

Travel Talk: Phrases for Travellers in India

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This paper examines the ways in which travellers in India tried to communicate with people in Hindi during the period from 1773 to 1874. My thesis is that these texts show individual pragmatic approaches to how to travel in India rather than a consistent ‘colonialist’ project.

Introduction

Western interaction with India interests me at heart because I am a Westerner who has interacted with India. In addition I also see the role of language as being an important factor in how this interaction took place. For a number of years now the interaction between Westerners and Indians has been seen predominantly through the perspective of theoretical views such as colonialism and orientalism. However, in this paper I suggest that that it might be better to contextualise Western Indian interactions during the period from around 1770 to 1870 as pragmatic negotiations between individuals and cultures.¹

I will look at phrases related to travel in a number of English works on India from 1773 to around 1882. The main works are; Captain John Fergusson’s *A Dictionary of the Hindostan language* of 1773, John Gilchrist’s *Dialogues English and Hindoostanee* of 1828, Edward Eastwick’s *Guide to the Bombay Presidency* of 1859, Duncan Forbes *Hindustani Grammar* of 1874 and Frederic Pincott’s *Hindi Manual* of 1882.

I also want to situate this paper in relation to Said’s thesis on the nature of Orientalism² and Bernard Cohn’s study of early English language teaching materials for Indian languages. Cohn argued that language studies were a part of an early colonial discourse through which the colonialists sought to develop knowledge about India as a part of their project to exploit India.³

I would argue though that these language teaching texts reveal such profound differences between 18th and 19th century texts that to seek to identify a single ‘colonialist’ project in

¹ This paper was presented to the 15th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia in Canberra 29 June-2 July 2004. It has been peer-reviewed and appears on the Conference Proceedings website by permission of the author(s) who retain(s) copyright. The paper may be downloaded for fair use under the Copyright Act (1954), its later amendments and other relevant legislation.

² See Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York, Vintage Books, 1978), pp. 1-28.

³ Bernard S. Cohn, ‘The command of Language and the Language of Command’ in *Subaltern Studies IV*, ed. Ranajit Guha, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 276-329, p. 283.

them would be to deny the variety of approaches apparent in them. Instead I argue that they rather represent a variety of pragmatic attempts to deal with the everyday realities of life in India. I would also propose that they show their authors reaching accommodations with prior-existing Indian social contexts for language use, that of military officers, civil officials, and travellers. I suggest then that these language teaching texts represent paradigms for how European travellers negotiated with local people in order to travel in India.

Captain John Fergusson's *A Dictionary of the Hindostan language* of 1773

Probably the earliest English to Hindi⁴ teaching guides published was by Captain John Hadley in 1772.⁵ However, as this does not contain any phrases it will not be studied here. The next guide to how to speak Hindi was that published by John Fergusson⁶ in 1773. Concerning why he wrote his work he says in the preface.

‘The advantages which Great Britain derives from its commerce with Hindostan are great and important. Any attempt therefore, to facilitate and promote their intercourse, deserves a favourable reception from the publick. To render the language of Hindostan familiar to the inhabitants of this country is the most natural and effectual means of obtaining this end. This the object of the author in the following work.’⁷

In his introduction Fergusson tells us that he was a captain in the Bengal Army and served under John Graham the resident of Midnapore who suggested that he learn ‘Hindostan’ and ordered him to spend fifteen months in the interior of the province where he had nobody to speak with but locals and so he learned the language.

The phrases given as examples of usage in the Hindi-English Dictionary part of it seem to be based upon questioning a number of informants who spoke different dialects of Hindi and were presumably members of the forces under Fergusson's command.

The book reflects the range of activities a British army officer would have been engaged in during the 1760s in India. The era that the work was compiled in is vividly depicted in some examples. ‘The viceroy of Oudeh, the nabob Sujah Dowla's defeat was at Buxar. After the

⁴ In this paper I will refer to the languages which in these texts are called Moors, Indostans, Hindoostanee, Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu, as Hindi. This is just for convenience and because most of the texts are for phrases which are comprehensible from the viewpoint of modern Hindi.

⁵ George Hadley's work is called *Grammatical Remarks on the Practical and Vulgar Language of the Indostan Language*, (London, 1772). However, it contains no example phrases in its 1772 edition, and I have not been able to access later editions as yet which do have example phrases in them apparently.

⁶ John Fergusson, *A Dictionary of the Hindostan language in two parts i. English and hindostan, ii. Hindostan and English. The latter containing a great variety of phrases, to point out the idiom, and facilitate the acquisition of the language*, (London, T. Cadell, 1773).

⁷ *Ibid.* p. i.

Buxar battle the viceroy of Oud made an alliance with the company'. Topics address include, commanding a military force, 'My battalion exercises excellently', the administering of justice, 'It is adequate to empale for murder', eating, 'I will eat meat, I am no Hindoo', health, 'I am rendered helpless by sickness', pastimes, 'I love a game at cards', and dangers, 'I got into a tree for fear of a tiger.'⁸

There also a number of phrases about relationships with Bengali women which suggest the author saw such relationships as a normal feature of British life in India.

'A beautiful woman gives me great delight. I desire a beautiful woman. Madam, I am your slave. The Bengal women are amorous. Concupiscence increases from bathing.'

There are also phrases about getting married, married life, and having children, which illustrate the then common custom of bringing up children from marriages with local women.

'I will marry a wife from a good family. A child is born me, therefore I rejoice. My child misbehaved, therefore I was distressed.'

In regards to travel the main kind of travel described is that of a military unit in the field and there are many descriptions of military manoeuvres such as, 'Let the train go afore.' and 'The van was forbid to go far from the main body because it is a woody country.'⁹

Apart from references the movements of an army there are also references to the purposes of travel as to supervise an area and to trade. 'There is occasion for a supervisor to survey the country and put a stop to oppression.' and 'He goes to a very remote country to trade.'

References to travel mostly relate to roads, riding and travelling by boat or ship. The main impression that you get is that travel was very difficult for the British at this time.

'The guide erred, for he knew not the road. I can't distinguish the road for the darkness. It requires an intelligent and experienced person in an indirect road to show it. In the rainy season the roads are difficult. There is filth on the road, and it is not eligible to go a-foot. In the rainy season the roads have much dirt. I lost the way in a fog.'

In comparison to the very occasional reference to walking on the roads there are numerous references to riding and horses, and their cost and the difficulties surrounding their ownership and riding.

'Master's horse runs best. A gelding is weak in comparison to a horse. The loss of the horse vexes me. A horse is a high priced animal in India. I cannot go on horseback, for my posteriors are excoriated. Adjust the horse's saddle, for it is fallen under his

⁸ There are no page numbers in the original work and so I cannot give references to the page numbers of the original phrases.

⁹ The van of the army is its advanced guard, its train the main column.

belly. Leave the horse in my charge and I'll breed him. There is a blemish in the horse's eye. Sell the vicious horse, never mind disadvantage. See the horse how he prances. Bring a fresh and sound horse from the stable. The horse has slipt from the groom, and he can't catch him without help.'

There are also references to travel on the river and boats and ships.

'I will cross the river at the ferry. The warden stopped one boat for the custom. The wind has overset the boat. The water got into the boat, but the cloth was undamaged. Take ten or twelve fish-boats to put the men across. Fix the rope and drag the boat. The ship was lost in a storm. There was an embargo of four ships. There is news of the arrival of the English ships.'

It is also interesting to note that one of the dangers of travel is the fear of wild animals. Indeed fear of attack by tigers was a factor in travelling. 'One tiger remains in the cave. Fortunate man! He escaped from the jaws of a tiger. A tiger lives in my neighbourhood, I therefore don't go abroad at night. I got into a tree for fear of a tiger.'

Another danger was robbers and pirates 'Care is requisite for about one thousand freebooters lurk at the pass.' Indeed these two entries make this very clear. 'Tshooar, s. Freebooter (the people who inhabit the woody and mountainous parts of Hindostan)'. 'Dekoyt, s. Pirate. (There are many of them who rob small ships about the mouths of the Ganges)'.

There are two features of these phrases which are particularly noteworthy. First, in regard to the modes of transport they are basically either by horse or boat, there are no descriptions of travel by palanquin or carriage. This I take to be because basically what we have here is a Hindi vocabulary for military commanders. Second, it is notable that the majority of the sentences are not commands, but descriptive statements. This suggests to me that Fergusson's experience was one in which he was engaged in actively conversing with the men under his command rather than simply giving orders.

The painter William Hodges experiences of travel in India during the years 1780-1783 were remarkably different.¹⁰ Speaking of travelling from Calcutta to Mongheir he comments on the excellence of the roads and how there are numerous Banyan trees planted along the roads by sides of wells, temples and tanks. He also describes the travellers including companies of native soldiers, merchants, devotees and people travelling by 'the common Hindoo pallankeen'. His companions on the road also included families, some riding on camels, some on bullock carts and some on horseback and some marching on foot. He has no problem with

¹⁰ This account is based on a section called 'Remarks on the Mode of Travelling in India', pp. 29-32, in Hodges, William, *Travels in India during the years 1780, 1781, 1782 and 1783*, (Delhi, Manoharlal, 1999, reprint of 1794 edition).

accommodation and comments positively on the Serais, or Caravanserais, which he says are in great number on the roads at which the travellers can rest the nights for a small sum.

Nor yet was his impression of river travel any less pleasant and he describes how he travelled in the train of the Governor General along the river and saw life on the river.¹¹ People mostly used 'budgerows' which could carry sail or be rowed by twelve to twenty oars and were up to fifty feet long. He said that they had small verandas, or porticos and dining rooms and bed chambers. Furthermore gentlemen travelling by these boats were normally accompanied by two other boats, a 'pulwah' which acted as a kitchen, and a 'pauchway' which was for ferrying to the shore and back. In addition to these boats he also saw boats called 'Moor-punky' which were a hundred foot or so long and about eight foot in breadth. These were paddled by forty men and had sterns in the shapes of peacocks, snakes or other animals tails, which no doubt accounts for their name.

He also travelled sometimes by palanquin and in a description of this mode of travel speaks of having fifteen palanquin bearers and being encumbered with such a quantity of baggage, including tents, and cooking provisions and numerous servants which he says 'makes the train of even an individual considerable'.¹²

To find a description of travel in this period that matches that in Fergusson we need to look rather at the travels of Dean Mahomed.¹³ In this work Dean Mahomed, who was originally from Patna, describes how he accompanied a British military contingent as a camp follower and later subaltern officer on its activities in Bengal from 1769 for 15 years. His descriptions of an army on the march match closely with Fergusson's phrases. Rather than an individual traveller, even with a not inconsiderable train in tow, what Dean Mahomed describes is pretty much the equivalent of a city on the move with a camp two miles in length when pitched. One description lists the army as including two battalions of Europeans, six regiments of Seapoys and one company of European Artillery. What is more an army on the move involved much more than just the troops, it also required bullock carts in great numbers to transport the baggage and with each English officer a company of seapoys and about seven hundred attendants, including groups such as shoe-makers, carpenters, smiths, sail-makers, Besties (water bearers), and Charwalleyes (cleaners) and others.¹⁴

¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 38-41.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 107.

¹³ Fisher, Michael, H., *The First Indian Author in English*, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2000, orig. ed. 1996).

¹⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 25-26.

There is also a fine description of a ‘palankeen’ which was part of the army’s transport. He says it was like a kind of travelling canopy-bed which was beautifully decorated and suitable only for a person ‘of condition’. It was carried by a group of eight men, two teams of four carrying it in rely.¹⁵ He also mentions that the army included not only horses but also elephants.¹⁶

I would like to suggest that it would be possible to characterise the selection of phrases in Fergusson as being those suitable for a military commander in India at that time. One question I feel is to what extent are the phrases representative of a distinctly ‘European’ approach to running an Indian army, I would suggest that apart from the emphasis on drilling for manoeuvres what we have in these phrases is not really distinct from that which have been needed with a native army of the time.

John Gilchrist’s *Dialogues English and Hindoostanee* of 1828

John Gilchrist was a highly influential figure who had a great impact on how people tried to communicate with Hindi speakers. John Borthwick Gilchrist (1759-1841) was born in Edinburgh and having qualified as a doctor travelled to Bombay in 1782 at his own expense and in 1783 went to Calcutta where he became an Assistant Surgeon in the employ of the East-India company and until ill health forced him to return in 1804. After staying in Edinburgh for some years in 1816 he moved to London and began to teach oriental languages until 1826 when he handed over to Sandford Arnot and Duncan Forbes. He seems to have been a somewhat difficult person inclined to be garrulous, suspected of Republican sympathies, and to have often taken rather odd ways to achieve his goals. For instance instead of accepting a wage for teaching in London he seems to have forced students to buy quantities of the quite costly text books he published, it is possible that this policy of his however may partly account for the numbers of his works still in existence today.¹⁷ He also had a more romantic side which is revealed in his poetry particularly the poems written between around 1778-1782 when he served as a surgeon on a number of ships.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 27.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 34.

¹⁷ Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. VII, pp. 1221-1223.

¹⁸ Brelvi, Ebadat., *Poems of Dr John Gilchrist*, (Lahore, University Oriental College, 1977).

These selections from one of his works published in 1800 are typical of his imperious approach to speaking to Hindi speakers, they are in the context of how to speak to a boatman in the Calcutta area.

‘I want a boat to go to Calcutta. What is the fare? When can you go? We will go immediately? Bring the boat here quickly. Is the tide in now? No, sir, it is out. Put me on the shore. Go this way, Turn that way. What is the name of that place? Who stays there? Can we get any thing to eat there? Well, take the boat there and put to. Keep the boat here, and remain all at hand, as we shall return immediately. Come, let us set off quickly. Row fast, pull away, don’t be lazy. Put up something to shelter us from the sun. What o’clock is it? Bring a chair quickly. Get porters, and send my baggage along with me. Where to you mean to go sir? Let them carry me at once to the best tavern.’¹⁹

In the 4th edition of his *Dialogues English and Hindoostanee* published in 1826²⁰ he included an extensive range of dialogues on topics such as dialogues with ‘a chairman, or bearer, etc., with a butler, steward, or valet, on speaking, telling, etc.’. The term dialogues would perhaps be more akin to our modern notion of phrases, as there is little in the way of reply indicated to each phrase and Gilchrist basically simply gives a list of commands and questions appropriate in each context. In relation to travel he talks about travel by all the then current modes of travel, by foot, palanquin, carriage, horse and boat.

I suspect that the first thing which is striking is the very notion of a ‘chairman’ which here refers to bearers for a palanquin. In 18th century and well into the mid 19th century these seem to have been common forms of transport. Answering the needs not only of the modern rickshaw but also of the taxi and used for cross country journeys as well.

In this work the palanquin is basically the equivalent of a rickshaw it seems. The following dialogues are given for use with a Chairman. ‘i want a palkee (or a chair) and bearers. what is the fare per day? go straight forwards. turn to the right. turn to the left (hand). go fast, go a little slower. go there, -go on, -stop. stop here till i return. i will be back immediately.’²¹

In relation to riding the phrases seem to be mainly aimed at the groom. The preparations for a ride start in a way which is probably similar to riding manuals from many contexts. ‘is the horse ready? put the saddle well on. hold the bridle till I be fairly mounted. take the stirrup

¹⁹ Gilchrist, J., *The Anti-Jargonist Or A Short Introduction To The Hindoostanee Language*. (Calcutta, 1800), p. 233-34.

²⁰ Gilchrist, J. *Dialogues, English and Hindoostanee; for illustrating the Grammatical Principles of the Strangers East Indian Guide* (London, Kingsbury and Parbury, and Allen, 1826).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24. Note that Gilchrist at some point decided to not use capital letters at all and there are none in the original of this text.

one hole. let the strirrup down two holes. tighten the girth. put a cloth over the horse's eyes, coax him that he may not be restive.'²²

However, once the ride begins things get a bit more distinctive and the Indian flavour of the context emerges clearly. 'tell that man, woman, child, carter, bullock-driver, etc., to go out of the way. call out to those people in good time, the horse may gallop over them. remove that bag, box, basket, otherwise the horse may start, take fright, and run off. bid these people give over their beating, singing, and noise till I get past.'²³

The section on travel by carriage also shows how similar most of the phrases seem to already follow a pattern which continues on into the later 19th century and are addressed to the driver of the carriage. 'drive the horses (bullocks) properly. is the harness ready, and in good order? grease the wheels well. get the harness repaired. bring everything to-morrow morning early, and examine the whole before me. open the coach door, let down, put up the steps.'²⁴

That there was some fluidity in English and Hindi terminology is also a feature of these texts. Gilchrist notes in relation to this phrase 'sit in the buggy with me and hold the umbrella' that 'this buggy is one of those ugly names for whirligigs of local currency, but very equivocal origin; it is almost naturalised in the hindoostanee.'²⁵

In relation to travelling he includes many phrases which indicate that travelling out of urban areas was not a simple matter.

'We must not commence such a journey with being provided with every necessary and comfort, few of which are to be procured on the way. As we travel by land, we must have every thing well packed, to guard against all accidents, which occur frequently by the carelessness of servants, independent of those common to all travellers. Both to avoid expense and inconvenience, we must reduce our baggage to as small a quantity as possible. Let us consult him; he has travelled much both by land and water in this country, and will give us assistance. You do not advert to the necessity of applying for orders to pass your carriages, etc. at the different stations. This will occasion a delay of two days at least. This road, though shortest, is in general much infested by robbers; I think we ought to go by the other, and even then, a small guard is absolutely necessary. Is the wine, and the other packages that were sent here in the morning, properly packed and put in the carts? There are people now

²² *Ibid.*, p. 92.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

employed in going, so you had better see yourself that it be well done. On the journey the loss of the wine would be a very serious one, and one easily remedied. These people, in place of exerting themselves, are all asleep in the veranda. so many of the servants ought to go on with the breakfasting tent, and the others remain with the dining tent. by sending one tent on in the evening to the next stage, we can have breakfast as soon as we arrive. the dining tent in which we sleep, seldom can come up until the day is far advanced, the sentinel must be very circumspect at night, otherwise we shall certainly be robbed, let the carriages and cattle be brought to one place before it gets dark, and put under the charge of the watchman. we must halt one day in each week, or even more should the stages be long, to relieve the people and cattle. all large towns we ought to avoid as much as possible, to prevent our people from deserting.’²⁶

The purpose of the journey is perhaps not limited to the shooting of game which features heavily in the following pages. It also includes activities related to later notions of tourism it seems. ‘what amazing numbers of peacocks, partridges, and other game we saw to-day; from never being disturbed, they are very tame. let us go and look at the celebrated mosque in the evening.’²⁷ ‘this immense number of hindoos is going to bathe at the ganges at such a place, it is their annual custom.’²⁸

The descriptions of boat travel on a river also relate to journeys done in a similar style. ‘send a person the different stations where bujros, and other boats, generally lie; and should he find a convenient pinnace or bujro, of about sixteen oars, let him bring the person who has charge of it with him. is your boat, and are your people ready to go a voyage of six weeks to such a place?’²⁹

The journey itself employs several boats, including a cooking boat and two horse boats and luggage such as table and chairs and obtaining passes for baggage from customs houses.

I would suggest that these phrases must be based largely on his experiences from 1782-1804 when he was in India and reflect an early style of travel in India that has a number of distinctive features. Travel in and around Calcutta uses of modes of transport such as the palanquin, cart, horse and boat, and seems to entail similar problems to those encountered by later travellers. But travel in the country, and on the river, seems more akin to an expedition

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

than a journey. The language is mostly related to giving orders and the traveller is apparently not very interested in talking with people on the journey.

I would suggest that the implication of such features of his travels as that he has the power to get his servants to stop people making noises that might disturb his horses shows he is acting in a way which shows much greater power than most modern people on the street. He is behaving I would suggest like a state official who has the power to ensure that other road users give way to him, something akin to a modern DM.

That not everybody's experience of Calcutta was like Gilchrist's, or idea of how people should talk in Hindi with the locals, can be seen from the dialogues in Herasim Lebedeff's work which was published in 1801.³⁰ Lebedeff (1749-1817) was a Russian adventurer who via Paris and London and Madras arrived in Calcutta in 1787 where he stayed for ten years and became a pioneer of Bengali theatre. Along with his theatrical work he took an interest in the local languages and seems to have learned some sort of Hindi. He left India in 1797 and eventually returned to Russia where he ended up working for the ministry of Foreign Affairs.³¹ Thus his period in India corresponds quite closely with the start of Gilchrist's time in India.

His grammar itself is so confused that it is not very useful. However, he also included in it a series of dialogues which seem to be transcriptions of conversations. What is striking about them is the difference in tone from Gilchrist's dialogues. Lebedeff is clearly talking to people in a completely different manner of discourse in which he is treating them with deference and as his equals in status and intellect. For instance consider this dialogue.

'To enquire about the road on a journey. Friend (brother)? Sir. Pray, does this road lead to Calcutta. No, sir you have come out of the road. How far? About a mile. Which way then must I go? Go straight forward until you come to the bushes, then turn to your left. Is there any danger hereabouts? None at all, sir, excepting the darkness of the night. Friend, will you do me the favour to shew me the way? And I will give something for your trouble. Very well, sir, then let us go. Now, if you will keep this path you cannot miss the way. Very well, friend, there is what I promised you for your trouble. I thank you, sir, and wish your safety to your journey's end. I wish you the same. Good bye. Farewell, sir.'³²

³⁰ Lebedeff, Herasim, *A Grammar of the Pure and Mixed East Indian Dialects*, (Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Limited, 1988, orig. ed. London, 1801).

³¹ See introduction by P. Thankappan Nair in the above work, pp. i-iii.

³² *Ibid.* pp. 110-111.

I have included Lebedeff's material here as it reveals that there were many more European views on how to communicate in Hindi with people that that of the British as typified by Fergusson, Hadley and Gilchrist. However, Fergusson, Hadley and Lebedeff's works seem to have fallen by the wayside as the juggernaut of Gilchrist's program rolled over them and laid the foundation for the 19th century study of Hindustani as practiced by Gilchrist's students, including the highly influential Duncan Forbes.

Duncan Forbes's *Hindustani Manual*

Duncan Forbes (1798-1868) was born in Kinnaird Perthshire and was illiterate until the age of 13, however, by the age of 17 he was appointed as a schoolmaster and from there went on to the University of St Andrews where he gained a Masters degree. From 1823 to 1826 he taught at the Calcutta Academy and from 1837 to 1861 he was Professor of Oriental Languages at King's College London. He published a number of works on oriental languages, including: a *Persian Grammar* (1828), a translation of the *Bagh-o-Bahar* (1851), a translation of the *Totakahani* (1852), an *Arabic Grammar* (1874), a translation of the Persian romance of *Hatim Tai* (1896). Monier-Williams recalling his first lessons in Sanskrit from Forbes about 1839 said he was, '...a podgy squat figure of a man...almost as broad as he was long suggesting he had been accidentally sat upon...during his babyhood...with dirty unkempt hair and untidy garments...[but] a more good natured, clear headed and efficient teacher than Duncan Forbes never existed.'³³

Forbes's *Hindustani Manual* first appeared in 1845 and continued to be published in various forms for at least seventy-six years. The first edition was published in 1845³⁴ and then in a new edition in 1850.³⁵ The success of this led to it being revised by John T. Platts and appearing in a new edition in 1874.³⁶ The continued success of this work led to its revision by M. Yusuf Jafari, chief Maulavi of the Board of Examiners in Calcutta, in 1918³⁷ which was

³³ Danvers, F., et al. (eds.), *Memorials of Old Haileybury*, 1894 pp. 44-45.

³⁴ Forbes, Duncan, *The Hindustani Manual; a pocket companion for those who visit India. Part 1. A compendious grammar. Part 2. A vocabulary of useful words.* London, 1845, [BL shelfmark: 826.a.3.].

³⁵ Forbes, Duncan, *The Hindustani Manual*, (New edition) London, 1850. [BL Shelfmark 826.a.30.]

³⁶ Forbes, Duncan, *The Hindustani Manual*, (New edition revised by J. T. Platts.), London, 1874. [BL shelfmark 12906.a.24.]

³⁷ Forbes, Duncan, *The Hindustani Manual*, (New [22nd] edition... revised by M. Yusuf Ja'fari) London, Crosby Lockwood and Son 1918.

published as its 22nd edition in 1918. The latest edition I can find references to is the 23rd edition of 1921.³⁸

There are a number of very odd things about this work. First, that despite being attributed to Forbes, it's actually a kind of composite work by many authors, rather than simply a work by Duncan Forbes. In the introduction to the new edition by Forbes, which I think must date from 1850 he says that part two of the manual was made on the basis of a work printed at Calcutta several years ago. Indeed, it appears to be strikingly similar to *The English and Hindustani Students Assistant* published in Calcutta in 1837³⁹ with some emendations. Nor yet does he mention that the majority of the dialogues in lessons 21 to 56 seem to be based on Gilchrist's *Hindoostanee dialogues*. The following section from Forbes's work is entitled 'On Travelling'.

'How many stages is Delhi from this town? Is your boat ready? Are all your people ready to go a voyage to Benares? What is the hire of this boat for two months? At which hour does the tide serve to go up the river to-day? As soon as the tide serves, let the boat be taken above the shipping to such a ghat where we will embark in the evening. We must not commence such a journey without being provided with every necessary and comfort, few of which are procurable on the way. Both to avoid expense and inconvenience, we must reduce our baggage to as small a quantity as possible. I am not going by water, I prefer going by land. We must have everything well packed to guard against all accidents, which occur frequently by the carelessness of servants, independent of those common to all travellers. Come, chairman, in whose service are you, and when did you arrive in Calcutta? How many other chairman are with you? Desire the people always to pitch the tents near water, and, if possible, under trees. Are they all your countrymen only, or your relations? What tribe of chairman is there here who make more money than the rest? What district is this village in, and who is the magistrate of it? How very highly cultivated the country is, through which passed to-day! Tell the proprietor of that village to send some his people in the evening to beat up the game for us. Take care that everything is paid for, and that no violence be used against the villagers.'⁴⁰

³⁸ Forbes, Duncan, *The Hindustani Manual*, (23rd edition), London, Crosby Lockwood and Son 1921, [BL Shelfmark: W10/5698].

³⁹ *The English and Hindustani Students Assistant; or Idiomatic Exercises in Those Languages*. Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 1837. [SLV Shelfmark S 491.43 EN3].

⁴⁰ Duncan Forbes (revised by John T. Platts), *Hindustani Manual*, (London, Crosby Lockwood and Sons, 17th ed., 1904), pp. 77-78.

This is I suggest based on the section on travelling from Gilchrist's dialogues given above. Some sentences are identical, some are new, and some sentences from Gilchrist's dialogues have been dropped. Indeed it's not surprising that if the dialogue is partly based on Forbes's experience of India in 1823-1826 and no doubt on studying Gilchrist's book, then that might explain why it seems to relate to travel in India at the start of the 19th century, rather than the end of the century.⁴¹ However, it's odd that even by the earliest edition of the work I have at hand, the 1906 edition, there are still no references to railway travel at all.

Some of the most notable changes from Gilchrist's dialogue are not the inclusion of new material, but the exclusion of certain subjects. In particular references to: the importance of wine on the journey, the need to hire a local guide, the need to obtain permits, and the need for guards against bandits. These show that some of the pleasures, and dangers, of the early 19th century are no longer fitting, or relevant, by this time. In fact I would propose that it is only by this period that the journey of a person as depicted in a *Hindustani Manual* has begun to approach most people's idea of the activities of a stereo-typical English Official in India.

Edward Eastwick's *Guide to Madras and Bombay Presidencies*

The earliest English language Indian travel guides were probably those of Captain Williamson published as the *East India Company Vade Mecum* in 1810 followed by a second version revised by John Gilchrist in 1825.

However, the earliest guide not specifically addressed to company servants was that published by John Murray the prolific publisher of travel guides. Indeed it seems that John Murray in England in 1836 and Baedeker in Germany in 1835 were the originators of the modern travel guide.⁴²

Rather than publishing an all India guide this guide began as a guide to for the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay published in 1859. The third part, a guide to Bengal and Burma did not appear until 1882 and the last part was a guide to the Punjab and the North West Frontier Provinces which was published in 1883. Then finally in 1892 a revised consolidated edition for the whole of India appeared.

Edward Eastwick (1814-1883) was born into a family with a tradition of service in the East India Company. After studying at Charterhouse and Merton college Oxford he joined the Bombay infantry as a cadet in 1836 and then due to his facility with languages he became a political officer in Sindh. By 1845 however, ill health had made him return to England where

⁴¹ However, I suspect that there are also changes which have been introduced by John T. Platts who revised the work in 1874 and no doubt brought it into line with his experiences in India.

⁴² Buzard, James, 2002, 'The Grand Tour and After', in Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 37-52.

he was appointed as a Professor of Hindustani at Haileybury college and then in 1859 he became an assistant political secretary at the India Office. It seems that he must have done the research for his India guide between his employment at Haileybury college and the India Office.

What particularly interests me here is that at the end of the Bombay volume there is included a set of vocabularies and dialogues, in English, Kanarese, Telegu, Tamil, Marathi and Gujarati. These dialogues are also later translated into Bengali and Hindi for the 1882 guide to the Presidency of Bengal. So what was in these dialogues which were intended to be useful to the traveller in India? They include the following nine sections:

‘Of landing and going to an Hotel, Of Hiring Servants, Of Dressing and washing, Of Meals, and Dining Out, Of a Journey, Of Sickness and consulting a Doctor, Of Riding and buying a Horse, Buying and Selling, A Lady and Maid, and A Lady and Tailor.’

Consider these dialogues which begin the first section.

‘I want to go ashore. Is this your boat ? Will you take me ashore ? What will you charge? These boxes are all mine. Put them in the boat. Is the surf high to-day ? Is there much current ? How long will it take to land ? I want a palanquin. Take me to the hotel. Which is the best hotel? How far is it off ? In what street is it ? Go quickly, but don't shake the palanquin. Take up the palki. Set it down. Put it in the shade. Where are the Khaskhas tattis ? Throw water on them. Torch-bearer, run a little before me. Keep to the lee-side. Don't let the torch flare in my face. I want to stop at Mr.----'s house. Call there on your way to the hotel.’

What is most striking is that the journey begins with an account of landing at Madras before the construction of the harbour there and the treacherous landing there was quite a famous feature of that city.

However there are many more striking things in the section entitled. ‘Of a journey’.

‘I am going to Allahabad to-morrow. I shall go by dak. Where is the post office: I want bearers to --. What must I pay: Must I give largesse: What is the custom? Give me a receipt. Tell the bearers their reward depends on their conduct. If they go quick they shall be well paid. If they put the palki down to rest one or two must remain with it. Have done with your smoking and go on. As you value your place see that there is a torch bearer with each set. See that he has abundance of oil for each stage. How far is it to -? What sort of a road is it? Are there any rivers or water-courses? Can they be crossed, and if so, how? Are there plenty of supplies at each station? What kinds of food are there? Is there good and wholesome water? Is this water from a tank, river, or well? Shew me where you got it. What is the name of that village, fort, or mountain? What temple or mosque is that? Is there a European bangle or a native inn for travellers? Is this bed clean? Are there any bugs, fleas or other insects? Is there

any epidemic in the village? Is there small-pox, cholera or fever? Is this a healthy place? Is it so now? Has any sick person slept on this bed lately? What was his ailment? Call the sweeper and let him clean the place. Take care where you pitch the tent. Let it be a dry place. Are there any snakes, scorpions, other reptiles here? I shall ride this stage in preference.’⁴³

First, oddly despite this being a guide to Bombay Presidency, it starts with a trip to Allahabad in the North Western Provinces. Second, the journey is being made by hiring bearers (for a palanquin) who run along the established dak (post) route. This is very different from any of the other travel accounts given above where all the travellers essentially equipped various forms of expeditions to travel across country. Third, despite the reference to tents and camping most references are to staying in Dak bungalows or even in native inns, something that none of the other guides to speaking Hindustani has even mentioned as a possibility.

I would also propose that not only is the mode of travel different from the other accounts above, but also the ideology is different, the traveller is acting like a customer who is paying for services from servants and officials. He is essentially involved in the same kind of negotiations with local officials, businessmen and merchants that modern travellers are.

It is interesting to compare these dialogues with those in the book of English, French, German, and Italian phrases also published by John Murray. The first edition of this guide was published in 1844 but the earliest edition I have seen is that of 1858. This begins with the following sections.

‘I. Landing – Crossing the Frontier – Custom house, II. Taking a place at Coach or Mail Office, III. The Luggage, Setting Off, IV. On the Road, In a Coach or Railway Carriage, V. Posting-preliminary enquiries, VI. On the Road, VII. Changing Horses, VIII. Travelling with a Voiturier – Agreement.’⁴⁴

The technology and ideology is distinctively different from that found in the 20th century and seems to be in a transition from the age of stage coaches to that of trains. The interactions between the traveller and those he meets with are also depicted as being essentially that of a master and servants.

However, by the 1885, seventeenth edition, of this work it begins to resemble something akin to a modern account of travel.

‘1. Landing - Crossing the frontier – Custom house, 2. The Railway Station – Taking Tickets – Departure, 3. Railway Station – Luggage – Booking and Reclaiming it, 4. In

⁴³ Edward Eastwick, *A Handbook for India, Being an Account of the three Presidencies and of the Overland Route Intended as a Guide for Travellers, Officers and Civilians*. Part II. – Bombay. (London, John Murray, 1859), pp. 550-554.

⁴⁴ *A Handbook Of Travel Talk*, ‘15th Thousand’, (London, John Murray, 1858), p. v.

a Railway train – Arrival at the terminus – Luggage, 5. Telegraph Office – Sending a Message, etc., 6. The Post Office – Enquiries – Despatching and Receiving Letters – Postage Stamps, 7. To Hire a Carriage for the day or a journey, 8. Road Travelling with a Voiturier – Hiring a Carriage and Horses – Agreement.⁴⁵

In other words much of the technology of travel has become similar to that which was in use into the 20th century and even today. Not only that but also the manner of interaction with the officials and fellow travellers seems to be very similar to modern times, in that the relationship has become one of customer and official or merchant, rather than master and servant.

The question then is if in Europe travel talk underwent such a profound transformation was there a similar transformation in travel talk for India? Unfortunately Murray's 1859 and 1882 editions do not show any difference in their phrases, but I think this is due mainly to the delay in the publication of the 1882 volume due to the first independence war in the North.

Eastwick's traveller in India is apparently expected to relate to his servants in the same manner as Gilchrist's or Forbes models for how to relate to servants. However, in how he relates to people while travelling it is clear that the traveller is much more like a modern customer than a gentleman or an officer, he is negotiating to be supplied with services, not equipping an expedition or organising an official tour.

Moreover, there is a vast difference in the actual descriptions of how to travel between the 1859 and 1882 guides, and that difference is mainly due to the railway it seems. The descriptions of hiring palanquins and riding horses from place to place are being replaced by train timetables and accounts of how to catch the train from place to place. This technological change though I suggest also marks a further movement away from the traveller as gentleman, to the traveller as customer. No more is there a need to hire men and manage their carrying of palanquins or grooms to look after horses or boatmen to sail you along a river. Instead in every case what is happening is that the traveller is being informed about how to become a customer for the transport services available.

Fredrick Pincott's *Hindi Manual* (1882)

Fredrick Pincott was a noted Orientalist who seems to have been sympathetic towards India and wrote a large number of works on India.⁴⁶ He was fondly mentioned in Gandhi's

⁴⁵ *A Handbook Of Travel Talk*, '17th edition, (London, John Murray, 1885), p. v.

⁴⁶ These include titles such as: *Social Reform by authority in India* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1892), *An Inquiry into the Truth : an English Translation by Frederick Pincott, Esquire, of the Tahqiq-Ul-Haq or an exposition of the true principles of the Hindu, Jain and Muhammadan religions, with reference to certain customs calculated to disturb the public peace or the well being of society* (Aligarh: Lala Ram

autobiography⁴⁷ and was involved in the founding of the Khalsa college in Amritsar.⁴⁸ He published what seems to have been an influential Hindi grammar in 1882, which then appeared in at least six editions up to around 1908.⁴⁹ This work includes a number of dialogues at the end which I believe probably date from the earliest edition of the work as one of the examples is. ‘In March ’75, I shall go to England’.⁵⁰ Under the heading of ‘Travelling’ he includes a number of sentences on the care of horses.

‘Is yours a good horse? Yes, it is good; but yours is better. It is leaner than formerly. He must have starved our horses. Is he giving you an old horse? Do not accept an old horse. The farrier has shod my horse excellently’.⁵¹

He also includes materials on travel by carriage such as ‘Can one horse draw this carriage? The chariot cannot go very swiftly now’⁵² and mentions transport by palanqueen, ‘Send for a carriage or palanqueen on hire’.⁵³ For the first time in a Hindi manual we also get a reference to travel by train.

‘In a very short time the railroad will reach even as far as Rajputana. A few carriages go every day to the railway-station for passengers.’⁵⁴

He also includes in relation to travelling sentences such as,

‘You will not see such edifices elsewhere, Something like a fort appears, I want to see the caves, where are they?’⁵⁵

This shows that at least in part he saw travel as related to tourism in the sense of visiting sites, although the following section returns to hunting as a reason for travel. Moreover, Pincott’s

Dyal, Manager of the Jagat Binod Press, 1893), *Primitive and universal laws of the formation and development of language. A rational and inductive system founded on the natural basis of onomatops.* By Callistus Augustus, count de Goddes-Liancourt and Frederic Pincott. (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1874).

⁴⁷ Gandhi, M. K. , *An Autobiography or the story of My Experiments with Truth* (London: Penguin Books, 1984), pp. 89-90.

⁴⁸ See URL: <http://www.sikh-history.com/sikhhist/institutes/kcollege.html>, accessed 11 March 2003.

⁴⁹ Pincott, Frederic, *The Hindi Manual*, pp. viii. 360. (London, Allen & Co., 1882). There is also a third edition from 1890 in the British Library. All references in this paper are to the sixth edition published in London by Crosby Lockwood & Son which is undated, but is ca. 1908.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 324.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* pp. 327-328.

⁵² *Ibid.* p. 328.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 330.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 332.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 331.

work shows that by the end of the 19th century Hindi teaching materials were beginning to reflect the realities of travel in late 19th century India with railway travel rapidly becoming the most common mode of transport over long distances in the country.

Conclusion

I have shown that each of the authors of guides to how to travel in India adopted quite distinct approaches. Fergusson travels as a military commander, Gilchrist and Forbes travel like state officials, and Eastwick and Pincott travel like gentlemen on a touring holiday. To lump them all in together and speak of them as typifying a single colonialist project is unrealistic. Rather each represents a distinctive approach to travel in India.

I would suggest that as Fergusson's paradigm for how to speak Hindi makes it clear that to live with local people, and have relationships with local women is typical of the culture of the late 18th century. This is then abandoned by the early 19th century and Gilchrist's texts represent a new paradigm for officials in India who are lovers of wine and Indian culture, if not actually married to Indian women. These two early paradigms seem far from the conventional image of the caddish British officer which it is possible to discern in Forbes text which resembles the stereotype of an English Indian Official and seems to show little interest in India beyond that which is necessary to do the work of an official in Victorian India.

Nor yet do Eastwick's or Pincott's paradigms fit into the colonialist paradigm and seem to relate better to a model of gentleman travellers on tour that harks back to William Hodges travels of the 1780s and anticipate the modern tourists interaction with India.

In conclusion none of this suggests to me that to categorise these authors as all belonging to a single colonialist project is not a helpful approach to studying the changes in interaction between Europeans and Indians during this period. Indeed I think it strongly supports the notion of many of those who went to India being intensely individual characters who interacted with Indians in distinctive and pragmatic ways which do not fit into any single over-arching category of ideological orientation.