"Calculated to be Offensive to Hindoos"? Vernacular

Education, History Textbooks and the Waqi'at

Controversy of the 1860s in Colonial North India

JEFFREY M. DIAMOND

As the historiography of colonial India continues to move beyond the political history of larger imperial projects to evaluating the social, cultural and intellectual transformations within distinct contexts during the nineteenth century, it is vital to examine educational debates and their role in social change. Indeed, as the British expanded their rule over north India during the nineteenth century, language and education became central to the British conquest of land and people. Research about colonial education has often concentrated on the expanding influence of English-language Anglicist education following the debates over Macaulay's Minute in the 1830s. Much of this writing has centred on the argument for a homogenous, hegemonic, colonial, educational agenda (in English) for British India.[1] Yet, a more focused analysis within the regional contexts of north India reveals that English-language education was less important than the reform and utilisation of local Indian languages for what was termed "vernacular" education.

In north India, especially the north-west Indian region of Punjab, colonial officials promoted the use of Urdu and the development of Urdu- language instruction by the 1850s. The object was to transform the Persianised (Perso-Islamic) cultural world of the Indian elite, replacing Persian – the main language of the courts (administration) and literate culture, utilised by all communities – with an Urdu cultural world that represented British rule. Led by orientalists and colonial officials, along with the Indian literati, the development of Urdu-language "vernacular" education was pioneered through the development of a new curriculum in Urdu that included subjects such as history. And the creation of textbooks for use in schools became central to these reforms.

The object of this paper is to examine the development of vernacular Indian history textbooks (in Urdu) to provide an insight into the emerging contestations about the meaning of history and its influence on the evolving nature of community identity in colonial India. History textbooks and newer historical methods – affiliated with vernacular education – help us to understand the wider implications of colonial educational reforms in the middle of the nineteenth century; these textbooks provided opportunities for reformers to influence, directly and indirectly, the emerging debates about historical identity – helping communities to articulate their own consciousness as well demarcate the boundaries between themselves

---

[1]One influential study that uses this Minute to offer a grand narrative about English language education is Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (Delhi, 1998).

and other communities. Indeed, the articulations about the meaning of history in the colonial context provided an important area of contention between British educational officials and the Indian literati about the purpose of education and the characterisation of religious identities. Thus, I undertake this analysis by situating history textbooks within a wider framework of educational developments in north India.

In this paper, I first will evaluate educational reforms (and the processes of reform) in colonial north India, concentrating on the formation of a vernacular curriculum. Then I will examine the development of colonial Indian historiography before analysing how these issues eventually shaped the creation of vernacular Indian history textbooks and facilitated the articulation of community identity.

The Context: Educational Reform in North India

North-west India, specifically the region of Punjab, provides us with an opportunity to examine the impact of colonial rule and educational reforms over a relatively short period of time. The region, only annexed by the British in 1849, was rapidly incorporated into British India. For colonial officials, education was a key method to promote British rule, as it could foster larger social changes as well. Thus, educational reforms expanded rapidly after the annexation of the region.[2] In addition, Lahore, the capital of the Punjab, became a centre for educational reforms in north-west India following the Revolt of 1857 and the destruction of Delhi as the physical and symbolic capitol of India.[3] Thus, educational reformers in the Punjab became some of the most prominent advocates for vernacular education, as well as the leading critics of Anglicist education in India.[4] Moreover, the Punjab helps us to reconsider the role of Muslims in educational reform in north India. Instead of resisting colonial attempts to develop newer education structures, the Muslim literati in Lahore took an active part in educational developments. Indeed, vernacular education provided a space for these literati to respond to the challenges of colonial rule by adapting their own cultural frameworks and incorporating and articulating new forms of knowledge, under the patronage of colonial officials. Lastly, the experience of colonial rule in the Punjab was not necessarily similar to other regions in India which had had a much longer experience of British rule. Thus, we need to understand the experience of colonialism and education reforms that were specific both to the Punjab as well as wider north India, as they will help us to contextualise later historical developments in the region that have been examined in much greater detail.

In the early 1850s, colonial officials in Lahore began to experiment with the establishment of schools that could reflect the new cultural world brought with colonial rule. These schools

---

[2]Reformers were able to utilise experiments developed in other parts of north India (see below) to formulate policy more quickly in the Punjab. Thus the Punjab serves as a 'case study' for wider changes in north-west India. In addition, there has been a dearth of research about the early colonial period in the Punjab, although the reforms there provided frameworks for later developments.

[3]For a discussion about the effects of the Revolt in Delhi in 1857–1858, see, Narayani Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires, 1803–1931*. (Delhi, 1998), pp. 39–58. Delhi was attached to the Punjab region after 1857 and administered through Lahore, further illustrating the rise of Lahore over the one-time capital of Mughal India.

[4]One important critic was G.W. Leitner, an orientalist educator and Principal of Government College, Lahore. See, Jeffrey M. Diamond, "The orientalist-literati relationship in the northwest: G.W. Leitner, Muhammad Hussain Azad and the rhetoric of neo-orientalism in colonial Lahore", *South Asia Research*, XXXI,1 (2011).

were not firmly planted within an administrative structure until 1856, when the colonial government founded the Department of Public Instruction, Punjab. However, many of the schools established before and after 1856 began to utilise the new administrative vernacular language chosen for the Punjab, Urdu. In these debates, colonial officials already deemed Punjabi as inappropriate, choosing instead Urdu, a language already used in other parts of north India.[5] Therefore, by the later 1850s, Urdu became the medium of instruction for schools founded and aided by the Punjab government, English instruction was limited to much more advanced students. At this time, the government initiated an ambitious programme to develop a series of vernacular textbooks as well.

The establishment of an official programme of education, the use of Urdu and the creation of an Urdu curriculum posed a direct challenge to the predominant indigenous educational structure in the Punjab, the Persian-language *maktab*.[6] The *maktab* was an elementary (and secondary for some) educational institution. It was central to the transmission of the Perso-Islamic cultural heritage of the Punjab (and north India).[7] Indeed it was a main site for the transference of Persian-language skills and knowledge associated with elite literate culture in the Punjab. Students learned the various skills and expertise that were required to serve in local administration, trade and other intellectual and cultural aspects of life in the region (even during Sikh rule). Although *maktab*s were by no means a universal educational system, students from all religious communities attended them.[8] Many were members of the elite in the region, including Hindu Khatris and Muslims who were members of the *sharif* elite.[9] These groups also were the main class of students who attended colonial schools, realising the need to adjust to new circumstances.

Although *maktab*s were not formally regulated by a government authority such as an education department, prior to colonial rule, there were many similarities between *maktab*s across the region (and north India). In addition to linguistic skills, they provided a moral framework associated with *sharif* culture. For example, *adab* literature was central to the curriculum, including the *Gulistan* and *Bustan* of Sa'di, the famous Persian poet. The teaching of Persian-language history texts varied and mainly appeared in more advanced classes as part of the *adab* curriculum. Yet, with the establishment of formal colonial schools, much of the *maktab* curriculum, including the texts by Sa'di, were arguably unsuitable for their

---

[5]For an analysis of the Urdu language debates in colonial north India, see Jeffrey M. Diamond, "A vernacular for a new generation"? Historical perspectives about Urdu and Punjabi, and the formation of language policy in colonial northwest India" in *Language Policy and Language Conflict in Afghanistan and its Neighbors. The Changing Politics of Language Choice*, (ed.) Harold Schiffman (Leiden, 2011).

[6]Although *maktab*s were not the only indigenous educational system, they were the predominant indigenous primary educational institution in the Punjab. This was confirmed by various colonial studies in the region during the 1850s. For example, see the first educational report by W.D. Arnold, the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, in "Extracts from Mr. Arnold's first report, dated 6th July 1857", in *Bureau of Education, India. Selections from Educational Records. Part II. 1840–1859*, (ed.) J.A. Richey (Calcutta, 1922), p. 290. Other educational systems included the *dharamsala* (which taught in the medium of Gurmukhi).

[7]The main pillars of Perso-Islamic culture included Persian language and literature, Islamic (and 'secular') knowledge and the transmission of Persian skills and knowledge. For further details about Perso-Islamic culture in North India, see Diamond, "A 'Vernacular' for a 'New Generation'?" and Francis Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (New Delhi, 2001), pp. 9–40.

[8]It was even argued that Hindus attended *maktab*s in "a greater proportion than the Muhammadans "Extracts from Mr. Arnold's first report, dated 6th July 1857," in Richey, *Selections,* p. 290.

[9]For an insight into *sharif* culture in the nineteenth century, see David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton, 1978), pp. 35–101.

practical application to the circumstances of colonial rule. For example, in one of his earliest educational circulars, the first Director of Public Instruction for the Punjab (DPI), W.D. Arnold, characterised the syllabus of *maktab*s as "teaching boys to read the Gulistan and Bostan with more or less fluency, and little or no comprehension", and "to write a letter in Persian, and perhaps . . . to keep accounts in the Mahajunee fashion".[10]

Due to these considerations, colonial officials viewed *maktab* education as outdated, and educational reform became identified with wider social reforms. Thus, officials sought to develop a new Urdu educational system that was not identified with the religious and cultural framework of the *maktab*, replacing it and many of its characteristic texts. It is not my intention here to explore the formal changes that facilitated the establishment of Urdu-language primary and secondary schools (both government and government aided-private schools). I have detailed this elsewhere.[11] Rather, here, I wish to examine specific aspects of the creation and production of an Urdu language-curriculum in the 1850s and 1860s, focusing on history textbooks. History textbooks were part of a curriculum that taught practical knowledge, skills, and morals – to produce productive and honest employees who could serve the colonial state. Therefore, Urdu textbooks were not only representative of the changes brought with colonial rule, they were considered central to educational and associated societal reform efforts.

Vernacular Education and the Transmission of "General Knowledge"

One of the main objectives of vernacular education in north India was to provide a new educational system that utilised key aspects of English education without relying on the English language to covey this material. This educational system was organised and regulated, and included the establishment of an official school system with schools in principal towns and villages that were subject to the authority of the colonial administration. Related to these developments was the formulation of an official Urdu-language curriculum that established fixed standards and taught distinct forms of literacy, knowledge and methods of analysis. Texts and materials were divided into specific subjects, including language and literature.

However, the impact of educational reforms went beyond simply utilising Urdu. One of the central functions of the vernacular school curriculum was the conveyance (in Urdu) of what was described as "general knowledge", including mathematics, geography and history. These subjects were drawn from the curriculum of English schools in Britain as well as those in India. Indeed, the incorporation of knowledge (what was termed generally as '*ilm*) from European educational systems into Indian-language textbooks was vital to the creation of a vernacular curriculum that offered a practical education, an education that also could be

---

[10]"Circular No. 1", April 5, 1856, Punjab Educational Proceedings, 31 January 1857. As we shall see, Persian histories also were criticised. For a detailed examination of the debates about *maktab* education, see Jeffrey M. Diamond, "Developing Indigenous and European Knowledge: The Vernacular Education Movement and Neo-Orientalism in the Punjab, 1849–1870" PhD thesis (University of London, 2002) Chapter III.

[11]See, Diamond, "Developing Indigenous and European Knowledge", Chapter IV. *Maktab*s did not completely disappear with the establishment of colonial schools, but their significance and numbers were severely reduced (mainly through the loss of patronage).

tested via examination.[12] This knowledge was identified with Europe, even if the roots of this knowledge were from classical Greece and Asia.

The use of knowledge identified with Europe was pioneered in the earlier nineteenth century at locations such as Delhi College.[13] Originally founded in 1825 on the site of a defunct madrasa, the College integrated European subjects and English-language education into its syllabus, forming English and Oriental departments in 1835. By the 1840s, Delhi College became renowned as a centre of learning for the revival and development of Urdu and Urdu education through the assistance of European thought. Although the curriculum offered an "orientalist" approach to the study of classical Indian languages and literature (such as Arabic and Persian), European knowledge was also transmitted through the study of history, philosophy and science in the "vernacular". As a result, the Vernacular Translation Society was formed at Delhi College in the 1840s, through the efforts of college officials and the Indian literati, to translate English textbooks on history, law, science and medicine into Urdu. These books, both translated and written for the College, were some of earliest textbooks to be developed for Urdu vernacular education. These pioneering efforts later served as examples for the development of vernacular texts – including history textbooks – in the North-Western Provinces (NWP) in the later 1840s (see below), and in the Punjab by the 1850s.

These advancements raise the question: why did reformers promote the use of knowledge and frameworks associated with Europe? 'European' knowledge came to represent the power of the colonial state. By utilising this knowledge, including European scientific developments and European concepts of history (discussed below) associated with the "advances" of Europe, the aim was to promote the progress and reform of Indian society. Indeed, educational reformers (and increasingly the Indian literati) argued that European knowledge (including the sciences, history and related disciplines) was necessary to improve and develop education in the region.[14] After all, Macaulay believed that, "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia", and there were many more shelves in this symbolic European library.[15] Through the promotion of European knowledge, educational debates in the 1850s moved beyond the questions about Anglicist or orientalist subjects to questions about the language of instruction. Although Macaulay and the Anglicists argued that European knowledge was best communicated through English-language education, 'neo-orientalists' in regions such as the Punjab argued that European knowledge and education could equally be communicated in Indian languages. These

---

[12]By the 1860s, general knowledge formed an important section of the annual educational examinations in the Punjab. Fuller to Secretary – Government of Punjab, 10 January 1865, Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, January 1865. Although *'ilm* was associated with both religious and secular knowledge, the use of the term by education officials and the literati in the region mainly denotes secular knowledge related to colonial education: see also the discussion about *'ilm* and history below.

[13]Historical analysis about Delhi College has been limited. A background and basic syllabus of Delhi College is included in Moulvi 'Abd al-Haq, *Marhum Delhi Kalij* (Delhi, 1945), pp. 73–87. For a general overview, see Margrit Pernau (ed.), *Delhi College: Traditional Elites, the Colonial State and Education before 1857* (Delhi, 2006).

[14]This was explicitly argued by European officials as well as Muslim reformers in the Punjab and elsewhere. For example, Muslim 'modernists' such as Syed Ahmed Khan sought to utilise European knowledge to improve the education and social conditions of Muslims. For a general overview of Khan's ideas and Islamic Modernism, see the classic by Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857–1964*, (London, 1967).

[15]Thomas Babington Macaulay, "Minute on Indian education", in *Archives of Empire: Volume 1. From the East India Company to the Suez Canal*, (eds) Mia Carter and Barbara Harlow (Durham, 2004), pp. 230–231.

'neo-orientalists' sought to draw from European educational systems (as well as Indian educational systems), using Indian languages as a way to respond to the push for English-language education.[16]

By the late 1850s, many education officials in the Punjab could be defined as neo-orientalists. They began to establish a formal Urdu curriculum, utilising textbooks to convey a variety of skills as well as 'general knowledge'. By the 1860s, 'general knowledge' in the Punjab became more formalised with the development of an official curriculum by the Director of Public Instruction (DPI), Punjab, A.R. Fuller, and the standardised use of textbooks for the region.[17] In addition to the creation and standardised use of language texts, there was an assortment of additional subjects. For example, textbooks were written that conveyed functional mathematics skills, including arithmetic, geometry, and algebra.[18] Geography and history textbooks were formulated as well.

Vernacular textbooks in the Punjab were, sometimes, translations of English school textbooks: for example, textbooks about the history of England and Europe.[19] Yet, the development of Indian history textbooks in Urdu involved more than mere translations of texts – raising larger debates about the meaning and functions of history. I will evaluate the emerging colonial historiography on India and how this influenced the development of Indian history textbooks in Urdu before examining history textbooks generally in the Punjab.

Colonial Historiography, Myth, and the Development of History Texts

To understand and situate the role of history textbooks in portraying community identity as well as their place in educational advances in the Punjab, we need to evaluate the development of colonial historiography on India in history textbooks prior to the 1850s. The relatively limited research on the evolution of Indian language history textbooks during colonial rule has focused on Bengal, often attempting to trace the relationship of these textbooks to the nationalist cause.[20] However, we also need to place these developments within the wider debates about education. Moreover, it is important to understand how history textbooks developed in north-west India in order to recognise the similarities as well as differences with developments in Bengal and to analyse the debates that erupted in the Punjab.

---

[16]However, vernacular education was not simply the imposition of Western ideas or part of a wider colonial hegemony. As we shall see, these ideas were appropriated for specific purposes. For example, the cultural authority of European knowledge was mediated by the considerations of the Indian literati who wrote many of these Urdu textbooks.

[17]W.D. Arnold, the first Director of Public Instruction, began to plan this curriculum. By the 1860s, general knowledge formed an important section of the annual educational examinations. See, for example, Fuller to Secretary - Government of Punjab, 10 January 1865, Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, January 1865. Fuller is examined in further detail below with reference to his role in the controversy over history textbooks in the Punjab.

[18]Most of these books were Urdu translations from English mathematics textbooks, where the explanations were translated into Urdu with the use of Arabic numerals. An example of an early textbook from the NWP is *Tahrir-e Uqlidis* [Elements of Euclid], (Delhi, 1853).

[19]For example, Goldsmith's *History of England*, taught in schools in Britain, also was used in the Punjab.

[20]For example, Partha Chaterjee develops a brief discussion about textbooks in Bengal to situate the later growth of the nationalist movements in the region (Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 77–94). However, the situation in north-west India varied from Bengal because of the much shorter period of colonial rule in the middle of the nineteenth century.

As I have said, the incorporation of European knowledge was a vital part of the development of the vernacular educational system, and history was a key discipline in this enterprise. It has been argued that the development of history writing in colonial India was a marker of modernity because it illustrated a "consciousness of . . . historical depths and trajectories", mainly associated with national consciousness and nationalist movements.[21] Although this point does not need to be specifically detailed here, the development of history in colonial north India was less concrete than a divide between modernity and pre-modernity ("medieval"), or between the rational and the irrational. I recognise that the attitudes and purposes regarding the writing of history largely changed with colonial rule, as the British brought European conceptions of history affiliated with the development of the European nation state. However, history textbooks developed during colonial rule in the nineteenth century also adapted pre-colonial conceptual frameworks and knowledge to serve colonial purposes (and this became the subject of debate – discussed below).

Mughal histories in Persian provided important pre-colonial sources for the development of Indian history texts in the colonial context. These pre-colonial histories exhibited the past as a model for contemporary readers, as Mughal histories included both historical (chronological) memory and collective memory.[22] Mughal texts provided insight into the worldviews of rulers and the elite, and this was evident to the readers of these texts. Thus, one could argue that these texts provided a limited understanding of historical trajectories and were part of a growing 'consciousness' about Muslim 'Hindustan'.[23] Nonetheless, pre-colonial histories did not reflect a wider historical background and did not trace the causes and consequences of historic events.[24] Therefore, Mughal histories were somewhat linear as well as cyclical, often articulating a general historical memory (Islamic or regional) as well as concentrating on a court of a specific ruler.

During British expansion in India, European conceptions of history influenced the developing forms of colonial Indian historiography. Colonial histories, and more specific to this discussion, history textbooks (in the vernacular) mainly detailed historical 'facts' in order to appear unbiased.[25] However, the British utilised pre-colonial knowledge in order to formulate 'factual' histories that covered longer trajectories of time, and attempted to illustrate the relations between different rulers and periods (see below). These histories also helped to legitimise British rule by redeveloping chronological and collective memory to

---

[21]Nicholas B. Dirks, "History as a sign of the modern," *Public Culture*, II, 2, (1990), pp. 25–32.

[22]In order to detail this memory, these histories often centred on rulers and courts. For a discussion of pre-colonial imperial histories, see Sudipta Sen, "Imperial orders of the past: The semantics of history and time in the medieval Indo-Persianate culture of north India", in *Invoking the Past: The Uses of History in South Asia*, (ed.) Daud Ali (New Delhi, 1999), pp. 231–257; Khaliq A. Nizami, *On History and Historians of Medieval India* (Delhi, 1982), pp. 39–48. My discussion does not intend to designate pre-colonial history and knowledge as simply "foils" for modernity, a common mistake for historians of modern India. Rather, I seek to illustrate some of the uses of these histories. This same concern was expressed in Daud Ali, "Introduction", in, Ali, *Invoking the Past,* p. 9.

[23]Religious scholars also were familiar with notions of linear history to some extent. The progression of Islamic history from Adam to Muhammad as the seal of the Prophets is an example of such an understanding.

[24]For example, these histories did not provide viewpoints of rivals to the rulers, and often were limited to the history of the "court and the camp" (Nizami, *On History*, pp. 46–52).

[25]Although the contextual use of such 'facts' – especially the choice about the events and ideas to include – was a matter of contention in history textbooks in England, the reliance on 'facts' was central to the rhetoric concerning the development of colonial Indian historiography (see below). For a review of history textbooks in England, see Valerie E. Chancellor, *History for their Masters. Opinion in the English History Textbook: 1800–1914* (Bath, 1970).

insert the British into the wider trajectory of Indian history. Therefore, we should evaluate the influence of European conceptions of factual histories, as well as pre-colonial knowledge, on the writing of history texts in English that served as models for history textbooks in Urdu.

The process of writing Indian history in colonial India dates from the earlier orientalist experiments during the time of Sir William Jones in the later eighteenth century. Jones focused on the importance of primary sources (in Persian and Sanskrit) in order to construct the past into an accurate history of India.[26] This emphasis on primary sources to locate 'facts' in order to write history illustrates the Orientalist connections to Western-derived notions of history and academic study. However, James Mill soon challenged the reliability of Indian language sources, formulating important distinctions between fact and fiction. For instance, he opposed the later eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century 'mythological histories' written by Indian historians where "fable stands in the place of fact".[27] This was part of a larger effort to separate literature (including fables) – labelled by the British as '*adab*' – from '*ilm* – knowledge associated with science and 'fact'.[28]

Mill's *History* influenced later Indian histories, and his ideas shaped the development of history textbooks. Consequently, a significant objective in the patronage and development of history textbooks in north India in the 1850s and 1860s was the separation of 'myth' (including literature and folklore) from 'factual' histories that represented knowledge – '*ilm*. Such 'factual' histories also served to justify vernacular education and the pre-eminence of vernacular texts over the *maktab* texts that supposedly relied upon 'fables' and unreliable facts. Indeed, colonial officials viewed the history texts of the *maktab* – often associated with *adab* literature – negatively. For example, W. D. Arnold (the DPI, Punjab), described one 'history' text used in *maktab*s, the *Sikandar Nama*, as "a narrative of facts which are not true".[29] In order to replace such texts and develop history as a subject, education officials sought to develop new Indian histories in the vernacular.

As Mill was part of the utilitarian movement, his *History* offered a comparative critique of European and Indian civilisations. His evaluations were often critical of Indian society. For example, during his discussion about the beliefs and practices of the "Religion of the Hindus" Mill criticised the "burning of wives" and the encouragement of the "loosest morality".[30] Indian history texts in Urdu were not so explicitly critical of Indian society. Thus, although most writers acknowledge Mill's influence in developing Indian historiography, another important model for the development of Indian history textbooks in the vernacular was the more "value-free" (implying a less critical or less moralising) *History of India: From Antiquity to the Accession of the Mogul Dynasty* by John Marshman.

---

[26]Jones's emphasis of primary sources in Persian and Sanskrit illustrated the need to find reliable sources for history (Javed Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings: James Mill's* The History of British India *and Orientalism* (Oxford, 1992), p. 139).

[27]Quoted from, Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings*, p. 149. As an influential author and critic, Mill's notions of history in *The History of British India* shaped the writing of Indian history in the nineteenth century.

[28]For a brief discussion of this separation, see, C.M. Naim, "Prize winning *Adab*: A study of five Urdu books written in response to the Allahabad government Gazette notification", in *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam*, (ed.) Barbara Metcalf (Berkeley, 1984), pp. 291–293.

[29]"Extracts from Mr. Arnold's second report, 25th June 1858", in Richey, *Selections*, p. 301.

[30]Mill believed that "nations differed less then one another in the knowledge of morality . . . than in the degrees of steadiness, with which they assign the preference to morals"(James Mill (ed) H.H. Wilson), *The History of British India*, Vol. 1, (London, 1840), especially pp. 416–424).

Marshman was a Baptist missionary who originally wrote his text (in English) in the 1830s for mission schools. It was less opinionated than Mill's work, providing a basic 'factual' history. Indeed, Marshman's main emphasis was "simplicity of style", although he used various historical writings as sources. For instance, Mill's *History* provided a three-part model to understand Indian history, based upon historical periods associated with Hindu rule, Muslim rule and British rule, a model that corresponds with European historiography of the 'classical', 'medieval' or 'feudal' and the 'modern' periods. Marshman's *History* also employed a similar framework, dividing Indian history up to Mughal rule into two periods, the "Hindoo Period" and the "Moosulman Period".[31] The Hindu period was roughly a third of the book, detailing early Hinduism, the Vedas, along with the rise of Buddhism, and various early invasions of India (including Darius and Alexander the Great). By this time, the need to separate fact from myth (or 'fable') influenced Marshman's attempts to locate proper sources for the Hindu period. Thus relatively few sources limited this discussion, an important point since Indian histories in Urdu (discussed below) relied upon Marshman's text.[32] However, Marshman also referred to wider historical events, such as the development of Christianity and Islam (outside of India) during the Hindu period. The Muslim period was much more detailed, and included the initial Muslim conquests in north India, up to the rise of the Mughals. However, this section also included references to Hindu rulers who challenged Muslim rule and the initial Portuguese contacts in India. Marshman's *History* was soon used for vernacular translations, and was referred to as the "Tarikh" at Delhi College.[33]

Indian History Textbooks in North India and the Punjab in the 1850s and 1860s

Indian history texts in English influenced the creation of history textbooks in Urdu. One of the first Urdu-language history texts came from the neighbouring region, the North-Western Provinces. Indeed, many of the early educational developments in the Punjab came from the NWP, as Lt. Governor James Thomason's administration became an early advocate for Urdu-language education in the later 1840s. Many of his young officials moved to Lahore in the 1850s, bringing their experiences and ideas with them.[34] The use of NWP textbooks influenced the development of educational subjects in vernacular schools in the Punjab. For instance, the first DPI, Punjab, W. D. Arnold, wrote that many *tehsil* (subdivision of the

---

[31]Marshman even states that he made use of Mill's *History*. Mill also may have influenced Marshman's brief discussion of Hinduism as well as the significance of 'facts' to write a history of India (John C. Marshman, *The History of India: From Remote Antiquity to the Accession of the Mogul Dynasty; Compiled for the Use of Schools* (Serampore, 1842) Preface). My references to Marshman's work will pertain to this 1842 edition unless noted otherwise. For a review of Marshman and other early Indian histories, see Avril Powell, "History textbooks and the transmission of the pre-colonial past", in Ali, *Invoking the Past*, pp. 96–98.

[32]Interestingly, a later expanded three-volume set of Marshman's *History*, developed for the University of Calcutta, also has limited coverage of the "Hindu" period (John C. Marshman, *The History of India, From the Earliest Period to the Close of Lord Dalhousie's Administration* (London, 1867), Vols. 1–3).

[33]Marshman's text also was known as the *Brief Survey of History* in English. My overall discussion is limited to history texts in the vernacular, but English-language Indian histories were also used in schools. Marshman's text was read in the 1st and 3rd classes of *zillah* (district) schools in the Punjab. These were more advanced schools (often located in prominent towns and cities) that offered limited instruction in English to the highest classes ("Revised scheme of studies for Zillah schools in the Punjab", in Captain A.R. Fuller, *Report on Popular Education in the Punjab and its Dependencies, For the Year 1860–61*, (Lahore, 1864), Addenda).

[34]Before textbooks were developed in Lahore and the Punjab, many were brought from the NWP.

district) schoolboys could "give an intelligent account of the early Muhammadan invasions of India".[35] One widely used general Indian history textbook from the NWP was the *Tarikh-e Hind* [History of India]. It was published in Agra early in the 1850s, and used in the Punjab soon afterwards. Fuller also included it in the curriculum of "middle" classes in schools in the Punjab.[36] In 1861 it was reprinted in the Punjab as the *Tawarikh-e Hind* [Histories of India].[37]

Similar to Marshman's *History*, the *Tawarikh-e Hind* provided a chronological framework that detailed facts about Indian history. It began with a review of the geography of India, from Burma to Kashmir and Afghanistan.[38] The second chapter provided an early history of India before the coming of Islam. It was not specifically labelled as the Hindu period, but it described several Buddhist and Hindu rulers and the conquests of Alexander the Great.[39] As the *Tawarikh* was influenced by Marshman's (and indirectly Mill's) conception of Indian historiography, it was concerned about "proper sources pertaining to the first people" [inhabitants] who came to India,[40] echoing Marshman's concern for "authentic" records from the era before the arrival of Islam in India, as many sources were "mythological" texts such as the epic, the *Mahabharata*. A lack of 'proper' or 'authentic' records was used to partly justify the brief discussion of this period in the *Tawarikh* – illustrating the influential emphasis on 'facts' by Mills and colonial historians as well as the supposed accuracy of the text.[41]

The third chapter about Muslim rule in India employed a comparable format and discussion to Marshman's *History*, sequentially detailing the history of Muslim rulers. After an opening discussion about the Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslim *Khalifa* period, the chapter chronologically rapidly proceeds to the early history of Muslim contact in India, the invasions of Mahmud of Gahzni and the Delhi Sultanate.[42] The largest section of the chapter is devoted to Mughal rule, including a detailed discussion of Mughal emperors. Although similar to Marshman, it is clearly aimed at an Indian audience. For instance, while Marshman stated the reign of Akbar began just prior to the reign of Elizabeth I of England, such a reference was not needed (and may not have even been understood) in an Urdu

---

[35] "Extracts from Mr. Arnold's second report, 25th June 1858", in Richey, *Selections*, pp. 301–303. Arnold's 'account' of these invasions is not clear. They presumably include the many controversial invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni, detailed in textbooks such as the *Tarikh-e Hind*, discussed below.

[36] I have located an 1856 Allahabad edition: Munshi Sada Sukh Lal, *Tarikh-e Hind*. (Allahabad, 1856). The *Tarikh-e Hind* was taught in the 5th to 7th classes of *zillah* schools and the 4th and 5th classes of vernacular schools in the Punjab ("Revised scheme of studies for Zillah schools" and "Revised course of study to be pursued in the vernacular schools", in Fuller, *Report on Popular Education in the Punjab . . . 1860–61*, Addenda). Even after the publication of a new history textbook, *Waqi'at-e Hind* (discussed below), it was listed for the sixth and seventh classes in *zillah* schools and the 5th and 4th classes of vernacular schools in Holroyd's revised Scheme ("Scheme of studies for Zillah Schools", Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, January 1865).

[37] *Tawarikh-e Hind* (Lahore, 1861). No author is listed on this edition except that it is published at the request of Captain Fuller, the DPI. The book was published in both the singular *Tarikh* and the plural *Tawarikh*. My references to *Tarikh-e Hind* in the ensuing discussion will be to this Lahore *Tawarikh* edition unless noted otherwise, as this edition was reprinted specifically for the Punjab Education Department – influencing later texts such as the *Waqi'at-e Hind*.

[38] *Tawarikh-e Hind*, pp. 1–4.

[39] For example, there was a brief review of Ashoka (*Tawarikh-e Hind*, pp. 5–23).

[40] *Tawarikh-e Hind*, p. 5.

[41] This arguably also illustrates the influence of Captain Fuller who sponsored the writing of the text and reviewed it.

[42] *Tawarikh-e Hind*, pp. 24–53.

textbook in north India. However, both texts were sympathetic to Akbar and less generous in their treatment of Aurangzeb, a common theme in colonial Indian historiography. For example, the *Tawarikh* states that Akbar, "enjoyed the company of scholars. His listened to all ideas carefully . . . .No disgrace to the nation came from his mouth",[43] while the discussion of Aurangzeb was less enthusiastic, focusing on palace intrigue and Aurangzeb's rise to power through force.

The textbook concludes with a brief review of the expansion of British rule in India, illustrating how the British were incorporated into a wider narrative of Indian history.[44] This review includes the acquisition of territory by the East India Company, and closes with discussions about the various Afghan wars and the annexation of Sindh. Although the book was republished in the Punjab, the Sikh wars that led to the eventual annexation of the region by 1849 are only briefly mentioned.[45]

These examples illustrate that the *Tawarikh-e Hind* provided factual knowledge (*'ilm*) within a chronological structure, following the model of Indian history textbooks in English. The long section on Muslim rule was organised mainly by the rulers of each time period. Although the Muslim period was informed by Persian histories either directly or indirectly (through Marshman), the conceptual organisation of historical trajectories, especially regarding the 'progress' of Indian history from a 'Hindu' period to successive Muslim dynasties, was a central feature of colonial historiography. However, the large time period under review did not provide many opportunities to sufficiently detail military campaigns or some of the major controversies that surrounded certain rulers.

Another significant feature of the text is that much of its information was obtained from other Indian histories, written in English (and Urdu). The many similarities between the *Tawarikh* and Marshman's *History* indicate that Marshman was an important source. As we have seen, the basic organisation and structure between the two texts is similar, with equivalent divisions into Hindu and Muslim periods and discussions about different family dynasties and conquests. In addition, both texts were concerned about historical sources of pre-Islamic India, and both only briefly cover Indian history prior to the tenth century. However, the summary of this period is even more basic in the *Tawarikh-e Hind*. An emphasis on the well-documented period of Muslim rule is apparent in many Indian histories, and *Tawarikh-e Hind* continued this tradition.

Although certain parts of the *Tawarikh* were heavily based on Marshman's *History*, the text is not a mere translation.[46] Instead, the *Tawarikh* selectively details Indian history. For example, the *Tawarikh* focuses on Muslim rule in north India; unlike Marshman, it did not extensively detail the Portuguese and Christian contacts in western India or the rise

---

[43] *Tawarikh-e Hind*, p. 66. The discussion of the Mughals is on pp. 54–85.

[44] *Tawarikh-e Hind*, pp. 86–94.

[45] This is one of the indications that the 1861 Lahore reprint was similar to the earlier NWP editions, as "revisions" often were kept to a minimum. The overall format of the 1861 Lahore edition is similar to earlier editions.

[46] The use of Marshman's text was facilitated by its translation into vernacular languages by this time. Although the *Tawarikh-e Hind* offers analysis similar to that in Marshman's *History*, the differences (discussed below) also show that the *Tawarikh-e Hind* was adapted – meaning it was not only translated but also interpreted and changed by the translator (an idea I explore in Diamond, "Developing Indigenous and European Knoweldge."). Unfortunately, there has been scant mention about *Tawarikh-e Hind* in secondary sources.

of Christianity (material arguably more appropriate for mission schools than a 'secular' government curriculum). Moreover, since Marshman's *History* originally only provided information up to the foundation of Muhgal rule, additional English and Persian language sources would have been used to write the *Tawarikh*. English sources appear likely for the brief discussion about the expansion of British rule in India and how "kings" and "nawabs . . . were gradually weakened" during the eighteenth century. This clearly echoes the familiar theme of Mughal 'decline' in colonial Indian historiography, inserting the British within the larger trajectory of Indian history. One colonial Indian history in English that could have been consulted – as it also was used in schools in the district of *Zillah*, Punjab – was Hugh Murray's *History of British India*.[47] However, Indian histories in English, such as Murray's book, mainly discussed British conquests and rule in India, whereas the *Tawarikh-e Hind* concludes with only a brief summary of British rule in India.

Emulating history texts written in English, the *Tawarikh-e Hind* became a model for history textbooks in vernacular schools in north India. It provided a chronological structure with a clear distinction between different periods of Indian history based on successive Hindu and Muslim rulers. The emphasis on 'factual' sources was central to British conceptions of historical knowledge (*'ilm*), leading to a larger focus on the 'Muslim' period. In addition, the text inserted the British into the larger chronology of Indian history. Consequently, the voice of the unnamed Urdu translator/author (of the Lahore edition) is less clear. Instead, we can infer a desire by colonial officials (such as Captain Fuller, the Director of Public Instruction who requested the Lahore edition) to provide a text that closely followed Indian history texts in English.

However, although the *Tawarikh-e Hind* originated during the formation of colonial education in the NWP, prior to the Revolt of 1857 that changed the nature of rule in India, it provides few details about the battles leading to the annexation of the Punjab in the later 1840s. Therefore, the Punjab Education Department required an updated history, with perspectives that incorporated the expansion of British rule in the Punjab and adapted Indian historiography to the circumstances of post-1857 colonial India. Moreover, education officials sought to reverse the mediocre history examination results of the early 1860s that compounded the difficulties of teaching history in schools in the Punjab.[48] For these reasons, educational officials in the Punjab sought to create additional history textbooks.

A.R. Fuller, Karim al-Din and the Development of Vernacular Textbooks in the Punjab

Two significant groups were central to the creation of Urdu textbooks and wider educational reforms in the Punjab. The first group consisted of British neo-orientalists and educational

---

[47] Murray's *History of British India* (written in 1851 and updated in 1857) reinforces the standard perceptions about the expansion of British rule in India, providing details about British battles (Hugh Murray, *History of British India. (Continued to the Close of the Year 1851)* (London, 1857). Students in the 2nd and 1st classes of *zillah* schools read Murray's *History* ("Revised Scheme of Studies for Zillah Schools," in Fuller, *Report on Popular Education in the Punjab . . . 1860–61*, Addenda).

[48] For example, during the first comprehensive examinations of government and government-aided schools in November 1861, students performed poorly in the history exams (Fuller to Secretary - Government of Punjab, 24 May 1862, Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, June 1862).

officers who were the patrons of the second group, the Indian literati. The development of Indian history textbooks in the region followed this model, and was promoted by the Director of Public Instruction in the early 1860s, Captain Abraham R. Fuller. Born in 1828 to a Bengal army captain, Fuller was appointed to the Royal Artillery, Bengal in 1845 and became a captain in 1858. He also was an orientalist scholar of Arabic and Persian and translated texts such as 'Inayat Khan's *Shah Jahan Nama*. In addition, he assisted H. M. Elliot in his massive project, *The History of India, as Told by Its Own Historians* (discussed below).[49] His superiors must have appreciated these skills when they recommended him for the post. Fuller's language skills became further apparent when he actively supported and sponsored the creation of vernacular textbooks for the Punjab, as well as the adaptation in the early 1860s of textbooks from Agra and other parts of the NWP (such as *Tawarikh-e Hind*).

In order to develop textbooks suitable for the circumstances of the region as well as to promote his educational agenda and career, Fuller was eager to locate promising Indian literati. The relocation to Lahore after 1857 of several important younger members of the Indian literati provided Fuller with the opportunity to work with several prominent intellectuals who mainly were Muslim. These intellectuals came to Lahore seeking opportunities, and for some – refuge, following the devastating British suppression of the Revolt in Delhi.[50] Many, including Karim al-Din, were educated and affiliated with Delhi College, which closed due to the Revolt. Thus, Lahore became a sanctuary for the literati, and they brought to Lahore their experiences and ideas of educational reform. As the main generators of change, the literati helped to elevate Lahore as a centre of learning in north-west India, making it a location for educational innovation and experimentation.

Karim al-Din worked closely with Fuller to adapt and create Urdu textbooks. His work in the Punjab (and in Delhi prior to that time) indicates that he was a significant educational reformer. Yet, there has been little work about the role and influence of this important Muslim intellectual. Karim al-Din previously was a central figure at Delhi College during its principal years of reform in the 1840s.[51] From an important Panipati family of Sufis and educated in Arabic and Persian before entering Delhi College, his literary skills were valued by its principals in the 1840s, including Dr Aloys Sprenger. Karim al-Din translated several books into Urdu for the Vernacular Translation Society at Delhi College, and wrote about Arab and Indian poets. He also held *Musha'ira*s (poetry sessions) at his house during this time. After Sprenger left Delhi College, Karim al-Din became a lecturer in Urdu at the

---

[49] Fuller's scholarly works included the translation of the *Shah Jahan Nama* in 1851 along with his assistance to H.M. Elliot's project from 1849 to 1851. Elliot's project eventually was published in 1867–1877. See "Introduction", in *The Shah Jahan Nama of 'Inayat Khan: An Abridged History of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. Compiled by his Royal Librarian. The Nineteenth Century Manuscript Translation of A.R. Fuller,* (eds.) W.E. Begley and Z.A. Desai (Delhi, 1990), pp. xxix–xxxii. Further biographical information is from, "A.R. Fuller", British Library Oriental and India Office Collections Biographical Indexes.

[50] For an analysis of 1857 and its influence on the Muslim elite, see, Francis Robinson, "The Muslims of upper India and the shock of the mutiny", in *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, (Delhi, 2000), pp. 138–155.

[51] Details about Karim al-Din's life and career before joining the Punjab Education Department may be found in H. Garcin de Tassy, *Histoire de la Litterature Hindouie et Hindoustanie*. 2nd edition (New York, 1968 – reprint of 1870 publication), pp. 166–168. Also see Muhammad Ikram Chughatai, "Eik nadir majmu'a mukatib: Moulvi Karim al-Din Panipati," *Urdu*, LXI, 3, (1985), pp. 137–176. And for Delhi College, see Avril A. Powell, "Scholar manqué or mere Munshi? Maulawi Karimu'd-Din's career in the Anglo-Oriental Education Service" in Pernau, *Delhi College,* pp. 203–231. The discussion below about Karim al-Din mainly analyses his efforts to compose textbooks in the Punjab.

Anglo–Oriental College at Agra in the 1850s, where he continued to write textbooks. He left Agra after the disturbances of 1857–1858, and soon found employment in Lahore as a *sarishtadar* (register keeper).

Where can we place Karim al-Din in relation to his contemporaries? He was part of a wider tradition of north India Muslim intellectuals who actively responded to the challenges of British rule to his Perso–Islamic cultural heritage. Although he did not closely associate with prominent movements such as the Aligarh Society of Syed Ahmed Khan, Karim al-Din shared similar ideas about the need to utilise European knowledge and ideas to re-examine Perso–Islamic knowledge systems associated with education.[52] Moreover, Karim al-Din and Syed Ahmed both were from important literary families rooted in a Persianised cultural heritage, and both sought to reform this heritage. Indeed, Karim al-Din was active in educational reform, and became a significant author of textbooks on grammar, composition and history for the Punjab Education Department. Thus, Karim al-Din provides us with some insight into the significance of the Muslim literati who worked closely with colonial officials and relied upon them for patronage, yet have been less studied than Muslim reformers such as Syed Ahmed Khan.

Several of Karim al-Din's NWP textbooks were used in the Punjab, and they became the foundation for his further work in the region. These include grammars such as *Qawa'id al-Mubtadi* [A beginner's grammar], written in the later 1850s during his service in Agra.[53] However, Karim al-Din became most recognised for his work in the Punjab, including his textbook about the history of India. This effort became embroiled in a controversy that provides us with insight into the nature and purpose of vernacular educational reforms, and the role of history textbooks in helping to define community consciousness.

The *Waqi'at–e Hind* and Indian History Textbooks in the Punjab

In the early 1860s, Fuller asked Karim al-Din to write a history textbook to replace the *Tawarikh-e Hind*. In 1863, his text was published as the *Waqi'at-e Hind* Indian Events. Although Karim al-Din is ultimately credited with writing the text, especially the sections that became embroiled in controversy, he was assisted by other Indian officials in the Education Department, Master Ram Chandra and Muhammad Zia al-Din.[54] Ram Chandra was an important mathematician connected to Delhi College prior to 1857. After the abolition of the College, he became the headmaster of Delhi District School. Muhammad Zia al-Din was an Urdu teacher at the Delhi Normal School, and became a Professor of Arabic at the newly opened Government College, Delhi in 1864. He also served as an examiner for the Punjab Education Department mathematics examinations as he previously

---

[52]For a background to Sir Syed, see, Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan;* Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860–1923* (Cambridge, 1974), especially pp. 84–132.

[53]Moulvi Karim al-Din, *Qawa'id al-Mubtadi* (Agra, 1858), p. 1. Karim al-Din was a professor at Agra College when he wrote the book.

[54]Maulvi Karim al-Din, *Waqi'at-e Hind* (Lahore,1863). This analysis situates the *Waqi'at-e Hind* within the context of the development of history textbooks in the Punjab, and compares it to its predecessor, the *Tawarikh-e Hind*.

had been a maths teacher.[55] Their work was divided up, and it appears that Karim al-Din mainly read English-language Indian histories, while Chandra and Zia al-Din consulted Persian-language histories of India.[56]

The *Waqi'at-e Hind*'s anecdotal form followed a similar chronological model as its predecessor, the *Tawarikh-e Hind*. The *Waqi'at* also begins with a review of the geography of India. After the geographical description, the first section of the book provides a brief review of the pre-Muslim period in Indian history. The treatment of this period is inconsistent, partially detailing Vedic times, the battles in the Hindu epic the *Mahabharata* and the invasions of Alexander the Great. The second section of the *Waqi'at* details the successive periods of Muslim rule, also covering similar topics to the *Tawarikh-e Hind* in further detail. It discusses the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni, the expansion of Muslim rule during the Delhi Sultanate and also reviews the various Mughal emperors. It concludes with a discussion of Siraj ud-daula, the battle of Plassey and the annexation of Bengal. The last section of the *Waqi'at* provides an "account" of British rule in India. This section was 73 pages, much more substantial than the *Tawarikh-e Hind*'s brief survey of British rule. It also incorporated a more updated history of British rule, inclusive of the Punjab.

The similarity between the *Tawarikh-e Hind* and the *Waqi'at* is not surprising since both texts utilised Marshman's *History* as an important source. For instance, the section on the "Hindu" period in the *Waqi'at* was adapted from Marshman's text by Karim al-Din (the main writer of the section).[57] This was because Karim al-Din and the other authors had no special knowledge about the pre-Muslim period of Indian history, and most likely would not have been able to read the necessary Sanskrit sources. Moreover, the issue about sources that concerned Marshman and Mill again surfaced about this early period. Therefore, the material covering pre-Muslim India was obtained from English-language Indian histories. In addition, Marshman's *History* influenced the writing about the Muslim period in the *Waqi'at*, both providing a chronological framework to present the history of Muslim rule, based upon successive dynasties (or families). Some descriptions closely followed Marshman's text, such as the section about Lodhi rule in Delhi. However, like the *Tawarikh-e Hind*, the *Waqi'at* mainly focused on north India and did not provide a detailed summary of Portuguese contacts or other Hindu rulers during the Muslim period. However, the Muslim and British periods in the *Waqi'at* were based upon additional sources. For example, Persian sources provided information for the section on the Mughals.

The sources of the *Waqi'at* are important, as the brief narrative about the pre-Muslim period of Indian history in the *Waqi'at* became the subject of controversy in the Punjab Education Department. This controversy sheds light upon the purpose of history textbooks and the relationship to the development of vernacular education. Moreover, it illustrates the central, but at times controversial, role of the literati in vernacular education. It began when

---

[55] Zia al-Din was a well-known maths examiner in the Punjab Education Department, including the October 1864 maths exams (Fuller to Secretary – Government of Punjab, 10 January 1865, Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, January 1865).

[56] Although neither was an important Persian scholar, Ram Chandra and Muhammad Zia al-Din were the researchers who utilised Persian histories. Additional details about Chandra and Zia al-Din's role in writing the *Waqi'at* are in Powell, "History Textbooks", pp. 98–99.

[57] See, Powell, "History Textbooks", p. 100. The use of Marshman for writing about this period in the *Waqi'at* is important, as this section became embroiled in controversy later (see below).

Captain Pollock, the Officiating Commissioner, Lahore Division, submitted the objections of "Hindoo scholars" in the Ferozepore district to a passage that did not recognise the "divine" origins of Raja Ram Chandra.[58] Fuller began his steadfast support for Karim al-Din, replying that the *Waqi'at-e Hind* followed the example of "a former history" (a reference to the *Tawarikh-e Hind*), when it stated that Raja Ram Chandra and his associates were human (and not divine). Fuller further argued that the "former history" had, "been used without the slightest objection in all Government schools of the Punjab", since 1856. Moreover, to the best of his knowledge, the *Waqi'at*, had not been, "met anywhere with the slightest opposition" either. Thus, Fuller questioned the legitimacy of these objections.

The controversy was mainly part of the internal battles between officials in the Education Department, as a relatively small portion of this history text became the focus of a significant dispute. The identity of the "Hindoo scholars" was not made clear. Fuller even raised the possibility that they did not exist, as the book was not distributed to schools in the Ferozepore district at the time. However, the controversy also illustrates the difficulty in writing a history textbook that will please different communities. The government did not want to appear biased against any community, and the *Waqi'at* controversy challenged their policy on neutrality. Therefore, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Robert Montgomery, stated that it was "exceedingly objectionable to issue . . . passages written by a Mahomedan in terms evidently contemptuous and calculated to be offensive to Hindoos".[59] In an indirect way, the supposed 'factual' basis of the knowledge used to write the text was questioned because the author might have been calculatedly biased.

However, Fuller supported his dedicated assistant Karim al-Din with a discussion about the role of factual knowledge in history. Fuller grounded his reply within the view that history texts should rely upon facts and serve a secular curriculum, not pre-colonial ideas of divine history that British historians from James Mill onward criticised, when he wrote that he did not wish to "corroborate" the belief that Raja Ram Chandra was an "Incarnation of the Deity".[60] Consequently, Fuller asked the new Lieutenant-Governor, Donald Mcleod, to dictate the exact changes that were necessary in the text in 1865. Eventually, certain sections about Raja Ram Chandra were omitted from ensuing publications of the *Waqi'at*. In addition, polite forms of respect, as expressed in north Indian languages – including the suffix *ji*, were added to Ram's name to acknowledge his royal connections, connections that could be factually corroborated.

On the surface, *Tawarikh-e Hind* and the *Waqi'at-e Hind* appear to be basic history textbooks. However, we can see several themes emerge when we analyse them within a wider framework, especially regarding the influence of British historiography on India in the development of vernacular history textbooks. Through sponsorships of indigenous literati such as Karim al-Din, education officials sought to create value-free history textbooks in

---

[58]Fuller to Secretary – Government of Punjab, 14 May 1864, Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, September 1864. This section examines the controversy and its relation to vernacular education reforms as well as the role of the literati in developing Indian historiography; it is less concerned about the administrative debates outside of that realm.

[59]Secretary – Government of Punjab to Fuller, 10 January 1865, Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, February 1865.

[60]Fuller to Officiating Commissioner, Lahore Division, 7 May 1864, Punjab Educational Proceedings, A, February 1865.

Urdu that were influenced by European historiography. These new history texts illustrated a wider understanding of historical trajectories, as they incorporated European models of history and the reliance upon 'factual' knowledge (*'ilm*) in order to facilitate the reduction of the cultural, religious and political influences of pre-colonial Indian histories. Thus, European historiography was an important part in the development of Indian history textbooks. This influence is noteworthy, as the section of the *Waqi'at* that perhaps was most directly influenced by European historiography and concepts of factual knowledge also garnered the most controversy.

Although European conceptions of historiography were central to the process of writing Indian history texts, the process was more complex than a simple, distinctive break from pre-colonial historiography. The use of Persian sources in the *Tawarikh-e Hind* and *Waqi'at-e Hind* demonstrates the reliance on pre-colonial knowledge and organisation in the development of history textbooks.[61] A.R. Fuller was an important sponsor of these efforts to write an Indian history in Urdu; as the translator of the *Shahjahanama*, and as a member of H.M. Elliot's project, the *History of India, as Told by Its Own Historians*, he was aware of the significance of precolonial histories. In addition, Karim al-Din and Ram Chandra were part of the earlier experiments at Delhi College that began to formulate Urdu textbooks, including history textbooks, from Persian texts. From this legacy, it is not surprising to learn the mixed nature and purpose of writing an Indian history textbook in the Punjab. Therefore, these textbooks were not simply derived from European models but illustrate the multiple influences on the development of knowledge for educational purposes.

The debates about the *Waqi'at* mainly concerned colonial officials and involved a clash of personalities; they did not directly involve the literati who wrote the text. Moving beyond the colonial concerns, what was the reaction of Karim al-Din? It is difficult to locate Karim al-Din within the debates, as his voice does not appear in colonial records and he rarely discussed the issue directly.[62] However, in his writings, there are limited references to this controversy that provide some insight into Karim al-Din's reactions. British officials clearly showed concern that Karim al-Din, as a Muslim author, intended to insult Hindu deities, beliefs and possibly practices. However, it would be difficult to prove that Karim al-Din held a personal animosity toward Hindus or that he 'calculated' to offend them. For example, in his novel, *Khat-e Taqdir*, he offered a defence of the *Waqi'at*, especially against the idea that he deliberately sought to debase Hindus or Hindu "mythology'. In the introduction, he states that he never sought to offend any "religion" or "philosophy".[63] Instead, he hopes that his writing would have a positive "effect on human nature ... and

---

[61] Indian history textbooks written at Fort William College in the early nineteenth century also utilised Persian sources. For example, the first Indian history written in Bengali used Persian sources (Chatterjee. *The Nation*, p. 77). This continued in the creation of Indian history textbooks in Urdu in North India in the mid-nineteenth century as well.

[62] This was not uncommon, as the Muslim literati rarely detailed their personal lives or reactions in great detail. For example, it also has been difficult to locate personal details about another important Urdu writer in the late nineteenth century, Abdul Halim Sharar. See the editors' introduction to Abdul Halim Sharar (eds. E.S. Harcourt and Fakir Hussain), *Lucknow: The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture* (London, 1975).

[63] This was one of his stated purposes in writing history and literature textbooks (Moulvi Karim al-Din, *Khat-e Taqdir* (Lahore, 1864), p. 2). Indeed, it is difficult to argue that Karim al-Din intended to offend Hindus, as communal grievances were not solidified at this time in the Punjab. The *Khat-e Taqdir* was a literature textbook written as one of the replacements to the *adab* literature of the *maktab*.

consequences on people". His personal actions and character support these statements. For example, Karim al-Din maintained faithful relations with his brother after the latter publicly converted to Christianity.[64] Thus, Karim al-Din used the *Khat-e Taqdir*, originally written as the controversy over the *Waqi'at* began, to defend his work and his personal beliefs.

Karim al-Din arguably was also concerned about receiving future patronage as well as his employment in the Punjab Education Department. Fortunately, Fuller defended Karim al-Din as he clearly was impressed with his work. Indeed, Fuller initially appreciated Karim al-Din's skills and efforts to write a variety of textbooks, including literature textbooks. For example, he commented that Karim al-Din's "original tales in Urdu . . . are likely to prove very popular".[65] In the late 1860s, the Inspector of the Lahore Circle also stated that Karim al-Din, his Deputy Inspector of schools, was "a man of considerable learning and immense industry".[66] Thus, Karim al-Din's devoted service to the Education Department further indicates that he did not intend to cause any controversy. Although Karim al-Din's superiors appreciated his work, his efforts did not bring him into prominent roles in administration, and his history textbook was criticised as "offensive". However, this has not diminished from his influence in formulating a history textbook that continued to be used for generations.[67]

Conclusion

The controversy surrounding the development of history textbooks in the Punjab raises several pertinent questions about the role of texts in the evolving nature of community identity during early colonial rule. There has been a burgeoning of studies about the processes of identity formation in colonial north India and the relationship to communalism and religious nationalism (including "Indian," Muslim, and Hindu).[68] One important feature of the articulation of community identity was the emergence of print and public forums for debate during colonial rule. For Muslims, this meant that the control of the articulation of Muslim identity moved beyond the traditional religious scholars, the *'ulema,* as well as mosques and Muslim education institutions (including the *maktab*); Muslim intellectuals and religious reformers, such as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, began to offer new alternatives.[69] In addition, as the developments discussed here begin to illustrate, the formation of colonial vernacular education became a site to construct and debate reforms; vernacular educational

---

[64]Avril A. Powell, "Reciprocities and divergences concerning religious traditions in two families of scholars in North India", in *Perspectives of Mutual Encounters in South Asian History, 1760–1860,* (ed.) Jamal Malik (Leiden, 2000), pp. 210–211. Karim al-Din's younger brother, Imad al-Din, was an influential convert to Christianity in the 1860s.

[65]Captain A.R. Fuller, *Report on Popular Education in the Punjab and its Dependencies, For the Year 1861–62,* (Lahore, 1864), p. 72.

[66]C.W.W. Alexander, "Report of Inspector, Lahore Circle", in W.R.M. Holroyd's *Report on Popular Education in the Punjab and its Dependencies, For the Year 1868–69,* (Lahore, 1869), p. 99.

[67]Copies of the *Waqi'at-e Hind* (in Urdu and English) were published through the late nineteenth century in Lahore and Lucknow (Blumhardt, *Catalogue of the Library of the India Office,* p. 92).

[68]These studies also help us to begin to reconsider twentieth-century histories. Thus, in a review of literature about partition, David Gilmartin argues that it is necessary for us to examine the construction of identity during colonial rule in order to understand the causes and meaning of 1947 beyond the high politics of partition (David Gilmartin, "Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian history: In search of a narrative", *Journal of Asian Studies,* LVII, 4, (1998), p. 1073.

[69]Francis Robinson, "Islam and the impact of print in South Asia ", in Robinson, *The 'Ulema of Firgani Mahal,* pp. 66–104.

systems provided a forum where the Muslim literati (who often were not directly part of Muslim reform movements) could participate in the transformations of language, print and, ultimately, the articulation of identity. Many of these Muslim literati, including Karim al-Din, travelled to Lahore, where they received patronage and encouragement to partake in these developments.

History textbooks and educational reform movements were one of several arenas where history and community identity were articulated through print and public forums in the nineteenth century. For example, the formation of community organisations and literary societies in the Punjab, such as the Anjuman-e Punjab, also provided opportunities to consider such issues.[70] Print facilitated debates between various individuals and organisations, including the Anjuman and the Education Department. Print also enabled a larger section of the public to participate in debates that concerned a variety of social issues. Although only one example from the emerging print culture in early colonial Punjab, the history textbooks examined here were formulated during the early development of print in the region, and are one of the relatively few examples still extant. Moreover, these textbooks help to illustrate the influence of print on identities as they were widely circulated and used in schools – schools attended by students who formed a literate elite in the region and who were likely to utilise print to articulate their interests in the late nineteenth century.

Therefore, the development of history textbooks challenges us to consider the growing articulation of community identity in colonial north-west India. Prior to colonial rule, it would be difficult to assert that there was a lack of community consciousness, especially an idea of a Muslim community (*umma*) and the importance of Islamic history to this community. For instance, the Muslim *sharif* were aware of their connections to Mughal rule as well as a wider trajectory of Muslim history that dated from the time of the Prophet Muhammad.[71] Although Persian-language histories differed in purpose, organisation and presentation from colonial Indian historiography, they did exhibit a wider understanding of the relationship of the Mughal emperor to the community.[72] However, Indian histories formulated during colonial rule assisted in the construction of newer forms of community identity, including the notion of a Hindu period, a Muslim period and a British period in Indian history. Such a framework served to increase both Muslim and Hindu community connections to 'their' histories as distinct parts of Indian history, especially in relation to British rule.

The growing literature on identity also has highlighted 'arenas' outside the direct control or influence of the colonial state.[73] These studies have provided us with analysis about local communities, moving beyond the role of the colonial state in controversial events (such as riots). Although there were various influences upon the development of community

---

[70]For an analysis of the Anjuman-e Punjab, see Diamond, "The orientalist-literati relationship in the north-west." Also see, Diamond, "Developing indigenous and European knowledge", Chapters V and VI.

[71]Indeed, Muslim reformers such as Shah Waliullah wrote extensively about the need to revitalise the Muslim community in the eighteenth century, and included references to Islamic traditions and early Muslim communities. For an overview, see Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 16–63.

[72]See, for example, Nizami, "On the historians", pp. 8–16.

[73]For an example of this approach, see, Sandra Frietag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India* (Berkeley, 1989).

identities, the production of history textbooks and the controversy surrounding the *Waqi'at* suggest that colonial officials played an important role in establishing at least part of a framework for emerging debates between religious communities. It would be difficult to assert that the colonial state directly sought to interfere in religious controversies, yet the state did play an indirect but important role through educational reform. For example, similar to the census and other studies, colonial historiography helped to demarcate boundaries between communities. The organisation of a three-part periodisation of Indian history (Hindu, Muslim, British – or one could state, ancient, medieval or "feudal," and modern – as that was an implied meaning) and the application of this organisation into Indian-language history textbooks are examples of a territorial marker.

In addition to the influence of historiography on concepts of community identity, education officials did take an active part in helping to define debates between communities about collective histories. In their attempts to be "neutral", they actually exacerbated a minor (but arguably fundamental) concern about the appearance of a Muslim author negatively portraying "Hindu history". These initial debates about the *Waqi'at* were not launched by members of any religious community or organisation.[74] Instead, the competition of education officials, Fuller and Pollock, helped to further the controversy (or as Fuller argued, this was the main reason it began since he was unaware of any objections by Indian readers). Thus, colonial officers facilitated future debates about history and identity in the region; the reference points and rhetoric used by officials such as Pollock certainly helped to politicise the entire process, providing important questions for later communities to utilise. Historical 'knowledge' became the subject of these debates, as the concept of factually based knowledge was used to question the validity of mythological and religious sources and the proper portrayal of historical figures. Moreover, the religious identity of the textbook author became important for determining a supposed 'bias' when writing about such knowledge. Therefore, the early controversy over the *Waqi'at* helped to define historical content and terminology that was appropriate as well as contentious, predating some of the more common debates in later colonial rule over the use of history.

Finally, although this discussion has related history textbooks and identity, I should state that I am cautious about applying the controversy surrounding history textbooks in the early 1860s in Lahore to an overt assertion of community identity in colonial north-west India (and for that matter communalism, as there is little evidence of direct community tensions over the creation of history textbooks in the 1850s and 1860s). Some authors have sought to trace the use of nineteenth-century history textbooks to communal and nationalist positions in the twentieth century.[75] There also has been extensive commentary about the use of education, especially history textbooks, to advance a 'communal' education in contemporary India.[76] Moreover, K.K. Aziz has written passionately about the politicisation

---

[74]This perhaps explains why I have not been able to locate any critical comments about the text from Indians who served in the Education Department (or elsewhere in print) up to the emergence of this controversy. If there were such voices, Pollock almost certainly would have used their writings to support his position. Instead he used the vague term "Hindoo scholars".

[75]For example, see, Chatterjee, *The Nation*, pp. 76–94.

[76]One volume containing debates about the use of Indian history by Hindu nationalists for education in contemporary India is *Communalisation of Education: The Assault on History: Press Reportagé, Editorials, and Articles* (New Delhi, 2002).

of history in Pakistan.[77] This paper takes us back to some of the early foundations of these contemporary crises, examining the early development of Indian historiography, its connections to the development of vernacular education and how history began to become a site for debating community history and identity. By doing so, we may not see an assertive communal identity, but the framework for the emerging articulation of such an identity. jdiamonduk@yahoo.co.uk

Jeffrey M. Diamond
College of St. Benedict/St. John's University, St. Joseph, MN, USA

---

[77] K.K. Aziz, *The Murder of History in Pakistan* (Lahore, 1993).