

The *Adab* of Guidance: Intimacy and Pedagogy between Two Urdu Master Poets.

Through an analysis of Urdu letters between Ustaads (master poets) Amir Minai (1828-1900) and Daagh Dehlavi (1831-1905), this paper attempts to surface a particular *adab* (etiquette and respect) of peer-to-peer knowledge transfer in 19th century India. In popular historical imagination, compatriot Urdu poets of the “classical” style/age are often cast as rivals locked into binary relationships. A few cases in point are Haidar Ali Aatish (1778-1848) and Imam Bakhsh Nasikh (1776-1838), Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib (1797–1869) and Sheikh Ibrahim Zauq (1789–1854), and Amir Ahmed Amir Minai (1828-1900) and Nawab Mirza Khan Daagh Dehlavi (1831–1905). As such, the affection and collaboration that often colored relations between compatriot poets is largely unrealized or ignored. The first part of this paper shall briefly introduce the historical context of the relationship between Ameer and Dagh. The second part shall discuss the elaborate and sincerely affectionate *adab* with which the poets critiqued and advised each other. Part three shall attempt to surface certain practices, supporting arguments, and pedagogical techniques through which this advice was delivered. The fourth and final part shall look at the shagirds (students) of these two masters, and their role in the creation and reification of the perceived “rivalry” between their teachers.