Mayo School of Art (1875–1898)*

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Abstract

This article sets out to delineate the process that led to the establishment of Mayo School of Arts in Lahore in 1875. It lays down the context within which the plan to set up art institutions in India was conceived. Contrary to Krishnan Kumar's view whereby the coloniser and the colonised constituted an adult-child relationship the coloniser, in that particular relationship took the role of the adult whereas the native became the child which had been a salient feature of the educational and academic landscape of British India. By challenging Krishna Kumar, this article while drawing on the inferences of Partha Mitter and Hussain Ahmad Khan, argues that in the realm of art instruction the analysis of colonial strategies of adjustment and readjustment provide useful insights about the administrative constraints and cognitive failures of the colonial administrators in the nineteenth-Century Punjab. Challenges like space-selection for MSA campus, appropriate Curriculum for the students and their inadequate language skills stared its founder Principal Lockwood Kipling (1837–19011) in the face. This forms the major focus of the article.

Introduction

British art instruction in colonial India more or less revolved around one avowed objective: to train local artisans who, it was argued, required scientific training in drawing due to the colonial impression, as iterated by a British artist, art critic and social thinker John Ruskin(1819–1900), that the natives could only draw 'an amalgamation of monstrous objects'.¹ Scientific training in drawing was viewed as indispensable to Orientalists and administrators; it would broaden the mental and imaginative faculties and make the 'natives' realise the glories of nature around them.² They thought it reflected the intelligence of observation through a co-ordination of eye, mind and hand. By acquiring this skill, one's faculties of perception and precision, discrimination and classification would be markedly

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¹Quoted in Christopher Pinney, *Photos of the Gods: The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India* (London, 2004), p.24.

²Same argument is advanced by Eric Hobsbawm and Bernard Cohn. See for detailed reference, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 1–14. Bernard Cohen, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton, 1996).

enhanced. One significant implication of this policy was the interconnectivity of art with craft, i.e. that 'art' was distinguished from 'craft'; thus the Orientalists assumed that better craft needed knowledge of basic art (drawing).

This paper attempts to see how the colonial administration interwove, yet differentiated art from craft or, in other words, re-defined the whole concept of art and devised policies to introduce new meanings of art into the local society through art instruction in the Mayo School of Arts in Lahore. It was the first art school in the British Punjab. By the time of its foundation in 1875, art schools in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay had already been set up. The aim of British policymakers resounded in the Director of Public Instruction's report of 1883–84 which defined a two-fold objective for the school:

to train craftsmen in the higher and more artistic branches of their crafts, and especially in the principle of design, and to exercise a general influence over the artistic industries of the Province, by acting as an aesthetic centre, a school of design, and source of enlightened criticism and advice.³

Such assertions alluded to the assumed inherent inadequacy in Indian art forms for the want of precision that could only be brought in through drawing. To contextualise such articulations by British officials, one needs to emphasise the radical reforms couched in Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay's Minute on Education (1834). These reforms encompassed the introduction of western education, free press and application of utilitarian principles in law and administration. Percival Spear contends that not only classical languages, particularly Persian were set aside, but claims the vernacular, ably championed by Orientalists to the chagrin of the Anglicist, were also neglected.⁴ Thus the only possible medium for the new learning was English. The agenda of the reforms was to train the native to become a citizen. Macaulay's minutes not only laid down the future direction for the education system in India but also set new standards of elitism which were deemed as sine qua non for reforming the society, "sunk (to) the lowest depths of slavery and superstition".⁵ Hence the coloniser and the colonised constituted an adult-child relationship whereby "the coloniser took the role of the adult, and the native became the child".⁶ The British therefore assumed as their responsibility "to initiate the native into new ways of acting and thinking",7which to Krishna Kumar was the "core agenda of colonial rule and education".⁸

By challenging Kumar's perspective, the writer of this article argues, like Mahrukh Tarapor and Hussain Ahmad Khan, that in the realm of art instruction, the analysis of colonial strategies of 'adjustment and readjustment' provide useful insights about the administrative constraints and cognitive failures of the colonial administrators in nineteenth-Century Punjab.⁹ Contrary to Kumar, Tarapor maintains that art education under British attained only

³Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Reports on Popular Education in Punjab and its Dependencies 1883–84".

⁵Krishna Kumar, "Colonial Citizen as an Educational Ideal" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.24, No.04 (Jan 28, 1989), p.45.

⁸*Ibid*.

⁹Hussain Ahmad Khan, "Artisans, Sufis and Colonial Art Institutions in Nineteenth-Century Punjab" (Singapore National University, Unpublished PhD Thesis 2012), p.136. Mahrukh Tarapor, "John Lockwood Kipling and British Art Education in India", *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 24, No.1 (Autumn, 1980), pp.53–81.

⁴Percival Spear, "Bentinck and Education", *Cambridge Historical Journal*, Vol.6 (1938), p.96.

⁶ Ibid. ⁷ Ibid.

partial success because of many limitations, such as contradictory objectives, lack of direction – some schools laid emphasis on art while others preferred crafts – and more importantly students' resistance to the learning process.¹⁰With reference to Bengal in particular, Indian art historians and critics like Tapati Guha-Thakurta and Arindam Dutta too have alluded to the adjustment between the 'native' and the 'western' in a sometimes nuanced and sometimes in an explicit manner.¹¹ The writer asserts that the same adjustment between the 'native' and the 'western' was practiced even at MSA in the Punjab.

In this section the complexity underlying the intricate relationship between art administrators, the people mostly drawn from civil service and the exponents of Indian art tradition is delineated. The complexity of the relationship is captured through the works of such scholars as Partha Mitter and Tapati Guha-Thakurta, in particular.¹² They emphasise the imperial motives behind the establishment of art institutions in colonial India. Mitter argues that despite multiple, sometimes contradictory reasons vehemently advocated by colonial art administrators for establishing such institutions, these schools became vehicles for infusing western notions in Indian art traditions.¹³ Thakurta in her early work remains close to Mitter's position;¹⁴ in her later work, however, she gives prominence to the hybridity of local art resulting from the interaction of the colonised and the coloniser. Such situational analysis, on one hand, highlights the influence of colonial art institutions; on the other, it signifies the internal debates among Bengali archaeologists and artists about various perspectives (historicist versus aesthetics) for redefining the Indian art tradition. By taking a similar line of argument, this article agrees that the British art administrators approached India with preconceived stereotypes as reflected in the works of reputable scholars like G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1830), James Mill (1773-1836) and James Fergusson (1808-1886). However, with the passage of time such opinions and policies based on these presuppositions shifted to meet the emerging needs of colonial economy and to address administrative problems. Rather than focusing on the stylistic analysis of art, which many art historians like Mitter and Thakurta have done so profoundly, this article studies the administrative management of the Mayo School of Arts. This study not only provides insights about the approach of the colonial state towards newly acquired colony (Punjab) but also highlights the adjustment and readjustment of the colonial institutions to meet the continuously emerging challenges, like scarcity of resources, non-availability of trained staff, resistance among the local artisans, etc. Such adjustment and re-adjustment of policies in managing routine administrative affairs

¹⁰Mahrukh Tarapor, "Art and Empire: The Discovery of India in Art and Literature, 1851–1947" (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Unpublished PhD dissertation, 1977), pp. 57–107, cited in Hussain Ahmad Khan, "Artisans, Sufis and Colonial Art Institutions in Nineteenth-Century Punjab", p.116.

¹¹Tapati Guha-Thakurta, "Recovering the Nation's Art", in Partha Chatterjee (ed.), *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal* (Calcutta, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, 1995), pp. 63–92 and Arindam Dutta, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty: Design in the Age of its Global Reproducibility* (London, 2007), pp. 32–33.

¹²Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *The Making of a New 'Indian Art': Art, Aesthetics and Nationalism in Bengal* (Cambridge, 1992).

¹³See Partha Mitter, "Status and Patronage of Artists During British Rule in India (c. 1850–1900), in Barbara Stoler Miller (ed.), *The Power of Art: Patronage in Indian Culture* (Delhi, 1992), pp. 277–300.

¹⁴Tapati Guha-Thakurta, Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-Colonial India (New York, 2004).

sometimes blurred the vision of empire which Edward Said,¹⁵ Bernard Cohn¹⁶ and the historians of same orientation have espoused so zealously.

Europeans' preconceived ideas about Indian art can be attributed to their 'Indian experience', but it was largely related to nineteenth-century developments in England. Significant among these developments were the construction of important buildings like the British Museum (1832), British Parliament (completed in 1836); the Reform Bill of 1832 which gave more political rights to the middle class; and the British Parliament's interest in reforming art education to increase the volume of trade. Such debates on reforming the art education intensified with the remarkable success of the 1851 Great Exhibition which renewed British interest in Indian products.¹⁷ These debates also led to the codification of artisanal knowledge, which many art critics believed was lacking among the British artisans.¹⁸ This sense of ignorance among artisans about their work led to the establishment of art institutions throughout England. Soon after the exhibition, a Department of Practical Art (later called the Department of Science and Art) under Henry Cole (1806-1873) was established to look after the curriculum and establishment of art schools. It is pertinent to emphasise here that Cole was thoroughly influenced by the exponents of utilitarianism like I. S. Mill, Horace Grant and Edward Chadwick, who emphasised the application of fine art to mechanical production not only to improve public taste, but also to improve the aesthetic value of industrial production by redefining the design patterns.¹⁹ Establishment of Indian art schools should be viewed against this backdrop. This article argues that Cole's mission of improving public taste by associating aesthetics with design instruction and mechanical production became altered in Kipling's project of preserving local art - and sometimes adopting contradictory policies - thus demonstrating a multiplicity of voices and policies within the colonial state.

1. British Art Administrators and the Establishment of Art School in Punjab

After the exhibition of Punjabi products, arts and manufactures in 1864, held at Lahore the debate around the establishment of a school of design (to teach drawing and designing) drew the attention of the Education Committee appointed to enquire into various aspects of art education in the Punjab. The main actors were B. H. Baden Powell (1841–1901), British Civil Servant, writer and art critic; Richard Temple (1826–1902), art critic and civil servant; H. H. Locke (d.1885), the first principal of Calcutta School of Arts; John Lockwood Kipling; and Dr De Fabeck, Principal of Jeypore School of Arts. The committee worked out all the necessary details, but the proposal fell through "from the difficulty of setting

¹⁵Edward W Said, Orientalism (New York, 1979).

¹⁶Bernard S. Cohen, Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India (Princeton, 1996).

¹⁷See for the discussion on Great Exhibition, Lara Kriegel, Grand Designs: Labor, Empire and the Museum in Victorian Culture (New York, 2007).

¹⁸Hussain Ahmad Khan, "Rationalizing the Mystical Relationship of Art with Artist: Art Discourses in England and Formative Years of Mayo School of Arts, Lahore (1875–1895)", *The Historian*, Vol. 7 (1), (Jan-Jun, 2009), p.96. Also see the same article for an overview of the developments in art domain in the 19th-Century England.

¹⁹See a remarkable study of Henry Cole's policies in design education, Arindam Dutta, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty: Design in the Age of its Global Reproducibility* (New York, 2007).

apart the necessary funds".²⁰ The subject remained in abeyance until February 1868, when a committee was constituted again which made some headway and drew up a report which directed the school to (1) instruct in Ornamental Art as applicable to manufactures and decoration of buildings; and (2) actually execute work as the main objective. The need for teaching free hand and geometrical drawing was emphasised "so as to enable students to appreciate pattern and form as applicable to manufactures".²¹

In his report, Baden Powell recommended the establishment of a School of Industrial Art where sufficient theoretical teaching would be imparted to initiate the students into working proficiently. Baden Powell, like Temple, looked at Indian art with derision and termed it as 'wholly empirical' and devoid of any tangible theoretical underpinnings. This he considered an insurmountable impediment in the evolution of Indian art, and he believed it was not likely to grow if left on its own. In the report about the state of Indian art, his comments betray the same derision: "... the force of conventionality is such that it is traceable in every work and is like blight upon every promise of higher purpose and better execution". Then he pleaded, "Improvement must come from without, or not at all" and "without the establishment of the Schools of design in this country, will art never make any material progress".²² Thus, the establishment of an art school was deemed very important for preservation of native art. He suggested three branches in the proposed school:

(a) Drawing and Designing. (b) Course of mechanics and physics consisting in theory of mechanics, elements of mechanism and special machinery with class of mechanical drawing. Elementary study of physical sciences would be the mainstay. (c) Workshops-Independent of the two former, so that the manufactures or processes need not limit the courses of design and mechanics and physics actually carried on in the workshops.²³

Lithography and Photography were included in the list of Baden Powell's priorities as subdisciplines in the curricula. He also stressed the need to establish departments of Antiquities and the Natural History.

While commenting on the memorandums of Kipling and De Fabeck, Temple advanced his views with regard to "the best curriculum for the school of art". He argued that the instruction should aim at producing "a knowledge and love of truth and beauty: not to develop industry, nor to produce marketable commodities".²⁴ He espoused the gymnastic nature of art instruction rather than its pure technicality, which would lead to the development and the expansion of the student's mental faculties. That would render the student "capable of receiving and knowing and retaining and appreciating, not to teach him petty knacks nor to strengthen his fingers and put him in the way of making money by means

²² Ibid.

²⁰T. B. Macaulay, "Minute on Indian Education" in J. Clive (ed.), *Selected Writings* (Chicago, 1972), p. 249.

²¹Home Department, Government of the Punjab, "School of Art, Lahore" from B. H. Baden Powell to the Officiating Registrar, P.U. College 31st May, 1872, p.454.

²³Quoted in Samina Choonara (ed), "Official" Chronicle of Mayo School of Art: Formative Years Under J L Kipling (Lahore, 2003), p. 137.

²⁴Home Department Government of the Punjab, "School of Art, Lahore", From B. H. Baden Powell to the Officiating Registrar, P.U. College 31st May, 1872, p. 456.



Figure 1. John Lockwood Kipling (taken from Hussain Ahmad Khan, 'Artisans, Sufis and Colonial Art Institutions in Nineteenth-Century Punjab', PhD Thesis, Singapore, 2012)

of aimless mannerism or stolid reproduction".²⁵ Richard Temple further recommended water-colour as an easier medium to work with as compared to oil, especially in the initial stages of art instruction. Work in oil would be permissible at a later stage when students were better versed in the technique. Water-colour subsequently became the signature of the Bengal School of Painting.

On the desirability of obtaining the services of good professional teachers, Temple stressed the need for trained men from England or Europe, casting serious doubts on the reliability and devotion of the local talent. Besides a thorough comprehension, what Temple considered most important for an art teacher was his ability to "impart to others what they themselves understand, and know, and feel".²⁶ He also suggested that the Secretary of State should appoint the "picked men" as principals, professors, and assistant masters in art schools just as they were selected and deputed to other departments.

While identifying the problems of the Indian art, Temple pointed out the want of knowledge of the principles of perspective and instinctiveness (rather than the faculty to be systematic) as two major pitfalls that Indian art which needed to be overcome. The 'line of beauty', the 'law of preponderance', harmonies and contrasts of colour and the rules of composition must be learnt, as established principles; only then could practical rules be found.²⁷

Temple's recommendation to establish new schools of art in Lahore or Allahabad seemed quite tenable; thus it did not take long for the Government to put that idea into practice. The

²⁵From-Her Majesty "Secretary of State for India to the Governor General of India in Council" No. 46 dated India Office, London 24thSeptember, 1874.

²⁶Home Department Goverment of the Punjab, "Exhibition and Schools of Art and Design in India" by Richard Temple 24th Oct., 1873, p. 6.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 7.

Secretary of State for India sanctioned the proposal for the establishment of the School of Industrial Art and Design at Lahore, conceived as a memorial of the late Richard Southwell Bourke, Sixth Earl of Mayo (1822–1872). On 30 December 1874, the Finance Department endorsed the proposal for the establishment of the Mayo School.²⁸ The Punjab Government started looking for a suitable principal and eventually selected Kipling for this task in February 1875 on a salary of Rs.800 per month.²⁹ Here it seems appropriate to give a brief introduction to Kipling.

Born to the family of Yorkshire farming stock at Pickering, John Lockwood was the first son of Reverend Joseph Kipling, a Wesleyan minister, and Frances Lockwood.³⁰ His adolescence and early manhood is shrouded in obscurity. However, he attended some art school, or technical college, after leaving Woodhouse Grove at the age of fourteen. Tarapor contends that the impetus towards a crafts career came from a visit to the Great Exhibition of 1851, which made an indelible impression on the youngster.³¹ He started his career as a designer and modeller at the pottery firm of Pinder, Bourne, and Company in Burslem, Staffordshire, where he worked until 1858. Simultaneously he attended the Stoke School of Art.³² Precocious Kipling had an insatiable desire for learning which subsequently won him a national scholarship. That enabled him to "begin designing and modeling under Philip Cunliffe Owen at the earliest art schools and museum in South Kensington".³³In 1863 he was appointed as Professor of Architectural Sculpture in the Jeejebhoy School of Art, Bombay, and in the same year he married Alice Macdonald on 18 March. On 4 April they embarked "on the 12th at Southampton in the *Ripon*" for India.³⁴ It was in Bombay that his son Rudyard was born on December 1865.

In 1870 he was commissioned to tour the North Western Provinces and to make a number of sketches of Indian craftsmen, some of which are today held at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. He combined the role of illustrator, for his son Rudyard's books, with the role of art administrator and curator, for the remainder of his working life in India.³⁵

2. Kipling and Mayo School of Arts

Kipling arrived in Lahore on 24 April 1875, and after carrying out the formality of reporting to the Director of Public Instruction, Major W. R. M. Holroyd, he took over as Principal on 27 May.³⁶His immediate concern was to secure an appropriate and permanent building

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 9.

³³Baldwin, "John Lockwood Kipling", p. 20.

³⁴*Ibid*, p. 21.

³⁵From Finance Department to Home Department, "Endorsement by the Govt. of India" No. 6941, dated Fort William 30th Dec. 1874.

³⁶From T. H. Thornton, Secretary of Government, Punjab to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Educational Department, "Industrial School of Art and Design at Lahore", No. 30, dated 5th January 1875.

²⁹From Her Majesty's Secretary of State in India to His Excellency the Governor-General of India, Proceedings of the Government of Punjab, Home Department, India Office, London, September 24,1874. Reprinted in Choonara and others, pp. 140–57.

³⁰A.W. Baldwin, "John Lockwood Kipling" in John Gross (ed.), *Rudyard Kipling: The Man, his Work and his World* (London, 1972), p. 20.

³¹Tarapor, "John Lockwood Kipling and British Art Education in India", p. 56.

 $^{^{32}}Ibid.$

for the school, since there was no space immediately available and adjacent to the museum. Temporarily, he secured the possession of a house previously occupied by a Mr Joseph Harrison. Abbas Chughtai, Deputy Director, Punjab Archives, Lahore, contends that in July 1875, the Mayo School of Arts was initially "housed in a rented bungalow, at Rs.150 per month at Kachehery Road for a year".³⁷ Colonel Young proposed the General Post Office's building as a viable option for the school since it was quite spacious though situated "at an inconvenient distance from the railway station" yet "conveniently near to the museum".38 The government did not agree to that proposition. Captain Nisbet pointed to the old hospital in Hira Mandi (the red light area) near Lahore Fort as a suitable place to meet the demands of the new institution. However, Kipling had serious reservations owing to the scarcity of space and inappropriate location of the proposed site. He termed the old hospital as "notoriously unhealthy" and maintained that it would incur unnecessary expenditure to meet the school's requirements.³⁹ It was eventually in 1876 that the site for the school's new building was selected near the station library. Money raised from the Mayo Memorial fund was stipulated for the design and construction of the building, which was to be "of plastered brick and Saracenic in style".⁴⁰ It originally had 5 rooms on the ground floor and a lecture hall 62 feet by 24 at the top floor. That building first came into use for the Punjab exhibition of 1881. To meet the scarcity of the space some temporary additions were also made. The next year Mayo School moved into that building, thus it became fully functional by the spring of 1882. In 1891, it was decided that the temporary additions should be demolished and that a building should be constructed in their stead, with "the portion consisting of four large well lighted ateliers" to be used for technical work.⁴¹ That portion had been designed by Kipling and Bhai Ram Singh and erected by Lala Ganga Ram, Executive Engineer.⁴² Kipling was satisfied as the work had been done according to his wishes.

3. Curriculum

In the *Plan for the Organization of a School of Art*, Kipling, in the light of his experience of being an art teacher at Bombay, designed a course of instruction suitable to local requirements. Then he enumerated the courses, reproduced below;

- 1. Blackboard demonstration of the first principles drawing. Elementary outline from flat copies. Elementary geometry
- 2. Outline from objects. Rudiments of perspective
- 3. Light and shade from objects and casts. Plant drawing from nature
- 4. The general principles of ornamental design, especially Eastern Modelling in clay from casts, Moulding in clay and casting in plaster, Architectural drawing from examples,

³⁷Abbas Chughtai, "Mayo School of Art: A New Light", *Lahore Museum Bulletin*, XIII (2000), pp. 99–104. Cited in Nadeem Omar Tarar (2011): From 'Primitive' Artisans to 'Modern' Craftsmen: Colonialism, Culture, and Art Education in the Late Nineteenth-Century Punjab, *South Asian Studies*, 27:2, pp. 199–219.

 ³⁸ Tarapor , "John Lockwood Kipling and British Art Education in India" *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 24, No.1 (1980).
 ³⁹ From J. L. Kipling, Principal, Lahore School of Art to the Secretary to Government, Punjab. 27th May, 1875.
 ⁴⁰ Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1879–80".
 ⁴¹ G. C. Walker, Esquire, *Gazetteer of the Lahore District, 1893–94* (Lahore, 2006), p.302.

Advanced perspectives, Modelling from nature, Studies in colour of ornament, Ditto of still life, Drawing from the living model in black and white, Original design, Painting from the living model, Modelling from ditto.⁴³

Kipling stressed "the need for a variety of subjects to be present in the curriculum in order to provide the stimulus of change" for the students.⁴⁴ Competitive timed sketching and sketching from memory one day each week was, in Kipling's view, an efficacious exercise to this end. He also proposed that instruction in woodcarving, lithography and copper etching was necessary for all students in the first three grades. However, in the fourth grade, the aptitude and the will of the respective students would take precedence. As Kipling put it, "... the instruction should begin to have special reference to the work by which the student proposes to earn his bread".⁴⁵He was favourably inclined to the establishment of a wood engraving class. To him, though "the work done" would be of simple character, its demand was considerable "especially for the illustration of educational works printed in the vernacular".⁴⁶

Recruiting students suited to the peculiarity of art instruction was a daunting task for both Kipling and Major W. J. Holroyd. The system of art instruction was comprehensively rooted into a centuries-old mechanism of apprenticeship tied up with such institutions as Karkhana and Gharana, as argued by Nadeem Omar in his 'Historical Introduction' of Official Chronicle of Mayo School of Art: Formative Years under J. K. Kipling.⁴⁷ Persuading the most eligible youths from the occupational groups of what British termed mistree or rungsas proved quite intractable because the mode of instruction in MSA was deemed divergent to their sensibilities and cultural ethos. The British method of art instruction could be relevant for those already exposed to and initiated in western notions of art and culture - and had a smattering of English language and elementary mathematics or geometry, to be very precise. Therefore, Holroyd wrote to the inspectors of schools and the principals of colleges in the Punjab "calling for lists of candidates from Government Schools who may wish to enter the school of art".⁴⁸ To lure them to the field of art, Holrovd proposed to offer stipends to youngsters who had a better acquaintance with English. Kipling concurred, although he wanted such provision extended to those who displayed 'promise' with the proviso that they could be withdrawn "on the holders proving inept, inattentive, or misconducting themselves".⁴⁹ It seems appropriate to mention here that Kipling was not forthcoming in dangling material incentives to the students; hence he was opposed to the free education for the reasons set out below:

⁴³Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1879–80".
⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Samina Choonara (ed), "Official" Chronicle of Mayo School of Art: Formative Years Under J L Kipling (Lahore, 2003).

⁴⁸From J. L. Kipling, Principal, Lahore School of Art to the Secretary to Government, Punjab. 27th May, 1875.
⁴⁹*Ibid.*

I venture to urge that as a matter of principle a fee should be charged. There are amateurs of art even among the middle classes of India, and I have observed that paying a fee is more agreeable to the self-respect of such persons as clerks and the better class of natives.⁵⁰

4. Record of the students

Kipling emphasised the need to maintain full records of students' backgrounds and date of entry to the college. The school clerk was duty bound to keep a register of daily attendance which was one method of preserving order in the school.⁵¹ Kipling was not as disdainfully disposed towards traditions entrenched in the Punjabi milieu, where every individual had to operate within the framework of his family occupation, as might first appear to be the case. Kipling thought of engaging every student to his ancestral profession. However, he deemed their acquaintance with the basic drawing method a vital skill. That was not as simple a task as it seemed prima facie. Rather, it amounted to initiating the whole lot of students in an entirely different tradition; they had previously imbibed many a century's old artistic ethos rooted profoundly in oral tradition. Lacking cognisance of that perspective and the bearing it might invoke on the process of art production at Mayo School in the coming years, Kipling set himself to the task of replicating the South Kensington way of doing arts. However, Musarrat Hasan's study on art and design suggests something very different, particularly when she comments on Kipling's modus operandi as to art instruction. "One of the first things he insisted on was the importance of the designs of the old buildings of Lahore".⁵² She further states, citing Kipling's adulatory remarks for the Wazir Khan Mosque.

The Wazir Khan's Mosque is in itself a school for design and the painted work is in a dilapidated state of neglect. Under these circumstances, it seems of the highest importance to secure careful copies for preservation in the museum and the school, and there could be no better training for our young decorators.⁵³What is very important here is to underscore the importance of Masjid Wazir Khan, situated in Central Lahore as an object of learning for the students of Mayo School. Built by Hakim Ali-ud-Din Ansari in 1634 AD, a physician by profession who rose to the rank of the Wazir during Shah Jehan and got the title Wazir Khan, the mosque epitomises "the profusion and excellence of the inlaid pottery decoration in the paneling of the walls".⁵⁴ The principal's annual reports amply corroborate the fact that this beautiful building was deemed in itself a school of design. Year after year, students of the school produced careful copies of its designs to improve their designing skills. It was a vicarious way of paying tribute to the artisans who conceived and created one of the most stunningly beautiful designs ever made in South Asia.⁵⁵ While designing a building for the Lahore Museum, Kipling uncannily referred to Masjid Wazir Khan, reflecting his obsession with that building; as he once said that, "It is not probable that we should at once surpass the beautiful work on Wazir Khan's mosque, but we could certainly produce something of a

⁵¹*Ibid*.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵²Ibid. Musarrat Hasan, Paintings in the Punjab Plains, 1849–1949 (Lahore, 1998).

⁵⁴Muhammad Baqir, *Lahore Past &Present* (Lahore, 1952), p. 336.

⁵⁵From J. L. Kipling, Principal, Lahore School of Art to the Secretary to Government Punjab, 27thMay, 1875.

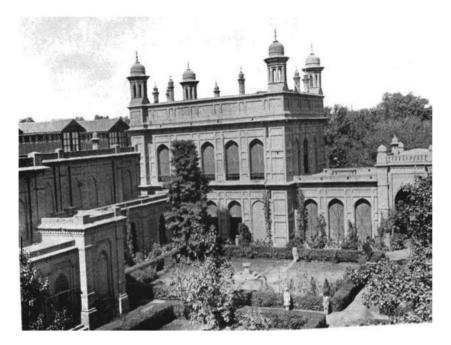


Figure 2. Mayo School of Art, Lahore, (taken from Hussain Ahmad Khan, 'Artisans, Sufis and Colonial Art Institutions in Nineteenth-Century Punjab', PhD Thesis, Singapore, 2012)

distinctive and artistic character, which might result eventually in the resuscitation of a dying craft". 56

5. Instructing the Natives: Students of the MSA

The initial intake in 1875–6 comprised of 88 students of whom 49 were Muslims, 24 Hindus, 12 Sikhs and three Christian boys.⁵⁷All of them came from the middle ranks of Punjabi society with quite a few of them from artisanal families. The *munshi* or *naukripesha* loosely translated as the white collared class also had a fair representation in the student body of the school. The former, as reported by the principal in his annual report, showed 'considerable aptitude' and 'great interest' in their work, whilst the latter evinced little interest and earnestness. In the overall estimation of the principal, the students did better than he expected, with many of them said to have begun to 'exhibit special technical aptitudes'.⁵⁸ In the first year, the majority of the students were instructed in the elements of drawing from demonstrations on the blackboard and flat examples, while some of them were taught to draw from objects.

⁵⁶From J. L. Kipling, Principal, Lahore School of Art, to the Secretary, Government of Punjab, Proceedings of the Government of Punjab, Home Department, May 27, 1875, "Proposed plan for the Organization of Mayo School of Art". Reprinted in Samina Choonara and others, pp.158–162.

 ⁵⁷Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1875–76".
 ⁵⁸Ibid.

In his recommendations, Kipling envisaged "the first efforts of the school might well be devoted to an attempt to train a few men to assist in building the physical infrastructure, and also in administrative as well as academic business of the School of Art and Museum".⁵⁹ That wish came true when promising young men like Bhai Ram Singh, Khan Bahadur Munshi Sher Muhammad, Muhammad Din, Amir Buksh, Miran Baksh and Edwin Holder returned to teach and assist in the administration of the school. Bhai Ram Singh and Sher Muhammad were prized scions of Mayo School who made lasting contributions by projecting the utilitarian image of their parent institution. Their contribution will be dilated in the later sections. Consequently, within a few years of its existence the school established sufficient good reputation to undertake several assignments for designing furniture for institutions like Government College Lahore and the Punjab Club, preparing wood block advertisements, maps and plans for the C&MG, and a carved showcase for the Melbourne Exhibition in 1879. These assignments apart, the students trained at the Mayo School were very easily employed by government departments like Public Works or in schools as art instructors. In 1879 Kipling set up a potter's kiln "to direct terracotta as the future decorative material for official buildings in the Punjab".⁶⁰

Besides catering to the needs of its own students, the school also facilitated the boys of the carpentry school, functioning at the veranda of Director's office, by providing them elementary instruction in reading and writing the vernacular and arithmetic. Kipling had an extraordinary interest in setting up such industrial schools, subject to the availability of sufficient resources, under the super-ordination of the Principal of the School of Industrial Art. These schools could act as nurseries, supplying from amongst their pupils the best possible material for the School of Art. The school of carpentry came under the direct supervision of Kipling as early as 1876. It entailed its merger with the Mayo School. Its pupils formed over one-third of the total numbers of the school of industrial art.⁶¹

Initial years saw some fluctuation in the number of the students but gradually it became more stable, as is evident from the schedule (A). In 1879, the number of the students fell to a paltry 55.⁶² Kipling proceeded on furlough in March 1878 for a year.⁶³ Garrick who officiated in his absence, however, did not take "a falling off in the number of elementary students" as an indication of decline in the school. The public had, according to Garrick, realised that Mayo School of Industrial Arts was a technical school where the essential prerequisite was aptitude and "not a sort of forlorn hope and refuge for aimless school boys, who would like to enjoy a scholarship here till something turns up".⁶⁴ Garrick's main contribution to the school's development was the introduction of photography as a subject. The number of the students fell to its lowest ever, 43, in 1881. However, that was possibly due to the raging cholera epidemic that beset the whole province.⁶⁵ The preparation for the Punjab exhibition, which interrupted regular class work, may also have been a factor

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1875–76". ⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶²Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1876–77".
⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1879–80".

⁶⁵Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1877–78".

contributing to the drop of the number. That phase of diminishing enrollment proved ephemeral as it attained a good measure of stability with 62 students admitted to MSA in the 1883–84 session and their number incrementally swelled to 217 in 1898–99.

The institution undoubtedly benefited from official patronage in coming out of the lean patch. In October 1881, the attention of the deputy commissioners of various districts was solicited in persuading promising youths engaged in local industries to join the school. Subsistence allowance was promised as incentive for such students. That method yielded positive results and Kasur, Jhang, Gujrat, Hoshiarpur and Nabha State each contributed one or two students.⁶⁶ The Principal reported "an improvement in the general tone and spirit of the school" affected to some extent by the "convenient and well lighted rooms of the new building".

Increased enrollment may also have been encouraged by the steady growth in the range of courses that were offered. The process of instruction was initially confined only to basic elements of drawing performed on the black board or teaching a few youngsters to draw from objects in 1875–76, but within four years, instruction was provided in moulding, photography, wood engraving, arithmetic, elementary geometry, lithography, gesso-work and decoration. In 1884–85, the elementary course that all the students had to pass through comprised of:

- 1. Blackboard Demonstrations of Free-hand Drawing and Outline from the flat
- 2. Elementary Geometry
- 3. Outlines from the round
- 4. Rudiments of Perspective (Model Drawing)
- 5. Lights and Shade from the Round
- 6. Plant Drawing from Nature
- 7. Elementary Studies of Colour

The course designed for more advance level included following subjects:

- 1. Architectural Drawing and Design suitable for Mistries and Draughts men.
- 2. Advanced Perspective.
- 3. Wood Construction amid Ornamentation, as Woodcarving, Cabinetwork, &c.
- 4. Modelling in Clay and Moulding in Plaster, Architectural details for Terra-cotta, Stone Carving, &c.
- 5. Modelling from Nature.
- 6. Painting in Oil, Water-Colour and Distemper.
- 7. Lithographic Drawing.
- 8. Engraving on Wood and Metal.
- 9. Textile Design, as Carpets, Embroideries.⁶⁷

Kipling attached extraordinary importance to the principles of Oriental Design in all Architectural and Decorative work. The drawings and designs exhibited at the Art Exhibition

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Extract from the Report of the Principal, School of Art, Lahore for 1881–82".

at Simla (held in 1876) very evidently exemplified such a pattern, where the drawings of Sher Muhammad earned acclaim and acknowledgement probably because they carried both influences. Those drawings also won laurels for Kipling who was teacher-patron to Sher Muhammad and many other youngsters of his ilk. Sher Muhammad was not alone in winning prizes for his work. In the autumn of 1882 the Patiala prize was secured by one of the students for a watercolour picture of the front of Masjid Wazir Khan. Another student exhibited a picture of the corner of the same building which was sold along with the former. A third student got a prize of Rs.50 for a design for a reading room and library at Dera Ismail Khan. A fourth student won a bronze medal and a small money prize at Jaipur.⁶⁸

6. Emphasis on workshop/craftsmanship

At the time of the school's tenth anniversary, Kipling became embroiled in an argument with a redoubtable Punjabi official, Mr Denzil Ibbetson because of his review of the school in which he berated MSA as "a superior sort of workshop".⁶⁹Ibbetson wanted the school "to exercise a general influence over the artistic industries of the Province, by acting as aesthetic centre, a school of design, and the source of enlightened criticism and advice".⁷⁰ Ibbetson exhorted the administration of the school to dispel the impression that it was "a mere superior sort of workshop" meant to make things of public's choice, on their demand.

Kipling's role as the curator of the Lahore Museum invariably encouraged him to emphasise the significance of public exhibitions. Ibbetson saw this as being detrimental to the school's solid academic achievements. That discrepancy persisted for some time and subsequently fizzled out without any trace. Ibbetson and Kipling were only in agreement on the matter of the need for English as the medium of instruction.⁷¹ By this juncture a handful of young artists from the school had in fact already secured lucrative employment. For example, Maula Bakhsh, a wood carver and draughtsman, found a position in Kashmir to design and superintend the execution of ornamental details in new buildings for Kashmir State; Amir Bakhsh, draughtsman and a decorator painter, was engaged as Head Teacher of Drawing in the new Municipal Artisan's Training School at Amritsar; Ala ud Din was employed as draughtsman to the Archaeological Surveyor to the Punjab Government; Ghulam Muhammad was also employed by the Archeological Surveyor; and Gurdit Singh, a Sikh carpenter, wood carver and draughtsman, secured a position as the Executive Engineer to the Kashmir State.⁷²

The year 1885-86 was important for another reason as MSA started getting commissioned work from the Punjab Government. This included work on the decoration of Barnes Court's official summer residence in Simla. Other commissions were for a new municipal hall and offices at Ferozepore, the new mission church at Batala, "three models of gargoyles" carved

⁷¹Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1884– 85". ⁷²Ibid.

⁶⁸Pervaiz Vandal and Sajida Vandal, The Raj, Lahore & Bhai Ram Singh (Lahore, 2006), pp. 138–145.

⁶⁹Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report of the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1882–83". ⁷⁰Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Extract from the Report of the Principal, School of Art,

Lahore for 1984-85".

in stone for the new cathedral at Allahabad in the neighbouring United Provinces and the decoration of the Punjab Chief Court.⁷³ The earnings accruing from those projects contributed quite considerably to the Mayo School of Arts' finances.

7. MSA and Exhibitions

The Colonial and Indian exhibition held in London in 1886 proved a memorable occasion for the Mayo School of Art. Nine medals in all were awarded to MSA, six of which went to the teaching staff and the remainder to the students "in recognition of their services in connection with the Colonial and Indian Exhibition".⁷⁴ The Principal received a congratulatory letter from the Director of the Royal Polytechnic Academy and Museum of Berlin, which obviously brought immense satisfaction to Kipling.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, not all these meritorious feats could provide sufficient reason to placate Kipling's indignation over what he saw as an irresponsible, irregular demeanour of the students completely devoid of punctuality, discipline and rigour. As he recorded:

The classes from which our boys are drawn are not remarkable for punctuality or regularity, nor is it easy to persuade them of the importance of these virtues in a line of study, that more than any other, demands continuous practice.⁷⁶

His frustration with the inability to instill western values of discipline is very evident from yet another observation:

... the care and pain spent have only half the effect that might be produced on better material. In Europe, a teacher is eagerly followed; in this Country, there is a constant sense of drag and push exerted against a stolid *vis inertia*.⁷⁷

Kipling here demonstrates the notion held by British colonial officials regarding 'native' indolence. The value judgments and stereotypes he adopted regarding pupil behaviour were of course part of the wider desire to inculcate western notions of design, while paying mere lip service to indigenous influences.

Of those students who were rewarded, their prizes reflected not so much their natural talent, but their ability to utilise this to mimic western cultural and design sensitivities. The year 1889 once again brought accolades in this respect to the school when the pen drawing of Munshi Sher Muhammad won the prize at the Bombay Art Exhibition. Another student of the modelling class, John David, also won Bombay Art Society's medal for a portrait bust in *terra cotta*.⁷⁸Architectural drawings by Bhai Ram Singh too found a place in 'commended'

⁷³Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1885– 86".

⁷⁴Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Mayo School of Art, 1885–86".

⁷⁵Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1885– 86".

⁷⁶Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1886–87".
⁷⁷Ihid

⁷⁸Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Mayo School of Art, Lahore for 1886–87", by Lockwood Kipling.

and 'highly commended' categories, which was no mean feat. This student was later to assist Kipling in the ultimate imperial commission of decorating the Darbar Room at Queen Victoria's Osborne House residence on the Isle of Wight. Sita Ram, another Mayo School student, was also successful at the Bombay Art Exhibition, winning an 'Ava' silver medal for a coloured architectural drawing. During the same year, Gurdit Singh won the Lala Karm Chand jubilee prize of Rs. 25 for his architectural drawing. The Marquis of Dufferin also awarded a silver medal to the School.⁷⁹ The accolades of the Mayo School of Arts continued to accrue under Kipling's headship and his legacy lasted many generations after him. Kipling proceeded on a furlough of 18 months in early 1898 until he was replaced as Principal by his assistant Frederick Henry Andrews who had recently arrived from England.⁸⁰

However, the Mayo School did not progress as smoothly as was expected. In fact MSA was marred with several problems and many of those problems persisted for quite a long time. One complaint that lingered on until 1890 was the inability of the students to read and write. Therefore, instruction in the general education (reading, writing and arithmetic) was provided to the students, especially of the second division, in addition to their ordinary work in geometry, drawing and carving. Yet another complaint was about the rate of dropouts at a very early stage. A plausible explanation for the fathers' decision to "withdraw their boys at too early a period" may lie in the growing employment opportunities for students with even a mere smattering of art instruction.⁸¹ So although the school suffered in that students often did not finish their courses, they nonetheless were still able to get employed. Sita Ram, Amar Singh, Mehr Singh, Jetha Singh and, from the batch of 1890-91, Uttam Singh and John David found teaching assignments at different places before finishing their respective courses. Similarly, Girdhari Lal took up the profession of photography; Abdullah and Duni Chand found employment as Draftsmen at the local municipality. From the engineering class, Jan Muhammad secured the job of a Sub-Overseer in the Public Works Department and Kashi Ram successfully applied for a similar posting in the Irrigation Department in Multan.⁸² Therefore despite the aforementioned problems, the Mayo School of Arts was increasingly proving its worth in developing artisans trained according to the colonial state's notions of art and design.

In the report of the year 1890–91, Andrews spoke admirably about the staff in general, Munshi Sher Muhammad and Gervaise P. Pinto in particular. He described Sher Muhammad as "quick in imparting to his students... new and perplexing a subject as perspective", and he lauded the efforts of Pinto as a designer and as a teacher.⁸³ On previous occasions Kipling, too, had been generous in lavishing praise on Sher Muhammad and Ram Singh as teachers and artists but Andrews's appreciation was even more explicit. From January 1891 the practice of surveying was introduced which proved to be of great advantage to young

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Mayo School of Art, Lahore for 1888–89", by Lockwood Kipling.

⁸²Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1889– 90".

⁸³Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Mayo School of Art, Lahore for 1888–90", by Lockwood Kipling.

men seeking employment in subordinate rungs of the Public Works and other departments.⁸⁴ Unsurprisingly this course was soon well subscribed.

By the time of Kipling's retirement, he had laid the firm foundations of an art institution during 18 years of service. Despite his criticisms of his pupils' laziness, they had produced quality works of art and won numerous prizes. While his greatest protégé (Bhai Ram Singh) received praise from Queen Victoria which was unprecedented, officials in the colonial administration from Governors down to district officials had lavished support and approbation on the Mayo School. Moreover, the School produced many art instructors who went to places like North West Provinces and Oudh, Allahabad, Faizabad, Lucknow, Bareilly, Meerut and Sind. Probably that was why J. C. Nesfield, Director of Public Instruction, North-West Provinces and Oudh, came to Lahore to "learn the best way of introducing the teaching of drawing in the Schools of the North-West Provinces".85 Kipling and Andrews in consultation with Nesfield drew up a "carefully graduated system of studies and series of standards for examinations".⁸⁶ In addition to that, five young men were also sent from the School to act as Elementary Teachers in the North West Provinces. Nesfield's visit to the Punjab and his consultations reveal that the school was now acting as a model for educational development throughout northern India. This pre-eminence was due in no small part to Kipling's leadership as Principal.

Conclusion

The Mayo School's development must be understood in the context of wider intellectual and political currents in both India and Britain. These include the desire of the Art administrators in colonial India to preserve native culture in the wake of the shock of the 1857 Revolt. 'Tradition' was nonetheless understood in terms of western notions of the native Indian and western sensibilities of what constituted beauty. The work of the Mayo School was thus at one level the same kind of imperial response to the blending of the Indian 'traditional' with its own cultural values as was Indo-Saracenic architecture. Like the latter, it was also influenced by cultural counter-responses at home to the 'industrial' challenge of modernity. Upholding traditional arts and crafts was both an attempt to prevent their dissolution in an age of mass machine production and a harking back to an imagined, idyllic world.

The Mayo School also reflected the inherent right as understood by colonial administrators to speak on behalf of their subjects. Kipling was as patronising to his students as was any Punjab School administrator. He also, like other administrators, fell back on 'expert,' colonially produced knowledge to be able to represent and categorise native interests and sensibilities. Moreover as in other fields of cultural and social endeavour, the colonial state was quick to recognise and reward those subjects who were most adept at minicking its values. The resultant hybridisation reached its apogee with respect to the Mayo School when Kipling's

⁸⁴Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Mayo School of Industrial Art, Lahore for 1890–91", by Lockwood Kipling.

⁸⁵Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Director Public Instruction Punjab, 1892– 93"

⁸⁶Home Department Government of the Punjab, "Report on the Mayo Industrial School of Art, Lahore for 1892–93", by Lockwood Kipling.

most successful protégé Bhai Ram Singh worked with him to actualise an imaginary Darbar hall in the incongruous setting of Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. In 1898 when Kipling relinquished the charge of the Principal, Mayo School had already anchored itself on surer footings. The traditions that Kiping had set, were sustained under his successors, thus his legacy continued.

Appendix 1

Year	Total No. Of Students		
1883-84	62		
1884-85	85		
1885-86	71		
1886-87	82		
1887–88	81		
1888-89	100		
1889–90	98		
1890–91	117		
1891–92	134		
1892-93	119		
1893–94	139		
1894–95	171		
1897–98	217		
1901-02	302		
1902-03	302		
1903–04	302		
1904–05	333		
1905-06	380		
1906–07	301		
1907–08	291		
1908–09	269		
1909–10	273		

Table 1. Gradual Increase in the enrollment of Students MSA

Source: The table is made from the reports of the Director Public Instructions Punjab (1883–1910).

Appendix 2

Year	No. of Students Discharged	No. of Students Employed	Range of Salaries (in Rs)	Nature of Jobs
1901–02	28	28	15-60	Four are Drawing and Carpentry Master, seven are Draftsman, two Lithographer, one Litho-Draftsman, seven sub-overseers, one surveyor, one Labelwriter in the Lahore Museum, one is in an apprentice in the North-Western Railway.
1903–04	15	15	30-45	Most of them are Teachers or Drawing Masters in Schools.
1905–06	31	31 (including Engineering class)	15-100	C
1908–09		17		One is employed as Draftsman, others as Teachers of Carpentry and Drawing
1909–10		8		Six Drawing Masters, one Draftsman, one Surveyor.

Table 2. Rate of Employment among the Discharged Students of the MSA

Source: Annual Reports on Popular Education of the years 1901–02, 1903–04, 1905–6, 1907–08, 1908–09, 1909–10. tk393@cam.ac.uk

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