British one. Written historical records, specifically Persian ones, were therefore studied, translated, and published with one eye looking to the future and one to the past.

V

Linguistic Purism, Persian Lexicography and Printing

Introduction

It has been argued by recent scholarship that advent of print from the late eighteenth century changed the functions and perception of authors. In the context of Europe, it has been argued that prior to the coming of print, authors were generally seen as individuals who reshaped past material for contemporary use. One of the most thoroughly covered areas in recent book history is the history of printing, printers, and the various agents involved in the production, distribution, and reception of books and the other texts (see, for example, the case of Nawal Kishore Press in India, discussed in Chapter III of this thesis). Book history highlights the role cultural agents have played in supporting and shaping the creation of print culture. As the examples discussed in this thesis have shown, early printers in Europe as in India combined printing, publishing, and bookselling roles, seeking out likely texts, purchasing rights to print, then attempting through various means to profit from promoting and selling these texts. This theme is discussed in the current section of this chapter with relevant examples from the period covered.

As has been discussed in the introduction to the thesis, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, India was an important centre for the development of Persian art, culture, and literature, and gave birth to the ‘Indian School’ or sabk-i-hindi of Persian

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poetry. The poets of the Indian School broke away from the conventional paradigms of the classical Persian poets and fashioned a distinct style and language of expression.\textsuperscript{481} Tavakoli-Targhi causally links the Persian literary renaissance of the nineteenth century to rise of Persian print culture in India.\textsuperscript{482} The causes are not difficult to identify: with the beginning of Persian printing in India, a large number of classical texts became easily accessible for the first time (discussed in Chapters II and III). Printing thus made possible the formation of authoritative canons and facilitated the dissemination of seminal texts.

Lexicography (the principles and practices of dictionary making) occupied a very important place in the Indian context with regard to Persian print. Stark has discussed in detail the contribution of Persian lexicography. According to her, the publication of a wide range of Persian dictionaries and vocabularies reinforced India’s image as ‘the home of lexicography’. Indian Persian dictionaries became the source for compiling reliable Persian dictionaries on the basis of the lexicographical works written in India. Blochmann classified Persian dictionaries in India into two parts. In one (‘period of gathering’) he includes practical vocabularies such as \textit{Burhan-i Qati}, while in the other (‘period of criticism’) he begins with \textit{Farhang-i Rashidi}.\textsuperscript{483}

Literary dictionaries became objects of linguistic debate in discussions and debates about writing in pure Persian or \textit{parsi nigari} in spheres prepared by print. This pre-occupation with the purification of Persian was not new. The Mughal court was once obsessed with the idea of purification of Persian (\textit{tathir-i Farsi}). The objective of the lexicon Akbar ordered Jamal-ul-Din Husain Inju to prepare in his name was to clear Persian of non-Persian (mainly Arabic) words and expressions. The drive at purification continued, although later the idea was to cleanse Persian of Indian influences. Inju’s \textit{Farhang} together with Muhammad Qasim’s \textit{Majam-ul-Furs Sururi} were taken as the sole standard lexicons in the first half of the seventeenth century. By the middle of the century Mulla ‘Abd-ur-Rashid Thattawi felt the necessity of compiling a new dictionary,

\textsuperscript{481}Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, ‘Refashioning Iran: Language and Culture during the Constitutional Revolution Author(s)’. \textit{Iranian Studies}, Vol. 23, No. 1/4 (1990), p. 86.
\textsuperscript{482} \textit{Ibid}, p. 88.
\textsuperscript{483} Blochmann, ‘Contributions to Persian Lexicography’, pp. 1-2.
among other things, because (a) in the existing two major dictionaries (*Jahangiri* and *Sururi*) certain Arabic and Turkish words were enlisted without clarifying that they were not Persian, and that (b) many words were wrongly pronounced by Inju and Sururi. However, there were two important ways in which Persian dictionaries complied in the past were regarded as inadequate after the mid-nineteenth century. First, these dictionaries did not provide quotations from the Persian literature. The lacuna, as led to be a proliferation of varieties of spelling and meaning which were most perplexing. Second, in Persian dictionaries the language of the *prose* was not represented.

**Literary Debates over *Qati-i Burhan* and the Printing Press**

The debate about Persian purity had reached a climax by the time of Asad Allah Khan Ghalib (1797-1869) the famous nineteenth century poet of Persian and Urdu. Ghalib commenced composing verses both in Persian and Urdu from a young age. In 1816 he had compiled his *Diwan*. From 1822 to 1852, however, he composed mostly Persian verses. In a series of letters which he wrote to his friends and followers, one gets the picture of how the debate over the language developed. After the uprising of 1857, Ghalib wrote an account of the events as he had witnessed in a book entitled *Dastanbu* (see below). We will draw on both Ghalib’s works as well his letters to contemporaries to understand the size and scope of Persian print culture.

Ghalib, in his letter to Mustafa Khan Bahadur, talks about a puré Persiañ (Persian without any Arabic words, *yekrangi zaban ya’ni, parsi be amizesh arabi*). Ghalib noted that Persian was mixed with the influence of Arabic words: “I am the person who has the key to this closed treasure of Persian Dari (Khusravani).” After visiting Calcutta in 1829, Ghalib founded an *Anjumân* or Literary Society to hold *mushairas* or poetic gatherings on the first Sunday of every solar month.

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485 Blochmann, ‘Contributions to Persian Lexicography’, p. 3.
in the premises of Calcutta Madrasa. Here he came in contact with Andrew Stirling, an important member of the Council of the College, Munshi Abdal-Karim, mir munshi of the Persian Department of the Company, and Maulawi Karam Husayn. These meetings revealed to Ghalib the beauty of simplicity in literary composition. In his taqriz (review poem) of Abul Fazl's Ain-i Akbari (Regulations of Emperor Akbar) edited and published by Sir Syed (c. 1856), Ghalib criticized the book and called it a futile endeavor to extol the dead past, which ignored the scientific accomplishments of the British.

According to S.A.I Tirmizi, ‘The love for an ornate artificial style was so great that, at

488 For this literary combat see, S. A. I. Tirmizi, Persian Letters of Ghalib, New Delhi, Ghalib Academy, 1969, pp.xxix-xxxi.
489 A Taqriz is a laudatory book review which was customary, in Ghalib’s day, for an author to solicit for promotion of was work. The taqriz page was provided in published books for critics to share and present the kown idea in public sphere. It seems that this tradition appeared with printing and was not present in the pre-printing literary sphere (kitabat).

It is Ghalib’s reply to a request of Syed Ahmad Khan (Later Sir Syed) to write a review on his edition of Ain-i Akbari

Give this good news to friends that this old book is now available, due to the efforts of Syed Ahmed Khan. Syed’s eye is keen and his arms strong, [Hence] an old thing has assumed a new shape.

That he attempted the editorship of these old regulations. Appears to me a matter of disgrace for a man of hi; staftri-e:

If we are still talking of the regulations of Akbar, then open your eyes and who at the old world:
See the Englishmen and their manners and their ways.
So that you may see the laws made by these men: laws which were never seen by men before.
These craftsmen have so improved the arts and crafts that their efforts have far exceeded the efforts of those gone before.
Only this nation has the right to make laws and enforce them. No other people do better administration than they.
They have combined justice with wisdom and have given hundreds of new laws to Hindustan.
The fire which we produce by (striking stone on) stone these skilled people make with straws.
What magic have they performed that steam (lit. smoke) is driving the boat.

490 Malik, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Muslim Modernization in India and Pakistan, p. 58.
first, this simple method of writing was scoffed at but in spite of mockery it conquered.491 Regarding its impact on Ghalib Tirmizi has this to say:

Influenced by this Simplicity Movement Ghalib gave up the artificial figurative style of Sanat i tatil or dotless and ornate prose and adopted natural style, though the lingering influence of rhymed prose is discernible in some of his letters. He made a sincere attempt, whenever possible, to discard the old and hackneyed forms of addresses and adopted the natural style of communication with his correspondents. He concluded his communications by simply mentioning his name at the end of his letters. He believed in the dictum—navishtan kam az guftan na bashad or ‘writing should not be any less than speaking.’492

In 1861 the Nawal Kishore Press published Mirza Ghalib’s Qati'-i Burhan (The Chopper of the Argument), a harsh critique of Tabrizi’s Burhan-i Qati (The Cutting Argument). The first edition of Burhan-i Qati was printed in 1818 at Calcutta by Câptain Roebuck, and the third edition, with a few corrections in 1834 by Hakim Abdul Majid. Burhan’s dictionary provoked in India a good deal of criticism. In a letter to Khwaja Ghulam Ghaus Bekhabar, Ghalib wrote that ‘not long ago, I made a collection of all of the lexical errors which I had noticed in the Burhan-i-Qati and offered my comments on them in a tract entitled Qati-i-Burhan.’493 According to Daud Rahbar, during the course of completing the Dastanbu Ghalib had occasion to make use of Tabrizi’s Burhan-i-Qati, which, on closer inspection, he found to contain a number of ‘Indianisms’ and errors of derivation. Ghalib then turned his hand, to writing a critique of this work focusing on what he considered to be deviation from the ‘purity’ of the Persian lexicon. Ghalib wrote to his disciple Hargopal ‘Tafta’:

Lexicographers rely on analogy and opinion. Each one wrote what he thought correct. Were there a dictionary compiled by Nizami or Sa’di, it

491 Tirmizi, Persian Letters of Ghalib, p. lii.
492 Ibid, pp. lii-liii.
493 Rahbar, Urdu Letters of Mirza Assadu’llah Khan Ghalib, p. 156.
would be binding on us. How and why can one regard Indians to be of proven incontrovertibility? 494

The above passage bears in a recent scholar’s assertion that ‘since a period of colonial ascendancy and weakening Mughal rule, Indian Muslims of the nineteenth century developed a romantic notion regarding Iran, both as the home of linguistic purity and authenticity, as well as a literary utopia.’ 495 A. Bausani claims that Ghalib’s keen interest in grammatical and lexicological issues persuaded him to learn Persian grammar and syntax in their classical Iranian form, and not the Indian variation. This led him to the imitation of ‘good Persian’, rather than writing in Indian Persian. However, he considered the style of Bedil and Ghaniem as a valid style. 496 For example, Ghalib in his poetical critique, against India-Persian writers, of Munshi Hargopal Tafta wrote:

I am writing a treatise to ridicule Burhan-i-Qati. I consider Char Sharbat (Four Sweet Beverages, a lexicographical work on Persian by the poet Qatil) and Ghiyas-ul Lughat (Aid to Vocabulary a Persian lexicon written by Mulla Ghiausuddin Rampuri, another native Indian whose work Ghalib scorned for its ‘inauthenticity’) no better than used original, so what is the sense in my offering to do battle with such unknown and untrained lads? Now I am trying to find the means to publish my criticisms of the work. If my wishes are fulfilled, I will send you a copy of the printed text. It should be very useful treatise. 497

In yet another letter to Anwaruddaula Sharq, 498 Ghalib emphasized that:

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498 Sharq was a man of noble birth and a student of Ghalib in the art of Persian poetry.
**Ghiyas-ul Lughat** is a high-sounding big name which reminds one of a man deceptively impressive because of mere corpulence. Do you know who this man is? An abject, worthless school-teacher, a resident of Rampur, totally ignorant of Persian and deficient in grammatical knowledge, a tutor using *Insha-i-Khalifa* and *Munsha at=i Madho Ram*.⁴⁹⁹

Although the privileging of Iranian Persian over Indian Persian began forcefully in the eighteenth century by Ali Hazin (1692-1766),⁵⁰⁰ a new round of literary debate emerged around Ghalib and his supporters. Maulvi Najam Ali Khan of Jahjari, Ghalib’s follower, wrote a book, *Dafi’ Hazyan*, which was issued by Akmal-ul Matabi’ in 1865 at Delhi, supporting Ghalib’s response to Sayyid Sa’adat ‘Ali’s *Muharq-i Qati’ Burhan* which was published in 1864 at Ahmadi Press in Delhi.


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⁴⁹⁹ Rahbar, *Urdu Letters of Mirza Assad ‘llah Khan Ghalib*, p. 168. *Ghiyas-ul Lughat (Aid to Vocabulary)* is a Persian dictionary written by Mulla Muhammad Ghiyasuddin Rampuri and published in 1826. Ghalib, somewhat unfairly, disparages this lexicographic work essentially because it was written by an Indian (rather than an Iranian), p.520.

⁵⁰⁰ Faruqi, ‘Unprivileged Power’, pp. 17-21. Faruqi argued that the end of the domination of the Persian language in India did not happen only with the shift of power from Delhi (seat of the Mughals) to Calcutta (seat of the British). He believes that the cultural foundation of Urdu and Indian-Persian were damaged when Iranian-Persian was privileged. In his criticism of this idea, Rahamn believes that the language has its designated role, and the elite privileged Iranian-Persian at the expense of Indian-Persian as they disregarded their own ability on account of their political problems. Rahamn’, *Language, Ideology and Power*, pp. 146-47.


⁵⁰² ibid.

⁵⁰³ Shakir was a man of remarkable literary attainments. He was a native of Gorakhpur. Most of Ghalib’s letters to him are undated, but internal evidence suggests that they were written between 1860 and 1866. Rahbar, Rahbar, *Urdu Letters of Mirza Assad ‘llah Khan Ghalib*, p. 611.
[A] the friends with whom I correspond, I write my fond letters these days exclusively in Urdu. Of the curious sahibs [Patron Sir] to whom I wrote with obeisance in former days in the Persian tongue, those who are still alive and around receive letters from me in this very vernacular. The collection of Persian letters, pamphlets, and books, all printed and bound, were received as publications in all the distant districts of 'Ajam'.

The passage indicates that Ghalib was quite sensible of his audience. He wanted to reach simultaneously to readers in India as well as outside India, in ajam. As he was a regular reader of newspapers, he was aware of the power of the written word to arouse controversy. C.M. Nairn points out that he was also a natural pamphleteer (as became evident in the controversy that raged around Burhan-i Qati') and he enjoyed and exploited the benefits of printing as no Urdu poet before him could have done. Ghalib was able to rapidly reach an audience markedly different in number and kind from what would have been the case otherwise.

Returning to the controversy, Mirza Rahim Beg Marathi 'Rahim' published his book Sati'-i-Burhan from Hashimi Press at Meerut in 1866. Ghalib's Namah Ghalib and Qati'-i Ghalib were published at Muhammedi Press and Akmal-ul-Matabi in 1865/1866 at Delhi in response to Sati'-i Burhan and Mu'aiyid-ul Burhan. On the other side, Mustafa'i Press published a book by Mahmud Bik Sahib 'Rahat' titled Qati'-ul Qati' that rejected the claims of Ghalib's Qati' Burhan in 1866. In one of his letters to 'Alauddin Ahmad Khan Nasimi (son of Nawab Aminuddin Ahmad Khan, the ruling prince of the native state of Loharu) Ghalib asked, 'why do you refuse to read Tap-i Muhrig?( Burning Fever)?'. This was a name coined by Ghalib in jest to refer to the work of Sayyid Sa'adat 'Ali entitled Muhrig-i Qati (The Burner of the Chopper), which was one of several published rejoinders to Ghalib's lexicographical work.

504 That is, Ghalib's Persian works—both prose and poetry—have been published and have been circulated as widely as to the distant regions of Iran ('Ajam). The word 'Ajam' is a Persian borrowing from Arabic in which the sense of the term in 'mute, dumb' and was originally applied to the region of Iran and central Asia. Arabic was not spoken. Ibid, p. 612.


506 Hussain Hali, Yadgar-i Ghalib, p. 55
In another letter to Chaudhari ‘Abdu’l-Ghafur Surur (1786-1867 A.D.), Ghalib wrote:

The entire stock of the bound copies of Qati ‘i Burhan is now in my possession—
I purchased it according to the terms of my contract.\footnote{Rahbar, Urdu Letters of Mirza Assadu’llah Khan Ghalib, p. 252.}

The quotation above indicates that the publisher who agreed to produce Ghalib’s controversial work on lexicography, Qati-i Burhan, had reached an arrangement with the author that Ghalib would agree to buy (and distribute) all copies which came off the press. This was not an unusual arrangement between author and publisher even in the case of non-controversial publications.\footnote{Faruqi, ‘Unprivileged Power’, p. 39.}

The controversy continued in the next year when Ghalib wrote a sixty page pamphlet, Tegh-t Tez (1867) in which he presented the opinions of his friend Shefta and pupil Hali as juridical pronouncements in support of his position on the issue of Persian lexicography. Ahmad ‘Ali replied to Ghalib’s pamphlet, in Shamshir-i Teztar, which came out after Ghalib’s death in 1869.\footnote{Surur was a wealthy landlord of Marehra, a qasba in the United Province (UP). A scholar of Persian and a great admirer of Ghalib’s work, he was the first person to collect the poet’s Urdu letters for publication (under the title of Mihr-i Ghalib or Ghalib’s Loving Kindness). He prepared the collection in 1861 but published the work eventually in 1869 under the title of ‘Ud-i Hindi (Incense of India).}

Here we must remember that this lexicography debate initially arose at a mushaira at Calcutta Madras where the two scholars (Ahmad Ali and Ghalib) met.

The debate was not restricted to Persian centres at Delhi and Calcutta. One can emphasize the gains of print at the expense of oral culture. The various uses of print were not lost to the literate public. In her work on the public sphere in India, Margrit Pernau gives the example of 1840s India, when the influx of newcomers into the realm of poetry as well as literary issues such as those pertaining to lexicography reached such an extent
that the guild-like teaching from master to pupil was no longer adequate. In Agra, an
total journal could thrive by catering to the needs of those who did not have access to
regular mushairas and who struggled with the rules of poetics and literature without
being able to find a teacher who would guide them. The printed word, thus, had taken
over the function of the oral culture. Poets were now arguing with each other not in
mushairas (where only the people present could witness these debates) but on paper
(where all interested and literate people could follow and participate in them). This
change, in which Ghalib was an active participant, testifies to the importance of print
culture in changing not only literary style, but the very mode of communication among
the literati.

We now turn to specimens of ‘pure’ Persian writing (parsi nigari). As Ghalib’s
Dastanbu is the best specimen of pure Persian prose, it will be discussed in some detail in
the next section, and its central position in the history of Persian print culture explored
further.

Debate on Dastanbu and Persian Print Culture

Dastanbu is Ghalib’s journal of his experience of the momentous days of 1857, the
occupation of Delhi by the rebel sepoys in May and its recapture by the British in
September, days in which he was in Delhi. Partly as a display of his linguistic virtuosity,
partly as an intellectual challenge, and partly out of nostalgia for the ‘good old days’ in
which ‘pure’ Persian served as a masterful literary language and the expression of ancient
Iranian culture, Ghalib set himself the task of writing this account in ‘pure’ Persian, that is,
archaic Persian with no-Arabic-derived vocabulary. This book was also involved in
debates over language, and the history of the book is also a history of the new literary
public sphere and readership that was created by print. In the book, Ghalib showed his
concern for the reader in some places, and an analysis of this book also sheds light on the

510 Pernau, ‘From a ‘Private’ Public to a ‘Public’ Private Sphere, p. 114 The Miyarush Shuara was
published since 1848 by Ghalib’s friend Aran, poet and Persian teacher at the Agra Madrasa. Ibid. p. 124.
See Imdad Sabri, Urdu ke akhbar navis, p. 56 & Sidiqi, Hindustani ke Akbar Navis, p. 287-88

194
author-printer relationship. It is in this work that Ghalib’s Persian prose reached its highest formal and stylized level.

Ghalib in his letter to Surur on 18 November 1858 wrote:

On 11 May 1857 the disorders began here. On that same day I shut the doors and gave up going out. One cannot pass the days without something to do, and I began to write my experiences, appending also such news as I heard from time to time. But I made it a binding rule to write it in ancient Persian, the language of Dasattir, and except for the proper names, which, of course, cannot be altered, to use no Arabic words. 511

The Datanbu has been termed a ‘masterful exercise in linguistics and diplomacy’. 512 Ghalib himself wrote a letter to Mirza Hatim Ali Beg Mhr (1815-1879) in which he outlined how he had tried to arrive at a new language of writing, which could also be need for conversation:

I have invented a style of prose that has turned correspondence into conversation: you can talk with the tongue of a pen at a distance of some two thousand miles and enjoy, while physically separated, the dance of words in conversational union. 513

Ralph Russell notes that the imagination of the Persian purism movement can be discovered, ‘by expelling all words that came into it from Arabic’, in Ghalib’s Dastanbu. 514 Sayyid Fayyaz Mahmud notes that according to a contemporary estimate of the book, it was in ‘old Persian and the writer had used many words which were obsolete

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512 Rahbar, Urdu Letters of Mirza Assadu'llah Khan Ghalib, p. xxxvi.
513 Ibid, p. 86.
and were no longer understood’. Tavakoli-Targhi argues that while Ghalib’s attitude to Persian purism arose from the influence on him of the Persian purism debate under Dasatirian’s ideas. Bausani, on the other hand, claims that ‘just as he had nothing poetically new to say in Persian poetry—and therefore he could exercise himself in writing in the comparatively simple style of the ancient—so too he could exercise himself in difficult Persian prose; [as the result] he had no urgent need of being understood by people’.

Here it will be relevant to discuss the influence of the Dasatirian on Ghalib. Dasatirian looked at ancient Iran and debated printed texts relating to Zoroastrianism like Dasatir, Dabistan-i Mazahib and Sharistan-i Char Chaman. By the mid nineteenth-century these had become examples of Persian pure-writing (sarehnawisi). This was already visible in Abul Fazl’s writings, and was continued by other Indo-Persian writers

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515 According to Mahmud, in 1865 Ghalib appealed to the Lt. Governor of the Punjab to get him appointed Queen’s Poet or Laureate and requested that Dastanbu be printed at Government expense. A report was ordered on Dastanbu. Mirza was so excited at the news that he had the booklet reprinted by The Literary Society, Rohilkhand, Bareilly and sent copies of this edition to the Government of the Punjab. The Mir Munshi (Head Persian Secretary) reported that the language of the booklet was Old Persian and the writer had used many words which were obsolete and were no longer understood. It was not necessary therefore to spend money on publishing this book. So what Mirza considered a sign of scholarship was considered by others a flaw in Mirza’s style!’ Mahmud, Ghalib: A Critical introduction, p.419.

516 Dasatir is the Arabic plural of the original Persian word dastur, signifying “a note-book, pillar, canon, model, learned man”. According to the Persian grammar, its plural would be dasturan, or dasturha, and not dasatir. Dasatirian means those who believe in dasatir’s order. For a discussion on Dasatir see, David Shea and Turner, The Dabestan or School of Manners, trns., Paris, 1843, Vol., I, Introduction.

Dasatir was claimed to be a “collection of the writings of the different Persian Prophets, who flourished from the time of Mahabad to the time of the fifth Sasan, being fifteen in number, of whom Zerdusht or Zoroaster was the thirteenth and the fifth Sasan the last” Mirza Ghalib, Kulliyat-i Nasir-i Ghalib (Dastanbu), Nawal Kishore 1883.p.411.

The root of Dasatir goes back to Azar Kaywan (1207/1617) and his supporters who were called Azariyan or Azarkaianiyan. In about 978/1570 he migrated to India and settled in Patna and founded the new school of Zoroastrianism. The most famous texts of this cult calls Dasatir including fifteen letters that they claimed were sent by fifteen Iranian prophets. This text was published for the first time in 1818 at Bombay. Azariyan believed that Dasatir was first translated by fifth Sasan, in Khushru Parvez’ period, into Persian Dari before Arab invasion. Thus pure Persian could survive because of Dasatir. Muhammad Tavakoli-Targhi, Tajaddu-i Bumi (Vernacular Modernity and History Rethinking in Persian), Tehran: Iran History Publisher, 2003, p. 16.

into the nineteenth-century. Thus Ghalib’s Qatl-i Burhan which consisted of Dasatiri\textsuperscript{518} lexicons played an important role in encouraging the linguistic debate. Ghalib called himself, with pride, the sixth Sasan.

Although Ralph Russell claims that ‘there is no suggestion either in insha or in Ghalib that the ‘pure’ language they were writing should become standard language,’\textsuperscript{519} Ghalib’s style of prose had his own followers which there similarity in authors ideas and style to looking at pure language, farsi-dari. For example, Maulvi Najaf Ali Khan also wrote a Farsi-Dari commentary on the Dasatir and called it Safarang-i Dasatir, which was published by Saraji Press in 1863 at the behest of Amir Mirza Sahib Dehlavi with the support of Maharaja Sawai Singh Bahadur. Ghalib also wrote a taqriz on it. In the introduction of the book, the writer says:

My book does not reveal any secrets. This translation became inevitable because in this age Persian Dari as a pure language has become unusual for people, and hidden from their eyes... I, the commentator, did not have any other aim. I am sure honest people can understand why I (as a Muslim) translated a Zoroastrian book. I apologize if I offended anyone. God is kind and is the commander of existence.\textsuperscript{520}

Even, twenty two years after the first publication of Dastanbu, a book called Atash-i Bi Dud was written by Maulvi Muhammd ‘Ahsanullah Khan ‘Saqib’ and was published in Ahmad Khan Sufi’s Mufid-i ‘Am Press in Agra with the comments of Maulvi Muhammd Abulqasim Fazl Rabbi ‘Arshi’.\textsuperscript{521}

\textsuperscript{518} See, Nazir Ahmad, ‘Dasatir Par Ik Nazar’ in Naqd-i Qatl-i Burhan, Ghalib Institute, New Delhi, 1985.
\textsuperscript{519} Russell, How Not to Write the History of Urdu Literature, p. 133.
\textsuperscript{520} Muhammd Najaf Ali Khan, Safarang-i Dasatir, Matba‘i Saraji, 1863, p. 194 (My translation).
\textsuperscript{521} Sharif Qasmi, Dastanbu by Ghalib, Ghalib Institute, New Dehi 2007, p.255.
Tavakoli-Targhi argues that the challenge and debate between the followers of modernism and tradition forged a culture which now is known as Iranian culture. It is his view that the Indo-Iranian intellectual symmetry continued till the end of the nineteenth century with the formation of Anjuman-i Ma‘arif, and in the publication of the paper *Miftah-ul Zafar* in 1897 (under the patronage of Jalaluddin Husaini, and Mirza Sayyid Hasan Kashani in Calcutta), which assisted the strengthening of Persian as a scientific language.

The Web of Print Culture: The Relationship between Author and Printer-Publisher

As was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the coming of print changed the role and position of authors as much as it altered the author-publisher relationship. These changes can be mapped in the context of our study with the help of a few examples. The publisher of *Dastanbu*, Munshi Shive Nara‘in Aram, tried to get the support of the British in the publication of *Dastanbu* and negotiated with the British so as to solicit their patronage and to send them copies of the book. He published the first edition of *Dastanbu* and also was a publisher responsible for the production and distribution of a number of journals of the day. In a letter to his publisher, Ghalib wrote, ‘I have not written an account of the victory of the Governed after all.’ According to Rahbar, Aram was probably worried that the *Dastanbu* might offend the British administration, and had apparently added some words of his own in the second page of the book to the effect that the work was Ghalib’s account of the victory of the British. Thus, in the letter, Ghalib was reminding Aram that this was not the case; that his account did not take sides, and that to suggest otherwise would mislead prospective readers of the book.

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324 Munshi Shiv Nara‘in Aram was a Kayasth from Agra. The *kayaths* were well-versed in the literary and scribal arts of Urdu and Persian. Aram was well-versed in not only Urdu and Persian but in English as well.

325 The first edition of the five hundred copies of *Dastanbu* was published by Matab-i Mufti-du khala‘iq, Agra, in 1858. It was sold out within five months. A second edition was brought out by the Literary Society of Rohilkhand, Bareilly, in 1865 and later 1871. Nawal Kishore published it in 1868.

What I have written is my story of these fifteen months. The narrative covers what happened between May 11, 1857 and July 31, 1858. Read it carefully and follow my advice. Otherwise, the nature of the book will be misrepresented and the press will be blamed.\textsuperscript{527}

In another letter he wrote,

Prayers for our prosperous and blessed young friend, (Aram). Then be it known to him that, as a precaution, I have sent a second copy of the opening passage of the Datanbu. I am sure that you have already received it, have had it printed and that the passage has been, or will be used by you as part of the advertisement for the work in the newspaper.\textsuperscript{528}

From another letter of Ghalib, we get a glimpse of the author’s concern with the readership of his book. As Ghalib put it:

I am happy that the edition of the Dastanbu is all sold out. I hope to God that you corrected the two or three printer’s errors. It is not clear to me whether it was primarily Sahibs or Hindustanis who purchased copies of the book. By all means, write to me on this subject. Now see, Sir, you worried without just cause. After all, this commodity did not remain in the warehouse but sold rather well.\textsuperscript{529}

In yet another letter written to Khwaja Ghulam Ghaus Bekhbar\textsuperscript{530} Ghalib wrote about the British readership of his book:

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{527} Ibid. pp. 106-7.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{528} Ibid. p. 107.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{529} Ibid. pp. 63-4. According to Rahbar, since Ghalib had intended his account of the uprising of 1857 as a neutral narrative, inoffensive to both sides in the conflict, he is understandably interested in knowing the book’s readership, p. 442. The ‘commodity’ to which he referred was the first press run of Dastanbu. Aram may have feared that the book wouldn’t sell, though he was probably more concerned that the work would prove offensive. Ghalib is naturally glad to gloat over the book’s sales as well as over the fact that it seemed to be generally well received by Muslim and English alike.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{530} ‘Bekhabar’ (1824-1904) claimed descent from Sultan Zainu’l Abidin of Kashmir. He was a poet and writer of prose in both Persian and Urdu and played a major role in the publication of Ghalib’s ‘Ud-i-Hind, a selection of his Urdu prose.}
\end{footnotes}
The copy of the book which its recipient is now reading is luckier than the other. What I mean is that this one is being perused with kind interest. The honorable sahib will naturally turn to you with any questions he might have about its contents. We shall see what the effect of the other copy will be. The worthy gentleman who has been told to look into it is learned. However, the style of the book, I must say, is quaint and unfamiliar, though not quite unique; so I hope to God that the worthy gentleman to whom its perusal has been assigned will read it is consultation with you and get help with the language from you.\

Conclusion

The rise of Persian print culture in the late-eighteenth century strengthened a literary trend that had begun as a result of a contestation among the various varieties of Persian: the Iranian variant and the Indian variant. The controversy reached a zenith in the lifetime of Ghalib, one of the central figures who sparked off the controversy. Ghalib's own life is an illustration of an author's changed role with the coming of print. The examples cited in this chapter show how print was involved in the production, distribution and encouragement of literary debate in public sphere. In manuscript culture, the debate around any issue began and ended with the elite. In print culture, specific publishers sought out readers in various parts of northern India.

Ghalib's letters are important as they indicate that authors were conscious of the new readership that was created by print culture. Although authors in the manuscript tradition were conscious of their audience, the process intensified as print magnified manifold the size and composition of the audience. Thus, Ghalib, even while writing his work was already thinking of how it would be read and received. Now the author was more conscious than ever before. In this way, print culture affected authors also, as even while writing they had to think about the intended audience and possibilities of suppression of their work, among other things.

\[^{531}\text{Rahbar, Urdu Letters of Mirza Assadu'llah Khan Ghalib, p. 499.}\]