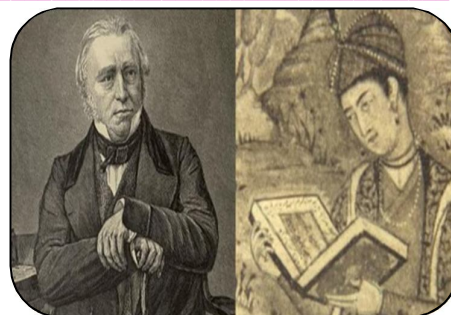




MACAULAY'S MINUTE OF 1835: ARCHIVAL INSIGHTS INTO THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN COLONIAL INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the archival records regarding Thomas Babington Macaulay's Minute of 1835 and the debate that ensued between the Anglicists and Orientalists officers over the educational policies in colonial India. Moving beyond the conventional narrative of the debate as merely a linguistic dispute between English and Oriental languages, this paper argues that the debate was fundamentally concerned with competing systems of knowledge and cultural authority. Macaulay's Minute of 1835 strongly recommended the promotion of European literature and science through the medium of English language while completely rejecting pre-existing indigenous knowledge traditions as inferior and useless. Recommendations in the Minute sought to limit state funds for Sanskrit and Arabic institutions, abolish stipends of students studying oriental subjects, and divert educational funds towards English education. In response, Orientalist officials within the commission, particularly H. T. Prinsep, challenged these ideas and defended the value of indigenous learning systems and openly criticized the colonial state's attempt to marginalize indigenous intellectual traditions and educational institutions. This paper examines the official archival documents including correspondences, minutes, resolutions, and petitions to understand the counter reactions generated by the 1835 Resolution and the subsequent reconsideration of educational policy under Lord Auckland. It shows that colonial educational policy was shaped by complex ideological contestations within the colonial administration itself. The study highlights how debates over education became a crucial arena for the construction, control, and dissemination of knowledge in colonial India.

KEYWORDS: Macaulay's Minutes (1835), Colonial Education Policy, Educational Reform in British India.

INTRODUCTION

The Law member of the council, T.B. Macaulay, wrote his minutes of 2nd February, 1835 that entailed an internal dispute in the general Committee of Public Instruction. He, in the minutes, stressed that the major objective of the British government was the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India. All the funds appropriated for the purpose of education should be only employed on English education rather than teaching Sanskrit or Arabic. For him, Sanskrit and Arabic should on no grounds be encouraged by the British Government because they were neither the languages of religion nor law. The minute stressed that the people of India desired to learn English in place of Sanskrit and Arabic.

He deemed it impossible for the Government to educate the body of the people as huge as Indians and therefore wished to cultivate a small class of people who could become the interpreters between the British officers and their subjects- 'a class of people Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.' This group, by refining the vernacular dialects, through the passage of time would indoctrinate the indigenous people with western ideas. Macaulay put forwarded several other proposals like abolition of Calcutta Madrasa and the Calcutta Sanskrit College, continuation of financial assistance to institutions of Oriental learning like Benaras Sanskrit College and Mahommedan College at Delhi.

The most important proposal in the minutes that was to influence the future of the pupils was the abolition of the stipends of students. It was proposed so that there should be no financial inducement before the students to study in an oriental institution. Moreover, it was proposed that the printing of the Oriental books should be ceased from further publication and the funds extracted from this should be devoted to the Hindu Collegeⁱⁱ at Calcutta and also to further establish schools in other cities aimed at teaching English languages and European sciences. It further resolved that when any professor of Oriental learning shall vacate his position, the government would further decide the expediency of appointing a new professor of oriental learning. It meant that the government would only appoint a new professor if it was expedient for them or it could abolish the position of the professor of oriental learning altogether.

One aspect which is the most misunderstood aspect of this Anglo-Oriental conflict is that most of the historians have interpreted it to be the linguistic conflict- the conflict between English language and Oriental languages such as Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. However, a more detailed analysis tells us that it was not only the Oriental languages that were being attacked but also the content they bear such as their literature, poetry etc. While degrading the contents of the Oriental literature as non-literary and unscientific he says:

'I have never found one among them (men knowing Eastern languages) who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia..... And I certainly never met with any orientalist who ventured to maintain that the Arabic and Sanskrit poetry could be compared to that of the great European nations.

It is I believe no exaggeration to say that all the historical information which has been collected from all the books of Sanskrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the most in the most paltry abridgments used at preparatory schools in England. In every branch of physical and moral philosophy, the relative position of the two nations is nearly the same

..(about the disciplines of India)..the medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made of seas of treacle and seas of butter.'ⁱⁱⁱ

This description of the subjects taught at the indigenous institutions given by Macaulay is not justified if we critically study the syllabus/curriculum that was followed in the indigenous institutions of learning. It completely differs from what was actually practiced in different types of educational institutions. The minutes passed by him sparked off a series of debates regarding the nature and patronization of native education, thus dividing the British officers into two groups; the Orientalists and the Anglicists, showing that it was not only the socio-political order that was in transition but the bureaucracy was in transition as well.

In response to Macaulay's minutes of 2nd February, 1835, Henry Thoby Prinsep, another member of the General Committee of Public Instruction who favoured the orientalist's view, wrote a detailed note denouncing the propositions laid by Macaulay in his minute. This formal note was however later withdrawn by Prinsep on the assurance of the private secretary of the Governor-General Bentinck that Macaulay's Minutes would be submitted to the Committee of the Public Instruction for

further discussion.^{iv} Prinsep, later found out that the Minute would not be referred to the Committee and would be decided at a meeting of the Supreme Council where Lord William Bentinck, the then Governor-General would give his 'entire concurrence' to Macaulay's minutes and brought out his decision into effect.^v

The essence of Prinsep's note lies in his empathy towards the oriental learning. Granting of scholarships to the students of Arabic and Sanskrit was a major issue of contention in Macaulay's Minute and curbing them was one of the major agendas of it. Denouncing Macaulay's claim that Arabic and Sanskrit students were paid scholarships and only because of that they were being forced to "learn which they nauseate", he cites the report of the Education Committee and points out that out of 200-300 students taught at the Madrasa, only 80 get government scholarships. As far as Sanskrit college at Benaras is concerned, the report suggested that the *jageers* or scholarships offered were only 130 whereas 300 students passed the examination. He further justified the granting of the scholarships to students and pointed out

'In truth the *jageers* or monthly allowances given at the Mudrusa and in the Sanskrit Colleges and elsewhere are in all respects similar to the scholarships of the Universities or to the foundation Scholars of the Public Schools of England. They are not given as inducements to study the language but as the rewards of successful study and in order to keep at the institution for the prosecution of further studies those who by their progress evince a love of science and the qualification to become learned men, Moolavees or Pundits.'^{vi}

While measuring the pros and cons of violently engrafting English education on the 'natives' of India- a colony that along with its society, politics, economy and institutions was in a state of transition- Prinsep's note draws a striking contrast between the contradistinctive principles followed in the payment of the salaries of the teachers of Oriental and Western learning. He pointed out that for *Molavees* and *Pundits*, following the same principle, it was considered meritorious to give instruction and it was considered sinful to take wages from the students. Hence, to them, remuneration was given in the form of a present which was voluntary. On the other hand, the English master who was a Christian, would never consider taking money in lieu of his teaching as a sin; in fact, he would make a special demand of it. So even if some money is realized as profit- as Macaulay claims that profit is realized when English is taught whereas the Government had to pay the students who study Arabic and Sanskrit- that profit is nullified when huge amount of money is paid to the teacher as his salary which is not the case with oriental learning.

Macaulay also resisted giving education in Arabic and Sanskrit because of the connection of these two languages with the religion of Muslims and Hindus respectively. In this context, Prinsep objected to his proposition and rejected this reason being ever applied for a Christian Government's giving instructions. He justified that it was not because of their connection with religions- Hinduism and Islam- but because of their connection with the existing laws by which their society was governed that it was necessary to continue instruction in these languages.

Prinsep's views well echo with the Foucault's theory of Power and knowledge and Bernard S. Cohn's thesis of the construction of knowledge by the colonial forces suiting their cognitive convenience and imperialistic aspirations.

However, as per the notes later written by Prinsep himself, Bentinck intentionally overlooked the dissenting voices of the committee^{vii} and passed the Resolution of 7th March, 1835.^{viii} This Resolution came as a lethal step for the promotion of the oriental learning and its institutions. It hit the oriental learning and its institutions at three different levels, over which there had been enough contention; firstly the financial grant of the Government towards oriental and Islamic learning was ceased. The resolution made it clear that the "great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed in English education alone".

Secondly, the scholarships of the students pursuing such learning were curtailed. The Resolution with regard to the scholarships stated that "scholarships give artificial encouragement to branches which in the natural course of things would be superseded by more useful studies and hence no stipends shall be given to any student who may hereafter enter at any of those institutions ref." Thirdly, they put a restriction on further appointment of the Professors of oriental learning and ceased the printing of the important oriental works citing shortage of funds repetition. It stated that "when any professor of Oriental learning shall vacate his situation, the committee shall report to the Government, in order that the Government may be able to decide the expediency of appointing a successor and that no portion of the funds shall be employed in the printing of Oriental works." reference

Instead of directly abolishing the institutions of Oriental learning the Colonial state adopted a policy that stealthily stifled the oriental scholarship. The Resolution with respect to this stated that, "It is not the intention of His Lordship in council to abolish

any College or school of Native learning...". It was very clear that Bentinck, Macaulay and other Anglicists wanted to rigorously replace oriental scholarship by western scholarship, but out rightly abolishing the institutions of oriental learning would have drawn the wrath of the higher authorities as well as the indigenous population. Hence, they preferred to curtail the scholarships given to the students and declared that no new appointments would be made at the positions vacated by the professors of oriental learning without the consideration of the Government. These policies when implemented would naturally lead to the death of oriental scholarship. However, the same principle was not adopted for the professorships of western learning.^{ix}

From Macaulay's minutes as well as from the subsequent Resolution passed that was precisely based on them, it becomes clear that the main objective of the colonial state at this time was to pass policies that would lead to disappearance of the oriental learning. The intention was not to promote the 'learned natives of India' as was mentioned in the Charter Act of 1813 in their traditional languages and disciplines but as Macaulay himself declared to create a "class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect".^x A year before this Resolution was passed the same concern was also expressed by C.E. Trevelyan when he envisaged the establishment of "our language, our learning and ultimately our religion in India".^{xi}

Counter-reactions from within and outside

The resolution invoked sharp criticism not only from H.T. Prinsep in the General Committee of Public Instruction but also from the members of the Supreme Council where Macaulay's minutes were discussed surreptitiously before the Resolution was passed. Alexander Ross and Lieutenant-Colonel William Morrison, members of the Supreme Council, objected to the Minutes of Macaulay to a certain extent but still could not deflect the stern determination of Macaulay and Bentinck. They however were able to have a little moderating effect which led the members of the Supreme Council to not completely abandon institutions of oriental learning. Morrison was completely against the idea that any direct preference should be given to the education of English by neglecting the traditional learning.^{xii} Ross, who on the other hand, though agreed with most of the propositions of Macaulay and Bentinck, but still made a strong urge in the Council that all the institutions of Arabic and Persian that were subsidized by the Government should continue to receive financial assistance from the Government.^{xiii}

On 20th March, 1835, the term of William Bentinck as the Governor General of India ended. When he left, the ground for the ongoing debates was still so vulnerable and chaotic that it continued to evoke reactions from the members of the Committee as well as in the form of petitions signed against it by eight thousand educated "Mahommedans" and another petition on behalf of the Sanskrit College by "Hindoos".^{xiv}

In this backdrop, Mr. W.H. Macnaughten, H. Shakespeare and James Prinsep, members of the General Committee of Public Instruction proposed their opposition to the Resolution passed by the Government in 1835.^{xv} To this, the members of the committee pointed out that this criterion to judge

the expediency of abolishing professorship was unfair and if that was the criterion to be followed then it would obviously apply as well to the European professors. Further, the members reminded the government that the sum of one lakh of rupees annually which had been appropriated by the Act of Parliament to literary purposes had been disbursed under the authority of their committee and a very large sum had been applied for the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the 'learned natives of India.' Then after the Resolution, the committee was in confusion whether to appropriate the funds meant for encouraging learned natives and for the revival and improvement of their literature, or on the English education alone.^{xvi}

The members of the committee also reminded the Government of the assurances the government had given to the Muslims of Calcutta on one previous occasion where the government assured that:

"So long as the desire to acquire instruction in the laws of morality and science of the Mahomedan faith shall continue to be felt and students shall offer for the classes which have been established and the professorship through which these branches of knowledge are imparted to the Muslim youth will be maintained on the same footing and no one while he conducts himself with propriety will at any time be deprived of any stipends or other benefit he may be deriving from the institution. In all other respects the Madrasa will continue as a seminary for the education of the Muslim youth of India on the same footing precisely as it was established by its illustrious founders."^{xvii}

These members are bringing out the duplicity of expressions and the diversion the resolution had taken from its prior assurances which would clearly be the breach of pledged faith on the part of the government. They also objected to that part of the Resolution that provided that no portion of the funds should thereafter be employed in the printing of oriental works. This step, however, would be in the direction of complete extermination of oriental literature altogether. They in their letter opposed the claim of the new Government officials and their crusade against oriental literature by claiming that the oriental literature is a mass of falsehood and absurdity. They showed their unwillingness to join those who were conducting a crusade against every oriental feeling and institution. They further condemned the notion that English language would ever become the language of India and regarded this as a myth. In fact, they even suggested that with every English school master, the Government should also appoint a *Moulavi* and a *Pundit* leaving the natives of the country free to choose which they would resort for instruction.

The important point they brought out was that if the Government wished to enlighten the great mass of the people of India, they must use the languages of India. Further, as India was dominated by religious sentiments, if they would continue to impart instruction in English language they would always have the religious leaders as their enemies. The idea was to import ideas and not words, which can be best done by the use of their mother language. Finally, they requested that oriental languages should not be abolished and wished to cultivate Sanskrit and Arabic languages as the languages to which the literary treasures of the European world could be translated and proposed that high prizes would be held for the translation of the most popular scientific treatises on all subjects of Britain into the vernacular languages of India.

Two months later, the Anglicist members of the Committee forwarded the statements showing the details of the oriental works under publication and the financial condition of the General Fund.^{xviii} The members recommended to suspend the further publication of these books. However, they proposed to continue to print the *Fatawa-I Alamgiri* in expectation that by its sale some return of the expenditure incurred may be obtained.

Statement (A) ^{xix}

Showing the particular of the Oriental Works under impression on account of the General Committee of Public Instruction

Name of the work	No. of Copies	Expense Incurred
Ustukussat on Geometry and trigonometry, translated from Greek	500	276
Jawamiya ilm Riyazi, translated from Hatton's Mathematics by Dr. Tytler, Jawamiyallmoolmeshauhat in Arabic translation of Crocker's Land surveying	500	910
Aneesul Moshahareen in Arabic translation from Hooper's Bade Macum	500	504
Fatawa Alamgiri Arabic, Inaya, and Arabic Version of Bridge's algebra Persian	500	
KhazainatulIlm	500	2114
Moha Bharat	500	11066
Susrata in Medicine	500	2076
Naishudha a poem by Kalidasa	500	7087
Raja Tarangini, a History of Kashmir	500	1718
Translation of Hooper's Vade Macum	300	1395

The list of works listed above shows that it was not only the Arabic or Persian works that had to bear the grunt of these policies but Sanskrit works as well underwent a setback after their printing was ceased. This was to be followed by the abolition of the Book Depository and disposal of the books in store.

They also requested the Government to halt the appointment of secretaries to Benaras and Calcutta Sanskrit Colleges till the Committee should ascertain whether the services of such officers be indispensably necessary. They proposed means to institute schools for teaching English literature and science through the medium of English Language in the principal cities and towns. It also proposed that the secretary must be instructed to prepare an estimate of the funds which they will immediately dispose for the purpose of English Education.

H.T. Prinsep the Secretary to Government in General Department, lending support to the first group of the members of General Committee of Public Instruction, found it very unethical that at the meeting of the council where the minutes of Mr. Macnaughten were laid and discussed, it was resolved by the majority not to reconsider the Resolution passed by the late Governor General in Council on 7th March but to allow them to stand as the rules for the guidance of the committee in their future proceedings. His voice and vote were with the minority on this occasion and he thought that the decision that was passed was calculated to alienate and to incur infinite injury to the natives in their respects.

This was in contrast to the situation where professorships of Sanskrit and Arabic were endowed at Oxford and in France and in Germany, then how could the Government publish a crusade against both languages and deny them to receive the encouragement of a single Rupee from the government funds. ^{xx} He particularly objected to the last part of the resolution which directs that all funds that can be raised by discontinuing Oriental professorship, by the lapse of oriental scholarships and by withdrawing from the oriental classics shall be devoted to the teaching of English education. This step was a milestone in the course of way the 'English propagandism' was being pushed forward.

An important fact that he brings forth was that if a comparison were to be made of the sums spent in printing native works and in providing new machinery for teaching the language of the East or new stipends for successful scholars of its literature with the amounts lavished on English masters and on teachers of the rudiments of European science and on professors of Law and metaphysics and natural philosophy, it would be clear that the former bore but a small proportion to the aggregate of the latter, thus showing that in the appropriation of the Lakh of rupees even on the principles of the orientalists the desire to teach English Literature and Sciences had always prevailed over the revival of the Oriental literature.^{xxi}

There had always been differences amongst the members of the Committee, some desiring to give more to one branch of knowledge and some to the other. Prinsep firmly stated in the official documentation as well as in his personal diary later that the Resolution was 'hastily and even rashly passed and was ill-advised and mischievously led'. These are the strong words to apply to any measure of the government. Thus, he joined the orientalists set of officers in the General Committee of Public Instruction and implicated the government to reopen the question and give the subject more mature consideration.^{xxii} The Orientalists' point of view was also presented at length by H.H. Wilson, who was also a former member of the Committee of Public Instruction in 1836.

As a result of this criticism that came from the officials as well as from the 'natives', the Directors also got enraged at this direct 'epistemological violence' that was unleashed by the policy of Bentinck. In 1836, a dispatch strongly condemning this policy was also prepared at the India House in 1836 but it was withdrawn because of the opposition it evoked from some members of the Board of Control.^{xxiii} The Court affirmed in this dispatch that the fears of the 'natives' that their religious and intellectual space was disturbed by this new policy were well founded. It suggested that since Indian society was deeply attached to its traditional practices of religion and education, and since education for them is associated with the study of the scriptures, any direct attempt at changing it would mean to attack their religion. And hence, such changes should be brought with 'great deliberation and caution, and if possible by slow and progressive degree'.^{xxiv}

Two more important points that were raised in this dispatch completely dismantled the propositions of Macaulay. Firstly, the Court proposed that the earlier policy and the functioning of the General Committee of Public Instruction were more likely to bear the financial ends that were envisaged by the Colonial authorities with respect to educating the 'natives' of India. Under the old system, the Colonial policies allowed the existence of two parallel pedagogical systems where the students were given an opportunity to learn English but simultaneously they were also given fair chance to pursue their studies in the disciplines of oriental tradition majorly comprising of Islamic studies and studies in Persian and Arabic. This system was able to win their confidence and did not invoke their suspicion.^{xxv}

Secondly, they expressed their inhibitions about Macaulay's belief that Indians themselves wanted to discard their traditional learning and adopt learning in western subjects. They debunked the basis of this argument that the lack of interest in oriental learning is proved by the fact that stipends had to be paid to the students of oriental institutions. But the Court regarded this practice as comparable to the European custom of providing students with provisions and in fact preferred this system to be extended in India rather than abolishing it.^{xxvi}

Such strong disapproval from the Court of Directors with regard to the policy adopted by Bentinck highlights the very vulnerable side of Bentinck that led to the failure of his policy. However, as also pointed out by the Directors, the authorities in India before passing such a Resolution should have consulted the superior authorities, yet Bentinck overlooked the existence of his superior authorities and on his own adopted a policy that was to affect the futures of their 'subjects' at an enormous scale.

Repulsion of the Resolution of Bentinck

Lord Bentinck was succeeded by Lord Auckland in March 1835 as Governor General. He took the office at a time when his predecessor left enough confusion in the matters concerning education of the 'natives'. As discussed above, there were fears expressed regarding the failure to maintain the old and traditional system of learning in every section of the society. There were apprehensions expressed against the sustenance of the new learning. The implications this new learning would bear upon the prevalent social relations and the social equilibrium of the society were thought upon.

In a detailed minute, dated the 24th November 1839, Auckland reviewed the existing situation and annulled the measures adopted by Bentinck and Macaulay. He, through this Minute guaranteed that the Oriental institutions would be maintained by the Government and no funds would be withdrawn from these institutions. His review of the situation became important because he was getting petitions from students complaining about their helplessness in getting stipends. One such petition from the students of the Government Sanskrit College of Calcutta brings in to light the restlessness of the students at the deterioration of their traditional learning system under the British. The following lines from the petition deserve to be reproduced here as they indicate the varied cerebral role the two different ruling regimes played in the dissemination of their knowledge:

'Since the accession of Mohammedan power, though the progress of Sanskrit language was a little retarded; yet the Mohammedan kings notwithstanding their tyrannical measures encouraged its cultivation not only by allowing the undisturbed possession of the former grants of the Hindoos; but also presenting new ones to those who most deserved them. Altogether the English, having got the possession of this country, neglected for a long time the cultivation of the Oriental languages and particularly the Sanskrit.'^{xxvii}

With petitions making strong accusations such as these, Lord Auckland not only had to review the situation but also had to make recommendations in favour of the Oriental scholarship. Contemplating the entire situation in his Resolution of 1839, he gave preference to the promotion of Oriental instruction as his primary object and the creation or support of the English classes as the secondary aim of the funds assigned to the General Committee of Public Instruction.^{xxviii} He resumed the disbursement of funds for the Oriental seminaries from the Treasury with the hope that the Honourable Court would approve as well. He also assured the retention of the efficient professors for the Oriental Colleges and instructed the General Committee an improved and effective superintendence of the Oriental colleges of the North-Western Provinces. A year later, the scholarships to the following colleges was restored: the Hindu and Sanskrit Colleges; the Calcutta madrasa and Institution; the Agra College; and the Delhi College and Institution based on merit.^{xxix}

This minute did put at rest the confusions in the Government policies that had crept in as a result of the Bentinck's regressive Resolution. However, some affiliates of the Anglicist party continued their struggle in the Bengal Presidency. One such Anglicist was the Rev. A. Duff, who belonged to the Church of Scotland Mission was very harshly against the study of oriental languages. He expressed his extreme opposition to the study of Oriental subjects in three letters addressed to Lord Auckland in 1841 and also in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1853.^{xxx} However, the controversy grew paler after the Dispatch of the Court of Directors dated the 20th January, 1841, in which they approved the minutes laid by Lord Auckland. Henceforth, this minute became the 'authoritative pronouncement of the educational policy' of the Colonial State in India. Subsequently, all the reforms in the policies of the Colonial State towards Oriental education were carried according to this policy till 1854.

As far as reception of the English language and studies in English language is concerned, Calcutta as against other Mofussil towns was more receptive towards learning English literature and science. The plan of the General Committee of Public Instruction to teach English science and literature at the Mofussil towns were not as successful as they were in Calcutta. A Report of Felix Boutros as a result of an enquiry made into the system of Education in northern India in 1842 also stated similar

results.^{xxxii} It stated that the schools of Chapprah and Arrah, cities having the population of fifty thousand inhabitants each were closed for the lack of students attending them. Delhi, which was not beneath Calcutta in population, the average daily attendance at the English Institution had fallen below sixty, and in the Oriental Madrasa below eighty.^{xxxiii}

The connection between the English language and the General education that met with success at Calcutta could be at the same time injurious to Delhi. The report suggested that the main reason behind such divergence at Calcutta and Delhi is that the wealthy classes of the *Mofussil* towns are more interested in learning the sciences of modern Europe in English language rather than merely learning the English language. Such a simplistic narrative, however, nullifies the larger issues that were at work in a town like Delhi that became a major force behind the resistance of its people towards English education.

At the end of 1841, the General committee of Public Instruction was abolished and a Council of Education was constituted in its place.^{xxxiv} The importance of this order lies in the fact that 'all the financial business connected with all the provincial institutions was brought directly under the control of Government; and the superintendence of the Council of Education was now confined to the institutions in Calcutta only.' Moreover, in April 1843 the management of the institutions of the North West Province was given to the newly formed Government of Agra.^{xxxv}

It was in 1854 that Charles Wood, the President of the Board of Control of the East India Company sent a dispatch to the then Governor-General of India, Lord Dalhousie. Apart from the recommendations regarding setting up of the Education Department for the better execution and superintendence of the education of the natives, and establishing Universities based on the model of the London University in big cities such as Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, it also recommended the adoption of vernacular languages at primary level but English for the higher studies in College.

This dispatch has been regarded as "The Magna Charta of English Education in India." In his minute of 1854, which Lord Dalhousie passed as a reaction to the Dispatch he had received from the Board of Control, he proclaimed that the scheme recommended by the Wood's Dispatch of 1854, was a more comprehensive scheme to be implemented in India at that time. An important intervention that this dispatch made in the existing policies of education was that it openly declared that the education that they wished to extend in India is that which has for its object the diffusion of the improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe; in short of European knowledge.^{xxxvi}

We can again see in these references that the animosity between the Anglicists and the Orientalists or the basis behind the Colonial Government's indifferent attitude towards indigenous learning was not just the use of the English language over the Oriental languages. It was equally about the content and forms of knowledge that should be imparted to the 'natives' of India. It would be further clear by the following extract from the Dispatch of 1854:

'The Systems of science and philosophy which form the learning of the East abound with grave errors and eastern literature is at best very deficient as regards all modern discovery and improvements; Asiatic learning, therefore, however widely diffused, would but little advance our object. We do not wish to diminish the opportunities which are now afforded in special institutions for the study of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. An acquaintance with the works contained in them is valuable for historical and antiquarian purposes and for the cultivation of the vernacular languages of India....But such attempts, although they may usefully co-operate, can only be considered as auxiliaries, and would be a very inadequate foundation for any general schemes of Indian education.'^{xxxvii}

Another important intervention of this dispatch was that it granted a 'secular' character to the education by removing any sort of instruction in the religions of the indigenous population. It was also suggested that the affiliated institutions would be managed by the people belonging to different religions. Hence, in India from then on all institutions –of Christians, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs, Parsees and Hindus- were to be affiliated to the Universities, if they were found to afford the required course of

study. It was however agreed to impart the useful knowledge of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian with the only purpose of their application to the development of the spoken languages of India. It was out rightly rejected that these languages should be taught in order to cultivate learning in the tenets of Hindu or Muslim religions. All such institutions would be affiliated to the Universities and would supply students for higher studies at the University level. The institutions that were to be affiliated also included the Mahomedan Madrasas under the superintendence of various religious bodies.^{xxxvii}

This Dispatch prepared the ground for and became the basis of the passing of the three acts for the establishment of the Universities namely University Acts of 1857. It was by this Act that three new Universities were set up in the major presidencies, namely – University of Calcutta, University of Bombay, and University of Madras. The policies adopted as a result of the Dispatch of 1854 were affirmed once again and in fact amplified by the Dispatch of 1859 which also reviewed the action taken on the earlier dispatch.

CONCLUSION

A close analysis of the archival documents pertaining to Macaulay's Minute of 1835 gives insights into a complex history of educational policy in colonial India than is often recorded in conventional accounts. Rather than portraying a straightforward victory of the Anglicists over the Orientalists, the archival records examined in this study uncover a protracted and contentious process of policy-making within the colonial bureaucracy itself. These records highlight that Macaulay's recommendations garnered substantial opposition not only from 'native' stakeholders but also from important colonial officials such as H. T. Prinsep, W. H. Macnaughten.

The archival documents further reveal that the conflict was not merely about the medium of instruction. The core contest was over the legitimacy of two opposing systems of knowledge and the role of the colonial officers in shaping intellectual traditions in colonial India. Macaulay's Minute sought not only to give privilege to English language but also to dismiss pre-existing institutions of Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian by gradually withdrawing financial patronage from them. Yet the archival evidence shows that such recommendations generated significant counter reactions and were subsequently moderated under Lord Auckland, whose interventions restored support to Oriental institutions and learning.^{xxxviii}

REFERENCES:

- ⁱ Macaulay's Minute, Sharp, *Selections from the Educational Records*, National Archives of India, pp. 107-117.
- ⁱⁱ The Hindu College was initially a private funded institution founded in 1817 for western education. In 1823, it became a Government institution managed by the General Committee of Public Instruction.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Macaulay's Minute, *Selections from the Educational Records*, pp. 110-11.
- ^{iv} Geoffrey Seed, 'Lord William Bentinck and the Reform of Education', *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No.1/2 (Apr., 1952), pp. 66-77, Cambridge University Press.
- ^v Home-Political (H-P), 7th March, 1835, No. 15, National Archives of India (NAI).
- ^{vi} Sharp, P. 123.
- ^{vii} H-P, 3rd June, 1835, No. 8, NAI
- ^{viii} H-P, 7th March, 1835, No. 19, NAI
- ^{ix} H-P, 22nd April, 1835, No. 10 A, NAI.
- ^x H-P, 7th March, 1835, No. 15, NAI.
- ^{xi} Geoffrey Seed quoting from the letter written by Trevelyan to Bentinck on 9th April, 1834 preserved in Bentinck Papers at the University of Nottingham, UK.
- ^{xii} H-P, 7th March, 1835, No. 17, NAI.
- ^{xiii} H-P, 7th March, 1835, No. 16, NAI.

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- xiv India Public Consultations, 13th March 1835, No. 9, National Archives of India.
- xv Letter from Mr. W.H. Macnaughten, H. Shakespeare and James Prinsep, members of the General Committee of Public Instruction to the officiating secretary to Government, General Department, Fort William. H-P, 22nd April 1835, NO. 10-10 A and 11, NAI
- xvi H-P, 22nd April 1835, NO. 10-10 A and 11, NAI.
- xvii Ibid
- xviii Letter to G.A. Bushby, the officiating Secretary to the Government, General Department, Fort William putting forward their propositions for the approval of the Governor General in council, H-P, 3rd June 1835, No. 6-8, NAI
- xix Statement A, showing the list of Oriental works under impression by the General Committee of Public Instruction, their number and the expenses incurred on them is given in the table, H-P, 3rd June, 1835, No.6, NAI
- xx H-P, 3rd June 1835, no. 8, NAI
- xxi H-P, 3rd June 1835, No. 8.
- xxii Ibid.
- xxiii Home Miscellaneous Series, 723 (2), P.3, NAI.
- xxiv Ibid., pp. 21-2.
- xxv Ibid., pp. 24-8.
- xxvi Ibid., 76-80, 83-84.
- xxvii Minute by the Right Hon'ble Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, dated 24th November 1839, Sharp, *Selections from the Educational Records*, Part I, P. 151
- xxviii Minute by the Right Hon'ble Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, dated 24th November 1839, Sharp, *Selections from the Educational Records*, Part I, P. 151.
- xxix Report of the General Committee of Public Instruction, 1840, J.A. Richey, *Selections from the Educational Records, Part II*, Part II, Bureau of Education, India, Calcutta, P. 75.
- xxx J.A. Richey, *Selections from the Educational Records, Part II*, Part II, Bureau of Education, India, Calcutta, P.1.
- xxxi Home Department- Public Branch, *Extracts from 'An Enquiry made into the system of Education most likely to be generally popular in Behar and the Upper Provinces'*, by F. Boutros- Serampore, 1842, NAI.
- xxxii Ibid.
- xxxiii H-P, 12 January 1842, NAI
- xxxiv H-P, *Circular No.1, dated 3rd May, 1843, to the Secretary to the Local Committee*, citing the Resolution of the Government of India, dated 29th April, 1843, NAI.
- xxxv *Dispatch of 1854*, J.A. Richey, *Selections from the Educational Records, Part II*, Part II, Bureau of Education, India, Calcutta, pp. 364-393.
- xxxvi Ibid
- xxxvii Ibid., pp. 374-375.
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