk to their officers they do not speak idiomatically, but try to speak in as English a manner as possible; further they confine themselves to the few hundred words that regimental officers know'.<sup>94</sup>

A second part of the answer as to why the actual necessity of learning Hindustani well differed from the perceived necessity of the archive is found in the role played by Indian subordinates in the day-to-day work of officers, both civil and military. In 1858, the Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, observed that, once the compulsory examinations were over, officers did not bother keeping up, let alone improving, their knowledge, as business was 'simplified and expedited by the Government Moonshees, Karkoons, and other native employees'.<sup>95</sup> In 1862, his successor, General Mansfield, claimed, '[n]ine out of ten Staff Officers, never during their whole official life, have to read a native paper of any description, or talk except on the more ordinary official business to their clerks or subordinates. Many others deal only with English offices'.<sup>96</sup> In 1878, the editor of the *Roman-Urdu Journal* noted

The departmental examinations in all branches of Government service require that the candidate shall be able to spell out an ordinary petition. Subsequent practice prevents him from losing this qualification, but not one man in twenty has the time or the aptitude for carrying it beyond the most elementary stage. No district officer in India can afford to devote an hour every morning to perfecting himself in reading a character essentially barbarous. If the much-needed change is ever effected, it certainly will not be by making the European officer stoop to the level of his moonshee.<sup>97</sup>

In a letter of 1881 to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Munshi Jwala Nath cast doubts on the necessity for British officers to acquire a high proficiency in Hindustani, particularly in terms of

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<sup>91</sup> Arnot *Grammar*, Appendix 17.

<sup>92</sup> Shore, *Notes*, Vol II, 498.

<sup>93</sup> Grant, *Domestic Life*, 9.

<sup>94</sup> Letter from Phillott to the Special Committee, IOR/P/7593.

This has parallels in other colonial contexts such as Swahili in Tanganyika. Joelson notes 'All too frequently, unfortunately, the European contents himself with the merest smattering of the common tongue, and gradually persuades himself that he is a master of it. The negro, by a queer conception of politeness, *contributes directly to this deception*, for, although he may speak perfect Swahili amongst his fellows, he will use in the master's presence only such phrases as he knows to be intelligible to the latter'. Joelson, *Tanganyika Territory*, 188.

<sup>95</sup> Commander-in-Chief Bombay to Government of Bombay Military Department, 20 January 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>96</sup> Minute by Lieutenant-General Mansfield, n.d. 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>97</sup> Editorial, 'The Education of Europeans in the Oriental Languages', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol.1, No. 6, November 1878, 21.

literacy, since, he argued, ‘the Native officials under them generally discharge the duties which entail reading and writing’.<sup>98</sup> In 1931, the Financial Secretary at the India Office again pointed to the lack of real necessity, in terms of literacy, stating, ‘the ability to read and write deteriorates, for the reason that reading and writing in the ordinary course of work is done for one’.<sup>99</sup>

A third reason that the British did not, in practice, need to attain a high level of competence in Hindustani lies in the decision, taken in 1835, to impose English as the language of the higher courts and of higher education. This decision was to radically alter the necessity for British administrators to acquire a high level of proficiency in the language. By the late 1850s and early 1860s, especially in cities such as Calcutta, the increasing the number of Indians who were proficient in English was already impacting on the perceived need to learn the Hindustani well. Writing in 1862, Colesworthy Grant tells us that not only many of the servants, but also all the ‘native clerks or Sircars – essential and indispensable aids attached to every office, great or small, government or mercantile’ spoke and wrote English ‘thus any necessity for other than English in matters of business’ was ‘generally speaking, dispensed with’.<sup>100</sup> In 1879, an article in the *Roman-Urdu Journal* lent further support to this stating

It must be obvious to everyone that the spread of English among the natives with whom Europeans are brought in contact renders those Europeans less anxious to learn the vernacular of the country. ... they find nine-tenths of their work to be English, and as to the remaining tenth they can get a babu on Rs 15 a month to do it for them. So long as there is an English Government in India English will be the dominant language from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin; and every day will witness an extension of its influence.<sup>101</sup>

That final sentence is, of course, a curious inversion of the statements uttered by so many text book writers and officials in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century regarding Hindustani, and shows how completely the balance had, by this time, been altered. Arguing that the power of vernacular officials was ‘not a permanently organizing power’ but merely that of ‘local and special knowledge’ the article continued

Whenever the district officer steps beyond the threshold of his own office he is compelled to use English. ... Many departments have abolished the vernacular altogether. The Treasury has turned it out “bag and baggage”. The Railways and the Telegraph Department will have nothing to do with it. The Department of Public Works is getting rid of it...In judicial and revenue procedure the Persian character still hold an important position but here too it is altogether subordinate to English. English is the language of the Legislature and the High Courts, and in the main of the Sessions Courts and the Bar. English too is the language of all our Settlement Reports.<sup>102</sup>

Almost exactly thirty years later, in a House of Lord’s debate of 1909, Lord Curzon attributed the ‘crowning reason’ why the British in India were failing to learn Hindustani well to ‘the enormous and ever-increasing number of natives’ who spoke English. He observed, ‘Around every official in

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<sup>98</sup> Munshi Jwala Nath to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 1 June 1881, IOR/P/1661.

<sup>99</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 4 November 1931, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>100</sup> Grant, *Domestic Life*, 93.

<sup>101</sup> Anonymous, ‘The advantages of Roman-Urdu as the basis of popular education in India’, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. II, No. 18, November 1879, 11.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*



India there now exists a sort of zeriba or rampart of natives doing his work for him, talking English as well as himself'.<sup>103</sup> In 1911, Sir Henry Cotton, commenting on the changes wrought by the spread of English, noted

... an English-speaking class of court officials has come into existence; the pleaders or mukhtars, who knew no English in my day, now all plead in that language, and the young civilian is no longer compelled, as it were, to think and speak in the vernacular if he is to transact any business at all.<sup>104</sup>

### 5.5 Summary

Although some senior officers argued that a special linguistic aptitude was necessary, this, particularly in a potential immersion learning/acquisition context is a somewhat specious, though convenient argument. What had a far greater impact on the success of officers in learning the language were their attitudes towards India and Indians which were, even from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, quite disparaging. Over time, and with the changing balance of power and increase in arrogance on the part of the British, such attitudes became more negative. The 'mutiny', and later social Darwinism, hardened the belief that Indians were inherently inferior as well as 'essentially unknowable'. Knowing and understanding Indians too well, or speaking Hindustani too well removed some of the 'essential difference' between ruler and ruled. The social gap had also widened, and most British officers increasingly only interacted with Indians as a necessary part of their duty. Earlier ideas that it was necessary to learn the language well in order to exert a hegemonic influence, and to maintain prestige and status in the eyes of Indians, were replaced by the notion that all that was needed was a practical basic command, to be able to function on a day to day basis. The class of Indians to whom they were speaking had also changed, from educated Indians to uneducated subordinates, and hence the level of the language required was lower.

The second factor which impacted on the motivation (and ability) of officers to develop a good command of the language was the inappropriateness of the curriculum, especially the anachronistic set texts such as Bagh-o-Bahar. Since they offered little of practical value, and were of equally little interest, this contributed to the tendency to 'cram' and forget. Their language was increasingly archaic, and the vocabulary in them of little use. Perhaps influenced by the prestige attached to a classical education in England, the Board of Examiners was reluctant to abandon the literary side, seeming to equate practical with low level. The case of Captain A.R. Judd, one of Ralph Russell's teachers at SOAS demonstrates that this was not necessarily the case. Judd was an ex-army officer and Russell tells us that despite having little knowledge of the literature

...his command of Urdu was astounding. He not only spoke it with complete facility – complete accuracy and a fluency which I have never encountered in any other speaker of English as a mother-tongue – he also wrote it in an elegant flowing hand...<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Curzon, House of Lords Debate 27 September 1909, Hansard.

<sup>104</sup> Henry Cotton, *Indian and Home Memories*, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911) 71.

<sup>105</sup> Ralph Russell, *Losses Gains* (Gurgaon: Three Essays Collective, India, 2010) 83-85

Judd, however, was an exception. He had a genuine love of, and interest in, the language. For those who did not have, bridging the enormous gap between between the mismatched extremes of the basic useful sentences or dialogues, and that of the literary texts was not possible.

Perhaps the most important factor, however, was the question of the extent to which a good command of Hindustani was, (despite the continued insistence of the official colonial archive) actually necessary. However imperfect the *sahibs'* Hindustani, Indians demonstrated a willingness and ability to understand and respond to it. Indian intermediaries were also always on hand. There was, therefore, little need to gain more than a basic competence, especially in reading and writing. The inexorable spread of English, after it replaced Persian in the higher courts and in higher education, also diminished the necessity to acquire a high level of competence in Hindustani. Taking all these factors together, it is unsurprising that so many officers failed to go beyond the bare minimum necessary to pass the examinations.

## CHAPTER 6

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### THE LANGUAGE OF COMMAND? LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE AND COLONIAL POWER

'Knowledge is Power'

*Francis Bacon*

*But on the other hand...*

'A little learning is a dangerous thing'

*Alexander Pope*

#### **6.0 Introduction**

In his work on the Belgian Congo, Johannes Fabian argued that

Among the preconditions for establishing regimes of colonial power was ... communication with the colonized. ... use and control of verbal means of communication were not the only foundation for colonial rule; but they were needed to maintain regimes, military, religious – ideological and economic.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, it has been suggested that, in the Indian context, Hindustani was the British 'language of command', and that the British were able, through a knowledge of the language, to exercise power.<sup>2</sup> This chapter examines issues of power and linguistic knowledge in relation to the British 'appropriation' of Hindustani, and seeks to 'unpick', to some extent, the, supposedly, inextricable links between them. In the light of the evidence, in Chapter 4, that many British officers did not acquire a high level of competence in the language, the first section examines how far, if at all, the British knowledge of Hindustani provided them with the power to command and control. The second section examines the apparent inertia of the colonial state in addressing problems the learning of Hindustani and their apparent ineptitude when they finally attempted to do so. It returns to the issue of the mismatch between the scholarly/literary approach to learning the language and the increasing conflict between this, and the practical needs of both civil and, more especially, military officers. The third section explores the debates regarding Hindustani and Romanization and seeks to answer why Romanization was never favoured by the colonial government. The fourth section, through a comparison with the colonial appropriation of another *lingua franca*, Swahili, analyses how and why Hindustani met its particular 'fate' and discusses the impact of British language policies on its development as a 'vehicular' language.

#### **6.1: Ignorance is Power**

It has, with some justification, been argued that the Indian classical languages contained useful and important knowledge which provided an important source of power to the British.<sup>3</sup> Sanskrit and Arabic held the keys to Hindu and Muslim laws, philosophy, religion, medicine and science. Persian was the language of the Mughal administration, and therefore, provided them with the practical knowledge they needed to run the empire. Such knowledge, whether cultural or practical,

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<sup>1</sup> Fabian, *Language*, 3. Emphasis added.

<sup>2</sup> See Cohn, (1985: 276-329 and 1996: 16-56) and Lelyveld, 1993: 189-214)

<sup>3</sup> Cohn and Lelyveld, op. cit.

undoubtedly facilitated the British in their exercise of power and control. So what, precisely, did Hindustani offer? In 1834, Trevelyan asserted that the 'Hindoostanee language', contained no knowledge 'in any recorded shape',<sup>4</sup> and aside from poetry, in which the British had precious little interest, he was right.

If Hindustani contained no useful knowledge, its only potential as a source of power to the British was as a means of communication with Indians. It was argued, in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that a competent knowledge of Hindustani would furnish them with important information. Gilchrist, writing in 1820, noted that 'if the hindoostanee had been sufficiently understood at Vellore by the european officers, the dreadful mutiny there would have been prevented from taking place'.<sup>5</sup> The 'sipahce' who 'first intimated of the conspiracy' was not understood by the British officer to whom he reported it. The officer was then forced to consult another 'native' interpreter who, being part of the plot, naturally concealed the intelligence. The same year Joseph Hume argued similarly that, 'the unfortunate affair at Talneir was entirely owing to the English officers being unacquainted with the Hindoostanee tongue'.<sup>6</sup> To provide the British with a source of power in the form of such vital information, however, would have necessitated officers to acquire a sufficient level of competence in Hindustani to enable them to understand 'Indian to Indian' communications. The fact, however, that they were, not infrequently, limited to a vocabulary of a few hundred words and could only understand Indians when they reduced their own speech to the *sahibs'* level, renders the possibility of many British officers understanding such communications unlikely. Hindustani, therefore, did not offer a high level of practical control.

If we turn to the issue of hegemonic control we again face the problem of the need to be highly proficient in the language. Although Cohn initially touched upon this, he quickly abandoned his discussion of it to focus narrowly on Gilchrist's dialogues. This led him to the conclusion that the British only learnt very 'restricted codes', which, apart from in the very limited sense of barking orders at *sepoys* and servants, did not allow it to become the 'language of command'. His very contention that the British *didn't* learn Hindustani well undermined his central argument, that they gained power through their knowledge of the language. The British lack of 'linguistic capital' in Hindustani could be regarded as a weakness which hindered, rather than facilitated, their rule. That they were well aware of this, especially with regard to literacy, is evident. In a lecture, given to the Society of Arts, in 1878, Frederic Drew remarked

Only those who have been in India ... are aware to how great a disadvantage the English magistrate is put by the evidence being taken down by the clerk of his court in a running native hand. Though the Englishman has passed an examination in that very writing, yet practically he is unable to read it

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<sup>4</sup> Trevelyan's Second Minute, 4 February 1834, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 37.

<sup>5</sup> Gilchrist, *Orthoepigraphical Ultimatum*, vii.

<sup>6</sup> Debate at East India House, *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, London: Black Kingsbury, Parbury & Allen, 1820, 78-80. Shah Shuja beheaded a number of prisoners and Sir Charles Forbes raised the question in a debate at East India House as to whether Sir John Keane had sanctioned it or had knowledge of it.

with such facility that he could take up the record and turn over the leaves and get at the bit of evidence he wishes to look at.<sup>7</sup>

In an article later the same year, the editors of the *Roman-Urdu Journal*, observed

Nothing but inexorable necessity can justify a system under which ninety per cent of official records are *undecipherable by the European rulers of the country*. ... No officer who sets any value on his time will consent to have read out to him what he can read for himself. ... At present the pergunnah clerk is master of the situation. The more he has to read, the greater the certainty that the sahib's thoughts will be a thousand leagues away before he gets to the end... [There are only two ways of effecting a remedy short of banishing the vernacular languages entirely from official records. One is to insist upon a thorough acquaintance with the shikasta on the part of English officers; the other, to introduce the Roman character. Experience has long ago proved the first alternative to be an impossibility.<sup>8</sup>

The following year, another editorial in the *Roman-Urdu Journal* noted regretfully, 'the Englishman is supreme wherever his own language is employed; ... Where it [Persian Urdu] is used the Munshi is supreme: he can write what he likes and read what he likes'.<sup>9</sup> Whether in the case of the Duncan's *memsahib*, who depended on the ability of Kali Bagh to make sense of her nonsensical instructions, or that of *sepoys* 'dumbing-down' their language so that officers could understand it, or that of the judge relying on the *amlah*, the lack of competence of many British in Hindustani ensured that control of the language, and hence of the situation, *apparently* remained firmly in the hands of Indians.

It is important, however, not to overplay this idea of Hindustani as a weakness. In the context of the nation-state, it has been argued that speakers need to possess a certain linguistic competence has suggested that to be '*listened to*'. Speakers who lack 'the legitimate competence' are *de facto* excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence.<sup>10</sup> The British in India, however, were neither excluded from social domains in which competence in Hindustani was required, nor condemned to silence. Their position as rulers in the colonial context ensured that, however imperfect their command of Hindustani might be, their orders were obeyed and they received answers to their questions. The anxiety surrounding the need to speak Hindustani well, which had existed briefly in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, had, by the 1830s, begun to disappear. This change can be explained by Wittgenstein's description of language as a game, the somewhat arbitrary, rules of which can be changed 'as new situations arise, or speakers change the rules and other speakers tacitly agree to those changes'.<sup>11</sup> Whilst the early 19<sup>th</sup> century British felt they needed to play the game of Hindustani according to Indian rules, they were later able to change the rules of the game by exerting a linguistic hegemony based on the

<sup>7</sup> Drew, 'Possibility of Applying the Roman Alphabet', 25.

<sup>8</sup> 'Education of Europeans in the Oriental Languages', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1. No 6, November 1878, 21

<sup>9</sup> 'Advantages of Roman Urdu as the basis of popular education in India', *Roman Urdu Journal* Vol. I, No. 18, November 1879, 11-12.

<sup>10</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, trans., Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991) 55. Italics original.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Ives, *Language and Hegemony in Gramsci*, (London: Pluto Press, 2004) 27.

unequal power relations between colonizer and colonized.<sup>12</sup> Such power was derived in a hegemonic sense from English and the spread of western education, and in a physical sense from superior technology and an ever-present threat of military force. In this situation another proposal by Bourdieu, that an agent's 'chances for profit' using a given linguistic strategy derive from 'his specific competence and his authority', is more apt. In this scenario, even 'imperfect mastery', can accrue symbolic profits as long as it is marked by sufficiently empowered or authoritative conditions of formation.<sup>13</sup>

Their 'imperfect mastery' of Hindustani was frequently parodied by the British themselves,<sup>14</sup> but the extract below provides a rare Indian example.

**Rani of Zanshi<sup>15</sup>: Act One Scene Two**

A 'Major General' demands to know from his *dhobi* why his clothes were not being carried in pride of place upon the back of his donkey:

**Major General:**

*Captain sahib bhi gadha, Major sahib bhi gadha, ham kyon nahin gadha? Kal se ham bhi gadha!*  
(Captain Sahib also donkey, Major Sahib also donkey, why not we donkey? From tomorrow we also donkey!)

**Dhobi:**

*Accha sarkar, aap jarur gadha. Phir kal se kyon? Aaj hi se aap gadha.*  
(Very well your honour, you certainly donkey. But why from tomorrow? From today already you donkey.)

Here the *dhobi*, apparently responds perfectly politely in the '*sahib's* Hindustani', acquiescing in the Major-General's request, but at the same time, delivering an insult of which he would, almost certainly, be unaware. Steadman-Jones has described as the native speaker's knowledge as 'a space for resistance and subversion,'<sup>16</sup> and this could, perhaps, be seen as subversion. It cannot, however, be seen as constituting any real resistance, as it does not in any way alter the power relations. Even supposing a *dhobi* did make such a joke at his expense, the next day the Major-General's clothes *would* be on the donkey exactly as he wished, the incompetence of his Hindustani notwithstanding.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.47.

<sup>13</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges', *Social Science Information* XVI [6], 1977, 655-659, quoted in Devyani Sharma, 'Return of the Native', in ed., Snell and Kothari, *Chutnefying English*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2011) 10.

<sup>14</sup> For example Duncan, *Memsahib*, Yeldham, *Lays of Ind*, Atkinson *Curry and Rice*.

<sup>15</sup> P.N.Oak, 'Rani of Zanshi', INA Papers, National Archives of India, New Delhi, 291/INA reproduced in Gajendra Singh unpublished PhD thesis, 'Between Self and Soldier', Edinburgh, 2009. Fabian notes that 'Africans as a rule adopted the restricted jargon of their immediate European masters' not just as a matter of expediency, but 'seldom noticed by the European' as 'a widely enjoyed form of parody'. *Language and Colonial Power*, 38-9.

<sup>16</sup> Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism*, 27.

<sup>17</sup> This is different from Collingham's example of servants who 'were able to turn the colonial power relationship by failing to hear or understand instructions', although it should be pointed out that such an example is not limited to the colonial context. E.M.Collingham, *Imperial Bodies*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001) 106.

This leads to an alternative hypothesis, that, in the colonial context, ‘power may be served by ignorance as well as by knowledge’. It has been argued that ‘the Englishman’s authority and identity’ was guaranteed by ‘a prophylactic ignorance’ and that an ‘aloof, even philistine refusal to know’ played an important part in the discourse of colonial experience.<sup>18</sup> This is borne out by a statement, made by Richard Burton in 1855.

I am convinced that the natives of India cannot respect a European who mixes with them familiarity, or especially who imitates their customs, manners and dress. The tight pantaloons, the authoritative voice, the procurante manner, and the *broken Hindostani* impose upon them – have a weight which learning and honesty, which wit and courage have not. This is to them the master’s attitude.<sup>19</sup>

Rather than being seen as maintaining British prestige and being conducive to British rule, as had been argued in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by the middle of that century speaking to Indians in language that they themselves ‘would not be ashamed to use’ was regarded as positively detrimental. *Broken Hindustani*, far from engendering a lack of ‘proper respect’ for the ruler, was now seen as a prerequisite for the maintenance of British authority.

### **6.2: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Inertia : 20<sup>th</sup> Century Ineptitude**

The notion of Hindustani as a ‘weakness’ for the British links with theories of the ‘precariousness’ of the colonial state itself.<sup>20</sup> However, the reactions of the Government of India, to the problem of officers’ lack of real competence in the language, provide us with further reasons not to overplay notions of ‘weakness’ or ‘precariousness’. The battles over the course of nearly a century and a half, between the Board of Examiners, the Government of India and the various military authorities, regarding the mismatch between the scholarly/approach of the examination syllabuses and with the practical needs of officers, serve to demonstrate this. In 1857, Nassau Lees, Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, (somewhat surprisingly) admitted that the examinations at Fort William did not produce the practical competence necessary for conducting administrative duties. He observed, ‘It would be as absurd to expect a student of the College of Fort William, to cross-examine a witness in Hindostani ... as it would a Regius Professor of Greek ... to tell his valet in that language as now spoken at Athens, to “pull off his boots.”’<sup>21</sup>

In 1858, Henry Somerset, Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, while accepting that in order to perform his duty properly with his regiment an officer must have a good *colloquial* knowledge of the language, and that promotion should be contingent upon being ‘fully able to communicate with his men on all matters connected with his duty’, nevertheless questioned whether the Hindustani

<sup>18</sup> Douglas Kerr, Not Knowing the Oriental, *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 5, 2 December 2003, 39.

<sup>19</sup> Richard Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah*, (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts, 1857) 40.

<sup>20</sup> See for example discussion on information panics. Christopher Bayly, *Empire and Information*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 143 and 171-3.

<sup>21</sup> Nassau Lees, *Instruction*, 20.

examinations actually fitted officers to do this.<sup>22</sup> Although he agreed that passing the Interpreter's Examination was 'indispensable' for officers holding that particular position, he contended

...to exact such an examination from every Officer, is ... very inexpedient. Generally speaking, it does not follow that the passed men of a Regiment are the best Linguists. ... the sportsman and others whose daily amusements and avocations throw them into more frequent contact with Natives, than their more sedentary and studious comrades ever have a chance of, are, for all practical purposes, in conversing with their men and in the ordinary affairs of life, far better conversant with the language, habits and prejudices of the Natives than even can be acquired from Book learning, or the scholastic conversations and dialogues of the Moonshee.<sup>23</sup>

He suggested that an officer might be 'a perfect linguist', but unable to pass the test, whereas 'the passed man' could not conduct business, as far as reading and writing were concerned 'without the aid of a Moonshee'.<sup>24</sup> Lord John Elphinstone, then Governor-in-Council, Bombay, concurred with Somerset's view. Criticizing the examination system in Bombay, he argued that it was 'founded on the principle, that a really sufficient knowledge of the language is only to be obtained by scholastic study; and therefore that the same amount of knowledge must be acquired, to fit a man for the duties of the Staff, as for those of the Interpreter'.<sup>25</sup>

In 1860 the mismatch between the scholarly/literary approach of the examinations and the practical/colloquial needs of officers, led the Madras military authorities also to express their concern. A Minute by the Commander-in-Chief complained that the existing rules for the examination of Military Officers were 'undoubtedly faulty' and suggested that 'the object of the Examiners should be really to test the actual acquaintance of the Examinee with the language ... and his ability to hold full intercourse in it with Natives'.<sup>26</sup> In the same year, Nassau Lees, despite having previously accepted the shortcomings of the Fort William examinations, made it clear that he was unwilling to abandon the scholarly approach, arguing

...though not absolutely necessary for the acquirement of a practical knowledge of any language, there can be no doubt that an acquaintance with its Grammar and construction, or in other words a little book learning, wonderfully facilitates a student's progress in speaking, and in writing and reading the written character.<sup>27</sup>

Although he recognized that public officers needed to attain a 'linguistic, in opposition to purely scholarly' command of the language, his arguments are reminiscent of those advanced earlier in the century. Acknowledging that a large section of the public regarded the Fort William examinations as 'useless', he observed

This arises from an erroneous impression that the only object of any examination in the native languages, is, or ought to be, to test an Officer's conversational powers. I take a very different view of the matter. Though it is of very high, perhaps of the highest importance, that all European Officers

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<sup>22</sup> Commander-in-Chief, Bombay to the Bombay Government Military Department, 20 January, 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Government of Bombay Military Department to the Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, 20 February 1858, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>26</sup> Minute by the Commander-in-Chief, Madras, 19 April 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>27</sup> Minute by the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 3 July 1860, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.



should be able to converse freely with their native subordinates and the people of the Country, this I hold to be a sine qua non, and I would certainly not rest here. A Military Officer amongst his own Countrymen, occupies the position of a gentleman; and it is equally, if not more desirable that he should hold the same position in the eyes of the natives of India.<sup>28</sup>

In 1862, the Governor-General-in-Council stressed to the Special Committee set up to revise the examinations that the paramount purpose of learning Hindustani was a practical one.

Both in speaking and in writing, provided the candidate can make himself clearly understood on simple matters connected with his ordinary duties, correctness of idiom or orthography need not be insisted on; the point to be looked at is *practical capacity* to understand and be understood in Hindoostanee by any ordinary *uneducated* Native.<sup>29</sup>

Whereas at the beginning of the century, therefore, the British had wanted to communicate in a sophisticated manner with *educated* natives in order to win them over to the advantages of British rule, over time the focus had shifted to basic communication with *uneducated* natives, chiefly *sepoys*, servants and civil subordinates. As early as 1825, in his address to the students at Fort William, Lord Amherst drew attention to the fact that ‘in former times English gentlemen, comparatively few in number’ had been required to communicate chiefly with natives of rank or influence’, but that they were now ‘constantly called upon to administer justice to the humblest, to ascertain the rights and interests, and institutions of the rudest classes’.<sup>30</sup> This shift, however, was not reflected in the Hindustani examinations. Lieutenant-General Mansfield, Commander-in-Chief Bombay, in an eerie echo of his predecessor, Somerset, stated in a Minute of 1862

... it is notorious that those who speak the language best for the purposes of ordinary business and of managing the people, are by no means always the most erudite, but on the contrary the thoroughly good Regimental Officers, who have often passed no Examination, or those who have been most cast with the natives by early staff employ in particular situations...<sup>31</sup>

Nassau Lees was ultimately forced to accept that the sole purpose of military officers in learning the language was a narrowly practical one. When, in 1862, the Special Committee, of which he was Secretary, made its recommendations, it stipulated that the revised examinations should include ‘conversation with the Examiners or Natives on subjects relating to the duties of the examinee’, and that the examination should be ‘sufficient to test fairly the candidate’s ability to comprehend all that is said to him, and to make himself fully intelligible to all Natives with whom he is likely to be brought in contact in the discharge of his duty.’<sup>32</sup> In its report to the Government of India, however, the Special Committee contradicted its statements in the draft recommendations, emphasizing the importance of the scholarly.

it should be well understood that the object to be attained by all examinations held by Boards of Examiners is not to ascertain the fitness of Military Officers as regards their practical knowledge of

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Governor-General’s Minute 23 December 1861, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>30</sup> Speech of Lord Amherst, 27 July 1825, *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, Vol. 21, January-June 1826, London, Kingsbury, Parbury and Allen, 218.

<sup>31</sup> Minute by Commander in Chief Bombay, (n.d.) 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>32</sup> Secretary to the Special Committee to Captain Touch of the Madras Staff Corps and Major Coley and Major Bacon, Bombay, 8 August 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

the languages of India ... but rather to ascertain whether those Officers have attained that scholastic knowledge, or knowledge of the grammar, structure, genius, and idiom of these languages...<sup>33</sup>

When the finalised revisions to the examinations were set out in October 1863, they appeared to have made significant concessions to the practical purposes of the military. The object of the 1<sup>st</sup> Standard was to ensure that Officers had acquired sufficient knowledge of Hindustani to 'enable them efficiently to discharge their Military or professional duties when serving with Native troops'.<sup>34</sup> The object of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Standard was to ensure they had sufficient knowledge to 'qualify them ... for general employment of the Staff, and for admission to the Staff Corps'.<sup>35</sup> Yet embedded in these tests were things which did not accord with such practical objectives. The, now archaic, literary set text books remained in place, as did the anomalous requirement that the translation from 'plain' English into Hindustani was to be 'into language similar to that of the *Bagh-o-Bahar* in the Persian character and an equal amount in the Deva Nagri character into language similar to that of the *Prem Sagur*'.<sup>36</sup>

When the new examinations were implemented in 1863, the literary set-texts, which had been in place for over half a century, were, supposedly, subject to review. In 1858, Trevelyan, writing as *Indophilus* to the Times, had labelled *Bagh-o-Bahar* as 'licentious' and 'puerile'. On his return to India in 1864, he was asked to submit to the Governor-General's Council a plan for 'effecting a revision of the Hindustani ... Class Books'.<sup>37</sup> He observed

As the object was to provide a set of class books, not only free from the puerilities and indecencies which disfigure the existing set, but composed in an idiom representing as nearly as possible the languages actually spoken in our Civil and Military stations and by the population at large in town and country it seemed advisable that the work should be entrusted to persons who were practically conversant with the language of every-day life....<sup>38</sup>

He accordingly set up a Commission which included 'the Reverend R.C. Mather, Missionary Mirzapore, Capt W.R.M. Holroyd, Inspector of Schools, Umballa, and Baboo Shiva Prasad of the Educational Department'. In its report of December 1864 the Commission endorsed Trevelyan's view of the books in place, noting that it was 'universally admitted' that *Prem Sagur*, *Bagh-o-Bahar* and *Baital Pachisi* were 'wholly uninstructional, useless, and in many places highly immoral in their subjects'.<sup>39</sup> As regards the language they were written in they observed

...the language of the *Prem Sagur* and *Bagh-o-Bahar* is not "such as is usually spoken in civil and military stations, and which is understood by the population at large... in both there may be found unusual or high flown words used in places where simpler vocables would be equally appropriate and more generally understood. Both books would, in very many passages, be quite unintelligible to

<sup>33</sup> Report of the Special Committee to the Government of India, (n.d) 1862, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>34</sup> Draft General Order 737, October 1863, IOR/L/MIL/7/7300.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ranjit Singh Rangila, M.S. Thirumalai, B. Mallikarjun, 'Bringing Order from Linguistic Diversity', *Language in India*, Vol.1. 6 October 2001, <http://www.languageinindia.com/oct/2001/punjab1/html>. Accessed 26 May 2012 (no page numbers given in online article)

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

an uneducated native, and many words and phrases that have now become obsolete may be found in both.<sup>40</sup>

Whilst acknowledging that the examination for military officers would ‘to a considerable extent be a professional one’ the Commission was keen to ensure that officers would be taught ‘to express themselves correctly on ordinary subjects’ and that they should acquire ‘a good knowledge of the general structure of the language’. To this end it suggested

...a work, in two parts should be prepared, one containing a well-selected set of dialogues on military subjects and also another set on ordinary matters. The other; consisting of a chapter of an easy work, entitled the *Rusum-i-Hind* ... and a series of translations in simple language, of dispatches and general orders.<sup>41</sup>

They noted that the *Rusum-i-Hind* (Manners and Customs of India) was already under preparation by Holroyd, and some specimen sheets of it, in the Roman character, accompanied their report.<sup>42</sup> It was, they said, designed to ‘shew the natives of India in their everyday life’, and, while giving the student a knowledge of words and phrases in most frequent use, avoided ‘the forced and foolish descriptions of places supernatural wonders and other blemishes in the *Bagh-o-Bahar*’.<sup>43</sup> Remarkably, given the general dissatisfaction with *Bagh-o-Bahar* and *Prem Sagar*, and especially given Trevelyan’s involvement, no action whatever was taken as a result of the Commission’s report.<sup>44</sup> The conflict, between the practical purposes of learning the language and the literary/scholarly approach of the examinations, consequently remained unresolved.<sup>45</sup>

In April 1877, another committee was appointed to look into revising the examinations. In August 1876, the Government of India Military Department had suggested that ‘it would be advantageous’ if ‘an instructive book’ could be ‘substituted for the *Prem Sagar*’.<sup>46</sup> The committee, however, although conceding that *Prem Sagar* when ‘judged by European standards of taste’, was ‘not of much merit in itself’, were nonetheless of the opinion that ‘considered with reference to the religion, Traditions, and daily habits of the people’, it was ‘in the highest degree instructive’. They maintained, moreover, that it represented ‘the natural idiom of the people, which a work cast more in an occidental mould would not do,’<sup>47</sup> and that it was written in ‘pure and simple’ language, a view which conflicted radically with the charges of unintelligibility and artificiality laid by Trevelyan in 1864. Yet again, however, no action was taken and *Prem Sagar*, remained firmly in place at Higher Standard for nearly another two decades. *Bagh-o-Bahar*, despite continued criticism of its

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Originally written by Pyare Lal Ashob, Holroyd’s *Rusum-i-Hind* was, indeed, published in 1868. Over 40 years later Phillott translated selections from it and was still advocating its use as a text book. A tiny section of it appeared in *Khwab-o-Khayal* in 1911.

<sup>45</sup> Despite the ‘obscene’ nature of *Baital Pachisi* it too was not replaced until 1876.

<sup>46</sup> Government of India Military Department to the Home Department, April 1877, IOR/P/1008.

<sup>47</sup> Report of the Committee for the revision of the tests under which Civil and Military Officers are examined in Oriental Languages, to the Government of India Home Department, 15 February 1878, IOR/P/1341.

suitability, both on the grounds of subject matter, and its increasingly archaic linguistic style, would not be replaced for another forty years. In March 1887, yet another committee was set up to consider revisions to the Hindustani examinations. In June of the same year, the Government of India concluded, however, that no change was desirable in the tests laid down for either the Higher or Lower Standard.<sup>48</sup>

When, in 1895, the complete standardisation of the compulsory examinations took place, the Government of India gave the first indication that they were beginning to favour the practical purposes of the military over the literary/scholarly approach. In a letter to the Board of Examiners, they stated that they were ‘of opinion that the first test to be passed by an officer need not require a greater knowledge of the language than is sufficient to qualify him for his military duties’.<sup>49</sup> Inevitably, the question of a new text book to replace *Bagh-o-Bahar* arose again. The Secretary to the Board, George Ranking, drew attention to the expense involved in the preparation of new text books and recommended that ‘the question of the reconstitution of the test for the Higher and Lower Standard’ might ‘be kept in abeyance’, until new text books had been prepared and approved.<sup>50</sup> The Government of India were not prepared to delay the revisions, however, and asked the Board to favour them with their opinion on the proposed new rules for the Higher Standard.<sup>51</sup> New text books could, in their opinion, be prepared *after* the alteration of the Higher and Lower Standard Examinations in Hindustani had been carried out.<sup>52</sup> It is ironic that this decision led to the retention, for another ten years, of the archaic and inappropriate text book, in the form of *Bagh-o-Bahar*, that the military authorities and, supposedly, the Government themselves, were so keen to replace.

Despite the concessions towards increased practicality, the military authorities were still unhappy with the examinations in place. In 1899, the Adjutant-General wrote to the Government of India suggesting that there should be only one examination in ‘ordinary Urdu’ in place of the Lower and Higher Standards and that the ‘tests for this examination should be made more practical’.<sup>53</sup> The proposed tests for this examination were

- (a) Conversation
- (b) Writing a report or letter on a subject given by the Board
- (c) Reading a native officer’s letter on the spot on a subject given by the Board<sup>54</sup>

The contrast between this proposal, and the examinations then in place, which included translation from *Bagh-o-Bahar*, at both Lower and Higher Standard, is stark. Predictably, the Board of Examiners

<sup>48</sup> Military Department Letter, June 1887, IOR/P/2956

<sup>49</sup> Government of India to the Board of Examiners, 10 October 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/ 7305.

<sup>50</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners, to the Government of India Military Department, 20 November 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/ 7305.

<sup>51</sup> Government of India Military Department to the Secretary of the Board of Examiners, 14 December 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/ 7305.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Government of India Military Department to the Adjutant-General in India, 15 June 1901, IOR/P/6112.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

objected, arguing that the current system of examination needed no change. The Government of India capitulated, and the Lower and Higher Standard were retained unaltered.

By October 1903, however, the question of the suitability of the existing examinations in Lower and Higher Standard Urdu had arisen yet again. In a letter to the Board of Examiners, the Government of India referred back to the 1899 suggestion of the Commander-in-Chief, that there should be only one examination in 'ordinary Urdu'. Paragraphs 4 and 5 of this letter, quoted below, reveal not only the continuing tension between the scholarly and the practical, but, finally, a significant change of position by the Government of India towards accepting the views of the military.

#### Paragraph 4

The Government of India ... have reason to believe that the revised system of examination has not been working satisfactorily owing, in a great measure to a divergence of view as to the class of knowledge to be required of the candidates who present themselves for examination. It is evident that the Board, on the one hand, regard the examinations for the Lower Standard, Higher Standard, High Proficiency, and Degree of Honour as parts of the same carefully graduated series, leading up, (in its highest stage,) to a thorough and *scholarly* acquaintance with the language, and founded therefore (*even in its lowest stage,*) upon a *literary* basis, whereas the military authorities (on the other hand) do not *demand scholarship or literary knowledge, but only such sound practical grammatical and colloquial* acquaintance with the language *as shall fit their officers to deal with natives. The Government of India concur in the latter view, and are further of opinion that scholarship and literary knowledge should, so far as the existing series of examinations is concerned, begin with the High Proficiency, and that the lower examinations should be regarded, not as stepping-stones to the higher, but as an end in themselves, designed with a single eye to practical utility.*

#### Paragraph 5

In the meantime it is *absolutely necessary* that the existing examinations by the Higher and Lower Standards in Urdu should be conducted on practical lines, and in this connections I am to remark that the exercises set by the Board of Examiners during the last few years show that *the object of these examinations as now defined, has not been clearly recognized by the Board ...* They constitute ... a test which could only be passed successfully by an officer who had devoted himself to acquiring highflown words and expressions somewhat unintelligible to the *ordinary class of native* with whom he is brought in contact. [The Government of India] ... are of opinion that the exercises should be set so that an accurate judgement can be formed of the qualifications of each candidate to carry out the requirements of his intercourse with natives.<sup>55</sup>

The shift in approach away from the wider ideological 'winning hearts and minds' of influential, educated Indians, towards the narrow purpose of communicating with the 'ordinary class of native' on matters of duty, which began in the mid-1820s, and was clearly evident by the 1860s, appears, from this statement, to have been complete by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There was an accompanying shift in the attitude of the Government of India towards the Board of Examiners. Their tone, previously a respectful one, soliciting advice from a specialist body, and (almost always) deferring to that body's expert opinion, was now censorious and dictatorial.

The response from the Board of Examiners, who, for a century, had insisted upon the merits of the scholarly/literary approach, demonstrated a remarkable about-turn. They stated that they were 'quite prepared to give effect to the wishes of the military authorities as to the nature of the

<sup>55</sup> Government of India, to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 8 June 1903, IOR/P/6576. Emphasis added.

examination by the Lower and Higher Standards in Urdu'. They had 'changed the nature of the exercises set to candidates', and hoped that the style of these papers would meet with the approval of the military authorities. Candidates would be able to see from the exercises, that what was required from them was 'a sound colloquial knowledge of the language in ordinary every day use' and not a literary knowledge of it or an acquaintance with high-flown Persian or Arabic expressions. For the first time they also admitted that *Bagh-o-Bahar* was not a suitable text 'for enabling candidates to acquire a good colloquial knowledge of Hindustani'. They assured the Government of India that they now fully understood that the literary examinations were 'to be kept distinct from the professional non-literary examinations of the military officers',<sup>56</sup> and with an obsequious humility, worthy of Uriah Heep, concluded, 'if the military authorities have any definite suggestions to make for the conduct of these examinations so as more fully to give effect to their views, the Board will do their best to comply with them on being informed of them'.<sup>57</sup>

The, at first puzzling, sea-change in the relationship between the Government of India and the Board of Examiners, becomes less so when placed in the context of the Curzon-Kitchener administration. Curzon, known for his liking for practical reform on many fronts, had arrived as Governor-General in India in 1899 followed in 1902, by Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief of the army. It is likely that both Curzon and Kitchener (who had no knowledge of Hindustani) would, (despite their later differences), have supported the military stance in favour of greater practicality. An India Office Minute of 1905 lends weight to this, noting that the Curzon Government had 'for some time been engaged in revising the rules for examinations in Indian languages',<sup>58</sup> and had decided that, 'The Lower and Higher Standard and examinations, which Military Officers have to pass before they can be permanently appointed to the Indian Army, were too literary in their character and should be much more practical'.<sup>59</sup>

It had taken over a century for the Government of India to make any radical changes to the literary/scholarly approach of the examinations and text-books, but when they finally did, it was not as part of a carefully considered or well-articulated policy. *Bagh-o-Bahar*, which had successfully withstood so many attempts at its removal, was finally replaced at Lower Standard in 1905. Its choice of successor was a translation of Baden-Powell's *Aids to Scouting!*<sup>60</sup> The Board of Examiners, continuing its new-found commitment to practicality, expressed the view that the new text would fulfil 'the essential conditions as to military and general vocabulary' and it would 'not only afford

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<sup>56</sup> Officiating Secretary to the Board of Examiners to the Government of India Home Department, 7 July 1903, IOR/P/6576.

<sup>57</sup> It is difficult to know what could have induced such swift and complete capitulation on the part of the Board of Examiners. It could, perhaps, be at least partially explained by the fact that its Secretary, Ranking, was on 6 months' leave in England and it was the officiating Secretary, Major Baldock, who was charged with dealing with this difficult issue.

<sup>58</sup> India Office Minute (handwritten and unsigned) 7 December 1905, IOR/L/PJ/6/742.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> A possible reason for such an apparently strange choice perhaps lies in the fact that Baden-Powell served with Kitchener during the Boer war. *Aids to Scouting* had also acquired immense popularity in Britain.

instruction in so important a subject as military scouting' but would also would be 'of far more practical utility than any other form of reading book which could be devised'.<sup>61</sup>

The Government of India's adoption of Munshi Mohi-ud-Din's translation of *Aids to Scouting*, as the text-book for both military and civil officers, was, at best, ill-considered. Even allowing that it had some utility for military officers, the mere title of the work, coupled with chapter headings such as 'Keeping yourself hidden and dodging the enemy', should surely have alerted them to its unsuitability as a text book for civilians. A cursory reading of the contents begs the question as to how they could have deemed it suitable even for the military, as the following passage on 'Language' demonstrates.

...you find your way a good deal by asking the way from inhabitants – if you know the language. Therefore, try and pick up sufficient of the language of the country to ask your way... people are sometimes apt to tell you lies either intentionally or otherwise. Thus in India it very often happens that if you ask a native, "Does this road lead to Lucknow?" he will say "Yes that's right" – and hurriedly get away from you. The road may lead to some other place altogether, but he is frightened of a white man, and merely says "yes" to get the conversation ended.<sup>62</sup>

Such passages were hardly likely to aid the establishment of 'friendly intercourse with the natives' and, despite the fact that Baden-Powell had spent several years there, India and Indians are mentioned only half a dozen times, in passing, in the entire book. The wider purpose of teaching officers about Indians and Indian culture, through their study of Hindustani, had, apparently, been altogether discarded.

It was not long before the adoption of *Aids to Scouting* came back to haunt the Government of India. In a letter to Phillott of February 1906, the Secretary to the Civil and Military Examination Committee Bombay, informed him that, (aside from the plethora of mistakes in the translation itself) in the Committee's opinion, *Aids to Scouting* was 'an utterly unsuitable text-book for any class of candidates'.<sup>63</sup> The Government of India, unwilling to lose face, were reluctant to admit that *Aids to Scouting* needed to be replaced and, when they finally did, it was more on the grounds of faulty translation, than an admission of the unsuitability of the text itself. In a letter of October 1907 to the Governments of Madras and Bombay, they acknowledged that the book was 'full of mistranslations and mistakes of idiom and grammar', and as a large number of opinions had accumulated against 'the inaccurate and unscholarly nature of the translation', they could no longer regard it as a satisfactory text-book. The use of it was, therefore to be permanently discontinued and some 'more suitable work' was to be selected or written to replace it.<sup>64</sup>

The consultations they subsequently initiated, in 1907, regarding the production of new text-books for Lower and Higher Standard revealed a fundamental difference of opinion as to the

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<sup>61</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners, to the Government of India Home Department, 30 May 1904, IOR/P/7501.

<sup>62</sup> Robert Baden-Powell, *Aids to Scouting* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden Ltd, 1915) 11.

<sup>63</sup> Civil and Military Examination Committee Bombay, to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, 13 February 1906, IOR/P/7316.

<sup>64</sup> Government of India Home Department to the Governments of Madras/Bombay, 7 October 1907, IOR/P/7593.

purposes of learning of Hindustani. In the opinion of Major Nethersole, the Hindustani Examiner, Madras

...the subject matter should contain in itself the ordinary every day word vocabulary that is essential to ensure a mutual understanding between those concerned, whereby alone the business and the pleasure of the day may proceed smoothly, and without friction; that the sentences should be in clear simple, grammatical and colloquial style.<sup>65</sup>

Whilst conceding that the books should also contain hints on 'etiquette and dealing with natives generally', he recommended providing a 'short detail of such of their habits and customs', merely to prevent officers wittingly or unwittingly giving offence and concluded that the *Rusum-i-Hind*, favoured by Phillott, would 'deal too much with the native side of the question'.<sup>66</sup> His proposal for the contents of the text-book is not only entirely practical in purpose, but also approaches the learning of Hindustani from an entirely British viewpoint. He suggested

...a short description of a Regimental Quartermaster on his morning tour round the lines ... would include a very useful and interesting vocabulary. An Adjutant with his recruits would depict a different scene... Include now the hospital with a brief description of the more common sort of diseases and illness among the natives; and a court-martial with a sketch of the more usual crime etc... a necessary and useful vocabulary, with a minimum of useless words would be evolved, and *mutatis mutandis*, the ideas may be applied to the civil or department life.<sup>67</sup>

Phillott, whilst agreeing that the new text-books 'should, as far as possible, be written in colloquial language', and that only words and phrases in use amongst, or intelligible to, 'intelligent but uneducated natives' should be used, did not see Nethersole's proposed compilation as fit for purpose. He observed

I do not understand Major Nethersole's objection ... regarding the *Rusum-i-Hind*. That it deals with native life, is its chief recommendation. Surely the whole object of studying Hindustani, is to acquire a knowledge of Indian language and thought. Hindustani is not studied for the purpose of acquiring European ideas.<sup>68</sup>

Phillott strongly recommended that 'translations from any English work, especially a military work', should be avoided, as they not only contained a large number of English words, but the whole thought was European.<sup>69</sup>

When the Government of India finally published the new rules for the examinations, they stated unequivocally, that they had been 'drawn up with a view to exacting from candidates a practical colloquial knowledge of the language'.<sup>70</sup> The set-texts prepared by Phillott were certainly a major advance in that direction. The outbreak of World War I, a mere three years after they had been put in place, however, wrought further radical changes, signalling the inexorable 'dumbing-down' of the examination requirements. By 1917, the Chief-of-the-General-Staff had issued a

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<sup>65</sup> Examiner in Hindustani Madras, to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Madras, 30 October 1907, IOR/P/8156.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, to the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Madras, 28 November 1907, IOR/P/8156

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> India Army Order No. 22, 15 February 1911, IOR/P/8697.



circular regarding the provision of special facilities for the teaching of Hindustani to the large numbers of young officers due to arrive who, as a result of the war, would be posted direct to their Indian units.<sup>71</sup> It stated

His Excellency regards it as essential that steps should be taken without delay to ensure that these young officers acquire in the shortest possible time, a good practical knowledge of colloquial Hindustani, in order that they may be able efficiently to perform their regimental duties. No scholarship is required and no study of text-books. Reading and writing, if taught at all, should be in Roman Urdu.<sup>72</sup>

Although introduced temporarily to cope during the exceptional circumstances of the war, the 'Colloquial Examination' set a new precedent and influenced the outlook of the military as to the type and level of examination officers should be required to undergo. In 1919, Major Benson-Cooke, suggested that the success of the Colloquial Examination in equipping officers to carry out the ordinary work of their companies, raised the question 'as to how far the present higher and lower standard Hindustani examinations might be adopted (sic) to approximate more nearly to the colloquial examination'. He maintained that the Lower and Higher standard syllabuses contained elements which practice had 'shewn to be superfluous',<sup>73</sup> and that few military officers kept themselves up to date with the knowledge they acquired for those examinations. In his view

The number of officers who could at any moment satisfy the board of examiners in the written exercise or even in many cases, the text book would be remarkably small. On the other hand it might safely be assumed that they would all pass in conversation. This means to say that these examinations, as they now stand, aim at *teaching something which is not required*. There seems to be a very fair case in favour of bringing Hindustani examinations into line with the other professional examinations as regards their practical utility.<sup>74</sup>

Benson-Cooke stressed the need for 'the acquisition of fluency in conversation' which, he said, was adversely affected by the amount of time which had to be 'devoted to exercises and text books'. To justify the retention of the written exercises and the text-book, it should be shown that 'a candidate's knowledge of colloquial Hindustani would suffer by their removal', which, he maintained, would be difficult to do.<sup>75</sup>

The lower requirements of the colloquial examination, however, had resulted in a decline in standards. The introduction of the Preliminary Examination, as an attempted measure to improve them, was yet another costly error on the part of the Government of India. The equivalent of Higher Standard, it was now the examination required for retention, but without the 'stepping-stone' of Lower Standard. The 'discovery' of the 200 'un-passed' officers, due to be discharged from the Indian Army on 1 March 1925, forced the Government of India to take drastic action. Since losing so many officers was not an option, rather than implement the sanction of dismissal, they chose to

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<sup>71</sup> Chief-of-the-General-Staff, Languages Native, 15 May 1917, IOR/ L/MIL/7/7327.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Benson-Cooke 'Higher and Lower Standard', 96.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 97-99. Emphasis added.

<sup>75</sup> Benson-Cooke, 'Higher and Lower Standard', 99.

'dumb-down' the examination.<sup>76</sup> With the introduction of the Urdu Qualifying Examination, 'practicality' was taken to a new level. Its stated objective was to ensure that a candidate had 'sufficient knowledge of the language to command a squadron, battery, company, or equivalent unit of his own arm on active service and in barracks and to be placed in independent command of a detachment'.<sup>77</sup>

The new 'temporary' arrangements were rushed through with indecorous haste in order to complete all three rounds of examinations by the 23 February 1925. Significantly, it was not until 29 January 1925, after two of the three examinations had already taken place, that the Government of India informed the India Office of their actions. They explained

In order to assist these officers to attain the necessary language qualification, the Government of India have, in anticipation of the Secretary of State for India, introduced, as a temporary measure for one year, a new test to be called the 'Urdu Qualifying Examination'... as *equivalent* and alternative to the Preliminary Urdu Examination.<sup>78</sup>

In deeming the Urdu Qualifying Examination 'equivalent' to the Preliminary Examination the Government of India were being utterly disingenuous. They informed the India Office that the 'salient features of the new examination' were that the syllabus was 'designed to ensure a knowledge of the language for professional purposes' and Urdu script was to be 'dispensed with'. Instead, a knowledge of the Roman character was required. They claimed

Although a knowledge of Urdu script is not required and the examination is confined to purely military requirements, it is not intended that the standard, within the limits prescribed by the syllabus, should be lower than that for the preliminary examination.<sup>79</sup>

The lack of 'equivalence' was immediately picked up by Peel, Secretary to the India Office Military Department, who observed that the substitution of the Roman script 'should certainly make it easier for the officers in question to pass the examination'.<sup>80</sup> J.A. Simpson, the Financial Secretary, was not convinced that the pragmatic should override all other considerations. Referring to the financial saving as a result of the reduced reward for the Qualifying Examination he observed

Whether such a financial saving is not too dearly purchased by loss in efficiency would seem to be for consideration. Apart from the question of the substitution of the Roman script for Urdu ... it must be borne in mind that the substitution of a purely military examination for one of wider scope lessens the officer's capacity to talk with the IOs and IORs on subjects outside the narrow scope of their military duties and this tends to weaken the personal tie between sepoy and officer. ... the old Lower Standard Hindustani exam prescribed reading and writing in Urdu script, and entailed the reading of books ... which were intended to be generally illustrative of Hindu life and character. ... That an

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<sup>76</sup> This had been done after the 1829 Madras examinations but on that occasion only a handful of officers was dismissed. It is puzzling how firstly things got to this stage and secondly how it suddenly came to the attention of the Government of India. They also knew about it early enough in 1924 to devise a new examination, so that should have given the officers time enough to pass the Preliminary. Coincidentally (?) the Board of Examiners had been turned into a Military body based in Simla by 1925.

<sup>77</sup> Government of India Army Department Instructions, 4 November 1924, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>78</sup> Government of India Army Department Instructions, 29 January 1925, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331. Emphasis added.

<sup>79</sup> Government of India Army Department Instructions, 4 November 1924, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>80</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 19 February 1925, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

examination which is to correspond to the old Higher Standard Hindustani should be confined solely to military subjects and lose its old general character seems therefore to be most unfortunate.<sup>81</sup>

Faced with the Government of India's fait accompli, however, the Secretary of State had little choice but to approve the new examination. Peel noted

... the Secretary of State's approval to this change is requested at so late a date that it would be almost impossible for him to interfere, even if he wished to do so... examinations in India have already been held and a third is due in three days from now.<sup>82</sup>

The most the India Office could do was to request that they should be 'furnished in due course with a report showing the results of the examination held under this scheme'.<sup>83</sup> This was not forthcoming and the India Office Military Department were, understandably, irritated when they were asked to sanction the retention of the examination for another year, without any information as to how many officers had passed or were still to pass. This irritation was apparent in a Minute in which Peel remarked

We can only approve the Government of India's proposal for the retention of the examination for another year, but it would have been far more satisfactory if they had given us the promised report before instead of after their telegram. We are not informed of how many officers there still are of over 3 years' service who have not yet passed the Urdu qualifying examination.<sup>84</sup>

In March 1926, the Government of India finally submitted a report in which they stated

From ... December 1924 up to December 1925, 501 candidates were examined of whom 215 qualified and 286 failed to qualify. These figures include the candidates who were examined more than once. Although the standard of the candidates was low at first, it has steadily improved and is now better than has been the case since the Great War. The fact that less than 50% of candidates passed the test indicates that the standard of the examination is reasonably high, and could not well be raised.<sup>85</sup>

The India Office, however, continued to express reservations both as to the success of the examination and the information provided by the Government of India. Peel wrote

The Government of India report very favourably on the working of this examination, which has now been extended up the 31<sup>st</sup> March 1927. 215 officers had qualified up to last December, so that it may be hoped that most of the 200 officers of over 2 years' service who had not previously passed the Preliminary Urdu Examination and were therefore due for removal, have now qualified for retention. It is a pity that the Government of India have not made it clear exactly how things stand in this respect.<sup>86</sup>

Though faced with little choice over sanctioning firstly the introduction of the Urdu Qualifying Examination, and subsequently its extension, the India Office clearly remained concerned about its nature and standard. When asked to sanction its ultimate permanence in 1927, Peel, commented

I am not sure whether this will now supersede (a) the preliminary Urdu examination and (b) the old higher standard Hindustani examination or whether it is an alternative to (a) and (b) only disappears. ... I think the Government of India might have told us a little more about the working of

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<sup>81</sup> Financial Secretary India Office to India Office Military Department, 23 February 1925, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331. These objections are similar to those of Phillott regarding Nethersole's proposed compilation.

<sup>82</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 19 February 1925, IOR/MIL/L/7/7331.

<sup>83</sup> India Office Military Department Letter March 1925, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>84</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 4 March 1926, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>85</sup> Report on the Urdu Qualifying Examination, from the Government of India to the Military Department India Office, 11 March 1926 IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>86</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 31 March 1926, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

the examination ie how many officers are there now who have not passed, and whether it has involved a lowering of the old standard. We must I think sanction the proposal but I should be glad of your observations.<sup>87</sup>

The Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani examinations reintroduced in 1931, ‘with a view to improving the standard of knowledge of junior officers of the Indian Army’,<sup>88</sup> were still very much practical in nature, but the re-introduction of either *Nagari* or Persian script, and of *Sepoy to Subedar* as a text-book for Higher Standard, ensured a more general approach, rather than a narrowly military focus. *Our Sowars and Sepoys*, the new set-text for the Lower Standard, though emphasizing the practical and professional nature of the examination, also served to provide officers with an introduction to the manners and customs of the various ‘races and castes’ of men in their regiments. The outbreak of World War II, however, precipitated a further, and final, ‘dumbing-down’ of the examinations. In 1940, the Government of India wrote to the India Office

... in order to assist officers to attain a reasonable standard of efficiency during the war when conditions may militate against the regular and uninterrupted study necessary for the Lower and Higher Standards in Urdu, the Government of India have decided to introduce, for the duration of the War, an Elementary Urdu examination from April 1940.<sup>89</sup>

Like the colloquial examination in World War I, and the Urdu Qualifying examination, it required only Roman script.

### **6.3: Romanization, Civilization and Control**

From the 1830s the issue of the Romanization of Hindustani and other Indian languages sparked debates both in India and in Britain. These can be divided into three sets of two. Firstly they surfaced at two main points in time, initially in the mid 1830s, and again in the late 1870s.<sup>90</sup> Secondly, there were two separate, but overlapping, contexts in which Romanization was to be used, British and Indian. Thirdly, it had two purposes, that of the ‘civilizing mission’ in the Indian context, and that of practical utility in both contexts. In order to clarify the arguments it is helpful to take the two contexts separately and work through each chronologically.

Looking first at the Indian context, the Romanization campaign of the 1830s had close ideological links with the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy. The proponents of the arguments for and against Romanization were, to a large extent, the same as those for and against English as the language of education. The chief protagonist and driving force of both was Charles Edward Trevelyan, who had joined the East India Company as a writer in 1826, having (ironically) shown ‘great facility’ in Oriental languages. The initial campaign was not limited to Hindustani, but had

<sup>87</sup> India Office Military Dept Minute from R. Peel, Military Secretary, to Col. Wilson-Johnston, 22 February 1927, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>88</sup> Government of India Army Department to the Military Department India Office, 23 April 1931, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>89</sup> Government of India Defence Department, 26 January 1940, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>90</sup> There were sporadic writings which emerged in the intervening years, particularly after the ‘mutiny’.

the ultimate aim of Romanizing all Indian languages. Hindustani, however, because of its 'mixed' nature, was of special interest to the proponents of the movement.

The proposal, in 1833, that the Calcutta School Book Society should publish a Romanized Hindustani dictionary, prepared at Trevelyan's request, by the missionary Joseph Thompson, provoked an adverse and hostile reaction from certain of the Society's members.<sup>91</sup> This prompted a defence of the work, and of the principle of Romanization, by Trevelyan whose grandiose vision saw 'the Roman letters' as the route to a common language which would, ultimately, unite all mankind.<sup>92</sup> In the shorter term, it held the key to removing India's 'tower (or towers)<sup>93</sup> of Babel' and thereby to civilizing Indians. He wrote

Next to the multiplicity of languages, the intellect of India is oppressed by the multiplicity of letters; and it is shocking to think how much human time ... is wasted in gaining a knowledge of the many barbarous characters with which the country abounds. *The student of the Hindoostanee now has to learn both the Nagree and Persian characters, and, if he would commence the study of English, he must learn the Roman also; but under the new plan, the Roman characters will do for all.* The infancy of every nation in the pursuit of knowledge is always marked by a diversity of language and letters, and, as it improves in civilisation, they gradually become assimilated and ultimately merge in one common character and tongue.<sup>94</sup>

... It is generally admitted that our endeavours should be mainly directed to the gradual formation of a national literature embodying in itself the selected knowledge of the whole civilised world... When the languages of England of India shall become expressed in a character common to both, the obstacles which stand in the way of their assimilation will be materially diminished. ... The person who knows English will be more easily induced to cultivate a tongue embodied in a character with which he is already acquainted ... while on the other hand, the Hindoostanee scholar will, for the same reason, enter with greater ease upon the study of English, and draw from it, in like manner, stores of expressive words for the improvement of this native dialect. In either case, whether the English scholar *descend* to Hindoostanee, or the Hindoostanee scholar *ascend* to English, the transition will be made much easier to them both by the use of a common character; and the certain result of this intimate connexion between the two languages will be, that the national literature will be enriched by plentiful supplies of words and ideas derived from the English source. ... How desirable it would be to engraft upon the popular languages of the East such words as *virtue, honour, gratitude, patriotism, public spirit* ... for which it is at present difficult to find any synonyme in them! ... By means of the assimilation proposed, the mutual good understanding between the two races will be greatly promoted. When their languages shall be expressed in a character common to both, the English will learn more Indian, and the Indians will learn more English.<sup>95</sup>

The complex arguments advanced by Trevelyan here in favour of Romanization illustrate how the different aspects of the issue were inextricably linked. His first point was a practical one, yet he used the word 'barbarous', for Indian scripts clearly implying the 'civilizing' aspect of Roman script. His second point was one of 'civilizing' through the creation of a body of knowledge and through unity and assimilation to English. His next point returned to the practical - Roman script would facilitate the study of English for Indians - but it also included the 'civilizing' aspect in that it would

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<sup>91</sup> Most notably James Prinsep and Joseph Tytler. They did not object to the work being used by the British but were opposed to its use for Indians.

<sup>92</sup> Trevelyan's 1<sup>st</sup> Minute, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 1859, 6-7.

<sup>93</sup> For a discussion of the plurality of India's 'tower of Babel' see Javed Majeed, 'What's in a (Proper) Name?' in eds., Indra Sengupta and Daud Ali *Knowledge Production, Pedagogy, and Institutions in Colonial India*, (New York: Palgrave 2011) 26-27.

<sup>94</sup> Trevelyan's 1<sup>st</sup> Minute, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 1859, 6-7. Emphasis added.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 13-14.

aid assimilation, and thereby the ‘improvement’ of the language through the addition of ‘expressive words’ from English, words such as ‘duty’ and ‘honour’ which epitomised English morality. His final point, that Roman script would improve relationships between the British and Indians, again contained the practical aspect, that the common script would make the learning of each other’s languages easier. All these points, however, are linked to facilitating British *control* over Indians by ‘civilizing’ them into Macaulay’s brown Englishmen. For Trevelyan, the link between Romanization and civilization was axiomatic, but he was keen to harness the arguments of practicality and ease to support his case.<sup>96</sup> The adoption of the Roman character for Hindustani would, he was convinced, result in ‘the gradual disuse of the Nagree and Persian and Arabic’, although he acknowledged that the complete establishment of it throughout India ‘to the exclusion of every other character’, would be ‘a work perhaps of several generations’.<sup>97</sup>

In his response to Trevelyan, James Prinsep deemed ‘the eventual general substitution of the Roman character ... as chimerical as the establishment of an universal language’.<sup>98</sup> Joseph Tytler concurred with Prinsep and cast doubt upon Trevelyan’s claim that Hindustani, once Romanized, would eventually merge with English. He pointed out that little advantage would be gained from this in any case unless Indians could be ‘prevailed upon to unlearn their present language, and to learn Hindostanee’.<sup>99</sup> Despite the trenchant criticisms from Prinsep and Tytler, Trevelyan did not lack supporters, especially in the missionary camp, notably Alexander Duff. For Duff, as for Trevelyan, Romanization and ‘civilization’ were inextricably linked. He, too, saw Roman script as paving the way to the ultimate acceptance of English and, in the interim, as permitting the introduction of new terms into Indian languages in order to express new ideas necessary to elevate the dense mass of the people ‘in the scale of moral and intellectual being’.<sup>100</sup> Like Trevelyan, Duff envisaged a future where the necessity for writing the ‘native’ scripts would ‘wholly vanish’.<sup>101</sup> This ultimate triumph of the Roman script would, he maintained, be due, not to Government influence or intervention, but to the ‘inherent, irresistible force of those advantages which it so liberally offers’.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> See Javed Majeed, ‘Modernity’s Script and a Tom Thumb Performance’, in *Trans-Colonial Modernities in South Asia* ed., Michael S. Dodson, Brian A. Hatcher, (London, New York: Routledge, 2012, for a discussion of Trevelyan’s view on the practicalities of Romanization including ‘print capital’ and cost effectiveness.

<sup>97</sup> Trevelyan’s 1<sup>st</sup> Minute, Monier Williams, ‘*Original Papers*’, 15.

<sup>98</sup> Prinsep’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Minute, Monier Williams, ‘*Original Papers*’, 34.

<sup>99</sup> Mr Tytler’s Reply to Mr Trevelyan, Monier Williams, ‘*Original Papers*’, 61.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 75-6.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 119. Duff’s argument is slightly different from the one attributed to Trevelyan by Majeed, that the Roman script possessed a ‘universalising logic immanent in the script itself as a ‘system’ which undercut human agency. Duff’s argument is that the benefits conferred by the Roman script are so great that it will therefore succeed, whereas Majeed’s argument is similar to that of Sanjay Seth, that western education of itself without any human intention, would necessarily turn Indians into a particular type of subject. See Seth, Sanjay. *Subject Lessons*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), Chapter 1, 17-45.

Despite Trevelyan's unswerving belief in the ultimate success of Romanization it made little progress once he left India in 1838. The Anglicists' victory, and the resulting imposition of English as a medium for higher education and official proceedings, ensured that it was through English, rather than Romanized Hindustani, that Indians could not only achieve positions of status within the colonial administration, but could also access the works of literature which were the key to 'civilizing' them. There was also a noticeable lack of official governmental support for the movement.<sup>103</sup> In his *Review* of 1836, Trevelyan commented that the Government Education Committee had 'hitherto very properly remained neutral', something he attributed to the fact that it was 'always safest for Government rather to follow public opinion in such matters than to attempt to lead it themselves'.<sup>104</sup> Following his return to England Trevelyan wrote little on the subject, but before his departure for Madras, in 1858, he asked Monier Williams to publish the collection of correspondence and documents from the 1830s. Monier Williams claimed that the 20 years 'chasm', between Trevelyan's 1836 review and the present, had been bridged over by a letter from the Reverend R.C. Mather, describing the progress made by the Romanization movement up to 1857.<sup>105</sup> Although, in this letter, Mather claimed that their labours had been 'crowned with success', it was evident that any 'success' over that period had been made almost entirely in missionary circles. Of the 46 school books he listed which had been published in 'Urdu-Roman' by January 1858, 35 were for 'native Christians' on religious topics.

The 'mutiny' sparked a renewed interest in Romanization, and a number of letters subsequently appeared in the columns of the English press, emphasizing both its civilizing properties and its practicality. A letter in *The Times* of 10 November 1858 observed that Romanization was necessary to the natives as without it they could have 'but little education and no literature'. The notion of Roman script as an instrument of hegemonic control was also evident in the writer's assertion that 'the very simple work of establishing the use of the Roman alphabet throughout India' was 'the stepping-stone' to educating the 'natives' and bringing them 'under the dominance of European ideas and a Christian civilisation'.<sup>106</sup> In December the same year, in a letter to the *Watchman and Wesleyan Advertiser*, another un-named writer, argued similarly that Romanization was

...so conducive to the spread of the science and ideas of the West, and so likely to be subservient to Christianity, that though no one wishes to obliterate all the native alphabets we hope it will, in the course of another century gradually supersede them in popular use.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>103</sup> At this point this was possibly due to the close link the movement had with missionaries.

<sup>104</sup> Trevelyan, *Review of the Romanizing System up the Year 1837*, reproduced in Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 196.

<sup>105</sup> Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, x-xi.

<sup>106</sup> Anonymous letter to *The Times*, 10 November 1858, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 211-214.

<sup>107</sup> Anonymous letter to the *Watchman and Wesleyan Advertiser*, 15 December 1858, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 234. Obliterating the 'native alphabets' was *precisely* what Trevelyan and Duff had wanted to do!

Despite the assertions in such letters that the Roman script had ‘gradually come into favour’ and was now ‘warmly advocated and applauded’, it continued to attract opposition. One such opponent was Thomas Jarrett, of Ely College who, in a letter to *The Times* of November 1859, argued that every language had ‘its own character’ which properly belonged to it and ‘must therefore suit it best’ and that ‘all attempts to transcribe it into any other’ would ‘fail of accuracy’.<sup>108</sup> It was in the face of such arguments that the Romanization camp found Hindustani of particular use to their cause. In answer to Jarrett, Monier Williams argued

...a more untenable proposition with reference to Hindustani could scarcely have been advanced. When ... the English appeared in the East, Hindustani was hardly a written language. The question then arose, what alphabet was to be employed in writing it? ...Hence it came about that Hindustani, which had no alphabet of its own, was written sometimes in Persian, sometimes in Devanagari characters, according to the prominence given to the Musalman or Hindu element. Now, however, that our own language is gradually winning its way to the position formerly occupied by Persian ... it follows that the mixed dialect which is meant to be the medium of intercourse between the races ... *has as much right* to be written in the Roman as in the Persian or Nagari alphabets. And since, *cæteris* (sic) *paribus*, the Roman alphabet is by far the most simple and flexible of the three, being more easily adapted to Persian and Nagari words than either Nagari to Persian and English, or Persian to Nagari and English; and since, moreover, it has already been employed increasingly for twenty-five years in expressing this mixed dialect, it does not seem too much to predict that our good old English ABC is likely ere long to establish its claim to be considered *the* Hindustani alphabet.<sup>109</sup>

The post-mutiny documentation exhibits a certain difference of approach from that of the 1830s. Unlike Trevelyan and Duff who had envisaged that the ‘native scripts’ would ‘wholly vanish’, the writer to *The Watchman* was careful to note that he did not want to ‘obliterate the native alphabets’. Similarly, Monier Williams, though dubbing Persian ‘very unreadable’ and ‘very unprintable’, and arguing that *Nagari* was, ‘too perfect for the practical purposes of this utilitarian age’, claimed to have ‘no wish to encourage negligence in the study of the native dialects’, including their scripts.<sup>110</sup> This more cautious note arose from a fear of a repetition of the events of 1857, as Monier Williams makes clear.

A great deal has been said about the danger of “disgusting the susceptibilities” and offending the tastes of the native of India, as if the attempt to introduce the Roman character might bring about a second mutiny ... The only desire we have is that every opportunity be taken of placing the Roman character before them and of inducing them to use it; that after convincing themselves of its practical superiority to their own, they may voluntarily accept it.<sup>111</sup>

Certain things, however, had not changed. In 1858, the un-named writer to *The Times* had expressed the ‘hope’ that the Government of India might be ‘induced to give some encouragement’ to Romanization. Such encouragement, he suggested, would take the form of permitting petitions and other documents in the Roman character to be received in the courts and offices, and the publication in it of ‘Acts of the Indian Government’ and of the ‘Government Gazette’.<sup>112</sup> In his letter of 1859, Monier Williams argued that Roman script should be employed in Government documents,

<sup>108</sup> Jarrett, letter to *The Times*, 12 November 1858, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 246.

<sup>109</sup> Monier Williams, letter to *The Times*, 31 December 1858, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 258-9.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 261.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 263-4.

<sup>112</sup> Anonymous letter to *The Times* 10 November 1858, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 214.



taught in missionary and other schools, and that vernacular books should be printed in it.<sup>113</sup> Both letters, by implication, reveal that government support for Romanization was still unforthcoming. Despite this, Monier Williams declared, optimistically, that ‘that the general adoption of the Roman alphabet’ would soon take its place amongst the ‘accomplished facts’ of the century.<sup>114</sup>

On his return to India, in 1864, Trevelyan remained surprisingly quiet on the subject of Romanization, but the articles of Aloys Sprenger, in the *Augsburgh Gazette* the same year, were instrumental in reviving the debate. In response to Sprenger’s articles, the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Nassau Lees, expressed doubts as to ‘the suitability of the characters of the Roman alphabet, to represent the sounds to be expressed in all the languages ... in use in India’. His arguments, reminiscent of those of Jarrett, centred around the fact that scripts were created and perfected to represent the specific sounds of particular languages. He used the analogy that a coat, which is made specifically for a man, fits him better, even if it is slightly old and unfashionable, than one which is fashionable and new but which is made for someone else. What comes next is no surprise. For languages for which a script had already been ‘perfected’, Romanization was not appropriate, but, like Monier Williams, Nassau Lees, saw Hindustani as the perfect candidate. He observed

It remains, however to enquire whether ... we have no languages which have received a considerable development, but for which no written character, original or adapted, has been perfected. And here our attention is at once arrested by a language ... which is written in many characters, yet which has no alphabet of its own; which has an extensive vocabulary; yet few words in that vocabulary can be said to belong to it; which is at once the most widely spread, the most popular, and the most useful of the languages of India, yet of which there is no definite form or dialect that can properly be called a language of any part of India; ... The language I allude to, is that which is commonly called Hindustani. We have here, then, not an alphabet seeking for a language; we have a language seeking for an alphabet.<sup>115</sup>

It is equally unsurprising, therefore, that the second major round of the Romanization debate, which began, in 1878, with the founding of the Roman-Urdu<sup>116</sup> Society in Lahore,<sup>117</sup> focused specifically on Hindustani.

In a lecture to the Society of Arts in London, subsequently published in the *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Frederic Drew addressed the issue of the lack of progress made by the Romanization movement in India somewhat pessimistically observing

I see no prospect of the general spread of the Roman system if the efforts for it are to be confined to the same methods as have hitherto been used. ... the multifarious native alphabets have been

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<sup>113</sup> Monier Williams, letter to *The Times*, 8 January 1859, Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 269.

<sup>114</sup> Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, xvi.

<sup>115</sup> William Nassau Lees, ‘On the application of the Characters of the Roman Alphabet to Oriental Languages’, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, No. IV, Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 1864, 358.

<sup>116</sup> At no point in any of the discussions on Romanization was there an attempt to define what was meant by Hindustani. Although the equation of Hindustani and Urdu had, by 1878, become fairly commonplace, the actual British construct as used in the examination syllabuses at this point still included *Nagari* script and *Prem Sagar* and would not change for another 17 years. What is strange about this choice of term is that while *Hindustani* may have had no script of its own, Urdu had one entirely suited to it.

<sup>117</sup> The initial money to start to start the society was donated by Trevelyan.

receiving distinct aid from Government. Government has undertaken to educate India and ... in all its own schools and in the greater part of the aided schools, its help goes to the teaching of some of the many local alphabets, or of the more general Devanagari and Persian characters. This is why Roman has not spread further. It has been met by the rising tide of the other alphabets encouraged by Government. And not only does the action of Government lie in teaching these in the schools, but for all Government purposes until the stage when English comes in, either Persian or Hindi or Bengali, or some character allied to these last, is made use of. I maintain that while this goes on our cause cannot prosper as we wish; that the course to take must be to convert Government to our views ... and to persuade them to give, at all events, an equal chance to the system; and even ... to aid yet more actively the growth of Roman to that wide spread state when it would be of so much advantage both to the people and to Government itself. <sup>118</sup>

No clearer indication could have been given of the continued lack of government support for Romanization. Part of the reason for the reluctance of the government to back the movement was, Drew suggested, the worry of generating further unrest. Even if those in government were convinced that adopting the Roman script was the right course of action, they would immediately ask themselves, 'Can we make this change? Dare we do it? Will it not too much shock the prejudices of the natives?' He answered his own rhetorical questions with an argument previously advanced by Trevelyan

... There is no obstacle of deep-seated prejudice standing in the way of the change we propose ... the natives will certainly learn what they see to be to their advantage. If they were once to see clearly that Roman writing was to rule the future, they would not take long to recognise the advantages attaching to a system which ... would enable their children to advance from the knowledge of their mother tongue to that of the *lingua franca* of India,\* and thence to the English. \*ie Hindustani

According to Drew, the only way for Romanization to succeed, was if the government allowed 'nothing to be taught in its schools, or in schools aided by its grants, until the pupil had learnt to read and write either his own vernacular or Hindustani in the Roman character'. He did not see even this, by itself, as necessarily leading to success and urged that court petitions should also be allowed to be presented in the Roman character. <sup>119</sup>

In a letter of 1878, to the *Society of Arts Journal*, Dr. G.W. Leitner expressed the opinion that attempts at Romanization were a waste of time, asserting

There is no chance of the Roman character being accepted by the masses in India, who revere the Perso-Arabic and the Sanskrit characters because they are identified with their religion ... Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit are also the keys to all that is valuable in an extensive Oriental literature, without which the whole national existence of the people of India has no meaning. Romanisation is a well-meant and laborious attempt of pouring water into a sieve. <sup>120</sup>

In a second letter to the same journal, he acknowledged that if Roman script were introduced into schools there would be 'every avidity to learn it', but only because it would be presumed to be a step towards the acquisition of *English*'. Assuming that Romanization could be successfully accomplished without sparking unrest, Leitner remained unconvinced of its value for Indians.

<sup>118</sup> Frederic Drew, 'The Possibility of Applying the Roman Alphabet Generally to the Languages of India', *Roman Urdu Journal* Vol. I, No. 2, July 1878, 19-20.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-23.

<sup>120</sup> G.W.Leitner., 'The Impracticability of Adapting the Roman Character to the Alphabets of India', *Society of Arts Journal*, re-published in *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1878, 19.

As a means of education, the Roman character for the vernacular will simply be laughed at, for there is nothing to read in it. ... no-one will ever read *Miskin* in the Roman character, or even glance at the *Bagh-o-Bahar* in it, excepting when teaching Hindustani to an Englishman. Urdu and Hindi will continue to be written in their own character as hitherto. ... you must neither translate foreign ideas nor transliterate foreign alphabets, but ... you must adapt all that is of universal application in your own religions, morality, philosophy, and literature, to the native standpoint. Otherwise you only court failure. The Roman character for the Urdu and Hindi will be learnt as a Pigeon-Urdu and Pigeon-Hindi, favoured by the English rulers, but no native will take credit to himself in it either as a scholar or as wishing to influence his countrymen by writing in it.<sup>121</sup>

The Roman-Urdu protagonists were convinced of its benefits. As in the 1830s, it was argued that Romanization would improve relations between the rulers and the ruled. In a letter, of 1878, to the *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Trevelyan suggested that ‘nothing would more conduce’ to giving ‘facility and confidence in the intercourse between Europeans and Natives’ than to ‘meet in the half-way house of the native language expressed in the European character’.<sup>122</sup> His sentiments were echoed in an article the following year, which argued

In English there is no bond between the races; ... Persian Urdu is equally incapable of forming a bond of union: ... In Roman-Urdu and in that alone is there mutual cooperation and assistance. Its adoption would do more than any other measure to unite in friendliness and mutual respect the European resident and the native of India.<sup>123</sup>

The connection between Roman script and ‘civilization’ in this ‘second round’ of Romanization remained a strong one, but there was an overt attempt to distance the Roman-Urdu movement from the aims of Christianization, aims which had been an integral part of the 1830s campaign. The editors of the *Roman-Urdu Journal* noted

The missionaries have hitherto been the principal supporters of the Roman-Urdu movement. We gratefully acknowledge our obligations to them in this respect. ... We may then appeal to them to give their support to the Roman-Urdu Society whose work they admit to be a good one, though, as we have said, Christian propagandism is not a part of its programme.<sup>124</sup>

The attempt to distance themselves from the missionaries was, quite probably, linked to the ongoing problem of government support. The editors of the *Journal* stressed the necessity of government aid in printing books in the Roman-Urdu character,<sup>125</sup> and an anonymous article in the same issue commented, ‘An expression of will on the part of our rulers is all that is wanted. Let a fair term be allotted for winding up the wretched old Urdu-Persian concern ... and meanwhile let the use of the Roman character be rationally encouraged.’<sup>126</sup> Trevelyan, himself, reiterated the need for such support, arguing

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<sup>121</sup> G.W. Leitner ‘The Roman v. the Indian Alphabets’, in *Society of Arts Journal*, re-published in *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1878, 23-24. This statement supports my contention that in the Indian context it was Urdu or Hindi that was used rather than Hindustani.

<sup>122</sup> Charles Trevelyan, Letter, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6, November 1878, 2.

<sup>123</sup> Anonymous, ‘The Advantages of Roman-Urdu as the basis of popular education in India compared with those of English’, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. II, No. 18, November 1879, 11-12.

<sup>124</sup> Editors, *Education of Europeans in the Oriental Languages*, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6, November 1878, 13.

<sup>125</sup> Editorial of *the Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. I, No. 5, October 1878, 17.

<sup>126</sup> Anonymous, ‘Urdu and Roman Letters’, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6, November 1878, 25.

Two things may reasonably be expected of the Government – that they should allow fair play among the different alphabetical systems by permitting the use of the Roman letters in the Courts and Offices of Government in common with other letters, and by providing for instruction in them in the Schools and Colleges subsidised by the Government.<sup>127</sup>

The much-desired and much-needed Government support, however, remained conspicuous by its absence.

Turning our attention now to the British context, the potential benefits of Romanization were twofold. Firstly it made their learning of Hindustani easier and secondly its use in courts and offices would have given them greater control over the administration. An examination of the textbooks and grammars demonstrated that Roman script was used extensively in Hindustani teaching materials from Gilchrist's time. One obvious reason for this, in an age where listening materials were unavailable, was to provide learners with an idea of the pronunciation of letters and words. It was also seen to give them a quicker route into the language itself, while they were getting to grips with unfamiliar scripts.<sup>128</sup> There was, from the outset, however, a heated debate over the merits of this, and even more opposition to the idea of the British relying on Roman script alone. In 1824, H.H. Wilson had stated unequivocally

Those who are able to learn a language are not apt to stumble at the threshold, and the alphabet in which that language is written is not likely to be regarded as an impediment where so many more and weightier difficulties are resolutely encountered. A system of expressing oriental words in Roman characters is therefore of trivial consequence, and it is in fact so far objectionable that it saves no labour in the end, as the language after all cannot be learned without perusal of its best writers; their works cannot be read without a previous knowledge of the characters in which the works are written. All written communication with the natives of Hindustani implies a like acquirement, and a thorough familiarity with the Hindi-Roman ultimatum will not obviate the absolute necessity of mastering the Persian or Nagri alphabet.<sup>129</sup>

10 years later, Joseph Tytler, countering Trevelyan's suggestion that Englishmen would learn Hindustani more easily through the Roman script, asked upon what principle it could 'rationally be expected that a person who has not perseverance enough to learn the *letters* of a language should ever be able to learn *the language itself*?<sup>130</sup> Frederick Shore writing in 1837, was sceptical of the motives of the Romanizing lobby, which he saw as less than altruistic. He asked, 'To what possible benefit is such a change contemplated? To enable a few Englishmen, who are too indolent to learn the native written character, to write a sort of mongrel Hindostanee'.<sup>131</sup> An article to *The Times*, in November 1858, argued however, that the script was a major impediment to learning the language well.

... if we were to ask, where is the great difficulty of learning a native language during a residence of some twenty years, - of learning, say, Hindustani, which is throughout India what French is

<sup>127</sup> C.E.Trevelyan, letter to the *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6, November 1878, 21

<sup>128</sup> Gilchrist's saw it as something that 'rather paves the way for, than obstructs the acquisition of the oriental alphabets'. Gilchrist, *Ultimatum*, ii.

<sup>129</sup> H.H.Wilson, Preface to *Roebuck's Oriental Proverbs*, 1824 ix-xiii, reprinted in *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 5, October 1882, No. 53, 19-20.

<sup>130</sup> Tytler's Reply to Trevelyan, February 1834, Monier Williams. *Original Papers*, 42. Italics original.

<sup>131</sup> Shore, *Notes*, Vol. I, 441-444.

throughout Europe, - we should be told that the difficulty lies at the very threshold of the study, it is in the alphabet. So great is this difficulty, and so urgent is the necessity of surmounting it, that ... it has been proposed ... to substitute for the complicated Oriental alphabets the Roman letters...<sup>132</sup>

Such arguments, inevitably, again gave rise to the criticism made by Shore a quarter of a century earlier that Romanization was intended to make life easier for lazy British officers. Monier Williams contended, however, that it was not intended to subserve 'the indolence of young men' and did not believe that it would encourage them to 'neglect the study of the native characters'. On the contrary he maintained that it was likely to produce 'more good scholars by rendering the study of the Oriental dialects easier and less *repulsive* to Englishmen at first, than by *disgusting* them with a *strange and difficult* tongue and a still *stranger and more difficult* character simultaneously'.<sup>133</sup> In the preface to his *Easy Introduction*, he explained that his use of the Roman script was intended 'to remove *hindrances* and *difficulties* that the most unstudious of Englishmen may be allured onwards to the acquirement of a correct and grammatical knowledge of Hindustani'.<sup>134</sup>

The discussion on Romanization in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* in 1864 focused largely on its benefits to the British, a fact not lost on Rajendralal Mitra, who remarked

...the question has been hitherto discussed mainly, if not entirely, from an European standpoint. The benefits which European scholar, officials and missionaries are to derive by substituting the Roman characters in their reading and printing of Indian dialects, are what have been most elaborately discussed, but little consideration has been shewn as to the advantage which the natives are to derive by accepting the Roman as a substitute for their national alphabet.<sup>135</sup>

Like H.H. Wilson and Joseph Tytler, Mitra was also unconvinced by the argument that the difficulty of the script was a serious obstacle to learning the language. He observed

He who has the ... inclination to learn a foreign language will never find its alphabet a stumbling block. If he cannot learn the alphabet, he is never likely to learn the language. There is no system of alphabet on earth which cannot be mastered in a couple of hours, and which would not become perfectly familiar in a month; but there is not a language that I know of, which the greatest linguist could acquire with sufficient accuracy for purposes of ordinary conversation, in six months.<sup>136</sup>

Some fourteen years later, Leitner, too, expressed reservations regarding the British motivation in imposing Roman script. He contended that it did not answer any purpose 'but the very doubtful one of bridging over the difficulty of acquiring the vernacular languages by the English'.<sup>137</sup> Even Trevelyan, who had constantly stressed the civilizing nature of Roman script for Indians, admitted in the discussion at the Society of Arts, in 1878, that convenience to the British was definitely a factor to be considered, observing

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.211.

<sup>133</sup> Monier Williams, *Original Papers* 263-4. Even allowing for the difference in English usage in 1859, this is a strange choice of words for a Sanskrit scholar!

<sup>134</sup> Monier Williams, *Easy Introduction*, v and vii.

<sup>135</sup> Rajendralal Mitra, 'On the origin of the Hindvi language and its Relation to the Urdu Dialect', *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, No.V, October 1864, Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 505.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 510.

<sup>137</sup> 'The Discussion which followed Mr Drew's lecture before the Society of Arts', *Roman-Urdu Journal* Vol.1, No. 3, November 1878, 6.

Nothing can be more inconvenient and perplexing than the Persian letters ... The forms of the consonants are elongated and sprawling, the reverse of our compact, symmetrical Roman type; and if the vowels are expressed at all, it is done by little dashes above or below the line. But the moment the running hand is attempted the vowels altogether disappear, and it becomes difficult even for the writer to read his own writing, still more for others, and above all, of course, for Europeans.<sup>138</sup>

Leitner, however, argued that the British 'could never admit it as a principle in governing Oriental races' that their own convenience was to be 'the guide in the reforms pressed on their attention'.<sup>139</sup> He observed, 'If our officers practised the Shikasta more, they would find it just as easy to read as the scrawls of some of their colleagues and superiors'.<sup>140</sup> He contended that it was 'the duty of those who had to administer justice in India to make themselves acquainted with this running hand', which he said, 'might be done by a little application and perseverance'.<sup>141</sup> He admitted, however, that the 'natives' did sometimes 'presume upon the little knowledge, which, as a rule, Englishmen possessed of their alphabet and language, by careless handwriting'.<sup>142</sup> The editors of the *Roman-Urdu Journal*, keen to defend themselves and other 'Romanizers', against the charges that their scheme was, 'merely to suit the convenience of a few thousand Europeans',<sup>143</sup> asserted that they were not advocating the use of the Roman alphabet *merely* to facilitate the learning of Eastern languages by Europeans'. This, they said was 'at best but a secondary object', but they admitted it was 'one of the advantages, and by no means an unimportant one' of the reform they advocated.<sup>144</sup>

Romanization did eventually gain some ground, albeit considerably later, in the Indian army. By 1914 it had already gained some momentum and the introduction of the colloquial examination, in 1917, for the duration of World War I, had a significant impact. The influx of new officers to replace those killed or wounded meant that there was little time for learning the language, and the script was a necessary casualty of this. Although the script requirement was subsequently reintroduced, the effects of the war on the learning of the language had been profound. By 1924, officers were taking the Urdu Qualifying Examination, which not only did not apologize for its lack of vernacular script, but in a Trevelyanesque manner glorified the substitution of the Roman, as is seen here in the report of the Government of India on the examination in 1926.

The substitution of the Roman for the Vernacular script allows candidates more time to work at the essentials of the language and, since they do not have to spend time and money in mastering the vernacular script, which is a task of great difficulty to many, examiners are justified in demanding a higher standard of knowledge within the scope of the syllabus. The Roman character is a better medium for conveying the Urdu language composed as it now is of many words and phrases of foreign origin, than is any vernacular script. ...The learning of the language in the Roman character by officers is in conformance with the principle that it is now the common script of the Indian Army and is taught systematically to Indian officers and other ranks.<sup>145</sup>

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-25.

<sup>139</sup> Leitner, 'Impracticability', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No.4, September 1878, 20.

<sup>140</sup> Leitner, 'Roman v. the Indian Alphabets', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 4, September 1878, 26.

<sup>141</sup> The Discussion which followed Mr Drew's lecture before the Society of Arts, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 3, August 1878, 11.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>143</sup> Editors of the RUJ, 'The Education of Europeans' *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6, November 1878, 1.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>145</sup> Government of India to the Military Department India Office, 11 March 1926 IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

Nevertheless, when Lower and Higher Standard were reintroduced, in 1932, the claims that had been made for Roman-Urdu, as the language of the Indian army, appear to have been somewhat exaggerated, if not completely misplaced. An India Office Minute observed

One of the most important changes is the reintroduction of the Urdu or Nagri script. This certainly seems to be an admission that "Roman-Urdu" has not taken the place of the native scripts of the country in the Army, notwithstanding the encouragement it has received.<sup>146</sup>

Even in its military heartland, Romanization had failed to achieve the dominance desired by its protagonists.

If Romanization was seen as beneficial to the British in *learning* the language, it had, potentially, greater advantages in facilitating colonial rule. In 1834, Duff pointed out that if Roman script were used, a judge 'might then read all the proceedings himself, and write his order himself'. Public functionaries would then perform, 'singly and unaided', the work which they were currently unable to perform without the assistance of three or four natives'.<sup>147</sup> Mather, writing a quarter of a century later, further developed the idea of Romanization as an aid to greater British control and efficiency in the administration of India, observing

The natives naturally wish that their petitions should be read, and their real meaning understood; and, as they suppose that their English rulers understand their own characters best, they would of their own accord get their petitions written in those characters. How much good such an usage would accomplish in putting a check on the duplicity and frauds of the native officials, it is easy for any one who has been in India to understand. What an amazing benefit would result, also, were all the accounts of Government kept in the Roman character! The despatch of business would be immensely facilitated, and the perpetration of frauds would become proportionately difficult.<sup>148</sup>

Although the pro-Romanization lobby used the benefits to Indians, in terms of civilization and unity, as their main arguments, the undercurrent of how much easier it would make life for the British was never entirely absent. In a letter to the *Homeward Mail*, in December 1858, another unnamed author wrote

...as life, leisure and vision are all limited, it does seem an utter absurdity to hesitate about the adoption of an easy substitute for the abominable scrawls used by the natives ... it is simply a suggestion for an alteration which would be as convenient and beneficial to the natives as to ourselves.<sup>149</sup>

For some, however, the advantages to the British and to colonial rule actually took precedence. In a letter dated 15 December 1858, W. Edwards, of the Bengal Civil Service, drew attention to the power that using the native scripts gave to the *amlah*, who, he claimed,

...well aware of the advantages they thence derive, perpetuate the evil by writing systematically so illegibly that few, save their own immediate brethren similarly employed under the state, can decipher the writing without great pains and difficulty... As long as the native characters remain in use for recording all our proceedings we must remain an 'Amlah-ridden Government'. ... I can read both Urdu and Hindee characters with considerable facility, and often would I have gladly taken up the proceedings in cases pending before me ... to find out for myself the important points therein,

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<sup>146</sup> India Office Military Department Minute, 14 May 1931, IOR/L/MIL/7/7331.

<sup>147</sup> Alexander Duff, *Calcutta Christian Observer*, June 1834, reproduced in Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 129.

<sup>148</sup> Monier Williams, *Original Papers*, 209.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

but the writing was prohibitive, and, in the multitude of cases to be disposed of, I could not spare the time to spell out the manuscript, but must content myself with listening to it read out by one of the Amlah. ... The change I advocate would effectually turn the tables and deprive them of all undue influence and power. District officers would be able to read for themselves, and also – which is most important – pass and record their own orders in their own handwriting to the English character in Urdu on each document as it was placed before them.<sup>150</sup>

In 1878, Frederic Drew, argued forcibly for the substitution of the Roman script in courts and offices and stressed the advantages to the administration which would result from it.

In judicial proceedings ... all petitions before a court of law should be allowed to be written either in Roman or in whatever character is now in use, at the option of the suitor. For some time Roman would be used side by side with the old character. As the native officers of the court became gradually acquainted with the Roman system ... so might the petitions be absolutely restricted to the Romanised form. ... Any improvement in the administrative machinery of our Government in India is a thing to be welcomed ... Now our proposed change would be for this great machine like a fresh turning of the bearings on which the various parts of it work..." Only those who have been in India ... are aware to how great a disadvantage the English magistrate is put by the evidence being taken down by the clerk of his court in a running native hand.<sup>151</sup>

An anonymous article in the *Roman-Urdu Journal* of November 1878, again stressed the practical advantages to officials and the administration in general arguing

District work would be far more interesting, far less laborious, and far better and more quickly done, if the *droning peshkar* were superseded everywhere by *neat Romanized* files, bearing their own history on the face of them, written in no *unknown character* and needing no interpreter.<sup>152</sup>

In the following issue of the *Journal* a certain C. Pearson stressed the advantages of Roman script for purposes of security.

... Instead of employing a Muharrir as amanuensis it is often convenient to write a memorandum oneself, and when Roman-Urdu is more generally current than it is at present, European Officers will, no doubt, find the advantage of writing with their own hands when the wording of a document is important. I am myself in the habit of writing examination questions in Roman-Urdu, when it is not desirable to take a Muharrir into confidence; and I can imagine that a Police Officer might often be glad to correspond with his Inspectors without the assistance of an Amlah.<sup>153</sup>

Another article, in the RUJ of 1879, blamed the British lack of competence in reading Hindustani, and the resultant dependence on intermediaries, on the poor quality of printed material.

The vernacular is presented to them with every disfigurement that hideous printing and lithography, meaningless and wearisome text books and uncertain and untrustworthy examinations can heap upon it. ... Under such circumstances who can wonder that the majority of Europeans in India throw up the vernacular in disgust and devote their exclusive attention to English work. One result of this is that such Europeans when unavoidably brought into contact with vernacular documents or with vernacular-speaking natives are wholly at the mercy of their middleman or interpreter'.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>151</sup> Drew, 'Possibility of Applying the Roman Alphabet', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 2, July 1878, 25.

<sup>152</sup> Anonymous, 'Urdu and Roman Letters', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6, November 1878, 25.

<sup>153</sup> Letter to the Secretaries to the Roman-Urdu Society, *Roman-Urdu Journal* Vol. I, No.7, December 1878, 16-17.

<sup>154</sup> There were interminable arguments regarding the merits of the various typefaces. Although the Romanizing lobby pushed the idea of cheapness and the fact that *Nagari* was more expensive to make and Persian type broke easily, they were somewhat economical with the truth as Roman type tended to wear out more quickly.



The editorial of the December 1879 issue of the *Roman-Urdu Journal* focused on arguments of legibility and speed, again revealing the extent of the reliance of the British on Indian intermediaries.

A district officer has to pass hundreds of orders on reports and vernacular misls read to him by his munshi. ... in such cases he is only too thankful for the apparent facilities which the Persian character and the glibness of the munshi afford.<sup>155</sup>

The thrust of their very long article was that Roman-Urdu would make the running of Courts and Offices easier, quicker and more transparent and would remove the dependence on Indians who could not always be trusted. It revealed that the majority of British civil officers did not learn the written language to the standard they needed to in order to have control over what was going on, and that Indians had a much greater control than the British did wherever Hindustani was used.

The second round of Romanization was short-lived. In January 1880, the editors of the *Roman-Urdu Journal* admitted that, over half a century, any growth in support for Romanization had been 'extremely slow' and the financial situation of the Society was far from secure. The continued lack of Government support had left them dependent on a 'handsome' donation from Trevelyan and a few other subscriptions of 'an exceptional character' and the survival of the society looked uncertain.<sup>156</sup> The *Roman-Urdu Journal* of May 1881, highlighted what it regarded as a missed opportunity to introduce Romanization observing

It was shown by officers of long Indian experience how the present system cut them off from the people, from the impossibility of reading their petitions, &c., for themselves; how it opened up a wide door for perjury and fraud of every description and how all this might be swept away by a simple Government order. But the opportunity was let slip, the Government refused to give the necessary order, and the consequence is that our Public offices are now once more filled to overflowing with documents in every stage of unintelligibility.<sup>157</sup>

The need for Government support had been stressed in a letter of 1880 to the Director of Public Instruction, Panjab, from the Joint Secretaries of the Roman-Urdu Society, who argued

...the time has come when the Society should bring itself to the notice of Government in order that it may obtain an official recognition of its existence, and in the hope that Government will give to it some encouragement and help. ... It cannot be said that public opinion in favour of the Roman character is urgent or demonstrative but it is sufficiently awakened to justify us in calling the attention of Government to the subject.<sup>158</sup>

By 1882, however, the future of Romanization was being threatened from another quarter. An editorial in the November 1882 edition observed

...there seems to be little advantage in our pressing the merits of the Roman alphabet at all urgently in connection with the present enquiry of the Education Commission. Considering that the enquiry has led to a certain amount of passionate agitation and excitement, it would be unwise in us while the excitement lasts to run a tilt against the windmills of popular prejudice.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Editorial, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. II, No. 19, December 1879, 9.

<sup>156</sup> Editorial, *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. III, No. 20, January 1880, 1.

<sup>157</sup> Anonymous, 'Romanisation in India', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. IV, No. 36, May 1881, 16.

<sup>158</sup> Joint-Secretary Roman-Urdu Society, 'Letter to the Director of Public Instruction Panjab', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. V, February 1882, No. 45, 9.

<sup>159</sup> Editorial, 'Primary Education in the Panjab', *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. V, No. 54, November 1882, 3.

The ‘agitation and excitement’ of the Urdu-Hindi controversy was to last a very long time, completely eclipsing any remaining chance of success that the Romanization movement in India might have had.

#### **6.4 Lingua Franca or Vehicular Language? : The Fate(s) of Swahili and the Fate of Hindustani**

Nearly a century after the British initiated their ‘Hindustani enterprise’ in India, on different continent, another *lingua franca*, Swahili, similarly attracted the interest of various colonial powers. The clear parallels between Hindustani suggest a comparison would be productive. Swahili, however, developed in several very different colonial contexts, the Belgian Congo, British Kenya and Uganda, German Tanganyika and later British Tanganyika. The contexts differed both in terms of the language policies of the colonizers and in terms of indigenous linguistic factors. As a result Swahili experienced various ‘fates’; in some cases similar to that of Hindustani, in one, in particular, the outcome was radically different.<sup>160</sup> These varied outcomes, and the reasons behind them, provide a clearer understanding of the ultimate ‘fate’ of Hindustani than that offered by an isolated examination.

Looking first at the similarities between the two *lingue franche*, the word Swahili, like Hindustani, was not used initially to refer to a language, but as an adjective, referring primarily to the Swahili people who lived along the long coast-line of East Africa, the *Suahel*. The language began life along this coast and is known as *Ki-Swahili* something that equates to the term *Hindustani zabān*. Just as Hindustani developed from an indigenous Indian base (*khari boli*) infused with the Arabic and Persian vocabulary of the Mughal rulers, so Swahili was an indigenous Bantu language, heavily influenced, through contact with Arab traders, by Arabic. Both languages, therefore, had cultural connections with Islam.

Like Hindustani,<sup>161</sup> Swahili was an established *lingua franca* before the advent of colonial rule. In pre-colonial India, Hindustani had been spread down into the Deccan by Mughal armies. Swahili had been introduced into the interior of Kenya, Tanganyika and the Belgian Congo, well before any process of colonization started in Africa. Early colonial impressions of the language are reminiscent of the description of Hindustani by Hadley, as a ‘jargon of Arabic, Persian, Tartar and Hindooee’.<sup>162</sup> The traveller Henry Salt, in 1814, wrote that the language of the coastal dwellers of East Africa appeared ‘scarcely to deserve the name of a distinct dialect’, being merely ‘a kind of mixed jargon’.<sup>163</sup> Salt was apparently unaware of the fact that, like Hindustani, Swahili had developed ‘a sophisticated verse literature in the language’, written in Arabic script, which ‘drew its strength

<sup>160</sup> The main focus will be on German Tanganyika as this was where the conditions existed for Swahili to flourish most, thereby providing a contrast with Hindustani.

<sup>161</sup> It would be more accurate to refer to the Indian *lingua franca* of pre-colonial times as Persianized *khari boli* since it is argued throughout this thesis that Hindustani was a British construct but to do so here would reduce clarity..

<sup>162</sup> Hadley, *Compendious Grammar*, x.

<sup>163</sup> Henry Salt, *Voyage to Abyssiania*, (Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1816) 397.

and inspiration from Islam'.<sup>164</sup> Like those who saw Hindustani as the solution to India's 'tower of Babel', the early colonisers in Africa, 'bewildered by East Africa's diversity and multiplicity of languages', found Swahili 'a godsend'.<sup>165</sup> For the early 19<sup>th</sup> century British the utility of Hindustani lay in its geographical versatility. Even prior to the establishment of colonial rule in Africa, Swahili had been seen by Europeans to possess the same utility. In a statement of 1850, the German missionary Ludwig Krapf observed

...if we reflect that the Kisuaheli is spoken, or at least understood, from the Equator down to the Portuguese settlements at Mozambique, consequently ... that it offers the key to the language of the Interior, with which it is intimately related, we cannot help attaching great importance to this language.<sup>166</sup>

Jerome Becker, a Belgian military officer assigned to work in Tanganyika, noted that, like Hindustani, Swahili, had potential value for Europeans, 'as a means to dispose of the need for potentially untrustworthy interpreters'.<sup>167</sup> By the 1850s Swahili 'was established as the regional lingua franca, and most Europeans who ventured into the interior over the next two decades found it to be a useful tool in achieving their goals'.<sup>168</sup> In 1881 Joseph Thomson described Swahili as 'a language not only spoken by the natives at the coast, but so well-known in the interior as to enable the traveller who can speak it to pass almost from one side of Africa to the other'.<sup>169</sup> In the preface to his *Handbook of Swahili*, Bishop Edward Steere, stated, 'There is probably no African language so widely known as the Swahili. Throughout this immense district any one really familiar with the Swahili language will generally be able to find someone who can understand him and serve as an interpreter'.<sup>170</sup> In 1920, in an uncanny echo of William Butterworth Bayley, over a century earlier, F.S. Joelson, the editor of *East Africa and Rhodesia*, wrote

From the river Juba in northern British East Africa to the Rovuma, the southern frontier of the Tanganyika Territory ... Wherever one wanders throughout East and Central Africa will be found men who understand it.<sup>171</sup>

(Nearly from Cape Comorin to Kabool... few persons will be found in any large villages or towns ... who are not sufficiently conversant in the Hindoostanee. Bayley 1802)

<sup>164</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 2.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>166</sup> J.L. Krapf, *Outline of the Elements of the Kiswahili Language* (Tübingen: Lud. Fried. Fues, 1850) 8-9.

<sup>167</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Language on the Road* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1984) 30.

<sup>168</sup> Michelle Moyd, 'Language and Power, Africans, Europeans and Language Policy in German Colonial Tanganyika', unpublished MA Dissertation, University of Florida, 1996, 20.

<sup>169</sup> J. Thomson, *To the Central Africa Lakes and Back*, Vol. 1 (London: Sampson Low, 1881) 29. Richard Burton observed that Swahili was 'the most useful because the most generally known, and once mastered it renders its cognates as easy of acquirement as Bengali and Mahratti after Hindustani'. Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa*, Vol. II, (London: Longman Green Longman and Roberts, 1860) 198-9. Interestingly Burton said here that Swahili was not a written language.

<sup>170</sup> Edward Steere, *Handbook of the Swahili Language* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1884) iii. This is reminiscent of Duncan Forbes' 1845 statement, 'Throughout the extensive empire of India ... the Hindustani is the language most generally used'.

<sup>171</sup> Joelson, *Tanganyika Territory*, 184.

As with the British Hindustani enterprise a teaching apparatus to learn Swahili was constructed by various colonizing powers. Both the British and Germans produced numerous grammars and dictionaries. Whiteley tells us

To the missionary JL Krapf we owe the first systematic grammar of the language (1850) and this was followed 30 years later by his monumental dictionary (1882)... His fellow countrymen, Velten, Delius, Büttner, Seidel, and later Meinhof, built on these foundations, providing at the same time a wealth of reading material. British contributions to Swahili studies start with Bishop Steere's Handbook of Swahili (1870) which, with his Exercises (1878), formed the basis of initiation into the language for several generations of students... Steere was followed by his fellow missionaries Madan and Taylor ... Shortly after the turn of the century there appeared the first of a series of grammatical studies by distinguished women scholars, most of them owing some allegiance at some time or other to the Missions. First, Mrs Burt, with her study of the Mombasa dialect, (1910) then the Misses Werner, drawing on the first ten years' work at the School of Oriental and African Studies, (1927). This was followed in 1944 by Mrs Ashton's authoritative Swahili Grammar which remains the standard reference work.<sup>172</sup>

Just as the British had set up first Haileybury, and later courses at Kings College and University College for civilians, and at Addiscombe for the military, the Germans set up the Oriental Seminar at Berlin University which by 1888

...was teaching courses in Kiswahili for prospective travellers to German East Africa. Herman von Wissmann, the commander of the German Schutztruppe (literally protection troops) during the conquest, insisted that officers destined for German East Africa learn Kiswahili to facilitate the occupation and administration of the colony. Colonial administrators were also required to attend the Oriental Seminar Kiswahili course before being sent off for duty in Africa.<sup>173</sup>

If there were clear parallels between Hindustani and Swahili, however, there were also crucial differences. Some of these existed irrespective of the colonial, or specific indigenous, linguistic contexts. Others are specific to those contexts. Four non-context specific differences can be identified. The first relates to the nature of the languages themselves. Hindustani was a colonial theoretical construct and the way in which the British delineated and systematized it, had a significant effect on how the language was seen by both colonizers and colonized.<sup>174</sup> Although Swahili had many dialects, the coastal varieties of Mombasa and Zanzibar being the most prestigious, these were developed by Africans for African use and were subsequently appropriated and utilized by the colonizers.<sup>175</sup> In the Indian context, whilst the question of dialects is certainly relevant to Hindi, it is not relevant to Hindustani.<sup>176</sup> Swahili dialects were regional and exhibited grammatical differences. The British construct of Hindustani was based on one dialect alone and its very all-encompassing nature did not permit variants to exist outside it. Whereas Swahili dialects, existed side by side, therefore, the variant 'styles' of Hindustani existed *within* the construct itself.

<sup>172</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili* 15-16.

<sup>173</sup> Moyd, *Language and Power*, 37.

<sup>174</sup> This links with the contention that 'representations of languages implicitly or explicitly laid out parameters for what constituted appropriate communication between colonizing and colonized people'. Gilmour, *Grammars of Colonialism*, 3.

<sup>175</sup> As, for example, in the case of Shaba Swahili in the Belgian Congo. See Fabian, *Language and Colonial Power*.

<sup>176</sup> Also to a much lesser extent to Urdu, for example with *Dakkhini*.

The second non-context-specific difference is that of the existence, or lack of it, of classical languages. In pre-British times in the Indian context, the classical languages of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic were accorded status and prestige by Indians. ‘Vernacular’ languages were considered inferior, and even when a substantial canon of poetry was established in the language known variously as Hindi, *Rekhta* and later Urdu, poets, like Ghalib, frequently regarded their Persian verse as worthy of far greater merit. For the British Orientalists of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century too, the classical languages held the key to Indian literature, philosophy, religion and law, and were, therefore, held in high esteem.<sup>177</sup> For both Indians and the British the classical languages retained their importance throughout the colonial period, whereas in the case of Swahili there was no such competition.<sup>178</sup>

The third non-context-specific difference is that of script. Whilst there was a small body of literature in Swahili written in Arabic script, the vast majority of those who spoke the language could not read it. Christian missionaries brought the Roman script to Africa and since tribal languages were unwritten they could, justifiably, be said to be languages ‘seeking for an alphabet’. Ludwig Krapf and later Edward Steere developed consistent systems of Romanization. Although Swahili was initially associated with Islam, as missionary education spread, and later government schools were established, Roman script became prevalent.<sup>179</sup> Whilst in India the Romanization of Hindustani always lacked government support, in Africa there was no question as to which script would prevail. Whereas Hindustani could be perfectly adequately represented in either Persian or *Nagari* scripts, it was generally agreed ‘that the Arabic script did not fit the Swahili phoneme system,<sup>180</sup> and the Swahili themselves were, apparently, often unable to read back what they had written.<sup>181</sup> According to Bishop Steere it was ‘absolutely necessary to have a good idea of what you are to read’ before you could read the Arabic Swahili script at all.<sup>182</sup>

The final non-context-specific difference is that a key factor in the development of Swahili as a *lingua franca* was trade. In pre-colonial times it was spread from the coastal areas of Kenya and Tanganyika into the interior as far as the Congo by the caravans of Swahili traders such as Tipu

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<sup>177</sup> This has a parallel in England, where a classical education was valued far more than English. English literature was not taught at Oxford until 1894 when the English School was founded. English was seen as ‘the poor man’s classics’, a soft option and a ‘women’s subject’.

<sup>178</sup> Throughout British rule the monetary rewards for passing examinations in the classical languages were considerably higher than those for the ‘vernaculars’.

<sup>179</sup> Unlike in India, missionaries in Africa, of various denominations, were actively encouraged by colonial governments to be involved in education. In the Belgian Congo, Fabian tells us that education was actually handed over to (mainly Flemish-speaking) missionaries by the colonial government. Fabian, Johannes. *Language and Colonial Power*, 70.

<sup>180</sup> Ann Brumfit, ‘Rise and Development of a Language Policy in German East Africa’, *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika*, 2, 1980, 275.

<sup>181</sup> Carl Velten, *Praktische Anleitung zur Erlernung der Schrift der Suaheli* (Berlin: 1901, 103, quoted in Brumfit, ‘Rise and Development’, 279.

<sup>182</sup> Quoted in Lyndon Harries, *Swahili Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962) 17.

Tip.<sup>183</sup> From 1832, with the permanent residence of the Sultan in Zanzibar, the importance of Swahili began to grow. According to Mazrui and Zirimu

... trade with the interior of the continent developed more substantially. The momentum of this trade was also a momentum of linguistic spread. ... As the 19<sup>th</sup> Century unfolded, trade expanded. Settlements inhabited by large numbers of people drawn from different linguistic groups increased, and the need for a *lingua franca* also arose.<sup>184</sup>

Krapf, writing in 1850, suggested that, unless they knew Swahili, coastal merchants were unable to conduct their mercantile transactions in the interior 'without the picklock of a selfish interpreter'.<sup>185</sup> In 1870, Steere noted that it was 'the trade language of a very large part of Central or Inter-tropical Africa'.<sup>186</sup> This function of Swahili as a *lingua franca* for trade was developed by, and for, Africans, but continued to operate under colonialism. In 1920, Joelson noted that Swahili had 'established itself as the business medium' practically everywhere. This was particularly 'true of the Tanganyika Territory', he said, where the Germans, both officials and missionaries, had been 'at pains to aid its propagation'.<sup>187</sup> Whereas Swahili was always inextricably linked to trade, Hindustani, apart from being referred to (usually disparagingly) as a 'bazaar' language, had no such function.

There are two context-specific factors affecting the development of Swahili. The first is to be found in the differing language policies of the various colonial powers. The second relates to the status of Swahili, and the balance between it, as a *lingua franca*, and other tribal languages. The second factor existed in pre-colonial times but was, to varying extents, affected by the language policies of particular European rulers. In pre-colonial Tanganyika Swahili had already acquired status in the eyes of Africans through its association with the Swahili coastal culture, which was regarded as more advanced than other tribal cultures. It has been argued that, prior to German rule, Swahili was, already therefore, 'the language of an influential stratum of society'.<sup>188</sup>

Debates as to which language should be officially adopted as the *lingua franca* of Tanganyika continued throughout the period of German rule. The authorities in Berlin consistently favoured German and sponsored the teaching of it through subsidies and rewards. Emil Schwörer, a lawyer and former *Schutztruppe* captain in German South-West Africa, also favoured German. He argued that although Swahili was often the favoured contender, 'the use of an African language rather than

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<sup>183</sup> Wilfred Whiteley, 'The Changing Position of Swahili in East Africa', *Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 26, No 4, October 1956, 343.

<sup>184</sup> Ali Mazrui and Pio Zirimu, 'Church State and Marketplace in the Spread of Kiswahili', *Case Studies in Bilingual Education*, ed., Bernard Spolsky, Bernard and Robert Cooper, (Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers, 1969) 428.

<sup>185</sup> Krapf, *Outline*, 8-9.

<sup>186</sup> Steere, *Handbook*, iii-iv.

<sup>187</sup> Joelson, *Tanganyika Territory*, 184.

<sup>188</sup> Brumfit, 'Rise and Development', 239. Iliffe however maintains that the coastal culture was not always preponderant and that Swahili was 'not the *lingua franca* of the trade routes but only the language for dealing with coastal traders'. John Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, Cambridge; CUP, 1979) 79.

German implied a degree of equality between ruler and ruled'.<sup>189</sup> In 1916, in a statement evocative of those of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century British in India, he argued that it was a mistake to describe Kiswahili as an 'easy' language. Those who thought that, after little study, they had 'mastered it', generally only knew it superficially and he warned that this presented the possibility of exposing German colonizers to mockery if they acquired a clumsy and inferior pidgin Swahili.<sup>190</sup> Like the Belgians in the Congo, however, some feared that by giving Africans access to German they would provide them with a tool with which to fight colonialism.<sup>191</sup> According to Brumfit, 'Many people saw India as a warning, and spoke of a "half-educated proletariat, planning revolt"'.<sup>192</sup>

The Germans initially settled on the coast in Tanganyika and Swahili was spoken in many of the places where they first set up their first district quarters (*Bezirksamter*) and military posts (*Militärstationen*).<sup>193</sup> The first Governor, von Soden, converted the existing commercial network into an administrative one,<sup>194</sup> hence German colonial administrators were able to count on Swahili-speaking staff from the coast.<sup>195</sup> During the 1890s the Germans set up a 'formal colonial structure', appointing an Imperial Governor to rule from the new capital Dar es Salaam. Although the highest levels of the colonial government were occupied by Germans and, therefore, at these levels German was used Swahili nevertheless 'began to gain acceptance as the language of the German East African administration'.<sup>196</sup>

It also quickly gained ground as the language of education and, although in Government schools subsidies were linked with the teaching of German, (and initially some schools taught up to 10 hours a week) it was taught as a foreign language whereas Swahili was the medium of instruction.<sup>197</sup> In 1901, official language policy, stressed the need for mission and state schools to teach both Kiswahili and German, but the level to which they were taught was entirely different.

Kiswahili was to be taught in such a way that students would learn to use the language "independently" or without supervision. ... It seems possible at this point that the Germans were interested in further spreading Kiswahili not just for administrative purposes, but as a means of "giving" Africans their own language – "simpler" than German, but more "advanced" than the local languages ... which would be suitable for "thinking independently". On the other hand it is clear that the goal of German teaching was to teach basic skills – perhaps just enough to receive and understand orders or requests made by German administrators, settlers, and managers of agriculture and industry.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Kenneth Orosz, 'Colonialism and the Simplification of Language', *German Colonialism and National Identity*, ed., Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer (New York: Routledge, 2011)103. Schwörer developed a simplified form of German for use in the colonies called Kolonial Deutsch.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>191</sup> Moyd, 'Language and Power', 60. Fabian says the same was true in the Belgian Congo.

<sup>192</sup> Brumfit, 'Rise and Development', 259-260.

<sup>193</sup> Bromber, 'German Colonial Administrators', 39.

<sup>194</sup> Brumfit, 'Rise and Development', 239.

<sup>195</sup> Bromber, 'German Colonial Administrators', 39.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup> Moyd, 'Language and Power', 52.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

Subsidies made available for promoting German, were often diverted by Government officials in Dar es Salaam for furthering Kiswahili.<sup>199</sup> According to Brumfit

The comparative difficulty of German, however, must also have contributed to the shift in balance between the two languages. For a start, the learning of German was vastly complicated in the early days by the teaching of two scripts: Gothic and Latin. The Gothic script was not dropped in the schools until at the earliest 1901.<sup>200</sup>

Following the *Maji Maji* uprisings of 1905-7,<sup>201</sup> when the Government took 'new stock' and 'there grew up a clear realization that German East Africa would never be suited to mass European settlement',<sup>202</sup> there was move towards greater German support for Swahili. In 1905, a letter from the Governor's office of the German administration in Tanganyika noted that 'the fostering of Swahili' was 'of the greatest importance'.<sup>203</sup> Gradually the number of hours devoted to German decreased in government schools and, by 1908, it had been decided that German should be 'limited to the specially talented pupils only'.<sup>204</sup> The German government increasingly established schools 'at which future members of the administrative service were educated in Swahili, which in turn, 'facilitated the spread of Swahili in Tanganyika as the language of administration and as the lingua franca'.<sup>205</sup> According to Mazrui and Zirimu, after some hesitation, the Germans 'promoted Kiswahili on a vigorous scale because it afforded considerable administrative convenience'.

... The impact of the period of German rule in Tanganyika upon the fortunes of the language in that country was considerable. The fact that education in the German colonies was much more controlled by the state and less dominated by missionaries than education in the British colonies ... was itself a factor facilitating the spread of Kiswahili in German-ruled Tanganyika. The position of missionaries there in favour of "vernacular" languages, though humoured to some extent, did not prevail.<sup>206</sup>

Africans increasingly recognized the advantages of being able to speak Swahili in terms of employment.<sup>207</sup> There emerged, therefore, a 'Swahili-speaking elite' in Tanganyika.<sup>208</sup> Swahili-speakers, in a variety of roles such as teachers, administrators and clergy, became the mediators between the rulers and the ruled. As their numbers grew, Swahili became more 'entrenched in Tanganyikan culture'.<sup>209</sup> Thus the German backing of Swahili, in turn, served to further enhance its status in the eyes of Africans. Rather than being used solely by the colonizers as a means of 'reaching down' to the colonized,<sup>210</sup> it has been suggested that in the context of German Tanganyika,

<sup>199</sup> Marcia Wright, 'Local Roots of Policy in German East Africa', *Journal of African History*, IX, 4, 1968, 626-7, quoted in Moyd, 'Language and Power', 50.

<sup>200</sup> Brumfit, 'Rise and Development', 279.

<sup>201</sup> *Maji Maji* has certain parallels with the Indian uprisings of 1857-9.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 277.

<sup>203</sup> Moyd, 'Language and Power', 44.

<sup>204</sup> Brumfit, 'Rise and Development', 267.

<sup>205</sup> T.P. Gorman, 'The Development of Language Policy in Kenya', ed., Whiteley, *Language in Kenya*, (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974) 405.

<sup>206</sup> Mazrui and Zirimu, 'Church, State and Marketplace', 432.

<sup>207</sup> Moyd, Michelle, 'Language and Power', 41.

<sup>208</sup> Although as Robinson (1974) has argued, there was an 'Urdu-speaking elite' in North India there was never a Hindustani-speaking elite.

<sup>209</sup> Moyd, 'Language and Power', 116.

<sup>210</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 61.



Swahili could also be used by Africans to ‘reach up’ and attain some measure of power within the colonial regime. Moyd has argued that

...the ability to speak Kiswahili became a key to advancement under German colonialism. Those who spoke Kiswahili came to occupy a special place in the changing political landscape of Tanganyika, and stood to gain both relative wealth and prestige which was not necessarily available to those who, for whatever reasons did not learn Kiswahili.<sup>211</sup>

Swahili in German Tanganyika, therefore, fulfilled, in many ways, a role similar to that of English in India. The language Indians needed to ‘reach up’ to the rulers, to gain education at higher level and to secure posts in the higher echelons of the administration was not Hindustani but English. The passage below illustrates this.

...Kiswahili-speaking (*English-speaking*) administrators all over the territory exerted power to which they may not have had access before this time. It must have become increasingly clear to Tanganyikans (*Indians*) that avenues for advancement within the colonial system were open to those who were qualified. For the most part, “qualified” meant the ability to speak Kiswahili, (*English*) and a willingness to work for the Germans, (*British*) often at the expense of other Africans. (*Indians*) The primary means by which these parvenus achieved their new status was the German (*British*) educational system, which eventually encompassed the mission schools.<sup>212</sup>

Changes in economic conditions also aided the spread of Swahili in Tanganyika. Greater migration and labour-mobility and an expansion in trade brought an increase in inter-tribal mixing, and ‘in these new mixed societies, Swahili as traditional lingua franca came to play an increasingly important role’. Brumfit has suggested that

The demand for Swahili literacy, at village level, followed on from Government sanction of the language, (which had made a knowledge of Swahili marketable); this Government sanction, however, was in its turn linked with a *quite independent spread of the language at grass-roots level*. Thus, as momentum grew and Swahili gained increasingly wide currency, much of the initiative was lifted out of official hands: no intelligent local administrator was going to deny the paramount usefulness of a language which (it seemed) would soon be everywhere comprehensible – regardless of metropolitan dicatates on “policy”. Recognizing this, the authorities in Dar es Salaam were pragmatic enough to modify their educational policy accordingly, even if this meant incurring the disapproval of Berlin.<sup>213</sup>

In areas of East Africa under British control the ‘fates’ of Swahili were somewhat different. In Tanganyika German language policies enhanced its status and encouraged its development as a vehicular language, but in Kenya and Uganda, it had to compete with English. Once Tanganyika became a British mandated territory after the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, there, too, Swahili came under threat from English. In German times it had been the key to employment and social position. Under British rule the situation changed.

... Swahili was seen increasingly by Tanganyikans as a ‘second-class’ language. It was used as the medium of primary school education ... but the medium of instruction in Secondary Schools and of Higher Education was English. As time went on the difference in the quality and quantity of secondary school materials and teachers was clear evidence to pupils ... of the inferior status of the language. Institutions of Higher Education in East Africa designed primarily for East Africans, made no provision for the study of Swahili, while their use of English simply confirmed East Africans in their belief that it was on this language that they should set their sights. While the language of the

<sup>211</sup> Moyd, ‘Language and Power’, 41.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 44. Words in italics added.

<sup>213</sup> Brumfit, ‘Rise and Development’, 273. Emphasis added.

lower courts was Swahili, the language of the higher courts was English. While Swahili newspapers were plentiful, the glossy magazines were in English.<sup>214</sup>

In Kenya, where the British had always pursued a more similar linguistic policy to that in India, Swahili had never enjoyed the prestige that it had in German Tanganyika. In 1909 the question of 'whether English or Swahili should be the lingua franca of the colony' had been raised for the first time at a United Missionary Conference held at Nairobi and was raised 'at frequent intervals' subsequently.<sup>215</sup> Whiteley tells us

In practice, Swahili was widely used by officials and un-officials alike to suit administrative convenience, but its relegation in many contexts to the status of a basic medium of communication won it few adherents... In education it was used both as a medium of instruction and taught as a subject, but nowhere was it surrounded with an aura of prestige comparable to that of English.<sup>216</sup>

By 1929, the Education Department in Kenya announced that it was 'the policy of the Government to establish English as the "lingua franca" of the Colony as soon as possible'.<sup>217</sup> As in India, English was seen as the key to economic and social advancement. Although English posed the *biggest* threat to Swahili, in the 1930s some antagonism was also shown towards it by the Kikuyu who advocated their tribal language.<sup>218</sup> In Tanganyika there were over a hundred tribal languages, almost all of them Bantu. Swahili was, therefore, not only seen as a necessary *lingua franca* but also had a linguistic affinity with other tribal languages making it easy to learn. In Kenya there were far fewer tribal languages and a significant percentage of the population had a non-Bantu language as their mother-tongue,<sup>219</sup> making Swahili a less obvious choice of *lingua franca*.

Another factor which militated against Swahili in Kenya was the development of simplified and 'corrupt' varieties of it. As a settlement colony, the British in Kenya were present in greater numbers, leading to the development of *Ki-Settla*, a low status 'pidgin' version of Swahili, used, rather like Anglo-Hindustani, with servants and subordinates. According to Whiteley

The European settler variety of Swahili ... with its limited vocabulary, highly attenuated grammatical structure, and occurrence in invidious social contexts did a great deal to encourage the myth that Swahili was unfit to cope with the requirements of the twentieth century, and discouraged any consistent policy.<sup>220</sup>

Swahili was also used in the military in East Africa, as Hindustani was in India. Since it was (again as in India) not the mother-tongue of many of the soldiers, a variety known as Ki-KAR, 'characterized by a relatively simplified structure and a distinct lexical borrowing of military terminology' emerged. Whereas in Tanganyika the army always used a more standard form, in Kenya, British officers 'acquired this form of Swahili and used it as KAR's formal language of command until the late 1930s' when standard Swahili was formally adopted. According to Mutonya and Parsons,

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<sup>214</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 61-2.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>218</sup> Whiteley, 'Changing Position', 351.

<sup>219</sup> According to Brumfit, 35% in 1980 spoke non-Bantu languages.

<sup>220</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 65.

'British officers' view of Swahili as an inferior language provided an environment that tolerated the use and development of an attenuated Swahili in the military'.<sup>221</sup> The emergence of varieties like Ki-Settla and Ki-KAR in Kenya added to both British and African perceptions of Swahili an inferior language.<sup>222</sup>

In Uganda the situation was different again. Its geographical position meant that coastal Swahili and its culture had less influence than in either Tanganyika or Kenya. Christian missionaries in Uganda (particularly Buganda) enjoyed a high degree of success. From the outset they had focused on the tribal languages, in particular Luganda, the language of the Baganda tribe, for their work. The position of Swahili in Uganda was 'jeopardized' from its associations with Islam and although its merits, from an administrative point of view, were 'frequently voiced between 1910 and 1920', the Church regarded it as 'an alien tongue'. For the Baganda it was 'a thinly veiled threat to their status' and the proposal, in 1927, of the Governor, Sir W.F. Gowers, that Swahili should be adopted as the *lingua franca* of education in a considerable part of Uganda, provoked protestations despite the fact that Buganda had been excluded.<sup>223</sup> With regard to English, the British pursued similar policies in Uganda as in Kenya and it therefore enjoyed the same high status. Under challenge on two different fronts, it was, unsurprisingly, in Uganda that Swahili fared the worst, surviving only 'on the football field' and in other situations where 'use of English or Luganda was neither desirable nor possible'.<sup>224</sup>

Returning now to the fate of Hindustani, in 1831 Sandford Arnot wrote that it was

...the prevailing medium of colloquial intercourse among a hundred millions of British subjects, and likely to become more and more generally established as the language of judicial, commercial, military and political transactions throughout our Indian Empire...<sup>225</sup>

From this it appears that Hindustani was still set to develop into Gilchrist's vision of the 'grand vernacular' language of all India.<sup>226</sup> Yet, when it came to the decision as to which language should be the vehicle of higher education, Hindustani was never considered by the colonial authorities as an alternative to either the classical languages or to English. Both Orientalists and Anglicists were, according to Macaulay, in agreement that

...the dialects commonly spoken among the natives of this part of India contain neither literary nor scientific information, and are moreover so poor and rude that, until they are enriched from some other quarter, it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>221</sup> Mungai Mutonya, and Timothy Parsons, 'KiKAR: A Swahili variety in Kenya's colonial army' *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*, 25:111-125, 2004, 111.

<sup>222</sup> The East African Standard of 6 December 1952, reported that it was referred to in an after-dinner speech in Nairobi as a "lingual obscenity" to which no Briton "worth his salt" should be a party. Quoted in Whiteley, 'Changing Position', 351.

<sup>223</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili* 70.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Arnot, *Grammar*, iii-iv.

<sup>226</sup> When considering Gilchrist's vision for Hindustani it is useful to consider what constituted British India at the time he was writing.

<sup>227</sup> Thomas Babington Macaulay, Minute recorded in the General Department, 2 February 1835, reproduced in Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir, *The Great Education Debate*, (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999) 165.

Macaulay was either unaware, or had conveniently forgotten, that numerous classical works from Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and English, including the Bible, had already by this time been translated into Hindustani, both at Fort William College, and by missionaries, such as those at Serampore. Despite having been regarded as ‘the vernacular language of India’, and deemed vital to the maintenance of British rule in India for 35 years, it was, seemingly, unfit to be the vehicle for the education of Indians.

There were those such as James Mill who took a different view from both the Anglicists and the Orientalists, believing that the vernacular languages would serve more efficiently as a medium of education.<sup>228</sup> In an essay of 1834, entitled *Language and Character Suited to the People*, Frederick Shore made a statement which accorded somewhat with Mill’s views.

The general introduction of the English language in India, may, indeed, be set down as a chimera. ... The majority of the people must, and can only, be enlightened by means of their own vernacular tongue; ... the first object ought to be to translate books into the vernacular languages of the country.<sup>229</sup>

Having divided Indians into four classes, ‘1. Old Muslim families, 2. Learned Hindus, 3. Shopkeepers and merchants, and 4. Expectants for official employments’, he suggested

If Government were to order that Hindostanee and Nagree should be the official character, the whole of the fourth class would immediately learn it stimulated by the hope of official employment; the second class would improve their knowledge of it, whereas, they have not sufficient leisure ... to enable them to acquire an entirely different and extremely difficult language, such as the English; the two first would ... soon follow the general current, and Persian would very speedily be as much disused as Arabic and Sanscrit are at present.<sup>230</sup>

No official case was ever put forward, however, to suggest Hindustani as an alternative.

As Zastoupil and Moir point out, the Anglicist victory did not, as has sometimes been suggested, immediately result in a complete defeat for the Orientalists.<sup>231</sup> Nevertheless, over the next fifty years, the decision to impose English radically altered the status of Hindustani and impacted directly on its potential development in both the British and Indian contexts. By the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the inexorable rise of English had destroyed any chances Hindustani had of fulfilling Gilchrist’s vision. An article in November 1879 by the editors of the *Roman-Urdu Journal* asserted that English was

...already the sole occupant of all the higher departments of the State. No correspondence reaches the Government of India in any other language, and even in the Provincial Governments the amount of vernacular work in offices higher than that of the Deputy Commissioner or Collector is extremely small. Deputy Commissioners and their subordinates have enough vernacular work and to spare, but even in their case the English work is that which presses most urgently on the officers’ attention. The influence which directs and guides the machinery of the vernacular establishment is that of English. ...This prevalence of English in all the departments of Government work necessarily renders

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<sup>228</sup> Javed Majeed’s suggestion that the Anglicists were driven more by evangelicism than utilitarianism, perhaps also helps to explain why Hindustani was not considered. Javed Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings*, (Oxford: OUP, Clarendon Press, 1992) 141.

<sup>229</sup> Shore, *Notes*, Vol. 1, 435.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, 446..

<sup>231</sup> Zastoupil and Moir, *Education Debate*, x.

its study popular with all who wish to gain a livelihood as employés of the State, that is to say with ninety-nine per cent of the lads, who attend our Government Schools.<sup>232</sup>

Alongside the imposition of English in education and the administration, there was an increasing recognition, as the British acquired more territory, and hence more languages, of the importance of regional 'vernaculars' and Wood's 1854 Despatch on primary education exerted a major influence on official British policy in this respect. It stated

We have always been most sensible of the importance of the use of the languages which alone are understood by the great mass of the population. ... It is indispensable, therefore, that in any general system of education, the study of them should be assiduously attended to and any acquaintance with improved European knowledge which is to be communicated to the great mass of people ... can only be conveyed to them through one or other of those vernacular languages.<sup>233</sup>

Whilst many people spoke Hindustani, it was now recognized that it was not their mother-tongue, the language through which their education was to be imparted. Where Trevelyan had viewed India's 'Tower of Babel', as a problem and an obstacle to civilization which needed to be removed, it now appeared that linguistic plurality was to be encouraged. The decision to remove Persian as the language of the courts in 1837, rather than enhancing the status of Hindustani diminished it further. Indians increasingly demanded that local vernaculars take its place and, in most cases, British policy acquiesced in their demands.<sup>234</sup>

The combination of the imposition of English with the increased emphasis of the importance of other Indian vernaculars had a corresponding effect on the perceived necessity for the British to learn Hindustani. In the civil context, it was realized fairly early on that, for most district officers, the language of the district to which they were assigned was the one they need to acquire. The extent to which Hindustani was deemed either necessary, or sufficient, varied from Presidency to Presidency. George Campbell, writing in 1853, acknowledged that although in Northern India, civilians rarely needed another language, in Bengal, and more especially in Madras, this was not the case.<sup>235</sup> Another civilian, John Capper, writing the same year, drew attention to the insufficiency of Hindustani alone. Having passed the examination in it, the young civilian would, he said, be 'at once drafted off as magistrate, or assistant collector, or both, to some remote district', the language of which would be 'perfectly unintelligible to him'.<sup>236</sup> Although when he was posted in 1859, to Gujrat as Assistant Commissioner, John Beames spoke Hindustani 'fluently and tolerably correctly',<sup>237</sup> when trying his first case, 'both the plaintiff and defendant spoke Panjabi' of which he

<sup>232</sup> *Roman-Urdu Journal*, Vol. I, No.18, 1-3.

<sup>233</sup> Extract from Wood's Despatch, quoted in Nurullah and Naik, *A History of Education in India*, (Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1951) 205-6.

<sup>234</sup> The main exception to this, both for education and the courts, was Panjab where they imposed Urdu. See Farina Mir, 'Imperial Policy, Provincial Practices', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 43, 4, 2006, 395-427, for a discussion of British policy with regard to Panjabi. I would also argue again that it was (highly-Persianized) Urdu rather than Hindustani which was used in the lower courts.

<sup>235</sup> Campbell, *Modern India*, 270.

<sup>236</sup> John Capper, *The Three Presidencies of India*, (London: Ingram, Cooke, and Co., 1853) 263-4.

<sup>237</sup> Beames, *Memoirs*, 99.

could not understand one word. Beames tells us that although all the 'upper classes and educated people spoke Hindustani', Panjabi was necessary with the peasantry and lower classes in towns'.<sup>238</sup>

By 1880, the Madras Government regarded the acquisition of Hindustani to its civilians as merely a useful 'extra'. They suggested it would be

...an advantage if Hindustani were added to the optional second vernacular in England for a Madras probationer. It is easy, and very useful throughout this Presidency while not being a recognized "language of a district" there is not the same necessity under the Service rules for a man to acquire it in India as there is in the case of Tamil or Canarese or Malayalam...<sup>239</sup>

The days when Hindustani had been seen as the 'most essential of the dialects in India' were clearly long gone. In 1881, the Bengal Government observed that Bengali was the language spoken in 33 out of 44 districts, whereas Hindustani was only spoken in 11. In a letter to the Secretary of State for India the Government of India made it clear that the acquisition of Bengali should be the priority.

Several complaints have reached the Lieutenant Governor from district officers, to the effect that the young Assistant Magistrates who now come out from England are at first, owing to their entire ignorance of Bengali, unfit for any work; ... On these grounds ... the Lt Governor recommends that Your Lordship should be moved to ... to rule that selected candidates allotted to the Lower Provinces must qualify in both the Hindustani and Bengali languages before coming out to India.<sup>240</sup>

It is the case of Bombay, however, which best illustrates both the changing policy of the British regarding Hindustani, and its decline in status during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1823, in a letter to the Government of Bombay, the Court of Directors asserted that Hindustani as 'the language almost universal throughout India' was 'of primary importance'.<sup>241</sup> In 1824, they wrote again, expressing their satisfaction at the number of writers who had passed in it, and were now qualified for public service, but noted

...hitherto the examinations have been confined to the Hindoostanee alone, whereas in a former communication you gave us to understand that the acquisition of two languages of which the Hindoostanee was an indispensable one, the other the Mahratta or Guzerathee; would be required as the condition of promotion in the service.<sup>242</sup>

By 1853, the situation had altered radically. Following an inquiring into the utility of Hindustani in the Bombay Presidency, Lord Elphinstone concluded

There seems to be no doubt that it will be expedient to exclude Hindustani from the list of vernacular languages in which the young student should be made to qualify. Hindustani is in fact not the vernacular of any district of the presidency. Nowhere in the Bombay territories is it spoken with any purity. It is useful to a civil servant chiefly as a medium of communication with servants and with strangers from other parts of India. But, for these purposes a colloquial knowledge of it is quite sufficient and that amount of proficiency is attainable by all men in India at a very small expenditure of time and labour.<sup>243</sup>

And by January 1881, the Bombay Government wrote to the Government of India stating

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid.,193.

<sup>239</sup> Minute by the Honble W Hudleston, Madras, 28 October 1880 IOR/L/PJ/6/39.

<sup>240</sup> Government of India Home Revenue and Agricultural Department to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, n.d. 1881, IOR/L/PJ/6/39.

<sup>241</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bombay, 11 June 1823, IOR/F/4/707/19245. Emphasis added.

<sup>242</sup> Extract Public Letter to Bombay, 4 February 1824, IOR/F/4/816/21743.

<sup>243</sup> India Office Memorandum, October 1906, IOR/L/PJ/6/780/3430.

Hindustani is not only *not* “the chief vernacular of the Bombay Presidency”, but it is not a vernacular in any portion of it. Throughout the greater part of the Presidency *Hindustani is an unknown tongue*, or is understood by only a few Mussulmans here and there. In no portion is it the language ordinarily in use, and nowhere is it employed in the Civil or Criminal Courts, in the revenue administration, or in official correspondence. Very few Hindus can even speak it, and the great majority of even Mahomedans rarely talk in Hindustani but ordinarily use the language of the district in which they reside, - Marathi, Gujarathi, Kanarese or Sindhi. It may also be added that the Hindustani as spoken in this Presidency is a very different language from the pure Hindustani as used in the Bengal Presidency, as found in text books, and as taught in Europe. In this Presidency it is a *debased dialect*. Under these circumstances His Excellency the Governor in Council considers that in the case of selected candidates for the Bombay Presidency the compulsory study of Hindustani in England during their period of probation should be discontinued. It is a *profitless waste of time* to require them to study for two years in Europe a language which is in no sense of the word a vernacular in this Presidency and which is *of very slight service* to them on their arrival in India and is in fact generally only used by them in conversation with their servants.<sup>244</sup>

In under sixty years Hindustani had gone from being ‘indispensable’ and of ‘primary importance’ to being a ‘debased dialect’ of ‘very slight service’.

Similar changes in policy took place in the other Presidencies. The 1894 revision of the Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani Military Examinations saw further emphasis being placed on the local vernaculars. Hindustani increasingly became seen merely as a preliminary hurdle to be got over before embarking on the study of the language of the regiment. A letter from the Government of India to the Board of Examiners recommended that

...it should be made compulsory for an officer to study the language spoken by the men in his regiment, whether it be Hindi, Mahrati, Tamil or any other dialect in the same way as Pushtu has been introduced as a language necessary to officers employed in some of the Panjabi regiments.<sup>245</sup>

At the same time, as a further indication of its decline in the status, the reward for passing in Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani was reduced from Rs300 to Rs200. A 1922 document, regarding language regulations in the military appeared to stress the continued importance of Hindustani stating, ‘Urdu is the lingua franca of the Indian Army; eligibility to appear for an examination in any other Indian vernacular will, in future, be contingent on previous qualification in Preliminary Urdu.’<sup>246</sup> This clearly implied, however, that Hindustani was a mere stepping-stone, a basic knowledge of which was required before going on to other, more important, ‘real vernaculars’.

Returning to the Swahili comparison, Johannes Fabian described Swahili as a ‘vehicular’ language, in contrast to African ‘vernaculars’. The term ‘vehicular’ has rarely been applied to Hindustani,<sup>247</sup> which is almost invariably described as a *lingua franca*. It could be asked whether a

<sup>244</sup> Acting Secretary to the Government of Bombay to the Secretary to the Government of India, 25 January 1881, IOR/L/PJ/6/33.

<sup>245</sup> Government of India, to the Board of Examiners Calcutta, 10 October 1894, IOR/L/MIL/7/ 7305.

<sup>246</sup> Regulations relating to the study of foreign and Indian languages, Simla Government Central Press, March 1922, IOR MIL/17/5/687.

<sup>247</sup> Farina Mir, borrowing the term from Fabian, states that ‘Hindustani was widely used by Company employees as a ‘vehicular’ medium of communication between rulers and ruled to facilitate both Company trade and administration’, and a little later, that ‘Hindustani served as a vehicular language in many parts of the subcontinent’. Mir, ‘Imperial Policy’, 399-400. I would argue, however, that it was not Hindustani that was used as the language of the lower courts, the lower echelons of the colonial administration in India and in education in UP and Panjab, but Urdu in Persian script, and therefore, Urdu, if anything was the vehicular language.

distinction can be made between the two. I would argue that it can. A *lingua franca* can exist at a very basic level, almost as a pidgin, serving merely as a form of communication between people who do not speak each other's language. A vehicular language is one which is used as a vehicle for specific purposes such as trade, administration and education. To be a vehicular language for administrative or educational purposes, requires crucially that the language is written. For Swahili, having been Romanized, this was straightforward. With Hindustani the question of script was always problematic.

It has been suggested that languages are 'hypercollective goods'. The more people use a language the more valuable it is to each one of them, its communication value being 'the product of its prevalence and centrality'.<sup>248</sup> The British construct of Hindustani was developed primarily for their own use, to be able to 'reach down' to Indians. Swahili, on the other hand, was developed in various forms by both Africans and the colonizers, for use by both parties. In German Tanganyika especially, the communication value of Swahili increased as more people started speaking it, often rejecting their own mother tongue in its favour, and passing it on as a mother-tongue to their children. Swahili was, therefore 'real' in the African context. Even in areas where it lacked great prestige, it had an African-to-African communication value. Hindustani by its very nature as a colonial construct was artificial and its Indian-to-Indian communication value was extremely limited. British language policy combined with the other complexities of the indigenous Indian linguistic landscape, ensured that it never became the grand pan-Indian vehicular language envisaged by Gilchrist.

### **6.6: Summary**

The evidence that Hindustani was not learnt to a high level by many British officers suggests that far from being a source of power it may have constituted a weakness, but this should not be overplayed on two counts. Firstly British power came from other sources such as the army and English. The need to gain prestige through speaking Hindustani well had disappeared and British authority became associated with 'broken' Hindustani. Secondly, despite the concerns of some about being 'at the mercy' of Indian intermediaries, the government of India repeatedly failed to take steps to change this even when clear opportunities arose. The old-fashioned and ineffective literary/scholarly approach based on the anachronistic set-texts was allowed to continue for a century. When changes *were* made in the 20<sup>th</sup> century they were often ill-thought out and inappropriate and offered no improvement. The inexorable 'dumbing-down', which began with *Aids to Scouting*, was temporarily halted by Phillott's intervention, but was then accelerated again by the pressure of two world wars. Improving officers' command of the language by making the examinations fit for purpose would undoubtedly have given the British greater control. Romanization would have made an even greater impact both hegemonically and practically and yet

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<sup>248</sup> Abram De Swaan, *Words of the World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001) 27 and 34.



the Government of India consistently refused to back it. All this indicates the lack of any real necessity either for a high level of Hindustani or to remove the dependence on Indian intermediaries. The colonial state was clearly not as 'precarious' as is sometimes suggested.

The comparison with Swahili demonstrates why Hindustani failed to become the grand pan-Indian language envisaged by Gilchrist. The comparison with German Tanganyika, in particular, shows that the conditions that enabled Swahili to succeed there were a combination of indigenous linguistic factors which acted in its favour, and colonial language policies which nurtured its development and facilitated its spread. Swahili also served real practical purposes not only in terms of facilitating colonial administrations, but also for inter-African communication. As a colonial construct Hindustani was not used for inter-Indian communication. In the Indian context either *Urdu* or *Hindi* was used. Even in the context of the colonial administration, Hindustani had to compete firstly with the classical languages, then with English and finally with other Indian vernaculars. Although, initially deemed 'the most essential' language to learn, over time Hindustani came to be regarded as merely as a 'useful extra' or as a 'stepping-stone' to the 'real' vernaculars, a lowly *lingua franca*, rather than an effective vehicular language.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

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 COLONIAL CHIMERA: INDIAN ILLUSION  
 THE INDIAN CONTEXT – INFLUENCES AND CONSEQUENCES
 

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‘Die Sprache ist gleichsam die äußere Erscheinung des Geistes der Völker...’

*Wilhelm von Humboldt*

### 7.0 Introduction

If rulers and ruled were overlapping classes that were mutually, if not symmetrically, defining, a point Gramsci made again and again, we cannot do the history of the one without also doing the history of the other.<sup>1</sup>

Earlier chapters have dealt exclusively with the British learning of Hindustani and its importance, perceived or real, to the colonial state. Although, the British, to some extent, existed in a ‘bubble’ of ‘splendid isolation’ the ‘bubble’ had a permeable membrane, and, at times, their learning Hindustani became linked, if not always directly, with developments in the Indian context. Quite independently of the British involvement with Hindustani, Indians produced poetry throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in what was usually known as Hindi or *Rekhta* and which would now be called Urdu.<sup>2</sup> By the late 1860s, works in prose, by writers such as Nazir Ahmed, were being published. Although in Hindi, dialects such as *Braj* and *Avadhi*, were traditionally the preferred vehicles for poetry, from the 1860s, the movement led by Harischandra, focused on developing literature in *khari boli*. The new Benaras style<sup>3</sup> Hindi became linked with Hindu revivalism, inspiring poems such as Maithili Sharan Gupta’s *Bharat Bharati*. Fuelled by myths, not only of a Hindu ‘Golden Age’, but also of the supposed tyranny and oppression of all things Muslim, *khari boli* Hindi became increasingly ‘Sanskritized’. Provoked by slogans such as that coined by Pratap Narayan Misra, *Hindi, Hindu Hindustan*,<sup>4</sup> Urdu speakers (mainly Muslim) became defensive, and the two literary styles grew ever further apart. By the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the equation of Urdu=Muslim and Hindi=Hindu had come to stay.

Section 1 of this chapter examines the contention that the Urdu-Hindi controversy, and the Hindu-Muslim split, can be attributed to Fort William College and the works produced there.<sup>5</sup> Section 2 explores Indian attempts to define the language, and how political factors further complicated any attempts to reach a consensus as to what it constituted. Turning to the

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (London: Hurst and Company, 1990) 270.

<sup>2</sup> For example Atish, Zauq, Dagh, Momin, Ghalib,

<sup>3</sup> This was more Sanskritized than the rival Agra style.

<sup>4</sup> ‘*Japau nirantar ek zaban, Hindi Hindu Hindustan*’. (Repeat the incantation continuously, one language, Hindi Hindu, Hindustan) Ironically Hindi/Hindu/Hindustan are all Arabic/Persian-derived, and Misra uses the Persian word *zabān*, to rhyme with Hindustan. ‘*Japau nirantar ek bhasha, bharti, ... bharti*’ doesn’t have the same ring and there is no Sanskrit-derived word for Hindu.

<sup>5</sup> Many scholars have written in detail on the Urdu-Hindi controversy and it is not the object of this chapter to rehearse the history and arguments of it, either from the Indian perspective, or the from the official government perspective, but to discuss it in the context of the British learning of Hindustani.

problematic issue of national language it seeks to demonstrate why, despite powerful champions such as Gandhi and Nehru, Hindustani did not succeed in becoming this.

### 7.1 The Urdu Hindi Controversy: 'Fall-Out' from Fort William?

Although language controversies were 'repeated in every part of India' during British rule,<sup>6</sup> the Urdu-Hindi controversy in the North Western (later United) Provinces during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, became an integral part of the increasingly bitter communal divide between Hindus and Muslims,<sup>7</sup> leading ultimately to the partition of India. The 1837 abolition of Persian in the lower courts, had generally seen it replaced with the local language, Bengali in Bengal, Gujarati and Marathi in Bombay and Tamil and Telugu in Madras. In NWP, however, the Government had adopted Hindustani (or more properly Urdu) in Persian script, which retained much of the previous Persian terminology. Hindus increasingly argued that this gave the, mainly Muslim, Urdu-speaking élite<sup>8</sup> an unfair advantage in terms of employment and the new Hindu proto-élite called for *Nagari* to be recognised in the courts. The demand to allow the use of *Nagari* was, initially, a purely economic one. Language policy in colonial India was frequently confused and contradictory. From 1854 onwards, Hindi-medium education, especially at primary level, had received government encouragement in NWP, yet all the posts in administration and the courts continued to require Urdu in Persian script. Crucially, at the same time as the controversy itself was developing, *khari boli* Hindi was also beginning to develop a Sanskritized literary form. As the religious and political conflicts intensified, Urdu and this new Sanskritized *khari boli* Hindi became weapons in that battle and the initial argument of script increasingly developed into one of language as a marker of socio-cultural and religious identity.

Fort William College has been seen by many writers as the 'origin and fount of linguistic division', part of a colonial plot of divide and rule.<sup>9</sup> At the top of the hierarchy of blame is John Gilchrist, the 'bête noire of the Hindi world, who set up Urdu (in the name of 'Hindoostanee') against Hindi (Bhakha) and took due care that they ran on two parallel, mutually exclusive lines'.<sup>10</sup> Such arguments of a deliberate divide and rule policy come mainly, though by no means exclusively, from Indians in the latter days of British rule, and in the first few decades of independence. In a 1939 speech on All India Radio, Tara Chand directly attributed the complex problems surrounding the choice of a national language for an independent India, to Fort William College. He argued that Lalluji Lal and others were 'ordered to prepare books comprising prose texts' and because *Braj* 'had

<sup>6</sup> Peter Robb, 'Borders, languages peasants, nations: colonial concepts in India', Power, Agrarian Structure and Peasant Mobilization in Modern India, a Symposium, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, May 1997.

<sup>7</sup> For detailed accounts of the Urdu-Hindi controversy, see, for example, Lütt, (1970), Dittmer (1972) Brass, (1974) Robinson, (1974) and King, (1994).

<sup>8</sup> See Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974) especially Chapter 2, 33-83, for a discussion of the challenge to the Urdu-speaking élite.

<sup>9</sup> Rai Alok, *Hindi Nationalism* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2000) 23.

<sup>10</sup> Rai, Amrit, *House Divided, Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (Delhi: OUP, 1984) 8. Rai is describing this viewpoint, not subscribing to it.

prose barely in name', they adopted the language of Mir Amman excising the Arabic/Persian words from it, and 'replacing them with those of Sanskrit and Hindi'.

Thus within the space of less than ten years, two new languages ... were decked out and presented at the behest of the foreigner. Both were look-alikes in form and structure ... but their faces were turned away from each other ... and from that day to this we are wandering directionless, on two paths.<sup>11</sup>

Sulaiman Nadvi, writing in 1941, also subscribed to the theory of British 'divide and rule', insisting that the Hindi being popularized in India was 'a deliberate creation of the British rule in India', and had 'never existed before the establishment of Fort William College'.<sup>12</sup> In a work of 1944, Tara Chand reiterated his earlier arguments

...the zeal of finding distinctions led the professors of the College to encourage attempts to create a new type of Urdu from which all Persian and Arabic words were removed and replaced by Sanskrit words. This was done ostensibly to provide the Hindus with a language of their own. But the step had far-reaching consequences and India is still suffering from this artificial bifurcation of tongues.<sup>13</sup>

Pandit Krishna Prasad Kaul, writing in the 1950s, similarly saw the origins of the controversy, and of *khari boli* Hindi, as being the work of the colonial government.

Neo-Hindi owes its origin to the political expediencies of the British Government and the encouragement of Fort William College authorities at the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. The language was produced by Lallu Lalji, who was directed to compose 'Prem Sagar' in so-called Hindi, which was neither Urdu nor Brij Bhasha but a mixture of Khari Boli and Hindustani.<sup>14</sup>

Two decades later J. Das Gupta continued to attribute the 'split' between Urdu and Hindi to Fort William College.

During the early years of the foundation of British rule, Dr. J. B. Gilchrist, of Fort William College at Calcutta, engaged a group of writers to write Hindustani prose. This prose was channelled into two distinctly different styles: Hindi, purged as far as possible of Persian words and Urdu, remaining as close as possible to Persianized style. From this time onward, the difference between Hindi and Urdu became increasingly sharper.<sup>15</sup>

One of the most extreme expressions of this argument can be found in Fatehpuri's 1977 work.

...the birth of Modern Hindi was not the result of natural or linguistic evolution; ... it was brought forth at the instigations of Fort William College authorities by an unnatural process. ...it was a pre-planned political manoeuvre, meant to get the minor communities of India into the clutches of Hindu nationalism ... and was designed against the Indian Muslims, with the active collaboration of British Imperialists. Some ... regard it a British sponsored scheme to do away every trace of Muslim supremacy and create a wedge between Hindus and Muslims, for furthering their policy of divide et impera.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, 'Comments', *Annual of Urdu Studies*, 16, Part II, Madison, University of Wisconsin, 2001, 399.

<sup>12</sup> Z.A. Ahmed, *National Language for India, Symposium* (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1941) 121.

<sup>13</sup> Tara Chand, *Problem of Hindustani* (Allahabad: Indian Periodical Ltd, 1944) 57-8.

<sup>14</sup> Krishan Prasad Kaul, *Adabi aur Qaumi Tazkare* (Aligarh: Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu, 1951)14-15. Quoted in Farman Fatehpuri, *Pakistan Movement and Hindi/Urdu Conflict* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1987) 54-55. The terminology he uses here makes little sense.

<sup>15</sup> J. Das Gupta, *Language Conflict and National Development*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970) 52.

<sup>16</sup> Farman Fatehpuri, *Hindi-Urdu Tanāza*, (Karachi: National Book Foundation, 1977) 49. Also in English translation, *Pakistan Movement*, 43.

There were also those among the British who saw Fort William as having deliberately created a separate style of Hindi. In 1867 Frederick Growse asserted

The division of the vernacular into Hindi and Urdu was a most unfortunate invention of the munshis of the College of Fort William at the beginning of the present century, and has never been generally recognized by the natives. ... Hindus and Musalmans alike, till very recent times, used one dialect for popular composition, though the Hindu, ... would naturally, though not inevitably nor uniformly, use more Sanskrit words, and the Musalman, from the nature of his religion, more Persian words.<sup>17</sup>

In 1889, George Grierson maintained that Lalluji Lal's translation of *Prem Sagar* resulted in 'practically a newly-invented speech'<sup>18</sup> and in his 1896 introduction to the *Satsaiya* of Bihari he again suggested that Gilchrist had 'created' a new language. The language used Lalluji Lal was, he said

... invented by him at the instigation of Gilchrist. That gentleman wanted an Urdu book written, with all Arabic and Persian words excluded, their places being taken by Hindu words. *Such a language did not exist in India before.* Urdu had been used to some degree, as a vehicle of literature, by Musalmans, and was the *lingua franca* of the Bazar. ... Urdu was nowhere the language of any locality or any nation. It was simply a broken mixture of half dozen Indian dialects, used by the Mughul conquerors in their intercourse with natives, and larded freely with foreign, Arabic, and Persian, words. Gilchrist made the initial mistake of supposing that it was a national language, and *he attempted to restore it to what he imagined must have been its original Hindu form*, by turning out all the Arabic and Persian words, and substituting Hindi ones. ... When, therefore, Lallu-ji-Lal wrote his *Prema-sagara*, in Hindi, he was inventing an altogether new language.<sup>19</sup>

In his 1898 literary history, the Madras civilian, Robert Watson Frazer observed that 'High Hindi' had 'evolved under the influence of the English who induced native writers to compose works for general use in a form of Hindustani in which all the words of Arabic and Persian origin were omitted', with Sanskrit words being employed in their place.<sup>20</sup>

In the preface to his 1897 translation of *Prem Sagar*, Frederick Pincott, however, made a completely different claim. Having first lamented that Hindi had not received the encouragement it deserved, he asserted that Gilchrist

...devoted his attention to the cultivation of the patois which formed the medium of communication between the Persian rulers of northern India and the inhabitants. He caused a whole literature to be written in this mongrel dialect, and by *copiously enriching it with Persian words may be said to have created what Europeans call the Hindustani language.* This artificial form of speech having been adopted for public business in 1830, has spread since then at a prodigious rate, and has had the unfortunate result of greatly obstructing communication between the rulers and the ruled.<sup>21</sup>

In his 1920 history of Hindi literature, F. E. Keay returned to the idea of the 'creation' of Hindi.

Under the direction of Dr. John Gilchrist he [Lallu Ji Lal] and Sadal Misra were the creators of modern "High Hindi". ... A literary language for Hindī-speaking people which could commend itself more to

<sup>17</sup> Frederick Growse, 'Some Objections to the Modern Style of official Hindustani', *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol.35, Part I, 178.

<sup>18</sup> George Grierson, 'Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1889, 107.

<sup>19</sup> Grierson, ed., *Satsaiya of Bihari* (Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1896,) 12-13. Emphasis added. The idea of a 'new language' conflicts with his own idea (also that of Dalmia) that Gilchrist was restoring it to its original form.

<sup>20</sup> R.W.Frazer. *Literary History of India* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898) 265.

<sup>21</sup> Frederick Pincott, trans., *Prema-Sagara or Ocean of Love* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co. 1897) 2. Emphasis added.

Hindus was very desirable, and the result was produced by taking Urdu and expelling from it words of Persian or Arabic origin and substituting for them words of Sanskrit or Hindi origin.<sup>22</sup>

According to Keay, *Prem Sagar* was the 'first work in this new dialect' whereas he described *Sinhāsan Battisi* and *Baitāl Pachisi* as being in 'mixed Urdu and Hindi'.<sup>23</sup> In his 1921 *Hindi Grammar*, Edwin Greaves observed similarly

In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, two pundits in Calcutta, Lallu Ji Lal and Sadal Misra, instructed and inspired by the European head of the college in which they were professors, initiated, or to speak more exactly, developed, a movement which is largely responsible for the existence of modern Hindi. The endeavour was made to draw on the Prakrits or Apabranshas and, to some extent, on Sanskrit, for the vocabulary, and to exclude, as far as practicable, Persian and Arabic words not already naturalised.<sup>24</sup>

The expression of such views towards the end of British rule, or in nationalistic writings during the first few decades of independence is, perhaps, to be expected. More recently such arguments have largely been discredited, yet, surprisingly, some 21<sup>st</sup> century scholars have continued to pursue them. In 2001, Faruqi contended

... the British generated a sense of identity ... for the Hindus of the North, so as to alienate them from the Muslims with whom they had shared a common language for centuries. The British produced the rabbit of "Hindi" out of their imperial hat within a space of about ten years. ...Urdu was not an instrument of imperial policy. ... Urdu was a victim, and a very unwilling victim, of the imperial policy. Indeed, modern Hindi was an instrument, and a willing instrument, of that policy.<sup>25</sup>

In 2002, Orsini, citing Faruqi as her source, maintained that the language of the predominantly urban Hindu-Muslim class of Persian-educated gentry, officials and law professionals used 'Hindi' written in the Arabic script as their language of communication 'until in the late eighteenth century John Gilchrist and other Orientalists popularized the names 'Hindustani' and 'Urdu' in order to spread the notion that there were actually two different languages, one for Hindus and one for Muslims.'<sup>26</sup>

In their 2004 article, Rajyashree and Hasnain argued that with the establishment of Fort William College

...*Khadi Boli* was communalized. Hindu and Muslim writers from far-flung places were called to write prose in two styles of Khadi Boli by using two different scripts: Devanagari and Perso-Arabic. ... Lallu Ji Lal and Sadal Misra of the FWC 'created' a new language called "Modern High Hindi" or "Standard Hindi" on sectarian lines expelling words of Persian and Arabic origin from Urdu. .... Thus, the establishment of FWC brought about the overt policy of divergence between Hindi and Urdu language on the one hand, and on the other the covert and subtle policy of a divide between Hindus and Muslims. ... What became significant in this literary venture was the conscious use of Devanagari script, which incited the minds of the Hindi revivalists.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> F.E.Keay, *History of Hindī Literature* (Calcutta: Association Press, 1920) 88.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>24</sup> Greaves, *Grammar*, 3.

<sup>25</sup> Faruqi, 'Comments', 399-400. The vocabulary here ('victim' and 'instrument') is loaded and it is not clear how a language can be either 'willing' or 'unwilling'.

<sup>26</sup> Francesca Orsini, *Hindi Public Sphere* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002) 3. Emphasis added.

<sup>27</sup> Hasnain and Rajyashree, 'Hindustani as an Anxiety Between Hindi-Urdu Commitment', *Yearbook of South Asian Languages and Linguistics*, ed., Rajendra Singh, Mouton De Gruyter, 2004, 250-251. Emphasis added.

Such arguments, attributing design on the part of Gilchrist or the *munshis* and *pandits* at Fort William College, to create a deliberate ‘divide and rule’ split are clearly unsustainable when considered against Gilchrist’s all-inclusive construct of Hindustani which was continued by the British for nearly a century. Some writers have suggested that Fort William recognised a pre-existing linguistic difference and merely ‘legitimised and consolidated it’.<sup>28</sup> According to King, Gilchrist’s own writings suggest that ‘the ingredients for the bifurcations of Khari Boli into two forms’ were already clearly in evidence at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup> Amrit Rai went further contending

Fort William College did not initiate a language policy that subsequently led to the division of the natural language Hindi/Hindavi into its two present forms, modern Hindi and modern Urdu. ... the *cleavage already existed* when the British came upon the scene...<sup>30</sup>...it seems fairly clear that the allegation against the East India Company or Fort William College of having initiated the division of the naturally evolving language of northern India, namely, Hindavi, into its two modern forms, Urdu and Hindi, is not well-founded; that the *split* was already a fait accompli when the British arrived upon the scene; and that in the given situation, which they had little reason to question or rectify, they found it advisable to follow a result-oriented, practical policy.<sup>31</sup>

Observations made, ‘en passant’, by Gilchrist have been taken as ‘proof’ of his desire to distinguish the language along Hindu-Muslim lines. Much has been made, for example, of his comment that ‘Hindoos will naturally lean most to the *Hinduwee* while the Moosulmans will of course be more partial to Arabic and Persian’ whence two styles arise, namely the court or high style, and the country or pristine style.<sup>32</sup> Faruqi sees this as ‘a prediction which came very nearly true’,<sup>33</sup> but, interestingly, omits the final section of Gilchrist’s observation which refers to a third style, ‘the middle or familiar current style between them’, which he recommended as ‘the most useful’.<sup>34</sup> If such conclusions are to be (over)drawn from *this* observation, it would surely follow that Gilchrist’s other ‘observations’ that ‘Moosulmans are fonder of wearing beards’, and that Hindoos ‘tie or fix the strings of their garments on the left side, while the Moosulmans prefer the right’,<sup>35</sup> were also deliberate instances of divide and rule, resulting in the ‘*Beard-NoBeard*’ and ‘*Left-Right*’ controversies! Gilchrist’s observations on linguistic styles were precisely that, *observations*, as he tried to make sense of a complex linguistic situation and a language that he found ‘evanescent’. Alok Rai has suggested that many Indian writers have been content to attribute a deliberate policy of linguistic divide to the British and Fort William College because

...the “colonial” explanation has an oddly consoling quality about it. It locates the source of the evil *outside* – and implicitly exonerates the “native” perpetrators and collaborators. But just as significantly, it implies a possible recognition by all sides to this conflict that there is some evil ...

<sup>28</sup> Alok Rai, *Hindi Nationalism* (Orient Longman: Hyderabad, 2000) 23.

<sup>29</sup> Christopher King, *One Language Two Scripts* (Bombay: OUP, 1994) 26.

<sup>30</sup> Amrit Rai *House Divided*, 11.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>32</sup> Gilchrist, *Oriental Linguist* (Calcutta: P. Ferris, 1802) ii. Also *The Anti-Jargonist* (Calcutta: Ferris & Co, 1800) iv.

<sup>33</sup> Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, *Early Literary Urdu* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001) 35.

<sup>34</sup> Gilchrist, *Oriental Linguist*, ii.

<sup>35</sup> Gilchrist, *Anti-Jargonist*, vii.

that needs to be explained, some loss that needs to be accounted for. The desire to find a culprit must necessarily imply that a crime has been committed...<sup>36 37</sup>

In tracing a supposed divide to Fort William, what is constantly overlooked, is that the British theoretical construct of Hindustani had already been formulated by Gilchrist in writings from 1785 onwards, well before the establishment of the college. Arguments involving a ‘split’ attach little or no importance to this all-inclusive construct of Hindustani, focusing almost entirely on the works produced by the college under the Hindustani umbrella, in particular the completely un-Persianized *Prem Sagar*. What is also (conveniently) overlooked is that *Prem Sagar* was the *only* example of its kind in the history of the college. Whilst various works were produced in a Persianized style similar to that of *Bagh-o-Bahar* and a number of others such as *Sinhasan Battisi* and *Baital Pachisi* in varying degrees of ‘mixed-ness’, *Prem Sagar* sits in splendid isolation and Gilchrist’s own contributions, as Dittmer has argued, do not point ... to the fact that he had the intention to create a new language style.<sup>38</sup>

*Prem Sagar* may have been an isolated example in the context of Fort William publications, but it was not the only work published in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in non-Persianized *khari boli*. In his 1803, *Rānī Ketkī ki Kahānī*, Insha Allah Khan, too, deliberately excluded all Persian and Arabic vocabulary. Unlike *Prem Sagar* it has not been seen by protagonists of Urdu and Hindi as an attempt either to create a new language, or as part of a divide and rule strategy. It has been argued that Insha’s work was merely written ‘under the spell of a humorous mood for entertainment only’<sup>39</sup> and that it was quite different from ‘the experiment carried out by Lallu Lalji and his associates, under the patronage of Fort William College’, whose object was ‘obviously’ to ‘create, in opposition to Urdu, a new language’.<sup>40</sup> Upon closer inspection, this supposed object is not ‘obvious’ at all.

Gilchrist is frequently blamed for ‘ordering’ Lalluji Lal to remove all the Persian and Arabic words. Lalluji Lal’s preface to *Prem Sagar* is, perhaps, the source for this contention.

श्री श्रीयुत गुणगाहक, गुणियन सुखदायक, जान गिलकिरिस्त महाशय की आज्ञा से संवत् १८६० में श्री लल्लूजी लाल कवि ब्राह्मण गुजराती सहस्र अवदीच आगरेवालेने, विसका सार ले, यामनी भाषा छोड़, दिल्ली आगरे की खड़ी बोली में कह, नाम प्रेम सागर धरा; पर श्री युत जान गिलकिरिस्त महाशयके जाने से बना अधवना रूप अधरूपा रह गया था; सो अब श्री महाराजेश्वर,

And by order of the revered patron, the gifted conferrer of happiness, Mr. John Gilchrist, in the year [of Vikramaditya]1860, Sri Lallu Ji Lal, the poet, a Gujarati Brahman, [of the]Sahasra Avadich [family], an inhabitant of Agra, taking the gist of it, rejecting foreign vocables, [and] relating [it] in the pure

<sup>36</sup> This does not, however, explain why British or other non-Indian writers would hold such views.

<sup>37</sup> Rai, *Hindi Nationalism*, 20-21.

<sup>38</sup> Kerrin Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims und Hindi-Urdu-Kontroverse in den United Provinces* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972, 62. ‘Gilchrists Beiträge zur Hindustani-Forschung deuten ... nicht darauf hin, dass er die Absicht hatte, einen neuen Sprachstil zu schaffen’.

<sup>39</sup> Fatehpuri, *Pakistan Movement*, 45.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.



language of Dehli [and] Agra, has named [the book] *Prema-Sagara*. But, by the departure of the revered John Gilchrist, it remained half-done and half-printed.<sup>41</sup>

From this it is somewhat ambiguous whether Gilchrist merely ordered him to translate it, or whether he specifically ordered him to reject the ‘foreign vocables’. Gilchrist left India in January 1804, before even the first part of *Prem Sagar* was published. The whole work was not completed and published until 1810, therefore it is not possible to establish with certainty whether removing the Persian and Arabic vocabulary was Gilchrist’s idea or that of Lallujilal himself.<sup>42</sup> The commission set up, in 1864, to revise the test-books for Lower and Higher Standard Hindustani, inclined to the latter view, noting that ‘the boast of the writer of the *Prem Sagar* was that every word of Arabic or Persian origin had been banished from his work’.<sup>43</sup> Like Fatehpuri, (who also seems to blame Lalluji Lal himself rather than Gilchrist for this ‘banishment’), Rai has argued that ‘the pundits and munshis of Fort William College found themselves coerced, by the ‘necessity of justifying their separate institutional existence’, into developing two gradually divergent registers’.<sup>44</sup> Such arguments are not particularly convincing, however. The Hindustani department at Fort William was all-inclusive, even subsuming *Braj* (and *Awadhi*). Although Lalluji Lal was employed as the *Bhakha pandit* from 1802, there was never a separate Hindi department, and it was not a case of ‘two divergent registers’ emerging, as will be seen below. More persuasive is the argument that both Insha’s work and *Prem Sagar* can be viewed merely as ‘curiosities in the literary history of Hindi-Urdu’.<sup>45</sup>

Alongside the ‘divide and rule’ argument, it has been suggested that the removal of Arabic and Persian words by ‘the professors of the College’ was done ‘ostensibly to provide the Hindus with a language of their own’<sup>46</sup> Charles Lyall, allegedly, saw ‘the Hindi form of Hindustani’ which, he said, had been ‘invented simultaneously with Urdu prose by the teachers at Fort William, as being ‘intended to be a Hindustani for the use of Hindus’.<sup>47</sup> Writing in 1916, Grierson, too, saw the ‘new Hindi’ in these terms.

This Hindi, therefore, or, as it is sometimes called, ‘High Hindi’, is the prose literary language of those Hindus of Upper India who do not employ Urdu. It is of modern origin, having been introduced

<sup>41</sup> Pincott, trans., *Prema-Sagara*, 2.

<sup>42</sup> There is nothing in Gilchrist’s prolific and unusually candid writings to suggest he ordered the excising of all the Arabic and Persian words. It would have gone directly against his belief that the ‘middle style’ of Hindustani was the best.

<sup>43</sup> Report of the Commission for Revising Test Books, Lahore, 28 December 1864, quoted in Rangila et al., *Bringing Order* accessed 26 May 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Rai, *Hindi Nationalism*, 22.

<sup>45</sup> ‘Der Versuch Lallū Lāls in seiner Übersetzung des *Prem Sagar*, die von arabischem und persischem Vokabular durchsetzte Khaṛī Bolī vom Fremdwortschatz zu befreien, um die Schriftsprache der indo-persischen Elite Nordindiens durch eine Schriftsprache zu ersetzen, welche dem gesprochenen Sprachstil Nordindiens näherkam, kann - wie auch das Experiment von Inshā-ullā Khān in dessen Prosaerzählung *Rānī Ketkī kī Kahānī* – als Kuriosität in der Literaturgeschichte von Hindi-Urdu angesehen werden’. Dittmer, *Indischen Muslims*, 61.

<sup>46</sup> Tara Chand, *Problem*, 57-8. This conveniently ignores the fact that Hindus already had *Braj*, *Awadhi*, *Bhojpuri*, *Maithili*, *Magadhi* and so on.

<sup>47</sup> Mohammed Din Taseer, Ahmad, ed., *Symposium*, 224. Taseer is supposedly quoting Lyall, but this does not appear in Lyall’s *Sketch*.

under English influence at the commencement of the last century. Up till then, when a Hindu wrote prose and did not use Urdu, he wrote in his own local dialect, Awadhi, Bundeli, Braj Bhakha, or what not. Lallu Lal, under the inspiration of Dr. Gilchrist changed all this by writing the well-known Prem Sagar, a work which was, so far as the prose portions went, practically written in Urdu, with Indo-Aryan words substituted wherever a writer in that form of speech would use Persian ones. It was thus an automatic reversion to the actual vernacular of the Upper Doab. ... Then the language fulfilled a want. It gave a *lingua franca* to the Hindus. It enabled men of widely different provinces to converse with each other without having recourse to the (to them) *unclean* words of the Musalmans. ... Hence the language of the Prem Sagar became, naturally enough, the standard of Hindu (sic) prose all over Hindostan...<sup>48</sup>

Vasudha Dalmia makes a similar argument

The institutionalization of Hindustani and Hindui as two autonomous linguistic entities came about when the Fort William College was founded in Calcutta in 1800... With the establishment of the *Bhakha* department, the foundation was laid for *Hindi* as the language of the Hindus.<sup>49</sup>

This statement is problematic, not only because of the use of the term ‘Hindui’, but because it seems to suggest that the foundation of Hindi being laid was not *khari boli* at all but *Braj*. Dalmia glosses over the importance of whether the ‘Hindee’ referred to was *Braj* or *khari boli*. Asserting that Gilchrist used the term *bhasa* or *bhakha* for Sanskrit and Sanskrit-derived languages such as *Braj*, she says he ‘now extended it to cover the newly-sanitized variety of Hindustani to be known as *khari boli*’.<sup>50</sup> In 1810, some of the works that had been published at Fort William College were listed in Roebuck’s *Annals*. The extract below clearly demonstrates that the works produced in ‘Hindi’ were not primarily in *khari boli*.

**In the dialects which are more peculiar to the Hindoo inhabitants of these provinces, the following works have been undertaken.**

1. The Ramayan of Toolsee as in the Poorbee dialects or that used in the provinces situated to the eastward of Dihlee, as Uwadh and Bunaras.
2. The Sut Suae of Biharee Lal, a poem ... in the old Hindee or Braj Bhasha, that is, the dialect that prevails about Muthoora and Agra.
3. A collection of Stories in the Hindoostanee and Hinduvee languages.
4. Grammatical principles of the Bruj Bhasha dialect...
5. A continuation of the Prem Sagur...
6. Rajneeti, or Admonition to Kings a work on morality and the principles of government ... translated into the dialect of Bruj.

<sup>48</sup> Grierson, Linguistic Survey of India, Volume IX, 1916, 46. Emphasis added. According to Grierson, not only had a new language been ‘invented’ for them, but, ‘[w]hen the Prema-sagara was written, Hindus discovered that they had been speaking prose all their lives without knowing it!’ A reference to M. Jourdain in Moliere’s *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of 1670 who exclaims: “Par ma foi ! Il y a plus de quarante ans que je dis de la prose sans que j’en susse rien.”

<sup>49</sup> Vasudha Dalmia, *Nationalization of Hindu Traditions* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1999) 166. Her use of Hindui here is confusing as Gilchrist used this term for the ‘old’ language of the Hindus and for *Braj*.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 168. Dalmia maintains that what was important was not which particular dialect it referred to but that for Gilchrist *bhakha* denoted the original pre-Muslim language of the Hindus.

The four last mentioned works are the composition of Shree Lullo Lal Kuvi, the Bhasha Moonshee attached to the Hindoostanee department.<sup>51</sup>

Although Lalluji Lal is chiefly remembered for his one non-Persianized *khari boli* work, it is clear that his main output was in *Braj*.

The contention that the British at Fort William wished to create a language for the Hindus is further undermined by the content of the examination syllabuses at High Proficiency and Degree of Honour level. The fact that these were always divided into *Oordoo* and *Hindee*, could, at first sight, be taken as 'proof' of a 'split'. Whilst it is, certainly, evidence of the confusion, in the minds of the British, as to what exactly constituted Hindi and Hindustani, it is not, however, evidence that they split *khari boli* into two. From the days of Fort William, until the end of British rule, the *Hindee* syllabuses included texts such as the *Ramayan* (*Awadhi*), *Sabha Bilas* (*Braj*) and *Rajniti* (*Braj*). Until the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this was, in fact, all they included because (apart from *Prem Sagar*) there was no literature in *khari boli* Hindi.<sup>52</sup> This, again, clearly demonstrates that the Hindus already had a language (and literature) and were, therefore, in no need of the British to create one for them, and that the British, themselves, were well aware of this. Further evidence that the British saw Hindustani as all-encompassing, and made no attempt to separate it into two, can be found in the 1856 lists of set texts for High Proficiency and Degree of Honour, where *Bagh-o-Bahar* and *Prem Sagar* were listed under both *Hindoostanee* and *Hindee*!<sup>53</sup>

The confusion surrounding the use of the term Hindi at Fort William is evident from correspondence between certain of the professors and the college authorities. Some of the professors at the college, notably Taylor, Roebuck and Price, were regarded as partisan towards Hindi. The Hindustani Professor, Taylor, in a letter of 1812 to Roebuck, stated that he had tried his best to expand the education of 'Hindee' at the cost of his health, but had been forced to restrict his mandate to teach only Hindustani.<sup>54</sup> Roebuck, subsequently, in a letter to the College Council, informed them, 'The dialect called Khuree Bolee or Tenth Hindee, or that dialect of the Hindoostanee Spoken by the great body of the Hindoos throughout the whole of Hindoostan ... is not taught in the College as it used to be'.<sup>55</sup> In complete contrast to this, it has, however been argued that 'Hindi was not seriously taught until 1815 ... and did not receive formal recognition as an important vernacular until 1825, only a few years before the college ceased to be a viable educational institution'.<sup>56</sup> Dalmia (citing Das) tells us that 'Hinduī or Hindi in the Nāgarī script

<sup>51</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 258.

<sup>52</sup> One or two isolated examples have been put forward by 'Hindi-wallahs' to try to establish a tradition of *khari boli* Hindi prose prior to Fort William, but this is not widely accepted.

<sup>53</sup> Fort William Home Department, *Rules for the Examination and Control of Newly Appointed Members of the Bengal Civil Service* July 1856. IOR/V/27/211/18 .

<sup>54</sup> Professor Taylor to the Secretary, Fort William College Council, November 1812, IOR/ F/4 /488.

<sup>55</sup> Indian Archives Home Miscellaneous ,Vol. 24, quoted in Rai, *House Divided*, 14.

<sup>56</sup> King, *One Language*, 27.

began to receive enhanced attention only from 1815,<sup>57</sup> when a large number of students from the army took admission in the college'.<sup>58</sup> What Das himself actually wrote, however, is somewhat different, and again highlights the problems which pervade any discussion of 'Hindi' at Fort William. He stated

*Braj*, though introduced by Gilchrist, was not seriously studied by students. The importance of *Hindi* started to be recognized slowly from 1815 the year a large number of students from the army took admission in the college to study *Hindi*. In 1818 Thomas Roebuck, incharge (sic) of Hindustani Department, asked for a greater measure of support for *Hindi*.<sup>59</sup>

If Das's statement suggests it was *Braj* rather than *khari boli* being studied by these military students, Edmonstone's 1815 Visitor's speech at Fort William removes any doubt.

It is highly satisfactory to observe, that several of the Military Students have prosecuted with success the study of the Bruj Bhak,ha, under the tuition of Lieutenant Price. ... The study of the Hindee ... although perhaps not more essential to a comprehensive and critical acquaintance with the Language strictly termed Oordoo, than the study of the Anglo-Saxon is to a perfect knowledge of English, yet becomes important and even necessary to those who may have to maintain an extensive intercourse and personal communication with all classes of the Indian population; more especially it is requisite for the Military Officers of the Company's Service, because a large proportion of the Sepoys of the Army on the establishment of Bengal speak either the Bruj Bhak,ha, or a Dialect of which the Hindee forms a chief component part. It is therefore greatly to be desired that this Language should become a more general object of study in the College.<sup>60</sup>

What is meant by 'Hindee', however, is still unclear. That *Braj* continued to be taught at the college is evident from the Marquis of Hastings' comments, at the 1821 Public Disputations, on the progress made by two more military cadets, in 'the Bruj Bhakha dialect as well as in the Hindustani'.<sup>61</sup>

In 1824, the Hindustani Professor, William Price, wrote to Ruddell, the Secretary to the College Council, in an attempt to clear up the 'perplexity' which had arisen from 'a disposition' to consider 'the language of the Upper Provinces' as two separate languages. Price's account is, however, somewhat contradictory. Initially he stated that 'scholars highly proficient in the Oordoo' could not 'read a sentence of Bruj Bhakha', but later asserted that the grammar of the 'highest Oordoo and the lowest Bhasha' was the same and that the 'slight differences' between the two were 'mere provincialisms'. This statement, however, only distinguishes between *Braj* and Urdu and takes us no further in ascertaining what was meant by 'Hindee'.<sup>62</sup>

Whatever 'Hindee' designated it is clear that the College began to attach more importance to it in the 1820s. In 1824, in a letter to the Government Secretary, Charles Lushington, Ruddell suggested that Hindoostanee might still 'to the to the Hindoos at large be considered as a foreign

<sup>57</sup> The archival evidence shows that the influx from the army was, in fact, in 1813 and 1814 when there were a number of supernumerary junior officers. In 1814 the College Council wrote to the Court of Directors regarding an 'increase to the College Establishment authorized for the purpose of admitting Military Students in addition to the Civil'. Extract Public Letter to Bengal, IOR/F/4/488/11845, May, 1815.

<sup>58</sup> Dalmia, *Nationalization*, 169.

<sup>59</sup> Das, *Sahibs and Munshis*, 66. Emphasis added.

<sup>60</sup> Roebuck, *Annals*, 466.

<sup>61</sup> *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, Vol XIII January-June 1822, London, Kingsbury, Parbury & Allen, 1822, 54.

<sup>62</sup> Indian Archives Home Miscellaneous, 1822-24, quoted in Rai, *House Divided*, 15.

language' and requested the Governor General to alter the College Statutes to require every student to acquire, in addition to Persian, 'a competent knowledge of either the Bengalee or Bruj Bhakha (also called the Thenth Hindee or Hindooee) instead of the Hindoostanee language'.<sup>63</sup> It is clear, from Lord Amherst's 1825 speech to students at the College that this suggestion was quickly acted upon.

An alteration in the studies of the College has been introduced within the last year by the enactment of a new statute requiring of every student, as a qualification for the public service, a knowledge either of the Hindee or of the Bengalee language in addition to the Persian. Experience had shewn that the students generally attended to the Hindoostanee lectures ... The study of Bengalee and of the Hindee dialects was in consequence greatly neglected ... In the general term Hindee are included those vernacular dialects which, with some local variations and modifications, are used by the bulk of the Hindoo population throughout the provinces of Behar and Benares, and in the ceded and conquered provinces. ... I would, therefore, in the strongest manner, inculcate on those who are destined for the western provinces, to make themselves masters of Hindee:<sup>64</sup>

Though again it is not clearly defined, this speech indicates that 'Hindee' designated not only non-Persianized *khari boli*, but a variety of other dialects, particularly *Braj*.

The implication by some of the proponents of the 'divide and rule' theory, that the materials produced at Fort William College were intended for Indian consumption is misleading.<sup>65</sup> As Faruqi has argued, 'the works of Urdu prose that the British caused to be produced and published from the College were not intended to be works of literature' but were rather pedagogical material intended solely for a British audience.<sup>66</sup> R.M. McGregor has argued that '[t]he Hindi reading materials adapted from Brajbhāṣā at Calcutta from 1800-1810 were at first of use only to the East India Company's civil servants and to a small number of other westerners (such as missionaries), and not at all to an Indian readership'.<sup>67</sup> According to Matthews and Shackle the Fort William texts were, in their time, 'largely ignored by the rest of Urdu-speaking India and until recently lay gathering the dust in the library of the British Museum'.<sup>68</sup> Although they later found their way into the Indian context, according to Sadiq, Faruqi and Dalmia, they had little effect on the development of either Urdu or Hindi prose literature.<sup>69</sup> As Dittmer has argued, it is, therefore, doubtful whether

<sup>63</sup> Letter from Ruddell to Lushington, 24 September 1824, Indian Archives Home Miscellaneous 1822-24, cited in Rai, *House Divided*, 15. Vedalankar, however, equates *khari boli* rather than *Braj* with 'theth Hindi'.

<sup>64</sup> Speech of Lord Amherst 27 July 1825, *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, Vol. 21, January-June 1826, London, Kinsbury, Parbury and Allen, 218.

<sup>65</sup> Some earlier Urdu literary historians such as Saksena (1927) and Grahame Bailey (1932) attributed the rise of Urdu prose to Fort William college, but later scholars such as Sadiq (1964) and Faruqi (2008) have played this down.

<sup>66</sup> Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, 'A Modest Plea: Please Could We Have a Proper History of Urdu Literature?' Keynote address: UrduFest 2008, University of Virginia, September 12, 2008, 6. Such works, as Russell points out 'did in the course of time reach a wider public'. Ralph Russell, *Pursuit of Urdu Literature* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1992) 84 and 263.

<sup>67</sup> R.S. McGregor, *Hindi Literature of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974) 65.

<sup>68</sup> David Matthews, Christopher Shackle, Shahrukh Hussain, *Urdu Literature* (London: Urdu Markaz, 1985) 76.

<sup>69</sup> Sadiq, *History of Urdu Literature* (London: OUP, 1964) 210-211, Faruqi, 'A Modest Plea', 6, Dalmia, *Nationalization*, 292,

the 'language experiments' at the college could have triggered a movement in literature and language so many decades later.<sup>70</sup>

The Urdu-Hindi controversy, was, initially, as Kumar says, 'fought specifically on the matter of script,<sup>71</sup> and this is another issue which has been cited by those seeking to locate the origins of the controversy in Fort William College. It has been suggested that Gilchrist's 'identification of language with script' was 'problematic' and 'opened up a veritable can of worms for both colonial officials and Indian intellectuals'.<sup>72</sup> Gilchrist, however, did not identify language with script. His 1796 *Hindoostanee* grammar, though mostly Romanized in the body of the text, includes examples of both scripts and the whole point of the all-encompassing British construct of Hindustani was that it included both scripts.<sup>73</sup> The early disputations at Fort William College were, in fact, written, not in Persian, but in *Nagari* script. The examples below of Mr W. Chaplin's 1803 and Mr J. Romer's 1804 *Hindoostanee* Disputations are not only in *Nagari* script but are on the subjects of *sati* and Sanskrit,<sup>74</sup> clearly indicating that Hindus, and Hindu culture, were regarded as an integral part of Hindustani.

वाद

सती होनेकी नीति हिंदूओं में अपनेपति के साथ भलमनसी और मयाके यत्नसे वाहन है

क्याई सत्री क्या और अच्छी जातोंके लोग किसी पंचके हांथ जाना जाता है कि मेन वादके मिटानेको कोई ऐकभी प्रमान नला सकेगा हे महाराजा मेनी बुद्धिसे तो यह नीति प्रसिद्ध सांयही जानी जाती है और यहिही निश्चय कन जानता हू कि इस

Mr W. Chaplin's 1803 Disputation

दअवा

ममालिकि हिंदकी क़बानोंकी असल बुनयाद संसृत है ॥

लेकिन जो शरक़ इस दअवेके साबित करने का इरादः करे उसे हिंदूस्तान की बअज़ी क़बानि मुरबज से खूब वाकिफ़ होना और हासिल करना ज़रूर है गोकि वुह सबसे माहिर नहो पस मुझे अगर यह बात लात्मि नहोती कि इस बाति दअवेमें

T H E S I S,

PRONOUNCED AT THE DISPUTATION IN  
THE HINDOOSTANEE LANGUAGE, ON  
THE TWENTIETH OF SEPTEMBER, 1804.

BY

M R. J. R O M E R,  
STUDENT OF THE COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM.

<sup>70</sup> Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, 61.

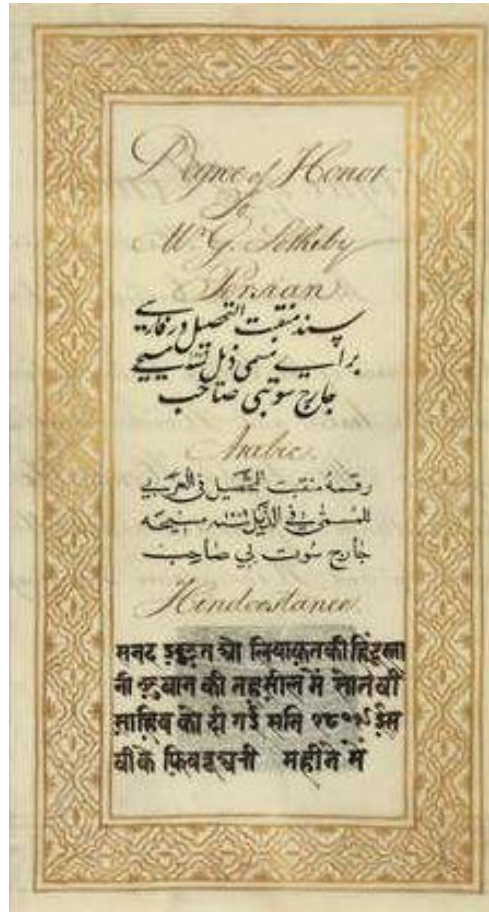
<sup>71</sup> Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005) 135.

<sup>72</sup> Francesca Orsini, ed., *Before the Divide* (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2010) 3-4.

<sup>73</sup> Although more of the Hindustani grammars and text-books produced by the British used Persian script than *Nagari* the *Nagari* alphabet was very often included and later *Nagari* editions were produced by authors such as Haidari and Saihgal indicating that for the British Hindustani could always be written in either script.

<sup>74</sup> Fort William College, *Primitiae Orientales* Vol. II, Calcutta, 1803, 51.

George Sotheby's 1809 Degree of Honour Certificate<sup>75</sup> from Fort William College, too, has Persian in *Nastaliq*, Arabic in *Naskh*, but *Hindoostanee* in *Nagari*.



For Indians, script certainly became an emotive and divisive issue, and, in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a somewhat thorny one for British officials. With regard to the British learning of Hindustani, however, it carried no cultural or emotional significance. For nearly a century the examinations insisted on officers learning both scripts as, from the practical standpoint, being literate in both Persian and *Nagari* increased their communicative ability. Several editions of *Bagh-o-Bahar* were published in *Nagari* script,<sup>76</sup> and although, from 1895, the British formally equated Hindustani with Urdu, even this did not confine them to the use of Persian script. In the 1930s officers were offered the choice of taking the Lower and Higher Standard *Urdu* examinations in either script and *Nagari* editions of the set texts, *Our Sowars and Sepoys* and *Khwab-o-Khayal*, were produced accordingly.

Even in the writings of those who discount a deliberate policy of ‘divide and rule’ on the part of Fort William, however, there is a pervasive view, that, though it had no intent to do so, the college produced works in two separate ‘styles’ of Hindustani, thus creating a ‘split’ which

<sup>75</sup> This certificate, signed by Minto, is currently for sale on Abe Books for £908.15.

<sup>76</sup> A *Nagari* edition appeared as early as 1847, and there are other editions in 1852, 1869, 1870 and 1879. Russell, *Pursuit*, 263.

intensified as language became increasingly identified with political, religious, socio/economic and cultural factors. , Rai, for example, whilst conceding that the ‘literary sports’ engaged in at Fort William did not have a communal agenda, asserts that ‘the pedants of Fort William’ played around with stylistic variations, ‘deleting *foreign* expressions’ and ‘using a preponderantly Sanskritic vocabulary’.<sup>77</sup> And, in a later work, though acknowledging that it was ‘clearly absurd to read any great design into it’, he argued that one might still ‘be justified in reading great consequences’ into the ‘differences between “Muslim” Hindustani and “Hindu” Hindustani’, which, he maintained, were ‘institutionalized at Fort William’.<sup>78</sup> Significantly for Rai

... the important thing that emerged from Fort William is the idea of two-ness, of linguistic duality. Fort William College gave institutional recognition to the notion that there were in fact two ways of doing Hindustani – one which used the available and mixed language, and another from which the Arabic-Persian words had been removed in order to produce a language ... more suitable to Hindus.<sup>79</sup>

The assertion that an idea of ‘two-ness’ emerged from the college, when examined carefully, is unconvincing. Firstly, Gilchrist never maintained there were two styles of Hindustani. On the contrary he observed

In the Hindoostanee as in other tongues we might enumerate a *great diversity of styles* but for the brevity’s sake I shall notice *only Three* here ... 1<sup>st</sup> The High Court or Persian Style, 2<sup>d</sup> The middle or genuine Hindoostanee style, 3<sup>rd</sup> the vulgar...<sup>80</sup>

The idea that there were ‘two ways of doing Hindustani’<sup>81</sup> implies two different *kinds* of Hindustani which are *separate* in some way. This is entirely different from Gilchrist’s contention that there were varying styles encompassed *within* Hindustani. For Gilchrist there was never any question of splitting *khari boli* into two, and the works produced by the college are themselves, evidence of this. If we look only at a few of the most familiar Hindustani texts which the British used in their lower level examinations, what emerges is a minimum of ‘four-ness’ rather than ‘two-ness’.

<b>Persianized (but not too much)</b>	<b>Very mixed</b>	<b>Less mixed</b>	<b>Non-Persianized</b>
<i>Bagh-o-Bahar</i>	<i>Sinhasan Battisi</i>	<i>Baital Pachisi</i>	<i>Prem Sagar</i>

Rai’s own description of the language of *Sinhasan Battisi*, which he describes as reflecting ‘the glorious confusion of the common tongue of north India, drawing freely not only from the classical founts of Sanskrit and Arabic and Persian, but also from the hybrid descendants of a whole range of Prakrits and other linguistic influences’,<sup>82</sup> also seems strangely at odds with his later idea of two-ness.

Vedalankar acknowledges the fact that the works written in Hindustani (in both *Nagari* and Persian scripts) at Fort William formed a continuum. In her view, *Sinhasan Battisi* ‘contains more

<sup>77</sup> Alok Rai, ‘Making a Difference: Hindi, 1880-1930’, *Annual of Urdu Studies*, 10, Madison, 1995, 138. Emphasis added. They also generally did not use ‘Sanskritic’ vocabulary.

<sup>78</sup> Rai, *Hindi Nationalism*, 26.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>80</sup> Gilchrist, *A Dictionary English and Hindoostanee* (Calcutta: Stuart and Cooper, 1787) preface.

<sup>81</sup> Rai, *Hindi Nationalism*, 22.

<sup>82</sup> Rai, ‘Making a Difference’, 138.



Urdu syntax and Persian words' than *Baital Pachisi*,<sup>83</sup> which, in turn, contains more than *Prem Sagar*. She goes on to argue that two other works, *Madhonal* and *Sakuntala Natak*, are Urdu in syntax, and have a large number of Persian words. Having quoted Lalluji Lal's definition that *khari boli* mixed with Arabic and Persian forms 'what is called the Rekhtu or Oordoo'<sup>84</sup> she concludes that 'the language of "Sihāsan Battīsī" and "Baītāl Paccīsī can be called Rekhtā, but that of "Mādhonal" and "Śakuntalā Nāṭak" is Urdu.<sup>85</sup> This rather puzzling conclusion is rendered questionable by William Price's two volumes of *Selections*, published in 1827. The first volume was in *Nagari* and contained extracts from *Sinhasan Battisi*, *Baital Pachisi*, *Madhonal* and *Sakuntala Natak*. The second volume contained selections 'in the Oordoo dialect and Persian character'. For Price, therefore, *Madhonal* and *Sakuntala Natak* were clearly *not* (as Vedalankar maintains)'Oordoo'.

Lelyveld has argued that the concept of languages as markers of national and communal identities was not a feature of the Indian intellectual landscape prior to the arrival of the British.<sup>86</sup> This may be true, but to suggest that there was any notion of 'divide and rule' along *Hindu-Muslim* lines in the first few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is, quite simply, writing history backwards. Several binaries have subsequently emerged; the partition into India and Pakistan, the Hindu-Muslim conflict, the Urdu-Hindi controversy and the battle between Persian and *Nagari* scripts. The benefit of hindsight, therefore, has led some writers to see a binary in the works of Fort William, one which simply does not exist. Yet without subscribing to the idea of this mythical 'two-ness' it is not possible to attribute the roots of the Urdu-Hindi controversy to Fort William. These should be sought, rather, in the events of 1857-9, which produced a 'turbulence' in the fabric of Indian society and forced a re-assessment by Hindus and Muslims (and the British) of their relative positions in that society.<sup>87</sup>

#### **7.4 National Language and the Demise of Hindustani**

Hobsbawm has argued that national languages are 'almost always semi-artificial constructs'. His contention that, 'the controversial element is the written language, or the language spoken for public purposes',<sup>88</sup> has particular resonance in the light of the Urdu-Hindi controversy. The multiplicity of languages in use in India already presented difficulties when it came to the issue of national language, but the 'problem' of multilingualism was ultimately overshadowed by the acrimonious debates over Urdu and Hindi. From the time of his return to India in 1915, Gandhi began writing on the issue of national language for an independent India. By the time it was being

<sup>83</sup> Shardadevi Vedalankar, *The Development of Hindi Prose Literature in the Early Nineteenth Century*, (Allahbad: Lokbharti Publications, 1977) 60.

<sup>84</sup> *Rekhta* and Urdu are used here synonymously.

<sup>85</sup> Vedalankar, *Development*, 63.

<sup>86</sup> Steadman-Jones, *Colonialism*, 17.

<sup>87</sup> According to Abdul Haq: 'The Hindi-Urdu controversy had no existence whatever before the Mutiny. Thus, when in 1837, Persian was replaced by Urdu as the court language, not a single voice was raised in protest'. Ahmad, Z.A. *National Language for India, A Symposium*, Allahabad, 1941, 82.

<sup>88</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990) 113.

seriously considered, however, the Hindu-Muslim split of which the controversy was, by then, an indissoluble part, had escalated to alarming proportions.<sup>89</sup> From the 1920s onwards Indian Nationalist leaders, intellectuals, and writers, increasingly focused their attention on Hindustani. It has been suggested that what attracted the Congress leadership to it was, as for the British, its widespread use.<sup>90</sup> For the nationalists, however, its utility lay more in its potential to form a linguistic bridge across the troubled waters of the increasingly bitter communal divide. Whilst for many Hindus modern Sanskritized *khari boli* Hindi in *Nagari* script seemed the ‘natural’ choice as India’s *rastrabhasha*, the Congress leadership realized they had to try to find a solution acceptable, if not pleasing, to all parties, rather than seeking to impose, (as in the case of many European nation-states) the language of a dominant élite. What such a compromise entailed was, however, a matter on which the nationalist ‘dominant élite’ were, themselves, divided.

The three predominant constructs of Hindustani in the Indian context exhibit the influence of the confusion and contradictions inherent in the British definitions.<sup>91</sup> Gilchrist’s all-inclusive construction of Hindustani as the whole *khari boli* continuum had always been problematic, but whilst in the British context such confusion and contradictions could be tolerated, for Hindustani to be a serious contender as a national language it was crucial to resolve them. In the Indian context the problems of an all-encompassing construct of Hindustani were exacerbated by the fact that the *khari boli* continuum had been extended to include a heavily Sanskritized variety and there now existed two well-established bodies of literature at either end of it. Gandhi’s suggestion that people could simply choose which script and vocabulary to use might have worked in the private sphere, but for a national language it was necessary to make a decision as to which part of the continuum and which script were to be officially used. The Indian all-inclusive construct, a ‘derivate discourse’ from the British construct, was clearly unworkable.

The problem of the substance of Hindustani was compounded by the problems of its very name. Even Gandhi, perhaps its most fervent advocate, struggled to find an appropriate designation for the language, initially calling it ‘Hindi’, then ‘Hindi or Hindustani’, before finally plumping for ‘Hindustani’. All three terms were problematic. In 1909 Gandhi wrote in *Hind Swaraj*, ‘A universal language for India should be Hindi’.<sup>92</sup> Despite assertions that the name Hindi was an Arabic word

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<sup>89</sup> The 1920s saw the emergence of the *Shuddi* and *Sangatham* and *Tanzim* and *Tabligh* movements and an upsurge in Hindu-Muslim riots. Between 1923 and 1928 the government recorded 112 ‘serious communal disorders’. The riots were widespread and occurred among other places in Multan (1922), Calcutta (1923), Kohat and Delhi (1924), and Nagpur (1927). See Gene Thursby, *Hindu Muslim Relations in British India* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975) 72.

<sup>90</sup> Granville Austin, ‘Language and the Constitution’, ed., Asha Sarangi *Language and Politics in India* (New Delhi: OUP, 2009) 50-51.

<sup>91</sup> An excellent source to illustrate this confusion is Z.A. Ahmad, *National Language for India, A Symposium* (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1941)

<sup>92</sup> Robert D.King ‘The Poisonous Potency of Script, in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 150, 2001, 56.

which had been given to the language by Muslims and should, therefore, be acceptable to them, it nevertheless carried connotations of Sanskritized *khari boli*. Lelyveld has suggested Gandhi

... shifted to the term “Hindi-Hindustani” to indicate that he advocated a language that freely used words of Persian or Arabic or, for that matter any other origin, and to disassociate himself from those in the HSS who sought to purge Hindi of any marked Urdu words while opening the language freely to unmodified Sanskrit ones’.<sup>93</sup>

The compromise formulation ‘Hindi or Hindustani’ it has been argued

...was doomed to failure. That “or” could connote either alterity or identity. It could mean either that Hindi was the same as Hindustani, so the mullah was up in arms, or that Hindustani was an alternative to Hindi, so the pandit, quite a pugnacious would have none of it.<sup>94</sup>

When, in 1942, Gandhi, parted company with the *Hindi Sahitya Sammelan*, and founded the *Hindustani Prachar Sabha*, he finally opted for the name Hindustani alone. Because of its association with the colonial constructs of the language, however, it ‘always carried the taint of denoting a language rather closer to Urdu than to Hindi’.<sup>95</sup> Some Indians, (both Hindu and Muslim), equated it with Urdu but whereas for Muslims such an equation was reassuring, for Hindus it was a ‘back-door’ way of promoting Urdu and was seen by them as a ‘menace’ and a threat to Hindi.<sup>96</sup> Nathuram Godse took this view arguing

Every body in India knows that there is no language called Hindustani; it has no grammar; it has no vocabulary; it is a mere dialect; it is spoken but not written. It is a bastard tongue and a crossbreed between Hindi and Urdu and not even the Mahatma's sophistry could make it popular; but in his desire to please the Muslims he insisted that Hindustani alone should be the national language of India. ... For practical purpose Hindustani is only Urdu under a different name, but Gandhiji could not have the courage to advocate the adoption of Urdu as against Hindi, hence the subterfuge to smuggle Urdu under the garb of Hindustani.<sup>97</sup>

Proponents of Hindustani protested strongly, however, that Hindi and Urdu were essentially one language. In a speech of 1918 Gandhi observed

It is necessary to give some thought to the definition of the Hindi language. I have often said that Hindi is that language which is spoken in the North by both Hindus and Muslims and which is written either in the Nagari or Persian script. This Hindi is neither too Sanskritized, nor too Persianized. ... The distinction made between Hindus and Muslims is unreal. The same unreality is found in the distinction between Hindi and Urdu.<sup>98</sup>

Nearly twenty years later in the *Harijan Sevak* of 3 April 1937, he referred to ‘the Hindi language, which we have come to call Hindustani and Urdu also’.<sup>99</sup> In 1934, Premchand expressed the view that, since Hindi and Urdu had ‘common verbs and subjects’, there could be no doubt that they

<sup>93</sup> David Lelyveld, ‘Words as Deeds: Gandhi and Language’, *Annual of Urdu Studies*, 16, Part I, Madison, University of Wisconsin, 2001, 73.

<sup>94</sup> Rai, *Hindi Nationalism* 16.

<sup>95</sup> Trivedi, ‘Progress Part 2’, 970.

<sup>96</sup> Ravi Shankar Shukla, *Lingua Franca for India* (Lucknow: Oudh Publishing House, 1947) 186-226.

<sup>97</sup> Final speech of Godse to the court, 1949, <http://www.votebankpolitics.com/source/nvg/godselsp2.html> Accessed 20.9.12.

<sup>98</sup> M.K.Gandhi, Presidential Speech at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 1918, in Hingorani ed., *Our Language Problem*, (Mumbai: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1998)13-14.

<sup>99</sup> Rai, *Hindi Nationalism*, 12.

were 'one and the same language'.<sup>100</sup> At a literary level, however, this was difficult to sustain. Trivedi, taking the examples of Ghalib and Nirala, has questioned whether the two were 'ever part of a common heritage'.<sup>101</sup> Perhaps an even clearer example is to be found in a comparison of Hali's *Musaddas* and Maithili Sharan Gupt's *Bharat Bharati*. The vocabulary of the two poems is so radically different that a speaker of either 'style' would have severe difficulty in understanding the other.<sup>102</sup> Gandhi's contention that Hindustani was 'the language which both Hindus and Muslims spoke 'naturally and without effort' and which, written in *Nagari* was Hindi, and in 'Arabic' script became Urdu, is, therefore, difficult to sustain.<sup>103</sup> Even Premchand, a staunch supporter of Hindustani, admitted that a word from Urdu would be seen as 'intruding into Hindi like a crow among swans' and conversely a Hindi word in the midst of Urdu would 'ruin the flavour like salt in a sweet dish'.<sup>104</sup>

Trivedi summed up Rajyashree and Hasnain's 2004 article as 'a lament for the lost cause of Hindustani, the notionally ideal middle ground between Hindi and Urdu'.<sup>105</sup> The idea of Hindustani as 'common ground' is the second of the three Indian constructs. But what did this middle ground comprise? One interpretation is that it signified 'that part of the continuum which was neither Hindi nor Urdu', By removing all the Persian and Sanskrit vocabulary, the only common ground which remained was indigenous *khari boli* vocabulary, thereby reducing Hindustani to a dialect of Hindi. Hence the *concept* of Hindustani as a compromise between *literary* Urdu and *literary* Hindi was lost and Hindustani 'tended to disappear altogether, to the great delight of the fanatics on both sides'.<sup>106</sup> Often conflated with this idea of 'common ground', yet, in reality, quite different, is the third Indian construct of Hindustani as an 'overlapping part' of the *khari boli* continuum. As described by Trivedi, this was common to both Hindi and Urdu and 'designated the people's language, vigorous, flexible, versatile'.<sup>107</sup> The idea of Hindustani as an area of overlap along the *khari boli* continuum presents serious problems however. It might well be 'vigorous, flexible and versatile, but it is also is a moveable feast depending on the speakers'.<sup>108</sup> Whilst such fluctuations are fine for 'the people's language', they are not helpful in establishing an official or national language, for which not only a standardised form, but also a sophisticated and specialised literary, technical, political, and scientific vocabulary is required. In this sense, therefore, as argued by several contributors to the *Symposium*, Hindustani did not already exist, but would have to be 'created'.

<sup>100</sup> Premchand, *Sahitya ka uddeshya*, 108, quoted in Faruqi, *Early Urdu Literary Culture*, 62.

<sup>101</sup> Trivedi, 'Anxiety', 269.

<sup>102</sup> *Bharat Bharati* was modelled on Hali's *Musaddas*.

<sup>103</sup> M.K.Gandhi, Presidential Speech at Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 1935, in Hingorani, *Language Problem*, 35.

<sup>104</sup> Amrit, Rai, trans., Trivedi, *Premchand, His Life and Times* (Delhi: OUP, 1991) 323.

<sup>105</sup> Rajyashree and Hasnain, 'Hindustani as Anxiety between Hindi-Urdu Commitment' and Trivedi, Harish, 'The Anxiety of Hindustani', ed., Rajendra Singh, *Yearbook of South Asian Languages and Linguistics* (Berlin, New York: Mouton De Gruyter, 2004) 247-265 and 67.

<sup>106</sup> Rai, *Hindi Nationalism*, 16.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> For example the area of overlap between Bhisham Sahni and Rahi Masoon Raza would be completely different from that between Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi and Nazir Ahmed.

As far back as 1858 Fallon had suggested

The Urdu language needs direction; but the natives have neither taste nor learning for such a work. The task must be performed by European scholars and by the Government of the country. We may not ... make the language for the people; but we may help the people make it for themselves.<sup>109</sup>

Even without the problem of the Urdu-Hindi binary and the accompanying one of script, however, the standardisation of a language is an enterprise fraught with problems, as the cases of Swahili and Turkish both demonstrate. In East Africa, it had been realised by the late 1920s that, if Swahili were to be used throughout the educational system, 'a common orthography and dialectical form for the written language were essential, whatever variations in spoken language occurred.'<sup>110</sup> Accordingly a conference was set up in 1928, and, after much deliberation, the Zanzibar dialect was chosen over that of Mombasa. The standardisation process was criticized on the grounds that its imposition by the colonial authorities resulted in the 'somewhat ludicrous position' of teaching Swahilis their own language through the medium of books, many of which were 'not Swahili in form or content', and whose language had 'but little resemblance to the spoken tongue'. Others argued, however, that standardisation could not have taken place effectively unless done from the 'outside' by the colonial regime.<sup>111</sup>

The difficulties of linguistic standardisation can equally be seen in the case of modern Turkish. Despite the absence of diametrically opposed competing linguistic styles and scripts to complicate the process, the results of the Turkish language reforms were often unsatisfactory, hence the description of them as a 'catastrophic success'. Their 'success' owed much, both to 'the boundless energy of Kemal Atatürk' and 'his authority as President of the Republic, to impose them. In their zeal to cleanse the language of its Ottoman vocabulary, they produced some strange anomalies, such as the new word for 'national'. The Ottoman word *millî* was replaced with the, supposedly 'pure-Turkish', *ulusal*. In reality this was 'half Mongolian and half French' *ulus* being the Mongolian for 'empire' or 'people' and '-al' being the adjectival ending for which Turkish had no equivalent.<sup>112</sup>

In the Indian context, with all the attendant political and linguistic complications, the attempt to create an overlapping compromise between literary Urdu and Hindi was doomed to failure. The colonial government was in no position to impose such a compromise (and had no interest in doing so) and the entrenched positions of both Hindus and Muslims rendered it almost impossible. The scale of difficulty involved is evident from the fact that it took All-India Radio five

<sup>109</sup> S.W. Fallon, *English-Hindustani Law and Commercial Dictionary* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1858) xviii,

<sup>110</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 80-81.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 85-86.

<sup>112</sup> Geoffrey Lewis, *Turkish Language Reform* (Oxford: OUP, 1999) 102.

long years, between 1940 and 1945, to arrive at an agreed lexicon for broadcasting.<sup>113</sup> By the time it was completed it had been rendered virtually obsolete as India headed inexorably towards partition.

Even had such standardisation of vocabulary proved successful, there still remained the insurmountable problem of script. It has been suggested that ‘the question of script was entirely begged by the Hindustani camp’<sup>114</sup> and that Gandhi’s tendency, was to minimize its role, wavering ‘between Devanagari and no choice at all’.<sup>115</sup> In 1917 he observed

... For the present Muslims will certainly use the Arabic script while Hindus will mostly write in Devanagari. Finally when there is absolutely no suspicion left between Hindus and Muslims ... the script which has greater power will be more widely used and thus become the national script. In the intervening period, Hindus and Muslims, who desire to write their petitions in the Urdu script, should be free to do so and these should be accepted at all Government offices.<sup>116</sup>

Gandhi’s phrasing here, especially this early on, is revealing. Urdu would continue be used in the ‘intervening period’ until the script with the ‘greater power’, by implication *Nagari*, won out. In 1918, he re-iterated this statement almost word for word, now admitting, however, that there was ‘no doubt difficulty in regard to script’.<sup>117</sup> As Urdu script was, supposedly, ‘a matter of religious importance’ to Muslims, Gandhi felt it ‘should be respected and nurtured.’<sup>118</sup> Yet, although he was careful to mute the idea in most of his public statements on the issue, he ‘believed that ultimately *devanagari* would become the universal Indian script’.<sup>119</sup>

A.H. Harley, former Principal of the Calcutta Madrasa, and later Urdu lecturer at SOAS, suggested that the lack of a specific script for Hindustani was the reason people hesitated to recognise it as a language. Whilst the ‘simple common speech of everyday life’ might, he argued, ‘equally well appear in either script’ the basic common language of millions of Indians had no written form common to all.

People who speak Hindustani may read and write Urdu in the adapted Persian character, or Hindi in the Devanagari (Sanskrit) character, or indeed both. But the cultural specialisation of the two languages emphasised by the two different scripts divides people whenever the common social life is either predominantly Muslim or predominantly Hindu.<sup>120</sup>

The issue of script then was central to the inability of Hindustani to become a national language. Hobsbawm has argued that ‘when forced into print’, a national language ‘acquired a new fixity which made it appear more permanent ... than it really was’.<sup>121</sup> Disagreements as to what Hindustani

<sup>113</sup> David Lelyveld, ‘Colonial Knowledge and The Fate of Hindustani’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 35, No. 4, 1993, 672.

<sup>114</sup> C. Shackle, R. Snell, *Hindi and Urdu since 1800* (London: SOAS, 1990)32.

<sup>115</sup> King, ‘Potency’, 56.

<sup>116</sup> M.K. Gandhi, Presidential Address at the Second Gujarat Educational Conference, October 20, 1917, in Hingorani, *Language Problem*, 12.

<sup>117</sup> M.K. Gandhi, Presidential Speech at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 1918, in Hingorani *Language Problem*, 13-14.

<sup>118</sup> Lelyveld, ‘Words as Deeds’, 74. The argument about religious scripts is a spurious one on both sides. Sanskrit had always been written in a variety of local scripts and Urdu script was not the script of the Qur’an.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>120</sup> A.H. Harley, *Colloquial Hindustani* (London: Kegan Paul Trench Trubner and Co, 1944) x.

<sup>121</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 57.

should comprise in terms of vocabulary, combined with the fact that it had no script of its own, removed any possibility of it becoming a print-language, and consequently, of acquiring the all-important 'fixity' needed for it to become a national language. Although not an exact parallel, Hindustani was 'assimilable' to both Hindi and Urdu, as Northwestern German was to print-German.<sup>122</sup> When written in Persian script it was seen as Urdu, and when written in *Nagari* it was regarded as Hindi. Whereas both Urdu and Sanskritized *khari boli* Hindi had, by the 1920s, acquired enormous 'print capital', Hindustani had none.<sup>123</sup>

In 1864, Nassau Lees had suggested that Hindustani was 'a language seeking for an alphabet' and, consequently, that it was an ideal candidate for Romanization. Some Indians later also argued that Romanization offered a solution to the script problem. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, in a 1935 booklet, had proposed the adoption of Roman script<sup>124</sup> as did the original manifesto of the Progressive Writers Association a few years later.<sup>125</sup> The Urdu branch of the PWA suggested that Hindustani could be written in two different scripts

... to be kept operational for the time being, with efforts gradually conducted to evolve a single script. The common script could be Roman, or Devanagari, though it will be necessary for the government to have the entire corpus of literature transcribed into the one that is ultimately adopted. ... About this we can seek guidance from Turkey and the Asian republics of the Soviet Union.<sup>126</sup>

The proposal to Romanize Hindustani, unsurprisingly, proved quite contentious and was soon dropped by the PWA.<sup>127</sup> Some Indians nevertheless continued to advocate it. In 1940, Humayun Kabir claimed that Romanizing Hindustani would not only 'serve to standardize the language', but would enable it to become one of the major languages of the world, and 'at the same time solve the problem of a national language for India'.<sup>128</sup> In 1864, Nassau Lees had noted, however, that there was

... a very serious difficulty to the engrafting of new alphabets on old languages. Most nations take an intense pride in the antiquity of every thing belonging to them; and no nations possess this characteristic in a greater degree than Oriental nations. This difficulty, of course is much heightened if the character in which the language is written ... is sacred, which is the case with the two classical languages of India.<sup>129</sup>

Even when the script was not 'sacred', people had a tendency to hold onto it as exemplified by the fact that the very articles, in which Sprenger had advocated 'the universal adaptation of the Roman alphabet to Oriental languages', were printed in 'the old and familiar' Gothic type. The difficulties

<sup>122</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006) 44-45.

<sup>123</sup> The fact that there never was a Hindustani PWA is not, therefore, 'curious' at all but an admission of the impossibility of producing anything literary in print that could genuinely be seen as Hindustani. Talat Ahmed, *Literature and Politics* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2009), 116.

<sup>124</sup> Chatterjee, Suniti Kumar, *Roman Alphabet for India*, 1935.

<sup>125</sup> Ahmed, *Literature and Politics*, 114-5.

<sup>126</sup> Progressive Writers' Association, 'The Future of Literature and Culture', *Savera* No.3, (n.d.) 85-55, trans., Memon, *Annual of Urdu Studies*, 25, 2010, 163.

<sup>127</sup> Ahmed, *Literature and Politics* 114-5.

<sup>128</sup> Ahmad, *Symposium*, 288 and 296.

<sup>129</sup> Nassau Lees, 'Application of the Characters of the Roman Alphabet', *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, No. IV, Calcutta, 1864, 350.

raised by the attachment to familiar old alphabets could, Nassau Lees argued, be traced to ‘bigotry, vanity, prejudice, force of habit, false ideas of nationality ... all of which might be overcome by a ruling power occupying the position of the English in India’.<sup>130</sup> By the 1920s, however, even if Roman script had not carried colonial connotations making it unpalatable to Indians, the ‘ruling power’ no longer had either the desire, or the power to implement such a change.

The example of Turkish was occasionally used by both Indians and the British in advocating the Romanization of Hindustani. Frank Lugard Brayne, writing in 1945, argued that Turkey became a modern country ‘by a stroke of the pen, when Kamal Pasha ordained that the Turkish language should be written in the Roman Alphabet’. According to Brayne, Romanization would lead Roman-Urdu to spread, thereby facilitating the spread of mass literacy. India, he argued, would ‘probably never be literate’ until, like Turkey, she modernised her scripts.<sup>131</sup> There were, however, key differences between Turkish and Hindustani. Atatürk’s authority as President of a single party state facilitated both the language reforms and the change of script in 1928.<sup>132</sup> The geographical position of Turkey and its political ideology were also entirely different. It was close to, and wished to be part of, a modern Europe. Roman script was a symbol of identification with Europe and, since Turkey had not been colonized by a western nation, it carried only the sweet scent of modernization rather than the unpleasant odour of colonialism. Unlike Indian Nationalists, who wanted their independent India to be modern but to retain an ‘essential’ Indian-ness which set it apart from the West, for Atatürk the modernization of the new Turkish republic was rooted in Westernization. In his view, for progress to occur, it was essential for reformers not to combine the old with the new. Reforms aimed at radically changing all aspects of Turkish society and abolishing its traditional beliefs and institutions.<sup>133</sup> Although Arabic script was removed from the language in the secular sphere, however, Arabic continued as the language of religion. Romanization did not, therefore, generate the (albeit spurious) problems which the hypothetical removal of *Naqari* and Persian script gave rise to with regard to Hindustani.

At this point a further comparison of Hindustani and Swahili is useful. It has been argued that

...Gandhi’s Hindustani was culturally neither fish nor fowl but a compromise whose political usefulness depended on its convenience as a rallying-cry in the fight against the imperialism of the British and their language; it offered no offence and at same time invited no committed enthusiasm from any substantial section of the population.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Nassau Lees, ‘Application’, 352.

<sup>131</sup> Frank Lugard Brayne, Roman Urdu, 29 September 1945, Mss. Eur. F/152/90.

<sup>132</sup> Geoffrey Lewis, Professor G. Jarring Lecture <http://www.turkishlanguage.co.uk/jarring.htm> accessed 15 July 2011.

<sup>133</sup> Lewis, *Turkish Language Reform*, 51.

<sup>134</sup> Shackleton C. and Snell, R. *Common Reader*, 32.



At first sight this seems to have some resonance with Whiteley's statement regarding Swahili in Kenya, that 'what was loved by none could be tolerated by all'.<sup>135</sup> That Hindustani engendered no real enthusiasm, even in its supporters, is maybe true, but that it offered no offence is deeply questionable. The strength of Swahili in Kenya lay in the fact that it satisfied the need 'for a unifying or 'national' language to avoid favouring particular tribal dialects'.<sup>136</sup> Hindustani fulfilled no such function and Urdu and Hindi protagonists found it equally offensive for different reasons. The notion of Hindustani as a national language

...left the pedants on either side - the pundits and the mullahs, committed to "Hindi" or to "Urdu" - either dissatisfied, each side seeing it as merely a Trojan horse of the other; or, occasionally, in moments of cultural confidence, greedy to annex it by infecting the middle domain with *their* kind of extremism.<sup>137</sup>

It has been argued that, the example of Tanzania shows, that without 'purist ethnic cooks' spoiling the broth, Hindustani could have succeeded in becoming a national language for India.<sup>138</sup> Leaving aside the counterfactual nature of this statement, there were, as seen in Chapter 6, key differences between the position of Swahili in Tanzania and that of Hindustani in India. As Mazrui and Zirimu point out, the spread of Swahili took place 'against a background of interaction between church and state and between economics and politics, with missionaries, merchants, administrators and educators, all playing a part in 'this drama of linguistic spread'.<sup>139</sup> In the case of Hindustani, missionaries were involved only on the periphery of the colonial state. It had little or no economic importance, having (unlike Swahili) never been a trade language. In education, either Urdu or Hindi was used, rather than Hindustani. This left only the administration and politics, but here it was English which dominated. The supposed Hindustani of the lower courts and offices, in reality, took the form of highly-Persianized Urdu. Perhaps, most importantly, Swahili, rather than being purely a means of vertical integration between the colonizers and Africans, permitted both horizontal and vertical integration within African society. Mazrui and Zirimu have emphasized this role.

...the economic role of Swahili has been important in horizontal national integration, fostering contacts across ethnic groups at grass-roots level. The political role of Kiswahili has, on the other hand, promoted vertical integration, creating links between the elite and the masses. To the extent that Kiswahili served as the main language of trade unionism and organized labor, and facilitated social communication between workers and peasants from different geographical areas and ethnic groups, the language was performing horizontally integrative functions. ... Kiswahili was involved in the critical process of economic integration within each of the East African countries.<sup>140</sup>

For (educated) Indians, however, English was the language of both vertical and horizontal integration.<sup>141</sup> Hindustani served as a means of vertical integration in terms of the colonizer 'reaching down' to the colonized but unlike Swahili did not allow Indians to 'reach up'. In terms of

<sup>135</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 12.

<sup>136</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 12.

<sup>137</sup> Rai, 'Making a Difference', 136.

<sup>138</sup> Abram De Swaan, *Words*, 70.

<sup>139</sup> Mazrui and Zirimu 'Church State and Marketplace', 427.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 439.

<sup>141</sup> At a mass-level horizontal integration would have been through the vernaculars.

horizontal integration it did not function at more than a very basic ‘bazar’ level or in British-created social spaces such as the bungalow or the army.

The difference between the two languages becomes further apparent when we compare how they were used in the struggle against colonialism. In East Africa ‘the spread of Swahili ‘had the result of bringing the hitherto distrustful native races more into sympathy one with the other’ and removing tribal isolation’’<sup>142</sup> and the ‘growth of national consciousness’ began to benefit from the availability of Swahili as a ‘grass-roots trans-ethnic language’.<sup>143</sup> Politicians used vernacular languages to appeal to fellow tribesmen, but ‘for a wider audience Swahili was essential’.<sup>144</sup> Swahili, therefore, offered a means of political unification. A leading article in *The Nationalist*, of 1 August 1966, stated, ‘It has proved our greatest asset in our pre-independence struggle as the instrument of uniting the people of the nation’s different tribes’.<sup>145</sup> In the Indian context, it was again English, rather than Hindustani, which provided the unifying factor in the struggle for independence, allowing educated Indians, whatever their mother-tongue, to come together against colonial rule.<sup>146</sup>

### 7. 5 Summary

Tracing the roots of either the Urdu-Hindi, or Hindu-Muslim, divide to Fort William College has been shown to be highly questionable. Not only was there no deliberate divide and rule policy at Fort William College in terms of splitting Urdu and Hindi, there was also no attempt or desire on the part of the British to ‘create’ a language for the Hindus. Nor was there any need. Indians already had literary languages in the form of *Awadhi* and *Braj* they had no need of a *khari boli* (ish) version of *Prem Sagar* as it already existed in *Braj*. Arguments regarding the place of ‘Hindee’ at FWC are confusing as it is never clear what is meant by ‘Hindee’. What is clear is that it was frequently not *khari boli* which was meant but *Braj* and other dialects. Works produced at the college were also intended solely for British consumption, the need being for teaching materials in an artificially simple style of prose.

What emerged from Fort William, was not a ‘two-ness’ but rather a multiplicity of ‘styles’ of Hindustani. To assert that two divergent registers originated there is simply reading (or writing) history backwards based on binaries which have arisen subsequently. The Urdu/Hindi controversy was initially one of script, based on economic and political factors. It arose out of the changed post-‘mutiny’ circumstances, which forced the British, Hindus and Muslims to re-assess their positions vis-à-vis each other and to realign themselves. Its roots are, therefore, in the Indian context rather than in the British ‘bubble’ of Fort William, which had effectively already ceased to exist even before Persian was replaced as the language of administration and the courts. Whilst it is true that

<sup>142</sup> Joelson, *Tanganyika Territory*, 6.

<sup>143</sup> Mazrui and Zirimu, ‘Church State and Marketplace’, 435.

<sup>144</sup> Whiteley, *Swahili*, 68.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>146</sup> To some extent Hindi was seen as a tool of anti-colonial struggle and Urdu was seen as a means of preserving Muslim identity – Hindustani fulfilled neither of these roles.

Fort William set a precedent for the production of prose literature in both *khari boli* Hindi and Urdu, even this needs qualifying, as the works produced at the college had little impact on the actual development of Urdu and Hindi prose literature.

In the Indian context there were three main constructs of Hindustani. The first of these was influenced by the British all-inclusive definition but was now extended to include heavily Sanskritized *khari boli* literary Hindi. This was clearly unworkable. Whilst in the private sphere people could choose to use any part of the continuum and either script, in the official context it was necessary to gravitate to a part of the continuum and to decide on a script. Even in the British context, where there were no religious, cultural allegiances Gilchrist's all-inclusive construct was chimerical. As a national language for India it was simply unworkable. The other two constructs were equally problematic. The notion of Hindustani as an 'area of common ground' caused it to disappear, and as an 'area of overlap' it needed to be created through a process of standardisation.

The name Hindustani itself was ambiguous and problematic. For Muslims it meant Urdu as it had for many British even before 1895. As far as Hindus were concerned it was, therefore, seen as a Trojan horse, and it was also tainted with colonialism. Leaving aside the problem of arriving at a common higher level vocabulary, script was an insurmountable problem. Unlike in the case of either Turkish or Swahili, Romanization was unacceptable both because of the cultural and pseudo-religious significance of the *Nagari* and Persian scripts, and because of its association with colonial rule. The lack of a solid base in economics, religion, and education which prevented Hindustani becoming a vehicular language in the colonial context, meant it had no real inter-Indian communication value, added to which it had no 'print capital'. The idea of it becoming a national language was, therefore, never more than an illusion.

## CHAPTER 8

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 ONLY CONNECT! LIVE NO LONGER IN FRAGMENTS  
 CONCLUSIONS

‘Make Sense Who May... I switch off.’

*Samuel Beckett*

### 8.0 Introduction

In a lecture of 1883, Sir John Seeley famously remarked, ‘We seem to have conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind’. In another lecture, he, perhaps less famously, asserted, ‘Nothing great that has ever been done by Englishmen was done so unintentionally, so accidentally as the conquest of India’.<sup>1</sup> The British Hindustani enterprise was anything but unintentional or accidental. To paraphrase Paxman slightly, like the Empire, it began with a pounce, then marched, (never really got to swagger) and then merely wandered about aimlessly for a while before slinking away.<sup>2</sup> Lelyveld’s assertion that the history of Hindustani ‘can be enclosed between the dates of two lexicons – Gilchrist’s started in 1785 and All-India Radio’s completed in 1945’,<sup>3</sup> while initially persuasive, is problematic as it links two completely different constructs of Hindustani which bear no relation to each other. Gilchrist’s lexicon was, in theory, one based on the all-inclusive British construct of Hindustani which consisted of the entire *khari boli* continuum as it existed *circa* 1800.<sup>4</sup> The All-India Radio lexicon was based on the Indian construct of Hindustani, as an attempted compromise between highly-Sanskritized literary Hindi and highly-Persianized literary Urdu. They are, therefore, two quite different ‘Hindustanis’ which do not share a history.

Returning to the British Hindustani enterprise, it is difficult, and not particularly productive to attempt to periodise it, but Corfield’s formulation of a loosely braided history of continuity, gradual change and turbulence, not necessarily in equal measures at any one time, has relevance. Until 1895 there was continuity in the theoretical construct of Hindustani itself. There was also continuity in the literary set texts in the form of *Prem Sagar* (until 1895) and *Bagh-o-Bahar* (until 1905 for LS and 1911 for HS). As regards the examinations, we can trace gradual changes in the format during the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the attempts to make them more practical. The emphasis and purpose in learning Hindustani also shifted gradually from initially needing to communicate with educated Indians to speaking to uneducated Indian subordinates. Another gradual change, which occurred during the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was in the perceived importance of Hindustani, originally being seen as the most ‘essential’ language for officers to acquire, but ultimately being relegated to merely a ‘useful extra’. The attitudes of the government of India also gradually changed from supporting the scholarly/literary approach of the Board of

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<sup>1</sup> Sir John Seeley, *Expansion of England* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1902) 10 and 207.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremy Paxman, *Empire*, (London: Viking, 2011) 285.

<sup>3</sup> David Lelyveld, *Colonial Knowledge and the Fate of Hindustani*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.35, No. 4 (October 1993), 680.

<sup>4</sup> In *practice* all his works which use his preferred ‘middle ground’ are pretty much Urdu.

Examiners, to privileging the practical approach of the military. The ‘mutiny’ produced the first turbulence which led to the standardisation of the syllabuses across the three Presidencies in the early 1860s. From 1903 we see constant changes sparked by the decision of the Government of India to support the military demands for practicality. The major turbulences of two World Wars forced further dramatic changes. In the last four decades of British rule all aspects of the British Hindustani enterprise; the purpose behind the learning of the language, the content and format of the examination syllabuses, the literary set-texts, and the grammars and text-books, underwent numerous radical changes involving an inexorable ‘dumbing-down’ of the level to which officers were required to learn the language.

A particular change which took place from 1917 onwards was that the grammars and text-books became an Indian preserve. This highlights an issue which has not been given its own separate space in this thesis, but which has arisen in almost all chapters of it, that of the Indian involvement in the British learning of Hindustani. Indians were, of course, present from the outset in various roles. During the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were employed as *munshis* at Fort William College, Haileybury and Addiscombe. They were also employed as either regimental *munshis* or engaged privately by civil and military officers. The number of Indians employed in teaching roles, however, was tiny. The Indians with whom the British interacted through the medium of Hindustani, whether intermediaries in the courts and offices, *sepoys* in the army or servants in the bungalow, were far more numerous. The role of such Indians was crucial in facilitating communication and thereby the running of the empire. Their ‘collusion’ in understanding the *sahibs’* Hindustani, and their collaboration and cooperation in undertaking the work that the imperfect British command of Hindustani did not enable them to do themselves, leads us to the question of Indian agency. Inden’s conceptualisation of agency is perhaps the most helpful model regarding the British Hindustani enterprise. In this scenario, *Munshis*, the *amlah* and *sarishtedars* in offices can be seen as, ‘more or less willing instruments’ who facilitated, either the British learning of Hindustani, or the administration of their rule. Servants can, perhaps, be assigned the role of ‘patients’ who were the ‘recipients’ of the British learning of Hindustani and were, arguably, ‘mere adjuncts or even chattels’. The role of *sepoys*, as Gajendra Singh has shown, was an ambiguous one, and it is perhaps arguable whether they were ‘instruments’ or ‘patients’, either ‘willing’ or ‘unwilling’.<sup>5</sup> It is, however, evident that Indians were complicit in the British Hindustani enterprise and it is tempting (though not historically helpful) to speculate how the empire would have fared had they not been.

This leads us to what the study reveals about the nature of the colonial state. It suggests that a binary of the ‘monolithic all-powerful and homogenous entity’ versus the ‘weak and precarious’ is oversimplistic. The ‘all-powerful/monolithic’ picture as painted as by many earlier

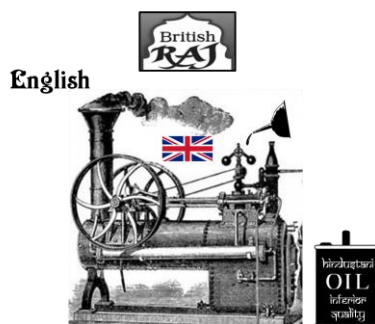
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<sup>5</sup> Singh, ‘Between Self and Soldier’, particularly 1-4 and 155.

historians, both British imperialist and Indian nationalist, is shown to be untenable. There were within the Hindustani enterprise both constant divisions and dissensions and examples of the left and right hands not knowing what the other was doing. The former can be seen, for example, in the disagreements between Phillott and Nethersole over the content of the set texts, between the Board of Examiners and the military over the scholarly/literary versus the pragmatic approaches, between the pro and anti-Romanization camps, and in the differences of opinion, between the government and certain military commanders, as to the level to which Hindustani needed to be learnt. Examples of the latter can be found in the 'Dakkhini affair', where the government and Board of Examiners were shown to be entirely ignorant of what was going on in Madras, and, perhaps most obviously, in the case of the 200 'unpassed' officers. This demonstrated a singular lack of communication between regimental commanding officers and the Board of Examiners/Government of India in allowing it to reach that stage. It also revealed that the India office was subsequently deliberately kept in the dark by the Government of India. Having said this, on the basis of other evidence, the study has also cautioned against overplaying the notion of the 'precariousness' of the colonial state. Despite concerns being voiced that administrators were at the mercy of 'untrustworthy' Indian intermediaries, the Government of India steadfastly failed to back Romanization and showed inertia and ineptitude when it came to making the Hindustani examinations fit for purpose. Since both would have significantly increased British control, the failure of the colonial state to take action does not suggest that it felt itself to be in a particularly 'precarious' position.

This last point takes us back to the questions of necessity and power. The fact that the majority of officers never went beyond the level of the compulsory examinations, even then often only scraping through them, undermines any contention that it was a source of real power for the British. In 1797 the Court of Directors had insisted on the necessity of being able to dispense with interpreters. A century and a half later the British command of Hindustani still did not permit this. The discourse of necessity in the colonial archive seems to have been mere rhetoric which took the place of any action. This is evidenced firstly by the fact that no post was ever created for which a high level of Hindustani was required in either the civil or military contexts, but perhaps more revealingly by two very different reactions to the 'mutiny'. Although it was argued that it was necessary to improve their learning of the language to avoid a repetition of the events of 1857, no serious steps were taken to ensure this happened. The contrast between this, and the speed with which railways were built in order to prevent, or quickly suppress, any future rebellion, demonstrates that such necessity did not, in reality, exist. The fact that very basic colloquial Romanized examinations apparently sufficed through two world wars also seems to dispel the notion that a high level of competence (especially in literacy) was necessary. The argument being advanced here is not, however, that Hindustani was not necessary to British rule. It may not have

been the cement which held the edifice of the colonial state together, and the level to which it was learnt may not have been sufficient to constitute a source of colonial power. It can, however, be seen as an oil of varying grades, dripped into the imperial engine in varying quantities and with varying frequency. As such it served to smooth the running of that engine, while the English language and military might, provided the coal and steam to power it.



A notable feature which emerges from the study, is how little the British learning of Hindustani was affected by events in the Indian context. It is evident that many of the British, especially those employed in education departments, were fully aware of the developments of the Urdu-Hindi controversy. Various British officials were partisan towards either Urdu or Hindi, notably in the exchange of views between John Beames and Frederick Growse in the pages of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* in 1865-6.<sup>6</sup> Both the colonial archival materials relating to the British learning of Hindustani and the grammars and textbooks, however, are curiously silent on the matter and virtually no attempt was made to reflect the developments, in the Indian context, regarding Urdu and Hindi. Although it is tempting to see the 1895 removal of *Nagari* and *Prem Sagar* from the compulsory Hindustani examinations, (thus officially equating it with Urdu) as a reflection of the increasing separation taking place between the two languages in the Indian context, on closer examination, this is not the case. The prime motivation behind the examination reforms of that year was complete standardisation, across all three Presidencies, to coincide with the army reforms. Trying to force Madras to include Hindi and *Nagari* script would have presented the Government of India with a major obstacle. Removing them, therefore, was a purely pragmatic move to achieve the desired standardisation as painlessly as possible. Removing Hindi from the compulsory examinations at a time when it was becoming ever more influential, in fact, goes completely against the tide of events in the Indian context. Only as late as 1931 does it seem possible to attribute any change in the British learning of Hindustani to a recognition of

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<sup>6</sup> John Beames, Outlines for a plea for the Arabic Element in Official Hindustani, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XXXV, Part I, No.1, Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 1867. Frederick Growse, Some Objections to the Modern Style of official Hindustani, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, XXXV, Part I, No. III, Calcutta, 1867, 172. John Beames, On the Arabic Element in Official Hindustani, in *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XXXVI, No. III, Calcutta, 1867. There was a tendency amongst the British to favour of Hindi which was seen as being the 'real' vernacular of the mass of the people with Urdu seen as 'foreign' and 'artificial' confined to the urban elite. It is, as Beames points, out quite odd (and illogical) for the British to champion the language of the illiterate peasant over that of the educated, something they would never have done in the metropolitan context.

developments taking place in the Indian context. When, in 1932, the Lower and Higher Standard examinations were re-introduced, the script was re-introduced with them. Significantly, however, officers were offered the choice of *Nagari* or Persian script. This appears, finally, to be a recognition that *Nagari* had increased dramatically in importance in the Indian context during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and should, therefore, be given equal status with Persian.<sup>7</sup> But even here it is an anathema since Muslims would not have wanted Urdu in *Nagari* script and most Hindus at this point in time would not have wished to learn Urdu.

In 1941, Mohammed Din Taseer noted that Hindustani had been ‘a budding language ... well on its way to becoming the *lingua franca* of at least Northern India’.<sup>8</sup> The bud never flowered. In the British context Hindustani has been shown to be chimerical. The all-inclusive construct was impossible to sustain even where issues of culture and religion, associated with particular vocabulary and script, did not arise. It existed only in the examination syllabuses and even there the use of two scripts prevented it ever merging into one complete whole. In practice, the British gravitated towards the Urdu end of the continuum, eventually forcing the 1895 change in the theoretical construct. In the Indian context Hindustani was merely an illusion, a language which, ‘beyond a basic street vocabulary of ... 500 words’ did not exist.<sup>9</sup> Trivedi has suggested that even the stalwarts of the Hindustani camp, such as Premchand, knew that ‘except in a basic and minimal sense the common language called Hindustani did not exist’.<sup>10</sup> To paraphrase Rai and Trivedi, rather than becoming a ‘ghost of some dead entity’,<sup>11</sup> it was merely ‘a utopian dream which never came anywhere near fulfilment’.<sup>12</sup> At independence Hindustani remained, as in pre-British times, an evanescent low level *lingua franca*, the language of the bazaar. The colonial construction of Hindustani had made no lasting impact on India.



<sup>7</sup> This could, in the civil context, perhaps be seen as being linked with the Indianization of the Civil Service, but these examinations were primarily military, and, according to Omissi, mass-Indianization of the officers of the army did not take place until World War II. Omissi, David, *Sepoy and the Raj* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1994)191.

<sup>8</sup> Ahmad, *Symposium*, 229.

<sup>9</sup> Trivedi, ‘Anxiety’, 271. The very words for national language, *qaumi zaban* and *rashtrabhasha* illustrate the impossibility of reconciling literary Urdu and literary Hindi. It is perhaps significant that the Hindustani Academy was not established to develop Hindustani as a compromise which could become a viable national language but to promote Hindi and Urdu simultaneously but separately, including the publication of the Hindi and Urdu versions of its quarterly journal, each named, somewhat inappropriately, Hindustani. Tara Chand’s speech, given at the Academy in 1936, in the ‘new fangled and unsettled’ Hindustani, was greeted with ‘roars of derision’. Premchand, *Vividh Prasang*, 316-8, quoted in Trivedi, *Progress of Hindi Part 2*, 979.

<sup>10</sup> Trivedi, ‘Progress of Hindi Part 2’, 976.

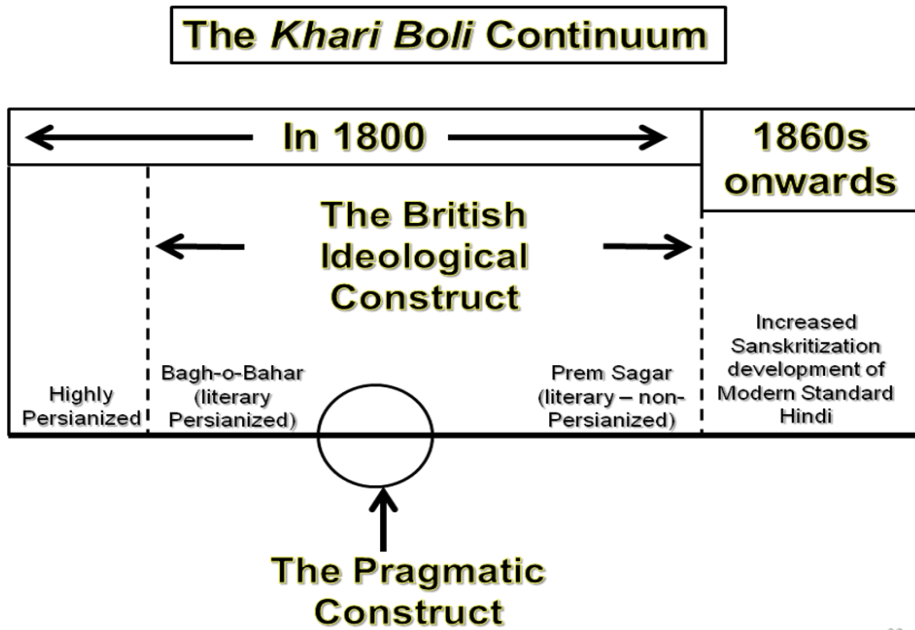
<sup>11</sup> Rai, ‘Persistence of Hindustani’, 135.

<sup>12</sup> Trivedi, ‘Anxiety’ 270-271.



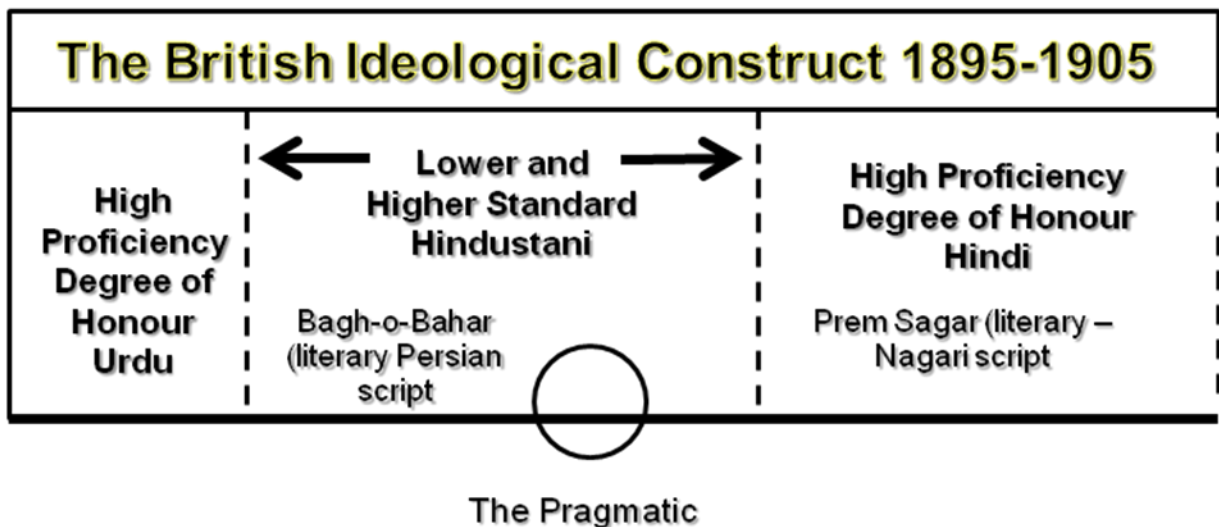
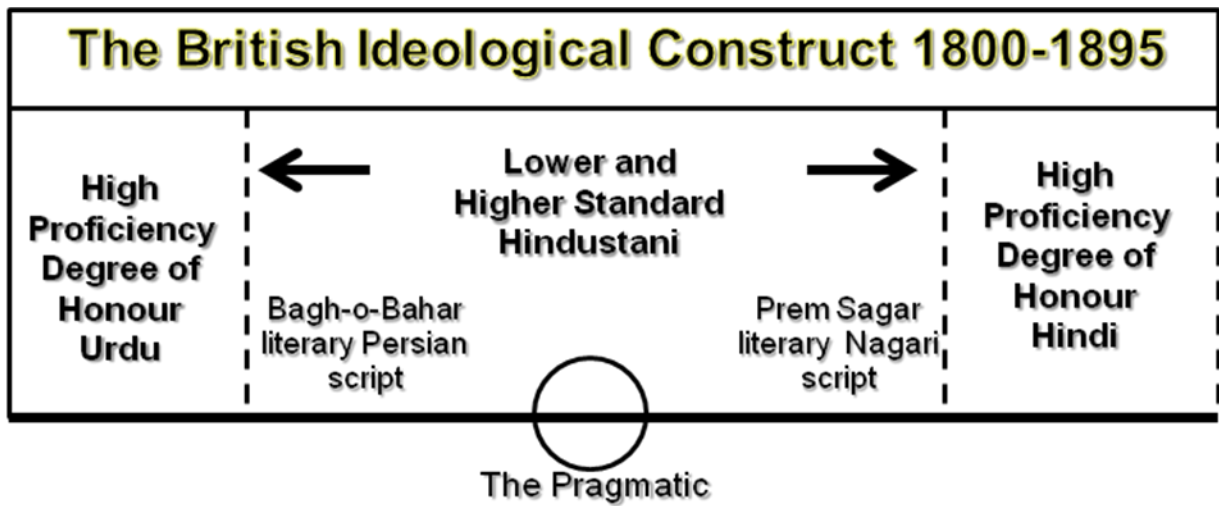
# APPENDICES





23

THE CHANGE IN THE IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCT FROM 1895



**INDIAN CONSTRUCT 1 (Similar to the British all-inclusive but extended)**

**The khari boli continuum**

Highly Persianized	Bagh o Bahar (literary)	Non-Persianized (Prem Sagar)	MSSH 1860s onwards
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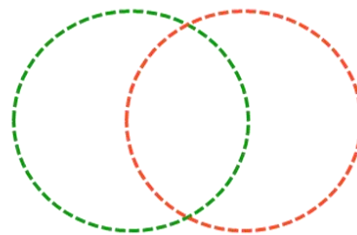
**INDIAN CONSTRUCT 2 (Neither Urdu nor Literary Hindi)**

Hindustani as area of common ground  
i.e. khari boli only



**INDIAN CONSTRUCT 3 (Moveable Feast)**

Hindustani as Area of Overlap



Rahi Masoom Raza

Bhisham Sahni



Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi

Nazir Ahmed



FORT WILLIAM COLLEGE EXAMS  
FIRST EXAMINATIONS OF 1801 HINDOOSTANEE  
FIRST DAY 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE  
(MSS ADD 13861)

**FIRST EXERCISE  
OF LETTERS**

1. Mention what Letter occurs in the Hindoostanee orally which has no formal existence.
2. What Letters cannot be expressed by the Nagree Character and what are peculiar to that Alphabet?
3. What Letter occurs initially as a servile in the Persian Character? How is it called and represented there, or elsewhere?
4. Which of the Vowels in the Roman Character is most liable to change in representing Hindoostanee sounds, and how is this peculiarity restricted or defined?

**OF THE ARTICLE AND NOUN**

5. Explain how the Definite and Indefinite Articles are expressed in the Hindoostanee by appropriate examples.
6. The number and names of the Genders in the Hindoostanee.
7. How many Declensions are there, and what are the characteristics of each with regard to Feminine or Masculine Nouns?  
On what general Principles is the Declension of Hindoostanee Nouns formed, compared with ancient and modern tongues, and with what department of our own language are they most analogous?
9. In what situation do the discriminating Signs or Particles occur with the Nouns, what is their name, and to what changes are they individually exposed?
10. How are they divided, and what is the consequence of such a division, and is this always uniform or not?
11. Are any Cases or the Inflections liable to be substituted for each other, to what extent, when and under what circumstances?
12. Prove the above by a series of appropriate examples.
13. What is the shortest way of treating the Genitive Sign, so as to account for this Paradox, that "Genitives in one sense may be Nominatives in another."
14. Give an instance on similar principles, to demonstrate that words may be Singular in one point of view, but Plural in another, and vice-versa.
15. Are any of the signs much exposed to confusion with other words and how?
16. Give an instance of any word in the same sentence occurring as a Noun and Postposition also.

**OF PRONOUNS**

17. Decline the second personal Pronoun.
18. What part of the Pronoun is redundant, and how may this be accounted for?
19. How do you express emphasis, definition, or identity in a Pronoun, and what effect has this on the declension of the Pronoun?
20. Can the Interrogative ever be used for the Relative Pronoun, and how?
21. Is there any thing peculiar in the sue of Upna, and what rules exist for its proper application in Hindoostanee?

**OF ADJECTIVES**

22. By what general rules do you treat the Hindoostanee Adjectives as to their Declension, Gender &c. ?
23. Give examples of the degrees of comparison, and one or two instances of the Superlative of any Adjective.
24. Is there any Particle particularly useful in the formation of Pronominal and other Adjectives, and how is it used?

**OF VERBS**

25. Conjugate the verb Bolna, and assign a reason why this is pitched upon in preference to others.
26. On what principle is the Passive Voice Conjugated?
27. What is the root of a Verb, and what are the Temporal or Modal Adventitious Particles which are used in the Hindoostanee?
28. What Verbs assume or drop w and e at pleasure in one of their Tenses or Modes, and which of them do not admit of this Latitude.
29. How many kinds of Compound Verbs occur, and under what circumstances?

30. In what particulars do Transitives and Intransitives differ in Hindoostanee, and under what circumstances is the distinction lost?

**SECOND EXERCISE**

To be translated literally into English

**PASSAGE IN NAGARI**

**THIRD EXERCISE**

To be translated freely

**PASSAGE IN PERSIAN SCRIPT**

**SECOND DAY, JUNE 24**

**FOURTH EXERCISE**

**GENERAL QUESTIONS IN GRAMMAR**

31. Enumerate the Adventitious Particles that occur in the Declension of Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives and Numerals.

32. Does this System extend beyond the Nouns, how far, and in what instances are the Analogies most evident?

33. What Inflections among Pronouns may belong indifferently to two Nominatives?

34. What particular cases or examples of those words are most subject, by indistinct pronunciation, to confusion?

35. In what do the Particles of Similitude and Identity differ in their effects upon pronominal words, and how do you prove it?

36. Give a general account of the division of time agreeable to the Hindoostanee Horal Diagram, and at the same time point out wherein the Moosulmans differ both from us and the Hindoos on this subject, stating the consequences which might ensue from inadvertency here, in Judicial or Military Proceedings.

**FIFTH EXERCISE**

To be translated into English and the first four couplets to be analyzed.

Shah Alam ki musibat ke bayan ki ghazal rekhte?? (not sure about the last word)

This is about 19 couples of a ghazal in Persian script.

It has stuff about Asaf ud Daula, and Timur

**SIXTH EXERCISE**

To be translated into Hindoostanee

**IDIOMS AND PHRASES**

37. "This is my picture," discriminating similitude, property and performance from each other, with an appropriate translation to each Mode.

38. "As to appearance, the two Borthers are exactly alike, but in disposition, they are as different as night and day."

39. "For one thing, he is an Infidel, and moreover, an unprincipled Gamester, upon whom mercy would be completely thrown away."

40. "Learn in time if you mean to learn, otherwise let it alone; if your progress be nothing to you, how can it be any important consideration to me?"

41. "If you sow the seed of justice and probity in cultivated ground like this, it will first thrive and blossom; nay be assured, it will in time produce good fruit."

42. "When the glass of your lives is expended, and the hour of death is at hand, you will then probably regret that you lent a deaf ear to all my instructions."

43. "Between this world and the next, the space is short indeed! It is true we are all here now, but in a moment, we may with one sweep, reach that unseen country, from whose bourn no traveller returns!"

***The following English Dialogue to be translated into Hindoostanee***

A. Will you come and breakfast with me to-morrow; there will be four or five of our school-fellows, we have provided horses, and we will ride somewhere out of town after breakfast?

B. I am very sorry I cannot; but am I obliged to be at home in the morning.

A. Why when we will come and breakfast with you.

B. I cannot do that either, I am engaged.

- A. Well then, let it be the next day.  
 B. To tell you the truth, it can be no day in the morning; for I neither go out nor see any body before twelve.  
 A. And pray what do you do with yourself till twelve o'clock?  
 B. I am not by myself I am with Mr such a one.  
 A. Then what do you do with him?  
 B. We study different things, we read, we converse.  
 A. Very pretty amusement indeed! Are you to obey all orders then?  
 B. Yes, my father's orders, I believe I must obey.  
 A. Why hast thou no more spirit, than to mind an old fellow a thousand miles off?  
 B. If I do not mind his orders, he will not mind my draughts.  
 A. Pooh! You would have one angry letter from the old fellow, and there would be an end of it.  
 B. You mistake him mightily; he always does more than he says. He has never been angry with me yet, that I remember, in his life: but if I were to provoke him I am sure he would never forgive me.  
 A. Why then he is an odd dog, that's all I can say: and pray are you to obey your tutor too, this same, what his name - Mr such a one?  
 B. Yes.  
 A. So he stuffs you all morning with Sanskrit, and Persian and Arabic, and all that. I have a tutor too, but I never looked into a book with him in my life; I have not so much as seen the face of him this week, and do not care a fig if I never see him.  
 B. My tutor never desires anything of me that is not reasonable, and for my own good; and therefore I like to be with him.  
 A. At this rate you will be reckoned a very good young man.  
 B. Why, that will do me no harm.  
 A. Will you be with us to-morrow in the evening then? We shall make ten with you: and I have got some excellent good wine, and we may be very merry.  
 B. Excuse me, tastes are different you know, and every man follows his own.  
 A. Well then; good night to you, you have no objection, I hope, to my being drunk tonight which I certainly will be.  
 B. Not in the least; nor to your being sick tomorrow, which you as certainly will be; and so good night too.

#### SEVENTH EXERCISE

To be translated into Hindoostanee

#### **THE DIAMOND AND THE LOADSTONE**

A diamond of great beauty and lustre, observing not only many other gems of a lower class ranged together with him in the fame cabinet, but a Loadstone likewise placed not far from him, began to question the latter how he came there, and what pretensions he had to be ranked among the precious stones, without any the least shining quality to advance him to such an honour. I find, said the Loadstone, you judge by external appearances; and it is your interest, that others should form their judgement by the same rule. I must own I have nothing to boast of in that respect; but I may venture to say, that I make amends for my outward defects, by my inward qualities. The great improvement of navigation in these latter ages is entirely owing to me. It is owing to me that the distant parts of the world are known and accessible to each other; that the remotest nations are connected together, and all in a manner united into one common society. I am willing to allow you your due praise in its full extent; you are a very pretty bawble; I am mightily delighted to see you glitter and sparkle; I look upon you with pleasure and surprise; but I must be convinced you are of more real utility than I am, before I acknowledge that you have any superior merit, or treat you with that high consideration and respect which you seem to demand.

#### **THE END OF THE 1801 EXAMINATION**

**SECOND EXAMINATION OF 1801**  
HINDOOSTANEE FIRST DAY

**FIRST EXERCISE**

**LETTERS**

1. What letters, Indian, Persian, and Arabian are used for the Hindoostanee language? Express them Alphabetically in the Nagree and Persian Characters; and in the Roman Character.
2. State in the Roman Character, the Hindoostanee Alphabet framed by Mr Gilchrist; under the divisions arranged by him of the Vowels, Diphthongs, and Consonants; with such information as you may be able to give of the principles on which this System of Hindoostanee Orthography and Ortheopy has been formed; and the advantaged proposed by it.

**ARTICLES**

3. Are there any distinct Articles, Definite and Indefinite in the Hindoostanee Language? Or in what manner is the power of the Article expressed? Given examples of each.
4. If any Article be occasionally adopted from the Persian, or Arabian Language; give an example of this also.

**NOUNS – SUBSTANTIVE**

5. How many Declensions of Hindoostanee Nouns are there? And by what are they distinguished? Decline a Noun of each Declension, as examples.
6. If there be any Nouns not reducible to the regular Declensions, state them; with the particulars in which they are irregular. State also to which of the Declensions the greater number of Hindoostanee Nouns belong.
7. How many Cases are recognized in the Declension of Hindoostanee Nouns; and what are the signs of each? If any Case have more than one sign; state the whole, with examples.
8. How do Hindoostanee Substantives form their Plurals? And are there any, and what general signs of the Plural Number?
9. How many Genders of Nouns are there in the Hindoostanee Language? And by what rules of general principles are they distinguished?
10. Are there any terminations peculiar to the Masculine, or Feminine Gender? Or any that may be considered generally characteristic of either Gender, subject to particular exceptions? If so, state them with examples.

**ADJECTIVES**

11. How is the Gender of Hindoostanee Adjectives discriminated? Give examples: and notice what Adjectives are subject to such discrimination.
12. Is there any distinction of Gender peculiar to Arabic or Persian Adjectives used in this Language? If there be, state, it, with an example.
13. To what inflections of Case and Number are Hindoostanee Adjectives liable? Decline as many as may be requisite to illustrate the Answer to this Question; and state what Adjectives are not subject to inflection.
14. How are the Degrees of Comparison expressed? State examples of the Comparative and Superlative Degrees.
15. What are the Hindoostanee Personal Pronouns: and how are they inflected?
16. What are the Demonstrative Pronouns, and how inflected?
17. What the Interrogative (sic) and how inflected?
18. What Possessive Pronouns, or what Pronominal Adjectives not included in the foregoing enumeration? And how inflected?

**SECOND EXERCISE**

To be translated literally into English

**PASSAGE FROM NAGARI.**

**THIRD EXERCISE**

To be translated freely.

From Persian script. Much longer than the previous passage.

**SECOND DAY**

**FOURTH EXERCISE**

**VERBS**

21. How many conjugations of Verbs are there in the Hindoostanee Language? If more than one, in what do they differ? Or if one only are all Verbs conjugated exactly according to the regular form, or are there any irregulars? If any, state examples.



22. What is considered the Root of the Hindoostanee Verb? And in what manner are the several Moods and Tenses formed from it? Conjugate the Verb *Dekhna*, to see, in the active voice, as far as may be necessary to exemplify.

23 Give the passive voice of the same Verb; as far as may be requisite to shew in what manner the Moods and Tenses of this voice are formed.

24. What parts of the Verb are inflected for concord with Nouns in Gender, Case, or Number? And what are the inflections it undergoes on these accounts respectively?

25. Is any part of the Verb inflected to distinguish the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Persons, and how are these distinctions expressed where there is no inflection?

26. What parts of the Verb may be used as Nouns? And to which Declension of Nouns do they belong?

27. Is there any and what general rule for the formation of Causal Verbs?

28. What descriptions of Compound Verbs occur in the Hindoostanee Language? State any classes of them which may be known to you; with their mode of formation respectively; and an example of each.

#### **ADVERBS**

29. Are they any and what appropriate adverbial Terminations in the Hindoostanee? Or in what manner are Substantives, Adjectives and Verbs used adverbially? Give examples of each.

#### **CONJUNCTIONS**

30. What are the most common Hindoostanee conjugations? And are any of them inflectible?

#### **PREPOSITIONS AND POST-POSITIONS**

31. What are the words and particles generally used in the Hindoostanee Language, to express the power of prepositions in European Languages? And to what inflections are they respectively subject? Distinguish the simple from the compound; and such as are prepositive, from those which are commonly used post-positively.

#### **INTERJECTIONS**

32. What are the most frequent Interjections in Hindoostanee? And are they inflected or otherwise?

#### **SYNTAX**

33. What concords occur between the Substantive and Adjective in the constructions of Hindoostanee Sentences? And are these invariably observed, or when are they commonly omitted? State examples.

34. Does the Substantive, or its (sic) attribute, usually precede? And is there any distinct rule when both words are Persian? Exemplify.

35. Does the governing, or governed Noun precede in the Hindoostanee? And is there a different mode of expressing this relation, borrowed from the Persian? If there be, give examples of both.

36. What Concords obtain between the Nominative and Verb? And are they always observed, or under what exceptions? Give examples; and notice under what circumstances an Active Verb may agree in Number and Gender with its (sic) Objective Noun: instead of the Nominative; or may not agree with either.

37. What is the usual Position of an Active Verb used with its (sic) Agent and Object? And of a Passive Verb used in like manner? State examples of each.

38. What effect has the Particle *ne* on the Nouns or Pronouns to which it is affixed? And with what Verbs only can this affix be properly used in construction? State any of these which do not admit it.

39. What is the government of the other Post-positions on the Inflection of Nouns in construction? Explain by examples; and particularly the regimen of the Genitive and Possessive Particle *ka*.

40. State any Rules of Hindoostanee Syntax, which you may recollect; and which may not be included in the Answers to the preceding Questions; illustrating the whole by examples.

#### **FIFTH EXERCISE**

The following Dialogue to be Translated into Hindoostanee

S. Moonshee, how shall I acquire a speedy knowledge of the Hindoostanee Language, so as to pass, in my conversation, for a native of India?

T. Sir, you must commence by paying the utmost attention to the accurate enunciation of every letter, which occurs in our Language, particularly to those letters which are not to be found in your own Language.

S. But how shall I discover whether I pronounce them properly or not, unless you assist me? And as I am as Hindoostanee, as you are of English, how am I to profit by your instruction?

T. I have learned all the Roman Letters which represent Hindoostanee sounds, and if you will take up any Book, containing the latter in the characters of the former, I can follow you with my eye, and will correct whatever offends my ear as you proceed. You have too much sense, I am sure to be offended at this freedom.

S. Why should I be offended? On the contrary you will truly oblige me by pointing out every mistake I commit at first, that I may not acquire a vicious pronunciation at my very outset; which must be the case, unless you faithfully execute the duties of a Tutor, and I diligently attend to your advice and instructions as a Student, in the Hindoostanee Language.

**SIXTH EXERCISE**

To be translated into Hindoostanee

**THE PARTRIDGE AND HER YOUNG**

A Partridge having built her Nest in a Field of corn, it grew ripe before her Young were able to fly. Apprehensive for their safety, she enjoined them, when she went out, to listen attentively to any discourse they might hear about reaping the field. At her return they told her that the Farmer and his Son has been there, and had agreed to send to some of their neighbours to assist them in cutting it down the next day. So they depend, upon neighbours, said the Mother, very well: then I think we have no occasion to be afraid of tomorrow. The next day she went out, and left with them the same injunction as before. When she returned they acquainted her that the Farmer and his Son had been there but as none of the neighbours came to their assistance, they had deferred reaping until the next day, and intended to send for help to their Friends and Relations. I think we may still venture another day, says the Mother; On the third day the Bird understood from her young ones, that the Father and Son made their appearance as usual, and finding that neither Friends nor Relations had regarded their summons, they resolved to come the next morning and cut the Crop down themselves. Now, said the Partridge, it is time to move: for as they depend solely on themselves for accomplishing their own business, it will undoubtedly be performed: and she accordingly removed her Young to a place of Safety.

**THE MORAL**

Of this Story is evident; and perhaps more applicable to Indian, than to any other Country.

**THE END.**

**MILITARY SYLLABUS AS PER BENGAL GENERAL ORDERS OF 27<sup>TH</sup> MAY 1823**

- 1<sup>st</sup> A well grounded knowledge of the general principles of Grammar
- 2<sup>nd</sup> The ability to read and write with facility the modified Persian character of the Oordoo and the Deva Nagree of the Khurree Bolee.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> A colloquial knowledge of the Oordoo and Hindooe sufficient to enable him to explain with facility, and at the moment, any orders in those dialects or to transpose Reports, letters &c from them into English.

**The tests by which these qualifications are to be tried are**

- 1<sup>st</sup> By well selected Questions not of the niceties but of the general leading principles of Grammar.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> By *viva voce* conversation with the examiners.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> By written Translations into Hindoostanee into both characters of selected Orders or Rules and Regulations.
- 4<sup>th</sup> By reading and translating the Bagh-o-Bahar in Hindoostanee, the Prem Sagur in Khurree Bolee and the Goolistan or Unwar-i-Soheily in Persian.

It will be the duty of Committees of Examination to ascertain the attainments of Candidates by the foregoing rules; and their Reports are to specify the proficiency of the party examined, under each of those heads.<sup>1</sup>

**RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION OF THE JUNIOR CIVIL SERVANTS  
AS SET OUT IN BOMBAY PUBLIC EDUCATION CONSULTATIONS OF AUGUST 1826**

Degree of Merit	Language	Points for Examination	Remarks
Indispensable Qualification For official Employment	Hindoostanee	1 <sup>st</sup> A translation <i>viva voce</i> without premeditation from a prose author and particularly from letters and petitions	The characters required to be at this examination are the printed Naskh
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Written translation with Premeditation but without any Kind of assistance, from English of a tale in similar kind of narrator style and of a letter or petition or a section of a Government regulation.	and the written Talik (Taluk?) and the books to be read are the Ukhlaqi Hindee Bagh o bahar, ?? Afroz Tota kahani
		3 <sup>rd</sup> translation <i>viva voce</i> from English of a dialogue or of questions and answers prepared by the examiners.	
		4. Conversation	

<sup>1</sup> Extract Bengal General Orders from the Commander in Chief, 27 May 1823, Board's Collections 1139. Also reproduced in Nassau Lees Examinations at the College of Fort William, 1860, XVIIIa.

## 1856 RULES FOR EXAMINATION OF BENGAL CIVILIANS

X. Every Civil Servant must qualify himself for the Public Service by knowledge of two languages according to the prescribed test. Those allotted to the Lower Provinces must qualify in Bengalee and Oordoo. Those allotted to the North-West Provinces and the Punjab must qualify in Persian and Hindee.

XII. Every Civil Servant shall be examined, as soon after his arrival as possible, in any language of languages of India which he may have studied, and a report of this initiatory examination shall be made to Government.

XIII. There shall be a general monthly examination at the commencement of every calendar month at which all unpassed Civil Servants resident in or near Calcutta are required to attend, and the result of every such examination shall be reported to Government.

### Qualification

1. Construing with readiness and accuracy from the under-mentioned books:-
 

<i>Oordoo.</i>	Bagh-o-bahar and Ikhwan-us-Safa
<i>Hindee.</i>	Prem Sagur
2. Translating in to English with accuracy a passage, in an easy narrative style, not taken from the test books.
3. Translating intelligibly and with accuracy of Grammar, into the language in which the examination is held, an English paper of an easy narrative style.
4. Translating in like manner a paper of English sentences.

### High Proficiency

1. Construing with readiness and accuracy from the under-mentioned books:-
 

<i>Hindoostanee</i>	1. Bagh-o-bahar
<i>or Oordoo.</i>	2. Ikhwan-us-Safa
	3. Gooli Bakawullee
	4. Baital Pachisi
<i>Hindee.</i>	1. Rajniti
	2. Prem Sagur
	3. Bagh-o-bahar
2. Translating from and into English, as prescribed for the test of qualification, but from papers of a more difficult nature and with greater accuracy of idiom and neatness of expression.

### Degree of Honour

1. Construing with readiness and accuracy from the under-mentioned books:-
 

<i>Hindoostanee or</i>	Bagh-o-Bahar
<i>Oordoo</i>	Ikhwan-us-Safa
	Khirad Afroz
	Kaliyati Souda
	Prem Sagur
<i>Hindee</i>	Prem Sagur
	Sabha Bilas
	Ramayan, by Tulsi Das
	Bagh-o-Bahar
2. Translating into English with accuracy two passages, one in prose and the other in poetry, selected from difficult work, not being a test-book.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Fort William Home Department, *Rules for the Examination and Control of Newly Appointed Members of the Bengal Civil Service* signed by Cecil Beadon, Secretary to the Government of India, 25<sup>th</sup> July 1856. IOR/V/27/211/18.

## 1859 AMENDMENTS

### High Proficiency

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <i>Hindoostanee or Oordoo.</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ikhwan-us-Safa (<i>Trans from Arabic - beasts versus man</i>)</li> <li>2. Nasr-i-Be-Nazir (<i>prose version of Mir Hassan's Masnavi Sihr ul Bayan</i>)</li> <li>3. Araish-i-Mahfil (<i>Sher Ali Afsos - history of Hindu kings</i>)</li> </ol> |
| <i>Hindee.</i>                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rajneeti (<i>Braj - translation from Sanskrit Hitopadesha</i>)</li> <li>2. Prem Sagur (<i>khari boli - from Braj</i>)</li> <li>3. Vidyankur</li> </ol>   |

### Degree of honour

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Hindoostanee or Oordoo</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nasr-i-Be-Nazir (<i>as above</i>)</li> <li>2. Fisanah-i-Ajaib (<i>Rajab Ali Beg Sarur - dastan type story</i>)</li> <li>3. Dewani Atash (<i>1<sup>st</sup> Half</i>) (<i>poetry</i>)</li> <li>4. Koliyati Souda - Extracts from (College Edition) (<i>poetry</i>)</li> </ol> |
| <i>Hindee</i>                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rukmini parinaya</li> <li>2. Sabha Bilas (<i>compilation of Braj poetry</i>)</li> <li>3. Ramayan, by Tulsi Das (<i>Awadhi</i>)</li> <li>4. Ram Geetaboli</li> </ol>  |

## LOWER AND HIGHER STANDARD AS IN DRAFT GENERAL ORDER 737 OCTOBER 1863

I. There will be two standards of qualification in the Hindustani language, the first to be in the place of the examination commonly called the Colloquial Examination and of the Examinations for the command of troops and companies, and for a Medical Charge; and the second to be in the place of the examination now called the P. H. Staff, Adjutant's Interpreters', and all similar examinations in the three Presidencies.

### FIRST STANDARD

II. The OBJECT of the first Standard is to ensure that Officers passing it shall have acquired such a knowledge of the Hindustani language as shall enable them efficiently to discharge their Military or professional duties when serving with Native troops.

III. To this end candidates will be tested as to their ability to read and translate passages from easy Hindustani books written in the Persian and Deva Nagri characters; and to speak and interpret on common or professional subjects, so as to understand and to be understood by, any ordinary uneducated Native of India.

### TESTS

IV. **First.** – Reading fairly, and construing with accuracy, not less than half of one octavo page of the undermentioned works:-

1. "Hindustani Selections" in the Persian character
2. "Hindustani Selections" in the Deva Nagri character

**Second.** – Conversing with the Examiners, or with Natives of India, on subjects likely to occur in the performance of Regimental or professional duty, in the transaction of ordinary business, or in the course of every-day life.

*If this test be applied through the medium of a native of India, he should speak the plain Hindustani of the Presidency of Province in which the examination is held, free from peculiarities of idiom and dialect and not a patois, - and though, as regards the performance of professional duties, it must, to a certain extent, be technical in nature, if, in other respects the candidate prove his ability to comprehend readily all that is said to him, and to make himself fairly intelligible, more should not be required.*

### SECOND STANDARD

V. The OBJECT of the second Standard is to insure that Officers passing it shall have acquired such a knowledge of the Hindustani language as shall qualify them so far as that language is concerned, for general employment of the Staff, and for admission to the Staff Corps.

VI. To this end candidates will be tested as to their ability, - 1st to read and construe passage in book of ordinary difficulty in Urdu and Hindi; 2nd, to make accurate and idiomatic written translations from English into Hindustani in both the Persian and Deva Nagri characters; 3rd, to read and translate petitions, native letters, &c., in Urdu and Hindi; 4th, to converse with educated or uneducated Natives of India.

### TESTS

**First.** - Reading fluently, and construing with readiness and accuracy, not less than an ordinary octavo pages of the undermentioned works:-

1. The Bagh-o-Bahar.
2. Selections from the prose of the Prem Sagur.

**Second.** – Translating accurately, and with correctness of idiom and grammar, not less than half an ordinary octavo page of plain English into language similar to that of the Bagh-o-Bahar, in the Persian character and an equal amount, in the Deva Nagri character, into language similar to that of the Prem Sagur.

**Third.** - Reading fairly, and translating readily and correctly, Hindustani Manuscripts, written in both the Persian and Deva Nagri characters.

*These MSS, may be selected from the proceedings of a case in Court, from reports and petitions addressed to Civil or Military authorities, from letters passing between natives of India in the ordinary course of business, or from private correspondence. They should not be written with the clearness of a printed book, nor yet in a very cramped or crabbed hand: but in such a manner, as fairly and honestly to represent the written characters as practically employed in the Presidency or Province in which the examination is held.*

**Fourth.** – Conversing with the Examiners or with Natives of India with fluency, and with such correctness of Pronunciation, grammar and idiom as to be at once intelligible.

VII. Every candidate passing an examination by the first Standard in Hindustani, shall receive an allowance of Rs 180; and on passing by the second Standard an allowance of Rs 180 additional; or in the case of an Officer passing, at once, by the second Standard Rs. 360.

## LOWER STANDARD 1875

- a) Reading fairly, and construing with accuracy, *not less than half an octavo page* of the under-mentioned works.
1. Bagh o Bahar – the *second durvesh including the story of King Azad Bakt*
  2. Bytal Pacheesee – *the first ten stories*
  3. Conversing with the examiners, or with natives of India, on subjects likely to occur in the performance of regimental or professional duty, in the transaction of ordinary business, or in the course of every-day life. If this test is applied through the medium of a native of India, he should speak plain Hindustani free from peculiarities of idiom and dialect, and not a patois; and if the candidate proves his ability to comprehend readily all that is said to him, and to make himself fairly intelligible, more should not be required.

## HIGHER STANDARD 1875

- (a) Reading fluently, and construing with readiness and accuracy, *not less than an ordinary octavo page* of the under mentioned works:-
1. The *Bagh-o-Bahar*
  2. Selections from the prose of the Prem Sagur, consisting of the first half of that book, that is, to the conclusion of the 54<sup>th</sup> chapter, page 22, *exclusive of the verses.*
- (b) Translating accurately, and with correctness of idiom and grammar, *not less than half an ordinary octavo page* of plain English, into language similar to that of the Bagh-o-Bahar in the Persian character, and an equal amount in the Hindi character, into language similar to that of the Prem Sagur.
- (c) Reading fairly, and translating readily and correctly Hindustani manuscripts, written in both the Persian and Hindi characters. These manuscripts may be selected from the proceedings of a case in court, from reports or petitions addressed to civil or military authorities, from letters passing between natives of India in the ordinary course of business, or from private correspondence. They should not be written with the clearness of a printed book, nor yet in a very cramped or crabbed hand; but in such a manner as fairly and honestly to represent the written characters as practically employed in the presidency or province in which the examination is held.
- (d) Conversing with the examiners or with native of India with fluency, or with such correctness of pronunciation, grammar and idiom, as to be at once intelligible.<sup>3</sup>

### EXAMPLE OF REPORT FORM FOR LOWER STANDARD COLLOQUIAL EXAMINATION IN 1875 MILITARY BENGAL

*Proceedings of the committee of examiners on the examination for the lower standard of \_\_\_\_\_ held this day as laid down in paragraphs 2481-2485 of the Bengal Army Regulations.*

*Dated at \_\_\_\_\_ 187*

	Remarks
1. <i>Bagh o Bahar</i>	1.
2. <i>Bytal Pacheesee</i>	2.
3. <i>Colloquial</i>	3.

*We, the undersigned, to hereby declare that the above is a fair and impartial report on the examination of the candidate, which was held by us on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 18\_\_\_\_, between the hours of \_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_; and, in conclusion, we are of opinion that the acquirements of \_\_\_\_\_ (do or do not) come up to the prescribed standard.*

*(Signature of President, members, and medical officer attending.)*

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<sup>3</sup> Jarrett, H. S. *A Manual of Reference to the Examinations in Oriental Languages held throughout the Bengal Presidency*, Calcutta, Mushubool-Ujauyeb Press, 1875, 16-18.

## EXAMINATIONS IN FORCE IN 1894

(LAID DOWN IN 1888 BENGAL AND 1889 BOMBAY )

### BENGAL AND BOMBAY

#### LOWER STANDARD

1. Reading fluently from the Bagh-o-Bahar
2. Translating written English into written *Urdu*
3. Reading and translating a manuscript in *Urdu*
4. (i) Conversing with the examining officer  
(ii) Conversing with a native

#### HIGHER STANDARD

1. Reading fluently from the Prensagar
2. Translating accurately written English into written *Hindi*
3. Reading and translating a manuscript in *Hindi*
4. Viva voce translations of sentences into oriental language.

### MADRAS

#### LOWER STANDARD

A Reading fairly from the Bagh-o-bahar

B Conversing with a native on subjects likely to occur in the performance of regimental or professional duties

#### HIGHER STANDARD

A Reading fluently from the Bagh-o-Bahar

B Translating accurately written English into *Urdu*

C Reading and translating an *Urdu* manuscript

D Translating short sentences, English into *Urdu*

E Viva voce translations into *Urdu* of proceedings of a court-martial

F Conversing with a native.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Army Circulars Clause 129 1888, Clause 210 1889, Army Regulations Volume II paragraphs 2660-93, Board's Collections 164, 7305.



## EXAMINATION SYLLABUS IN FORCE IN 1899

### LOWER STANDARD

In this examination a piece of simple English is given for translation into Urdu. For this translation three hours are allowed. There is also a *viva voce* examination, which consists of the following subjects:-

- (a) Oral translation into English of a short passage (usually about eight or ten lines) from the text-book (pp1-148)
- (b) Reading and translating into English an easy manuscript in Urdu.
- (c) Conversation of a simple character, with special attention to the candidate's power to give clear and intelligible directions on matters connected with his duties and to elicit information for purposes of reconnaissance, etc.

This part of the examination usually occupies from twenty minutes to half-an-hour, according as the candidate is better or less well prepared.

The text-book at present in use is the Selections from the History of India, published in Calcutta and obtainable from the Librarian, Board of Examiner's (sic) Office 17, Elysium Row, Calcutta.

### HIGHER STANDARD

This examination consists also of two parts, one written, the other oral. The written examination occupies three hours, and includes a translation from English into Urdu, for which the first two hours are allowed, and a translation from the text-book (the whole of the Selections from the History of India) into English, for which the third hour is given.

The oral examination comprises - (a) Reading and translating into English an Urdu manuscript; (b) A colloquial test, which consists of translating *viva voce* a paper of sentences which are read out one by one to the candidate, who is then called upon to converse with an educated native upon some subject or subjects selected by the Examiner. In this test, special attention is paid to pronunciation, and it will not be out of place to warn candidates that it is in the colloquial part of this examination that the majority of candidates fail.

The oral examination of each candidate occupies from twenty to forty minutes, of which about half is given to colloquial. A thoroughly well-prepared candidate may expect to complete this portion of his examination in twenty minutes.

## **THE LOWER AND HIGHER STANDARD TESTS AS AT 1907-1910**

### **LOWER STANDARD TESTS**

PART I. Written translation from English into Hindustani

PART II. (a) Viva-voce translation from the text-book.  
(b) Reading and translating manuscript  
(c) Conversation

### **HIGHER STANDARD TESTS**

PART I. Written translation from English into Hindustani

PART II. (a) Viva-voce translation from the text-book.  
(b) Reading and translating manuscript  
(c) (i) Viva-voce translation of a paper of English sentences  
(ii) Conversation

## RULES FOR LS AND HS CIVIL AND MILITARY EXAMINATIONS AS FROM JULY 1911.

<b>LOWER STANDARD</b>		<b>HIGHER STANDARD</b>	
<b>TEST</b>	<b>MARKS MAX IN EACH SUBHEAD 100</b>		
	<b>MINIMUM TO PASS</b>		
a) Conversation	50	a) As for the LS Test but adapted to the HS	60
b) Viva voce translation into English of selected passages form the text-book	65	b)	80
c) Questions on selected parts of above, set and corrected by the Board of Examiners	65	c)	80
d) Written translation into English of a special unseen printed passage, corrected by the Examining Officer	35	d)	50
e) Written translation from English into Hindustani (part of this to be taken from the English translation of the text-book	50	e)	50

**TEXT BOOK**

A text-book edited and published by the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, containing selected extracts from Parts 1-4 of the Urdu Reader and a Hindustani adaptation of "Wazir-i-Lankeran"

**TEXT-BOOK**

A text-book edited and published by the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, containing "From Sepoy to Subadar" and specimens of modern colloquial Urdu eg Rasum-i-Hind, Qisas-i-Hind, Chand Pand, Mirat ul Arus, Fazana-i-Azad

NB A candidate who fails to obtain 25 marks in b) for LS will not be allowed to present himself for re-examination within four months.

Failure in one sub-head will entail re-examination in all sub-heads. The rewards for passing the examination will be as heretofore, and with reference to paragraph 636, Army Regulations, India, Volume I, will only be admissible on passing the whole examination for each standard.

Boards: The examiner for the tests in both standards must be an officer not below the rank of captain, who has passed at least the Proficiency test in Urdu and who will be selected by the Divisional or Independent Brigade Commander in communication with the Secretary. Board of Examiners, Calcutta.

The existing regulations will be amended in due course.

**SYLLABUS AND STANDARD OF QUALIFICATION OF THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION  
1922**

*Note: When a language possesses a special written character candidates must be prepared to write in that character*

**PART I ORAL**

	<b>Marks</b>
<b>1. English Translation</b> Viva voce translation of a paper of English sentences read out by the local examiner	60
<b>2. Vernacular Translation</b> Viva Voce translation of sentences read out or spoken by a native of the country	40
<b>3. Conversation</b> Conversing with reasonable fluency and accuracy with an Indian soldier (or local inhabitant) in cases where a soldier is not available) unacquainted with English, on general and military topics of a practical nature	100

**PART II WRITTEN**

<b>4. English Translation</b> Written translation from English (Time allowed 1 ½ hours)	60
<b>5. Vernacular Translation</b> Written translation from the language into English (Time allowed 1 ½ hours)	40
Total marks	300

Papers will be set by the Central Board (except conversation no 3)

**BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR STUDY IN THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS IN URDU**

**LITERATURE:**

1. Punjab Education Department Urdu Readers (8 parts) Obtainable from Rai Sahib M Gulab Singh & sons Lahore)
- (NB A selection from these books is contained in the Urdu Rozmarra, edited by Lieutenant-Colonel Phillott Rs 3-12. It has an annotated English translation Rs 4-12, a transliteration Rs 3 and glossary Rs 3-12)
2. Khwab-o-Khyal, Part 1 (from Sepoy to Subadar), edited by Lieutenant Colonel Phillott Rs 3-12 Annotated English translation Rs 4-12 and glossary Rs 3-12.
3. The Great War – Comrade in Arms (Urdu and English editions)

**GRAMMARS ETC**

1. Abdul Hakim's Modern Colloquial Hindustani (Rs 2-8-0)
2. Saihgal's Hindustani Grammar (Rs 5)
3. Military Glossary and Phrase Book, (published by Superintendent Government Printing, India Calcutta, 2as)
4. M A Khan Haidari's Munshi (Rs 3-12)
5. Forbes' Hindustani Manual (new edition Rs 3.8)
6. Hindustani manual by Lieutenant-Colonel Phillott Rs 4

**NEWSPAPERS**

1. Phul – A child's weekly magazine published by Maulvi Syed Mumtaz Ali Railway Road Lahore Subs Rs 4-9 pa
2. Fauji Akhbar (Urdu) A weekly magazine, published at Army Press Simla, Subs 3-4 pa.

## SYLLABUS FOR OF THE INTERPRETERS EXAMINATION 1922

### PART I ORAL

	Marks
<b>1. Conversation</b>	
(a) Translating viva voce with readiness a paper of English sentences read out by the local examiner	15
(b) Translating viva voce with readiness a paper of conversational sentences in the language read out or spoken by a native of the country	15
(c) Conversing with a native of the country with such fluency, correctness of grammar, idiom and pronunciation as to be at once intelligible. Subjects to be suggested by the local board and should deal with general, military, and political questions of a difficult but practical nature.	40
 <b>2. Reading Manuscript</b>	
Reading short MS reports, notes, telegrams, etc., and dictating answers thereto	20
 <b>3. Technical Terms</b>	
Knowledge of technical, military and local terms (including titles of local officials and terms of etiquette in dealing with them, terms used in travel, reconnaissance, transport duties, collection of supplies, court martial proceedings, etc.) to be tested by direct questions and by oral translation from a British or foreign training manual	20
 <b>4. Oral Translation</b>	
A passage in the foreign language of an ordinary everyday style will be placed in the hands of the candidate who will translate it aloud	20
 <b>5. Oral Composition</b>	
An English passage of an ordinary every-day style will be placed in the hands of the candidate who will translate it aloud into the foreign language	20

### PART II WRITTEN

<b>6. Translation</b>	
Translation into English, from the language of unseen Passages (Time allowed 1 ½ hours)	20
 <b>7. Composition</b>	
Translation, into the language, of unseen English Passages (Time allowed 1 ½ hours)	40
 <b>8. Manuscript</b>	
Translating into English, official and private correspondence (manuscript) Time allowed 1 hour.	20
 <b>9. Letter</b>	
Writing a private or official letter in the language, a précis being given. (Time allowed 1 hour)	20

Total marks 250

*The examination lasts for 2 days, candidates need to get 60% in Part I or the examination will not be proceeded with. 80% must be gained for 1<sup>st</sup> class and 60 % for 2<sup>nd</sup> class Interpretership. The Board has to have people who have done HP or one can just have Proficiency.*

## BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR STUDY IN THE INTERPRETERS EXAMINATIONS (1922)

### LITERATURE:

1. Jadid Kalam-i-Urdu Rs 2-8 English trans Rs 7 Glossary, obtainable from Rai Sahib M Gulab Singh & sons Lahore
2. Darbar-i-Akbari By Shams ul-Ulema Azad of Delhi (Muhammad Husain?)  
Rs 4 obtainable from Azad Book Depot English translation of first 78 pages Rs 4-12

### MANUSCRIPTS:

1. Mukhtabat-i-Faruqi
2. Insha-Urdu Shikasta obtained from Rai Sahib etc etc Lahore
- 3.

### GRAMMARS:

Phillott's Hindustani Stumbling Blocks Rs 5 – see also those for preliminary

### PERIODICALS:

1. Vakil – a bi-weekly paper published at Vazir – I Hind Amritsar
2. Sala-i-Am A monthly magazine Delhi
3. Shabab-i-Urdu monthly magazine Lahore

### DICTIONARIES:

Student's Practical Urdu English and English Urdu Dictionary Rs 6  
English-Hindustani Dictionary – By Lt Col Ranking Rs 7.8  
English Hindustani Vocabulary By Lt Col Phillott Rs 5

## SYLLABUS URDU QUALIFYING EXAMINATION 1924-7

### PART I COLLOQUIAL (100 MARKS)

#### **Object**

(1) To see that a candidate can Construct his sentences correctly, and in order that he may acquire the vocabulary necessary for fire direction and control and for giving tactical orders in the field. [See also notes (d) to (g) ]

(2) To make a candidate read the drill book of his arm in Roman Urdu and to enable him to instruct his men. [See also notes (d) to (g).]

(3) To test a candidate's ability to give clear orders to his subordinates in action. [See also notes (d) to (g)]

(4) To test a candidate's ability to Supervise the interior economy and discipline of his command.

(5) To help a candidate to acquire the necessary vocabulary and knowledge to understand the home life and difficulties of his men and be in sympathy with them. To encourage him to visit the recruiting districts of his men.

(6) To read and understand messages in the field. [See also notes (d) to (g)]

#### **Syllabus**

(1) To translate into Urdu short sentences designed to introduce rules of grammar construction and syntax. Sentences to be connected with the description of ground and objects of a landscape (20 marks). ( A manual for use throughout the Indian Army in these subjects is now under compilation).

(2) To explain in Urdu the detail of (a) an exercise connected with musketry, rifle exercises, or physical training and (b) of squadron troop, battery, company, platoon, or section drill (according to the candidate's arm of the service) (15 marks.)

(3) To give verbal orders in Urdu to a troop or platoon commander for a minor tactical operation. (15 marks)

(4) To give orders to and converse with an Indian officer on matters connected with the interior economy of his unit, including rations, cooking, forage, animal management, and stable duties, health, sanitation, pay, discipline, courts martial, clothing, equipment, barrack furniture and utensils. (20 marks)

(5) To converse with a sepoy on matters connected with his family, land, crops, methods of agriculture, and marketing, village life, the organization of the civil administration of his village, tehsil, and district and legal questions connected with land tenure and irrigation. (20 marks)

(6) To read aloud, in Roman script, manuscript and explain in English. A signal message in Roman Urdu of not less than 20 words, such as he might receive in the field from a troop or platoon commander (10 marks).

**PART II – WRITTEN (100 MARKS)**

To make a candidate read a Roman Urdu book thus acquiring a vocabulary and learning the construction of sentences.

*(Until the Field Service Regulations, Volume II, has been translated, the Passage will be taken from Infantry Training, Volume II.)*

To enable a candidate to see that Regimental orders are correctly Translated and promulgated.

To test a candidate's knowledge of the language for the purpose of writing messages and orders in the field.

(Marks will not be deducted for tactical errors.)

(1) To translate from Roman Urdu into English a passage from the Field Service Regulations, Volume II (20 marks)

(2) To translate extracts from English into Roman Urdu of regimental orders connected with courts martial, charges and sentences, summary punishments enrolment, discharge, transfer and pay. (15 marks)

(3) The candidate will be given a short tactical narrative in English in connection with which he will be required to write:-

(a) A signal message in Roman Urdu (15 marks)

(b) Orders for a battalion connected With a march, outposts, attack, defence or retirement. (30 marks)

(4) The candidate will be required to write an essay or to answer a letter in Roman Urdu on the subjects mentioned in Part I, item (5) 20 marks).



**THE SYLLABUS FOR THE RE-INTRODUCED LOWER AND HIGHER STANDARD  
EXAMINATIONS FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 1932**

**LOWER STANDARD**

<b>Part 1 - Oral</b>	<b>Marks</b>
(a) Conversation with an Indian Officer	100
(b) <u>Viva Voce</u> translation of English sentences	60
(c) <u>Viva Voce</u> translation of Urdu sentences	40
	<b>200</b>

**Part II - Written.** (In Urdu or Nagri Script ) Time allowed - Three hours

Text book.- “Our Sowars and Sepoy” in Urdu, Hindi and English (under preparation by the Board of Examiners).

	<b>Marks</b>
(a) Written translation of passages from English into Urdu, half of which will be taken from the English Translation of the text-book.	60
(b) Written translation of passages from Urdu into English, half of which will be taken from the text-book.	40
	<b>100</b>

*In order to pass a candidate must obtain 60% of the total marks in each of Parts I and II. The examination of candidates who fail to pass in Part I will not be proceeded with. A candidate who fails in Part II only will not be re-examined in Part I.*

**HIGHER STANDARD**

<b>Part 1 - Oral.</b>	
(a) Conversation with an India Officer.	100
(b) Viva Voce translation of English sentences	60
(c) Viva Voce translation of Urdu sentences	60
(d) Reading and translating easy manuscript in Urdu (!)or Nagri Script.	30
	<b>250</b>

**Part II - Written** (In Urdu or Nagri Script.) Time allowed - Three hours

**Text-book. “Khwab-o-Khayal”**

(a) Written translation of passage from English into Urdu, half of which will be taken from the English translation of the text-book.	60
(b) Written translation of passages from Urdu into English, half of which will be taken from text-book.	40
	<b>100</b>

*In order to pass a candidate must obtain 60% of the total marks in each of parts I and II. The examination of candidates who fails to pass in Part I will not be proceeded with. A candidate who fails in Part II only will not be re-examined in Part I.*

Note:- 1. All papers for the above examinations including subjects for conversation will be set and supplied by the Secretary, Board of Examiners, A.H.Q.

2. The candidates will be allowed to choose whether he will take these examinations in the Urdu or Nagri script. This should be stated in his application to sit for the examination.

5. Besides the text-books, the following grammars etc. are recommended:-

- 1.- Saihgal’s Hindustani Grammar
- 2.- Haidari’s “The Munshi”.
- 3.- Wahshat’s Graduated Exercises.

## INDIA ARMY ORDERS – JANUARY 1939

### Lower and Higher Standard Examinations in Urdu.-

From the examination to be held in April 1939, the reading and translation of an easy manuscript (subject 3, Part I - Oral of the Higher Standard Urdu) will be abolished. The total marks for this part will be 220

2. (a) From the quarterly examinations to be held in October 1939, the following revised syllabus for the Lower and Higher Standards Urdu will be brought into force:-

#### **Part 1 Written**

(IN THE URDU OR NAGARI SCRIPT)

(Time allowed - three hours)

	MARKS
(1) Written translation of passages from English into Urdu, half of which will be taken from the English translation of the Text-books.	60
(2) Written translation of passages from Urdu into English, half of which will be taken from the Text-books	40
	---
	100

*Standard of qualification in Part 1 - 50 per cent of the total marks*

#### *Part II - Oral*

(1) Viva voce translation of English sentences	60
(2) Viva voce translation of Urdu sentences	40
(3) Conversation with a VCO Indian Warrant Officer or NCO.	100
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	200

*Standard of qualification in Part II - 70 per cent of the total marks*

(b) Candidates may either offer themselves for the whole examination or they may first appear only for the Part I Written examination

**ANNEXURE TO ARMY INSTRUCTION INDIA NO 1 OF JANUARY 1940**  
**SYLLABUS FOR THE ELEMENTARY URDU EXAMINATION**

(In Roman Script)

**Syllabus**

**Part I – Written**

	Marks
(a) (i) Translation into Urdu of a passage from the English translation of the text-book.	60
(ii) Translation into Urdu of simple unseen English passage	(60 for both parts)
(b) (i) Translation into English of a passage selected from the text-book.	
(ii) Translation into English of ten Urdu sentences illustrating points of grammar.	40 for both parts of (b)
Total	----- 100
Pass marks	50

**Part II – Oral**

(i) Oral translation of Urdu sentences read out by the examiner	30
(ii) Oral translation of English sentences read out by the examiner	50
(iii) Reading out and translating orally from the test-book	20
(iv) Conversation in simple Urdu with an Indian Officer, W.O. or N.C.O on general subjects	100
Total	--- 200
Pass Marks	140

**Text-books.**

“Shah Safar Sair-i-Dunya” by K. B Risaldar Shahzad Mir Khan OBI, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition:

And Translation of the above entitled “A Right Royal World Tour” by Colonel C.A. Boyle, CIE, DSO.

Candidates may offer either offer themselves for the whole examination, or they may first appear only for Part I – Written.

Candidates who pass in the Part 1 – Written but fail in the Part II – Oral, will not be required to sit for the Part 1 Written again.

Candidates who fail in the Part 1 – Written will be considered as having failed in the whole examination, and will be required to qualify in both parts before being passed.

Tuition Grant: Rs 100

LIEUTENANT BAYLISS' HIGHER STANDARD CERTIFICATE 1883

Fort William,  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> 1883.

Proceedings of the Board of Examiners on the Examination of *Lieutenant*  
*C. S. Bayliss, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. R. A. Regt.* in *Hindustani* held this day  
by the Higher Standard, agreeably to Section XXIV, Bengal Army Regulations.

REPORT.

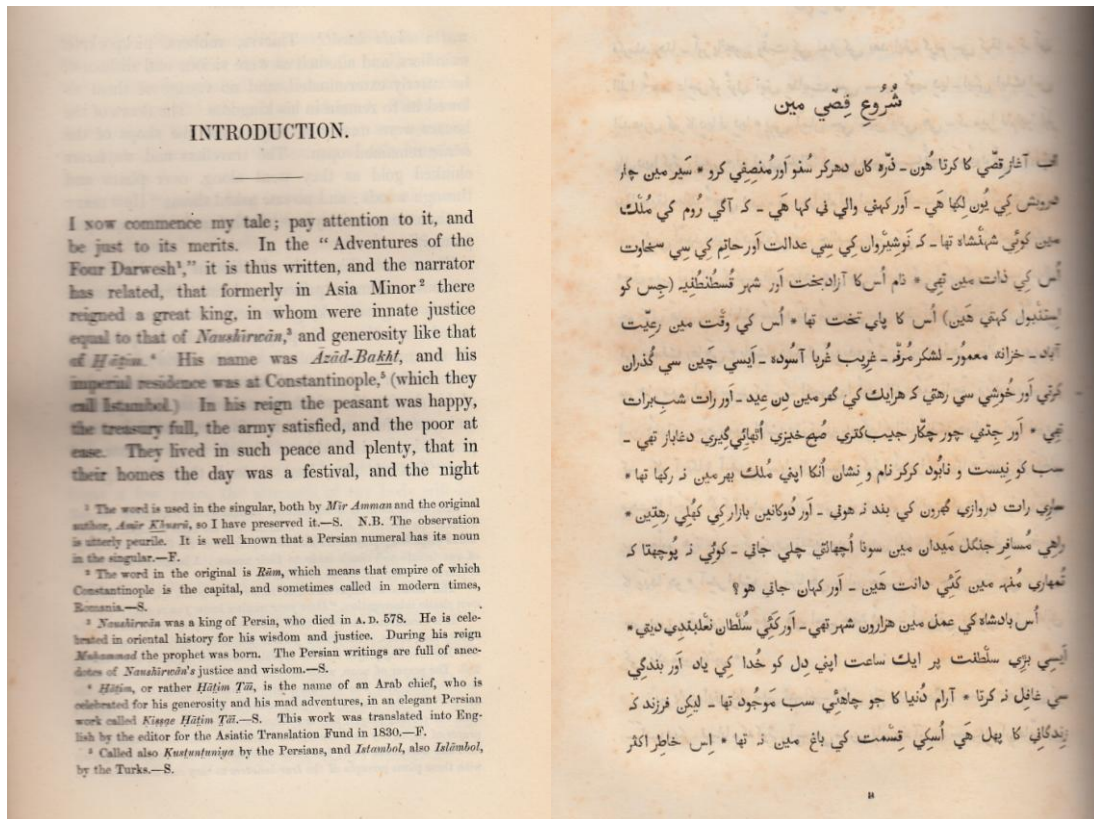
- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1. Oral— <i>Bāgh-o-Bahār</i> .  | 1. | <i>Pass</i>                                  |
| 2. Oral—Selections from the prose of the <i>Prem Ságar</i> .  | 2. | <i>Pass</i>                                  |
| 3. Manuscript in Persian character.   | 3. | <i>Pass</i>                                  |
| 4. Manuscript in Deva Nágari character.   | 4. | <i>Pass</i>                                  |
| 5. Written—English into Hindustani in the Persian character, and in language similar to that of the <i>Bāgh-o-Bahār</i> . | 5. | <i>Pass</i>                                  |
| 6. Written—English into Hindi in the Deva Nágari character, and in language similar to that of the <i>Prem Ságar</i> .    | 6. | <i>Pass</i>                                  |
| 7. Colloquial.  | 7. | <i>Not able to understand</i><br><i>one.</i> |

In conclusion, the Board are of opinion that the acquirements of *Lieutenant*  
*C. S. Bayliss* do come up to the prescribed standard.

By order of the Board of Examiners,

(Sd.) *A. C. Zoller*, Lieut.-Colonel,  
*Off* Secretary to the Board of Examiners.

## APPENDIX THREE THE LITERARY SET TEXTS BAGH-O-BAHAR



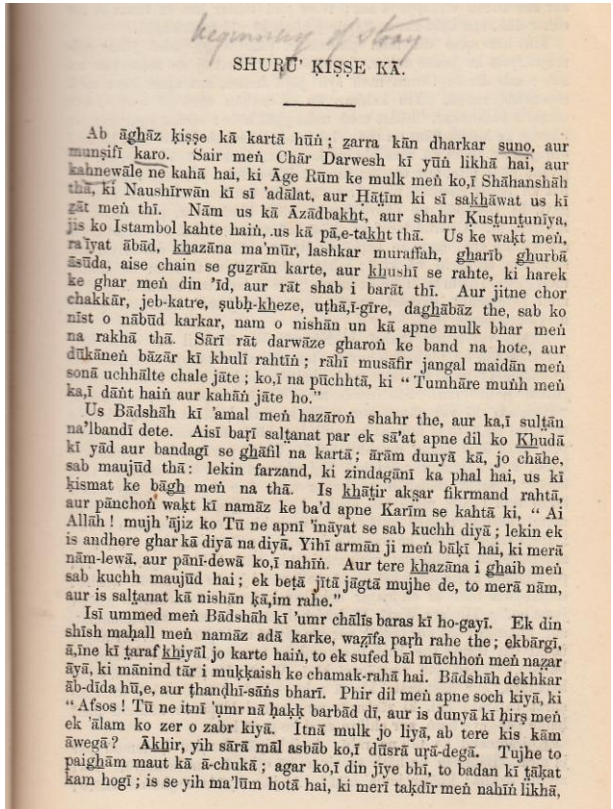
INTRODUCTION.

I now commence my tale; pay attention to it, and be just to its merits. In the "Adventures of the Four Darwesh",<sup>1</sup> it is thus written, and the narrator has related, that formerly in Asia Minor<sup>2</sup> there reigned a great king, in whom were innate justice equal to that of *Naushirvân*,<sup>3</sup> and generosity like that of *Hâkim*.<sup>4</sup> His name was *Âzâd-Bakht*, and his imperial residence was at Constantinople,<sup>5</sup> (which they call *Istambol*). In his reign the peasant was happy, the treasury full, the army satisfied, and the poor at ease. They lived in such peace and plenty, that in their homes the day was a festival, and the night

<sup>1</sup> The word is used in the singular, both by *Mir Anman* and the original author, *Amir Khusrô*, so I have preserved it.—S. N.B. The observation is utterly peculiar. It is well known that a Persian numeral has its noun in the singular.—F.  
<sup>2</sup> The word in the original is *Rûm*, which means that empire of which Constantinople is the capital, and sometimes called in modern times, *Romania*.—S.  
<sup>3</sup> *Naushirvân* was a king of Persia, who died in A.D. 578. He is celebrated for his generosity and his mad adventures, in an elegant Persian work called *Kisssa Hâkim Tâi*.—S. This work was translated into English by the editor for the Asiatic Translation Fund in 1830.—F.  
<sup>4</sup> *Hâkim*, or rather *Hâkim Tâi*, is the name of an Arab chief, who is celebrated for his generosity and his mad adventures, in an elegant Persian work called *Kisssa Hâkim Tâi*.—S. This work was translated into English by the editor for the Asiatic Translation Fund in 1830.—F.  
<sup>5</sup> Called also *Konstantinûya* by the Persians, and *Istambol*, also *Istambul*, by the Turks.—S.

شروع قصی میں

شب آثارِ قصی کا کرتا ہوں۔ قرہ کان دھکر سُنو اور مُنصِفی کر۔ سیر میں چار فریش کی یوں لکھا ہے۔ اور کہنی والی بی کہا ہے۔ کہ آگے روم کی مُلک میں کوئی شہنشاہ تھا۔ کہ توشیروان کی سی عدالت اور حاتم کی سی سخاوت اُس کی ذات میں تھی \* نام اُس کا آزادبخت اور شہر قسطنطنیہ (جس کو استنبول کہتے ہیں) اُس کا پای تخت تھا \* اُس کی وقت میں رعیت آباد۔ خزانہ معمور۔ لشکر مرؤ۔ غریب فریا آسودہ۔ آسی جین سی گذران کرتی اور خوشی سی رہتی کہ ہر ایک کی گھر میں دن عید۔ اور رات شبِ برات تھی \* اور چندی چور چکار جیب کتری۔ صُحُخیزی اُتھائی گبری دغاہار تھی۔ سب کو نیست و نابود کر کر نام و نشان اُنکا اپنی مُلک بھر میں نہ رکھا تھا \* ساری رات دروازی بھرن کی بند نہ ہوتی۔ اور دُکانیں بازار کی کھلی رہتیں \* راہی مسافر جنگل میدان میں سونا اُچھالتی چلی جاتی۔ کوئی نہ پوچھتا کہ تمہاری مہم میں کئی دانت ہیں۔ اور کہاں جاتی ہو؟ اُس بادشاہ کی عمل میں ہزاروں شہر تھی۔ اور کئی سُلطان نعلبندی دیتی \* آسی بڑی سُلطنت پر ایک سامت اپنی دل کو خُدا کی یاد اور بندگی سی غافل نہ کرتا \* آرام دُنیا کا جو چاہتی سب موجود تھا۔ لیکن فرزند کہ بندگانی کا بھل ہی اُسکی قسمت کی باغ میں نہ تھا \* اِس خاطر اکثر



beginning of story  
SHURU' KISSA KA.

Ab aghaz kisse ka kartā hūn; zarra kām dharkar suno, aur munshifi karo. Sair meñ Chār Darwesh ki yūn likhā hai, aur kahnewāle nē kahā hai, ki Āge Rūm ke mulk meñ ko,ī Shāhanshāh thā, ki Naushirwān ki sī 'adālat, aur Hākim ki sī sakhawāt us ki zāt meñ thī. Nām us kā Azādbakht, aur shahr Kustantuniya, jis ko Istambol kahte haiñ, us kā pā, e-takht thā. Us ke waqt meñ, ra'iyat ābād, khazāna ma'mūr, lashkar murāffah, gharib ghurbā āsūda, aise chāin se guzrān karte, aur khushī se rahte, ki harek ke ghar meñ din 'id, aur rāt shab i barāt thī. Aur jitne chor chakkār, jeb-katre, shub-kheze, uṭhā, i-gire, daghbāz the, sab ko nist o nābūd karkar, nam o nishān un kā apne mulk bhar meñ na rakhā thā. Sāri rāt darwāze gharoñ ke band na hote, aur dūkāneñ bāzār ki khulī rahtīñ; rāhi musāfir jangal maidān meñ sonā uchhālte chale jāte; ko,ī na pūchhtā, ki "Tumhāre muñh meñ ka,ī dānt haiñ aur kahāñ jāte ho."

Us Bādshāh ki 'amal meñ hazāroñ shahr the, aur ka,ī sultān nā'bandi dete. Aisī barī salṭanat par ek sāt apne dil ko Khudā ki yād aur bandagi se ghāfil na kartā; āram duniyā kā, jo chāhe, sab maujūd thā; lekin farzand, ki zindagāni ka phal hai, us ki kismat ke bāgh meñ na thā. Is khāṭir akṣar fikrmand rahtā, aur pānchoñ waqt ki namāz ke ba'd apne Karim se kahtā ki, "Ai Allāh! mujh 'ajiz ko Tū ne apnī 'inayat se sab kuchh diyā; lekin ek is andhere ghar kā diyā na diyā. Yihī armāñ jī meñ bāki hai, ki merā nām-lewā, aur pāni-dewā ko,ī nahīñ. Aur tere khazāna i ghaib meñ sab kuchh maujūd hai; ek betā jītā jāgtā mujhe de, to merā nām, aur is salṭanat kā nishān kā, im rahe."

Isī ummed meñ Bādshāh ki 'umr chālīs baras ki ho-gayī. Ek dīn shīsh maḥall meñ namāz adā karke, waḥfā parh rahe the; ekbārgi, ā, ine ki faraf khīyāl jo karte haiñ, to ek sufed bāl mūchhoñ meñ nazar āyā, ki mānind tār i muḥkaish ke chamak-rahā hai. Bādshāh dekhkar āb-dida hū, e, aur ṭhandhī-sāñs bhari. Phir dil meñ apne soch kiyā, ki "Afsos! Tū ne itnī 'umr nā ḥakīq barbād di, aur is duniyā ki hīrs meñ ek ālam ko zer o zabr kiyā. Itnā mulk jo liyā, ab tere kis kām āwēgā? Akhīr, yih sārā māl asbāb ko,ī dūsrā urā-degā. Tujhe to paighām maūt kā ā-chukā; agar ko,ī dīn jāye bhī, to badan ki tākat kām hogī; is se yih ma'lūm hotā hai, ki merī takdīr meñ nahīñ likhā,

BAITAL PACHISI  
LOWER STANDARD TEXTBOOK (FOR NAGARI PART OF EXAMINATION)  
FROM 1863.

BAITÁL PACHÍSÍ.

शुरुआत कहानी का विह है.  
है یہ کہانی کا شروع  
Beginning of-the-story this is.

कि धारानगर नाम एक शहर, वहाँ का राजा  
राजा का वहाँ शहर एक नाम धारानगर  
That Dhārānagar by-name a city (was), of-that-place king  
गन्धर्वसेन उसकी चार राखियाँ थीं, उनसे छः बेटे  
बेटे छः से उन थीं रानियाँ चार की उस गन्धर्वसेन  
Gandharb-sen, of-him four queens there-were, from-them six sons  
वे एक से एक पढ़ित और जोरावर था. कजाकार  
कजाकार था जोरावर और पढ़ित एक से एक थे  
were one-than-one<sup>1</sup> learned and powerful was. By chance  
बचद चंद रोज के वह राजा मर गया, और उसकी जागह  
जागह की उस और मर गया राजा वह के रोज चंद बाद  
after-some-days, that king died, and of-him in-place  
बड़ा बेटा शंक नाम राजा हुआ. फिर कितने दिनों के  
के दिनों कितने पुर हुआ राजा नाम शंक बड़ा  
(his)-eldest son Shank by-name king became. Again some of-days<sup>2</sup>  
पीछे उसका छोटा भाई विक्रम, बड़े भाई की मारकर  
मारकर को भाई बड़े विक्रम भाई छोटा का उस पीछे  
after of him younger brother Bikram, elder brother having-killed  
आप राजा हुआ, और बखूबी राज करने लगा. दिन  
दिन लगा करने राज बखूबी और हुआ राजा आप  
self king became, and with-goodness government to-make began. Day  
बदिन उसका राज ऐसा बढ़ा कि तमाम जंबूद्वीप का  
का जंबूद्वीप तमाम के बढ़ा ऐसा राज का उस बदिन  
by-day of-him dominion so increased that (of)-the-whole of-India<sup>3</sup>

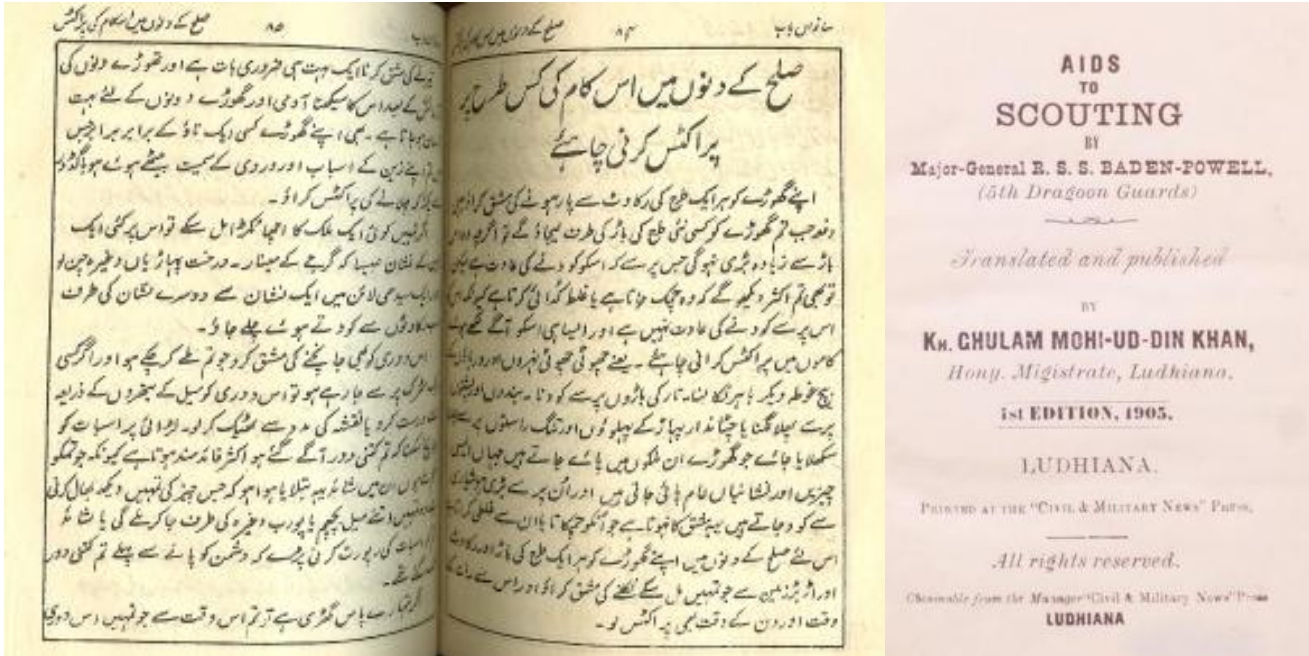
There was a city named Dhārānagar, the king of which was Gandharb-sen, who had four queens, and by them six sons, each of whom was more learned and powerful than the other. It happened that, after some days, this king died, and his eldest son, who was named Shank, became king in his stead. Again, after some days, Bikram, his younger brother, having killed his elder brother (Shank), himself became king, and began to govern well. Day by day his

<sup>1</sup> 'Each than the other.' <sup>2</sup> *Kitne dinon-ke piche*, 'After some days.' *Kitnd*, lit. 'how much.'

<sup>3</sup> *Jambū-dvīp*. One of the seven regions of the world (India).



MUNSHI MOHI-UD-DIN'S  
Translation of Aids to Scouting  
Lower Standard Textbook from 1905



**HOW TO PRACTISE IN PEACE TIME.**

Practise your horse at getting over every kind of obstacle. The first time you take a horse at some strange kind of fence, although it is no bigger than what he is accustomed to, you will often find that he shies off or blunders over it through not being accustomed to it. And it is the same in the matter of getting him to plunge into and out of small canals and rivers, to jump wire fences, and to scrambling over dykes and embankments, or making his way over rocky mountain sides and passes; horses reared in countries where such features are common, get over them cleverly enough. It is want of practice that makes them shy off or blunder. Therefore, in peace time, practise your horse over every kind of fence, obstacle, and difficult ground that you can find.

And practise him by night as well as by day.

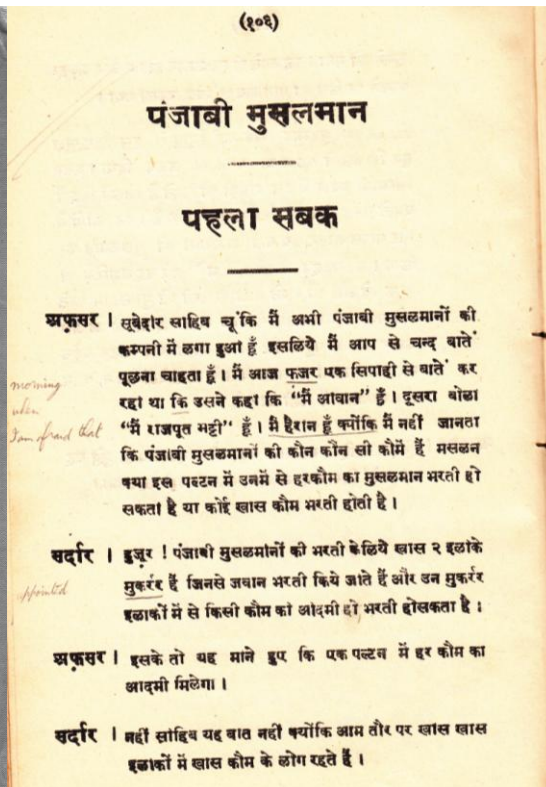
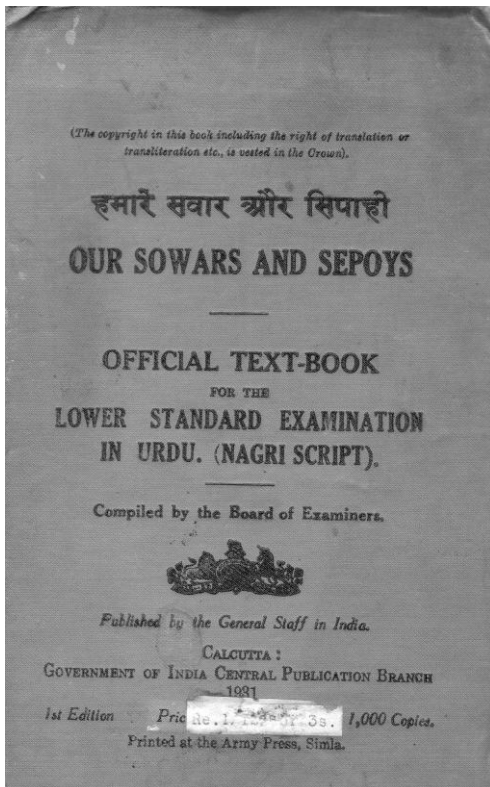
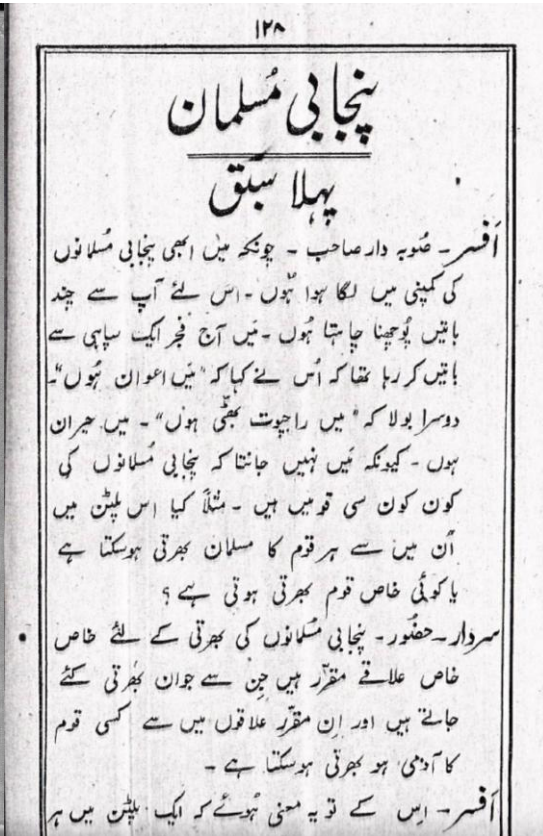
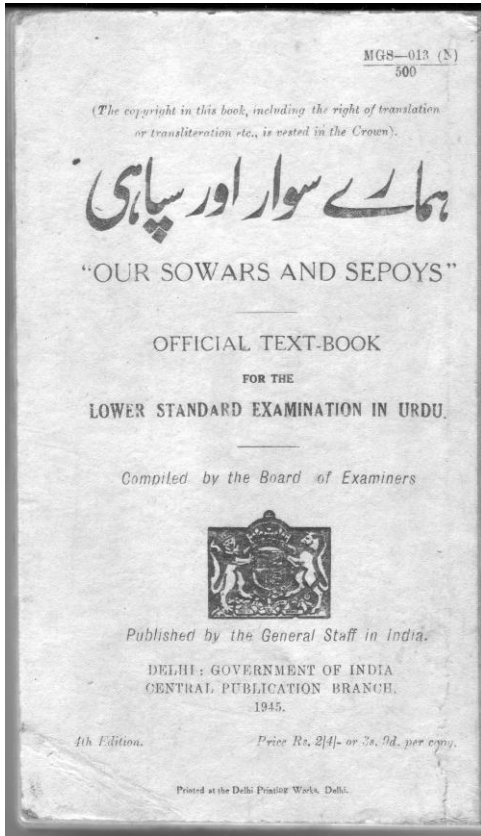
Swimming is a most important thing to practise, and after a few days' trial it comes quite easy to both man and horse. Practise also your horse at towing alongside a boat in which you sit with your saddlery and kit.

If you can get a good bit of country, select a few landmarks, such as steeples, trees, hills, etc., and ride a line straight from one to the other, taking all obstacles as they come.

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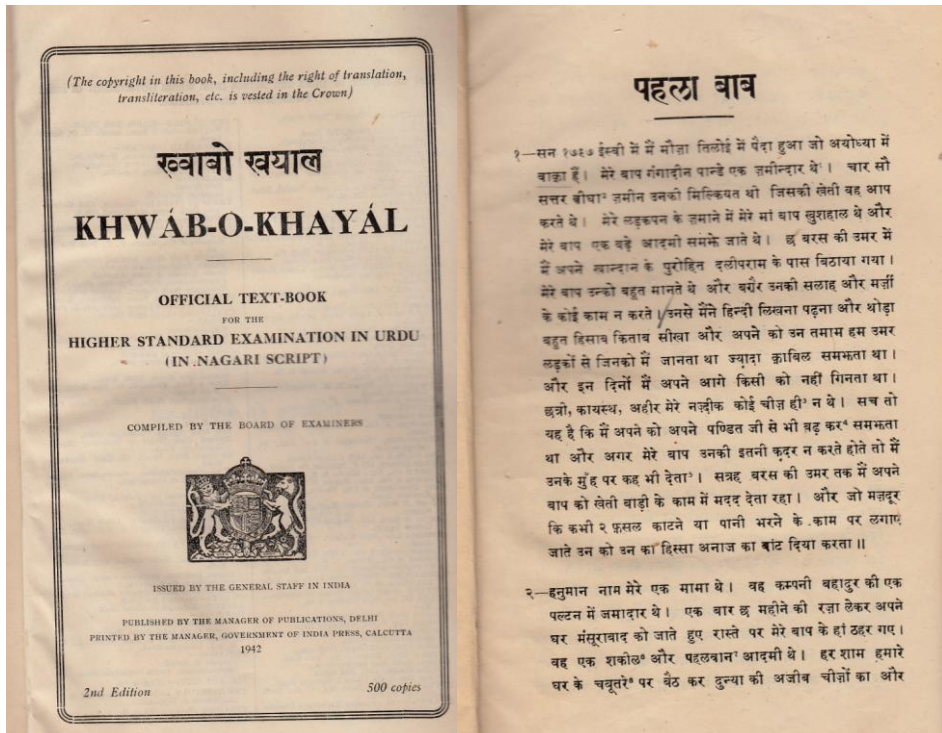
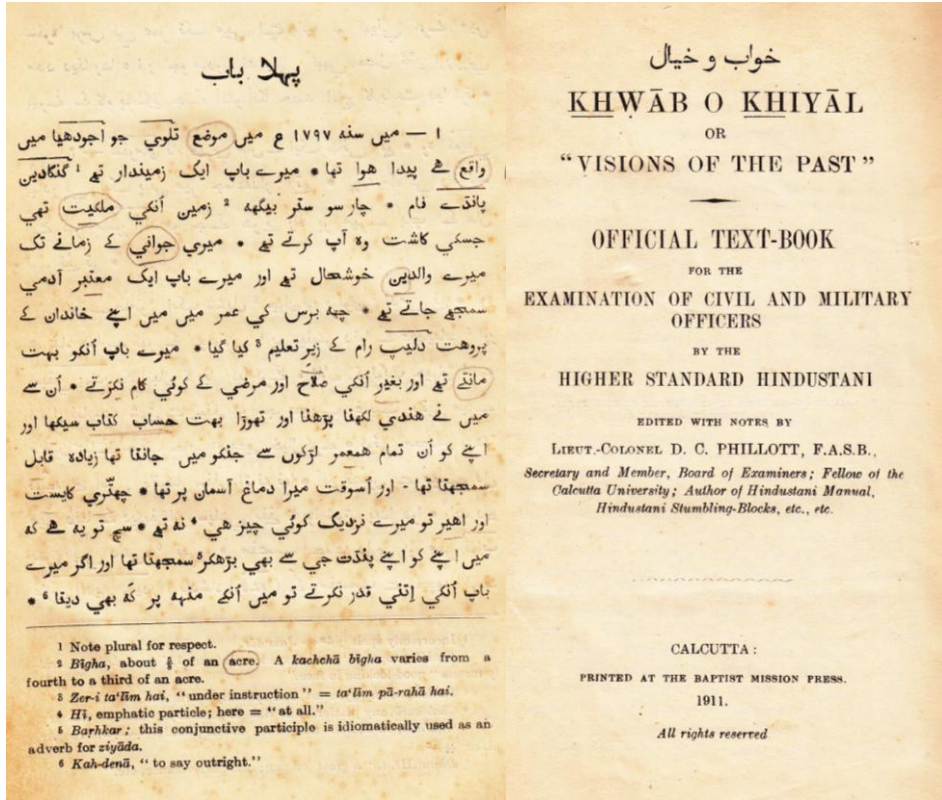
Page 30

OUR SOWARS AND SEPOYS  
LOWER STANDARD TEXT BOOK FROM 1932





## KHWAB O KHAYAL HIGHER STANDARD TEXT BOOK FROM 1911-1947



## APPENDIX 4

### Examples of Examination Papers

#### Tests In Place in Bengal in 1860

### Civil

#### OORDOO, No. 1 — GENERAL

القضاء اسی اثنا میں ایک دن میں شہر کے کوچہ و بازار کی  
سیر کر رہا تھا کہ ناگہ ایک جوان سے جو میزا ہم منکب تھا  
ملاقات ہوئی۔ اور حسب اتفاق اُنہوں اُسے باپ کے کئی جہاز  
لندن کے لنگر گاہ میں موجود تھے۔ میں اُسے دیکھنے سے باغ باغ  
ہوا اور آئے بھی بڑے تباہ سے ملاقات کی۔ جب میں نے اپنے  
سفر دریا کا شوق اُس سے بیان کیا تب اُس نے بڑی مہربانی سے فرمایا۔  
کہ لچھا میں اپنے باپ سے کہہ کر تمہیں جہاز پر سوار کروا دیتا ہوں۔  
اور جو کچھ اسباب ضروری کھانا پیٹا اُرزہنا بیچونا درکار ہوتے خرچ  
اور یہ ترہن دلوا دیتا ہوں۔ تمکو جہاز کے نیول وغیرہ ساز سامان  
کی فکر کرنی کچھ ضرور نہیں ماری چہیزیں بے قیمت ہمیشہ  
ملا کر دینگے۔ اسبات کے سنے سے میں بہت خوش ہوا اور شکر  
احسان بجا لایا۔ اُسی دن سے امداد سفر ہو خلاف مرضی ملا۔  
باپ کے قدم گھر سے باہر رکھا •

#### No. 3 — GENERAL.

- 1.—Speak louder, I have great difficulty in hearing and understanding you. I am somewhat deaf.
- 2.—A *chawkidar* has just come in from *Burhee* to say that a murder was committed there last night.
- 3.—Let him come in. I will examine him myself.
- 4.—Well *chawkidar*! When did you leave *Burhee*, how did you travel, and at what time did you arrive here?
- 5.—The *Thanahdar* sent for me last night at 10 o' clock. I left *Burhee* at midnight. I travelled on foot, and arrived at 10 o. c. this morning.
- 6.—You say a murder has been committed. If you know any of the particulars of the case, state them.
- 7.—I know nothing. The *Thanahdar* was to hold a preliminary investigation the morning after I left. The murderer had not been caught.
- 8.—Order my horse to be saddled at once. The Court is closed. *Chaprasie*! my *Shola* hat and riding whip? Be quick!

### Military

#### HINDOOSTANI—COLLOQUIAL.

- 1.—You have been 6 months absent, whereas you only had 4 months leave; what were you doing?
- 2.—Why, my Lord, I went to *Jagnath* and I was taken ill on the road returning and could not get back.
- 3.—Now I think you told me the very same story last year when you went to your home.
- 4.—Cherisher of the Poor, ask any of the leavemen, and they will tell you cholera was very bad this year. About 100,000 travellers died of it.
- 5.—Can you tell me the names of any men who were with you when you took ill.
- 6.—If your Lordship will let me go to the lines I shall bring five or six.
- 7.—I dare say you will, 50 or 60; but I am not so stupid as you imagine; mention their names please.
- 8.—Show me that musket;—the stock, cock, trigger, barrel and ramrod appear to be injured.
- 9.—As I was coming from the Treasury yesterday, Sir, I fell into a hole and was nearly killed.
- 10.—Explain the circumstances. If such is true, it should have been reported to me at the time.

#### HINDOOSTANI—TRANSLATION.

WHEN the morning broke upon us, we saw none of our pursuers, and began to indulge the hope that they had given up the chase. We had, however, only made four miles in the entire night, and our prospects of escape can scarcely be said to have improved. About 8 a. m. we saw some natives bathing, and persuaded a native drummer who was with us to go and talk with them, and try to induce them to get us some food. The drummer took with him five rupees, and procured from one of the bathers a promise to obtain food, and also, if possible, the assistance of some native boatmen. This man left his *LOTAH* (a cooking-pot, which the natives carry everywhere with them) as a guarantee for his fidelity; but we saw no more of him, and he informed our messenger that orders had been sent down to *Nuzzuffghur*, two miles farther, to seize us, and that *Baboo Ram Buksh* of *Dhownriakera*, a powerful zamindar on the *Oude* side, had engaged that he would not suffer one of us to escape his territory.

TESTS IN 1899  
ARZIS

1. (Lower Standard.)

حضور عالی پرسوں میں سودا لینے بازار جارہا تھا آپ چیرا سر ہادیو سنگھ نے  
ناحق لٹھی گالیاں دیں۔ میر جواد نے میرا دل سے اتنے زور سے میرا گال پر طمانی  
کھینچ مارا کہ اوکس گانٹاں ابھی تک موجود ہیں۔ خیر وہ تو جو کچھ ہوا تھا سو ہوا  
سنتا ہوں۔ چند بوبہ معاشوں کو اوکس نے میرا پیٹھ سے لے لگا رکھا ہے۔ اس لیے  
حضور سے عرض نہ کر آپ اس مقدمہ کی تحقیقات کریں۔ اور اگر وہ دلو  
سنگھ کا مقور ٹھہرے تو اوکس کو سزا دیں۔ ورنہ لاچار ہو کر مجھے پولیس  
میں اطلاع دینا پڑے گی فقط

نور احمد شکر لال  
ملاکدر

1. (Higher Standard.)

حضور عالی کل شب کی واردات یہ ہیں؟ فوج کو تمام  
سیاہ اپنے اپنے خیموں میں آرام کر رہے تھے؟ آدھی لائٹ کو لگا کر  
ٹلا کہ پہلے کوئی پیکس مسلح ڈاکو ہمارے آدمیوں کو غافل پا کر تھلا در  
آؤ گے۔ اور بہت سب اسباب و مولشی لیکر اور ڈیڑھ سیر آؤ  
لگا کر فوراً ہوجانے کا قصد کیا۔ اتنے میں ہمارے سپاہی جاگے اور  
اوڑا کی تعانت کیا۔ لیکن چونکہ ہم پہلے سے بے خبر اور تقابلاً کمر بستہ  
نہ تھے۔ صرف پانچ بد معاشوں کو نظر قرار کر کے۔ اور باقی فوج  
ہوئے۔ اس میں چند سپاہیوں کو زخم بھی پہنچا۔ مگر کچھ ایسے کارا



HIGHER STANDARD 1921

HIGHER STANDARD—HINDUSTANI.

OCTOBER 1921.

QUESTIONS ON THE TEXT-BOOK—SUBJECT C.

FIRST DAY—AFTERNOON.

[Time allowed—1½ hours. Full marks—100. Pass marks—80.]

I.—Translate :—

توڑ دیکھ کر بیٹھا اس سے کئی برس بڑا تھا۔ اور یہ دودھ پیتا تھا۔ ایک دن کامران نے دونوں کو کشتی لڑایا اکبر کی انار ہماروں اور بیگم کی یاد میں اور اپنی قید میں آتھہ پور رزتی رہتی تھی اس کے شگون لیا۔ اور دل میں کہا کہ ”اگر اس وقت اکبر اپنے اس لڑکے کو بچھا دیا تو جانزگی کہ اس کے باپ کا اقبال بھی ضرور پلٹتا لیگا“ خدا کی شان! اکبر نے حریف کو اس طرح اٹھا کر پٹخا کہ دیکھنے والے حیران رہ گئے۔

گر واپس جانے پر اتر جائے۔ تینوں فوجوں میں غدر کی جھلک دکھائی دینے لگی۔ کچھ تو شاہ کے بیحد اور جی بڑھانے والے وعدوں اور کچھ بھولچیروں کے خوف سے جنکی تعداد رز بزرز بڑھتی جاتی تھی فوجیں کوچ کرتی گئیں۔ اور جہاں تک صاحبزوں سے ہوسکا انہوں نے سپاہیوں کا دل بڑھایا۔ ہمارا دکھہ بیان سے باہر ہی۔ ہندوستانیوں کا کلیجہ پاتی ہرکھا تھا \*

1. What is the force of the Compound verb **انگار کر بیٹھا** ?
2. What will be the difference in the meaning if we use **تین** instead of **میں** ?
3. State the rule regarding the use of **جانا** (1st) with the root of a verb, (2nd) with the past tense of a transitive verb.

[P. T. O.]

II.—Translate :—

تھوڑی دیر بعد عزیز و اقربا نے کہا کہ کہا گیا۔ اور ویسے کی دعوت کے واسطے رات بھر تیار ہوتی رہی۔ دوسرے روز صبح کو تمام رشتہ دار اور شہر کے رئیس آئے۔ اور سب نے عمدہ عمدہ کھانے کھائے۔ جب مرد رخصت ہو گئے اور زلفے میں عزتیں بھی کھانے سے فارغ ہو گئیں تو اتفاقاً دل افروز کی ددا کی نگاہ اس کے گلے پر پڑی۔ دیکھا۔ تو گلے کا سارا زبور موجود ہی مگر موتیوں کی کتھی کا پتا نہیں۔ یہ دیکھتے ہی بول اُٹھی۔ ”اے بیگم! تمہاری کتھی کہاں ہے؟“

1. Explain the terms - **بسم اللہ** - **زلیمہ** - **افطاری**
2. Derive the words **زبانہ** and **مردانہ** :-
3. Explain the difference in meaning of **موجودہ** and **حاضر**.

III.—Translate :—

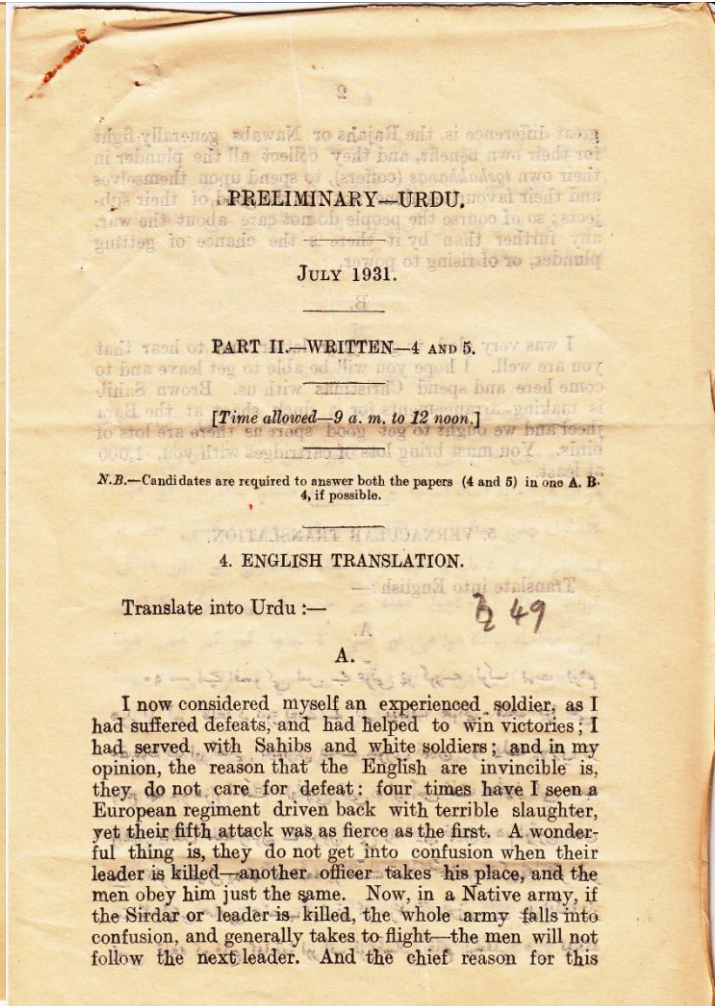
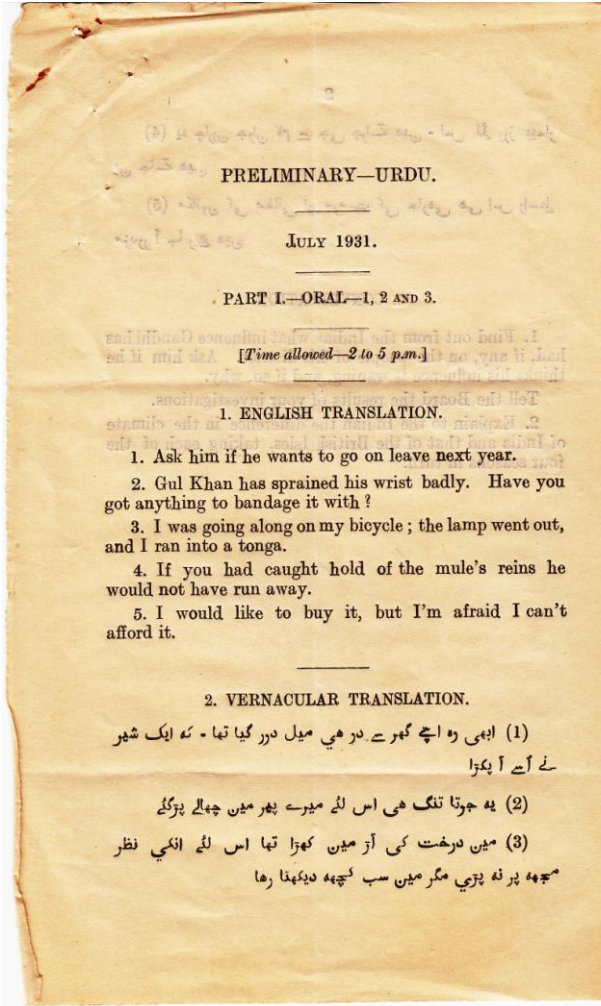
کامران کا بیٹا اس سے کئی برس بڑا تھا۔ اور یہ دودھ پیتا تھا۔ ایک دن کامران نے دونوں کو کشتی لڑایا اکبر کی انار ہماروں اور بیگم کی یاد میں اور اپنی قید میں آتھہ پور رزتی رہتی تھی اس کے شگون لیا۔ اور دل میں کہا کہ ”اگر اس وقت اکبر اپنے اس لڑکے کو بچھا دیا تو جانزگی کہ اس کے باپ کا اقبال بھی ضرور پلٹتا لیگا“ خدا کی شان! اکبر نے حریف کو اس طرح اٹھا کر پٹخا کہ دیکھنے والے حیران رہ گئے۔

1. What is equivalent of a **پہر** in the English method of reckoning time ?
2. Mention another word having the same meaning as **شگون**.
3. What is the meaning of **بچھا کر** ?



URDU PRELIMINARY

JULY 1931



**URDU PRELIMINARY  
JULY 1931**

2

great difference is, the Rajahs or Nawabs generally fight for their own benefit, and they collect all the plunder in their own *toshakhanas* (coffers), to spend upon themselves and their favourites alone, not for the good of their subjects; so of course the people do not care about the war, any further than by it there is the chance of getting plunder, or of rising to power.

B.

I was very glad to get your letter and to hear that you are well. I hope you will be able to get leave and to come here and spend Christmas with us. Brown Sahib is making arrangements for a duck shoot at the Bara jheel and we ought to get good sport as there are lots of birds. You must bring lots of cartridges with you, 1,000 at least.

## 5. VERNACULAR TRANSLATION.

Translate into English:—

A.

۹۰ — اپنے افسر کی اس بے عزتی پر گورے لڑکے بہت برہم ہوئے اور اس قلعہ پر دروازے کے لئے بیقتاب ہو گئے۔ قلعہ بڑا ہی مضبوط تھا اور اسکی دیواروں بہت چوڑی تھیں۔ وہ ایک پہاڑی پر واقع تھا جو ہزار فٹ اونچائی تھی۔ اور اس تک پہنچنے کی سب راہیں بالکل قلعہ والوں کے گولوں کی زد میں تھیں۔ ہم لوگوں میں سے اکثر کا خیال یہ تھا کہ قلعہ پر مدت تک محاصرہ کا کچھہ اثر نہر سکیگا۔ لیکن ماموں صاحب کہتے تھے کہ سرکار نے اس سے پہلے ایک بار اسی قلعہ کو فتح کیا تھا اور اب تو بآسانی فتح کرسکتی ہی کیونکہ

3

فتح پہلے سے کہیں اچھی ہی اور اسوقت توہیں بھی بہت سی ہیں اور بڑی بڑی ہیں۔ میری قسمت تو اب تک بہت اچھی رہی تھی لیکن پھر بھی ان برجوں پر نظر ڈالنے سے جی دھلتا تھا۔ کلیجہا بیٹھا جاتا تھا

B.

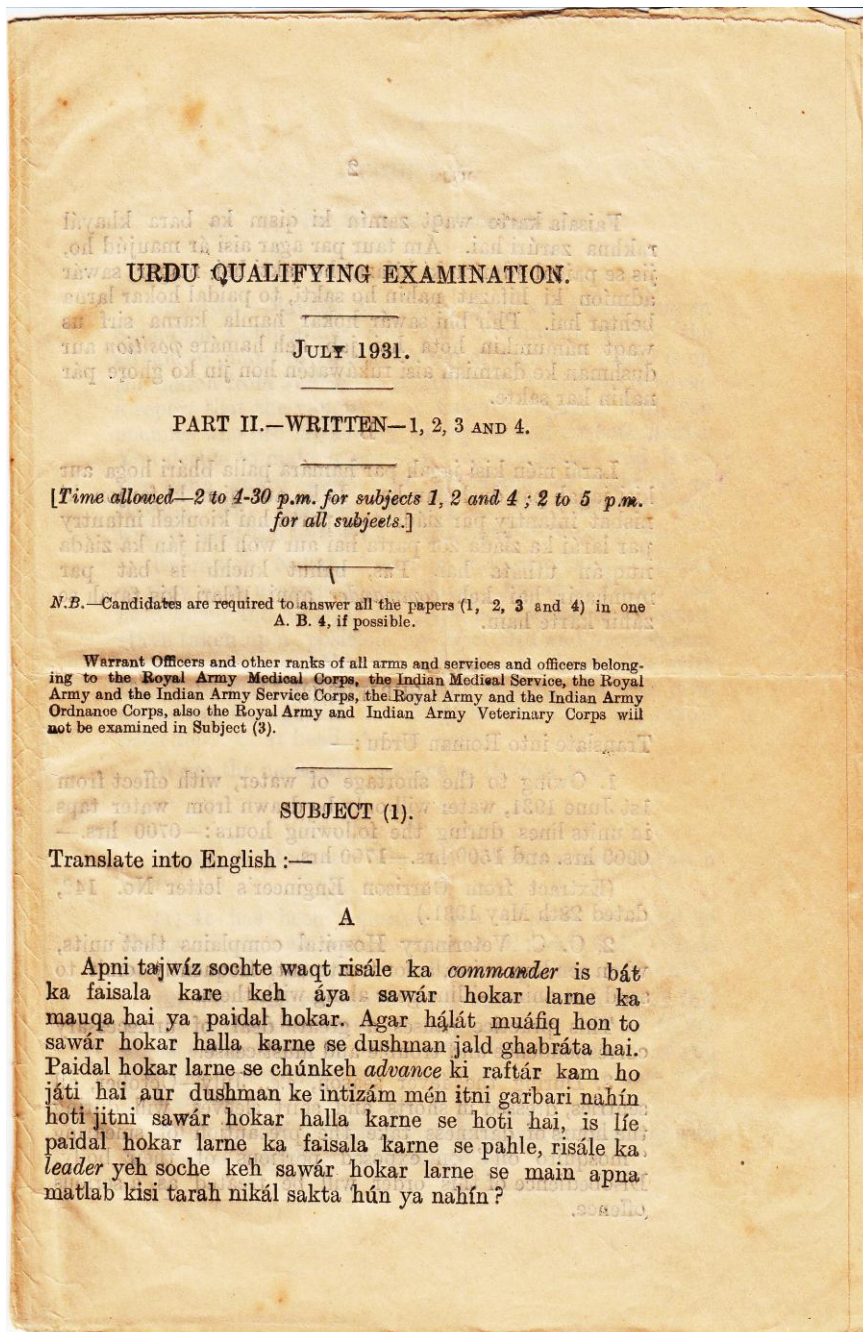
کانپور میں سخت فساد

پچھلے ہفتہ ہم نے خبروں کے کالم میں ایک چھوٹی سی خبر اسبارے میں شائع کی تھی کہ کانپور میں سخت قومی فساد ہو گیا ہے۔ یہ فساد اسوجہ سے ہوا تھا کہ مسٹر ساندرس اور ہیڈ کانسٹیبل چفن سنگھ کے قاتلوں کو لاہور میں پھانسی دینے پر احتجاج کرنے کے طور پر کچھہ لوگ چند دکانداروں سے بزرگ ہوتال کرانہ چاہتے تھے۔ پچھلے ہفتہ سے سب قوموں کے لوگوں کا خیال اسی معاملہ پر لگا ہوا ہے اور اسی کا چرچا گھر گھر میں ہوتا رہتا ہے۔ کہتے ہیں کہ یہ فساد اس قسم کا ہوا ہے کہ ایسا ممالک متحدہ میں پہلے کبھی نہیں ہوا ہے

لیجس لیٹو اسدبلی میں اعلان کیا گیا کہ پچھلے پیر (سرموار) کی صبح تک کل نقصان یہ ہوا تھا کہ ۴۱ آدمی ہلاک اور ۳۸۶ زخمی ہوئے۔ ان اعداد و شمار کو دیکھنے سے ہی اسبات کا کافی ثبوت مل جاتا ہے کہ یہ معاملہ کتنا سخت قسم کا ہے اور خاصکر ایسے موقعہ پر جبکہ آج کل ہندوستان میں قوموں کے آپس کے میل جول پر اتنا زیادہ زور دیا جا رہا ہے



## URDU QUALIFYING EXAMINATION JULY 1931



**URDU QUALIFYING EXAMINATION.**  
**JULY 1931.**

**PART II.—WRITTEN—1, 2, 3 AND 4.**

[Time allowed—2 to 4-30 p.m. for subjects 1, 2 and 4 ; 2 to 5 p.m. for all subjects.]

N.B.—Candidates are required to answer all the papers (1, 2, 3 and 4) in one A. B. 4, if possible.

Warrant Officers and other ranks of all arms and services and officers belonging to the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Indian Medical Service, the Royal Army and the Indian Army Service Corps, the Royal Army and the Indian Army Ordnance Corps, also the Royal Army and Indian Army Veterinary Corps will not be examined in Subject (3).

**SUBJECT (1).**

Translate into English :—

A

Apni tajwiz sochte waqt risale ka *commander* is bat ka faisala kare keh aya sawar hokar larne ka mauqa hai ya paidal hokar. Agar halat muafiq hon to sawar hokar halla karne se dushman jald ghabrata hai. Paidal hokar larne se chunkeh *advance* ki raftar kam ho jati hai aur dushman ke intizam men itni garbari nahin hoti jitni sawar hokar halla karne se hoti hai, is lie paidal hokar larne ka faisala karne se pahle, risale ka *leader* yeh soche keh sawar hokar larne se main apna matlab kisi tarah nikal sakta hun ya nahin?

**URDU QUALIFYING EXAMINATION  
JULY 1931 (contd)**

2

Faisala karte waqt zamīn ki qism ka bara khayāl rakhna zarūri hai. Am taur par agar aisi ar maujūd ho, jis se paidal adīmīn ki hifāzat ho sakti hai, magar sawār admīn ki hifāzat nahīn ho sakti, to paidal hokar larna behtar hai. Phir bhi sawār hokar hamla karna sirf us waqt nāmumkin hota hai jab keh hamāre *position* aur dushman ke darmiān aisi rukāwatēn hon jin ko ghore pār nahīn kar sakte.

B

Larāi mēn kisi jagah par hamāra palla bhāri hoga aur kisi jagah par dushman ka. Is ka aur qism ki faujon ki nisbat infantry par ziāda asar parta hai kionkeh infantry par larāi ka ziāda zor parta hai aur woh bhi jān ka ziāda nuqsān uthāta hai. Pas, bahut kuchh is bāt par munhasir hai keh *commander* apni lfdari kis tarah se zāhir karte hain.

SUBJECT (2).

Translate into Roman Urdu :—

1. Owing to the shortage of water, with effect from 1st June 1931, water will only be drawn from water taps in units lines during the following hours :— 0700 hrs.— 0900 hrs. and 1500 hrs.—1700 hrs.

(Extract from Garrison Engineer's letter No. 142, dated 28th May 1931.)

2. O. C. Veterinary Hospital complains that units, when sending animals for treatment, frequently omit to send the animals' line gear along with them.

This practice causes a great deal of unnecessary correspondence and trouble and must cease.

3. During the fever season, *i.e.*, July—October, all sentries, dressed in shorts and shirt sleeves, will during the hours of darkness take the precaution of smearing "mosquito oil" on exposed portions of their body. Disobedience of this order will be treated as a serious offence.

3

SUBJECT (3).  
(Not for R. A. E. Officers.)

A.

*Situation.*—Savage Warfare. You are a Company or Squadron Commander and your command forms the advanced guard to your battalion or regiment which is on the march from Jadran to Imam Aun. You have received a report that the vanguard is heavily engaged with the enemies who are attacking in front and on both flanks. You decide to make a personal reconnaissance and leave the main guard under the command of Subedar or Risaldar Ali. Having made your reconnaissance you wish to send the following instructions to Subedar Ali.

Enemy in Nallah North of Maka attacked vanguard as they were nearing that village. Jemadar Hasan has been killed and all N. C. Os. have been killed or wounded. Have taken up a position on Dari Hill and am delaying enemy's advance. You will advance to Dari Hill with the main guard and attack enemy in flank and rear, who are advancing against my right flank. Send this report back to O. C. at head of main body.

Write the necessary message in Roman Urdu.

B.

Write in Roman Urdu the following orders for a patrol :—

(1) It has been reported that a party of about 20 Hanza Khel, well armed, entered Hazrat Kali village last night where they were welcomed by the inhabitants.

(2) You will endeavour to obtain confirmation of this report by establishing an observation post on hill R 241 about 600 yards S. E. of the village from which point you will keep the village under close observation through your field glasses.

(3) You will establish signalling communication with the post in the tower in Gudai village.



**URDU ELEMENTARY EXAMINATION  
1945**

**ELEMENTARY URDU TEST—November 1945.**

**PART II.—ORAL—1, 2 AND 3 (2 TO 5 P.M.).**

(1) Translation of Urdu sentences.

(40 marks.)

(To be read out to the candidate.)

1. Yih kám main tum se muft nahin lena cháhta ; jo tum mángoge, main dunga.
2. Tum ko sámne ki zamin ki dekh-bhál din hi ke waqt hoshyári se karni cháhie.
3. Zor se kion bolte ho ? Rát ke waqt áwázen dur tak suni játi hain.
4. Jawánon ko yih sikháo kih wuh chizon ko ek dafa dekhkar unhen yád rakhen.
5. Agar dushman muqábala kare, to tumháre pás jo hathyár ho, us se pura *kam lo*

(2) Translation of English sentences.

(60 marks.)

(To be read out to the candidate.)

1. I tried to reach the village in time but failed.
2. If they had advanced the company commander would have sent me information.
3. That's the man I was talking to yesterday : bring him into my office.
4. He said he had arrived the day before.
5. The company must cross that river before 6 o'clock this evening.
6. Let him go ; he doesn't know anything about the matter.

(3) Conversation.

(100 marks.)

(Subject to be set by the Local Board.)



## HIGHER STANDARD 1941

### HIGHER STANDARD—URDU.

JULY 1941

#### PART I.—WRITTEN—1 AND 2.

(First day—10 a. m. to 1 p. m.)

*N.B.*—Candidates are required to answer both the questions (1 and 2) in one A. B. 4, if possible.

(For Civil and Military Candidates.)

#### I. Translate into Urdu in the Urdu or Nagari Script :—

A

I remember that when I first came to India and was stationed in Fort William, Calcutta, there was an Indian Regiment also in the lines there. We used to watch the recruits drilling and were most surprised when we realised that the Havaldar Instructors gave the words of command in English. The recruits, who were Rajputs, wore white shorts and shirts, and boots with no socks. They also wore great white pagris. There were a great number of them parading at that time, because that was in the days of the War, when, as today, the Indian Army was being expanded. Of course, it was not expanded to the extent to which it is being nowadays, but it was quite usual to have at least a thousand recruits in each battalion. We had only just arrived from England, and were filled with admiration at the way the British Officers of the Indian Regiment spoke to their men in Hindustani. They seemed to be able to say anything they liked in that language. The Indian officers were very fine to look at, and lots of them had medals. We all wanted to speak to them, but none of them knew English. We also heard that some could only write their own names, and that with difficulty.

2

B

At this time a new General came to take command. The enemy had all gone to another fort, and the army was ordered to march on that place. Here again the Europeans rushed on like tigers, and fought like madmen ; but we were all driven back, with considerable loss. My uncle was also wounded in the knee by a bullet, and suffered great pain. I was allowed to attend him in the hospital tent. Some of the sepoy's said that the war was an unlucky one, and would never succeed ; but my uncle said that the Sahib-log and the Europeans always fought the better for being beaten at first. The next day news came that the Sirkar's army, which had gone round by Gorakhpur, had been destroyed by the Nepalese army. The Sahibs began to look anxious, and, although the General told us that only several companies had been cut off, and not the whole army destroyed, most of us believed that the first news was true. My uncle was the only one who credited the General's story.

#### 2. Translate into English :—

A

اس عرصے میں میں نے کرنل صاحب سے درخواست کی کہ ”میری ایک عرضی سرکار کی خدمت میں بھجوا دیجئے۔“ انہوں نے ایسا ہی کیا \* اس عرضی میں میں نے سب کچھ لکھا مثلاً سرکار کی نوکری کتنی مدت سے کرتا رہا ہوں۔ کس کس لڑائیوں میں شریک رہا۔ کب کب زخمی ہوا زخمیہ زخمیہ \* اس بات کو بھی ظاہر کر دیا کہ ”میں جو شاہ کی فوج میں گیا تھا تو ایک صاحب نے کہنے پڑ گیا تھا۔ مجھے ترقی اور زیادہ تنخواہ کی امید دلائی گئی تھی۔ سر ترقی تو کہاں ابھی چہہ مہینے کی تنخواہ تک باقی ہے \* زخمی ہوا۔ پکڑا گیا۔ غلام بنایا گیا۔ پانسو روپے اپنی کاتھہ سے دہنئے تم کہیں

## HIGHER STANDARD 1941 (CONTINUED)

3

خلاصی ملی - پنشن والی نوکری کے ایس مہینے یونہی گئے - \*  
 عرضی کے آخر میں میں نے سرکار سے التجا کی کہ ”میرے حال پر  
 رحم کیا جائے اور میری درخواست منظور فرمائی جائے“ \*

B

ہٹلر نے اپنی مشہور کتاب میں ہیس کی بڑی تعریفیں کی  
 ہیں - اس کی بابت فیصلہ تھا کہ اگر ہٹلر اور کوئرنگ مہرجائیں تو  
 جرمنی کا ’نیوہرر‘ یہی ہو \* کتنی عجیب بات ہے کہ اب وہی  
ہیس اسکاٹ لینڈ میں بیٹھا ہے اور برلن ’ریڈیو‘ والے بار بار  
 یہ کہہ رہے ہیں کہ ہیس کا دماغ خراب ہو گیا ہے اور وہ اپنے پاگل پن  
 کی وجہ سے بھاگ کھڑا ہوا ہے \* جرمنی کی موجودہ حکومت جھوٹ  
 برلن میں بیٹے ہی بہت تیز تھی لیکن اس معاملے میں تو اس نے  
 حد ہی کر دی - پہلا ایسا یہی ہو سکتا ہے کہ ایک پاگل آدمی  
 خود ہی ہوائی جہاز چلا کر سینکڑوں میل دور پہنچ جائے اور ہوائی  
 چہتری کے ذریعہ جیتا جاگتا آسمان سے نیچے اترے \* اصل بات یہ ہے  
 کہ ہیس تو پاگل یقیناً نہیں ہے - البتہ خود نازی حکومت والوں کے  
 دماغ میں خلل ہے - جب ہی تو وہ اپنے کو سب سے اچھا سمجھتے  
 ہیں اور ساری دنیا پر حکومت کرنی چاہتے ہیں \*

A

ملک اس ار سے میں نے کارنل صاحب سے درخواست کی کہ میری ایک  
 اصرار سے سرکار کی خدمت میں مہجوا دیجیے۔ انہیں ایسا ہی  
 کیا۔ اس اصرار میں میں نے سب کو لکھا کہ سرکار کی نوکری  
 کیتانی سہت سے کرتا رہا ہوں۔ کین کین لڑائیوں میں شریک

4

رہا، کب کب جڑمی ہوا وغیرہ: اس بات کو بھی لکھ کر  
 دیا کہ میں جو شاہ کی فوج میں گیا تھا تو ایک صاحب کے  
 کہنے پر گیا تھا۔ میں ترکئی اور جیادا تانخواہ کی خدمت  
 دلائی گئی تھی۔ سو ترکئی تو کھاں ابھی ۶ مہینے کی تانخواہ  
 تک باقی ہے۔ جڑمی ہوا، پکڑا گیا، گولام بنا دیا گیا،  
 پانچ سو روپیا اپنی گاٹ سے دیا تب کھیں کھٹکارا ملا۔  
 پینشن والی نوکری کے انیس مہینے یونہی گئے۔ اصرار سے  
 میں نے سرکار سے بابتی کی کہ میرے حال پر رحم کیا جائے  
 اور میری درخواست منظور فرمائی جائے۔

B

ہٹلر نے اپنی مشہور کتاب میں ہیس کی بڑی تعریفیں کی  
 ہیں۔ اس کی بابت فیصلہ تھا کہ اگر ہٹلر اور کوئرنگ مہرجائیں تو  
 جرمنی کا ’نیوہرر‘ یہی ہو \* کتنی عجیب بات ہے کہ اب وہی  
ہیس اسکاٹ لینڈ میں بیٹھا ہے اور برلن ’ریڈیو‘ والے بار بار  
 یہ کہہ رہے ہیں کہ ہیس کا دماغ خراب ہو گیا ہے اور وہ اپنے پاگل پن  
 کی وجہ سے بھاگ کھڑا ہوا ہے \* جرمنی کی موجودہ حکومت جھوٹ  
 برلن میں بیٹے ہی بہت تیز تھی لیکن اس معاملے میں تو اس نے  
 حد ہی کر دی - پہلا ایسا یہی ہو سکتا ہے کہ ایک پاگل آدمی  
 خود ہی ہوائی جہاز چلا کر سینکڑوں میل دور پہنچ جائے اور ہوائی  
 چہتری کے ذریعہ جیتا جاگتا آسمان سے نیچے اترے \* اصل بات یہ ہے  
 کہ ہیس تو پاگل یقیناً نہیں ہے - البتہ خود نازی حکومت والوں کے  
 دماغ میں خلل ہے - جب ہی تو وہ اپنے کو سب سے اچھا سمجھتے  
 ہیں اور ساری دنیا پر حکومت کرنی چاہتے ہیں \*



OFFICER CADET GRANTHAM'S ATTEMPTED TRANSLATION FOR  
HIGHER STANDARD IN 1945.

Do not write on  
this margin.

A. I.

Ek din ko. Jab main ek gaon se durra tak  
chal raha tha. ~~Jab main~~ <sup>mujh ko</sup> ek gaon wala mila.  
Hamne apna apna ~~ka~~ <sup>kaho.</sup> kiah, "achcha subah (salam  
sahib) aur tab main ne us se ~~kaha~~ <sup>sup dha</sup> kiah. "Ap  
kahan ja rahe hain?" Us ne mujh se kaha kiah.  
"Main apni Regimental Centre (~~jo Meerut~~)  
wapas a raha hun. Jo Meerut men hai."  
Chunke ~~ap~~ <sup>us</sup> hi bisi bimar hoti thi, is lie  
Commanding Officer sahib ne us ko ikkis  
dinon tak chutti dia tha. Jab woh <sup>apni</sup> ghar  
pahuncha. (~~Us ko salam kiah~~) Woh paye kiah  
Chunke banish hi wajah se. Us ka ghar tut  
gaya tha.

aur kiah ~~ap~~ us ka khandan durra makkam  
men raha tha. Woh ap ka ghar banaya aur  
ab us ko <sup>apni</sup> battalion wapus a pata hai.

Railway station about tis milon tak dur  
tha. Is lie agar us ko ek motor bus milta hai  
to woh walk karna parega.

main ne us se kaha kiah. Main apni motor  
gari men do ~~gh~~ ghantontak station ko  
jaunga, and main ap ke sath ap ~~ja~~ un.  
~~Yeh~~ ~~re~~ ~~po~~ ~~yo~~ ko das. sal naukari hai.  
Chunke woh illiterate tha, is lie us ko  
ukhedar nahin milta tha. Woh N. Africa aur  
Italy gaya tha, aur us ko commanding officer  
sahib ko orderly ~~kaha~~ <sup>hwa.</sup> tha. Us ka do beta  
Boy's company men the, aur woh likhna aur  
pakhna sakte ~~the~~ hain.

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- <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1909/sep/27/oriental-languages>
- <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/exhibits/e-exhibits/india/intro.htm>
- <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/exhibits/e-exhibits/india/intvw5.htm>
- <http://venn.csi.cam.ac.uk/ACAD/lists/IML.html>
- <http://www.languageinindia.com/jan2004/campbell.html>
- <http://karachi.s-asian.cam.ac.uk/archive/audio/interviewlist1.html>
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