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EDITOR'S NOTE

Journal of Regional History since its inception has focused on the social, cultural, economic and political history of the North Western India in general and Punjab in particular. Its objective is to understand the region in the larger canvas of the history of South Asia. It has been an endeavor on the part of the Department of History to provide a forum both to the research students and teaching faculty of the region to publish their work. Continuing with its tradition of well researched articles, the present Journal offers ten scholarly articles and three book reviews.

Forgotten Makers of Panjab: Discovering Indigenous Paradigm of History by Prof. I.D. Gaur was delivered as the Mahan Singh Dhesi Annual Lecture on 21.03. 2016. In Baba Farid and Nanak, Gaur finds a paradigm for understanding the history of Punjab, the land of five rivers that evolved in syncretic, social, cultural, linguistic and devotional tradition. Rohira, according to Dr. Paru Bal Sidhu was a proto-historic settlement as it was assessing resources like wood, minerals and stones from various places. Prof. Bir Good Gill has analyzed the challenges posed by the fierce tribes on the North Western Frontier of Punjab between 1849-1857. They dashed to the ground the British dream of subduing the region. Dr. Rohit Kumar has given us a very comprehensive account of the British recruitment policy in the Punjab and how it left far reaching consequences for the people. Prof. M.Y. Ganai and Zamreeah Yousaf have given us glimpse of Rural Life of Kashmir from 1849-1947. They give a very dismal picture of rural life of Kashmir. It was the result of faulty Land Revenue System accompanied by rampant corruption. The Land Settlement of 1893 brought some relief to the peasant though corruption and impunity continued unabated. Prof. Amandeep Bal has explored the life of pioneers and their first institutions Khalsa Diwan Society and Gurudwara Vancouver in Canada, which not only served as centres for religious and cultural exchange, but were also the first centres of political activity. Dr. Raj Kumar has studied the impact of inflation on the people of Punjab during the First World War. The export of food grain in large quantity to war fronts increased its prices beyond the reach of common people. Dr. Amandeep Kaur has studied the role of Sikh Educational Conferences in promoting the women education.

Kamaljit Kaur has studied the unrest in Gujranwala in April 1919. According to her the dropping of bombs was unjustified as the rioting had stopped. Dr. Sunaina Pathania has done a case study of the Punjabis settled in Thailand. The Punjabis have been assimilated well in the host country though most of them have maintained linkages with their home country.

I thank Prof. Bir Good Gill, the member of the Editorial Board for her cooperation. I also thank my colleagues Prof. Radha Sharma, Prof. Sulakhan Singh and Prof. Sukhdev Singh Sohal for their valuable suggestions. My special thanks to family friend Rajiv for going through the proofs of the Journal and to Dr. Raj Kumar for doing the final settings. My special thanks are to the staff of Publication Bureau especially Professor Incharge, Harvinder Singh Saini for speeding up the publication of the Journal.

Amandeep Bal

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**MAHAN SINGH DHESI ANNUAL LECTURE:
FORGOTTEN MAKERS OF PANJAB
DISCOVERING INDIGENOUS PARADIGM OF
HISTORY**

*I. D. Gaur**

It is a great honour to have been invited to deliver the 'Sardar Mahan Singh Dhesi Annual Lecture' in the university named in the honour of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) who taught us in the sixteenth century the democratic and scholarly tradition of dialogue:

As long as we are in this world, Nanak
We should listen and speak to others.

(Guru Granth Sahib [GSS]: 661)

It was Baba Nanak who visited Pakpattan to collect the *bani* of the first Panjabi Sufi-poet, Baba Farid (1173-1265), and bequeathed to us the literary and philosophical legacy of Panjab. Farid had pronounced in the thirteenth century:

O Farida! Don't be too eager to revile the dust
For dust is simply beyond compare
Battered down under the feet of the living
It rises to cover us all, when we're dead and gone (GSS: 1378)

Farid-Nanak Paradigm

The above cited *saloks* point out that both the eminent poet-philosophers of Punjab, Baba Farid and Baba Nanak were not in favour of a monologue. They preached the significance of one's primordial cultural space (*khaq* or *mitti*) as well as of dialogue or exchange of ideas and opinions. Farid and Nanak, as their above cited *saloks* indicate, inspire a historian to journey the domain of people's literature and culture in order to be acquainted themselves with those signifiers and mileposts that remain subdued and fossilized under the shadow of a prosaic and linear history/discourse of literature and culture. In other words, Farid and Nanak offer a paradigm for understanding and writing the history of Panjab, the land of the five rivers that evolved its syncretic social, cultural, linguistic and devotional traditions. Farid-Nanak paradigm thus enables a historian to meet and hear the Panjab people and their poets telling their own story in their own words

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and, hence, facilitates him in drawing a distinction between *literature and culture of history* that sprouts from the indigenous space of Panjab, on the one hand, and *History of literature and culture* that is domiciled in the official/elite texts/archives, on the other. In the said historically evolved Punjab cultural matrix a voice against social and religious orthodoxy and hypocrisy has been active since the times of Baba Farid. Later it resonated in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the verses of Shah Husain, Sultan Bahu, Bulleh Shah and Waris Shah. In one of his *saloks*, Baba Farid strips off the religious pretensions of his co-religionists:

O Farid! With a prayer mat on my shoulder, and a loose,
Woolen garment around my neck, I walk with a swagger,
A dagger in my heart, and honey dripping off my tongue
(GSS: 1378)

Farid-Nanak paradigm under reference refutes the ideologies and practices which are divisive and hegemonic, and hence rehabilitates the people and their cultural matrix in the different sectarian bottlenecks. The Punjab saints (Sufis, Gurus and Bhaktas) were not in favour of fabricated cultures of differences. They were the bearers, protectors and promoters of the cultural diversities. They recognized and upheld the secularity involved in culture and hence defied the hegemony of the priestly classes. They were well versed in the art of socio-cultural odyssey, i.e. movements in the divergent cultural spaces including language. For example, the language-repository of Baba Farid is very rich. It treasures the words of Sanskrit, Farsi, Arabi, Turki, Sindhi, Gujarati, and of Panjabi vernacular origins (for detail see Singh 2002). Farid was the first who synthesized Islamic and indigenous Punjabi streams of culture and language, and hence facilitated a dialogue between the people of Punjab, Islam and Sufism

Thus Farid-Nanak paradigmatic engagement with the socio-cultural and literary space of Panjab and its numerous shapes and genres may enrich the Panjab historiography, and resuscitate the memory of the unforgotten makers of Panjab. To illustrate the historiographical nuances involved in the Farid-Nanak paradigm of studying the Panjab society and culture vis-a-vis the mainstream historiography of Panjab, I delve into medieval Panjab from sixteenth to mid nineteenth century.

Fusion of Spirituality and Eroticism

The mainstream historiography of the sixteenth century in Indian Panjab is outstandingly confined to the emergence and development of Sikhism from Guru Nanak to the fifth Guru, Arjun Dev. There is no denying that during the sixteenth century the emergence of Sikhism, its non-conformist and holistic nature and praxis in terms of its non-denominational and non-caste traditions of scripture (i.e. Shri Guru Granth Sahib), common kitchen,

(*langar*), and open-ended architectural design of Harmandir Sahib were a landmark, and contributed substantially to the Panjab history, culture, religiosity, literature and language. However, a study of the Sufi literature of the sixteenth century Panjab, particularly the *kafis* of Shah Husain, and of the seventeenth, nineteenth and twentieth century Persian and Panjabi works like *Hasanat-ul-Arifin* (1653 AD) of Dara Shikoh, *Khazintul Asfia* of Mufti Ghulam Sarvar (1864), the Qissa of *Dullah Bhatti* by Kishan Singh Arif (1836-1904), and the plays titled *Takht Lahore* (1973) by Najm Hosain Syed, and *Quqnus* (1976) by Ishaque Mohammed about the sixteenth century reveals that this period resonates with multiple discourses of non-conformism, secularism and syncretic traditions of Sufi and Bhakti. These discourses constitute an archive of Panjab history. They reveal the historicity of the people of Panjab. What is being suggested in this section and the succeeding ones is that the Punjab people, their lore, and their organic representatives were liberated from those bottlenecks in which a specific section of the archons of history writing whimsically situate them.

Here is a *kafi* of Shah Husain (1539-1599), a Panjabi Sufi poet of Lahore to illustrate the above said statement that the sixteenth century Panjab resonates with multiple discourses. Shah Husain's life span coincides with the period which is considered as 'the evolution of the Sikh *panth*' under the patronage of Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev. Let us read his *kafi*:

Wear the shawl (*salu*) of equanimity,
 The shawl of equanimity.
 My shawl is high-priced,
 Many women have come to see it,
 All have left with praise.
 I hang my shawl on the peg,
 The neighbour comes to borrow it,
 And it cannot be given.
 The shawl has come direct from Kashmir,
 Brought through the snows,
 It will go its way, too.
 The shawl has come direct from Gujarat,
 I am afraid of the first night,
 Afraid of how it passes.
 The shawl has come direct from Multan,
 The Lord knows the longing in my heart,
 As I sleep with my arms round His neck.
 The shawl has come direct from Karnal,
 Nobody knows my innermost feeling,

To whom shall I go and tell.
 The shawl is coupled with the scarf;
 Shall happen what God wishes.
 It cannot be changed into something different.
 All wear shawls,
 Like the branches of the same tree,
 But none is equal to Thee.
 The shawl will lose its colour,
 There is not coming back to this world,
 Which we shall leave after much wandering.
 My shawl is of wool (*unni da*),
 I have heard of the Sham of Brindaban [Lord Krishna],
 the way to whom is hard.
 Says Husain, the mendicant,
 I am stranded in the wood for the night,
 So uncaring is the Lord (trans. Sekhon 1996: 163)

It is said that the term ‘Sufi’ was first applied to Muslim ascetics who attired themselves in coarse garments of *suf* which is an Arabic word for wool. In the said *kafi* Shah Husain vernacularizes his *tasawwuf*. He communicates it in his mother tongue (Panjabi). He tells that the fabric of his shawl (*salu*) is of *unn* which also means wool in the Panjabi vernacular. *Salu* is a scarlet embroidered auspicious headgear (dyed in madder). It is worn by a Panjabi maiden on the occasion of her marriage day. Shah Husain was a virgin Sufi who throughout his life remained robed in red. Hence, he was popularly known as Lal (red) Husain. The signification of Shah Husain’s scarlet *salu* and of the latter part of his name, i.e. ‘Husain’, needs to be comprehended in order to characterize the above cited *kafi* as a literary archive of the cultural history of Panjab. Shah Husain’s *salu* is dyed in madder. Madder in Panjabi vernacular is called *majeeth*. This plant is a creep or vine which exudes fast red colour used for dyeing a *salu* of a bride. Invoking the erotic beauty of Sahiban, the beloved of the legendary hero of Panjab, Mirza, Hafiz Barkhurdar in his Qissa *Mirza-Sahiban* portrays her flawless *majeeth* complexion. In the Sikh scripture, *majeeth* also signifies the colour of devotion or Bhakti. Guru Nanak says:

If the body becomes the dyer’s vat, and is imbued with the fast colour of the madder (i.e. Thy Name),
 And if the Dyer who dyes this cloth is the Lord Master — O, such a color has never been seen before!
 Those whose shawls are so dyed, O Beloved, their Husband Lord is always with them.

Bless me with the dust of those humble beings, O Dear Lord.
Says Nanak, this is my prayer (GSS: 721).

That Shah Husain was popularly known as Lal (red) Husain signifies the second layer of the colour, red, i.e. martyrdom, the first (layer) being marriage, passion and love as said above. The suffix 'Husain' reminds us of Imam Husain, the second son of Fatima and Ali as well as the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, who was slain in the battle of Karbala (680 AD).¹ The imagery of both marriage and martyrdom is vermillion, i.e. a bright red colour - a colour of celebration and transformation. Thus the persona of Shah Husain and his poetry are intricately wrapped in the fragrance of marriage and martyrdom. The motif of the fusion of marriage and martyrdom is a prominent one in the Panjabi literature and culture. I have elaborated it in my book, *Martyr as a Bridegroom: A Folk Representation of Bhagat Singh* (2008).

Telling about the prominent pious passages of his *salu* before its final arrival at Lahore, Shah Husain in the above cited *kafi* feels to be blessed by and wedded with the great Sufi masters of Kashmir, Gujarat, Multan, Karnal², and with Lord Krishna of Brindaban whom he calls, in one of his *kafis*, Sham, the Black One:

I am a slave of Krishna the dark,
Krishna the dark is my master,
Says Husain, the humble fakir,
Reveal thyself to me, thirsting for Thee, O, Lord
(trans. Sekhon 1996:171)

Interestingly, *shayam* or *sham* in Sanskrit means 'black' and in Persian it denotes 'evening or dusk' (Krishna's name being the generic designation of dark-skinned pre-Aryans.) (Kosambi 1970:115). Sham/Krishna and Brindaban is a recurring motif in Panjabi Sufi poetry. For example, a Panjabi Sufi poet of the eighteenth century Panjab, Bulleh Shah invokes this motif in many of his *kafis*:

The flute which the Lord [Krishna] has played,
Has inflicted a grievous wound on my heart
(trans. Puri and Shangari 1986:328)

Now, from whom do You hide yourself?
In Brindaban You graze the cows
In Mecca You put on the garb of a pilgrim (ibid).
Wondrous music does the Lord [Krishna] play on the flute
(ibid.:272)

With reference to Shah Husain and his said *kafi*, it is important to note that the synthesis of marriage and martyrdom springs from three fonts:

first, Islamic history (with reference to the suffix 'Husain'), second, *tasawwuf* (with reference to Shah Husain's *salu*) and, third, Bhakti (with reference to Lord Krishna of Brindaban). Shah Husain had been communicating his *tasawwuf* through *kafis* which he composed in the syncretic flavour of *sirgun* Bhakti and erotic vernacular love-legend of Panjab, *Hir Ranjha*. It was a time when Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, was about to complete the compilation of the *Adi Granth* (1604) in which the devotional songs (*bani*) of the saints of different regions, and of divergent religious and caste communities were incorporated.

By introducing the erotic Lord Krishna of *sirgun* Bhakti, and the legendary Panjab lovers, Hir and Ranjha, as metaphors in his devotional songs (*kafis*), Shah Husain added an innovative and audacious dimension to the concept and practice of Islamic mysticism (*tasawwuf*). Such a dimension of the Sufi alludes to his creative praxis that could not take place without the mediation of cultural consciousness of the region. In other words, Shah Husain did problematise and aestheticize the concept of *tasawwuf* and in the process he came face to face with Islamic orthodoxy. He imagined himself as Hir, Ranjha as his Beloved, and Takhat Hazara (the village of Ranjha) as his Mecca. Thus in order to retain an inward sense of devotion to God, Shah Husain ostensibly/worldly soaked himself in what Kugle calls 'the erotic pleasure and play' (Kugle 2007:186). Full of such a vernacular aptitude and elegance Shah Husain spoke and sang subversively in the bazaars and streets of Lahore beyond the control of the orthodox Islamic voices:

It would be excellent if I get together with the Beloved,
 Friend Ranjhan stands on the farther bank,
 Let us all swim across the stream (trans. Sekhon 1996:175-76)
 Ever calling upon Ranjhan,
 I have become Ranjhan myself.
 Call me Ranjhan, everybody,
 Nobody call me Hir.
 The Lord whom I ever looked for,
 I have found the very same (ibid.:180-81)

Anecdotes, recorded in Dara Shikoh's *Hasanat al Arifin* (1665) and Mufti Ghulam Sarwar Lahori's *Khazinat-ul-Asfiya* (1864), portray Shah Husain taking up the cudgels against the clerics (*mullahs*) of Lahore (Singh. January-February 1956). The aesthetics of Shah Husain's *kafis*, however, require not to be appreciated simply by the vernacular metaphors or the motifs which enhance their literary beauty, but it needs to be explored and studied from the viewpoint of its ideological nuances which mark his *kafis* as a discursive watershed in the history of Panjabi literature and culture. Both Shah Husain and his literary art are anti-patriarchal in the

social and theological contexts.

The orthodox and theocratic class was not the only one against which Shah Husain rebelled. He too confronted the state and its functionaries in his own subtle way. If for communicating his secular/erotic devotional praxis he brought Madho Lal in his domain of *tasawwuf*; similarly, he too in a subtle manner aligned with his another contemporary, Dullah Bhatti, a Muslim Rajput who, as a counter-state icon, is embedded in the literary and cultural psyche of the people of the Panjab's cultural matrix. Dullah Bhatti's village was Pindi, situated twelve *kos* from Lahore on the highway to Kabul. His father and grandfather were hanged in Lahore on the orders of Mughal emperor Akbar, as they refused to comply with the state system of land revenue. Dullah too followed the toes of their ancestors, and rebelled against Akbar. He too was arrested and a death penalty was given to him (Singh 2008:89-112). *Khazinatal -ul-Asfiya* informs us that on the day of the execution of Dulla Bhatti, Shah Husain was present among the crowd that had gathered to witness the execution in the Nakhas area, Lahore (now Landa Bazar), as Akbar had ordered that the execution be publically done.

Now the question arises why Shah Husain was present at the site of the execution. The mainstream historiography of the sixteenth century Panjab is silent about Dullah Bhatti and Shah Husain, and obviously about the presence of Shah Husain at the time of Dullah Bhatti's execution. If Dullah Bhatti was a challenge to the political patriarchs like Akbar and his Mughal state, Shah Husain was the same to the religious orthodox patriarchs. Thus Dullah Bhatti and Shah Husain represent what in Gramscian terms may be conceptualized as a 'historic bloc' of the rebels against the socio-religious and political hegemony prevailing in the sixteenth century Panjab. If Shah Husain symbolizes the syncretic tradition of *tasawwuf* and *bhakti*, Dullah Bhatti also stands for the Hindu-Muslim oneness in Panjab. A Panjab legend and a folk song reveal that Dullah Bhatti saved the honour of two Brahmin girls, Sundri and Mundri, against the carnal avarice of a Muslim feudal lord. Every year on the occasion of the celebration of the festival of *Lohri* in the month of January, Dullah Bhatti is remembered in Panjab.

Horizons of Spirituality

During the seventeenth century, Panjab witnessed a spectacular progress of its spiritual traditions owing to the contributions of Miyan Mir, Baba Lal and Sultan Bahu. Miyan Mir (1531-1635), who lived in Lahore for nearly sixty years, raised the Qadiri order to the pinnacle of its influence and popularity. Besides an enviable mastery in traditional and rational subjects, he acquired a deep interest in the classic works of Ibn-i Arabi (*Futuhāt*-

i-Makkiya and *Fusus-ul-Hikam*) which elaborated the ideas of Unity of Being (*wahdat-ul-wujud*). He believed that mystical quest comprised of three stages – canonical law (*shariat*), path (*tariqat*) and reality (*haqiqat*) – each purifying respectively three aspects of an aspirant viz. body, heart and soul. There were reports of his spiritual eminence spread far and wide. The Mughal emperors, Jahangir and Shahjahan, held him in high esteem and sought his advice on worldly and spiritual matters. Since Miyan Mir was endowed with a wide social outlook, he maintained an intimate friendship with the Sikh Gurus. He laid the foundation of the Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar, the most sacred place for the Sikhs. It was on his intervention that the sentence imposed on the children of Guru Arjan Dev was not carried out. His intercession with the ruling elite is said to have led to the release of Guru Hargobind from the prison of Gwalior. (Singh 2009:135-57). During the last five centuries, the Sikhs have held him in great reverence.

Dara Shikoh (the eldest son of the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan), who served as the governor of Panjab during 1648-1658, was a mystic in his own right, but also a serious researcher of comparative religion and a prolific writer.³ It is not surprising that he took lessons in spirituality from two great spiritual masters of his times, Miyan Mir and Baba Lal. Dara Shikoh, being an adherent of the Qadiri order, was deeply attached to Miyan Mir. He has produced a detailed biography (*Safinat-ul-Auliya*) of the Sufi master, which is the only authentic source of information on his mystical beliefs and practices. Miyan Mir often directed his disciples to pray for the spiritual progress of Dara Shikoh and to hold him in imagination during their contemplations. Dara Shikoh describes his esoteric experiences, wherein he received spiritual insights from Miyan Mir in his dreams and visions (Singh 2009:152). It is equally significant to note that Dara Shikoh was intimately associated with Baba Lal, the famous Vaishnavite saint who lived at Dhianpur near Batala. Dara Shikoh, in his compilation of aphorisms of prominent saints (*Hasnat-ul-Arifin*) has included the views of Baba Lal on various categories of spiritual leaders. What is more important, he had even seven meetings with Baba Lal in different parts of Lahore, while returning (1653) from the expedition to Qandhar. A few paintings of the Mughal School depict the two sitting face to face in a mode of conversation. Recorded originally in Hindavi by Rai Jadhav Das, these seven dialogues were translated into Persian by Chandar Bhan Brahman under the title *Nadir-ul-Nikat* (Hasrat 2013 (reprint): 239-53; Hurat and Massignon 2003:106-30; Gandhi 2014:65-101). These dialogues need to be seen in the same light as Guru Nanak's dialogue with the Jogis, as they point out the time-honoured tradition of inter-faith religious interaction.

Seen from the chronological angle, Sultan Bahu (1630-1691) stood as a bridge between Shah Husain and Miyan Mir on the one hand and Bulleh Shah and Waris Shah on the other. By composing over two hundred versified passages (*abyat*), which have acquired a timeless popularity in Panjab, Sultan Bahu has made a unique contribution to the ongoing march of spirituality. To begin with, he expresses a deep suspicion of the prevailing method of learning, as it failed to promote genuine feelings of spirituality, but merely led to arrogance and materialism. The fault lies with the class of theologians, who were not only greedy and hypocritical, but merely laid stress on mechanical performance of rituals and outward display of religiosity. Sultan Bahu portrays their character:

The scholar is proud of his learning,
The hafiz thrives on self-promotion!
With books under their arms
They swam around, selling their honour.
Wherever they find a promising household,
They read the scripture in loud, fervent strains
For a lucrative commission.
O Bahu! They have put God's name on sale
Just to make a living.
In this world they live spiritually bankrupt;
Robbed of all honour, they go to the beyond.
(*bait* no.31, trans. Puri and Khak 2004)

In this dismal scenario, Sultan Bahu suggests, the solution lay in adopting love (*ishq*) as the sole means of seeking union (*wasal*) with the Supreme Being. The seeker is expected to visualize God not as an overpowering authority, but as a Beloved (Ibid. *bait* no.124). This effort involves implanting God on the tablet of one's heart, which is the only site where the ultimate reality is experienced (Ibid. *bait* no.137-38). In his role as a lover, the seeker suffers pangs of separation and makes tremendous sacrifices to achieve his goal. He takes public censure in his strike, thinking of Mansur who was sent to the gallows (Ibid. *bait* nos.122-23, 129, 132-33). The path of love has its own beliefs and customs which do not conform to orthodoxy. The seeker undertakes his arduous task under the guidance of a perfect mentor (*murshid kamil*). Owing to an insatiable desire to see him, the seeker treats his mentor as the holy Kabah and visit to him as a pilgrimage (*hajj*). In Sultan Bahu's eyes, the role of an able mentor was similar to that of a farmer, physician, washer man and goldsmith (Ibid. *bait* nos.11, 152, 164-65, 168). Though Sultan Bahu lacked the eroticism of Shah Husain and the rebelliousness of Bulleh Shah, yet he delivered some stern lessons of spirituality in a clear and effective manner.

Struggle Against Political Oppression, Orthodoxy and Patriarchy

During the eighteenth century the zeitgeist of the Punjab cultural matrix surfaced boldly. Besides the political awakening and armed confrontation of the people of Panjab under the leadership of the Khalsa-Singhs against the Mughal state and the Persian and Afghan marauders, the literary upsurge was active in debunking the religious orthodoxy and formalism, and also the degrading character of the ruling elite. For instance, Bulleh Shah (1680-1758) in his *kafis* began to pronounce:

Mecca shall not end thy tale of woe
If thy mind be not purged of filth
Going to Gaya shall not save thy soul,
Even by thou offering sacrificial feast

(Puri and Shangari 1986:458)

He confronted his critic:

You have become the lover of God,
and reaped a thousand reproaches.
They go on calling you an infidel,
you keep on saying, 'Yes, I am' (ibid.: 460)

Bulleh Shah's contemporary, Waris Shah, a Qissakar of consummate skill versified his magnum opus, the story of *Hir* in 1767. The protagonist of his *Qissa*, Hir of the Siyal clan is a crusader. If Khalsa-Singhs had been fighting to break the shackles of political slavery and oppression, Hir too had been fighting to dismantle the social and religious barricades of the patriarchy. She fights for the social approval to get married to her lover, Ranjha. Both Khalsa-Singhs and Hir are in love with freedom from patriarchal servitude. During her struggle Hir too achieves martyrdom (for detail see Gaur 2010: 194-223). On the occasion of her *nikah*, she plunged into a raging debate with the Qazi of her village and stripped off his false character. Thus through Hir, Waris Shah waged a literary war against the social and religious patriarchs of his time. To her lover, Ranjha, Hir declared:

Having entered the lists of love, for us
It is cowardly now to turn away (Sekhon 1978: 72)

Drawing a distinction between faith and canonical religion, she tells the Qazi:

The believer's heart is the seat of God,
O Qazi, do not demolish His throne (ibid.: 78)

Another poet of the eighteenth century, Ali Haidar (1690-1785) in his *siharfi* expressed his anguish over the intra-conflict of the ruling elite and

the failure of the Mughal state for not having resisted the invasion of Nadir Shah:

They should die by eating poison,
These Hindustanis have no sense of shame.
The Turanis are so devoid of honour.
The fools have opened their treasures,
To Persians and Khurasanis.
They should dip their noses in the water of pitchers,
if they don't find a pool to drown in,
What should be said of these,
The elephantine Afghans? (Sekhon 1996: 38)⁴

Similarly, Najabat in his *Nadir Shah di Var* (Lay of Nadir Shah) composed between the 40s and 50s of the eighteenth century evinces a patriotic sentiment in as much as he condemns the treachery of the Indian Mughal nobles against their country and empire. Najabat particularly condemns Nizamul Mulk who hatched a conspiracy and invited Nadir Shah to invade Delhi:

May damn Nizamul Mulk, be pulled out from his roots,
Who lit a spark to show the inside of the house to the thief
(ibid)

Another poet Fard Faqir (1720-90) of the Gujrat district (Panjab) revealed the exploitation of the artisans by the ruling elite in his *Kasab-Nama Bafindgan*, a treatise on the profession of weavers which he completed in 1751:

Being rulers they sit on carpets and practise tyranny;
Artisans they call menials, and drink their blood;
By force they take them to work without fearing God,
Fard, the sufferer's sighs will fall on them one day.
The artisans have (to pay) the first tax and they have to
suffer this loss.
Carrying the load of the poor on their heads,
they (rulers) themselves go to hell.

(Krishna 1973 [1938]: 106)

Thus what is being suggested is that the poets of the eighteenth century were much worried about the safety of the Punjab and their native places. Anguished to see the deplorable condition of the eighteenth century Punjab, Bulleh Shah spoke: "The gate of Doom's torments has opened, Punjab is in a very bad state" (Sital 1970:13). Waris Shah in his *Hir* expressed his anxiety about the safety of his native place Jandiala and Qasur where he had received his education. The eighteenth century Punjab literature is reflective of the valour and vitality of the people.

In the same century there is a multi-faceted Urdu poet of the people, Nazir Akbarabadi. In 1758 when Ahmad Shah Abdali attacked Delhi, people left the city for safer places. Nazir along with his mother and grandmother also abandoned Delhi and migrated to Akbarabad (Agra). At that time Nazir was eighteen years old. As a poet he does not belong to the category of “portfolio intellectuals of the period” he lived in. Rather, he is located “in the conventional Sufi-oriented religious and literary tradition of Hindustan, which is known for its inclusive, non-confrontational approach to the diversities of beliefs and practices.” (Aquil 2011: 129-30). His themes show a wonderful eclecticism. In his voluminous body of work, there are poems on such diverse topics as popular festivals, the seasons, the vanities of life, erotic pleasures and pursuits, and niggardly merchants. Besides eulogizing Prophet Mohammad, Hazrat Abbas (Ali’s brave son and a martyr of Karbala), and the Muslim saints like Hujwiri Data (Ganj Bakhsh), Shaikh Salim Chishti and others, Nazir Akbarabadi also paid homage to Sri Krishna, Guru Nanak and other such pious icons. Nazir’s tribute to Guru Nanak, cited below, is important in the present context of Panjab’s historiography:

The one who is referred to as Nanak Shah is the all-knowing Guru
He is a perfect leader and is illuminated the world over like the moon.
One longs for the Guru who fulfils our desires, wishes and expectations.
He looks after us through his perpetual grace and generosity.
Such is the exalted presence of Baba Nanak Shah Guru
That one should bow one’s head in submission and chant His praise
all the time (ibid)

Thus in an atmosphere of war and struggle, literary texts of revolt, dissent and heroic feats of the religious, romantic and warlike heroes of the people had been cropping up in the eighteenth century. The people of the Panjab had begun to project themselves as a community not only in their struggle for political power but also in their language and literature. Their cultural ethos got crystallized in the different poetic genres. Vernacular poetry played a crucial role in defining the Panjab cultural matrix as a historical reality. It was a period so much fertile from all aspects that the concept and practice of Punjabi community and identity surfaced spontaneously and boldly, instead of being invented from above. Literature of the period communicated the free expression and self-assertion of the Panjab people, and also their will for freedom from the authority of a willful and tyrannical monarchy and its both feudal and priestly allies.

What is being stressed is that by the time Ranjit Singh established the Khalsa Raj, *Panjabi* or a sense of collectivity among the people of the Punjab had struck deep roots. Of course, he “brought the scattered people of the Punjab under a uniform and consistent system of

government”(Chopra 1960: 22). Like the united front of Shah Husain and Dulla Bhati in the sixteenth century Panjab, the peculiar historic bloc of the non-conformist rebels like Bulleh Shah, Waris Shah, Nazir Akbarabadi, Fard Faqir and the Khalsa-Singhs of the eighteenth century has also been on the margins of the mainstream historiography of Panjab. The century is emplotted as “the heroic period of the Sikh tradition,” (McLeod 2000:71); and Sufism of this century has been erroneously studied as a reflection of “defeatist tendencies” of the Muslims because it is argued that the decline of the Muslim Mughal power produced a depressing effect on them as represented by Bulleh Shah who tried to forget it by “drinking *bhang* and singing *kafis*.” Thus the political situation especially from the point of view of a Muslim was “deteriorating and the Sikhs were gaining power day-to-day” (Sekhon 1996:35).

Challenging the Colonial Perspective

The genesis of this procrustean treatment of the eighteenth century Panjab may be traced back to the *History of the Sikhs* (1849), written by J.D. Cunningham. Notwithstanding the low opinion of his contemporaries like Steinbach and Captain Murray about the Sikhs (Steinbach 1970:76), J. D. Cunningham did not want to alienate them (Sikhs), particularly when they were defeated in the First Anglo-Sikh War. His colonial masters would use them for their future politico-military and economic interests. Cunningham humours the Sikhs: the strength of “Sikhs is not to be estimated by tens of thousands, but by the unity and energy of religious fervour and war like temperament. They will dare much, and they will endure much, for the mystic ‘Khalsa’ or commonwealth; they are not discouraged by defeat” (Cunningham 1956: 12). Cunningham also laments that the Sikhs are regarded “essentially as Hindus”, though “in religious faith and worldly aspirations, they are wholly different from other Indians”; a living “spirit possesses the whole Sikh people, and the impress of Gobind Singh has not only elevated and altered the constitution of their minds, but has operated materially and given amplitude to their physical frames” (ibid.: 75-76).

Cunningham does not seem to be acquainted with the Panjab community of the Panjab which reflects in the Panjab cultural matrix we have delineated. His language of narration is sectarian: “Nanak *disengaged* his little society of worshippers from Hindu idolatry and Muhammadan superstition...” (ibid.: 80, emphasis mine). Cunningham’s Western, Christian and imperialist bent of mind is echoed in his following statement:

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of the *Christian* years, Nanak and Gobind, of the Kshattriya [Kshatriya] *race*, obtained a few *converts* to their doctrines of religious reform and social emancipation among the Jat peasants of Lahore and the southern banks of the Sutlej.

The 'Sikhs', or 'Disciples', have now become a *nation*; and they occupy, or have extended their influence, from Delhi to Peshawar, and from the plains of Sind to the Karakoram mountains (ibid.: 1, emphasis mine).

Cunningham designates the above mentioned area of the Sikh influence as 'the country of the Sikhs' (ibid.:1). What is being emphasized here is that in the Panjab itself, Cunningham had been characterizing the Sikhs as a separate nation/race of a separate country.

When Cunningham was writing *A History of the Sikhs from the Origin of the Nation to the Battles of the Sutlej*, Shah Mohammed (1780–1862), a Panjab poet was versifying his ballad, *Jang Hind-Panjab*, popularly known as First Anglo-Sikh War. In this ballad, the poet portrays a different picture. For him the concept of the Khalsa is not narrow like that of Cunningham. He records that the Muslim-Sikh-Rajput soldiers and generals of the Khalsa Raj fought against the Feringhee:

Sham Singh [Attariwala], the hoary general, moved out
From his headquarters;
As also the Jallawalias, the heroes of many a legend.
All the Rajputs kings too descended from their mountain haunts –
Those who had unblemished reputation as swordsmen.
The Majhails and the Doabias came marching, closing their ranks,
As the Sandhawalias came, on their haughty mounts.
O Shah Mohammed! Also moved out the fearsome Akal regiment
With flashing naked swords taken out from scabbards
(trans. Nijhawan 2001: 170-71)

The Feringhee once again attacked after heavy bombardment.
But the Singhs repulsed them with very heavy losses.
Both Mewa Singh and Magh Khan took them head on.
Three attacks of the Feringhee were broken and beaten back.
Sham Singh, the honourable Sardar of Atari,
Was resplendent in the battlefield despite his years.
O Shah Mohammed! In that binding action
The Singhs spilled the Feringhee blood like squeezing ripe limes
(ibid)

Thus it was Panjab (not only the Sikhs) at war with Hind or India which was under the East India Company.

The entire Punjab appeared to be on the offensive –
As no count was possible of those joining the action.
O Shah Mohammed! None could be stopped in that blinding storm.
The Singhs now appeared determined to conquer Delhi (ibid.:178).

Shah Mohammed begins his account with the delineation of the character of the Khalsa Raj of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1799-1839) and

of the Panjabi community before the advent of the Feringhee/British whom he designates the 'third caste', i.e. the intruders. Shah Muhammad is a representative of the Panjab cultural matrix. In the beginning of his *Jang Hind-Panjab* he recalls the communal harmony existing in the matrix. He begins his *Jangnama* (i.e. *Jang Hind-Panjab*) with the depiction of the Punjabi community:

One day as I sat in Wadala; wholly lost,
The Feringhee became the subject of our talk.
Hira Lal and Nur Khan, two of my bosom friends,
Suddenly did they accost me, asking:
How in the midst of Musalmanns and Hindus,
living happily together,
Had a scourge of sorts descended from nowhere?
For, O Shah Mohammed! never in the Punjab,
Was a third caste ever known to have come (ibid.:58)

A reading of *Jang Hind-Panjab* as archives of Panjab history presents a fresh perspective of the Panjab society which is unsympathetically ignored by Cunningham. Shah Mohammed provides his/her reader with an opportunity to comprehend the historically evolved character of the Panjabi society of the pre-British Panjab. He also points out that Khalsa had come to symbolize the Panjabi pride during this period i.e. nineteenth century pre-colonial Panjab. Shah Mohammed is an icon of integrated Panjabi society. He is optimistic about the healthy human ecology. He knows that the Lahore kingdom has lost the battle against the British and the annexation is inevitable. Nonetheless, he is optimistic, and also critical of the British. He pronounces categorically:

God willing, good things shall happen again
What if the soldiers have lost the luster of their mien?
Great commonality does exist between the Hindus and the Musalmans.
None should ever dare break this common silken bond.
The new rulers have no ear for anyone.
Drunk with themselves oblivious they're of our pain.
O Shah Mohammed! All wealth is today garnered
By sons of moneylenders and *gumashtas*⁵ in the main (ibid.:259)

It is to be noted that Shah Mohammed did not turn off his loyalty to the Khalsa Durbar even after the demise of the Maharaja, particularly when the court and camp of the Lahore Kingdom was ridden with internal conflicts. Like the interests of 'Sikh' nobility and members of the royal family, Shah Mohammed's interest was not parochial or self-centered. He presents himself as a 'citizen' of the *Sarkar-i-Khalsa*. He condemns the traitors like Gulab Singh (Dogra) and also does not spare the Sikh Sardars

like Lehna Singh Majithia who, despite their capabilities, did not rise to the occasion, but preferred to retire in peace for their selfish ends. Shah Mohammed was a better 'Muslim' citizen of the state headed by the 'Sikh' Maharaja. He not only debunks the role of the traitors but also experiences melancholy and dejection. His *Jangnama* underlines the state of helplessness and tragedy as he conveys that the Khalsa did not lose the battle in the battle-field but on its 'own space'. He demystifies the popular 'myth' about the invincibility of the 'mighty' British imperialism.

The description of the Hindu-Muslim oneness that one reads in Shah Mohammed's *Jangnamah* cannot be explained without taking into account the historically evolved Panjab cultural matrix which Ranjit Singh inherited, maintained and enriched. It is evident from the fact that the Panjabi Muslims remained unstirred by the calls made by Sayyid Ahmad Bareilvi for *jihad* against the Khalsa Raj. Syed and his followers maintained the warfare for about five years (1827-1831). Eventually the uprising was suppressed (Askari January 1955).

Another contemporary of Cunningham was Ganesh Das who was a Khatri of Badhera sub-caste. He completed his celebrated Persian work *Char-i-Bagh Panjab* in 1849. It is rich repository of information regarding the socio-cultural mosaic of the pre-colonial Panjab. Ganesh Das familiarizes us with administrative units like *ilaqa*, *pargana*, *taluka*, *tappa*, *chakla* etc; chief administrators like *nazim*, *hakim*, *diwan*, *faujdaur*, *thanadar*, *qanungo*, *chaudhari*, *muqaddam*, *panchas*, *sahukar*; religious men and establishments like *sannyasis*, *shivalas*, Jogis and their establishments, *devidwaras*, *bairagis* and their establishments, *thakurdwaras*, *samadhs*, *sadhs* and faqirs, *khanqahs*, *mazars*, Sikh Gurus and Sikh establishments, *dharmshalas*, *Bhais*, *Udasis*, *Udasi Akharas* etc.; and men of arts sciences, learning and literature. He also tells us about the Panjab love legends like Sohni and Mahiwal, Hir and Ranjha and Mirza and Sahiban, and also about Haqiqat Rai, a teenager from Sialkot, who was executed in Lahore during the governorship of Zakariya Khan for refusing to convert to Islam. In 1782, a poet named Aggra composed a ballad, titled *Haqiqat Rai di Var*.

In the context of unforgotten makers of Panjab like Waris Shah, Bulleh Shah and Shah Muhammad, mention also needs to be made of Qadiryar (1802-90) who was born in the village of Machhike, Panjab (now in West Panjab, Pakistan). He was Sandhu Jatt. He is said to be the court poet of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Qissa of *Puran Bhagat* is his magnum opus. Puran, lesser known than his legendary brother, Rasalu, was the son of Raja Salvan of Sialkot. The dates of Salvan's regime are uncertain, varying from the first century A.D. to eleventh century A.D. (Tahir 1988: 65-66). At the time of his birth Puran was considered inauspicious for his father. He therefore, was confined to a dungeon for twelve years where

he grew up, isolated from the royal household. However, he was imparted the lessons in various arts required for a prince. As per the folk-legend, Salvan married in his old age a young damsel named Luna of the lower caste, a daughter of a cobbler. When Puran came out from his confinement, she wooed Puran, her step-son to gratify her sensual desire. But the Prince, regarding her as mother, refused to respond. Consequently the sexual frustration of Luna led her to accuse Puran of molesting her. As a result, at the order of Raja Salvan, Puran's hands and feet were cut off and he was thrown into a well. Guru Gorakhnath, who was endowed with miraculous powers, arrived and rescued the Prince. Having recovered his lost limbs, Puran becomes a disciple of Gorakhnath. He adopted the name of Charrangi. He too was endowed with miraculous powers, and returned to Sialkot, where he restored the eye-sight of his blind mother, Ichhran.

Mohan Singh Diwana writes: "It is strange that during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, a Muslim poet should have taken it into his head to revive the memory of Prince-Jogi Puran of Sialkot" (Singh n.d., dedication March 1951:153). M. Athar Tahir, a scholar from Pakistan solves this riddle. He argues:

Puran as a dramatic persona may well be the projection of Qadiryar's individual conviction and commitment. But at a more public level he speaks of the richness of Muslim participation in and contribution to the culture of the Punjab...Orientalists have tended to treat and project the Muslims as images of exclusiveness. In a multi-religious society, such as India's, this impression is particularly pronounced...But there exists a sizeable area of mutual exchange, an area where various religious strands meet, mix and at times mingle. Historians tend to cite the Mughal Akbar as the 'enlightened' emperor of all Indians. Later his famous descendent Prince Dara Shikoh (d. 1659) is held up as another Muslim who was willing to venture into the Hindu ethos...But it is a creative individual like Qadiryar who obliges us to perceive a third dimension, that of the poets and artists (Tahir 1988: 92).

The significant point that emerges from the preceding discussion is that the men of letters of Panjab like Shah Mohammed, Qadiryar and Ganesh Das, who were contemporaries of Cunningham, did not approve the self-willed social picture of Panjab which he painstakingly portrayed in his *A History of the Sikhs*.

Coping with Two Panjabs

The forgotten makers of Panjab – Baba Farid, Shah Husain, Bulleh Shah, Waris Shah, Shah Mohammed and Qadiryar mentioned in the preceding account – were involved in the Panjabi society of their respective day. Yet a fact so evident and so easily capable of confirmation that they were

Muslims, does not accord easily with the projected communitarian connotation of their identity. Historically evolved 'syncretic' Panjab is overshadowed by the two Panjabs mapped by the Sikh and the Muslim, or the Indian nationalist and Pakistani nationalist crafts of writing history. Particularly, the partition of 1947 has bequeathed to us two geographical Panjabs: Indian or Sikh-Hindu Panjab and Pakistani or Muslim Panjab. Farid-Nanak paradigm has got spilt. Panjab space and the nationalist/communitarian ideologies have merged together.

The paper also intends to convey that instead of considering the long period spanning from thirteenth to mid nineteenth century as a period of the rise, consolidation and fall of the Delhi Sultanate, Mughal Empire and the Khalsa Raj in the northwest India/Panjab, one should appraise it also as a period or era of a noteworthy literary, cultural and religious dynamism. It was a period when Sufis, Bhaktas, Gurus, Qissakars and balladeers of Panjab used their vernacular language, folk literature/legends, culture and landscapes of their native soil and topography for their devotional, literary, imaginative, performative, expressive and documentary purposes. Thus it was a period of literization (development of a written form of vernacular) and literarization of Panjab culture, society and history.⁶

Therefore, we need to identify: (i) the sources that are used for making a text of Panjab history, culture, society and literature, (ii) what kind of discourse/message this text intends to propagates, and (iii) how this discourse impacts a reader/listener/spectator? A text is a semiotic being which does not have *natural* meanings, rather acquires them. How a text establishes its hegemony and acceptability, and how it affects the social and cultural life of the people are also important questions to be reckoned with. Hegemony and acceptability are not a *revelation* that descends from heaven; rather they originate and flourish on the earth. Keeping in view the non-conformist cultural and literary space of Punjab, the question – why do we feel the need to invest in an acceptability of a text/discourse – is also historically very prominent. The Panjab people and their representatives never let anyone hegemonically baptize their historically evolved cultural imprints or heritage. The last pre-colonial Panjab poet, Shah Mohammed presaged the colonial onslaughts on the Farid-Nanak paradigm and cultural matrix of Panjab:

“O Shah Mohammed! never in the Punjab,
Was a third caste ever known to have come.”

Notes and References

1. The martyrdom of Husain and Hasan is sung in the *dhola* and *dohira* genres of Punjabi folksongs. See Bedi 1981: 816-818 and 919. Muqbil, a Panjabi Qissakar (poet-narrator) wrote *Jangnama* (war account) of Husain and Hasan in 1747 AD.
2. Shah Husain does not refer to the names of the Sufi masters of Kashmir, Gujarat, Multan and Karnal. We, however, mention some of the important Sufis who must have been the source of mystic inspiration for Shah Husain. In Kashmir, the prominent Sufi was Shaikh Nuruddin Rishi (b. 1378), the founder of the Rishi order. The Sufis of this order generally remained celibate believing that a family was a great impediment to the pursuit of a saintly life. The celebrated Qalandar of Karnal/Panipat was Shaikh Sharafuddin Abu (Bu) Ali Qalandar (d. 1324). Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya (1182-1262) of the Suhrawardi order was a prominent Sufi of Multan. Shah Husain's *salu* may also be viewed from the view point of *khirqah* (Sufi mantle) which he imagined to have come from Kashmir, Multan, Karnal and Gujarat. *Khirqah* stands for the shadow of a Sufi master's love towards his disciple, and bond of sincerity on the part of a disciple (*murid*). A *hadis* reads that someone brought to the Prophet Muhammad some garments. Among them was a small black blanket with yellow and red stripes. Picking it up, the Prophet said to the assembly, "Who intends to put on this?" All were silent. Then he said, "I give it to Umm Khalid." Then the Prophet covered her with the said blanket, and said, "O Umm Khalid! This is admirable." Suhrawardi 1984: 62-63.
3. In *Safinat-ul-Auliya*, Dara Shikoh has put together biographical sketches of a large number of Sufis. In one of his works *Majma-ul-Bahrain*, he has tried to show similarities between Hinduism and Islam with reference to their terms and concepts. In another work *Sirr-i-Akbar*, he has translated the major Upanishads from Sanskrit to Persian.
4. The Mughal court in the eighteenth century was engrossed in factional politics and narrow self-seeking. For detail see Chandra 1959.
5. An Indian agent of the British East Indian Company who was employed in the Company's colonies, to sign bonds, usually compellingly, by local weavers and artisans to deliver goods to the Company. The prices of the goods were fixed by the *gomasthas*.
6. Insights of this argument have been derived from Francesca Orsini April-June 2012; also see Sheldon Pollock 2007: 19-30.

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RECONSTRUCTING ROHIRA: A PROTOHISTORIC SETTLEMENT IN THE SUTLEJ - YAMUNA DIVIDE

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Rohira was an important settlement of the Sutlej-Yamuna Divide region in the Early and Mature Harappan periods. This is an attempt to unravel Harappan intrusion into areas of already existing cultures and what it can convey about Harappan State expansion in the Sutlej-Yamuna Divide.

The site of Rohira, is presently situated in the Ahmedgarh Tehsil of Sangrur District, in Punjab. District Sangrur was formed in 1948. Prior to this, since the mid- fifteenth century, this area was a part of the Malerkotla Princely State. Rohira was first explored in 1964 and Harappan pottery, beside grey, Sunga-Kushan red and medieval wares were reported.¹ In the early eighties excavation at Rohira was conducted by the Department of Cultural Affairs, Archaeology and Museums, Punjab under the guidance of G.B. Sharma. A four-fold occupation sequence was unearthed. However details of the finds of the excavation are very limited.² Reconstructing the archaeological evidence for the present paper was an arduous task.

The earliest occupation 1A is Early Harappan. It recorded 'Pre Harappan' pottery as well as Bara pottery. Period 1B is labelled as Harappan; and Period 1C is the Post-Urban phase, characterized by Bara pottery. The next phase is designated as 'Painted Gray ware' (though no major finds of such ware were reported³) followed by 'black slipped ware using people,'⁴ according to the excavators. The Early Historic period followed, which was identified on the basis of Sunga-Kushana pottery and Kushana bricks. This was topped (no doubt, after a long interregnum) by medieval period habitation. As regards the time frame of the site, the earliest Pre-Harappan occupation has been compared by the excavators to finds from Early Kalibangan and Banawali.⁵ Since the calibrated dates for Kalibangan⁶ Period I are pre 2600 BCE and Period II, i.e. Harappan from 2600-1900/1800 BCE, we can apply the same yardstick for Rohira.

Therefore, Rohira's earliest occupation can be taken to the early third millennium BCE. The paper is restricted to the Protohistoric levels of

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Rohira, i.e. reconstructing the patterns of the Early Harappan and Mature Harappan periods of occupation.

At present, no regular river flows through or along the entire Sangrur district. The site, is however situated close to a relict water channel, which is only activated during heavy rains. At the time of the first survey of Malerkotla princely state in 1889, the only method of irrigation in the state was wells. The groundwater depth at that time was recorded at levels varying from thirteen to thirtynine feet.⁷ In some areas, the ground water could almost be touched by hand.⁸ The soil type in the entire Malerkotla tehsil is *Powadh*. This type, according to the *State Gazetteer of 1904*, it is so retentive of moisture that even a small amount of rainfall produces an average crop, provided it is seasonal.⁹

The agricultural produce at Rohira in the Early and Mature Harappan periods is testified from archaeobotanical evidence. In the Early Harappan levels the cereals identified were two varieties of barley i.e. barley (*Hordeum vulgare L. emend Bowden*) and naked barley (*Hordeum vulgare L. var nudum*). Two varieties of wheat i.e. dwarf wheat (*T. Sphaerococcum*) and emmer wheat (*T. dicoccum*). Beside the cereals the pulses identified are Lentil (*Lens culinaris*), Horsegram (*Dolichos biflorus*) and Jowar millet (*Sorghum Vulgare L.*). In this period a grape pip (*vitis vinifere*) and grape vine (*vitis vinifere*) and an uncarbonized stone of date were also identified. In the Mature Harappan period there is a continuation of the cultivation of the above cereals and pulses, with the additional evidence of fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum graecum*). There is no evidence for any major agricultural change correlating with the Mature Harappan period.

It is evident that winter cereals and pulses were being cultivated by the inhabitants of Rohira, in addition to some crops. This indicates that double cropping was being practised by them from the Early Harappan period onwards. Fuller and Madella make an interesting observation regarding cultivation pattern in the areas east of the Indus, according to them, 'the presence of two cropping seasons could have offered an extensive approach to agriculture and an alternative to the more intensive agriculture that might have been postulated for the core Harappan regions. Double cropping allowed productivity to be spread across time, and in order to maintain soil fertility it may also have been spread across space, or else cereals would have been alternated with nitrogen fixing pulses'.¹⁰ It is relevant to point out here that pulses like lentils and horse gram are rotated with other crops to maintain and restore soil fertility since they have the capacity to fix atmospheric nitrogen in the soil. And these pulses were being cultivated at Rohira.

The double cropping pattern of *Rabi* and *Kharif* crops would have depended, even in the protohistoric period at Rohira on monsoon (and winter rainfall) and the palaeochannel /s of the river Satluj which would have carried water in the rainy season. But ground water would have been the most reliable sources available. During the excavation at Rohira, a well made of wedge shaped baked bricks was reported from the Mature Harappan period.¹¹

As regards carbonized wood recovered from Rohira they have been identified as those belonging to the following species: *babul* (*Acacia nilotica*), *kareel* (*Capparis aphylla*), *jhau* (*Tamarix dioica*), *toon* (*Cedrela toona*), *khinrni* (*Manilkara hexandra*), *khejri* (*Prosopis spicigera*), *teak* (*Tectona grandis*), *deodar* (*Cedrus deodara*), *Sheesham* (*Dalbergia sp.*), *jujube* or *ber* (*Ziziphus sp.*), *grape vine* (*Vitis vinifera*) and *parijat* (*Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*) and *henna* (*Lawsonia inermis*) have been identified. All the above species occur from the Early Harappan period onwards.

In addition to the local woods, there were those varieties which were being resourced from great distances. These included *Cedrus deodara*, *Tectona grandis* and *Shorea robusta*. The former two species have been identified in the Early Harappan levels¹², whereas *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) from the Mature Harappan period.¹³

Sal is found along the banks of the river Yamuna and further to the east; it is also found growing in the lower Shivaliks.¹⁴ *Deodar* is also found growing in the Shivaliks but at much higher altitudes. There are blocks of *deodar* forests in the upper catchment of the Satluj in Himachal Pradesh.¹⁵ Logs of wood could have been floated down this river and collected at sites which were located close to river banks. According to Ratnagar, 'logs of *deodar*, used for ceiling beams at Mohenjo-daro, were until recently floated down the Ravi river to Lahore.'¹⁶ Ropar¹⁷ and Kotla Nihang Khan, were two Harappan sites which were strategically located on a crossing of the Satluj as well as on the navigation head, no doubt, serving as points for the collection of high altitude produce like wood and metals. Downstream, to the west, according to Ratnagar is another, crossing at Ludhiana.¹⁸ Ratnagar refers to Burnes (1835) account¹⁹, who states that the river can be forded 2 miles above Ludhiana in the cold weather. It may be noted that Ludhiana lies approximately 30 kilometres north of Rohira. Ropar, on the other hand is further (approximately 100 kilometres). It is possible that in the prehistoric past (Early and Mature Harappan) that logs of *deodar* and *sal* were being floated down the Satluj and being collected at the point near Ludhiana, which Burnes makes note of. This would have been a nearer access point, as compared to Ropar for the people of Rohira.

As for Teak its provenance is Central India. Konkan Sahyadri and Deccan Wood charcoal of teak being identified in Early Harappan Rohira makes one wonder how the wood was being got to the site. One can only conclude that far reaching exchange networks had become operative from the Early Harappan times.

The archaeobotanical evidences from settlements like Rohira have thrown fresh light on the arbori-horticultural practices in the Early and Mature Harappan periods of Punjab.²⁰ Grape seeds and vine charcoals were reported from both Rohira and the nearby site of Mahorana. From Rohira was also reported an uncarbonized stone of date palm. However, it could have been an import rather than a local produce.²¹ *Hina* and *Parijat*, i.e. night jasmine wood charcoal remains were also found at Rohira. According to Wright, 'arboriculture would have necessitated careful planning. Parcels of land exclusively for the fruit trees would have to be set aside and managed. And this further, would have entailed 'new forms of labour organization that differed from that employed at large tracts for the growth of wheat, barley and millets'.²²

Evidence of constructional activity at the site is limited to finds of only a few structures of sun-dried bricks in the ratio of 1:2:3 in the early period. In the following period 1B, which according to the excavators, 'represented the arrival of the Harappans,' a 1.6 meter wide made bricks fortification wall was raised for defence. And this was also, a period which according to them witnessed 'intensive constructional activity'.²³ In the nearby settlement of Mahorana too in the same period there is evidence of a 2 meter thick platform on the west side, which according to the excavators was for the purpose of protection against floods.²⁴ However, brick walls are not suitable or practical for flood protection. Therefore this, in all likelihood, was also a fortification wall as at Rohira.

At Rohira, according to Y.D Sharma, 'judging from the continued use of Pre-Harappan pottery even after the construction of the city wall and the use of mud brick of 3:2:1 ratio size, the most popular size being 39:26:13 cm, it would appear that the wall may have been erected by the Pre-Harappans'.²⁵ At Kalibangan and Banawali too, there are evidences of fortification walls from the pre-urban phase. Bisht²⁶ positioned that at Banawali the Harappan wall concealed the earlier wall. Y.D. Sharma opines that Rohira represents a sequence of constructional development parallel to that of Banawali, including the existence of a town wall, but without the bipartite division of the settlement.²⁷ However, Manmohan Kumar and G.B Sharma, at one place also refer to this wall as being a, 'citadel wall with bastions and ramp on the east probably running all around the residential complex'.²⁸ Manmohan Kumar (personal communication) confirmed the presence of a citadel at Rohira. The reference to bastions

and ramp is clearly indicative of the fact that the wall was built for defence purposes. The erection of defensive enclosures around the settlement in the Harappan period has implications in political terms, in the sense, that the settlement needed to be defended. It clearly reflects on the possible importance of the site and its protection in this period.

The artifact - types recovered from Rohira include ceramics, beads, gold foil and gold beads, faience objects, copper objects, terracotta objects and bone objects.

The Early Harappan period, 1A yield 'Pre-Harappan' pottery²⁹ as well Bara pottery.³⁰ The so called Pre-Harappan pottery specimens are wheel-thrown with a light to thin fabric. The colour of the pottery varied from red to pink and is painted in black. The design included geometric designs, horizontal bands, loops, criss-cross lines and fish scales. Amongst the main types were vases, storage jars, bowls and dishes. No details regarding shapes, types and painted motifs of Bara pottery recovered from Rohira are available. The site of Mahorana lying close to Rohira however, yielded both the pottery types from the Early Harappan period onwards. In period 1A, i.e. Early Harappan, Pre-Harappan and Bara pottery was found intermingled. But in period 1B, i.e. Mature Harappan pottery there was a decrease in Pre-Harappan pottery and correspondingly an increase in Bara pottery rather than Harappan.³¹ The Bara pottery from Mahorana has been described in detail. It is a distinctive ware; wheel turned with a dull brown slip and bearing designs in black or chocolate colour. It has distinctive shapes and painted motifs. It has some parallels with Harappan forms that have a thick section, such as dish-on-stand or large bowls with flaring sides. But on the whole, Bara pottery is thicker, has bigger shapes and moreover is almost always painted or incised.

Period I B at Rohira which is marked by the 'arrival of the Harappans'³² yielded the classic Mature Harappan pottery. The main shapes included dish-on-stand, cup-on-stand, perforated jars, storage jars, troughs, dishes, bowls, vases and beakers.³³ The pottery was painted in black and graffiti marks were noticed on several shreds. However, in this period, pottery of the Early Harappan period continued and in fact, was found in 'large quantity'.³⁴ According to the excavators, 'there was no evidence of upheaval and the Harappans and Pre-Harappan continued to live side by side'.³⁵ At Ropar too, like at Rohira, the Early Harappan level, 1A records Pre-Harappan pottery types amongst which Bara type is also represented. And in level I B, the pottery assemblage is a mixed one with both Mature Harappan and Bara wares. This would imply, in Ratnagars words: 'the robustness of local traditions during their encapsulation in a geographically widespread civilizational network'.³⁶

A large number of beads of terracotta, steatite, agate and carnelian are found in the early levels which record Pre-Urban pottery types. Besides bead making, in the Early Harappan level 'an oval shaped furnace and a gold foil were found in a house indicating that it was probably a gold smith's house'.³⁷ The evidence of beads of various types as well as gold foil and associated furnace suggest that the tradition of bead making and gold working were prevalent at the site before the coming of the Harappans. Moreover resourcing of material for these industries from places near and far had been initiated.

Sources of carnelian include, the northern part of Oman peninsula, Bushehr peninsula (Iran), Hab valley (Baluchistan), Wadi beds of the Dasht-i-Lut (Iran), in the Kirthar range (Pakistan) and Gujarat.³⁸ For the Harappan world, Gujarat seems to be a likely source. In Gujarat, the Ratanpur area, as a source of carnelian according to Ratnagar, 'remains nothing more than an assumption'.³⁹ Ratnagar⁴⁰ and Law⁴¹ refer to carnelian, agate and jasper occurring in a small island in the little Rann and another source on the eastern shore of the Great Rann. Near Bhavnagar and Ahmadabad, too, there are several rock formations containing agate and carnelian.⁴² Therefore, resourcing from areas as far as Gujarat had begun in the Early Harappan period.

The manufacturing of beads at Rohira carries into the Harappan period with 'bead maker's houses' being identified by the excavators⁴³, on the basis of a large number of finished and unfinished beads ; and in the same context the discovery of two copper chisels which according to them were for the 'purpose of making holes and cutting'.⁴⁴ However according to Bhan, Vidale and Kenoyer, bead making tools, in particular drills in the Harappan period were made from stone and that the 'use of copper drills with abrasives is unlikely'.⁴⁵ Drills, according to them could be manufactured out of very small stone blades or a distinctive type of rock (greenish grey hard stone).⁴⁶ They also, very importantly state that drill manufacture required special skills which could be transmitted through long periods of apprenticeship'.⁴⁷

The evidence of gold working from the Early Harappan level is a noteworthy feature of this site. The evidence of gold foil in association with an oval shaped furnace in this period indicates smelting i.e., removing impurities and melting once gold had been purified. This would have been followed by forging, i.e. stretching it to make these sheets to be applied as foil. Gold foil allows the 'possibility of using gold as a surface on internal and external architectural details as well as on smaller objects like cosmetic jars'.⁴⁸ In the Harappan level, gold beads (number not specified) have been reported.⁴⁹ According to Manmohan Kumar and G.B. Sharma, the usage of gold 'attest to the general prosperity of the people of Rohira'.⁵⁰ The

evidence of gold from the Early Harappan period onward is suggestive of the fact that either gold objects were being made for use by the local elite or gold items made here were being circulated to areas beyond (again for consumption of the elite). Production for the elite of prized items by specialists was associated with, according to Ratnagar, 'the prestige or political legitimization of the elite, material culture bestowing social distinction on the user'.⁵¹

As regards the source of gold, some scholars opine that the Kolar gold mines of south India were a major source area for the Harappans; But it seems improbable that the Early Harappans were resourcing from such a distance. It is possible, that Rohira was resourcing gold from areas closer to home turf. Gold grains in the river bed of Indus, Jhelum and Chenab have been referred to in Mughal sources.⁵² The Punjab State Gazetteer of 1901 also mentions that gold washing was done along the Sutlej in Bashehr.⁵³ A little further, placer gold is also found near the confluence of the Kokcha with the Oxus in Afghanistan.⁵⁴

Steatite based crafts have been identified at Rohira. Steatite beads were found in the Early Harappan level; and in the Harappan period numerous steatite beads, including disc and micro beads were reported.⁵⁵ Steatite or soapstone indicates various types of soft rocks which are found in the metamorphic belt of Baluchistan, the Aravalli hills, the Deccan plateau and Kashmir.⁵⁶ Steatite is also available on the Indus near Attock.⁵⁷ The base material for the micro beads was powdered steatite; the disc beads, on the other hand were prepared from lumps of steatite. Kenoyer, when reconstructing the process of manufacture of such beads writes that the 'unworked lumps of steatite range in size from 1 to around 7 cm maximum length, but most of the fragments have been sawn or ground to prepare bead blanks. The saws used to cut steatite were primarily fine toothed metal blades of copper or bronze. Stone blades were occasionally used to create a groove for splitting a blocklet of steatite, but never made the thin water like slabs to make disc beads... flat slabs were sawn from blocklets and then either chipped or ground to the basic shape and size of the desired bead. The bead blank was perforated using a fine pointed object and then all the perforated beads were strung on a cord'.⁵⁸ At Rohira, copper parallel sided blades with serrations have been found in the Harappan period. These could have been used for the sawing of steatite.

Rohira has also reported one steatite square button seal from the Harappan level. The seal has a geometric (swastika) pattern on it but no writing on it. From the nearby site of Mahorona (20 kms from Rohira), two button seals with geometric pattern were recovered from period 1B. One of these had four concentric circles and the other a rosetta pattern.⁵⁹ Steatite button seals with geometric, floral and other motifs were in use

in the Early Harappan period. This has been attested to at sites like Mehargarh, Harappa, Tarakai Qila, Kunal etc. During the Harappan period button seals continued to be in use. However, Kenoyer points out that, 'the range of motifs appears to have declined and the swastika motif was the most common form of decoration followed by the stepped cross and circle and dot motifs. Some button seals have simple geometric designs such as cross hatching or concentric circles, square or triangles, but more complex designs are quite rare. This reduction in motifs during the urban phase of the Indus cities could indicate a widespread uniformity in ideology as well as some degree of centralization in the production of seals'.⁶⁰ Kenoyer further states that, 'the fact that button seals continued to be used alongside seals with animal motifs and writing suggests that they served as an important parallel role in legitimizing social order and ideology'.⁶¹ Button seals, with geometric and floral motifs continued to be used in the Late Harappan period at some sites; however they were not made of steatite, but rather terracotta or faience.

The finds of faience objects are very limited at Rohira. There is only mention of 'faience bangle pieces and ear rings'⁶², from the Harappan period. Faience bangle pieces have been reported from a number of sites in present day Punjab from this period. Amongst them are Ropar, Kotla Nihang Khan, Bara, Mahorana, Sanghol and Dher Majra. Dher Majra and Bara, in fact, recorded a wide array of faience items including bangles, beads, ear rings, balls, figurine rings and miniature pots. It is possible that further excavation of the site of Rohira might reveal a pattern similar to these sites, in terms of faience artefacts. The production of faience is not an easy process. It is extremely complex and if evidence of its production is revealed at Rohira, it will further testify to its craft specialization activities.

Amongst the copper objects, only a few, and that too from the Harappan period have been reported.⁶³ These include copper chisels, arrowheads and parallel sided blades with serrations on one side. The copper chisels (2) have been found associated with a bead makers house, as mentioned earlier. It is also likely that the copper blades were being used for craft activities. No smelting furnaces, ores or slag heaps have been reported from Rohira. But it must be pointed out that neither much copper ore nor accumulated manufacturing debris has been recovered from any of the Harappan sites.⁶⁴ According to Ratnagar, 'copper and its alloys would have been scarce in the South Asian Bronze age world and technologies of smelting, alloying, casting and hammering would have been known only to a few persons, perhaps in a few Harappan centres. It is logical to infer that the production of metal tools for crafts was controlled'.⁶⁵

Terracotta artefacts from Rohira include figurine of a bull, toy cart

wheels and bangle pieces from the pre-urban levels; and figurine of bulls, toy cart frames, hubbed wheels and terracotta cakes from the Harappan levels. Bulls, outnumber all other animal representations in clay in the Harappan world.⁶⁶ There are also two terracotta sealings found at Rohira. One which represents a standing figure with a bow and arrow on one side, and a masked figure standing in front of it and on top right there is the symbol of the rising sun. The other sealing has an anthropomorphic figure with Harappan signs on top and below left has some abstract design.⁶⁷ The sealing is of the Harappan period.

Toy cart frames and wheels in terracotta are reported at almost every Harappan site. Overall in the Harappan period, cart-types do not exhibit regional variations.⁶⁸ The cart frames and wheels can help us get insights into the actual vehicles in use at that time for transportation. The cart according to Ratnagar, 'is clearly an instrument of short to medium distance transport.... carts could not have been used for long distances but for shifting heavy loads from villages to the central city, or between neighbouring cities. Bullock carts are heavy, clumsy and slow. However the wheeled cart, like the sailing boat, could only have been constructed by skilled carpenters equipped with suitable (bronze) saws, adzes, chisels and gouges'.⁶⁹

At Rohira triangular, circular and square terracotta cakes have been 'found in abundance'.⁷⁰ Terracotta cakes have been commonly found at all Harappan sites. They have been found in a wide range of contexts. At Kalibangan, for example, they were found associated with fire altars. Rao's finds at Lothal in the same context also led him to conclude that the ovoid balls and triangular cakes were used for ritualistic purposes.⁷¹ However, they have also been found in houses (for example in bathing areas) and sometimes, though rarely on streets, surface of lanes etc. They could, thus have been used as soling material, as part of floor, in streets, passages and bathroom. But very importantly, terracotta cakes have been found in context associated with heat, for example with some unbaked pottery in a kiln at Sanghol⁷² and at the mouth of a pottery kiln at Harappa.⁷³ This implies that they were being used in places where prolonged heating was required. According to Dales and Kenoyer, in reference to the cakes at Harappa they were primarily used as heat conservers allowing 'air into the kiln and at the same time effectively sealing in the heat'.⁷⁴ J Manuel⁷⁵ is of the opinion that the fire places where terracotta cakes have been identified would have been used for industrial (hearths, ovens, kilns) rather than ritualistic purposes. According to E. Cortesi *et al*, they were used in pyro-technological activities, both in domestic and industrial contexts.⁷⁶

The spherical shaped terracotta cakes might also have served as projectiles.⁷⁷ There are also bone points reported from Rohira, which again might have been used as projectiles.⁷⁸ Also as mentioned earlier there is evidence of copper arrowheads. Considering, the fact that there was the presence of fortification with 'ramps and bastions' at Rohira, it would not

be wrong to assume the presence of weapons of defense.

The late Harappan period at Rohira has a rather impoverished material culture. There is only evidence of Bara pottery. No structures were evidenced in this period.

An overall assessment of the material culture evidence from Rohira indicates the richness of a local tradition in the Early Harappan period. The local tradition, here indicates subsistence strategies and crafts such as ceramic styles, bead making, gold working etc. It also includes accessing resources from areas located beyond the Satluj-Yamuna Divide. In the following period, with the construction of a fortification wall, the likely presence of a citadel, presence of Harappan ceramics, copper, beads of gold, agate, carnelian and steatite micro and disc beads, terracotta toy carts and wheels and a profusion of terracotta triangular, square and round cakes – all indicate the integration of Rohira into an expanding Harappan civilizational network. However, the ‘urban presence’⁷⁹ at Rohira did not obliterate the local traditions, as is evident from the continuation of the earlier ceramics, like the Bara ware in the Mature Harappan period.

The question here is that was the Harappan intrusion into an already well settled culture area a smooth process or was it marked by resistance? Wheeler wrote in 1968 that the wide extent of the Harappan civilization was ‘something more forcible than peaceful penetration’.⁸⁰ According to the excavators, as already mentioned there was no evidence of ‘upheaval’ and that the Early Harappans continued to co-exist with the Harappans. They also do not make any mention pertaining to the archaeological evidence of destruction or burning or desertion preceding the Mature Harappan. This could mean that either the state faced no threat from the indigenous population or else there was no imposition of state authority and only Harappan interactions. However, the evidence from Rohira suggests more than just interactions. Rohira was an important center, which was accessing resources like wood, minerals and stone from various places; and this was the reason it was co-opted⁸¹ within the Harappan horizon.

Notes and References

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A GLIMPSE OF RURAL LIFE IN KASHMIR (1846-1947)

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Introduction

The treaty of Amritsar concluded between Maharaja Gulab Singh and the British East India Company on 16 March 1846 was a watershed in the annals of Kashmir. This treaty is considered a sale deed because the article 3 of it reads as ‘in consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing Article, Maharaja Gulab Singh will pay the British Government the sum of seventy five lakh of rupees (*Nankshahee*), fifty lakhs to be paid on ratification of this treaty, and twenty five lakhs on or before the first October of the current year, A.D. 1846’.¹ Whether the Maharaja paid this amount or not has always been a point of debate as there is no concrete evidence in this regard but henceforth it was believed that the Valley was his purchased property. This move in addition to its other baneful implications helped the Gulab Singh and his successors to legitimize their exorbitant taxation policy in Kashmir. It was perhaps in this context that Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz wrote: ‘The Dogras have always considered Jammu as their home and Kashmir as their conquered territory’.² In order to gauge the impact of Dogra rule on the rural economy of Kashmir, the present paper is a humble attempt to highlight the condition of the rural masses during the period under reference.

About Land Revenue System

The first fifty years of Dogra rule in Kashmir were most repressive. The reason was the faulty land revenue system, rampant corruption and the consequent tyranny and impunity exercised by a chain of revenue officials against the peasants for the collection of land revenue. The agrarian system during this period was in crisis. The exorbitant land revenue policy of the Dogras is evident from the fact that during the times of Gulab Singh, the founder of the Dogra rule in Kashmir, it rose manifold. For instance during the times of Shaikh Imam-ud-Din the last Governor of the Sikh period in Kashmir the total revenue of the Valley amounted to Rs.3,39,200 whereas

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during the first year of Gulab Singh's rule it rose to Rs. 8,43,000³ and the same went on increasing year after year by taxing every commodity except air and water as Walter Lawrence, the prominent Settlement Commissioner had observed.

The method of revenue assessment as well as collection underwent various faulty experiments. In the beginning the land was parceled out by the State to its own agents known as *Kardars*. The *Kardar* on his own distributed it among the cultivators for one year. During this period the responsibility of the *Kardar* was to get "the largest possible quantity of grains for the State",⁴ a task that he accomplished with ruthlessness. The next State agents were known as *Shakdar* and *Sazawol*. The function of the former was to sit in the village and watch the crops while the latter supervised the work of the farmers. Once the harvest season came a regiment known as *Nizamat Paltan* supplemented from the regular army, moved out into the villages to enforce the State's claim. This system had remained in force till 1860. The period between 1860 to 1873 witnessed the arrangement of *Chakladars* or speculating contractors which was replaced by *Assamivar Khewat* in 1873. It remained in operation till 1880.⁵

In 1880 the State resolved to realize the land revenue through the revenue officials. However, the worst part of it was that the system was exploited by the officials more in their own interest than in the interest of the State. The revenue was collected with such a severity and impunity that the peasants had to sell out even the cattle and sheep of the village. Most of the peasants could not pay the revenue in full and as such under the fear of severe penalty were forced to leave their villages. They migrated to other villages where they took service as farm labourers. This method was soon found unsuccessful and it was replaced by a new device called *Izad-Boli*. Under this, villages began to be auctioned to the highest bidders. The fields under cultivation were 'examined by *Nazardid* (eye survey), after which the Government share was made over to the highest bidder among Pandit contractors...'⁶ These bidders were responsible for collecting revenue for the State. The main drawback of this method was that when it appeared to these people that the year's crops were not good "nearly all the speculating bidders, after taking all they could wring from the villagers, absconded without paying the State a single rupee".⁶ The sums offered at the time of bidding being unrealized by the State were entered as future revenue demand of the village. The speculative bidder and the revenue officials joined hands together to rob the State as well as the cultivator.

The villagers were subjected to two kinds of revenues i.e. *Koul* and *Rasum*. The former was legitimate and the latter was illegitimate. *Rasum* formed perquisites which every revenue official exacted from each

village as his own share. Not only this but the officials robbed the peasants even of their due rights. For instance it was the tradition to allot to each village a certain amount of grain as seed in the form of advance called *Tukhm-i-Masada*. However, “the grain never reached the cultivator but was divided between the officials and the value of the grain was gravely entered every year as an arrear against the village’. Moreover, whenever the land was taken from the assessed areas either for public purpose or for private purpose of the officials, no revenue was remitted on that land and the village had to pay for the same. The villagers were also forced to join the conspiracy to rob the State. Those who declined to agree with the officials had to suffer.⁷

Settlement by Walter Lawrence

It is worthwhile to mention that it was for the first time in the history of Kashmir that the peasants lost both hereditary as well as occupancy rights in land. During this period *Baidakhli* (eviction) became a common phenomenon and both the State as well as the privileged holders could eject the peasants at their sweet will. This practice rendered the Kashmiri peasants to the status of food gatherers who in search of livelihood migrated from one area to another and the agriculture continued to remain in shambles.

The appointment of a permanent Residency by the Government of India in Kashmir in 1885 proved a boon for the people of the Valley in general and the Muslim peasantry in particular. The establishment of Residency was a progressive measure in state of Kashmir. It was after this development that Maharaja Pratap Singh initiated land reforms by way of settlements. Accordingly Walter Lawrence (ICS) was entrusted the job of *Bandubast* (land settlement) in Kashmir. He examined the problem carefully and with all commitment. After five years of rigorous exercise from 1889 to 1893, he submitted a report on the basis of which a new settlement was introduced in the Valley of Kashmir. This settlement till today continues to be the bedrock of the land records in Kashmir.

Walter Lawrence in his celebrated work *The Valley of Kashmir* has frequently referred to the haphazard land revenue system that was neither in the interest of the State nor the poor peasant and it was only the callous Pandit officialdom that thrived on it by betraying both—the rulers and their ryots. The peasant in addition to the so called legal taxes was made to grease the palms of the Pandit officials in numerous ways and forms. In this context, it is pertinent to quote Walter Lawrence:

Apart from the opportunities for speculation afforded by the recognized methods of the revenue system, the officials enjoyed other perquisites which are known by the name *rasum*. The *patwari* keeps a list of these

perquisites, and when he is pressed or when it suits his purpose he will often show these lists to me. I take at random a list of the perquisites taken in one year from an average village.

Its legitimate revenue was Rs. 1,332.6.0 Chilki, made up of the following items: —

	<i>Chilki</i>		
	<i>Rs.</i>	<i>a.</i>	<i>p.</i>
Half-share of kharif and rabi crops	520	0	0
Item on account of walnut trees	63	12	0
Lump sum paid for land cultivated by shawl-weavers and for land under vegetables	138	12	0
An advance on the original assessment made by a Pandit. The Pandit failed to pay, but the State insisted on the village paying the advance (izad boli)	300	0	0
Item for jungle produce	7	0	0
Item for grass and village officers	9	0	0
Total	1,038	8	

These items are supposed to be permanent, and are known as kaul, but in 1883 the State levied in addition the following taxes: —

	<i>Chilki</i>		
	<i>Rs.</i>	<i>a.</i>	<i>p.</i>
Tax of 2 per cent. (Do khawrai)	18	13	0
<i>Sala, Jalus.</i> (Sala is a tax on account of a Sanskrit school. <i>Jalus</i> is a tax on account of expenses of English visitors)	18	13	0
Kanungo tax	3	14	0
Patwari tax	3	14	0
Tax on account of Maharaja's temple	2	8	0
Khitmatgars	1	4	0
Tax on account of establishment	77	3	0
Tax on account of land granted to chakdar. The chakdar did not cultivate, so the village was called upon to pay the amount assessed on the chakdar's land	58	9	0
Tax on account of apricot trees (it is worthy of notice that there are no apricot trees)	10	0	0

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Various taxes—(1) loss on ponies seized by the State and paid for at prices far below market price, (2) Nazrana, (3) tax for support of temples, (4) tax on occasion of marriage in Royal House, (5) tax for dispensary.	99	0	0
Total	293	14	0

The perquisites (*rasum*) taken in one year in addition to this revenue were as follows:—

	Amount		
	<i>Rs.</i>	<i>a.</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Chilki</i>		
Tahsiladars	12	0	0
Tahsiladars's Assistant	8	0	0
Naib-tahsildar	8	0	0
Naib-tahsildar's Assistant	5	0	0
Parcha Navis	5	0	0
Mir Chaudhri	13	0	0
Ahd Ghanai, Assistant to Mir Chaudhri	11	0	0
Mir Zilladar	5	0	0
Zilladar	10	0	0
Rassad-Talabana	25	0	0
Blankets taken	4	0	0
	Price was Rs. 10. Price given by officials was Rs. 6.		
Ponies	22	0	0
	Price was Rs.40 Officials gave Rs. 18.		
Item for permission to pay as revenue I kharwar of cotton*	5	0	0
Ghee taken	12	0	0
Sheep taken	6	0	0
Violets, Zira and Guchis	4	0	0
<i>Chob-i-kot</i>	21	0	0
Wool	12	0	0

Grass	8	0	0
Share of crop taken by Zilladar	9	0	0
Share of crop taken by Mir Chaudhri	7	0	0
Share of crop taken by Patwari and Lambardar	7	0	0
Item taken by police	6	0	0
Tahsil Establishment	7	0	0
Wasil Baki Navis	10	0	0
Sihaya Navi	3	0	0
Tahsil Treasurer	2	0	0
Tahsil Kanungo	4	0	0
Twenty fowls taken for officials	5	0	0
Tahsildars' fine not credited to the State	10	0	0
Miscellaneous	4	0	0
Total	270	0	0

* The item is of great importance. Under the old system, the State accepted a certain portion of its revenue in cotton, oil-seeds, and pulses, and gave for these articles a commutation rate considerably higher than the market price. The villagers would buy cotton from the bazaar at Rs. 8, and pay it in to Government at Rs. 14, and it was worth their while to bribe the *Tahsildar* for the privilege of paying their highly-priced commodities. The village in question never grows cotton.⁸

In spite of his noble endeavors Lawrence did not succeed in removing the inbuilt defects of the old system. The relations between the State, landlord and the peasant continued as before. The positive recommendations made by him were not implemented for a long time. Nevertheless, this settlement in the long run helped in improving the lot of agriculture and the tenancy in Kashmir. It was on his recommendations that occupancy rights were conferred on the peasantry that continued to plough their holdings for the last 10 years. Such peasants were entered in land records as *Assamies* which in other words were recognized as *Marusi* (hereditary) peasants.⁹ The good work of Lawrence is borne out by the fact that till recent past. He is popularly known as *Laransaeb*. He is a household name in rural Kashmir. The illiterate cultivators while working in the fields also speak high about this British Official. It was after this settlement that life

began to come to rails in rural Kashmir. Nevertheless, owing to the feudal character of the State oppression against the peasantry continued in the form of rack-renting, illegal exactions and various types of *Begar* (forced labour).¹⁰

About Economic Condition

To quote prominent anthropologist and historian A. R. Desai that 'peasants were born in debt, lived in debt and died in debt' was also relevant in case of Kashmir. Lawrence writes that everything except air and water was exorbitantly taxed to fill the coffers of the State and its collaborators. It had made the life of rural people virtually a hell. The deteriorating economic condition had reduced the rural masses to paupers. More than 90 percent of the people living in villages were often in debt. In most of the cases produce of the land was mortgaged to the money lender long before it was visible in the fields. Under the system of *Wad*¹¹ (money-lending) the illiterate and ignorant villager who had borrowed a paltry sum of 30 or 40 rupees went on paying something both in cash or kind every year but was not able to payback the debt in full during his life time. Thus, after his death the family remained perpetually under debt.

After paying revenue in kind and cash to the State and meeting the claim of *Taifdars* or *Nangars* (the landless village brethren) on whom he relied upon for various services like blacksmith and carpenter and various other types of people like potter, shepherd, cattle-rearer, leather worker, village priest and barber, which the elders reveal were of 36 types, the peasant was left with a small quantity of produce that could hardly suffice his minimum needs and that too only for a few months after the harvest. For the most part of the year especially from spring to the end of summer the lower strata of peasantry whose holdings were very small lived on wild fruits and vegetables and other types of sub-standard diet like rice-gruel and chaff.¹²

It is pertinent to mention that even today elders reveal that in a small village with 50 to 100 households only 5 to 10 households used to be self-sufficient in case of two time meals throughout the year. To our understanding as already mentioned these were the households who had been recognized as *Marusi* (hereditary) peasants and were entered as *Assamis* (account holders in land records) by Walter Lawrence in 1893. Their holdings were comparatively big and they could afford to raise livestock as an additional source of income in comparison to poor peasants with little holdings.¹³

As is true of all the feudal societies there was deficiency of cash currency and most of the business was conducted through barter system. Though with enormous difficulties and hardships especially in case of health-care and modern amenities village was a self-sufficient economic

unit. It was with the construction of Jhelum Valley Cart Road in 1890 which connected Valley with Punjab that the modern commodities of daily use began to enter Kashmir, but till the end of the first half of the 20th Century Kashmiri village by and large retained its feudal character. The natural calamities like floods, fires, famines, plagues and earth-quakes in 19th Century Kashmir did no less in shaking the economy of the Valley in general and that of rural Kashmir in particular.¹⁴ These calamities devastated the rural society leading to the enormous loss of life. It was owing to the fragile economy that the peasantry in search of livelihood would opt for seasonal migrations to the adjoining plains of Punjab. Just after the harvest season in autumn the Kashmiri peasants in large numbers would cross the deadly high altitude mountains of *Pirpanjal* and *Mari* on foot in order to do hard labour for about three months in various cities of Punjab. At times some of them would lose their lives to snow storms at high altitudes.¹⁵

About Society

A society with hill agrarian economy producing only a single crop throughout the year and with hostile geography and administration cannot be expected to develop a healthy social setup. The rural masses as such lived in abject poverty and insecurity. To our understanding it was perhaps because of this reason that the element of insecurity has shaped the psychology of a common Kashmiri. It has percolated down to the generations through genetic makeup and is still visible in their attitudes. No doubt, the human beings at global level have almost identical traits but we are of the opinion that a common Kashmiri is more vulnerable to fear and insecurity in comparison to his counterparts elsewhere.

Majority of the rural population consisted of Kashmiri Sunn Muslims who according to observation of Walter Lawrence were Hindus by heart. No doubt, they had converted to Islam in 14th and 15th centuries, but they have not given up their Hindu past. Till date they continue to be superstitious, fatalistic and credulous. No doubt, the non-conformist movements like *Wahhabi movement* and *Jammat-i-Islami* have had some impact of monotheistic thought on Sunn population but on the whole Kashmiri Muslims are inclined to folk instead of *doctrinal* form of religion. The other traits of Kashmiris that have been observed by Water Lawrence—the keen observer of the society under reference—were those of being *Zulum Parast* (worshippers of tyranny) and rumour mongers.¹⁶ No doubt, the consciousness caused by Western education and the present day electronic and print media has brought some positive changes in their attitudes but such traits in society have not vanished altogether. The trait of being the worshippers of tyranny had been openly admitted by none other than the renowned poet of Kashmir-Mehjoor- who in one of his poems unequivocally admitted that: ¹⁷

"Tateh cha waqtek zerak teh gatel zalimas vanan dildar"

(Do the wisemen of times there call an oppressor a courageous one!)

In spite of enormous oppression at the hands of the State and its intermediaries we do not come across any open revolt by the peasantry as was true in case of other parts of the Subcontinent. No Sidhu or Kanu or Birsa Munda was born there. A well-known idiom in rural Kashmir which is popular till today is:

"Hindvandan gachena guneh teh greistan gachen"

(Is it possible to raise the heaps of watermelons? So is true about the peasants!)

Leaving the mindset and psychology aside let us focus on the overall way of life during the period under reference. It is worthwhile to mention that owing to the feudal economy joint family system was in vogue both in rural as well as urban Kashmir. But in case of former it remained intact for a long period. The households entered by Lawrence as *Assamis* in 1893 over the period emerged as *Vandas* consisting of various families with the same *Krams(surnames)* like *Bhat, Rather, Ganai, lone, Dar* etc. These *Vandas* and other migratory peasants with small holdings and in case of some villages some outcastes known as *Watahs*, who being landless used to assist the peasants in their routine work and to do other menial jobs, formed the village community. In spite of variation in economic profile there was a sense of belongingness among the villagers who used to come to the rescue of each other at odd occasions. The farming was carried out collectively by assisting each other. It was perhaps due to this sense of live and let live that the village communities continued to survive in spite of enormous hardships, difficulties and calamities. The comparatively affluent peasant would share some amount of his foods and other things with his poor neighbour. If not rice an affluent peasant would certainly spare rice gruel for his poor neighbour that he would eat with some wild or domestic vegetables.¹⁸

Speaking practically and from a humanist point of view the condition of women in rural Kashmir was extremely bad. They were supposed to work in the fields and simultaneously arrange food supply to men at work. In case of any error or negligence due to exigency some rude husbands would beat their wives ruthlessly.¹⁹ The society was extremely orthodox and till recent past i.e in 1970's and 1980's most of the families did not like to educate their daughters. A peasant would prefer to allow her daughter to go to forests to collect firewood instead of permitting her to go to school. It was owing to his ignorance and conservativeness that a peasant believed that she would be safe in woods rather than school. Besides, the joint family system of course with some merit in feudal system,

was not good for the overall development of society. It hampered the growth of an individual. The daughter-in laws were the worst victims of this system. The ladies were by and large treated as family servants rather than the respectable spouses. In a patriarchal society the daughter-in-laws and *Khan-e-Damads* (Gharjamaies) generally received second class treatment. They were frequently humiliated and their hard work was hardly counted. About, the institution of *Khan-e-Damad*, it is said that it rose to heights during the period under reference.²⁰ The peasants with good amount of holding in order to save their sons against *Begar* or *Kar-i-Sarkar* (forced labour) and to manage the cultivation of their estate would opt for a *Khan-e-Damad*.

The society was well knit and intimately integrated. The rural people used to share both sad as well as happy occasions. Simplicity was the integral feature of this society. On marriage occasions people would collect utensils, bedding and furnishing from the neighbouring households. Such occasions were taken as a family matter by all the villagers especially the neighbours. However, in certain cases where the father of the bridegroom due to poverty factor or some intention of deceit would not fulfill the already agreed upon conditions resulted into tension that at times could take ugly turn resulting into the humiliation of the members of the *Barat* (marriage party consisting of friends, neighbours and relatives who accompanied the bridegroom). Such feuds were taking place either on the number or quality of dresses that the father of the bridegroom had to arrange for the bride or on the amount of *Boag* (some amount that the father of the bridegroom had to pay to the family of the bride) or the *Zaivar* (jewelry) or the *Wazdiar* (cooking charges) that the father of the groom had to pay on the spot or the excess in the number of the members of *barat*. In case of such conflicts the elders from both the sides would finally play a positive role and only then the bride was allowed to accompany her life partner to the new home.²¹ But, with the passage of time perhaps because of economic prosperity such traditions disappeared altogether.

In rural Kashmir the season for weddings till recent past was the late autumn that in local parlance is called *harud* and this tradition also had a history behind it. Since the main stay of rural economy was the agriculture and paddy the main crop of the Valley used to be harvested towards the end of September to October and by the end of November the peasants were completing all the agricultural operations including the thrashing and husking of paddy and harvesting other minor crops like maize and pulses etc,. Later the fields were brought under plough for sowing mustard and other Rabi crops.

As mentioned earlier the peasant during period under discussion lived in extremely low economic conditions. Nevertheless, after the immediate

harvest season the peasantry to some extent used to be in a better position than other seasons of the year because it could retain some produce as its share. Therefore, it used to opt for weddings in this particular season. Thus, the economic factor as well as appropriate timing, free time from agricultural work, were the two important reasons behind the tradition of having weddings mostly in late November and early December.

Most of the families on marriage occasions either used to borrow money from money-lenders or purchase eatables especially spices and cloth for dressing called *vardan* on credit from the shopkeepers. The important function on the occasion of marriage used to be the *mehandirat* when during the night hours *mehandi* (a powder used for dying hands and feet) was applied on the hands of the bride and groom at their individual residence. During the night before initiating the application of *mehandi* and more importantly during the application of *mehandi*, the friends, neighbours and relatives who were invited to the function in advance would sing and the ladies at different intervals would do *vanvun* (songs sing in *chorus* by the Kashmiri women especially in the praise of the bride, bridegroom and the concerned families). During the night intervening the day of *mehandiraat* and *barat* (formal marriage) a sumptuous feast in local language known as *wazwan* was prepared to be served to the guests next day both at the home of the bride and the groom. The invitees to the feast used to be neighbours and the relatives from outside the village. However, the neighbours and the guests from outside the village were served separately. In case of the guests from outside the village more care was taken so that they were served properly and in case of neighbours it used to be homecoming event. The neighbours were considering the occasion as a family affair and as such were taking more interest in the service of the guests from outside.

The *barat* (marriage party accompanying the groom) was received by the late evening not only by the immediate neighbours and close relatives of the bride, but in case of a small village, almost all the villagers and in case of a big village most of the residents of the mohallas around. The members of the *barat* were warmly received and first of all the popular *Kashmiri Kahva* (a sort of tea made by adding sugar and some spices) was served to the members of the *barat*. Later, a marriage bond was written by the priest called Qazi known as *nikah* and then the priest would recite verses of holy Quran called *Ijabat* (a sort of pronouncement about the marriage) and the members of the *barat* would listen to it seriously and finally prayed for the success of the marriage and offered blessings for the couple. Bride is not called on the occasion but proper permission for *nikah* (marriage) is solicited from her. Later, the feast or *wazwan* is served and all care is taken that everything goes nicely while serving the

guests. Then, the members of the *barat* would rest for some time and at times *tueth* (a sort of tea little bitter in taste but helpful in digestion) was served to the *barat*. Later, with the permission of the family members of the bride especially his father and mother and local elders the *barat* would leave and the bride would accompany her life partner to the new home. Also, there was a tradition of hiring *bands* (professional minstrels) who accompanied the *barat* to and fro while beating drums and playing flutes. All this during the night hours presented a lovely and fascinating scene.²² A society with limited means and resources used to maintain all the parameters that are expected from a civilized society. Above all, the faithfulness and sincerity was a dominant norm that the present materialist society is lacking to a great extent.

In spite of various socio-economic disabilities the rural society had its own methods of amusement and merry-making. *Nendehkal* (the times of removing weeds from the paddy fields in summer) was followed by *Behwijkal* (the time of rest from farming). This period lasted for more than two months after the month of June. During this period the villagers would normally enjoy music and *Bandpather* (drama conducted by professional minstrels). The peasants of the village used to pay these professionals in kind mostly rice or paddy. Besides, the villagers had the tradition of celebrating *Urs* or *Mela* on the anniversary of the holy men who have played a significant role in the spread of Islam during the medieval times and are buried in almost all the villages of the Valley. There is hardly a village in the Valley where a *Sufi* or *Reshi Saint* is not buried. On such occasions in addition to other rituals the villagers either arranged music or wrestling or *Kabbadi* where people from within or outside the village would assemble for enjoyment. Besides, at times the women of the village would sing *Rouf* in order to entertain the people.²³

About the Polity

The Dogra State was autocratic and sectarian in nature. The first fifty (50) years of this regime after the Afghan and Sikh rule was the darkest period of Kashmir history. However, from 1885 with the establishment of Residency by the British Government of India things began to change for good. Nevertheless, the State retained its sectarian and feudal character till 1947. The Dogra Rajputs being the kin of rulers were the most privileged people. Next in hierarchy were the Kashmiri Pandits who being the co-religionists of the rulers were relied upon and entrusted with the responsibility of manning the administration. The Kashmiri Muslims, barring a small section of Muslim elite consisting of landed magnates and clergy who also acted as the collaborators of the *Raj*, belonged to the oppressed mass. In urban centers they were associated with small scale industries especially

Rafugers (Shawl-Bafs) and in case of rural areas they were tied to land as peasants. They were the producers of wealth who that filled the coffers of the State and its collaborators at the cost of their own starvation. It is pertinent to mention that in spite of divergent economic interests of Kashmiri Pandits, who formed a thin minority, especially in rural Kashmir, and the majority of Muslim peasants, their social relations were very cordial, perhaps due to the tolerant social ethos and traditions nourished by the prominent ascetic personalities like *Laladed* and *Nund Reshi* since medieval times. In spite of being the collaborators of an oppressive and sectarian State the Kashmiri Pandits were respectable both in urban as well as rural Kashmir.

It is also worthwhile to mention that elite on the whole irrespective of creed was ruling the roast and in case of the attitudes of bureaucracy and landed aristocracy towards the peasantry there was no difference between a Pandit and a Muslim aristocrat. The Muslim landlord was equally tyrant to his Muslim tenant. However, being the co-religionists of Maharajas the Kashmiri Pandits in spite of being a thin minority formed the majority of landed aristocracy and officialdom. The Kashmiri Pandits being the most learned community in case of English education in North India²⁴ as the collaborators of the Raj did not start any organized movement against the autocracy in Kashmir. It was the middle class educated Muslim youth who after returning from various universalities of British India especially Aligarh blazed the trail for freedom in Kashmir. It were they who formed the *Reading Room Party* and later on the *All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference* (1932-38) in order to struggle for the genuine aspirations of the working classes. Muslim Conference went a long way in persuading the Maharaja Hari Singh who was comparatively a liberal ruler to implement the Glancy Commission (1932) recommendations. It was with the implementation of these recommendations that a legislative assembly known as *Praja Sabha* was established in the State as late as 1934. No doubt, the *Sabha* was colonial in nature where due to the majority of the nominated members the will of the State prevailed. Nevertheless, it provided a platform to discuss various socio-economic problems of the subjects. Besides, the freedom of press and platform, grant of proprietary rights in *Khalsa* lands and the abolition of *Rasum* and *Nazrana* was granted by the Maharaja by acceding to the recommendations of the Commission in 1933. The Commission also promised due share to Muslims in case of State services that enraged the Kashmiri Pandits who had a hegemony over the State administration.²⁵ The Pandits in reaction to these reforms started what is known in the annals of Kashmir as *Roti Agitation* (agitation allegedly at snatching away the livelihood) in Srinagar. Moreover, various tenancy reforms were undertaken by Maharaja Hari

Singh that went a long way in ameliorating the lot of rural masses.

Later in 1939 owing to the secular and progressive character of Kashmir freedom struggle and the influence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on S. M. Abdullah, Muslim Conference was converted into National Conference. The new organization with its pro-people agenda struggled for the emancipation of the people of Kashmir in general and the working classes in particular.

In 1943 it adopted a manifesto popularly known as *Naya Kashmir* programme which till today remains relevant and provides a guideline towards the overall development of the State keeping in view its resources and geography. It was under this manifesto that the Nationalist leadership introduced the *Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act in 1950* which considerably contributed towards the economic welfare of the poverty stricken peasants who by virtue of it became the proprietors of the land.²⁶

By virtue of this Act fifty five lakhs (55) kanals of land were transferred to the tillers. It is pertinent to mention that under this Act only that land was transferred from the landlords which exceed 182 kanals and the orchard and *maufi* lands were exempted from it. Though this Act was only a beginning towards the abolition of landlordism in Kashmir, by virtue of it 396 big jagirs were revoked and two (02) lakh and fifty thousand (50,000) tillers become the proprietors of the land.²⁷

Conclusion

The treaty of Amritsar critically called as *Bienamai Amritsar (sale deed of Amritsar)* concluded between the representatives of East India Company and Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu on 16 March, 1846. It was a landmark event in the history of Kashmir. The Treaty was no doubt left the Maharaja independent in case of his internal administration but in foreign affairs he was supposed to refer the matters to the arbitration of the Government of India and to accept its paramountancy. The early Dogra Maharajas like other Princes misused the internal autonomy and for a long did not modernize their administration on the analogy of British India. That is why the first fifty years of this rule is considered as a period of administrative mess causing enormous exploitation and harassment of the working classes in general and the rural population that mostly consisted of peasantry in particular.

Till 1893, the land revenue system of the Valley was completely in shambles that generated an agrarian crisis causing the devastation of rural Kashmir. It was a period in which faulty experiments were made in case of assessment as well as collection. The intermediaries between the peasant and the State were misusing their authority for their individual

benefit and thus robbing both-the peasant as well as State. During this period we come across the migration of the rural population from one area to another in search of relieved conditions. The peasants had lost interest in ploughing that had made the State to force them for farming. Also, the revenue was fixed exorbitantly and at harvest times the State and its intermediaries were robbing the cultivators by appropriating almost all his produce by way of legitimate as well as illegitimate taxation. After paying the revenue to the State the peasant was left with a little quantity of produce that could meet his requirements only for a few months. For the rest of the year he generally lived on wild vegetables and fruits. Such a phenomenon had made the Kashmiri peasants to have seasonal migrations to the plains of Punjab in search of livelihood.

Things began to change since 1889 when on the request of Kashmir Darbar the Government of India spared the services of Walter Roper Lawrence (ICS) in order to have a land Settlement in Kashmir. This settlement was a significant development towards the streamlining of land revenue system. Lawrence made a number of positive recommendations that went a long way in bringing the land revenue system back on rails. It brought a relief to the peasantry, however, the corruption and impunity continued unabated that hampered the welfare of peasantry.

In-spite of enormous difficulties the village was a self-sufficient unit where the people even after the payment of harsh revenue claim survived. It was perhaps because for a long time the people had a little materialist mindset. The comparatively affluent peasant was sharing rice-gruel if not rice with his extremely poor neighbour that he would take with some ordinary vegetables. Besides, there was a sense of belongingness and the village community used to share its joy and sorrow. In-spite of extreme poverty the rural people had their own methods of amusement and merry making.

As mentioned earlier that the last Maharaja of Dogra dynasty was a liberal ruler who brought in tenancy reforms which also went a long way in improving the lot of rural populace. In addition to it he paid due attention to education, health care and governance. The freedom struggle in Kashmir like other Princely States started very late i.e 1930's and it had a pro-people character. The National Conference (1939-1947) being an apex organization and as such the leader of the Kashmir freedom struggle adopted New Kashmir Plan as its programme in 1943 which was a progressive document and in post-independence period it served as a road map for socio-economic welfare of the State on the whole. It was under this plan that S. M. Abdullah in the capacity of Prime Minister enacted the Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act in 1950 that made a significant contribution towards the welfare of rural population in the State on the whole.

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22. The first author is himself from a rural background and as such has observed all these characteristics of village life personally.

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THE BRITISH AND THE CHALLENGE OF NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF THE PUNJAB (1849-1857)

*Bir Good Gill**

The British were actively involved on the North West Frontier (NWF) of India much before the Punjab was annexed in 1849. One is well aware of the accounts of M. Elphinstone, William Moorcroft, Charles Masson and other travellers who penetrated into the tribal regions of NWF during the second and third decades of 19th century. But it was Alexander Burnes who later on (1834) has given us detailed insights into the region and its tribes.

The inhabitants of NWF have always been known to be fiercely independent and the ones who detested any authority which attempted to subdue them. The frontier tribes which are spread over hundreds of miles and divided among themselves by blood feuds and clan disputes as well as by mountain barriers could never find a common centre of action or any single military leader who would unite them, yet they were roused by a common hatred of British domination.¹ These tribes were Mohammadan *sunnis* without exception. They were strict in the observance of prayers, fasts and festivals of their religion. They were also committed to honour the shrines of their saints and celebrated their anniversaries with great fervour. A tribe always boasted if it had within its territory a shrine of a saint to whom they made pilgrimage on every significant occasion of their lives. Unfortunately if the tribe did not have any such grave, it was looked down upon by the rival tribes.²

These tribes popularly known as *Pathans* guarded their independent identities zealously. One of the most significant of these tribes was the Mohammadans living partly in Afghanistan, partly in adjoining independent territory and partly in Peshawar District. They were divided into nine clans with *safis* to the north and *shalimanis* to the south. They boasted of fighting force of 25,000 at the time of annexation of Punjab. The *baizais* who lived on both sides of the Afghan border was their most martial clan.³ The *Afridis* were one of the most dreaded of the lot. Charles Mason made this observation as early as 1830. The tribe occupied very strategic area of hilly country south and west of Peshawar. This was the most powerful

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of frontier tribes. The Khyber Pass runs through this region. Needless to say that it was dominated by *Afridi* clans of various origins who were by nature restless and constantly at feud with one another but always united in defence if an external attack was made.

The tribe was further divided into eight clans out of which *Zakhakhel* and *Adamkhel* were their major fighting force. On the whole they were people of nomadic traits who were always a source of trouble to the British. Owing to their geographic advantage they could neither be ignored nor very often traceable after the raid.⁴ Another important tribe of this region was the *Yusufzai*. It was considered the oldest tribe which inhabited the mountains of Dir and Swat along with fertile plains of Mardan. This tribe was better organised as compared to others as far as its internal administration was concerned. The *Bajauris* were located near the Afghan border on the southern side of Dir. The tribe was known to have preserved some of the oldest customs and traditions of Pathans. Another tribe, the *Mohmands* were most closely knit clan who lived in Lalpura across the Afghan border next to Kabul river valley. Their customs were similar to those of *Yusufzais*. The *Shinwaris* was yet another significant tribe that inhabited the extreme western end of Khyber Pass and the hills next to Jalalabad valley of Afghanistan. The *Arakzai* tribe divided into seven clans though less warlike than *Afridis* were an equally restless lot that gave the British tough time in the Tirah valley. Besides engaging in disputes with other tribes, they also continued to carry internal feuds. *Waziris* was one more tribe worth the mention as they occupied the Kurram and Gomal rivers. There are four *Waziri* clans out of which Mahsuds were the most daring and inhabited the centre and northern part of Waziristan. The anarchy that pervaded the social and political life of many parts of the frontier land was more intense in Waziristan than other regions. The Waziris being more fanatical, resisted all foreign influence with great zeal, with the result that the British had to invade their country often.⁵ One thing was common in these tribes that they shared strong sense of independence and were prepared to live and to die for their freedom. The difficult physical conditions of the terrain made the task to contain these tribes a bigger challenge to the British than the control of the Punjab.

Lord Hardinge after the treaty of Bharowal on 16th December 1846 had appointed a Council of Regency and thought that he had solved the problem of the Punjab. The exchequer was low⁶ and the cost of first Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1839) and then the Anglo-Sikh War had left the Company largely in debt. Hardinge, to reduce the expenditure, cut the army strength by fifty thousand men and shrank the sepoy battalions from a thousand to eight hundred each, besides reduction in cavalry and artillery. He thought no shot will be fired in India for years to come. But the restless Sikhs soon

took to arms (Second Anglo-Sikh War) and it was proved how wrong he was in his assessment.

After the annexation of Punjab in 1849, the British realised that the boundaries of trans-Indus tracts were vague. On the north it melted vaguely into the Himalayas and on the western side it was not clear where the Sikh state ended and Afghan state began. To decide a boundary between the settled districts and tribal territory was a task in itself. The immediate worry was to secure the NWF from the tribal raids. Almost all the tribes were in ferment in 1849, the year of annexation. The tribes of Swat valley were quick enough to send planned groups for raiding Peshawar which was welcome intrusion from their brethren who were yearning for independence of Peshawar. Their unrest was increased by a large number of Pathans who had taken refuge in the hills unhappy with the Sikh rule. The Mohmands, many of whom lived within the British territory were well connected with their Khan in Lalpura who further owed his allegiance to Amir of Afghanistan. The Afridis of the Khyber Pass continued to hold sovereignty over the Khyber. They blocked the passage and looted the trading caravans as per their whims. The rest of the tribes continued to maintain their ancestral feuds and proved a hindrance to the maintenance of peace in the region.

The British soon realised the gravity of the situation and set up a separate division for the districts of Peshawar, Kohat and Hazara under a Commissioner. Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu were placed under a Deputy Commissioner. These officials were given the charge to maintain law and order in the region and to check tribal incursions. A special military body called the Punjab Irregular Force was speedily set up. The name was soon changed to the Punjab Frontier Force. This force was promptly used to control the offending tribes. In the very first year after annexation, an expedition of more than 3000 men was sent to Kohat Pass against the Afridis.

Lord Dalhousie felt that the best way to deal with the unruly tribes was to take stringent measures. On April 13, 1850 he ordered:

- (a) Raids on the hill tribes near Peshawar and Kohat to burn their ripened crops and destroy their villages". He added, "measure which could be cruel and unjustifiable in war between civilized nations are sometimes absolutely necessary in dealing with barbarous tribes who can understand no other punishment but destruction. It is a measure of last resort.
- (b) Payment of these tribes by a fixed subsidy to induce them to keep peace and protect the road (this point was conceded after discussions with commander in chief).⁷

This was a strict policy and the British administration even at the behest of the commander in chief of the Punjab believed that it was necessary to take such extreme action in order to deal with these 'barbaric' races. To any rational mind and for a nation that boasted of their "civilising mission" it seemed to be a cruel policy. But did it inject fear in the minds of the tribes is the question? This can be assessed from the incident below:

In October 1853, Colonel Mackeson, Commissioner at Peshawar was attacked by a tribal man. He was so severely wounded that he was scarcely expected to survive for many days. It so happened that Colonel Mackeson was hearing the appeals of the people in the *veranda* of his house at Peshawar, when a man, who had been very earnestly engaged at his devotion all day with his carpet spread within sight of the house and making repeated and continued prostrations, came up to him towards evening and presented a paper. Colonel Mackeson supposing it to be a petition raised his arm to receive it from his hand and the man in a fraction of a second ran a dagger into his chest. The man was seized but Colonel Mackeson died of the wound in a few days.⁸ Later on it was found that this man was instigated by the fanatic leaders of Kabul to commit the act.

Peshawar was no doubt a large city under the influence of Afghanistan which was annexed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh at a great price. When Punjab was annexed, Peshawar came to the British as a challenge of a city that was most fanatical and fully infected with tribal Mohammedan population which was ruthless and reckless and kept giving trouble on the frontier. Having so lately belonged to the Afghans, these tribes were not likely to be very pleasant neighbours for they had never reconciled to the loss of the city and the province and dearly longed to get them back again. On the death of the Commissioner, Colonel Mackeson, the excitement was great and the whole area was in panic. Such was the fear of the wild tribes that officers were sleeping with their boots on and their swords by their sides, ready for danger.⁹

It was in this state of affairs that Herbert Edwardes was ordered to Peshawar to take charge as Commissioner. Governor General, Lord Dalhousie considered him the most befitting man to meet the crisis that had so suddenly arisen. The order was accompanied by private letter from Lord Dalhousie written on 17 October 1853. Its contents were as, "I have much and real pleasure acquainting you that the government has selected you to fill the very important and difficult office so sadly vacated by the slaughter of my poor friend Mackeson. In the whole range of Indian charges none which at the present time is more arduous than the commissioner of Peshawar. Holding it, you hold the outpost of Indian Empire. Your past career and personal qualities and abilities give me assurance that, in selecting you, I have chosen well for its command....."¹⁰

Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes was settling Derajat district. He was

given the responsibility to tackle the tribes in the North West Frontier. He had his own mode of dealing with the frontier men. Infested with war loving tribes, the region was unlike that of Hazara where Major James Abbott could control and pacify “by kindness and conciliation”.¹¹ Regarding these warring tribes, Edwards could not help noting in their praise, “they have the great virtue of manly courage, and they have the great virtue of hospitality... a race able to struggle with him (Englishman) for empire”.¹² He adds, “At present the principles by which *Pathans* especially are guided in their intercourse with each other are those of retaliation—blood for blood, injury for injury, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”.¹³ He knew it was a challenge to deal with such daring lot, but once on equal terms Edwardes loved the challenge.

The valley of Peshawar, 60 miles long was divided by Afridi Hills and Swat and Sulaiman Mountains. The tribes always made sure to act and retaliate from within Peshawar. They only respected that officer who was equal. To gain a strong position and to show the might of the British, regular troops were raised in Peshawar along with Punjab Frontier Force under the command of the Board of Administration. The full strength of Frontier Force was eleven thousand whereas the regular troops of the army were 12,500 troops.¹⁴ These men were mostly of *Pathan* origin who could easily understand the temper of their brethren and handle them in a better way. Besides the above army force the Guides Corps, one thousand in number were recruited who were to watch any shady characters, thus functioning as a wing of the Intelligence Bureau. They were further trained not to get excited about petty issues and to deal with minor events on their own. Towards better administration, money was invested in the maintenance of fords, rivers, *chowkies*, roads and watching the activities of the tribes beyond the frontier without throwing any hint of provocation.

Assurances of goodwill and promises of good behaviour poured in from the chiefs but Edwardes knew not to be carried away with those as long as he could show himself equal to the task. Plundering expeditions by members of different tribes continued to occur. The depredators were safe when they escaped to their hills and were welcomed with their booty.¹⁵ The mischief done was often insufficient to warrant the expense of lives in punishing the offence. Edwardes tried the method of barring out the whole of the offending tribe from the Peshawar market thereby making the community suffer for its complicity in the crime. He adds, “the sting of this punishment was that the people having to trade through the medium of their neighbours only got their supplies after paying a heavy tax”.¹⁶ This policy pinched the pockets as well as their ego that they were punished and payment was asked for. They knew nothing of taxation policy of a civilised nation but for them taxes were punishment as they were exempt from all.

The Board of Administration in the Punjab was directed to pursue the policy of appeasement at the same time. The clans which showed friendly leanings and cooperation with the British government were given passes to conduct trade freely¹⁷ and were thus held separate from those clans which showed hostility. This policy gradually brought many tribes to yield to discipline.

The *Kuki Khel* tribe that lived at the mouth of the Khyber Pass was notorious and known to have murdered the people they plundered. Edwardes made a policy to capture every man of the *Kuki Khel* tribe and put in prison whenever he looted the traveller.¹⁸ Thus by putting counter pressure he secured the passage as well as the prestige. Instead of maintaining spy system, he preferred a straight forward policy. The tribes were pacified to some extent and to buy peace on permanent basis the authorities thought of entering into treaty with the Ameer of Afghanistan. According to the treaty that was signed in January 1857 the Ameer was given nearly one lac rupees (annually) to maintain peace on the frontier. The British representative at Kandhar was appointed. The Ameer in his situation to earn a friendly powerful neighbour and to counter the Russian bogey thought it to be the best course. Moreover, disruption of trade and continuous flow of arms and ammunition that was promised by the British to safeguard his country could, if the tribal region was left to its own action or given a direct or indirect support, stood to inflict equal injury to the Afghans as well. Thus the British under the company rule finally bought peace and tribal control at a price.

Such was the intensity of restlessness of the tribes that sixteen expeditions had to follow within next four years since 1852. These military incursions were against the *Afridis*, *Yusufzais*, *Mohmands*, *Arakzais* and *Utman Khels* tribes. These measures, however, proved ineffective.

Seeing the fate of these, the British tried to pacify these tribes by granting subsidies. The Kohat Pass Afridis were the first to receive an annual subsidy of Rupees 5700 for not attacking the travellers and traders through the Pass. The *Orakzai* tribe was similarly granted a subsidy of rupees 8000. The *Adam Khel* tribe was also granted a subsidy of Rs.5000. There were instances when this method also failed and force had to be applied. Sir Charles Napier, Commander in Chief, of all British Forces in India, personally led an expedition against the *Adam Khel* tribe. As a result the Pass was opened, but when the forces withdrew, the Afridis were quick to attack the caravans again.

The tricky geography of the region resisted all moves of the organised army and even misled the soldiers in wrong directions, thus not allowing the army to reach in time to counter the surprise attacks of these tribes. Early punitive expeditions occurred periodically soon after annexation of the Punjab. Captain W. James points towards the failure of Bengali

regiments in the Punjab in these early expeditions, “we require no prophetic skill to calculate the rest-not aware of the style of the enemy’s warfare and of the nature of the country he is about to penetrate...it would be a miracle if he avoids disaster”. All British Generals and officers who fought on the frontier concurred that it was the lack of geographic knowledge of the world’s most intricate terrain as well as the tactics of the formidable enemy who appeared and vanished out of their hideouts into natural spaces in no time. This, besides the limitations of the regular army training they received in European tradition, proved very different from the needs of the fighting ground of North West Frontier of the Punjab. The former expeditions were ‘very costly, formal and ineffective’ directed by British impulses to subdue the region-a dream that they chased all through the period of their rule in India and yet it remained a dream till the very end. This vulnerability of the Frontier continued and was a huge challenge during their lean period of 1857. The British Government had to devise new tactics and adopt stronger measures to control the North West Frontier when in 1858 India came directly under the Crown.

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KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY AND GURUDWARA VANCOUVER: PRECURSORS OF THE GHADAR MOVEMENT

*Amandeep Bal**

The Punjabis started reaching North America in early twentieth century. Soon after their arrival, they formed religious, social and political organizations. The first such centers were *Gurudwaras*. These were the places, where apart from socialization, the pioneers discussed issues like racial discrimination and immigration laws. The Khalsa Diwan Society and the Gurudwara at Vancouver in Canada were the main centers of activities of the pioneers, before the formation of the Gurudwara Stockton in U.S.A. Prior to the foundation of the Ghadar Party, the Khalsa Diwan Society was the rallying point of the Sikhs on the West Coast of North America. It was a vehicle for the growth of Sikh pioneers of the British Columbia and paved the way for the formation of Ghadar Movement. Since both the institutions were the precursors of the Ghadar Movement, they need more space in the Ghadar historiography. The purpose of the present paper is to understand the role of the Khalsa Diwan Society and Gurudwara at Vancouver in Canada in the life of Sikh pioneers in historical perspective and not to build an argument that it was a Sikh centric movement, as is being vigorously debated by some scholars.

I

As early as 1906, Bhai Arjun Singh and a few other Sikhs worried about the degeneration among Sikh pioneers decided to do something to check the growth of corrupting influence of the western world. Thus was established the first Gurudwara at port Moody in 1906. They hired a building at a rent for 25 Rupees and made a makeshift Gurudwara. It was a weekly congregation. As the *Guru Granth Sahib* was not available, they managed with a small book containing five holy psalms (*panjgranthi*). The Committee preached against evils of the drinking and smoking and even baptized willing persons. The Committee arranged for the temporary stay of new immigrants in the Gurudwara. There was no priest, but they always had one or two persons around. As they could not manage the cleanliness, the Gurudwara was declared unfit by the city Corporation. They decided to

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have their own place.¹ Later the Committee came to be known as Khalsa Diwan Society. Harnam Singh Tundilat has described assembly of Sikhs on holidays in the Gurudwara as the beginning of a new consciousness. It laid the foundation of getting together to discuss political and other issues concerning the Sikhs in British Columbia.²

The story of constructing the first Gurudwara in Vancouver needs to be told as it gives an idea how immigrants in a foreign land were trying to create a space for themselves. As most of the immigrants worked in lumber mills, were alone, did not have families, so arranged common kitchen in the mills. To pass time they would sit together and recite hymns. They decided to have their own place once their make shift Gurudwara was declared unfit. Bhai Arjun Singh bought a piece of land. Funds were raised. A Committee was formed to organize, supervise and construct the Gurudwara in Vancouver. As all the Sikhs in Vancouver helped in construction, it saved the money. There is a concept of *kar seva* among Sikhs in which everyone partakes in social work. The building of the Gurudwara was opposed by the white residents on many grounds. They took the plea that the Sikhs continued singing till midnight which disturbed their sleep. They also complained about their dress. The Corporation, however granted them permission to build the Gurudwara.³

The Khalsa Diwan Society was formed in 1907, though it was registered on 13 March 1909 and the bylaws, rules and regulations were approved on February 12, 1915. The Society appointed priest, who was elected annually by vote and received salary in addition to boarding and lodging. The entire expense was met by subscriptions. It organized *gurmat parchar*. Bhai Bhagwan Singh and Balwant Singh granthi baptized the non-baptized and tried to maintain purity of the Sikh norms. They were particularly concerned about the growth of *mona* (clean shaven) Sikh trend. According to Bhai Kartar Singh Nawan Chand 'approximately six hundred Sikh brothers had taken to wearing of hats' by January 1908. The Khalsa Diwan Society decided to boycott such 'apostates' and prohibited them from buying or accepting eatables from them or welcoming them in their homes.⁴ The clean shaven trend had become very popular among the Sikhs to get acceptance in the new world where keeping long hair was considered unclean. Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna also writes in *Meri Ram Kahani* that he had also cut his hair but grew them after few months.⁵ The Sikhs were facing identity crisis in the new land. On the one hand, the religion insisted on keeping unshorn hair, on the other, acceptance in the Western world was being linked with clean image. It was but natural that a large number would shun the external symbols of Sikhism.

The Society opened branches in many cities and mills and built more *Gurudwaras* in Victoria, New Westminster, Fraser Mills, Duncan Combs,

Ocean Falls and Abbotsford.⁶ The Society also had branches in Washington, Oregon and California in USA. There is a very interesting observation by R. K. Das that wherever there were 20-25 Sikhs, there was a temple. There were nine temples on the Pacific Coast by 1920.⁷

An important contribution of these *Gurudwaras* was that they served both as religious and social centres for all the religious communities. The Society and *Gurudwaras* also made arrangement for the cremation of dead people. The Society made sure that bodies were cremated and not buried. The temples apart from place of worship were meeting place, dining hall and even hostel. They were refuge for all those who had no place to go. The institution of *langar* helped all new comers and also those without a job. It is recorded by Col. Falkland that they were well provided with funds. Even during spurts of unemployment, the Indians did not face much problem and were looked after by their community, stayed in 'Hindu Ghar' and never became public charge.⁸ Dady Burjour, in his Report on the life and working conditions of Indians in California has made a similar kind of statement about their never becoming a public charge, though he carried a poor opinion of Indians because of their unclean habits like public spitting, talking loudly and drinking heavily.⁹ Another Government Report agrees to that fact that the primary aim of the Society was the welfare of the entire community. It was a kind of Labour Union using the Sikh Temple as rendezvous to provide assistance to indigent Hindus so as to keep them off the streets.¹⁰ Even 'notorious' Inspector W. C. Hopkins, secret agent of Immigration Department writes "It is difficult to prove any charge of vagrancy against the community".¹¹

The Gurudwaras were built much before other places of worship of Indians came up in North America for the simple reason that the Sikhs comprised the only group with enough number to erect and maintain temples or community centers. It served as religious center for all communities. It has been a tradition in Punjab irrespective of religion to participate in each other's festivals and to enter each other's shrines. According to Harjot Oberoi there were no visible religious boundaries among the common people and they all believed in popular culture and superstitions? In Punjab, Muslim and Hindu holy men attracted followings from among the Sikhs and vice versa.¹²

II

The foundation of the Khalsa Diwan Society and Gurudwara at Vancouver was closely linked to the discrimination faced by the pioneers. Within two years of their arrival, the Sikhs were facing racial discrimination. With their peculiar turban they were easily recognizable and quickly became target of hostility. By 1907, there were 2200 Indians mostly Sikhs in British

Columbia. Fear of 'Hindu Invasion' had begun. On October 18, 1906, a ship bringing more Indians was refused landing by Mayor of Vancouver and was directed to Victoria. The resolutions against further immigration of Indians were passed at the Town Hall in Vancouver.¹³ The hostility already simmering against Chinese and Japanese labour got directed against them. Local papers reported the activities of the Sikh immigrants. *The Daily Province* wrote "The class of Hindus that have invaded British Columbia, are commonly known as Sikhs, entirely dependent upon their physical capabilities- those who have no set aim in life. They are coolies of Calcutta. In stature the average Sikh is slender. The complexion is dark-brown while his hair is long and black. In dress he copies the European with the exception of the head adornment which is substituted by the turban". It also wrote "Experience has shown that immigrants of this class, having been accustomed to the condition of a tropical climate, are wholly unsuited to this country and their ability to readily adapt themselves to surroundings so entirely different inevitably brings upon them much sufferings and privation, also that were such immigrants allowed to reach by considerable dimensions, it would result in a serious disturbance of the industrial and economic conditions in portion of the Dominion and especially in the province of British Columbia"¹⁴

As there was already slump in the market, many of the new immigrants had to stay out of work for long periods. They had to stay in the shacks or beyond city limits. Some white residents, writes Hugh Johnston, complained that unemployed Indians would knock at the doors of the residents for work and were begging money.¹⁵ This, however, seems contradictory as Immigration officers both in Canada and USA testify that they never became public charge and were looked after either by their own men or Khalsa Diwan Society as already discussed.

From 1880s onwards, the Government had made it increasingly difficult for the Chinese to immigrate.¹⁶ Employers, however found Indian labour to exploit. Though the immigration was severely restricted, yet poor economy in Vancouver continued to produce strong resentment against Asians. This led to creation of the Asiatic Exclusion League in British Columbia in 1907. The League staged protests in Vancouver. Despite rejections, 11,000 Asians (all categories) had immigrated to British Columbia. On September 8, 1907, several thousand English men made speeches against the 'yellow peril'. They carried banners "Keep Canada white". To solve the problem, the Government came out with new ways.¹⁷

The uproar against immigrations in Canada led to investigation by Royal Commission in 1907. The Commission recommended the exclusion or restriction of oriental labour including the Hindustanis. Before the adoption of any measures, Mr. W.L. Mackenzie-King, Deputy Minister of

Labour was sent over to Great Britain in 1908. The conferences and negotiations between the Canadian Government and the British Government resulted in practical ban or the restrictive measures. The Government came out with interesting reasons for ban. They were:

1) To prevent hardship to the Hindustanis themselves due to the severity of the climate. 2) To avoid race friction with all its complications. 3) To protect Canadian workmen whose standard of life, family duties and civic obligations were of a higher order. The specific measures adopted to turn down Indians were:

1) Both the Canadian Government and the Indian Government deprecated the activities of the steamship companies, who were in any way responsible for recruiting immigrants in India. 2) Indian Government took special measures in prohibiting the distribution of literature giving glowing accounts of industrial opportunities in Canada. 3) The amount of money which each immigrant was required to possess at the time of his arrival in Canada was raised by an Act in Council from \$25.00 to \$ 200.00.¹⁸ The most important however, was a new piece of legislation. The British Government was opposed to head tax as it would set East Indians against the colonists. On 8 January 1908, a new Immigration policy called 'Continuous Journey Clause' came. It allowed entry only to those who travelled from their country of origin to Canada. For both Japanese and Indians, it was end of emigration to Canada as there was no direct ticket to Canada from their country of origin. The Indians were free to come, but by 'through direct ship' and there was no direct ship from India to Canada.¹⁹

III

By 1908, the Khalsa Diwan Society was vigorously fighting against the Government at three levels. Firstly, against the Canadian Government's move to relocate them in British Honduras, a British island; secondly against 'Continuous Journey Clause' and thirdly for the family reunion. In the wake of increasing unemployment and cry against further immigration, the Government was looking for means to check further immigration and also remove Indians from British Columbia, if possible, to some other area. The British Honduras was their new discovery. J.B. Hankin, the private secretary to the minister of the interior and the leading proponent of the British Honduras plan wrote to Superintendent that each year the Colonial office brought ships of Indian 'coolies' to work in West Indies. He suggested that England should send one of these 'coolies' ships to Canada to take load of the Hindus to West Indies. Jointly the Canadian and British officials decided upon British Honduras as it was a growing country with a demand of cheap labour. To Indians they tried to sell it as a plan where

the unemployed would get secured employment.²⁰ Before the execution of the plan the government agreed to send one or two representatives of the Indians to visit the colony. In this, Mr. W.C. Hopkins²¹, secret agent of Immigration Department worked as liaison between the British and the Sikhs. He contacted the Sikhs many times, attended Gurudwara ceremonies and tried to convince the Khalsa Diwan Society of the merits of the relocation. Two representatives of the Sikhs, Nagar Singh and Sham Singh were sent to Honduras. They refused to sign the Report on many grounds that it included unfavourable climate. Monthly wages were low, labour was contractual and water was not fresh etc.²² The representatives to Honduras also made an allegation that an attempt was made to bribe them to sign the Report. The congregation at Gurudwara made a unanimous resolution refusing to go to Honduras.²³ Harnam Singh Tundilat insists that they were offered as much as thirty thousand dollars to sign the Report.²⁴ It is an exaggeration, but they were offered bribe to sign the report.

Tarak Nath Das had been advising the Khalsa Diwan Society not to accept the Honduras plan. He advised them to call Prof. Teja Singh as he was in the United States and could not come to plead their case. Thus came Prof. Teja Singh, a native of Amritsar, a degree holder from Columbia and a Law degree from Cambridge to take over the management of the Khalsa Diwan Society and represent their cases to Immigration authorities. It was promised to him that his expenses would be taken care of. He came in October 1908. For the next three years, he played an important role in the lives of the Sikhs in British Columbia. He talked in spiritual idiom. His speeches appealed to their sentiments. *Daily Province* wrote that Teja Singh was regarded by the Sikhs as a demi-god.²⁵ Meanwhile, owing to the resistance by the Sikhs or on the advice of some of its officers, the Government declared on December 10, 1908 that it had no intention of enforcing Honduras plan. S Nihal Singh wrote an article in *Modern Review* under the heading 'Triumph of Indians in Canada'²⁶

Prof. Teja Singh had ambitious plan. In November 1908, he established Guru Nanak Mining and Trust Company that planned to use the funds of the successful Indian immigrants to fund commercial ventures to provide jobs to unemployed Indians. The Company started with a capital of \$ 50,000. It decided to import Indian products and also buy and sell land for its east Indian clients. By 1909 Prof. Teja Singh had bought 200 acres of land outside Vancouver. He advised Indians not to accept low wages and start business in mining, logging and shipping²⁷ On his initiative, Khalsa Diwan Society got affiliated to Chief Khalsa Diwan of Amritsar. There was another reason also. Some among the Society did not trust the Hindus and wanted fellow educated Sikh, who could be more reliable and trustworthy mediator. During this period the Society mainly concentrated on the immigration

issues beginning with resolutions, petitions and deputations. But many Sikhs in British Columbia were not happy with the slow pace of activities of the Khalsa Diwan Society. They were in defiant mood and their anti-British tone could be seen in the meetings of the Khalsa Diwan Society. Prof. Teja Singh, however remained away from national political activity.

Anti-British mood was visible at a meeting at Gurudwara Vancouver on October 3, 1909. Natha Singh stood up and spoke about the deplorable conditions of the Indians in India and other parts of the world especially British colonies. He presented a resolution: "No member of the executive Committee of the Sikh Temple should wear any kind of medals, buttons, uniform or insignia which may signify that the position of the party wearing the article is nothing but slave to the British supremacy". He argued that their medals signify that they have fought for the British as mercenaries against fellow countrymen or some other free people. They are medals of slavery. The audience, therefore unanimously accepted the resolution. Sardar Garib Singh, a member of the Committee took off his medals and took an oath that he would not wear them anymore. Sardar Bhag Singh, Secretary of the Khalsa Diwan Society went a step ahead. He made a bonfire of certificates of honorable discharge. Campbell Ker²⁸ calls such incidents as genuine proofs of awakening among the Sikhs. He wrote "Coming in contact with free people and institutions of free nations, some of the Sikhs, though labourers have assimilated the idea of liberty and trampled the medals of slavery. There is, in this, lesson for the 'so called' educated people of India and their moderate leaders".²⁹

More serious was the issue of 'Continuous Journey Clause' It was the end of journey for Indians to Canada. Only six Indians were allowed to enter Canada in 1909. With immigration laws tightening every year, talks within Gurudwaras were taking aggressive tone. Many decided to return home or moved to adjoining province of Washington and Oregon in USA. The Government was looking for new ways to expel all Indians. In 1910 came the Ordinance enabling the Immigration Authorities to prohibit the entrance of any Asian into Canada unless he came directly from the country of origin and possessed \$200. To plead their case, a deputation of Sikhs went to Ottawa in 1911, but came back empty handed. The first to suffer the blow were the wives and children. The case of Indian wives came when Bhag Singh and Balwant Singh, president and priest of Gurudwara Vancouver brought their families. The two men were allowed, but their wives were detained and ordered to be deported. The Indians appealed before the Supreme Court. The judgment was pending but the Immigration Department allowed the women and children to land 'as an act of grace'.³⁰ This grace, however was not shown in the case of wives and children of other immigrants. In the following year, only five wives, one mother and thirteen children were allowed to enter.³¹

Bhag Singh, president of the Khalsa Diwan Society took the fight against the authorities to next level, when he refused to participate in a function welcoming Duke of Connaught, Governor General of Canada. The Mayor of Vancouver wrote to Secretary of Khalsa Diwan Society inviting the Sikh veterans to attend a Military Review. Bhag Singh wrote back that retired soldiers would not be able to attend the Review 'on many reasonable grounds which are already known to the city officials and officials of the Immigration Department'.³²

The pioneers were now more conscious and aware and were ready for struggle. In 1911 defunct Hindustani Association was reorganized as United India League. Both Khalsa Diwan Society and United India League worked together. Both had their headquarters at Gurudwara in Vancouver. Some of the leaders had simultaneous positions in the Khalsa Diwan Society and United India League. Bhag Singh, president of the Khalsa Diwan Society was also the president of Hindustani Association and Balwant Singh, the head priest was the treasurer of the United India League.³³

IV

Around this time, a few pioneers had started airing the grievances of the immigrants in their papers published in *Urdu*, *Gurmukhi* and English. The pioneers had started publishing papers as early as 1907. *Circular-i-Azadi*, *Swadesh Sewak*, *Aryan*, *Pardesi Khalsa* and *Sansar* were spreading awareness among Indian workers against the British. Ram Nath Puri was probably the first to start the political propaganda on the West Coast. In 1907, he founded Hindustani Association in San Francisco and started the lithographed *Urdu* paper *Circular-i-Azadi*. It advocated boycott of government laws and services, took extracts from *Gaelic America* and Indian newspapers and published them.³⁴ Tarak Nath Das was the first important political activist on the West Coast. Before leaving India, he had been associated with *Anusilian Samiti* and *Jugantar* party. In 1908 Tarak Nath Das started publishing *Free Hindustan*.³⁵ His articles such as "A Strong Protest Against British Justice", "Our National Life at Stake", "Farmers in Hindustan and the only Remedy", "Lesson From the German Revolution of 1849" led to inquiry against him by the Canadian Government.³⁶ Issues of *Free Hindustan* appealed directly to the pride of the *Khalsa*. In the issue of September 1908, Das wrote "The *ferengi* are going to interfere in our business if we remain quiet. The time is not far when they are going to come and settle our social and family questions such as marriage and protection of women. The man who supports British rule to make *Khalsa* slaves of foreign rulers is traitor to all *Khalsa* and to our sacred religion. Every true *Khalsa* must do his best to free the nation from

such slavery”³⁷ The *Times* reported activities of Das as ‘nefarious’. The paper was deemed highly ‘outrageous’ with its main aim to preach hatred against the British especially among Sikh military personnel.³⁸

Another pioneer to work among the Sikh workers was Gurun Dutt Kumar. He started a *Swadesh Sewak Home* in November 1909. It was a kind of hostel for everyone. He used the building as night school for teaching English and Mathematics. It soon became a meeting place for Indian activists. In 1910, he started the publication of monthly *Swadesh Sewak*. Most of the articles were reproduced from *Bande Matram*, *Liberator* and *Indian Sociologist*. The Government saw the paper as the foundation of later troubles as it aired the grievances of the Sikhs arising out of restrictions imposed by the immigration authorities. Harnam Singh helped in the publication of the *Gurumukhi* paper.³⁹ Many Ghadrites have recorded in their memoirs that they were the regular readers of the paper.⁴⁰ As it was written in *Gurmukhi*, it had direct influence on the Sikhs. Its circulation rose as high as 500. In 1911, its importation to India was banned under the Sea Customs Act.⁴¹ Later Harnam Singh along with Tarak Nath Das set up India House on the lines of India House of London. Probably they wanted to use it as future centre for their political work. But the centre did not survive for long because of the paucity of funds. Tarak Nath Das, G.D. Kumar, Harnam Singh Kahri Sahri moved between Washington, Oregon and British Columbia and interacted with the workers. In 1910, G. D. Kumar and Harnam Singh set United India House at Seattle. They worked among the workers and asked them to rise above caste and leave the habit of drinking, gambling and smoking. Harnam Singh Tundilat left drinking under the influence of G. D. Kumar.⁴²

Almost all the papers took up the difficulties being faced by the immigrants. Dr. Sunder Singh wrote in *Aryan* against restrictive laws and disillusionment of Indians with the British.⁴³ He started another paper *Sansar* in English and *Gurmukhi*. Early issues of *Sansar* used handwritten *Gurmukhi*. In 1912, the editor was able to procure *Gurmukhi* printing fonts. However, *Aryan* and *Sansar* did not attain much popularity as Dr. Sunder Singh confined only to moral, social and religious education of Sikhs and criticized the activities of the radical members. The main focus of his activities was to protect the interest of the community.⁴⁴ James Campbell Ker agrees that though the papers like *Pardesi Khalsa*, *Aryan* and *Sansar* did not attain much popularity yet they had done good deal of harm by drawing the attention of the Sikhs in India and USA to the Canadian effusions on immigration issue.⁴⁵ These newspapers in general appealed to the self-respect of the Sikh army personnel. They touched their consciousness by shaking their dignity that despite having served the Empire, they were being treated unjustly. Written in *Urdu*, *Gurmukhi*,

Hindi and even English they addressed every type of audience. Though only a few immigrants were literate, yet all had access to these papers through public reading in the *Gurudwaras*. By publishing in *Gurmukhi*, the activists had reached the Sikhs and appealed to their sense of Indian and Punjabi identity.⁴⁶

V

By 1912, the firebrand Sikhs had taken over the Khalsa Diwan Society and Gurudwaras. Prof Teja Singh, who was not ready to go beyond prayers and petitions was losing audience. Moreover, the Sikhs who had promised to take care of his expenses, were no longer interested in carrying the conditions of the guarantee. Teja Singh even threatened to report the matter to Chief Khalsa Diwan, but left Vancouver.⁴⁷ In 1912 Bhai Bhag Singh also left Vancouver and his role was taken over by Bhai Bhagwan Singh, who took over the fight for the family reunion.

From 1912 onwards, there was lot of activity in Washington and Oregon as well. Workers had started forming associations and meetings on Sundays. The Ghadar party was on its way to be formed. They were going ahead of Khalsa Diwan Society and United India League, were thinking more in terms of freeing the country from the British than concentrating only on issues related to immigration. Meanwhile United India League and Khalsa Diwan Society decided to send three delegates to visit England and India to represent both to Government and the public to highlight the difficulties faced by the immigrants. The delegation reached Lahore after meeting some officials in London. At Lahore the delegation met Joint Secretary of Singh Sabha, editor of *Loyal Gazette* and *Tribune* and editor of *Desh*. In the meetings of the Singh Sabha at Lahore, they discussed the methods to be employed. At one point they also thought of visiting the cantonments. Some of the ideas stirred the masses, but according to F.C. Isomonger & J Slattery, they were not welcomed by the Hindu leaders of the province. The deputation held public meetings in Lahore, took a tour of the province and even visited Karachi probably with the intention of attending Congress session.⁴⁸ The delegation also met Viceroy, who gave them patient hearing, but showed his inability to help them. Michael O'Dwyer, however not only rebuffed them but also warned them against inflammatory speeches.⁴⁹ The deputation failed to get any concession. The British government in India believed that the members were dangerous men and were here to create mischief and were advance agents of the Ghadar Party.⁵⁰

As the delegation was on a tour in India, a firebrand granthi from Hong Kong entered British Columbia. He was already known for his free speeches recited through poetry. The Government in Hong Kong was so

upset with him that the Sikh military men were prohibited from attending the Hong Kong Gurudwara.⁵¹ Bhagwan Singh reorganized the United India League and Guru Nanak Mining Company. He started Saturday lectures in the basement of the Gurudwara. His lectures had positive effect on the workers. They stopped going to the city for drinking and spending nights at hotels.⁵² He was arrested two months after his arrival, but was released on a bond of two thousand dollars. A special order was secured from Governor-General of Canada for his deportation. A few months later, he was dragged out in the middle of the night and deported.⁵³ During his three month stay in Vancouver, he had charged the small community through series of lectures against the British government in India. He was a great orator who delivered revolutionary speeches in open religious congregations. He quoted from Sikh scriptures and history and recited the war poetry of the tenth Guru in Sunday congregation. Combining it with his own poetic skills he asked the people to adopt revolutionary nationalist salutation *Bande Matram*. The Special Tribunal in Lahore Conspiracy Case First Judgment observed “Vancouver became the first centre of seditious propaganda among Indians until it was eclipsed by that of California with the launching of the Ghadar Movement”.⁵⁴

The Ghadar Movement cannot be fully comprehended without appreciating the pioneering work of the Khalsa Diwan Society and the Gurudwara Vancouver. Both these institutions, therefore have a special place in the history of the Ghadar Movement. The Khalsa Diwan Society and the Gurudwara Vancouver not only served as the centers of religious and cultural exchange but were the first centers of political activity as well. It gave the immigrants a sense of identity and confidence in foreign lands, which soon turned into anti-British sentiments.

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THE BRITISH RECRUITMENT POLICY IN THE PUNJAB AND ITS ECONOMIC IMPACT (1849-1901)

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The people of Punjab are known for their martial qualities. The concept of martial races was introduced after the uprising of 1857. Soon after Punjab became the main hub of recruitment for the Indian Army. The term 'martial race' was coined by the British rule to classify Indian population on the basis of 'martial and non-martial' traits. This was to facilitate the recruitment of martial races to the British army. According to this concept, all natives were not equal in soldiery qualities; some races were superior to others. The British wanted to make it sure that the army remained loyal to them. Martial race theory is an ideology based on the assumption that certain ethnic groups are inherently more martially inclined than others. A 'martial race' was typically considered brave and well-built for fighting whereas the 'non-martial races' were those whom the British believed to be unfit for battle because of their sedentary lifestyle.¹ The government initiatives were aimed to protect the interests of recruited groups and enhance their local standing. This led them to pursue a relatively benevolent policy when dealing with militarized men or with militarized region.

The process of militarization of the people of Punjab came to notice during the *misl* period and later during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The province of the Punjab was consolidated by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the military genius of the great Maharaja lies in his firm grasp of the challenge of his times and in the undoubted success of practical measures undertaken to meet it.² "The regular army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was about 75,000 out of which 60,000 comprised the infantry and the remaining belonged to cavalry and artillery. He was the architect of his colossal military machine built up with consummate skill; part of it was modeled on European pattern but mostly its traditional Sikh character was retained. It was composed of mixed social elements and commanded by the Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and European officers. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the master of this efficient machine and he was his own commander-in-chief."³ It is a well-known fact that Maharaja Ranjit Singh employed a few European officers to train his army on western lines. Notable among them

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were General Ventura, who held charge of training the infantry; General Allard disciplined the cavalry; Colonel Court held charge of the artillery. The first step of British policy after annexation was cutting down the strength of the Khalsa Army because majority of the Sikh soldiers had participated in the anti-British struggle during Anglo Sikh wars. They were deprived of all claims for pensions and privileges. The British punished them by throwing them out of employment and making forfeit former claims.⁴ “The forts, except those required for military purpose were dismantled and ones that were retained, were repaired or rebuilt. A general muster of the Sikh soldiery and the military retainers of the late Darbar was held at Lahore, when all were paid up and disbanded. The most promising of them were subsequently taken into British service, while the infirm and superannuated obtained pensions and gratuities.”⁵ That part of the army which had refrained from joining anti-British actions was summoned to Lahore for being mustered. Under the guidance of Lieutenant Becher, the able-bodied officers and men were selected for new formations while the superannuated were pensioned off.⁶ The people living at North West Frontier were tribal. It was difficult for the British to control them. By realising the actual position of the North West Frontier, the British Government in the Punjab started recruiting Punjabi youth and deployed them on the frontier. This on one hand created a handy armed force that was later re-organized into regular army and on the other gave them less expensive army to control the frontier. Indirectly it helped their economic policy in the Punjab as these recruits helped their families with their salaries who could now have better living standard.

The British wanted some form of control along a lengthy and extremely difficult mountainous border across which lived fiercely independent tribes accustomed to fighting amongst themselves and striking against the inhabitants of the low land areas.⁷ The insistent military threat posed by an estimated 1,00,000 heavily armed Pathan fighting men to the security of the Punjab meant that the protective measures were immediately needed by the British. On 18 May 1849, Henry Lawrence was empowered by the Governor-General Lord Dalhousie to raise a force for the protection of the North West Frontier and to ensure internal security while the strength and deployment of the permanent military garrison of the Punjab was determined. “A special force, the Punjab Frontier Force, under the direct orders of the Board, was raised for the service, normally on the frontier. It consisted at first, of five regiments of cavalry, the corps of guides, five regiments of infantry, three light field batteries, two garrison batteries, two companies of sappers and miners and the Sind camel corps.”⁸ The British Government wanted to encourage trade in the Punjab. The incidents of robberies were common at North West Frontier. So to restore confidence

among traders, the maintenance of peace was must.

The first local Sikh Infantry Regiment was recruited by Major (later on Brigadier) John Hodgson, who after 1849 became a leading figure in establishing the Punjab Irregular Force. Initially, it was to consist of Sikhs only, but for the sake of diversity, other recruits were also admitted with Sikhs in the dominant position. The 2nd Regiment of the Local Sikh Infantry was mainly recruited from the hillmen of the Jalandhar Doab. The 3rd Local Sikh Regiment had a considerable portion of Hindustani soldiers in its ranks while its 4th Regiment had no peculiarities of composition.⁹ The people of the Punjab living in aforesaid areas depended heavily on agriculture thus causing a great burden on land as a source of income. They found an outlet of economic opportunities by offering themselves for recruitment in the British Army.

Ten regiments – five infantry (1-5 infantry) and five cavalry (1 to 5 cavalry) were raised at stations throughout the Punjab during the summer and autumn of 1849, collectively designated as the Punjab Irregular Force (PIF), intended for general service in Punjab and the trans-Indus districts. They were placed under the command of Brigadier John Hodgson. “PIF was placed under the direct control of the Board of Administration of the Punjab. Lord Dalhousie thought that excluding the PIF from military control would deliberately secure for the local government the full and complete control of military means sufficient to effect any object which political consideration may, in their judgment, render it expedient to secure on the distant frontier.”¹⁰ This decision to localize the PIF solely for duty in the Punjab gave the Board of Administration almost complete control of the troops stationed along the border enabling it to quickly respond to raids or other developments without constant recourse to the Central Government for military support. It was sensible for the British Government to recruit natives (the Punjabis) for PIF as it saved large expenditure that could have occurred due to deployment of British troops.

The organization of infantry and cavalry units reflected their different role in the defence of the border.¹¹ A total of fifteen expeditions were carried out between 1849 and 1855 against the Kohat Pass *Afridis*, *Mohmands*, *Miranzai tribes*, *Utmanzai Waziris*, *Hassanzais*, *Ranizais*, *Utman Khel*, *Bori Afridis*, *Shiranis*, *Kasranis*, *Michni Mohmands*, *Aka Khels*, and *Orakzais* as punishment for offences committed in British territory and to demonstrate the ability of imperial troops to penetrate their hills at will.¹² However, the regiments and batteries of the Punjab Irregular Frontier (PIF) quickly adapted to local conditions and devised specialized tactics to conduct an attack in the hills, protect columns on the march and when halted at night and to govern the conduct of withdrawal in conduct with hostile tribesmen that were dominated by the principles of offensive

action and the maintenance of security.¹³ The PIF proved an effective means of control over the unruly trans-border tribes and it continued to do so until it was finally amalgamated with the Bengal Army in 1886. The PIF provided jobs to unemployed Punjabi youth on the one hand and helped the British to develop the resources of the province on the other by protecting the caravans of traders at the North West Frontier border.

The second arm of the colonial executive was named 'Military Police' and was to consist of 2700 Sowars (horsemen) and 4800 soldiers on foot. Its main task was to deal with internal disturbances. Concessions were made in case of Military Police which was to serve the Provincial Government as an instrument of speedy actions against any attempt to challenge British supremacy. The Board of Administration recommended a relatively high pay which was to be equal to that of the regular army. The Military Police consisted of 4 Darbar Regiments which had supported the British in 1848 and were promised further employment after annexation. They were therefore transferred to the Military Police, but on better conditions of service such as higher pay and the rights of wearing their old uniforms if desired. After annexation two regiments were formed in addition, dominated by Punjabi Muslims and the scheduled 6 battalions of Military Police (foot) were thus complete. However, in 1853 the 7th battalion was organized and recruited mostly in the Amritsar district.¹⁴ The British knew the warlike characteristics of the Sikhs of the Punjab. They had never doubted the bravery of the Sikhs.

The Governor General Lord Dalhousie, in his letter dated 4 July 1850, placed before the Court of Directors and wrote:

My own opinion has always been very strongly in favour of such a measure. The high soldiery qualities of the Sikh class are too well known to require any illustration here. They have already been enlisted in our service as troops of the line, as local corps by Lord Harding in 1846, as troopers of Irregular Cavalry in the Bengal Army, and as sepoys in the local regiments in the Punjab. In every instance these men have behaved as good soldiers, worthy of trust, and are highly regarded by the officers under whose command they serve.¹⁵

The British knew that the Sikhs were a disciplined community when it comes to their soldiery qualities. They knew they would have to spend less on their training and salaries should be much less as compared to the British soldiers. So without compromising on the quality of soldiers they recruited Punjabi Jats into army and police and gained in the long run. To accelerate the recruitment of the Sikhs in the British Army, the Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepur was empowered to enlist and attest any soldier

or person desirous of enlisting or re-enlisting into the service of Indian Military by a government notification dated 22 October 1852.¹⁶

The uprising of 1857 completely changed the recruitment scenario. The poorbeas had 'betrayed' the British during the uprising of 1857. As far as the Sikh recruitment was concerned it worried the British the most. It was dangerous to recruit them from military angle. They thought in the given situation the Sikh loyalty could never be taken for granted but the urgency of the time made it expedient to do so. A middle path was followed and that too, to a limited extent. It was felt that it was less dangerous to recruit the young Sikhs. The Government of India kept pressing the Chief Commissioner right from the beginning to raise bodies of the old Khalsa soldiers but Lord Lawrence did not authorize this believing that 'the measure would be a dangerous one, in the Cis-Sutlej states especially where they formed the most turbulent portion of the Sikh Army and were never well disposed towards the British'. On the other hand, the *majha* which was the main recruiting ground showed their unwillingness to enlist.¹⁷

John Lawrence wrote to the Governor-General Lord Canning and urged the expediency of raising a large body of Sikh Irregulars. Between May and December 1857, a new force of 34,000 Punjabis was raised which included 18 new Regiments of Infantry, a body of 300 veteran Sikh artillery men re-enlisted after being disbanded in 1849 and a corps of about 1200 low-caste Sikhs. Irregular levies numbering 7,000 on horses and 9,000 on foot were raised.¹⁸ This was almost-equivalent to Hindustanis disarmed. The total number of soldiers reached 60,000 of whom nearly half were Muslims, a third Sikh and equal number of Hindus and low-caste Sikhs (*mazbis*).¹⁹

The loyalty of the people of the Punjab towards British Government resulted in a preference for the Punjabis in the army. The Hindustanis of the erstwhile Bengal Army came to be considered untrustworthy by the British.²⁰ "Uprising of 1857 necessitated the raising of a large body of troops from Punjab which a few years ago had been undergoing a process of gradual demilitarization."²¹ The British preferred yeoman peasants who were supposed to be sturdy, independent, upright, honest and reliable. In the Punjab it was easy to identify the right material for the soldiery from among various sections of agriculturists. Preference for Sikh youth to be recruited in the army provided lucrative incentive for the youth to grab alternatives for employment.

Following the uprising of 1857, the administration of the Punjab came under the Crown as anywhere else in India. In February 1858, a major administrative change was made when Delhi was transferred from North-Western Provinces and placed under the Punjab Administration. In November 1858, Queen Victoria assumed the direct control over the Government of

India.²² Army recruitment from the Punjab increased largely from rural areas under the Crown. An understanding of the relationship between the colonial state and the new army is crucial not only in understanding the nature of imperial rule but also the economic aspect of the army recruitment. There was certain and fixed salary in the British army. Almost every Jat village used to send recruits in the British Army. The proportion of Sikhs increased in Bengal and the Sikhs used to send money to their families in the Punjab that helped raise their living standard and which was utilized for paying the land revenue that was in cash.

In 1859, the Punjab together with the Delhi territory was placed under a separate Lieutenant Governor. Sir John Lawrence was the first to hold the office. He was succeeded by Sir Robert Montgomery.²³ A local European Army was proposed by Lord Canning, the Governor-General as it would be fully at the disposal of the Government of India and more economical; and that officers and men would identify themselves with the country and its inhabitants, providing a source from which officers could be drawn for various civil employments. On the other hand, it was urged with equal strength that the British Army should be truly imperial serving different masters; that the spirit and traditions of the British army could be preserved only by the return of regiment to England; and finally that a local army was worse disciplined and more liable to disaffection than one which was relieved by units.²⁴ The revolt of 1857 put heavy burden on the economy of Government of India and the annual expenditure for the army, military police, new levies, police and public works went up from Rs. 13.2 Crores in 1856-1857 to Rs. 17.2 Crores in 1857-1858 and Rs. 24.7 Crores in 1858-59, and in the same period the debts of the Government of India increased by 36 percent.²⁵

Table I: Annual Army Expenditure 1856-57 to 1858-59

S. No.	Year	Annual Expenditure for Army (in crores)
1.	1856-57	13.2
2.	1857-58	17.2
3.	1858-59	24.7

Source : Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, *Financial Foundations of the British Raj, Ideas and Interests in the Reconstruction of Indian Public Finance 1858-1872*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2005, p. 86.

After the revolt, the Budget system was introduced in India to ensure a complete review of income and expenditure of the coming financial year and a full scrutiny of the past year. The Financial Department was

recognized and the Government of India Act 1858 concentrated the power of financial control and scrutiny in the hands of the Secretary of State in Council.²⁶ The military expenditure remained static in the neighborhood of sixteen crore during the period 1864-65 to 1870-71. Military charges showed a slight tendency to rise during the viceroyalty of John Lawrence, but he found it difficult to control the expenditure in the army.²⁷

The net military expenditure was never below 46 percent during the period of this study (1849-1901).²⁸ The following table shows figures of net military expenditure and net total expenditure from 1884-85 to 1899-1900.

Table II: Military Expenditure and Total Expenditure 1884-85 to 1899-1900

<i>Year</i>	<i>Net Military Expenditure (£)</i>	<i>Net Total Expenditure (£)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1884-85	12,207,681	23,407,591	52.2
1889-90	14,486,643	27,824,517	52.1
1894-95	15,263,147	32,949,446	46.3
1899-1900	15,485,147	30,715,625	50.4

Source: Rajit K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, p. 18.

The uprising of 1857 forced the British administration to shift the base of military recruitment to more loyal and effective races for the consolidation of their rule. Therefore, a new ideology of ‘martial’ and ‘non-martial races’ was formulated by Lord Roberts (the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army during 1885-1893).²⁹ The theory of martial races was a colonial construct that was produced and propagated by the British who recruited a large number of soldiers of the communities referred as martial races for services in British army.³⁰ The following table shows that the number of the Punjabi recruits in the Indian Infantry increased steadily throughout the period of this study (1849-1901).³¹

Table III: Indian Infantry Units

<i>Year</i>	<i>Gurkhas</i>	<i>North-Central</i>	<i>North-West (Punjab and NWF)</i>	<i>Bombay</i>	<i>Madras</i>
1862	5	26	28	20	40
1885	13	20	31	26	32
1892	15	15	34	26	25

Source: Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State: The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab, 1849-1947*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2005, p. 71.

The regularly increasing number of the Punjabi recruits boosted the economy of the province. The people became disciplined and they started investing surplus money in the agricultural land and other assets that would generate income for them. The economic stability of the people who started paying land revenue in time also turned the Punjab into disciplined and profitable possession for the British.³² The following table shows the regular increase in the number of people of the Punjab in the Indian Army:

Table IV: Recruitment of People of the Punjab in the Indian Army

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Native Army</i>	<i>Total from Punjab</i>	<i>Percentage from Punjab</i>
1880	1,37,299	25,810	18.8
1890	1,47,852	30,548	20.7
1900	1,44,095	50,952	35.3

Source: Rajit K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, p. 18.

Apart from a fixed salary, the soldiers used to receive clothing allowance, rations (Wheat flour, Dal, Ghee, Sugar and Fuel) and messing allowance at a flat rate, except proficiency pay which was determined in each individual case by the Commanding Officer.³³ The surplus money if not wasted in litigation, social ceremonies and drinks was invested in land, buildings, cattle, well sinking, agricultural implements and jewellery etc.

The British Army became the largest source of employment in the Punjab at that time. The army helped the British to conquer, subjugate and control the empire, it simultaneously provided a regular and significant source of income to its soldiers. The impact of colonialism through the benefits of military service on those recruited seems to be less exploitative than on the rest of Indian society.³⁴ Many Punjabis went overseas to serve in the military and police. Most of these men were drawn to such employment by pay scales substantially in advance of those available in the Indian Army. These men clearly benefited from India's central position in the imperial system and from the construction of Muslim and Sikh Punjabis as favoured martial races. The Indians stayed at Singapore and Malaya after their retirement. The service in the Indian Army benefited families back in India, as pay of the soldiers was invested in land and jewels and many retired soldiers took up their residence in canal colonies because they received land grants in the canal colonies and one source of the Punjab's enduring prosperity throughout the late nineteenth century is surely to be found in its situation as a vast recruiting ground for the Indian Army.³⁵

The change in the lifestyle was evident. The things which usually marked an ex-military man from others in the village were neater dress,

a better type of house, the use of chairs, crockery and a wristwatch.³⁶ It would not be wrong to say that the British Government adopted paternalistic and benevolent attitude towards the people of Punjab because of their increasing number in the British Indian Army. The life of army was thoroughly regulated in terms of uniforms and dress codes. Those going directly into regiments with the casual approach of a villager would have been affected by the army's strict rules and regulations. Indian soldiers were required to wear pantaloons, shirts and combination suits. The other influence of military dress was in terms of the material used for clothes. The young recruits, used to rough village *khaddar*, were now exposed to fine cotton and silk manufactured in mills.³⁷ The Sind Sagar Doab demonstrated the role of army in improving life, i.e. the general impact of pay and pensions, the expenditure on food, clothing and housing.³⁸ The army recruitment put an impact on the habits and daily routine life of the Indian soldiers.

The large number of recruitments in the British army put an impact on the people of the Punjab. The change was clearly seen in the Tarn Tarn area of central *majha*. The military incomes enabled the Tarn Taran's recruited peasantry to generate a surplus that permitted them a higher standard of living.³⁹ The only reason for the higher price of land in central *majha* was the greater presence of military men whose desire for the land pushed prices up and their additional incomes enabled them to purchase it at inflated rates. The selling price of land was highest in central *majha*. The aggregate price over the period was Rs. 20 per acre higher than in upper *majha* and nearly Rs. 70 per acre dearer than in Bet Bangar. The lack of canals in Bet Bangar may have had an effect on its lower prices, but canals were equally distributed in the two *majha* circles which could not be differentiated in terms of agricultural conditions. The sales to money lenders by the Jats of central *majha* accounted for only 22.13 percent of total cultivated areas sold, while it was 36.26 percent in upper *Majha* and 42.13 percent in Bet Bangar. Retired native officers were eager to invest their savings in land and in the central *majha*, the tract which furnished most recruits to the army, the proportion of alienation to village traders was little over one fourth.⁴⁰ Though land alienations and debt was there in central *majha*, yet the impact of the military incomes cannot be denied which made it a prosperous part of the province.

The Tarn Taran tahsil was the favourite recruiting ground. The most of the recruits came from the lower part of the central *majha*, especially from among the Sandhus. One third of the pay by money orders was sent home by sepoy and men serving in the Burma Military Police. There is no doubt that service under government afforded a valuable outlet in a tract with small holdings and an increasing population.⁴¹ The pensions earned by retired sepoy also added largely to the total income.

The recruited peasantry of the Punjab benefited directly from the army recruitment policy of the British because the pay and pensions bolstered economic capability. The close interaction with the British raised social standing and the policies of the government strengthened the political and economic position of the people of the Punjab. The greatest help by the peasantry was in supplying men. They fought bravely and many were rewarded with military decorations.

The Government of India invested in the Punjab for the building of strategic railways, roads and cantonment towns during the period under review (1849-1901). The construction of railways, and cantonment towns had an impact on the economy of the Punjab. The province of Punjab provided manpower to the British Empire in India and the British used to call it the 'sword arm and shield of India'. The British Army recruitment policy in the Punjab during the period (1849-1901) put a favorable impact on the economy of the province. The prosperity of the province, increased with the increased proportion of the Punjabis in the Indian Army. The living standard of the people raised and they were exposed to a more disciplined and educated set-up. Many people who served in the Indian Army, settled abroad gave stimulus to the economy of the province.

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INFLATION, FOOD CRISIS AND THE GREAT WAR: THE PUNJAB EXPERIENCE (1914-18)

*Raj Kumar**

The First World War also called the Great War, started on August 4, 1914 after the Britain declared war on Germany. Many countries of the world got involved into this destructive conflict willingly or unwillingly. Though the Great War was widely considered to have been primarily a European conflict, yet it had enormous impact across the world. It was characterized by extreme violence, social disruption and economic destruction. Immediately after the outbreak of the War, the British colonies like India, Canada and Australia were called upon to contribute with men, money and material to fill the war demands.¹ There was a greater demand on India's manpower for War purposes, more than any other British colony, including the self-governing dominions. India as a part of the British Empire contributed equal number of men put together by all other colonies. On August 1, 1914, the Indian army contained 1,55,423 combatants, including about 15,000 British officers and 45,660 non-combatants. After intense and repeated recruitment drives, 6,83,149 combatants and 4,14,493 non-combatants were recruited in India till the end of the War. of them 4,46,976 (349,688 combatants and 97,288 non-combatants) were mobilised from the Punjab.² Over the same period, altogether 9,43,344 men of Indian army were despatched for different war fronts and they suffered the following fatalities in the War: 36,686 killed, 60,289 wounded, 1,519 missing and 9,090 prisoners.³

India's contribution to the War efforts was not limited to the supply of man power, it was also taken in equal manner both in terms of monetary assistance and in the form of materials. India made direct cash contribution of £129 million in military expenditure and sent overseas materials amounting to at least £250 million. These materials included every item from leather and hides clothing for the army personnel, railway track and rolling stock, ammunition and military equipment.⁴ At the beginning of 1917, the Government of India also offered the Imperial Government a lump sum of £100 million as War Loans. The amount was large enough to add 30 per cent to India's national debt and was more than country's annual income for an entire year.⁵ Huge expenditure on military in form of cash and war loans effected Indian economy and its resources. As a result, the

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public debt of British India increased. Between 31 March 1914 and 31 March 1919, the rupee and sterling debts of the Government in India rose from Rs.4,453.8 million to Rs.6,625.7 million and from Rs.2,656.0 million to Rs.3,037.9 million respectively, thus saddling India with a larger interest burden in the post war period.⁶ War expenditure, insatiable demand for grains and raw materials for War purposes led to increase in prices of all necessary commodities. The present paper attempts to delineate the inflation or rise in prices of essential commodities used by poor and shortage of food during the War in India in general and the Punjab in particular.

I

Inflation is defined as sustained increase in the general level of prices for goods and services. It is measured against a standard level of purchasing power. Continued inflation affects people in diverse ways. Those who live on fixed income or those whose income increase very slowly suffer most from inflation because they are able to buy less and less. Those who invest money, when prices are low get enormous profits when prices rise.⁷

The prices started rising in India in general and the Punjab in particular after 1880s. From 1861 to 1882, the price level on the whole with little variation remained the same. From mid-1880s, the food prices started showing a marked upward tendency. In 1861, according to Brij Narain, the average price of wheat was 38 *seers*; gram 48 *seers*; barley 58 *seers*; and *jowar* 38 *seers* per rupee. But after 1882, the prices rose to 26 *seers*, 36 *seers*, 33 *seers* and 28 *seers* per rupee respectively.⁸ As food grains started being exported, their prices began to fluctuate with price fluctuation in India as well as other countries.⁹ Prices of food grains stood more than fifty per cent in 1869. In 1897, prices rose more than 100 per cent for the first time. They again touched that level in 1908.¹⁰ The Government appointed a Committee to investigate the rise of prices under the chairmanship of K. L. Datta. The Committee presented its Report in 1914.¹¹ K. L. Datta in his Report gave shortage of supply as the principal cause of the price rise in India. The shortage of supply did not mean that the production had contracted, but production has not kept pace with the growth of internal consumption and external demand. The introduction of cheap and easy means of communications brought Indian markets in close touch with those of the outside world. As a result, the country was no longer an isolated unit from the commercial point of view.¹²

During the War, however, the prices rose as a result of many causes, the operations of which was not confined to one country. On account of the withdrawal of large amount of capital and labour from productive to unproductive, the supply of goods had decreased. Hundreds of thousands of men were killed or maimed on the War Fronts, who at the time of peace

were engaged in the production of useful commodities. The War destroyed an enormous amount of capital.¹³ The rise of freights, bad harvest and difficulty of transport added to the already rising prices.¹⁴ Depreciation of Indian currency also contributed to it. It created further problem of inflation. The prices remained high during the war not only because of low agricultural production, but also because of shortage of currency.¹⁵

The War caused general dislocation of trade and business of which principle factors were the weakening of exchange, withdrawals of Saving Bank Deposits and a demand for the encashment of notes. This was due to the belief that the Government might be defeated and people might lose their deposits and their notes might become mere scraps of paper.¹⁶ Owing to the increasing economic activities, more currency had to be coined. It created additional demand for silver which pushed up the silver price.¹⁷ Shopkeepers did not exchange rupee note for silver coin to a poor person except for a commission of two to four *pice* per rupee. To make matters worse, the Government treasuries and post offices totally refused to give coin in exchange for one rupee note. Postman did not get cash from post offices for paying money orders. It caused considerable inconvenience to the public.¹⁸ Since India formed the base of the military operations in Mesopotamia, Persia and East Africa, the Government of India had to pay the British and Indian soldiers to meet the civil expenditure of the occupied territories. It amounted to £240,000,000 from 1914 to 1919. This exceptional disbursement created a heavy additional demand for Indian currency.¹⁹ The Government had adopted a number of measures to cope with the changes in the currency and exchange situation. Export of silver was prohibited and the circulation of paper notes expanded. The Government issued small currency notes of the denomination of Rs.1 and Rs.2½ and a large number of nickel coins of two *annas*, four *annas* and eight *annas* to reduce the use of silver in coinage. The total currency in circulation had thus doubled in the course of the War. To meet the difficulties of obtaining sufficient quantities of silver and gold for coinage, the Government increased the fiduciary portion of the note-issue from Rs. 14 crores to Rs.120 crores. The gross circulation of currency notes rose from Rs.66.12 lakhs in 1914 to Rs.179.67 lakhs in November 1919.²⁰

II

To meet the growing demand of the Allies, the British Government exported wheat in large quantity from India in general and Punjab in particular. As a result, within six months of the outbreak of the War, prices of essential commodities started moving upward. Tons of wheat was sent to the troops at various War Fronts. The total export of wheat from India in twelve months (April 1914 to March 1915) amounted to 7,06,000 tons of which

3,72,000 tons were shipped before the end of July and additional 2,48,000 tons before November 30, 1914.²¹ The Government exported wheat not only to England, but to other countries of Europe as well. It was said that the Government contracted with Indian flour mills for the supply and export of flour to England.²² As the stock of wheat started depleting, there were reports of unrest in the province of the Punjab and the Government was asked to take measures to restrict the movement of grains.²³ Some other important items which were shipped from India up to the end of March 1915 included 2,19,889 tons of rice, 3,22,587 tons *atta*, 35,602 tons sugar and 6,502 tons tea. In addition to this, about 3,513 herd of dairy cattle and 2,139 bullocks were also sent overseas.²⁴

The precarious situation had even frightened Michael O' Dwyer, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab. He urged the Central Government to give attention to the wheat question, if it wanted to avoid unrest in the province. He also showed his inability in 1914 to the Central Government in procuring more wheat from the Punjab for export.²⁵ Fearing widespread discontent, the Government restricted private exports of wheat till 31 March 1915 by a notification dated 28 December 1914. On 28 February 1915, the Government issued another notification prohibiting all export of wheat and wheat flour on private account up to 31 December 1915.²⁶ It gave some relief to the people. Therefore, in April 1915, prices showed a slight downward tendency. The price of wheat lowered to some extent. In Ambala and Amritsar, it was below 10 *seers* a rupee. The fall was accompanied by a decline in the price of gram.²⁷ But, in August 1915, the price of wheat again rose to 8¼ *seers* per rupees. In October 1914, it was 12 *seers* per rupee.²⁸ The *Paisa Akhbar* (Lahore) wrote that grain merchants were enhancing prices of food grains day by day. They were freely storing grains in their godowns to make large profits. The European firms were purchasing standing crop of wheat at rate of Rs.1-6-0 or Rs.1-8-0 per *maund*.²⁹

The year of 1916 was bad for agricultural production. The failure of rain and continuance of severe drought throughout the province was frequently mentioned in the District Reports. The Commissioner of Jullundur Division wrote:

The agricultural situation at present is very bad. There has been practically no rain and no barani sowing have been made in Ferozepur and in the central and western parts of Ludhiana and Jullundur.³⁰

In 1917, however, witnessed heavy rain and it resulted in difficulty of transport.³¹ In 1917, wheat was sold at 7½ *seers*, gram 11¼ *seers* and salt 10½ *seers* per rupee in Lahore.³² The price of salt also rose because of the shortage of supply from the salt mines. Salt was sold at Rs.4 a

maund in November 1917, which was Rs.3 in October 1917. In the same month, the Government raised the tax on salt by 25 per cent, which caused further discontentment.³³ The press everyday reported about the precarious situation of the people. Sometimes, it exaggerated also, but it gives the pulse of the people. There was no way by which a poor man could escape from the pangs of hunger. Necessary articles of daily use were sold at fourfold rate in the market wrote a vernacular paper *Sitarah-i-Subah*.³⁴ Men of lower middle class on scanty pay were feeling severe pinch owing to high prices all over the province.³⁵ Voices were raised to alleviate the distress by opening municipal shops. The demand for increase of salaries of private servants was also raised.³⁶

In 1917, wheat production in India was 9.9 million tons and that of the rice was 35.9 million tons, but in 1918-19, it dropped to 7.5 million tons in case of wheat and 24.3 million tons in case of rice.³⁷ In early 1918, wheat was sold at 6 ½ *seers* per rupee in Lahore which was highest since the beginning of War. The price of gram was 8¼ *seers* per rupee and of salt 10 *seers* per rupee. In May 1918, wheat was 8 *seers*, gram was 10¼ and salt was 12¾ *seers* per rupee in Lahore.³⁸ The Government opened a few cheap grain and *atta* shops in Lahore and other parts of the province. But these shops failed to serve even one poor buyer wrote the *Tribune*.³⁹ The Deputy Commissioners of South-West Punjab reported that villages were facing difficulty in getting food.⁴⁰

There was a very short supply of crop of wheat in 1918. In Ambala Division, belated *kharif* crops got burnt up by dry hot winds. The only districts which reported some rainfall were Rawalpindi, Jhang and Mianwali. Therefore, the prices of food grains further speeded up. For British India, the wheat output was 8,401,000 tons in 1916-17, 8, 276,000 tons in 1917-18 but fell to 6,469,000 tons in 1918-19. However, wheat exports from India virtually doubled in 1917-18 compared with previous years: the exports were 13,057,573 cwts, in 1915-16, 14,978,272, cwts in 1916-17 and 29,087,492, cwt in 1917-18.⁴¹ According to W. H. Myles, in 1918, food prices broke all previous records by standing 163 per cent above the average.⁴²

The price of kerosene oil rose from Rs.2-8-0 to Rs.5 per *tin* from 1914 to 1917. The *Panth Sewak* reported that people were badly hit by the rising prices. But the Government took no preventive measure to put down the prices. If the rates of kerosene oil did not fall, several newspapers and printing presses would suffer.⁴³ In April 1918, the Amritsar Municipal Committee decided to stock ten thousand gallons of kerosene oil and sell it to the public at cheap rates.⁴⁴ The prices of manufactured goods also increased rapidly. The rate of a pair of *dhotie* was Rs.1-8-0 in 1913 which rose to Rs.1-10-0 in 1914, Rs.1-12-0 in 1915, Rs.1-13-0 in 1916 and to

Rs.4-0-0 in 1918. As compared to the price in 1913, the price of *dhoties* rose by 66 per cent. The price of match boxes doubled. The price of imported coal rose from Rs.24 per ton in January 1913 to Rs.36 in January 1916. Coal was not a manufactured article, but it was essential to production and the rise of its price affected the prices of all manufactured goods.⁴⁵

A general demand was raised that the Government should take steps to assist the people by controlling the prices of cloth and grain. Many local bodies raised the question of cheap grain shops to counteract the hoarding by *baniyas*. In the districts of Amritsar and Ferozepur, *satta* (gambling) had further contributed to the trouble. In Ferozepur, a leading official reported that *satta* was chiefly responsible for high prices of grain.⁴⁶ The situation became so precarious that the poor were forced to sell their household goods to meet their needs, wrote the *Vakil*.⁴⁷ In the Attock district, cattle were sold rapidly due to lack of fodder and also because they fetched higher price for hide and skin.⁴⁸ The prevailing epidemics especially influenza during closing years of the War further accentuated the misery of people. The unparalleled loss of human lives reduced the workforce in the rural area.⁴⁹ Very high mortality caused by the influenza epidemic was a result of the joint impact of the infiltration of the influenza virus and the exhaustion of stocks of food grains especially wheat.⁵⁰

Table 1
Prices of Food Grains in Seers per Rupee in the Punjab
(1914-1919)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Wheat (seers)</i>	<i>Barley (seers)</i>	<i>Jowar (seers)</i>	<i>Bajra (seers)</i>	<i>Gram (seers)</i>
1914	10.47	14.65	12.26	11.18	11.71
1915	8.80	13.77	10.66	10.22	11.70
1916	10.27	13.50	12.70	10.88	12.12
1917	9.54	13.80	12.60	13.04	11.66
1918	7.89	11.28	7.10	8.36	9.86
1919	6.50	8.96	6.56	5.60	7.02

Source : Brij Narain, *Eighty Years of Punjab Food Prices 1841-1920*, p.52.

III

The inflation or rise of prices of various commodities especially food grains had serious consequences for the Punjab. The *Dipak* (Lahore) wrote in September 1914 that the increase in the price of food stuffs was not because of the ordinary shopkeepers, but to the firms such as Rolli Bros. etc.⁵¹ Writing under the heading “Question of High Prices of Articles”, the

Jhang Sial wrote that the food stuffs had become exceedingly expensive. This caused great distress to the poor population of the province. But the authorities did not adopt any practical measure to control the prices.⁵² Poor were living in very painful conditions. Lakhs of people took meal only once a day and many thousand families were suffering from starvation.⁵³

In February 1915, thousands of employees of the North-West Railway workshop went on strike in Lahore and began to cry “hunger”. They complained about high prices of food stuffs and starvation. When the employees were asked whether they would be satisfied if their salaries were increased by one *anna* per day, they declined. They said that it would be insufficient to fill their stomachs. If wheat flour was not sold at the rate of 10 *seers* per rupee, they would die of starvation.⁵⁴

The problem of food grains was very acute in the province. Many went to bed with empty stomachs. High prices and scarcity of foodstuffs increased grain robberies and dacoities in the province.⁵⁵ Many dacoities or grain robberies were reported in the early months of 1915 in the province especially in South-West Punjab. On the night of February 28, 1915, two Hindu villages, Kashi Chaudhri Kundan Mal and Rampur (Tehsil Kabirwala) were attacked by the robbers. The Deputy Commissioner telegraphed to the Lieutenant Governor about the state of insecurity that prevailed in the villages of Jhang district.⁵⁶ On March 12, 1915, a dacoity was committed in Jhugiwala town, Muzaffargarh district. No Mohammedan resident of the town helped the Hindus when a large gang of dacoits attacked. The condition of other villages and towns of the district was the same.⁵⁷ Another dacoity took place in Mianwali district. Nearly a dozen armed dacoits carrying rifles and swords entered into a *sahukar's* house in the village of Ahluwali in Mianwali and carried away the entire savings of the *sahukar*. The people of the village were panic stricken and no one dared to stir out of his house.⁵⁸ The affluent sections of Hindus often became victims of these robberies. Reports of these dacoities came frequently from all parts of the province especially from the Western Punjab.⁵⁹

According to Brij Narain, the rise of prices does not affect all classes in the same way. The rise of prices were generally regarded as a cause of agricultural prosperity. The income of large agricultural population cannot increase other than by an increase in the price of produce.⁶⁰ The classes which benefited most are cultivators and producers of commodities. Those classes whose income is fixed, but whose expenditure is variable are hit by the rise of prices.⁶¹ The rise in the price of agricultural produce benefit agriculturists in the sense that they have to sell a smaller proportion of their produce in order to pay the land revenue when prices are high than when they are low. The big farmers get profit because they have enough land. They produce not only for their own consumption, but also

for the market.⁶² He gives examples of farmers who were happy when prices were high. Kasha Ram, a Brahman, and a big farmer from Hoshiarpur, said '*sastew ich kahda faida*' (What gain is there in low prices). The big farmer had no need to buy foodstuffs, or milk or *ghee* or fodder for cattle, but spent a certain amount of money every year on clothes, shoes and other miscellaneous articles. When prices of all commodities rise, his expenditure increased.⁶³

The majority of the peasants of the Punjab did not have enough cultivable land. Their holdings were very small and what they produced barely sufficed for their own consumption. Brij Narain interviewed many small cultivators to know how rise of prices hit them. One farmer named *Hassu*, village *Rania* in *Moga Tehsil* said, "*main bechan tan mehngiyai da savad ae; dane khane joge nahin honde; sano mehngiyai da ki ae*". The rise of prices would mean something to me if I had anything to sell. What I produce is barely sufficient for my own consumption. The rise of prices means nothing to me. Another farmer said, "*chhote zamindaran da tava mundha hi rehnda hai*". Small Farmers find it difficult to make the two ends meet.⁶⁴ Other replied "*masan logan de dhidd pure honde hain; masan dang tapda hai; taklif buhtari hai tusi jande ho; vahi karke kakh nahin bachda; Har sal das bis charh jande hain; zindagi masan basar karde hain; har waqt inhan nun fikr hi lage rehnde hain*" It is with great difficulty that people manage to live. What we have barely suffices for a single meal. We suffer much as you know. Tilling the soil pays little. Our indebtedness increases every year. They (small farmers) are always full of worries.⁶⁵ Almost every small farmer was in debt. The high price of food contributed to increase in the indebtedness. *Rupee kal mein charhte hain* said one farmer. It did not mean that extravagance on the occasion of a marriage or a funeral was the only cause of his indebtedness. He borrowed to pay the *m'amlā* to the Government. A farmer, *Hassu*, whose debt amounted to 120 rupees said, "*m'amlā le ke daida hai; har bar m'amlā le ke daida hai*".⁶⁶ The rate of interest that a small farmer had to pay was exorbitant. A large farmer was able to borrow on easier terms because he could offer better security for the loan. The rate of interest varied according to the means of the borrower said a village official.⁶⁷

IV

The World War I resulted heavy fall in the real wages. The wages of both rural and urban workers either remained stationery or rose slightly. Rise in the cost of living caused widespread discontent among all classes of population, especially the lower middle class and persons of fixed income. Rise of prices can be understood only in relation to wages. The average

wage of iron and hardware worker was 14-16 *annas* in 1912, it was still 16 *annas* in 1917. Similarly, that of carpenter was 16-20 *annas* in 1912. He did not earn more than 18 *annas* even in 1917. Weaver who earned 6 *annas* in 1912, still earned 8 *annas* in 1917. Similarly an unskilled worker who earned 5-8 *annas* in 1912 did not earn more than 7-9 *annas* in 1917.⁶⁸ Wages did not rise according to rise in prices and therefore every increase in the cost of living worsened the condition of both urban and rural people. The rise in the price of food seriously diminished purchasing power of labour class. They had to spend an increasing proportion of his income on the necessities of existence and a decreasing proportion on other commodities. The average wage had remained almost same but the prices of food grains had nearly doubled from 1911 to 1919. Rise in price of poor man's food like *jawar* and *bajra* was more than double. For the agricultural labourer, the price of food was a matter of indifference, if he was paid in kind and his share of the produce was sufficient for his consumption throughout the year.⁶⁹ They lived from hand to mouth and in this case the rise of prices far from being a source of gain was a cause of indebtedness. His daily earning was very small. Therefore, it became difficult for him to survive. In 17 per cent villages, rate of wage paid to agricultural labourers was 4 *annas* or less. In 27 per cent villages, it varied between 4 and 6 *annas*. In 39 per cent villages, it varied between 6 and 8 *annas* and in 17 per cent villages, it was more than 8 *annas*.⁷⁰ In 1914-1915, several districts reported a shortage of labour, attributable in some instances to the heavy recruiting for the army and in the Lahore and Rawalpindi Divisions to the plague.⁷¹

Brij Narain met some workers of the province and questioned them about their consumption. No one said they were fine. A sweeper named Moti, said, "*bahut tang hoida hai*" (We suffer much). Another sweeper Buta said, "*mehnat na mile to bhuka rehna parta hai; zagir nahin, jaidad nahin*" (When out of employment I have to go without food; I have no *Jagir* and no property). Husain Bakhsh, another labourer said, "*jis malik ne paida kiya hai woh deta hai, ek wakt nahin to dusre wakt*" (The Creator gives bread, if not at one time, then at another). Musharraf Hussain, said "*guzara na guftah beh hai. rozi nahin to rozah*" (The less we talk about how we live, the better. No *rozi* (employment or means of living) means a *roza* (fast). Few items became luxury for the poor. On the question of consumption of *ghee* and milk some poor workers answered: "*sadde nasibon wih ghee kithhe*" (Ghee is not meant for poor people like us); "*ghee paise do paise ka. rukhi roti bhi mil jae to ganimat hai*" (Ghee worth a pice or two. We thank our stars when get even unbuttered bread). On the question of milk one replied that "*dudh bachpan main pi liya jab bap jita tha*" (I used to get some in my

childhood while my father was alive); “*aji bus miyan! dudh ki jae pani mil jae to achha*” (Enough of this! Even water in the place of milk will do).⁷²

The Great War affected the economic life of country which was felt by every strata of society. The demand of food grains increased after the outbreak of War but production remained low. Food grains were exported to Europe and other War Fronts in large quantity which led to depletion of stocks. Export of food grains and low production combined to increase the prices of food grains beyond the reach of common people. The scarcity of food grains created panic in the Punjab. The continuous rise in prices of food and other necessary commodities caused widespread disaffection among different classes of population especially the lower middle class, persons of fixed income and the labour class. In early 1915 reports of grain robberies and dacoities in the South-West Punjab were recorded which further created sense of insecurity. Low wages during the War put the labour class into miserable condition.

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SIKH EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES: ISSUES AND DEBATES

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The Singh Sabha movement was the most popular and widespread among the Sikhs in the Punjab during the late 19th and 20th century. The first Singh Sabha was founded in Amritsar in 1873 followed by Lahore Singh Sabha in 1879. Within the two decades, there was Singh Sabha in nearly all the towns and cities of the Punjab. For better coordination among them, the Khalsa Diwans came into existence during 1890s followed by Chief Khalsa Diwan in 1902. Sikh Educational Conference was one of the important subsidiary organizations of the Chief Khalsa Diwan. Its major concerns were to co-ordinate and accelerate activities related to education among the Sikh men and women.

The present paper is an attempt to highlight the issues related to the women education raised by Sikh reformers in the Sikh Educational Conferences of Chief Khalsa Diwan. The Chief Diwan held Educational Conference every year under its Educational Committee founded in 1908. Education of women became central issue during every session of Sikh Educational Conference. Intellectuals and educationists declared that with education of a boy would produce one educated person but with the education of a girl the whole family would be benefited. The thoughts of a mother affect the growth of a child when he or she was in the womb.¹

Different issues emerged in the meetings of Sikh Educational Conference. These issues can be studied by dividing its development into three phases. In the first phase (1908-1918) the reformers emphasized on the need of educating women. They debated over the special study schemes for girls. In the second phase (1918-1928) efforts were made for starting a separate Women Educational Conference. In third phase (1928-1938) Sikh Women Educational Conference began to be held simultaneously with Sikh Educational Conference. It gave a platform to women for debating the issues concerning them.

During the first phase Sikh reformers tried to bring about consciousness that no community can make progress if their women remain uneducated. At the very first session at Gujranwala they emphasized on “education of

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Sikh women". In the second Educational Conference of Lahore they raised the issue of syllabus for them. They passed a resolution and demanded from the Education Department to introduce a special study scheme for girls in middle and high schools. They demanded that classes of cooking, nursing and child care in Punjabi language should begin for women.²

Several educational institutions for women came up in different parts of the province. According to the scheme special subjects were introduced to be taught in schools. The subjects like needle work, cooking, stitching were introduced as a part of curriculum for girls which could meet the future requirements of the girls when they grow. By the year 1915, as many as 8 Kanya Middle Schools, 36 Kanya Primary Schools, 5 boarding houses and 1 widow *ashram* were established which were affiliated to Chief Khalsa Diwan.³ With increasing number of girl schools, the requirement of women teachers was felt. The parents of the girls wished that only female teachers should be appointed to teach them. There was strong resistance to the idea of appointment of male teachers in girl schools.⁴ The leaders of the conference made arrangements for the training of female teachers at various places to meet the requirement of the schools. First of all Junior Vernacular (J.V.) and Senior Vernacular (S.V.) classes were started in the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala, Ferozepur and it became world famous boarding school, producing ideal women teachers for community services.

The 7th Sikh Educational Conference was special for women. It gave opportunity to Bibi Savitri Devi, Bibi Agaya Kaur and Bibi Ripudaman Kaur to speak in the conference. Bibi Savitri Devi spoke on 'Sikh education system.'⁵ She was the only speaker who spoke in English and was listened to with attention by each member. 'Her words penetrated every heart and the beautiful rise and fall of her voice kept them spell bound'. On the 2nd day of the conference Bibi Agaya Kaur of Ferozepur delivered her speech. She spoke on women education about an hour without consulting a single note. This showed her complete mastery on the subject and kept the whole audience spell bound.⁶

On the occasion of 8th Sikh Educational Conference in 1915 Sikh reformers declared that their aim was to make women 'a *gurmat kanya*, *gurmat bhain*, *gurmat istri* and *gurmat mata*.'⁷ For the overall development of their women they emphasised on education and on physical exercises for the development of mind and intellect. At the very next conference they declared that the future of the community lay in the hands of learned and talented women.⁸ The conference gave special attention to the promotion of women education and preferred different courses for them. Bibi Agaya Kaur proposed a resolution at the 9th Sikh Educational Conference, asking the Panjab University Lahore to prepare a separate and easier course of

entrance for girls than the boys. She insisted that the whole education of girls should be different from those of boys from the very beginning. The subjects of stitching, cooking would be more helpful for girls than Algebra and Geometry in their practical life.⁹

The issue of separate course took a concrete shape when a resolution was passed in the name of 'final examination scheme'. Under this scheme separate courses were suggested for those girls who wanted to continue their higher studies than those who just aimed at to pass an examination.¹⁰ During initial 10 years the conference focused on the issue of women education. The leaders used every opportunity and method to make the Sikhs aware about the condition of women. The issues related to syllabus and ideal Sikh women teachers for *panthic* schools were raised more empathetically in years to come. At the 11th Sikh Educational Conference at Gujranwala they appealed to the management bodies of girls' schools to impart more education of home management and religious values. The need to produce more capable women teachers for girls' schools was also felt.¹¹ They also made a sub-committee under Chief Khalsa Diwan to monitor continuously and revise the schemes of courses for girl schools at regular intervals.¹²

The first phase showed great concern towards women. The number of women participants increased. The free mingling of both the sexes was main feature of the conference. The effective participation of women was noted by visitors of other communities. For instance, on the 10th Sikh Educational Conference the speaker of Muslim deputation Nawab Julafkar Ali Khan noted the progress of education among the Sikhs and congratulated the women for their participation in the works of community welfare.¹³

In the second phase of the progress of Sikh Education Conference a very important issue of Sikh Women Educational Conference was raised. This idea was proposed by Babu Tek Singh, a master of Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur in 1916 to hold Sikh Women Educational Conference along with Sikh Educational Conference. The basic objectives was to ensure effective participation of women.¹⁴ But the proposal was refused by the Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan.¹⁵ To change the traditional attitude towards women was not so easy. The issue of Women Conference was again raised by Bhai Nihal Singh Kairon in 1920.¹⁶ But due to the lack of mutual consent Educational Committee could not finalize its decision. Ultimately they succeeded when a resolution was passed on March 17, 1928 by the Education Committee and permission was granted to hold Women Conference along with Sikh Educational Conference.¹⁷

By this time the educated women had realized that women's cause could not be left to the male activists. The students of girls' schools also

raised demands to improve their conditions during these years. At the 18th Sikh Educational Conference of Rawalpindi in 1927, the students of Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur and Sikh Kanya Pathshala of Rawalpindi addressed letters to the President and pointed out the lack of good books and facilities for physical exercises for them in their schools.¹⁸

The students of Ferozepur Mahavidyala also requested to establish a Sikh girls college for the advancement of their education.¹⁹ There emerged a group of women intellectuals including doctors, teachers and inspectors of Education Department which was ready to play an active part in their development. Bibi Raminder Kaur, Bibi Kuldeep Kaur and Bibi Pritam Kaur (daughter of Bhai Takhat Singh) were prominent activists of the group. On the demand of Bibi Raminder Kaur, Educational Committee provided time and venue to hold the Sikh women session during the 19th Educational Conference at Montgomery.²⁰ They were also allocated time to discuss specifically women related issues on fixed hours. Hence, on the occasion of Montgomery conference around 900 women assembled under the Presidentship of Bibi Raminder Kaur. Bibi Kuldeep Kaur (B.Sc.), Bibi Wazir Kaur and Bibi Pritam Kaur were the eminent speakers of the session. They pointed out the deficiencies in women education. They raised the issues of less number of girls' schools in comparison to boys. There were 109 recognized senior secondary schools in Punjab, out of which 20 were high schools and 89 middle schools. Among these there was only one high school and ten middle schools for Sikh girls. They insisted on the need of capable women teachers and head mistresses for these schools. They also demanded a girls' boarding house at Lahore for those who came here for higher studies. Moreover one of the remarkable achievements of their efforts was the establishment of Sikh Women's Association.²¹

The leaders of Sikh Educational Conference also came forward to meet their demands. The President of the conference, Sardar Mohan Singh suggested to open libraries for women along with Singh Sabhas and Gurdwaras for their educational development.²² Later on, in the Brief Report of the Educational Committee of the year 1928, a separate chapter was devoted to women education. It was regretted in the report that there were no suitable arrangements of physical exercises for women in schools and the existing system of their education required a complete overhauling. The paucity of trained teachers was also felt.²³ During this phase the Sikh Educational Conference also showed its regret on closing some girls' schools. In 1926 the conference had recorded its strong protest against the policy of the local bodies and district inspecting staff of Attock, Rawalpindi, Jhelum in closing some of the Gurmukhi Girls' schools known as Bedi Khem Singh's Girls schools with a view to stop the teaching of Punjabi among the Hindu and Sikh girls of these districts and thus practically

stopping the advantage of education to women of these areas.²⁴

In the third phase a new beginning was made. In 1929 with the foundation of Sikh Women Educational Conference, women started to play more active role in educational matters. On the demand of Sikh Women Educational Association (earlier Sikh Women Association) the Education Committee gave permission to organize separate Women Conference on the 2nd day of Sikh Educational Conference. The rules made for Women Conference by Educational Committee were as follows:

- the conference would be held under the supervision of Educational Committee,
- there would be no separate ticket of the conference and no separate appeal for grant would be made,
- initial permission of Educational Committee was required for any agenda of the conference.
- permission of Educational Committee was must for the members of conference and
- it was made necessary to present passed resolutions of the conference at the Sikh Educational Conference.²⁵

According to the proposed plan first Women Conference was held by Sikh Women Association on the 2nd day of the 20th Sikh Educational Conference at Sargodha, 1929. The conference expressed its concern over the poor conditions of women at homes and lack of primary education among them. The papers on child care and prevalent conditions of homes were read by Bibi Pritam Kaur (B.A.B.T.), Inspectress of Schools, Kapurthala criticized the less number of Sikh girls' schools in her article, 'Our position in Sikh community'. She also raised the issue of ideal Sikh girl schools with the aims of producing 'ideal Sikh women'.²⁶ In another paper on 'women education' she raised many issues. She spoke about the backwardness of the community in women education. She observed that the promotion of education is the only key of success for an ideal family. She emphasized on the need of more primary schools for the progress of the Sikhs and religious education for Sikh children. She also emphasised that those girls who went for studies to Lahore in different schools and colleges did not learn the Sikh morals. They were exposed only to western education. They thus remained away from the teachings and training of Sikh tenets. The purpose of separate boarding house for Sikh women would be to train the inmates in the recitation of the *granth*, playing musical instruments like the sitar, harmonium. This was considered necessary to perpetrate the principles of ideal living.²⁷

The President of 20th Sikh Educational Conference Sardar Bahadur

Sardar Bishan Singh strongly criticized the apathy shown by government and local bodies towards their education. He emphasized that the inspecting agency was responsible mainly composed of European or Anglo-Indian ladies for whom travel from village to village was uncomfortable. Moreover they were not motivated enough for their job. He suggested that government should take responsibility of maintaining primary schools of girls.²⁸ Hence the Sargodha conference devoted all its attention towards the question of women education in villages. This conference passed a resolution and hold authorities responsible for not creating adequate facilities for women education in the Punjab. It urged the government to take immediate steps for women education.²⁹ By another resolution they put the demand of opening boarding house at Lahore.

The women intellectuals continued their efforts for the development of their education. At the 21st Sikh Educational Conference, Amritsar they reaffirmed the issues of the last conference. The resolutions were passed by the conference against the unsympathetic attitude of some local bodies towards education of women. Bibi Pritam Kaur and Bibi Kuldeep Kaur regretted the indifferent and unsympathetic attitude of the government and semi-government local bodies. They also noted that for many years not a single payment of grant-in-aid was made to Guru Nanak Girls Schools of Fatehjang, Nankana Sahib and Sahiwal by their respective bodies, despite of the fact that Education Department had sanctioned grants-in-aid and requests had also been made to the local bodies to pay it.³⁰ At the women session of the conference Bibi Amrit Kaur and Bibi Pritam Kaur again passed the resolution of Sargodha conference pointed out the failure of authorities to provide adequate facilities for women education in the Punjab and urged the government to take immediate steps in this direction.³¹

Women reformers realized the need of increasing number of women in the Education Department to raise the issues concerned with women more forcefully. They tried their best to bring awareness among women so that they could participate in a large number in the Sikh Educational Conferences. As a consequence, on the 22nd Sikh Educational Conference Lahore, they held women session on 2nd day under the Presidentship of Shrimati Shiv Devi. The total attendance of women participants was 1,500. Besides Sikh women, there were Hindu, Muslim and European ladies. After singing hymns by girls of Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur, Bibi Shiv Devi delivered her Presidential address. She raised the issue of absence of high schools for girls even in big towns like Lahore and Amritsar. She demanded from the government to provide at least one Sikh girls college in the province. She observed that in the absence of Sikh educational institutions, the girls would become ignorant about their own

religious values and ethics. They would easily become targets of others religions. She emphasized on opening of more and more educational institutions to secure Sikh religion. It was emphasized that religious education should be given to the children both at homes and schools. She further noted that unemployment was the main problem of the day. It was difficult to meet both ends of the life with single earning hand in a family. She suggested that by learning the art of handicraft, stitching, knitting, cooking and home management the women could support their families financially.³²

The conference passed resolution and appealed Education Minister of the province to appoint Sikh women in women branch of Punjab Educational Service Department.³³ In another resolution the leaders considered the fact that the women education in the province was already very poor, the order for imposing fees on girls in schools was highly unjust and detrimental to the cause of their education. They requested the authorities not to take fees from them.³⁴ Moreover they encouraged Sikh ladies to organize themselves and found a Sikh Women League.³⁵

The President Sardar Wasakha Singh of Lahore Educational Conference also noted less educational institutions for women than men. In his Presidential address he noted that there were total 3 colleges, 70 high schools and 200 middle schools for men. On the other hand there was no college, only one high school in the name of Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala and 20 middle schools for women. Only 2% girls were educated. There was a dire need to pay attention towards women education.³⁶ The Chairman of Reception Committee Sardar Kartar Singh also pointed out the slow progress in women education. He noted that paucity of fund and lack of trained woman teachers were the hindrances in their educational growth. He also raised the question of mismanagement of funds. He showed figure of expenditure on education of the province and noted that in the year 1930-31 total 2,26,90,630 rupees spent on men education whereas only 28,35,324 rupees on women education. He suggested raising more funds for education so that more women teachers could be produced for their institutions.³⁷

The issue of different types of education for girls remained a leading concern of the women at the 24th Sikh Educational Conference at Rawalpindi in 1934. Dr. Davinder Kaur³⁸ (M.A., Ph.D.) cited the psychological aspect and emphasised that 'a girl's personality is different from that of a boy and its development has to be on different lines which ultimately affects vocations in life. The schools being separate it is only reasonable that their curricula should be suited for their mental make-up and being so it is bound to be related to their professions in life.'³⁹

The concept of an 'ideal Sikh woman' was so high on the minds of the Sikh thinkers that from the beginning the issues of different syllabi,

different type of education for girls almost remained integral part of speeches of the conferences. The President of the 24th Sikh Educational Conference Rawalpindi, announced the aim of women education in five words 'simple living and high thinking' (*ਸਾਦਾ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਤੇ ਉਚਾ ਵਿਚਾਰਨਾ*).⁴⁰ He also propagated the fact that women are the main inspiring spirit of our nation builders.

During the 1934 and 1935 conference sessions the demand of Women College for Sikh girls remained an important issue. Sikh leaders wanted to upgrade Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur upto a college. They fixed it as a target in 1935.⁴¹ The President of the Sikh Educational Conference of Rawalpindi Sardar Raja Singh Sahib suggested upgrading the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur into college level. He expressed his concern over sending Sikh girls to non-Sikh colleges in the absence of Sikh Girls College and pointed out that they would forget the real Sikh tenets. They would fail to transmit moral and religious values to the children.⁴² But unfortunately the efforts could not be materialized in to reality. Some new issues emerged at the Silver Jubilee session of the conference in 1935. Mrs. Bedi and Mrs. Kasheb read their papers at women session of the conference. Mrs. Bedi women reform 'a necessary condition for the development of community'. She also raised the issue of increasing death rate among children in the country due to the carelessness of uneducated mothers. She therefore emphasized on the learning of child care and principles of hygiene along with stitching, knitting and cooking by women.⁴³

With the progress of women education, the reformers were becoming aware about the dangers of the western type of education for their girls. They felt that western learning would make them agile, lazy and impetuous. They insisted traditional education for their women and wanted to make them simple, hardworking and of gentle nature.⁴⁴ The real asset of a women is to make home a heaven. They therefore, emphasised on homely and religious education for them.⁴⁵ They wanted to make them more fit for their family life. In brief, they assumed that men and women were two entities meant to perform different roles. Therefore, they demanded a different educational curriculum for women.

During 1940s the issues related to women education remained same in the conference sessions with more and less changes. Sikhs reformers got success in the field of women education and became forward in the province by expansion of their institutions. Fully conversant with the fact that no community can make progress if their women are uneducated, the conference paid special attention towards women education. Many a times, women's conferences were also held during the session of the Sikh Educational Conferences. By presenting papers on women issues launching special education schemes and raising funds the Sikh Educational

Conference did a commendable service to the cause of the women education.

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**UNDERSTANDING MIGRANT-HOMELAND/
HOST COUNTRY LINKAGES: A CASE STUDY
OF PUNJABIS IN THAILAND***

*Sunaina Pathania**

Migration to South East Asia has been a major part of life in Punjab province since 1890's under the British. New administrative system brought changes in the traditional set up which prompted Punjabis to migrate to these countries for economic needs. Despite being a minority they constituted major proportion of Indian migrants and played dominant role in politics, economy, business and culture.

Punjabi migration to Thailand started in the last decades of the nineteenth century with one Kirpa Ram Madan from Sialkot. He travelled to Siam and gifted Arabic horse to Maharaja of Thailand, who in return gifted white elephant as a present for Maharaja of Jammu state.¹ He again came back to Thailand and decided to open cloth business. Almost all the respondents told this story to the researcher during their interviews. They even called him the founder of Punjabi migrations to Thailand. Regular flow of Punjabis started with the arrival of his wife's brothers. Most of the early migrants to Thailand were from undivided Punjab, i.e., Gujranwala, Mianwali, and Sheikhpura with Arora and Khatri castes settling in Chiang Mai, Phuket, Bangkok, and Pattaya. They came to Thailand with the idea of establishing businesses of their own.

Early migrants were dependent upon other communities for credit to start their business. Later on they gathered enough money to start their own businesses and eventually owned big estates or factories. Majority of respondents told the same story that how their grandparents came in early twentieth century and started working in small firms and took loans from others and subsequently built their estates and business empires. For instance, Rakesh Matta, one of the respondent told that his father Krishan Lal Matta came to Bangkok as a helper for his uncle's textile business and eventually was economically sound enough to open his own shop.² At

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* This research paper is based on a field work and structured interviews based on random sampling conducted among Punjabis residing in Bangkok in 2015. For more information see my doctoral thesis "Indians in South East Asia with special reference to Punjabis in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand."

present, Rakesh Matta is the president of Hindu Samaj of Bangkok and owns many factories. Besides textiles, many Punjabis are also engaged in handloom, pharmaceutical industries, travel agency business and hotel business. One respondent told the story that how early migrants used to sell Mosquito-nets which they carried on their shoulders.³

Migrations to Thailand were at its peak during partition riots in 1947. Many decided to permanently settle and became citizens of Thailand. Many of them changed their name to Thai names like Metta Khun, Than Thep and Somkid Sirikumarkul to avoid complications with the locals as well as the Government. Thailand Government like other South East Asian countries restricted the regulations regarding Immigration. In 1950, Indian embassy in Bangkok informed their nationals to obey Thai law to obtain alien registration card of failing which they might be deported. After this, fresh migrations were limited. But still many were coming to work here for short time. These days, occupational profile has widened as new generation Punjabis are more attracted towards new professions rather than engaging in their traditional businesses.

The Punjabis have been able to maintain their traditions, distinct image as well as their linkages back in Punjab on one hand and were trying to assimilate in the local Thai culture on the other. At present, there are estimated eighty thousand Punjabis currently residing in Thailand. It includes Punjabi Sikhs, Hindus, Namdharis, Neeldharis and Radhasoamis having subcastes of *bawas*, *pahwas*, *sethis*, *chawlas*, *malhotras*, *bajajs*, *pathelas*, *sachdevas*, *narangs*, *khanijous*, *buddhirajas* and *chabras* which constitute about forty one per cent of Indian community. The composition of Punjabi migrants from the point of view of their original place of residence is interesting. Nearly fifty six per cent of Punjabis are from Majha region. Out of which forty per cent of the migrants belong to the districts of Gujranwala (now Pakistan), while sixteen per cent are from the district of Amritsar. Thirty per cent are from Malwa region and ten per cent represent Doaba region. Rest of the four per cent belong to Shimla and Delhi.⁴

Unlike migrations to other countries of South East Asia, it is interesting to note that none of the Punjabis went to Thailand through travel agents. It is, however, certain that almost every Punjabi came for economic reasons. Some of them reached Bangkok during partition with their parents and got married to those who had already settled here. Statistical analysis indicates that nearly eighty six per cent of Punjabis came through relatives while eight per cent came on their own and rest through other means. Survey further concluded that seventy four per cent Punjabis were permanent residents while twenty four per cent were on work permit. At present majority of them are descendants of the early Punjabi migrants.

Those who are on work permit prefer to stay on work visa. Some of them are here for more than twenty years. They claim that they were given same facilities as permanent residents, so they don't feel the need to apply for citizenship. In addition to this, the process of becoming permanent resident is very lengthy and expensive. They have to give thousands of baht (Thai currency) every year for applying for the citizenship. So, they just renew their contract for work permit. There are however some Punjabis who are on tourist visa and engaged as helpers in Punjabi restaurants.

Majority of the permanent resident Punjabis in Thailand are engaged in their own business ranging from textiles (import export), handloom, embroidery, real estate, hotel, small restaurants, tailoring shops and gun business. They have shops in *Pratunam* market, *Phaurat* market and textile retail showrooms in China Town, Indira House and India Emporium in Phaurat Market in Bangkok and hotels in Sukhumvit Soi area near Indian embassy. However, new generation has diverted its attention towards new business lines. Many Punjabis are fourth generation of early migrants and are engaged in electronics business and some are teachers and even lawyers. Older generation has no problems with next generation who have dissociated themselves from the old family business. Punjabis coming for short period of time on work permit are engaged in other skilled works such as technical jobs, cooks and accountants. There are many granthis and pujaris. Statistical analysis suggested that seventy four per cent Punjabis are businessmen; twelve per cent are skilled workers while four per cent are unskilled workers. Basic salary in Thailand is 9000 baht per month which is roughly Rs18, 000 in terms of Indian currency.

Majority of Punjabis residing in Thailand are engaged in their own businesses and earn enough money from 3 lakh baht to 5 lakh baht per month. However they told the researcher that they earn very less. For example, a textile factory owner gave the figure of 20,000 baht per month. In reality, a small shop owner who sells readymade cloth told the respondent that he makes 5 lakh baht per month and enough to remit to Punjab. He came to Bangkok nearly 15 years ago and decided to stay here as long as his income provided him enough to remit to Punjab.⁵ In addition to this, the income of textile factory owners is as high as 10 lakh baht per month or more. A real estate owner earns nearly 5 lakh baht or more per month. However, this range is not for all the Punjabis working in Bangkok. Many respondents were working as helpers or agents of the small restaurants who brought the customers to their owners' restaurants. They were seen shouting and calling for their food items of their restaurants to attract the tourists in Little India-II in *Pratunam* market.⁶ In addition to this, Punjabis also owned big tailoring showrooms. Romeo and Juliet tailor showroom

near *Pratunam* market in Bangkok is an example of that kind. Owner of this shop is the third generation Punjabi migrant from Gujranwala. Now, he runs the million dollar investment tailoring shop in Bangkok. His sons are a doctor and a lawyer.

Namdhari Punjabis despite being small in number in Bangkok are engaged in profitable gun business for many generations. Researcher found nearly 15 gun showrooms on Sao Ching Cha Road, Bangkok. All these shops belonged to one *Sachdeva* family. They have lots of property in Bangkok. In addition to this, they also are engaged in hotel business. They also have real estates and apartment buildings in Sukhumvit area of Bangkok. They earn more than 20 lakh baht or more per month. *Pujaris* and *granthis* earn nearly 1 lakh baht per month. Those who are in electronic business earn nearly 3 to 4 lakh baht per month.

Punjabis residing in Thailand have maintained their connection with homeland on different levels. They organize Punjabi folk dance shows like *giddha* and *bhangra* to remain close to their homeland. They visit their homeland according to their suitability. They are constantly in touch with their families and friends back in Punjab through social media. In addition to this they remit money to their near and dear ones and invest their wealth by buying land in Punjab. Their experiences with their relatives and with the administration back home determine the level of closeness with their homeland. For example many Punjabis visit Punjab regularly because they are in good terms with their relatives and have land. However, many who are third or fourth generation of Punjabis have never visited Punjab. They have lost touch with their distant relatives back home. In addition to this, many Punjabis have had relations with their relatives back home. Many are not satisfied with the infrastructure as many respondents complained that after having lived for so many years in their adopted home, they find Punjab as dusty and full of corruption. They don't want to settle in Punjab and therefore prefer to visit only for short periods.

Remittances, frequency of number of visits and desire to meet *biradari* are three major factors that determine homeland linkages. On the basis of survey, sixty eight per cent never remitted any money back to Punjab. Most of these were third generation Punjabis or those who came with their families during partition. So they have no reason to remit back. Some of them also boasted that their relatives are well off in Punjab and so there is no point in sending money. About thirty two per cent remit money from time to time to help out their family, friends and relatives.

Frequent visits made to Punjab to attend marriage ceremonies, to visit shrines and pay homage to their Guru indicate the bond with their *biradari* back in Punjab. On the basis of survey, sixty per cent revisit Punjab every

now and then. Some of them visit two to three times a year via Kolkata to Delhi and then Punjab. This indicates their bonding with Punjab. On the other hand forty per cent never visited Punjab. Majority of them are the third or fourth generation. They don't have any family left back in Punjab and Pakistan. However, they do visit Mumbai and Delhi for business purposes. Many respondents mentioned that their relatives and families back in Punjab come to Bangkok every year on a tourist visa for fifteen days to one month.

Good infrastructure, better living conditions and better future are three components that determine the desire of the migrants to settle in their adopted country. Major concern of temporary migrants is to acquire wealth and return home. Their familial roots are still very deep. They do not wish to settle in any other place than Punjab. However, the permanent citizens like to visit Punjab from time to time but the wish of the most was to spend their last days in Thailand. Every respondent had different story. On the basis of which the interviewer came to the conclusion that seventy eight per cent Punjabis prefer to live in Thailand than to return to Punjab. They had even changed their names to Thai names which indicate their level of absorption in the host culture. They are fully satisfied with their life in Bangkok. Preference of the Punjabis to settle in Thailand means that these people have little or no connection with their *kith* and *kin* in the Punjab. They, therefore have chosen to become the naturalized citizens of the country of their adoption. They organize festivals, religious ceremonies and language classes. Some of them complained about corruption of bureaucracy, lack of facilities, infrastructure and poor safety issues in Punjab. On the other hand, they have good facilities and security for life in Thailand. One respondent said "Women walk alone at 2 a.m in Thailand".⁷ About twenty two per cent migrants desired to settle in Punjab. Majority of those who had been in Bangkok for less than ten years prefer not to apply for citizenship and remain as Indian nationals and ultimately want to be back in Punjab.

Selection of the spouse is another dimension which gives the idea of assimilation into the culture of the adopted home. Although marriage is usually solemnized within Punjabi community, there are many cases of marriages between Punjabis and local Thais. First and second generation Punjabis are mostly married within their own community. However, this is not the case with third and fourth generation. Inter-marriage between Punjabi boys and Thai girls are quite prevalent and parents are accepting this trend. Three Punjabis married to Thai girls were located by the researcher. One respondent was Punjabi Namdhari.⁸ Although this trend is rarely noticed among Namdharis. They are bound by ethics of faith in their *Guru* back in Punjab. They depend upon their religious leader for

almost every decision. They give him full authority over selection of spouse and respect his decision. The other two were Punjabi Sikhs.

There are, however different views regarding the experiences of Punjabis in Bangkok. Majority of the respondents mentioned the peaceful life, good infrastructure, better facilities, education, and opportunities for good business in Bangkok. They are a respected community in Thailand. One respondent mentioned that Thais called Punjabis as *seths* out of respect. He narrated the incident how he was left only with the warning for not wearing seat belt by the traffic police, while a Thai was fined for the same reason.⁹ Another respondent who owned Juliet tailoring shop also claimed that “we are a peaceful community in Bangkok”.¹⁰

On the other hand, some respondents talked about the racial discrimination faced by them in Bangkok. Every now and then, friction between Punjabis and local Thais surface due to growing unemployment and low income jobs left for locals. They see Punjabis as ‘invaders’ who have come to grab the jobs meant for them. One female respondent narrated the story of verbal abuse by the Thai taxi driver for creating unemployment by taking the local jobs. She had to explain to the taxi driver that she was born and brought up in Bangkok and was basically a Thai.¹¹ The researcher also faced verbal abuse of a Thai taxi driver on the way to Chulalongkorn University.

Migrants maintain linkages through various agencies like social media, phone, mails, remittances, matrimonial alliances with their own community, visits back home and organization of various groups and festivals that remind them of their homeland. Researcher witnessed one such gathering of Punjabi Hindus in the Hindu Samaj Mandir.¹² They remain in touch with their culture in host country by organizing religious functions in temples and gurudwaras and language lessons. They have opened schools that cater to the needs of Punjabi children. Punjabi lessons are taught in Gurudwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha, Bangkok. Modern International School of Bangkok, Bharat Vidyalaya (Bangkok) and Thai Sikh International School (Bangkok) are such examples. In addition to this, Punjabis are trying their best to assimilate in the host culture and society. They have learnt their language, adopted their cuisines, follow the rules and regulations and even changed their names to mix well with the locals and secure status in the society. However, their level of maintaining these linkages with parent culture as well as assimilation with host culture is different individually.

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4. Present data is based on the survey conducted by researcher in Bangkok (2015).
5. Interview of Kulwinder was taken by researcher on 2 Sept. 2015 at Pratunam market, Bangkok. He is from Ludhiana and satisfied with his daily sales in Bangkok.
6. Researcher found them during the field work in Bangkok. They were the helpers of *Guptaji ki Kitchen* and *Khurana Inn* in *Pratunam* market. Accommodation and food is provided by their restaurant owners.
7. Interview of Simran was taken by researcher on 10th August, 2015.
8. Simran mentioned during interview about a *Sant*, who is married to a Thai girl. He can no longer perform the duties of *Sant* in Namdhari Sangat of Thailand, *Sukhumvit Soi*, Thailand. However his Thai origin wife comes every Sunday to perform Sikh rituals in the Gurudwara.
9. Sonu alias Gursiopreet Singh, narrated this incident when he was being warned by traffic police.
10. Interview taken by researcher on 02 Sep, 2015.
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12. Researcher attended the Rasleela function (first time performance) on 04 September 2015 at Hindu Samaj Mandir. Mandali from Vrindavan was specially invited to perform the dance and other rites. Nearly 200 Punjabi Hindus including Namdharis and few Thais attended this occasion.

UNREST IN DISTRICT GUJRANWALA 1919

*Kamaljeet Kaur**

The year 1919 opened with large scale demonstration against the British all over India. These demonstrations were in response to the call given by Mahatma Gandhi to the Rowlatt Bills framed to deal with the revolutionary activities of the Indians. The Government during the First World War had armed itself with the Defence of India Act. The Government wanted a similar kind of legislation to deal with the 'terrorist' and disruptive activities after the end of the war. In 1917, the Government of India appointed a committee under Justice S. A. T. Rowlatt to investigate seditious activities and suggest suitable legislations. On the recommendations of the Committee, the Government drafted two Bills. The aim of the first Bill was to give the executive authority the power to check activities detrimental to the security of the State. It provided for the trial of political workers by special Tribunal, consisting of three judges without juries. The accused were denied the right of defence with the help of a counsel. The Bill provided for detention without trial upto two years. The aim of the second Bill was to bring changes in the criminal law. Even the possession of a seditious document was made punishable with imprisonment. It was felt that it would give draconic powers to the state to suppress every kind of agitation. The Bills were rushed through the Imperial Legislative Council between 6 February and 18 March 1919. Much against the unanimous opposition of all non-official Indian members, the first Bill became an Act.¹ On the passage of the Bill, Mahatma Gandhi gave a call for a nationwide *hartal* accompanied by an act of self-purification. He wrote "Satyagraha is a process of self purification and ours is a sacred fight, and it seems to be in a fitness of things that it should be commenced with an act of self-purification. Let all the people of India suspend their business on that day and observe the day as of fasting and prayers".²

The present paper aims to concentrate on the disturbances in Gujranwala and the British reaction to it. A voluminous literature is available on unrest in Amritsar. Considerable work has also been done on agitation in Lahore, Delhi, Ahmadabad and Bombay also. However, no work is available on Gujranwala where to scare the crowd, bombs were dropped from aeroplane. Before I move to the unrest in Gujranwala and why it

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happened, it is necessary to discuss a little about the district. Gujranwala, though a small town containing a population of 30,000 was important in many respects. It was the birth place of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It was also an important railway station and was only 42 miles from Lahore on the main line. The important towns in Gujranwala were: Wazirabad, Nizamabad, Akalgarh, Ramnagar, Hafizabad, Sangla Hill, Moman, Dhaban Singh, Manianwala, Nawan Pind, Chuharkana and Sheikhpura.

Unrest in Gujranwala

Unlike in Amritsar and Delhi there was no *hartal* on 30 March in Gujranwala. However on 4 April the matter was discussed by the members of the District Congress Committee in connection with Mr. Gandhi's message.³ On 5 April, the barristers and pleaders in Gujranwala made arrangements for a public meeting. Hand bills were hurriedly printed in Lahore and distributed throughout the town. The notice announced that a public meeting of the citizens of Gujranwala would be held at the house of Lala Amar Nath, pleader, at 5.30 p.m. under the presidency of Lala Hakim Rai, Pleader to show displeasure at the passage of the Rowlatt Bill. Members of all religions and communities were invited to attend and lend their support to the meeting. At 1.00 p.m., Lt. Col. A.J. O'Brien summoned the leaders of the movement and warned them that they would be held responsible for any disturbance. However, the meeting was held as advertised and the following resolutions were passed:

1. That this meeting express its strong protest against the Rowlatt Bill and vies with consternation and disapproval the manner in which it has been passed in the teeth of unanimous opposition and the considered judgment of the country as a whole.
2. This meeting expects that 6 April be observed as a national protest day and a fast of 24 hours be kept by all, and that all business in the town be suspended for the day.
3. That this meeting views with alarm the action of Delhi authorities in firing upon the people of the city, which resulted in the deaths of many citizens and urges on the Government the need of enquiring into responsibility for the said occurrence.
4. That a cable be dispatched to the Secretary of the State, etc., conveying the purpose of the resolutions.⁴

Thus, on 6 April, the shops of the city remained closed. Rumours were circulated that closing of shops was on the orders of the Government. The district authorities were of the opinion that the rumours were circulated by the leader themselves. They had realized that extra police would be posted to prevent any disorder which would lend colour to this report. In

order to introduce the element of fasting it was also rumored that the Government had forbidden any fire for cooking that day. The day passed off peacefully as its organizers intended.

The shopkeepers accepted it merely as an extra holiday and the population wandered round idly without excitement. Meanwhile, the news of the deportation of Drs. Satypal and Kitchlew had reached Gujranwala. According to District Report on disturbances special efforts were made to stir up the Sikhs by the rumours of damage done to the Golden Temple. The Report ran:

This was quite unsuccessful among the educated Sikhs, who behaved well throughout, but took effect among the 'ignorant Sikh peasants' of the neighbourhood of Chuharkana. At the same time, it had been noted by the organizers that the Government had done nothing against the leaders at Delhi and they thought, as the approver has stated in his evidence that at most they will be sent to a Hill Station to enjoy a holiday at Government expense. In fact it is clear that none of the internments from that of Lajpat Rai in Ragoon have had any deterrent effect, except the internments inside the goals. Another factor which is well worthy of notice is that in Gujranwala the Municipal elections were due shortly. The candidates felt that they had to take a prominent part in what was going lest they lose the reputation of being leaders.⁵

Gujranwala was quiet after the *hartal* on 6 April. Late on the night of 10 April, news of the occurrences at Amritsar and Lahore reached Gujranwala.⁶ In the morning on 11 April there were meeting of the Executive Committee of the District War League and the District Board. Referring to the Amritsar incident, Lt. Col. A.J. O'Brien warned the leaders to see that no such incident occurred in Gujranwala. In the evening he held a minor Durbar for the distribution of recruiting and other rewards.⁷ Lt. Col. A.J. O'Brien in his statement said, "On 12 April he left the district in the evening on transfer, handing over officiating charge to Khan Bahadur Mirza Sultan Ahmed, Extra Assistant Commissioner. Other Magistrates and notable people of the District also left for Lahore the same evening or the following morning to attend the Durbar on 14 April."⁸

Gujranwala on 13 April had attracted a large crowd of holiday makers, it being a *baisakhi*. So, on 14 April, Gujranwala Congress Committee found the elements that go to make a crowd unruly, viz., the holiday mood of 'do as you please', the drink, the resentment over the Government doings, the knowledge of mob excesses elsewhere and idleness.⁹ According to Lieutenant Colonel A.J. O'Brien, Deputy Commissioner of Gujranwala:

Early in the morning of 14 April before 7 a.m., the body of a dead calf was found hanging on the Katchi bridge near to the railway station. Rumours were circulated that this was the work of the police. The calf was discovered and promptly buried by the police. From early morning crowds collected in the bazaars, raising various cries and seeing to the closure of all the shops. The crowd went to the Railway Station and tried to damage the train. Part of the mob then proceeded to set on fire a small bridge over the railway line opposite Gurukul. Mr. Nevill, Assistant Superintendent of Police went to the spot with a small guard, while he himself went towards police lines to collect more men and to warn the station master. Mr. Nevill, Assistant Superintendent of Police found two or three sleepers of the train burning. On seeing Mr. Nevill, the crowd consisting mainly of small boys, ran away. The Superintendent of Police on reaching the station found that the Telegraph wires had been cut on both sides, but as the telegraph to Lahore was still open, he sent a brief message to the Inspector-General of Police through the Controller. He found it difficult to keep the railway station clear of the crowd as the station staff refused to co-operate.¹⁰

Till this time no Magistrate was present. However, the officiating Deputy-Commissioner, with Agha Ghulam Hassan Khan, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Lala Amar Nath, Extra Assistant Commissioner came around 9.00 a.m. The Permanent Way Inspector certified that the bridge was safe and the morning train was sent off to Wazirabad. Shortly after information was received that the Katchi bridge on the Lahore side of the railway station had been set on fire. Police was sent to extinguish the fire. All communication to Wazirabad and Lahore had by this time been cut. The crowd in front of the railway station started increasing and some carried black flags. Two men, meanwhile were moving among the crowd distributing *chapattis* and calling out "*langer ki roti*".¹¹

Meanwhile, according to Lt. Colonel O'Brien, the three Magistrates endeavored to induce the people to go quietly to their homes. One or two pleaders also made a 'pretence of influencing the crowd'. The mob next attacked the railway line near the distant signal on the Lahore side, having secured tools for the purpose from the gang huts. The Superintendent of Police with Lala Amar Nath, Extra Assistant Commissioner, and a small force of police proceeded to the spot and the crowd ran off. The Katchi bridge was still burning and more constables were deputed to extinguish it. When Superintendent of Police was returning to the station, a large mob came up and started throwing stones at him and his police escort. At this movement, Chaudhri Gulam Rasul, Deputy Superintendent of Police, and Agha Ghulam Hussan Khan arrived from the city with more police. Despite their presence, the mob made a rush and attempted to seize the

Superintendent of Police himself. He used his revolver to fire with buck-shot to disperse the crowd in the direction of the city. As the state of affair was now serious, Mr. Heron sent off telegrams by special messengers to be dispatched from Eminabad and Rahwali to Lahore and Sialkot respectively, requesting military assistance. There was still a large crowd in front of the station and all the members were in a state of great excitement, as they had gained access to the Post Office from the rear and the inner rooms of the Telegraph Office had been set on fire. Water had already been removed from the premises and the pumps at the station. It was, therefore impossible to save the building. After this the mob cleared off for a time, but returned again opposite the station. The rioters according to Lt. Col. O'Brien had been greatly inflamed by the speeches made by mob orators at various meetings and by the stimulus given by the leaders on the arrival of a couple of wounded men into the assemblage.¹²

Another crowd collected at the Post Office, which was beside the station. As all the water had been removed and the pumps at the station damaged, the building was gutted. The crowds was waving black flags and hurling bricks upon the police, mostly at Mr. Haron. Both Mr. Haron and the Deputy Superintendent of Police wanted the crowd to be fired upon, but the acting Deputy Commissioner, however did not to give liberty to fire. He was influenced partly by the presence of boys in the crowd and partly by some pleaders who said that they would try and persuade the mob to go away. The pleaders tried to convince the crowd but their efforts were in vain. However, according to DICR (Majority Report), "In failing to order the police to fire upon and so disperse these mobs around the burning post office, the acting Deputy Commissioner appeared to have committed an error. If effective measures had then been taken to disperse the mob and restored the order, the later incidents of the day would have been avoided".¹³

While this was going on, aeroplanes came to Gujranwala three times, first on the afternoon of the riot and again next morning and in the afternoon. According to Daily Report of April 1919, "A good many of the bombs dropped turned out to be 'duds'. About 90 rounds were fired from machine guns".¹⁴ According to Lt. Col. A.J. O'Brien:

Aeroplanes arrived from Lahore and by dropping bombs drove the crowd to the safety of their own houses. Two of these bombs fell into the thick of rioters. About this time I arrived by motor car from Lahore. The more violent of the rioters had full intention of destroying the Civil Station and its white inhabitants, but also of looting the wealthy merchants of the town. However, the unexpected arrival of the aeroplanes effectually discouraged the rioters. Five persons were killed and four wounded by one bomb outside the railway godown. Whether they had plucked up courage

during the night to make a fresh attack on the small party with women and children which had taken refuge in the Treasury, cannot be said. Fortunately, however the arrival of troops from Sialkot at 9 p.m. finally quieted the situation.¹⁵

Captain D.H.M. Carberry, M.C., D.F.C., Flight Commander, No. 31 Squadron, Royal Air Force was sent to bomb Gujranwala. In his statement, he said that at about 14 hours on the afternoon of the 14 April 1919, he was given verbal instructions by Lieutenant Colonel F.F. Minchin, Commanding 52nd Wing, Royal Air Force, to proceed to Gujranwala and bomb and machine gun any people seen causing damage to property, or any large crowds. Colonel Minchin also asked him not to drop bombs on the native city unless in his opinion he considered it necessary. He told the Disorder Inquiry Committee:

I arrived in Gujranwala at 15-10 hours and found the Railway Station on fire and bales of goods on the platform burning. A passenger train on the up line appeared to be on fire, and the English Church and 4 houses in civil lines on the east of the Railway Station burning. I was flying at heights varying from 100 to 700 feet when over Gujranwala and neighbouring country, and I should like to point out that no action was taken until I had satisfied myself that the target was a justifiable one. I took no action to start with and flew round the neighbouring villages. At about 15-20, I dropped three bombs on a party of 150 natives outside a village about 2 miles north-west of Gujranwala. One bomb failed to explode, and the others fell near the party which scattered and ran back to the village. Three casualties were seen. Fifty rounds of machine gun were fired into the village.¹⁶

To Capt. Carberry the dropping of bombs was justified and need of the time. However, according to Congress Committee, all the firing from the aeroplanes was entirely unjustified. It began after the destruction by the mob was over, and the crowds had dispersed. There was, therefore, no question of preventing further damage. The Congress Committee said, "We believe, too, that the firing was thoughtless, vindictive and the Officer incharge of the machines, on their own showing, held the lives of the villagers cheap, and fired in order to terrorize the people". The casualties, according to the list supplied and embodied in the statements produced before the Congress Committee was 12 killed and 24 wounded, and if the loss of life was less, it was because some of the bombs did not explode".¹⁷

There were outbreaks in fourteen different places in the Gujranwala district. Some of the important ones are referred below:

Wazirabad

It was 20 miles north of Gujranwala district. On the *Baisakhi* fair on 13 and 14 April 1919, the bazaars and streets thronged with villagers.¹⁸ On 13 April 1919, at the request of *halwais*, the leaders of the movement postponed the *hartal* to 14 April 1919, so that the sweets prepared by the *halwais* may be sold and they be put to no loss. On 14 evening, a meeting was convened in the *Juma Masjid* under the Presidentship of Jamiat Singh and lectures were given by Sheikh Inayat Ullah, Alias Basha, Master Muhammad Jan, Pritam Das and Badri Nath Phul, on the subjects of (1) Hindu-Muhammadan unity, (2) Protest against Rowlatt Bills, (3) Observance of *hartal*. There were about two thousand persons present at the meeting.¹⁹

Next morning, on 15 April 1919, a mob of about 1200 men with sticks and stones made their way to the goods shed. At about 9 hours on 15 April 1919, the mob started cutting the telegraph wires and knocking down the posts near the station and advanced in the direction of the Gujrat station.²⁰ Stones were thrown from the street into the station and an attempt was made to fire the railway oil tanks. During the day no supplies were available in the bazaar. That evening more troops with Colonel Burbery arrived and issued notices that armed force would be used, if necessary.²¹

Hafizabad

At Hafizabad, about 58 miles from Gujranwala, *hartal* was held on 14 April and 15 April. On 15th the crowd damaged the signals and telegraph wires. The main outbreak, however was on 14 April, when the crowd rushed to the station as the train was coming in. Lieutenant Tatam of the Military Farms Department on seeing the turbulent nature of the crowd closed all the shutters of the windows and bolted the doors of the carriage. The crowd attempted to open the doors of the carriage. When they failed, they threw sticks and stones at the windows. According to Mr. R.C. Chopra of Hafizabad there was no doubt that the intention of the mob was to murder Lieutenant Tatam, but fortunately the train moved on before the crowd was able to lay its hands on him. According to Lieutenant Tatam, the crowd was dancing in front of him waving flags and sticks and shouting "Captain Sahib ko maro, Sahib sala andar hai".²² Hafizabad was quiet after 15 April. Despite everything being fine, the Martial Law was declared on the evening of 19 April, 4 days after the disturbances.²³

Sheikhupura Sub-Division

According to Mr. B.N. Bosworth-Smith, Joint Deputy Commissioner, there was *hartal* first on 6 April and then on 14 April in Sheikhupura. It was organized by the pleader community. The two public meetings and *hartal* at Chuharkana was held on 11 April and 12 April. Three meetings were

held at Sangla. A procession was carried in the town to the railway station accompanied by a black flag. Other important events of the day were public bathing of Hindus and Muslamans together at the canal and the *hartal* on 12 April. The disturbances took place on 14, 15, and 16 April. Wires were cut at two places, a riot took place and a signal was pulled down. In the village of Machhike also, the wires were cut. Chuharkana Station was burnt, two bridges were pulled down and a crowd of some three or four thousand persons were out in the streets all day. The railway line was pulled up and bungalow of missionaries was looted. In the words of Mr. B.N. Bosworth-Smith, I.C.S., Joint Deputy Commissioner of Sheikhpura the population of Chuharkana market and of the surrounding villages were out for war in the firm belief that the *Sarkar's* days were numbered.²⁴

According to Disorder Inquiry Committee Report (Minority), an armoured train which had machine guns and searchlights was sent from Lahore to Shiekhupura on 15 April. Lala Sri Ram Sud, Sub-Divisional officer of Shiekhupura got into the train and proceeded to Chuharkana station. The armoured train proceeded slowly from Shiekhupura and arrived near Chuharkana station in the early hours of 16 April. They found men around the line and opened fire. One man was killed. The armoured train then proceeded to the Chuharkana station, but the rioters by then had left. Lala Sri Ram Sud and a Military escort got down from the armoured train and went into the factory, where some men were suspected to be hiding. Some rifle shots were fired in the dark with a view to terrify the villagers. On 16 April the armoured car reached the village and did some further firing. The Minority Report, however differed from the Majority. It emphasized that the people in the village who were fired at, were at that time not engaged in any acts of violence and Committee concluded that this firing was not justified.²⁵

Ramnagar

Ramnagar was situated about 5 miles from Akalgarh on the bank of Chenab. It was not on the railway line. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had built *Baradari* in Ramnagar. There was *hartal* on 6 April and again a partial *hartal* on 15 April. No damage of property was done at Ramnagar. Disorder Inquiry Committee Report (Minority) did admit that the effigy of His Majesty was burnt on 15 April and ashes were thrown into the river. The Congress Committee, however in its report insists that after investigating it found no truth in this charge that insult was offered to His Majesty. They concluded that it was entirely a manufactured charge. On 17 April the Inspector of Police went round Ramnagar but made no mention of it.²⁶

Events at Dhaban Singh and Moman

Dhaban Singh and Moman were two railway stations situated at the line between Chuharkana and Sangla and both these stations were burnt and looted by large mobs on the night between 15 and 16 April. At Dhaban Singh some mischief was committed by villagers of Mahanianwala and Pucca Dalla inhabited by Sikh settlers. According to Rai Sahib Sri Ram Sud, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Sub Divisional Officer Sheikhpura:

On the morning of 18 April communication was restored and we proceeded in the armoured train towards Sangla and on our way filled it up opposite the Mahanianwala village and we walked into the said village—a distance of more than one mile and there arrested a village *lambardar* whose son was actively involved in the Dhaban Singh affair and en route for the village we fired upon a crowd that had collected in the distance and dispersed it with one casualty.²⁷

Akalgarh

At Akalgarh which was about sixteen miles from Wazirabad, there was *hartal* on 6 April. On 14 April there was another *hartal* over the arrests and the events at Amritsar and Lahore. On the 15 April Telegraph lines were cut and signal lamps broken.²⁸ According to Rai Sahib Sri Ram Sud, the majority of rural notables and agriculturists were not connected with disturbances. Principal classes which participated in the *hartal* were pleaders and their *munshis*, students and school boys, traders and some Government servants.²⁹

Martial Law

Martial Law was proclaimed in Gujranwala on 16 April. During the days of the Martial Law, people of Gujranwala were subjected to humiliation, flogging and many indignities. The city administration compelled people to open their shops. The order was passed that shopkeepers should not shut their shops when the army and the police came at their shops to purchase articles. If anyone was found refusing to sell the articles, he would be arrested and would be liable to be punished by flogging. Under Martial Law it was also compulsory for Indian's to salute the British Officers. The order was, "If anyone is on horseback or is driving any kind of wheeled conveyance, he must get down. One who has open umbrella in his hand, should close or lower it down, and all these persons should salute with their right hand respectfully". People were forbidden to carry sticks. Railway travelling was stopped for some time, and curfew order was issued.³⁰

Almost all the British officers justified the imposition of Martial Law. Mr. J.B. Nevill Assistant Superintendent of Police in his statement said that upto the time of proclaiming Martial Law, the disorder was rapidly

spreading to the villages and in Aulakh a *Patwar Khana* was burnt. On 18 April, he and a party of British troops under Captain Whealty went there and arrested the culprits immediately. The effect of Martial Law was by this time noticeable and no more trouble occurred. On 21 April he was sent down to Chuharkana to supervise the investigation in the Sheikhpura Sub-division. Here the centers of the agitation were Sheikhpura, Chuharkana and Sangla. Hartals had been held on all these places. At Chuharkana, the Virks and at Dhaban Singh, the Kambhos led by disaffected persons attacked and damaged the railway line and telegraph line. A band of Sikhs practically ruled the country at Sangla, burnt the station at Moman, cut telegraph wires, assaulted Mr. Wale and rescued a military deserter. Their cry was that even if the British Raj returned, the Sikhs ruled today. The population was very truculent and disturbed. It was obviously only the fear of Martial Law that kept them from resisting. At first investigation it was extremely difficult, but the Martial Law and trial by summary courts soon enabled the local authorities to get the mal contents in hand.³¹ On the other hand, Munshi Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din, Retired Military Sub-Assistant Surgeon, Wazirabad in his statement to Disorder Inquiry Committee said:

Martial Law in Wazirabad was proclaimed after 16 April 1919. The public subjected to indescribable suffering, misery and disgrace. A house tax at the rate of rupee one was levied and collected during the Martial Law days by Chaudri Ali Ahmad from all the inhabitants in the name of the Government, though without any legal authority, and when anyone ventured to protest against this illegal and unauthorized tax, he was threatened with arrest.³²

As there was fear of arrests a large number of people concerned with riots had left the city and were hiding themselves. A notice was issued that if such persons did not return immediately the property of their fathers or their nearest relations would be confiscated.³³

The Martial Law was withdrawn on 9 June. Fourteen cases were tried by Commission involving 233 persons, of whom 149 were convicted. Twenty-two were sentenced to death, 108 to transportation for life, two to imprisonment for 10 years or over, one to seven years, one to five years, eight to one year and two to six months. Fines were inflicted in six cases and whipping in five. Minor offences committed between 30 March and the date of proclamation of Martial Law were tried by Summary Courts. There were 89 such cases, involving 168 persons of whom 142 were convicted, 85 persons were sentenced to imprisonment for two years, 2 to one year, 21 to six months and 9 less than six months. Fines were imposed on 85 persons and whipping inflicted on four.³⁴

The Government Report on Punjab Disturbances categorized the disorder at Gujranwala as of serious nature. It led to widespread destruction of Government property and had there been a scattered European community such as that at Amritsar, it might have led to outrages such as those which occurred in the city on 10 April. The prompt arrival of troops limited the field of disorder to the towns, in which it had originated, but disorder might have extended and with disastrous results to the neighbouring rural areas. As a result the peasantry at large remained unaffected. The district was poor recruiting area and had thus been the scene of an intensive campaigns from November 1917 to November 1918 and it was true that such campaigns were a cause of unrest.³⁵

Pandit Pearay Mohan, a contemporary was one of the first Indians to write about the unrest. He gives forcible recruitment as one of the main reason for unrest in Gujranwala. He writes:

When the War closed, Gujranwala had 13,000 men in the army out of whom 7,000 had been raised in the 11 months from December 1917 to October 1918. This 'intensive campaign' was said to have been carried on with such zeal, that some of the officials with the help of the police actually raided villages in the dead hours of night and arrested sleeping villagers, who were forcibly marched to the headquarter where they compelled to enlist in the army. It was also in this part of the district, in which the largest number of outrages were committed, that the villagers were forced to subscribe to O' Dwyer Memorial Fund. The story here is one of damage and outrage done largely by agriculturists. No better example than that of the Gujranwala district can be given to show that the illegal and barbarous methods of recruitment for the army were to a large extent responsible for the general discontent which prevailed in the villages and burst forth into acts of disorder when the minds of people were excited by exaggerated rumours of further acts of official lawlessness. So, this was the main reason that agitation took place in rural area of Gujranwala district.³⁶

There is no doubt that disorders in Gujranawala was of serious nature. There was destruction of Government property in Gujranwala city and adjoining areas in the district. Dropping of bombs, however were totally unjustifiable as they were dropped without surveying the area. Both the Congress Committee and Disorders Committee (Minority) found the firing and bombing as unjustified. Whereas the administration justified the firing and bombing by calling it the need of the time. The administration was living in the fear of rioting and killings at Amritsar on 10 April and behaved in barbarous manner with its population.

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BOOK REVIEWS

MIND OF THE REVOLUTIONARY: BHAGAT SINGH

Bhagat Singh's 'Jail Note Book': Its Context and Relevance: Complete Note Book with Additional Notes: Hanging of Bhagat Singh, Vol. V, (Series Editor Malwinder Jit Singh Waraich and Editing and Introduction by Harish Jain), Unistar, Chandigarh, 2016, pp. cvii + 378, Price Rs. 495 (HB)

Bhagat Singh, in the revolutionary historiography of Indian Freedom Struggle, is a class apart defining the revolution in both perception and praxis. He has acquired a figure of iconic proportions in the minds of the people of Punjab in particular and India and abroad in general. Often, he along with his associates Rajguru and Sukhdev is remembered, reconstituted and rallied round in the political, literary circles and cultural festivals of North Western India. His appropriation is all-encompassing, transcending class, caste, colour and creed. Moreover, his revolutionary consciousness reverberates through his epigrammatic expression: 'making the deaf to hear'. His revolutionary vibrancy echoes that of Che Guvera and intellectual sinews match with Antonio Gramsci, Italian revolutionary and Marxist theoretician. His execution stirs imagination of the people. He lives more in the inner recesses of minds of the people than in the pages of the books. Moreover, intellectual bent of mind of Bhagat Singh is reflected through his reading and writing corpus, though small in quantity yet definitive in content.

Bhagat Singh's '*Jail Note Book*' provides golden opportunity to enter into the revolutionary mind in the fateful days of judicially- induced incarceration under the British rule during 1929-31. Though jail is its locale, yet it has universal domain. In the situation, the revolutionary got the best out of the worst. The jail elevated him to actualize his intellectual and revolutionary potential. Bhagat Singh had 'fascination' with the book. The jail was no exception. Fortunately, we are left with his *Jail Note Book*. Tracing, preservation and presentation of the *Note Book* has a chequered history which include Bhupendra Hooja, Malwinder Jit Singh Waraich and Professor Chaman Lal. However, the efforts of Malwinder Jit Singh Waraich and Mr. Harish Jain, the Editor, culminate the process by making the *Note Book* available to the reader in a comprehensive way. His extensive introduction helps a reader to 'walk along Bhagat Singh'. The

reader treads the rocky path of a mind navigating between revolutionary pragmatism and existential reality. '*Jail Note Book*' makes it clear which path did Bhagat Singh prefer to follow and then living through it.

It was on 12th September 1929 that the official of the Central Jail, Lahore handed over Bhagat Singh a '*File Note Book*' bound in red colour produced by Bharati Bhawan Booksellers, Lahore. In all, it contained 404 pages certified by the official. The family received the *Note Book* on 7th October 1930 when Bhagat Singh was transferred to the condemned cell. Onwards, the *Note Book* changed hands and houses. Finally, it reached the Nehru Memorial Museum Library, New Delhi in April 1981. There it was microfilmed and laminated. A copy was provided to the National Archives of India, New Delhi. By 1994, Sh. Bhupendra Hooja provided transcription and annotation, really a remarkable feat. Between 1994 and 2014, the *Note Book* passed through 17 editions and 7 languages in various incarnations. Professor Chaman Lal contributed a lot in this endeavour. The present '*Jail Note Book*' edited by Sh. Harish Jain is both in facsimile form and transcription with extensive annotation.

There is a lot to read about the passage of the *Note Book* and the message it enshrined in the words of Bhagat Singh. It speaks of the Punjab, British Empire, Marxism, and Revolution and world history. Extensive notes and thematic variation show the maturity of his mind. Broadly, themes impinge on State, Empire, Religion, Culture, Literature, Freedom, Liberty, Prison, Capitalism, Class, Democracy, Power, Socialism, Nature, Education, Machine, Imperialism, Bourgeoisie, Dictatorship, and Exploitation. List could be endless. He was a man of ideas and method, always in search of scientific bases of his philosophy. The output is massive, a testimony to emerging intellectual interests of a revolutionary. Death put a full stop to the body, yet his ideas are flowing into the minds of the youth and people in large. The '*Jail Note Book*' opens up the wordy and worldly domain of Bhagat Singh. He was a voracious reader and visionary exuding high hopes of revolutionary praxis. It is engrossing and intellectual *tour de force*.

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Malwinderjit Singh Waraich (ed.), *Bhagat Singh's Jail Note Book: Its Context and Relevance*, Unistar, pp. cvii+1-378, Rs. 495/-

In the streams of anti-British imperialism Shaheed Bhagat Singh is one such personality who is not only widely known at the popular level but has attracted attention of the academia. Most of the aspects of his life became known in the context of his activities, contributions and the sacrifice. Yet it was only in 1994 that his hitherto little known 'Jail Note Book' became public. Although it was in possession of his family and relations but it was on the initiative of Bhupender Hooja that it was published under the title 'A Martyr's Note Book'. G. S. Deol, however had written an article in 1968. By now the note book has more than a dozen editions and a number of translations. The editor is of the view that a number of reasons contributed towards its late publication.

That Bhagat Singh had studied a number of books in prison excited the editor of the present book. With his methodology to identify the issues at the pattern of writing along with the objective, the editor focused on tracing the origin of the notes, history of the note book, understanding the notes and the process of their selection from the books. He made use of the copy given to him by Professor Jagmohan Singh, a nephew of Shaheed Bhagat Singh. It is known or mentioned that on 12 September 1929 some official of Central Jail, Lahore gave Bhagat Singh a 'File Note Book'. It had 404 pages; of which 140 were used by Bhagat Singh during the stay.

The editor had supplemented the note book with new material arranged systemically. It included books used by Bhagat Singh, authors cited in the note book, missing pages and pagination, miscellaneous quotes, Urdu couplets and books found in searches. It is also mentioned that the miscellaneous quotations, added at the end of the book consists of notes and quotations taken by Bhagat Singh prior to his getting the present note book. The loose sheets were handed over by the jail authorities to the family along with the note book, books, papers, and other personal belongings and an iron trunk. These notes were hand copied by Professor Jagmohan Singh probably in the year 1966-67 along with the complete contents of the notebook. The appendices given at the end of the present book further enrich it.

Bhagat Singh's pre-occupation with the books became manifest from his National College days and later through his engagement with his peer group. The editor revealed that Bhagat Singh did not read only for study, but for pleasure also. 'Of all his jottings in the Note Book are not quotes in the strictest sense...some of the writings are paraphrasing or plain notes. Bhagat Singh tinkered with many of them, played with many and many a times was not prudent enough to copy correctly'. Of all the early writings of the Bhagat Singh his jail note book was different as it was not a vehicle for propaganda.

The editor counted that hundred authors are represented in the note book, while eighteen appear in miscellaneous pages. There are still 13 quotes whose authors are not known or could not be identified by the editor. He further found that the thinkers and writers in the note book are eclectic mix giving voice to millennia's human development and thought. Bhagat Singh had not read or consulted the original works of all the authors, but only a few of them and rest he picked from secondary sources. The editor cites titles of twenty-four books which according to him seems to have been read somewhat closely by Bhagat Singh. He classified them as Marxist Leninist (10), Western Thought (3), Literature and Anthology (4), Law (1) and India (5).

On the basis of this exercise, the editor succeeds in making certain assumptions which include: that Bhagat Singh read only those books in jail which found place in the note book; that the number and making of notes in the note book are the valid indicators of the interest he had taken in that particular book. At the same time he claims that both the assumptions just could not have been true. He held the assumptions that Bhagat Singh was engaged in an intense study and devoured volumes and volumes of books numbering hundreds, he was receiving in jail on a very daily basis. According to he was making a deep study of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and other Marxist-Leninist writers. He took serious notes which he put in the note book in a highly systematic manner like a scholarly study. Probably he studied law to defend his case better. He was engaged in writing four books for which he took notes and manuscripts of these books he handed over to Mrs. Lajjawati, but due to lack of her seriousness were lost to posterity.

The editor admits that these assumptions also could not have been true as none of the evidence presented and deduced so far supports such theses. At the same time one has to agree with the editor that the note book is an important source to understand the last phase of Bhagat Singh's life. In fact, the story is very clear that Shaheed Bhagat Singh had enough time in jail and he utilized it through the study of books. It also fitted his background and reflects the choice of the issues on which he needed to enhance his understanding of man and its environment.

In the end the editor deserves credit for the hard-work and his clarity of the exercise along with certain additions to be used as a source material not only on Bhagat Singh but the story of human struggle in a particular time and space.

Professor Navtej Singh

Department of Punjab Historical Studies,
Punjabi University, Patiala.

Amandeep Bal, *A Nationalist Muslim in Colonial Punjab: Life and Times of Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew*, Unistar, Chandigarh, 2015, pp. viii+180. Rs. 395 (HB).

Biography is a half way to history. There is a lingering debate on biography as history and history as biography. However, E.H. Carr makes tacit distinction: biography treats man as an individual and history treats man as a part of a whole. Historians and philosophers spar over this concern endlessly. Karl Marx reminds us that ‘*history* does nothing. It is rather man, real living *man* who does everything who possesses and fights.’ It is rather emphasis or importance one attaches to individual in the historical context. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was such a personality who personified much in the Indian National freedom struggle. Present work is a timely treatise.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was born in 1888 in Amritsar in an affluent Kashmiri family of a *pashmina* and saffron merchant. He was an illumine of Aligarh with national ethos. He studied in Europe for higher education and returned back in 1912. He knew the need of education for the development of Muslims. He took keen interest in the Home Rule Movement and was a staunch supporter of the Hindu-Muslim Unity.

The year 1919 turned out to be significant in his life. The Rowlett Bills ignited the political climate in India. With a view to arm itself, the Government rushed the Bills through the Imperial Legislative Council between February 6 and March 18, 1919. Voices were raised against the intent of the Bills. In haste, the first Bill became an Act. Mahatma Gandhi launched the Rowlett Satyagraha. The Indian National Congress had decided to convene its session at Amritsar in 1919 and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew was to be the Chairman of the Reception Committee. He became active in the Home Rule League and the Indian National Congress. He joined the Rowlett *Satyagraha* in February 1919 and organised meetings on the burning issue. The meeting on March 30th attracted 30,000 to 35,000 persons. Fraternity between Hindus and Muslims irked the British authorities. Both Drs. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Satyapal were arrested on April 9th and sent to Dharamsala on the morning of April 10, 1919. The people came to know of these arrests. There were furious crowds. A large number of them were Kashmiri Muslims. In panic, the city of Amritsar was put under military administration of General Dyer. Processions and meetings were prohibited. On the April 13th, 1919, blood bath in the Jallianwala Bagh left 379 dead and thousands injured. Dr. Kitchlew carried 24 charges under the Amritsar Conspiracy Case. To Michael O'Dwyer it was ‘a rebellion’ and Dr. Saifuddin its mastermind. However, he was released in December 1919.

He participated in the Khilafat movement and the Non-Cooperation Movement. He was populariser of Mahatma Gandhi's programme. He not only exhorted the students but also gave up his legal practise to strengthen the Khilafat and Congress movements. In January 1921, he established the Swaraj Ashram to train workers on a revolutionary line. Mahatma Gandhi and Mulana Azad stayed in the Asharam. He was 'a lone crusader' of the Civil Disobedience. In fact, his 'over-enthusiasm' courted controversy mainly among the Muslims. He also participated in the Akali movement and was arrested and confined in Nabha Jail for a month. He was released on March 21, 1924 and was also presented a *saropa* in the Darbar Sahib.

In 1924, he turned to the *tanzim* programme. The Muslim *jathas* on the Sikh model were to be organised. He wanted *tabligh* (Muslim missionary work) to be carried out with the same zeal. During this period of Hindu-Muslim tussle, he came close to the Muslim League, but its opposition to the Simon Commission annoyed Dr. Kitchlew. He once again came closer to the Congress. His anti-imperialist bent of mind was the reason of distance from the Muslim League. He was Chairman of the INC session 1929 at Lahore and was at the forefront of the Civil Obedience movement. He considered the 'Pakistan' Resolution (1940) as 'a divisive force'. During the Quit India Movement (1942), he remained aloof of the movement. He was elected President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee on May 16, 1946. During the Partition, he stood his ground against the Muslim League. He suffered heavily and was saved by the Communist and the Congress workers. He was against the Partition. Decision of the Congress in favour of the Partition 'shocked' him. His family had to leave Amritsar for Pakistan under threat, but returned after a year and settled in Delhi. He was left with 'no home'. In 1952, he was awarded the Stalin Peace Prize (Lenin Peace Prize). The price money he gave away in charity. He died on October 9, 1963 in Delhi.

Indians' writing biography often ends up being hagiographic. We often worship our dead. Biography writing once Imperialist enterprise has turned into a national project. Amandeep Bal has maintained a balance. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew remains within historical panoply. In fact, reverse is happening. He is no longer remembered in Amritsar in particular and India in general. The present work helps us to understand Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and his contribution in the freedom struggle and his irrelevance in the post-Independent India.

Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *Professor*
Chair for Study of the Ghadar Movement,
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Amritsar (PB) 143005.

APPENDIX

Complete List of Ph.D Thesis and M.Phil Dissertations

Year & Name of Author & Title of the Theses

S. No.

1974

111. Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs (1759-1849 AD)*. (Published)

1977

2. G.S. Dahiya, *Ladakh from 1846 to 1905*
3. Ravi Inder Malhotra, *Afghan Frontier Settlements (1872-1893)*.

1979

4. Joginder Kaur, *Ram Sukh Rao's Sri Fateh Singh Partap Parbhakar: Early Nineteenth Century Punjab*. (Published)
5. Kamlesh Mohan, *Militant Nationalism in Punjab (1919-1947)*. (Published)

1982

6. S. S. Hans, *Historical Analysis of Sikh Literature (1500-1859)*. (Published)
7. Anand Gauba, *Amritsar (1849-1947): A Study in Urban History*. (Published)
8. S.D. Gajrani, *Some Aspects of Agrarian Problems and Role of Peasantry in Freedom Struggle in Punjab (1920-1925)*. (Published)

1985

9. Sulakhan Singh, *The Udasis Under Sikh Rule (1750-1859 AD)*. (Published)
10. Sabinderjit Singh, *Historical Analysis of Nanak Prakash by Bhai Santokh Singh*. (Published)

11. Daljinder Singh Johal, *Society and Culture as Reflected in Panjabi Literature (1750-1859)*.

1986

12. Harish C. Sharma, *Artisans of the Punjab: A Study of Social Change in Historical Perspective (1849-1947)*. (Published)

1988

13. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy During the Late Eighteenth Century Punjab*. (Published)
14. Radha Sharma, *Peasantry Under Sikh Rule (1765-1849)*. (Published)

1989

15. Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *The Middle Classes in the Punjab (1849-1947)*. (Published)
16. Reeta Grewal, *Urbanization in the Punjab (1849-1947)*. (Published)
17. Kanchan Jyoti, *The City of Jalandhar: A Study of Urban History (1849-1947)*.
18. Gurpreet Kaur, *The Historical Analysis of Sikh Rahat namas*.
19. B.S. Hira, *Social Change in Upper Bari Doab (1849-1947)*. (Published)
20. Sukhwant Singh, *Peasant Proprietors in the Punjab (1849-1901)*. (Published)

1990

21. Joginder Singh, *The Sikh Resurgence (1900-1920)*. (Published)
22. H.S. Chopra, *Bhai Vir Singh and Editing of Parachin Panth Prakash by Rattan Singh Bhangu*.

1991

23. Amandeep, *Politics of Lala Lajpat Rai, Baba Kharak Singh and Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew: A Comparative Study*.
24. Paramjit Kaur, *Editing of Manu Manas Paryah by Kavi Sahib Singh Mirgind*.

1992

25. Sukhpal Singh, *The Punjab During Regency Period (1846-1849)*.

1993

26. Amarjit Kaur, *The Nascent Sikh Politics*.

1995

27. Gopal Singh, *The Critical Editing & Qazi Noor Mohammad's Jangnama*.

1997

28. Jaswant Singh, *The Labanas in the Punjab: Social Economic and Political Change (1849-1947)*.

2000

29. Kuldip Singh, *Namdhari Movement; Continuity and Change (1857-1959)*.

2002

30. Narinder Iqbal Singh, *Communal Violence in Punjab (1947)*.

2005

31. Balwinderjit Kaur, *A Critical Editing of Sant Rein's Udasi Bodh*.
32. Jaspreet Walia, *Master Tara Singh and Sikh Politics (1920-1947)*.

2006

33. Jagdishpal Singh, *Administration of Civil Justice in the Punjab (1849-1947)*. (Published)
34. Gagandip Cheema, *Health, Disease and Medicine in the Punjab (1849-1901)*. (Published)

2008

35. Seema Arora, *Contemporaneous British Historiography on Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Lahore*. (Published)
36. Balwant Singh Malhi, *The Radha Soami Satsang Beas (Punjab) and its Schismatic Groups (Ad 1903-2003)*.
37. Baljit Singh, *The Elections and Politicisation in the Punjab (1945-47)*.

2009

38. Parminder Singh, *Historical Analysis of Gurbilas Patshahi 10 by Koer Singh*.
39. Kuldip Singh, *A Study of Social and Economic Change in a Village of the Punjab (1865-1997)*.

40. Vishav Bandhu, *Arya Smaj and DAV Movement : A Case Study of DAV Institutions from 1947-2001*.

2010

41. Charanjit Kaur, *Context, Experience and Consequences of Punjabi Diaspora: A Case Study of Village Shanker (1947-2001)*.
42. Jasbir Singh, *Violence, Trauma and Loss: Literary Representations of the Partition of the Punjab (1947)*.
43. Supreet Kaur, *Critical Editing of Ghulam Muhy-ud-Din's Futuhat-Namah-di-Samadi*.

2011

44. Nirapjit Parmar, *Reconstructing Gender from Sikh Literature (1500-1920)*.
45. Chanderkanta, *Historical Monuments of the Kapurthala State*.

2012

46. Rakesh Sharma, *The Imperial War and Its Consequences: The Punjab (1939-45)*. (Published)
47. Vinay Sophat, *Idea of Swami Vivekananda's National Awakening*.
48. Renu Bala, *Society and Culture of the Punjab: Late eighteenth and Early nineteenth Century*.
49. Kiranjeet Sandhu, *The Udasis in the Colonial Punjab (1848-1947)*.
- 50.
51. Pushpinder Kumari, *Peasantry and Politics after the Green Revolution in Punjab*.

2013

52. Daljit Kaur, *Sikh Shrines from Sikh Historical Literature (Late 19th and early 20th Centuries)*.
53. Kamaljit Singh, *The Lubanas of Punjab: A Study of Social, Economic and Political Change (1947-2001)*.
54. Babusha Maingi, *The Namdhari Sikhs of Punjab (1947-2001)*.

2014

55. Amandeep Kaur, *Education among Punjabi Women: Role of Sikh Institutions (Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century)*.

Ph.D THESIS (1974-2017)

145

56. Harmandeep Singh Sohal, *Literary Representation of Revolutionary Movements: Naujawan Bharat Sabha and Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.*
57. Manjit Singh, *Social and Economic Challenges in Punjab: 1947-66.*

2015

58. Sarita Rana, *A Critical Editing of Giani Gian Singh's Nirmal Panth Pardipika (A.D.1891).*
59. Kabil Singh Bhatti, *The Swadeshi Movement in the Punjab (1905-07).*
60. Satnam Singh, *Region and the Rulers: Structure of Economy in the Punjab during the Late Eighteenth Century (1750-1799).*
61. Anchal Sharma, *Indian Migration to West Asia with Special Reference to Bahrain: A Study in Historical Perspective (1930-2007).*
62. Sharanjeet Nijjar, *Structure and Functioning of the Board of the Administration in Punjab (1849-1853).* (Published)
63. Gurjot Kaur, *Contextualizing Colonialism: Brij Narain as an Economic Historian.*
64. Harminder Kaur, *Relocating the Uprising of 1857 in Colonial Punjab.*

2017

65. Arti Suri, *Politics of the Punjabi Suba Movement.*
66. Rohit Kumar, *British Economic Policies in the Punjab: 1849-1901.*
67. Raj Kumar, *Empire, The Punjab and the First World War.*
68. Shalini, *Polity, Society and Economy of Jammu in the First Half of Nineteenth Century.*
69. Sunaina Pathania, *Indians in South East Asia with Special Reference to Punjabis in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand.*
70. Showkat Ahmad Dar, *Socio-Cultural and Economic Developments in Kashmir under the Mughals (A.D.1586-1753).*

M.Phil Dissertations (1979-2014)

1979

1. Ganeshi Mahajan, *Congress Politics in the Punjab (1885-1947)*. (Published)
2. Partap Chander Sharma, *Political Consciousness in Punjab (1900-1919)*.
3. Sukhwant Singh, *Agricultural Development in the Punjab Plains (1849-1947)*.
4. Urmilla Sharma, *Social Economic aspects of Separatism in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.

1980

5. Joginder Singh, *The Sikh Resurgence (1849-1947)*.
6. J. S. Bhutani, *Quit India Movement: 1942*.
7. Mohinder Singh, *Peasantry and the Village Organization in Medieval India*.
8. Asha Wadhwa, *Vaishnava Bhakti in the Punjab*.
9. Gurbachan Kaur Kahlon, *Social Religious Conditions as Reflected in Janam Sakhis of the 17th Century*.
10. Harminder Singh, *Industrial Development in the Punjab (1901-1947)*.
11. Inderyas Bhatti, *Nobility Under Lahore Darbar*.
12. Indra, *Politics, Society and Culture of India as gleaned from the European Travellers' Accounts During Late 17th Century*.
13. Jasbir Singh, *Muslim League: An Institutional Study (1906-1947)*.
14. Kiran Bedi, *Demand for Swaraj (1905-1930)*.
15. Kirpal Singh, *The Educational Programme of Christian Missionaries in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
16. Kulbir Singh, *Trade and Industry in the Kingdom of Lahore (1799-1849)*.
17. Ranjit Singh, *The Babbar Akali Movement*.
18. Sukhdev Singh, *The Middle Classes in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
19. Surinder Kaur, *British Policy towards Education in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.

20. Veena Sachdeva, *Rule of the Bhangis*.

1982

21. Gurpreet Kaur, *An Attempt to Account for the Popularity of Bhai Bala Janamsakhi*.
22. Vinod Kumar, *Akali Politics in the Punjab (1925-1947)*.
23. Adarsh Kaur, *Trade in the Punjab (1849-1901)*.
24. Gurbax Kaur, *British Policies in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
25. Jagir Singh, *Canal Colonies in the Punjab (1886-1947)*.
26. Jasmittar Singh, *The Nirankaris (1849-1947)*.
27. Jit Singh, *The Amritsar Singh Sabha (1873-1901)*.
28. Kiranjit Sandhu, *Banda Singh Bahadur (1708-1716)*.
29. Rakesh Sharma, *Business Communities in the Kingdom of Lahore*.
30. Ranjana Kumari, *Textile Industries in the Punjab (1858-1947)*.
31. Reeta Grewal, *Polity, Economy and Urbanization in Early Nineteenth Century Punjab*.
32. Rita Rani, *Foreign Trade in India (1858-1914)*.
33. Sukhdev Singh, *Educational Aspects of the Arya Samaj (1886-1947)*.

1984

34. Jaswant Singh, *Lobanas in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
35. Jatinder Kaur, *Customary Laws of the Upper Bari Doab and Bist Jalandhar (1849-1947)*.
36. Jatinder Sandhu, *Attitude of Arya Samaj Towards Other Communities in the Punjab*.
37. Kashmir Singh, *History of Khalsa College, Amritsar*.
38. Manjit Singh, *European Officers of Ranjit Singh*.
39. Paramjit Kaur, *Sikh Chiefs of Satlej-Jamuna Divide (1760-1809)*.
40. Sukhpal Singh, *Civil Services in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.

1985

41. Amandeep Dhillon, *Lala Lajpat Rai: A Study of his Ideology and Politics*.
42. Amarjit Kaur, *Editing of Das Gur by Kankan kavi*.

43. Baljinder Kaur, *Occupational Changes in the Punjab (1881-1931)*.
44. Barjinder Kaur, *The Jats in the Punjab During the Nineteenth Century*.
45. Bimaljit Kaur, *Role of the Hill Chiefs in the Kingdom of Lahore*.
46. Har Kanwaljit Kaur, *Editing of Rajniti by Devidas*.
47. Harpreet Kaur, *Land Rights in the Punjab: Early Nineteenth Century*.
48. Maninder, *European Travellers to the Kingdom of Ranjit Singh (1830-1834)*.
49. Nisha, *Mazhbi Sikhs in the Upper Bari Doab (1881-1951)*.
50. Parveen Dhawan, *Brahmans in the Punjab (1880-1930)*.
51. Poonam Seth, *The Municipality of Jalandhar (1950-1975)*.
52. Ravinder Kaur, *The Tribune and the Punjab Politics (1930-1947)*.
53. Rita, *Transport System in the Punjab (1849-1901)*.
54. Sarabjit Kaur, *The Tribune and the Punjab Politics (1837-1947)*.
55. Saroj Bala Saddi, *Industrial Working Class in the Punjab (1901-1947)*.
56. Sukhbir Singh, *Akali Politics and the Tribune (1936-1947)*.
57. Sukhwinder Kaur, *Business Communities in the Punjab (1904-1947)*.
58. Sunita Mahajan, *The Chamars of the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
59. Usha Rani, *The Commercialization of Agriculture in the Punjab (1900-01 to 1918-19)*.

1986

60. Hardev Singh, *Analysis of Jangnama Shah Mohammed*.
61. Harjinder Kaur, *Analysis of the Land Revenue Settlement: Reports of the jalandhar District Under the British Rule*.
62. Jugraj Kaur Bath, *Historical Analysis of Rani Rajindermati Charitar: History of Punjab (1839-1849)*.
63. Kamlesh Kumari, *Gurdaspur Municipality in the Punjab (1920-1947)*.
64. Manjit Kaur, *Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Tribune*.

65. Rachhpal Kaur, *Kambohs in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
66. R.K. Dewedi, *The Khattris in the Punjab (with special reference to the 19th century)*.
67. Satpal Kaur, *Journalism in the Punjab and the Khalsa Samachar (1891-1919)*.

1987

68. Balwinder jeet, *Dharmath Grants Under Sikh Rule (1750-1850)*.
69. Bhupinder Kaur, *Agricultural Labourers in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
70. Gurdeep Singh, *Tenant-Cultivator in the Upper Bari Doab (1849-1947)*.
71. J. N. Singh, *Vaishnavas of Pindori*.
72. Kuldip Singh, *Baba Ram Singh and the Namdhari Movement*.
73. Madanjit Gill, *Administration of Justice in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
74. Naresh Kumari, *Jagairdari System in the Kingdom of Lahore (1799-1849)*.
75. Paramjit Kaur, *Editing of Ranjeet by Tansukh*.
76. Prabhjot Kaur Nagi, *Moneylenders in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
77. Parvinder Kaur, *Transport System in the Punjab (1901-1947)*.
78. Poonam Dutta, *Banking in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
79. Satinder Kaur, *Agricultural Technology in the Punjab (1849-1947): A Study of Socio-Economic Change*.
80. Seema Sukarchakia, *Education of Women in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
81. Surinder Kaur, *Co-operative societies in the Punjab (1904-1947)*.
82. Varsha Bala, *Kartarpur and its Municipal records*.
83. Harpal Kaur, *Marketing of Agricultural Produce in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.

1988

84. Kuljit Kaur, *Public Works in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
85. Paramdeep, *Municipality of Chheharta (1952-1978)*.
86. Rajneesh Kumar, *Politics of Muslim Separatism (1837-1947)*.

- 87. Sandhu Lovely, *Akali-Congress Relations (1920-1947)*.
- 88. Sarabjit Chahal, *Rule of the Ahluwalias (1765-1837)*.
- 89. Sawaran Lata, *Urbanization in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.

1989

- 90. Asha Ohri, *Industries of Punjab (1901-1947)*.
- 91. Baljeet Kaur, *Social reforms undertaken by the Chief Khalsa Diwan (1902-1920)*.
- 92. Balwinder Kaur, *The Municipal Committee of Hoshiarpur (1953-1986)*.
- 93. Charanjit Kaur, *Chief Khalsa Diwan (1902-1947)*.
- 94. Geeta Rani, *The Municipal Committee of Ludhiana (1849-1947)*.
- 95. Harinder Kaur, *Analysis of the Settlement Reports of the Hoshiarpur District Under British Rule*.
- 96. Harpinder Kaur, *The Editing of Rajniit by Goal Parshant*.
- 97. Harpreet Kaur, *Critical Analysis of B-40 Janamsakhi Paintings*.
- 98. Karam Chand Raghav, *Kangra in Relations to the Sikhs*.
- 99. Kulwinder Kaur, *The Towns of Phillaur (1867-1947)*.
- 100. Parveen Lata, *Public Works in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
- 101. Phoolan Rani, *Criminal Tribes and Jail Administration in the Punjab (1849-1947)*.
- 102. Raj Kumari, *Trade in the Punjab (1901-1947)*.
- 103. Raj Kumar Sharma, *The Towns of Gurdaspur: An Urban Study (1825-1981)*.
- 104. Renu Behal, *Social and Religious Reforms of Arya Samaj (1875-1947)*.
- 105. Sangita Jaggi, *Business Communities of the City of Amritsar under Colonial Rule (1849-1947)*.
- 106. Vishav Bandhu, *Industries of Amritsar City (1849-1947)*.

1990

- 107. Balbir Kaur, *The Punjabee and the National Movement in the Punjab (1904-1907)*.
- 108. Barinder Bedi, *Historical Background of Gurdwaras of Amritsar and Gurdaspur Districts*.

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109. Chander Kanta, *Demographic Change in Jalandhar Doab (1881-1931)*.
110. Charanjit Kaur, *British Educational System: An Analysis of Punjab Administration Reports (1901-1921)*.
111. Gurjot Kaur, *An Analysis of the Tribune with special Reference to the Demand for Pakistan (1940-1947)*.
112. Gursharan Kaur, *The City of Nawanshahar: A Study in Urban History (1951-1981)*.
113. Harinder Singh, *Nangal Lubana (1956-1988) Study of Socio-Economic Change*.
114. Harvinder, *Dina Nagar: Past and Present (1852-1990)*.
115. Jasdip Kaur, *Kartarpur: Some Aspects of its Social and Economic History (1849-1947)*.
116. Kawaljit Kaur, *Business Communities of Jalandhar (1846-1947)*.
117. Meenakshi Gupta, *Agrarian Unrest in the Punjab: An Analysis of The Tribune and the Punjabee (1901-1907)*.
118. Neelam Kalsi, *The Swadeshi Movement in the Punjab (1905-1906)*.
119. Pardeep Kaur, *Sugar Industry in The Punjab (1933-87)*.
120. Rashida, *The Municipality of Dhariwal (1955-1980)*.
121. Sarabjit Kaur, *Sikh Politics in Historical Perspective : A Study of Majithia Papers*.
122. Satveer Kaur, *Batala: An Urban and Historical Study*.
123. Seema, *Arya-Sikh Relations as Reflected in Arya Patrika (1885-1888)*.
124. Sharanbir Kaur, *Political Biography of Hira Singh Dard*.
125. Simmi Johal, *Sikh Painting as a Social and Historical Documents*.
126. Sukhbir Singh, *Regulated Marketing of Agricultural Produce in the Punjab (1966-1989)*.

1991

127. Balwinder Kaur, *Famine in the Punjab in the Late 19th Century: A Case Study of Hissar District*.
128. Charanjit Kaur, *Historical Analysis of Sikhan De Raj Di Vithia by Shradha Ram Phillauri*.

129. Papinder Singh, *Brahmo Movement in the Punjab*(1863-1925)
130. Shashi Sharma, *Journalistic Activities of the Singh Sabha Movement (1878-1920)*.

1992

131. Sukhwinder Kaur, *Left Wing Politics among the Sikhs*.
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