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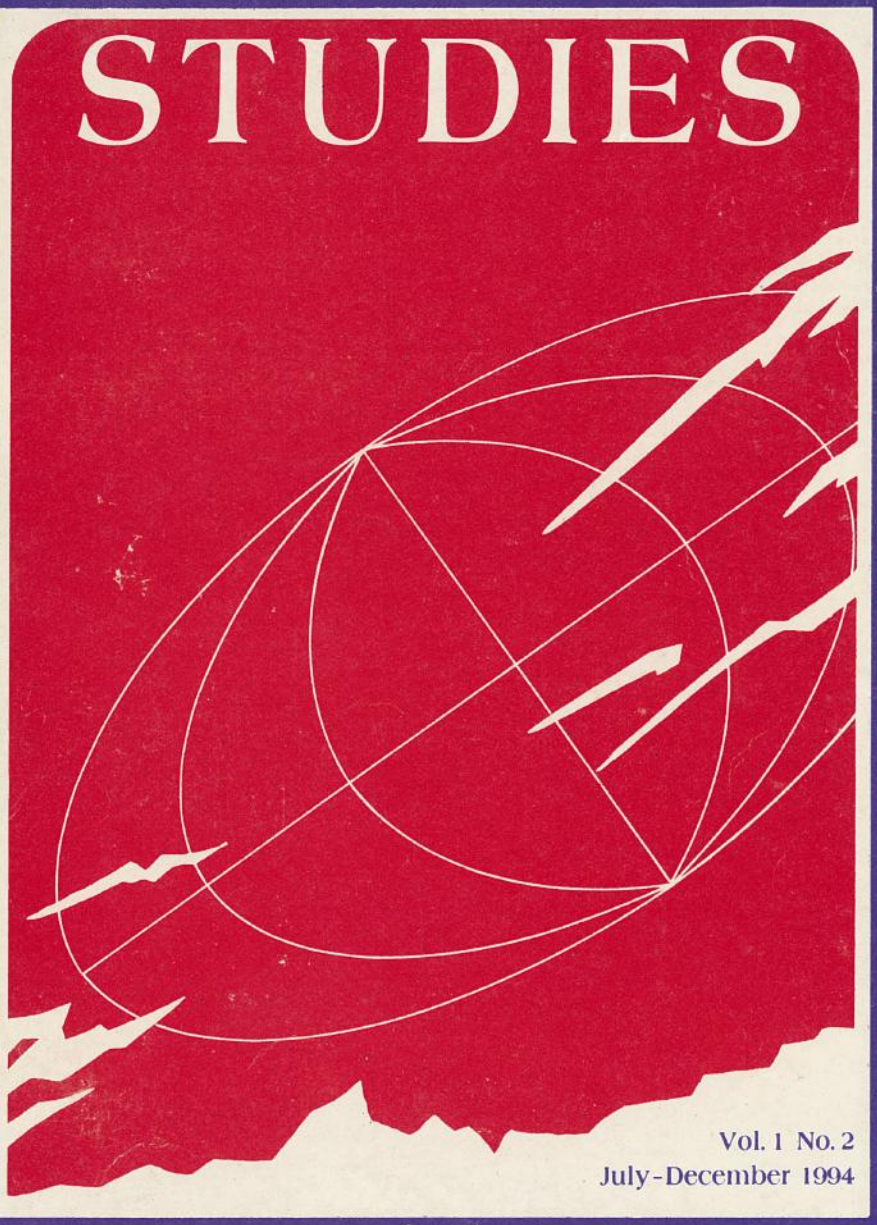

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Prelude to Partition: Sikh Responses to the Demand for Pakistan, 1940–47

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It is well-known that the Sikhs in the Punjab played a central role in the large-scale communal violence that accompanied the creation of Pakistan in 1947. Rather less is known, however, about their earlier responses to the idea of Pakistan: their reaction to the Muslim League's Lahore Resolution of 1940; their reactions to the growing popularity (amongst the Muslim masses) and viability of the Pakistan idea; their responses to, and involvement in, tortuous political negotiations on the Pakistan issue between the main political parties in India after 1942. This essay explores the political dilemma facing the Sikh community in the Punjab in the wake of the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan in the 1940s. It examines the various initiatives (including demands for the creation of a separate Sikh state in the Punjab) taken by the Sikh political leadership in their attempts to safeguard the community against an uncertain political future. It sets out the unfortunate series of setbacks for the Sikhs which eventually led them to play a major part in the communal upheaval which accompanied the partition of the Punjab and the creation of Pakistan in August 1947.

INTRODUCTION

In August 1947 the Sikhs, enraged that the Punjab would be partitioned and half of it given to the newly created state of Pakistan, reacted with unbridled fury and plunged the province into a state of carnage and destruction. The birth of Pakistan had split the community and robbed them of their sacred sites and agricultural lands in western Punjab. Many of them, left on the wrong side of the border, had to abandon their ancestral homes for the safety of eastern Punjab. Inflamed with desperation and hatred, the Sikhs sought to exact their revenge on the Muslims. In the weeks following independence and partition, the Punjab was engulfed in massacres on an unprecedented scale.

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The magnitude of the part played by the Sikhs in the tragic events of August 1947 has long excited interest amongst historians but inexplicably has yet to receive a treatment worthy of its importance. The traditional historiography of the British transfer of power in India, invariably preoccupied with the triangular negotiations involving the British, the Congress and the Muslim League, has dedicated but a few pages to the story of the Sikhs in the 1940s, merely pointing out that the Sikhs in the Punjab found themselves in a rather awkward position on the eve of partition.[1] There has been precious little attempt to explain the violent outbursts except in very simplistic references to the turbulent nature of the Sikhs and their deep-seated antipathy to the Muslims.

Although the historical literature on twentieth century Sikh politics has developed significantly since the 1960s, one still finds in the works of B.R. Nayar, Khushwant Singh, Rajiv Kapur and J.S. Grewal, for instance, only very cursory treatment of Sikh politics during the climacteric phase that culminated in the dissolution of the British Raj, the independence of the Indian state and the birth of the nation state of Pakistan.[2] As a result, several questions concerning the Sikhs in the 1940s call for closer attention. How did the Sikhs perceive the idea of Pakistan as it evolved from 1940 to 1947? Was there any consensus or unanimity in the way the community as a whole reacted to the threat of Pakistan? How did perceptions of Pakistan affect Sikh political orientations particularly with regard to their relationship with the Unionists, the Congress and the Muslim League? How did the question of Pakistan shape their approaches to the British constitutional initiatives? Why did the Sikhs eventually settle for a partition of the Punjab only to have to physically uproot a substantial portion of their fellow brethren from western Punjab and sacrifice in the process their sacred shrines, prosperous canal colonies and some of their best farming lands?

More recently, Indu Banga has addressed some of these questions and given us an illuminating account of what she calls the 'crisis of Sikh politics in the 1940s'.[3] Although we now have a clearer picture of how the Sikhs, in particular the Shiromani Akali Dal, reacted to the threat of Muslim domination as posed by the Pakistan demand, we are still left without a sense of the dilemma the Sikhs found themselves in during the 1940s. There is little doubt that the Sikhs were opposed to Pakistan for religious–emotional reasons; they feared that Pakistan, once realised, would convert the Punjab (being a Muslim majority province) into an Islamic state, where the Sikhs would be at the mercy of Muslim tyranny. But in opposing Pakistan, the Sikhs had to face the possibility of a partitioning of the Punjab, which would inevitably split the Sikh

community. On the other hand, the Sikhs could have closed ranks with the Muslims and supported a Pakistan which would have kept the province intact, and might have given them bargaining power vis-á-vis the Muslims. But could the Muslims be trusted?

This essay is an attempt to understand the difficult choices facing the Sikhs in the Punjab in the final years of the Raj. It examines how the process of the transfer of power from the British Raj, immensely complicated by the demand for Pakistan, steadily and almost inexorably undermined the props that for almost a century had secured the interests of the Sikh minority in the Punjab until it found its tragic denouement in the massacres of 1947.

SIKHS AND THE LAHORE RESOLUTION

In March 1940 the All India Muslim League passed its famous Lahore Resolution, demanding the creation of a separate state from the Muslim majority areas in India. The Lahore Resolution was a vague statement, glaring in its absence of detail. No mention was made of the nature and substance of the proposed Muslim state, and except for the vague term, 'Muslim majority areas', the Lahore Resolution gave no specific definition of the areas which were to constitute the 'autonomous and sovereign units' that were to form the Muslim state. Its ambiguity notwithstanding, the Lahore Resolution sparked off an enormous furore amongst the Sikhs in the Punjab. The Sikh reaction was not unexpected. The creation of a Muslim state, already dubbed 'Pakistan' by the popular press, was perceived as a threat to the very existence of the Sikh community; the professed intention of the Muslim League to impose a Muslim state on the Punjab (a Muslim majority province) was thus anathema to the Sikhs.

No sooner was the Lahore Resolution made public than the Sikhs launched a virulent campaign against it. Pakistan was portrayed as a possible return to an unhappy past when Sikhs were the persecuted and Muslims the persecutors. Public speeches by various Sikh political leaders on the subject of Pakistan invariably raised images of atrocities committed by Muslims on Sikhs and of the martyrdom of their gurus and heroes. Reactions to the Lahore Resolution were uniformly negative, and Sikh leaders of all political persuasions made it clear that Pakistan would be 'wholeheartedly resisted'.[4] The Shiromani Akali Dal, the party with a substantial following amongst the rural Sikhs,[5] organised several well-attended conferences in Lahore to condemn the Muslim League.[6] Master Tara Singh, leader of the Akali Dal, declared that his party would fight Pakistan 'tooth and nail'.[7] Not to be outdone, other Sikh political

organisations, rivals to the Akali Dal (namely, the Central Khalsa Young Men Union and the moderate and loyalist Chief Khalsa Dewan), declared in equally strong language their unequivocal opposition to the Pakistan scheme.[8]

Akali criticism soon shifted from the Muslim League to the Unionist government. Master Tara Singh had been opposed to the Unionist chief, Sikander Hayat Khan, since the Shahidganj affair in 1935, and was quick to seize the opportunity to use the Pakistan issue to embarrass the Unionist government. Sikander, who had signed a pact with Jinnah in 1937, was accused of collusion with the Muslim League and its scheme to impose a Muslim Raj in the Punjab. Sikhs in the Unionist government were not spared either; members of the Khalsa National Party who had joined the government were denounced as a bunch of traitors.[9]

Knowing that Sikander's government was built on an inter-communal alliance of agricultural interests, and that Sikander would be hard-pressed by his Hindu and Sikh allies to distance himself from the Lahore Resolution with its avowed expression of Muslim nationalism, the Akali Dal started to apply pressure on the Unionist government, using the resolution to wring political concessions for the Sikhs. In the months following the announcement of the resolution, the Akali Dal launched a series of highly publicised attacks on the Unionist government, accusing it of pursuing a communal policy aimed at subverting the political and cultural rights of the non-Muslims in the Punjab.[10] In particular, the Akali Dal charged that the Sikhs had been discriminated against by the Unionists in matters of gurdwara management, recruitment and promotion in government services, and other religious matters.[11] Sikhs were told to distance themselves from the Unionist government, and those serving in the legislative assembly were told to resign their posts as long as the Unionists remained associated with the Muslim League.[12]

Throughout the Punjab in the summer of 1940, the Akali Dal conducted a feverish campaign to whip up popular opposition to the Muslim League and the Unionist Party. Rallies were held to coincide with well-attended melas, where speakers denounced the idea of Pakistan. A Ghallugara day was observed by the Akali Dal to remember the massacre of the Sikhs at the hands of the Muslim invader, Ahmad Shah Abdali, in 1762.[13] During these months, Akali leaders not only succeeded in creating an atmosphere of general nervousness amongst the Sikh population, as was revealed by the feverish purchase of arms and ammunition,[14] but, at the same time, generated tremendous popularity for the Akali Dal itself, seen now as the champion of the Sikh cause against Pakistan.[15]

By the end of 1941, however, the initial excitement generated by the

Lahore Resolution had begun to subside, and the anti-Pakistan campaigns began to lose momentum. Despite their fierce rhetoric, the Sikh leadership knew that for the moment, Pakistan posed no immediate threat; the British were too busy with the War to concern themselves with the constitutional future of India. Furthermore, by 1941, Sikh politics had come to focus on the question of War recruitment and Sikh–Congress relations. Since the 1880s, the Sikhs had been a favoured 'martial race', and were heavily recruited for the Indian Army. But following the Akali agitation in the 1920s, the British became suspicious of the loyalty of the Sikhs, and their numbers in the army consequently dwindled. In 1939, when War broke out and the British began a recruitment campaign in the Punjab, the reaction of the Sikhs was largely divided. Sikhs loyal to the Congress were committed to the official Congress policy of sympathy to the anti-fascist struggle but no support for the War; the loyalist Khalsa Nationalist Party followed its traditional line of total support for the King Emperor; while Sikh communists were actively propagating the War as an imperialist one in which the Sikhs should remain uninvolved.[16]

The Akali Dal's attitude towards the War was ambivalent. While it was generally sympathetic to the nationalist movement, it realised that the Sikh community would lose their favoured position in the army, and the economic advantages that went with it, if they boycotted British recruitment drives. This ambivalent attitude soon had its political fallout. Unable to come to terms with the Congress insistence on non-cooperation in the War effort, Master Tara Singh finally decided to break ranks with the Congress. On 12 September 1940, he resigned from the Congress and came out in open support of the British War effort. He and his supporters subsequently played a major role in the creation of the Khalsa Defence of India League, set up with the sole object of encouraging Sikhs to join the Indian Army.[17] Master Tara Singh's resignation from the Congress precipitated a rift in the Akali Dal; a strongly anti-British faction led by Baba Kharak Singh broke away in October 1940 to revive the Central Sikh League which remained closely associated with the Congress throughout the 1940s.

SIKHS AND THE CRIPPS OFFER

In March 1942 the spectre of Pakistan once again surfaced on the horizon of Sikh politics when Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Privy Seal of the British Cabinet, arrived in Delhi with a draft declaration concerning India's political future. The draft declaration represented a radical British initiative which signalled very clearly that the British government was serious

about granting Indians the right to rule themselves in the near future. The declaration contained a 'local option' clause, which meant that, should the Muslims decide to, Muslim majority provinces could secede from the Indian Union. To the Sikhs, the Cripps proposal, with its 'local option' clause, seemed to imply that the British were prepared to concede Pakistan in principle.[18]

Cripps was well aware of Sikh anxiety towards the draft declaration. He met various Sikh representatives, including an All Parties Sikh delegation led by Master Tara Singh,[19] and assured them that there were enough safeguards embodied in his proposal to protect the interests of their community. He pointed out that the Congress, should it eventually emerge as the major party in India, would require the support of all minorities to form a constituent assembly at the centre, and the Sikhs could take advantage of this and press the centre for safeguards. If this was not forthcoming, the Sikhs could join the Muslims of the Punjab and vote in the legislative assembly or through a plebiscite for the secession of the Punjab from the Union, and in return for their support for the Muslims demand certain protection clauses in the constitution of the non-acceding province. They could, for instance, 'set up a semi-autonomous Sikh-dominated unit within the non-acceding province.[20]

Cripps's assurances, however, failed to allay Sikh fears. As far as the Akali Dal was concerned, the safeguards which Cripps talked about could not be guaranteed, and as long as the Muslim majority in the Punjab had the deciding say in secession there was every likelihood that the Sikhs, being the powerless minority, could be brought, willy-nilly, into Pakistan. The Sikhs instantly rejected the draft declaration, and announced that they would 'resist by all possible means the separation of the Punjab from the All-Indian Union'.[21]

The Sikh community was thus relieved when both the Congress and the Muslim League rejected the draft declaration borne by Cripps. The failure of the Cripps Mission had momentarily lessened the threat of Pakistan, but the lesson of the episode was not lost on the Sikhs. The Cripps Mission showed that the only way for the Sikhs to be taken seriously in any future constitutional process was for them to have a dominant say in the politics of the Punjab. The Sikhs knew they could not look beyond the Punjab for deliverance; their numbers were concentrated in the Punjab, and unlike the Hindus and Muslims, they were hardly a presence anywhere else in India. Master Tara Singh highlighted the problem when he said: 'The Hindu and Muslim majority of India could always look to those provinces wherein their co-religionists were in a majority; but the Sikhs can never do this'.[22] The Akalis were also worried that the Congress, in

its desire to achieve independence quickly, would eventually sacrifice Sikh interests to realise its objective. Master Tara Singh had already fallen out with the Congress leadership, and the Congress Working Committee seemed less than unequivocal in its rejection of Pakistan when it resolved that 'it could not think in terms of compelling people to remain in the Indian Union against their declared will', a view echoing that of the Madras leader, C. Rajagopalachari, who had earlier advocated that the Congress 'acknowledge the Mulsim League's claims for separation as the lesser evil' to sacrificing the chances of the Congress forming a national government.[23]

Consequently, in 1942, soon after the dejected Cripps left India, the Akali Dal took a political about-turn, and proceeded to close ranks with the Unionist government. The way was cleared for a rapprochement between the Akali Dal and the Unionists with the death of Tara Singh's old political rival, Sunder Singh Majithia, the Khalsa Nationalist Party leader who had been closely associated with the Unionist Party since its formation in 1923. Secret negotiations were started between the Akali Dal through its representative Baldev Singh, a wealthy Sikh industrialist, and Sikander Hayat Khan. On 15 June 1942, an agreement was reached, and the Sikander–Baldev Singh pact was sealed. Under the terms of the pact, the Unionist government promised to give special consideration to Sikh demands and Baldev Singh was appointed to the provincial cabinet as the sole Sikh representative; as a quid pro quo the Akali Dal undertook to refrain from further anti-Unionist activities.[24]

The pact was well received by the majority of the Sikh community, although some sections, particularly Congressite and communist Sikhs as well as rivals of Tara Singh,[25] showed dissatisfaction. Tara Singh was accused of selling Sikh interests for his own political gains. Such criticism notwithstanding, the general feeling was that with the pact the religious rights of the Sikhs would be preserved.[26] The pact thus brought about an improvement in the tone of communal politics in the Punjab. Sikh–Muslim relations became less tenuous as both communities were obliged to refrain from polemics against each other. Tensions between the communities were evidently more relaxed during the Id and Diwali festivals, events which were usually marred by communal restlessness. With the Sikander–Baldev Singh pact the Pakistan issue in the Punjab was marginalised, and Sikh criticisms of the Unionist government ceased temporarily.

This state of affairs was, however, disrupted in November 1942 by Jinnah's visit to the Punjab. Not wishing to create an open rupture with the Muslim League that might unsettle the Muslim ranks in his party, Sikander had to concede that he saw 'eye to eye with the champion of

Pakistan'.[27] The statement immediately raised the ire of the Akali Dal. The Akalis began to suspect that Sikander was playing a 'double-game' with them, but before recriminations started, Sikander suddenly died of a heart attack in December 1942. The Akali Dal once again found itself in a fix. It had been uneasy about Sikander's relationship with Jinnah, but at the same time, Sikander's pact with the Sikhs offered the best guarantee of their interests being protected in the Punjab. With the premier dead, the pact, however flimsy, could no longer be taken as a guarantee of Sikh interests; the Akali Dal then decided that a new strategy had to be evolved to protect their community. By early 1943, the Akali Dal started talking about a redemarcation of the Punjab province, and an idea which had first been aired in 1931 hardened into a concrete demand.

THE DEMAND FOR *AZAD* PUNJAB

At the Round Table Conference in London in 1931, the Sikh delegate, Sardar Ujjal Singh had suggested that if the existing boundaries of the Punjab were redrawn, and the Muslim-dominated western districts of the province detached, the respective proportions of the communities in the reconstituted Punjab would be more balanced, and there would be no need to introduce unpopular devices such as communal weightage or separate electorates to solve the communal problem in the province.[28] The Sikhs would benefit from this scheme as under a reconstituted Punjab, shorn of the Muslim majority western districts, the Sikhs would form a substantial community and thus have a bigger say in the politics of the province. This scheme did not make much headway at the Round Table Conferences in the 1930s, but the idea was suddenly revived and given credence during a debate in the British House of Commons in April 1942. Leo Amery, Secretary of State for India, mentioned that the British government was willing to consider alternative methods 'which offered a better basis for the definition of boundaries...which might give representation to the smaller elements, such as the Sikhs'.[29] The Akali Dal quickly latched on to the idea and, in March 1942, decided to embrace the demand for Azad Punjab—the definition given to the new territory after the boundaries had been readjusted—as a policy.[30]

In essence, the Azad Punjab scheme involved the redemarcation of the boundaries of the Punjab by detaching the Muslim majority areas of western Punjab away from it. In Azad Punjab, the proportion of the three communities would be more equitable, and no single community would be in a dominating position. The Akali Dal thus saw Azad Punjab as comprising the Ambala, Jullunder and Lahore divisions, the Lyallpur

district of the Multan division, and some portions of Montgomery and Multan districts.[31] In Azad Punjab, Muslims would constitute 40 per cent of the population, Hindus 40 per cent and the Sikhs 20 per cent. This demographic pattern would thus enable the Sikhs to hold the balance of power between the Muslims and the Hindus, and thus maximise their political leverage in the province.[32] The Akali Dal tried to justify the vivisection of the Punjab by arguing that the north-western parts of the province, west of the river Jhelum, did not belong to Punjab proper, but were only added to the Punjab by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.[33]

Azad Punjab was not intended to be a Sikh state carved out of the Punjab. Unlike the Muslims, the Sikhs were not sufficiently localised or self-contained to realistically demand a separate state of their own. There was not a single district in the Punjab where the Sikhs commanded a majority. But if future constitutional developments were to proceed along the lines of the Cripps offer, a provincial plebiscite could ultimately determine the future of the Punjab. In that eventuality, the Sikhs would want to be in a position to determine the outcome; in Azad Punjab, their numbers would ensure that things would go their way. The Azad Punjab proposition was essentially a means by which the Sikhs hoped to offset their permanent disadvantage as a minority in the Punjab.[34]

The Akali Dal was convinced that the Azad Punjab scheme offered the best way out of the present political impasse, not only for the Sikhs, but for the British and the Hindus as well. Sir Stafford Cripps was told that 'if the British government was prepared to accept this proposal...there [was] a likelihood of a final solution to the communal problem, at least in the Punjab'.[35] The Hindus were told that Azad Punjab would free both Hindus and Sikhs from the 'shackle of Muslim domination'. Even if the Muslims insisted on Pakistan, they would have to settle for a country deprived of the valuable resources of central Punjab.[36]

Outside the ranks of the Akali Dal, however, enthusiasm for the Azad Punjab scheme was more muted. The general sentiment was that a redrawing of Punjab's boundaries was too problematic, and certainly not worth the trouble just to try and placate the Sikhs. Sir Bertrand Glancy, Governor of the Punjab, pointed out that 'the practical objections to the scheme were even greater than those which lie in the path of Pakistan'.[37] The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, shared his views. Although he admitted that the Sikhs were a nuisance worth placating, they were nevertheless a 'small nuisance'; he warned that the British should be careful not to give substance to a 'shadow of such a preposterous claim'.[38]

Within the Sikh community, the pro-Congress Central Akali Dal criticised the scheme for its intention to vivisect India and its failure to

take into consideration the Sikhs living in the Rawalpindi division. The Congressite and Communist Sikhs called the scheme communal, anti-national and reactionary.[39] The leaders of the Sikhs in the western districts of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Campbellpore, Mardan, Kohat and Peshawar, all of which would be shorn off from the Punjab under the Azad Punjab scheme, insisted that a referendum be taken by the entire Sikh community in the Punjab, and only if more than two-thirds wanted Azad Punjab should the demand be pressed.[40] The opposition notwithstanding, the Akali Dal embarked on a strident campaign to press its demand for Azad Punjab. A pamphlet was published to explain the scheme in greater detail, and several local conferences were held throughout the province to propagate the idea of Azad Punjab among the Sikhs. Master Tara Singh personally led a delegation to the western regions of the Punjab to assure the Sikhs there that their interests would not be sacrificed.[41]

SIKHS AND THE CR FORMULA

The Akali Dal's enthusiasm for Azad Punjab seemed vindicated when news was released of a series of letters between Congress leader, C. Rajagopalachari, and Jinnah. In July 1944, Rajagopalachari had intimated to Jinnah that Gandhi and the Congress were prepared to concede Pakistan if the Muslim League would support the Congress in its demand for complete independence and cooperate in the formation of a provisional government. Once the Congress has achieved its goals, it would establish a commission to demarcate 'contiguous districts in the northwest and east of India' with an absolute Muslim majority, and a plebiscite would then be taken in those areas to decide whether they should separate or remain part of Hindustan.[42] The CR formula, as it came to be known in the popular press, was ostensibly an attempt by a section of the Congress, frustrated by the lack of constitutional progress, to break the political stalemate with Jinnah. But it was also an attempt by the shrewd Rajagopalachari to draw Jinnah out into the open about his Pakistan scheme and to demonstrate the weaknesses and inherent contradictions in his demand. Through his formula, Rajagopalachari was trying to point out to Jinnah that the provinces which he was claiming for Pakistan contained large portions of non-Muslims, like Sikhs and Hindus of the Punjab, who would loath 'inclusion in the Muslim state. If Jinnah persisted in his demand, then the existing provinces of the Punjab and Bengal would have to be partitioned, leaving him, at best, a truncated Pakistan of the 'less fertile parts of northwest India and the swamps of east Bengal'.

The Akalis were outraged by the formula, and felt betrayed. The

Congress had all along been opposed to a vivisection of the country, but now, by apparently agreeing to a division of the Punjab, the Congress was in effect sanctioning a proposal which threatened to dissect the Sikh community into two. If the CR formula was accepted as a basis of settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League, there was a strong likelihood that the 17 Muslim majority districts in the Punjab would go to Pakistan, while the remaining 12 districts would remain in Hindustan. The Sikh community, scattered across the central districts, without a majority in a single district, would consequently be dissected.[43]

The unpopular CR formula provided Master Tara Singh with yet another opportunity to vilify his pro-Congress political rivals. At an Akali-dominated All Parties Sikh Conference, Master Tara Singh, who had earlier resigned his posts in the Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), was recalled to steer the community out of its present crisis. With the help of his lieutenant, Giani Kartar Singh, Master Tara Singh proceeded to discredit the pro-Congress factions of the Akali Dal and to strengthen his hold on the party.[44] In characteristic fashion, Master Tara Singh raised the spectre of the community's annihilation by the Muslims in connivance with the Hindus.[45]

Gandhi's attempts to come to an agreement with Jinnah after his release from jail in 1944 served to confirm Sikh fears that the Congress was prepared to sacrifice the Sikhs for an agreement with the Muslim League. Gandhi's assurances to the Sikhs that their interests were safe in his hands, and his plea that he represented himself and not the Congress, were loudly derided and abusive epithets against Gandhi resounded at every Akali-held or -sponsored meeting.[46] The Akali Dal exploited these well-attended meetings to rally the Sikhs to oppose the Gandhi–Jinnah talks by emphasising the need of the community to guard against the revival of the demand for Pakistan.[47] Master Tara Singh threatened that 'should a settlement be reached over the heads of the Sikhs, the reaction amongst [them] will be terrible'.[48]

In 1944, the Sikhs found themselves in a rather desperate situation. They were uneasy with the apparent reversal of Congress policy with regard to Pakistan. What was more disconcerting for the Sikhs was that Jinnah's position and his demand for the partition of the country could no longer be taken lightly by anyone. The Congress had to negotiate with him as an equal, and the British too knew that no constitutional plan was workable without Jinnah's approval. By 1945, Jinnah seemed in no mood for compromise over the issue of Pakistan. For the first time since the Lahore Resolution, Jinnah openly claimed for Pakistan the six full Muslim majority areas of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Sind,

Baluchistan, Punjab, Bengal and Assam and rejected outright any talk of altering the existing boundaries of any of these provinces.[49] Wavell's attempts at the Simla Conference of June 1945 to bypass Pakistan and proceed with the formation of a national government consequently foundered on the rock of Jinnah's intransigence. For the Sikhs now, the prospects of a Muslim raj in the Punjab seemed to loom larger than before.

The rising popularity of Jinnah amongst the Muslims of India was revealed by the 1946 general elections. The results of the provincial elections confirmed the Muslim League's status as the party most likely to represent the Muslims of India. It won majorities in all the Muslim majority provinces except the NWFP. Its victory in the Punjab, which had all along eluded its grip, was most remarkable. In a complete reversal of the 1937 fiasco, the Muslim League captured 75 of the 86 Muslim seats and became the largest single party in the 175-member provincial legislative assembly. In contrast, the Unionists, who had held 96 seats previously, could this time only manage 18 seats.[50] The League's victory proved to be a complete endorsement of Pakistan by the Muslim electorate in the Punjab, as also an indication that Punjabi Muslims were more prepared to identify with the wider, all-India Muslim nation at the expense of local Punjabi parochialism. Communal differences in the province, which had hitherto been successfully contained, now threatened to intensify.

The implications of the League's victory in the Punjab were not lost on the Akali Dal. It was clear that the Unionist Party was a spent force in the province, and the Akali–Unionist pact could no longer afford the Sikhs any protection. The 1946 election results also showed that their future partners in the Punjab government would either be the Muslim League or the Congress. Fortunately for the Sikhs, though both parties did well in the elections, neither was in a position to form a government in the Punjab. The Akali Dal now proceeded to use the 23 seats which it had won as a bargaining chip to secure political safeguards in the province.

Ever the political opportunist, Master Tara Singh explored possibilities of alliances with parties with larger numbers of seats in the province. Despite its rhetoric against the Muslim League, the Akali Dal responded to overtures from League leaders in the Punjab. League leaders, notably Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Raja Ghazafar Ali and S. Shaukat Hayat Khan, met Akali representatives. Discussions centred around the formation of a possible Muslim League–Akali cabinet in the Punjab.[51]

Akali responses to League overtures probably signalled the pragmatism with which Sikh politicians like Master Tara Singh now approached the political problems confronting the Sikh community. The Sikhs had indeed been unsettled by the Muslim League's communal stance during the

election campaign. But confronted now with the distinct possibility of being a minority in a Muslim League-dominated province, the Akalis knew that partnership with the Muslims in the government was probably the best safeguard of their interests in the uncertain political future that lay ahead. Furthermore, there was evidence that Congress–League negotiations were already in progress. Could the Congress, still seen by many Sikhs as a purely Hindu organisation, ever be trusted to protect Sikh interests?[52]

Punjab Muslim League leaders, apparently with approval from Jinnah, had been meeting Akali representatives, and had assured them that the League's demand for a Muslim homeland of 'Pakistan' was merely an electoral device for the winning of Muslim votes. The Sikhs had nothing to fear as the Pakistan that was going to be would be essentially different from that promised to the Muslims during the elections.[53]

The Akalis, however, were not prepared to accept such vague promises; they needed more concrete assurances. A list of demands was drawn up and sent to the Muslim League: the Sikhs demanded reservation of seats for Sikhs in the provincial administration; recognition of Gurmukhi as an official language; and a promise that the Muslim League would not arrive at settlements which would affect the Sikhs without first consulting the Akalis.[54] The Sikhs further insisted that the League denounce all talk of Pakistan if it wanted the Sikhs as partners in the government.

On the last point, the Akali–League negotiations stalled. The Muslim League had not come so far in its demand for Pakistan only to have to denounce it just to please the Sikhs. In exasperation, Punjab Muslim League leaders announced that the Sikhs were not in a position to discuss the issue of Pakistan at this stage.[55] This stalled further talks between the Muslim League and the Sikhs; as far as the latter were concerned, they could 'hardly maintain in power a party whose avowed policy was to treat them [the Sikhs] as inferiors in a Muslim country'.[56]

Having tried and failed to come to an agreement with the Muslim League, the Akalis then turned to the Congress. Baldev Singh consequently held a series of informal negotiations with local Congress leaders, together with the Unionist leader, Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, to secure a basis for a tripartite coalition in the Punjab government. The Congress seemed keen to form the government in the Punjab. Mindful of the recent furore caused by the CR formula, the Congress assured the Akalis that its commitment to the community as expressed in the Lahore Resolution of 1929 still stood. Finally on 6 March, it was announced that a Congress–Akali–Unionist coalition had been effected in the Punjab.

The Akalis had momentarily sorted out their position in the province.

But this proved to be only a temporary respite. Elections and the formation of new ministries in the provinces were merely the prelude to a final settlement in the Indian constitutional problem. The Sikhs now had to gear up in preparation for the next round of constitutional talks which would eventually determine the future of India, and with it the Sikhs' fate.

SIKHS AND THE CABINET MISSION

In March 1946 a three-member Cabinet Mission was sent to India to attempt to settle India's constitutional problem. The arrival of the Cabinet Mission was greeted with apprehension by the Sikhs. The presence of such a high-powered commission, comprising Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, and A.V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, could only mean that the British were now dead serious about bringing to an end British rule in India. While the Raj lasted, the Sikhs could at least be assured of minority protection as a favoured martial race in the Indian army. Now that their patrons had signalled their earnest desire to leave, the last remaining prop which had secured Sikh interests in the Punjab was about to be removed.

Fearful that the Cabinet Mission, in their attempt to break the Congress–Muslim League deadlock, might evolve proposals that would prove detrimental to the Sikhs, the Akali Dal on 22 March 1946, confronted the Mission with the demand for a Sikh state, subsequently dubbed Sikhistan or Khalistan. The demand for a separate Sikh state to be carved out of the Punjab province had first been floated in the middle of 1944, at an All-Parties Sikh Conference in Amritsar, in response to the CR formula. Not much notice was taken at the time of such a demand, and Sikhistan did not feature at all in the 1946 election campaign of the Akali Dal.

The demand for Sikhistan marked a significant departure from the Azad Punjab scheme propagated by the Akali Dal in 1943. The latter was perceived merely as the redrawing of the existing boundaries of the Punjab by leaving out the Muslim majority areas. Azad Punjab, in which no community would dominate numerically, would thus not be constituted as a Sikh state. Sikhistan, on the other hand, was to be a Sikh federation, comprising districts in eastern and central Punjab with a large Sikh population, and would include the Sikh states of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Kalsia and Kapurthala. In brief, Sikhistan, unlike Azad Punjab, was to have a distinctly Sikh complexion.

The demand for Sikhistan was clearly a desperate attempt by the Sikhs to press their case with the British. What the Sikhs really wanted was to impress upon the British their fear of being subjected to a Muslim Raj and

to emphasise their need for sufficient representation in a post-independence government of the Punjab. Hence they decided to emulate the Muslim League and put forward an incredible demand. Sikh leaders knew that the demand would not be taken seriously. The Sikhs were scattered across central Punjab and did not constitute a majority in a single district. Cripps was quick to point out, when the demand was brought to his attention, that the 'demographic compulsions...and the inescapable geographical facts make it impossible to evolve any such scheme'.[57] The Sikhs themselves were uncertain as to how Sikhistan was to be constituted. Master Tara Singh would only make a vague mention of 'a separate independent state' with the right to federate with 'Pakistan or Hindustan';[58] Giani Kartar Singh told Cripps that Sikhistan would include the whole of Lahore, Karnal, Simla, Montgomery and Lyallpur districts;[59] while Baldev Singh had in mind the entire area covered by the Ambala, Jullunder and Lahore divisions.[60]

While the Mission lent a sympathetic ear to the Sikh representatives, they were not about to take the Sikh demand seriously. The Sikhs were regarded as an important minority, but not important enough for their demands to sidetrack the primary objective of the Cabinet Mission—to secure an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League, the main arbiters of the political future of India. But both parties remained deadlocked in a political stalemate. The Muslim League clung adamantly to its demand for an independent and fully sovereign Pakistan, while the Congress was pledged to a unitary India.[61] After lengthy discussions which failed to effect any form of agreement with the two parties, the Cabinet Mission decided to put forward what it considered to be the 'best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of the new constitution'.[62] Accordingly on 16 May 1946, the Cabinet Mission issued a statement of its proposed settlement.

The Cabinet Mission proposed the setting up of a Union of India, but in recognition of the acute anxiety felt by the Muslim minority, it prescribed a constitution based on a three-tier model. The Union, comprising both British India and the princely states, would deal with foreign affairs, defence and communications; the remaining subjects and all residual powers would rest with the provinces and the states. Provinces would also have the right to form groups which would have a legislature and an executive, and each group would determine the provincial subjects to be taken in the community. A constituent assembly would be set up, comprising elected representatives from the provincial legislatures in the ratio of one to a million of their population. The assembly thus constituted would meet first to settle business at the all India centre, after which the

representatives would separate into sections—Section A comprising the provinces not claimed for Pakistan, Section B consisting of Punjab, the NWFP, Sind and British Baluchistan, and Section C which was to be made up of Bengal and Assam. Each of these sections would then proceed to settle the constitutions for the provinces under their respective groups.[63] The Cabinet Mission proposals were an attempt at finding a *modus vivendi* for the Congress and Muslim League to come together to frame India's future constitution. It proposed an Indian Union, thus preserving the geographic unity of India and satisfying Congress aspirations. Though Pakistan was rejected, the formation of groups of provinces which had the right to frame their own constitutions was a concession to Muslim interests as it offered them the right to direct their 'own essential interests...in their own way and to their own advantage'.[64]

Although the details of the proposals were aimed at meeting the demands of the Congress and the Muslim League, the interests of the Sikhs seemed to have been a factor in the Cabinet Mission's deliberations, particularly on the issue of Pakistan. The Cabinet Mission pointed out that it had rejected Pakistan to prevent an injustice to the Sikh community. A larger Pakistan comprising the provinces of Punjab, Sind, the NWFP and British Baluchistan and including the northeast provinces of Assam and Bengal was not justifiable because it would include large portions of non-Muslims, like the Hindus and the Sikhs.[65] The case for a smaller truncated Pakistan was also ruled out as it would involve a radical partitioning of the Punjab, and this would divide the Sikh community and leave substantial bodies of it on both sides of the boundary.[66] By insisting on the unity of the Punjab, the Mission pointed out, it was hoped that the Sikh community be kept intact and continue playing an influential role in the Punjab.[67]

The above assurances notwithstanding, the Sikhs remained unhappy with the proposals. The Sikhs pointed out that although the Cabinet Mission proposals had made a token gesture to the Sikhs by recognising them as one of the 'major communities in India', they had not provided specific safeguards for the community as were provided for the Hindus and the Muslims. Furthermore, though the Mission had rejected Pakistan, the Sikhs were, without their consent, thrown into a Muslim-dominated group and hence still in danger of being subjected to Muslim majority rule. They pointed out that the compulsory groupings of the provinces 'have made it possible for the Muslims to secure all the conditions of Pakistan without incurring the dangers in it'.[69] They complained that with only four seats in an assembly of 36, they would be put entirely at the mercy of the Muslims.

The Sikhs thus considered the Cabinet Mission proposals 'injurious to their interests', and decided to boycott the constituent assembly.[69] In the meantime, the Akali Dal convened a Panthic Pratinidh Board, headed by an ex-Colonel of the Indian National Army, to direct Sikh opposition to the Cabinet Mission proposals. Akali Dal leaders traversed the province giving anti-British speeches and Sikh *jathas* pledged to oppose the implementation of the Cabinet Mission scheme. Thousands of volunteers took vows to defend the honour of the *Panth* and donations poured in to support a campaign against the Cabinet Mission proposal. Sikh behaviour began to worry the British administration, and the Governor of the Punjab, Evan Jenkins, expressed concern at the possibility of another disturbance similar to the Akali movement two decades earlier.[70] The Panthic Pratinidh Board reiterated the call to all Sikh members of legislative assemblies to boycott the constituent assembly and the interim government.

Meanwhile, Akali leaders began exploring possibilities of alliances with either the Muslim League or the Congress. They knew that unless they secured the support of one of the main parties in India, their protests were going to have little impact on the British.

A Sikh–Muslim rapprochement at that stage seemed at best a very remote possibility. Though the Muslim League had made approaches to the Sikhs for cooperation in Group B by offering them generous weightage in the civil service, Sikhs were nevertheless suspicious about this 'superficially attractive offer'.[71] The Muslims at this stage were not prepared to offer the Sikhs any concrete assurances. The Muslims would never agree to a partition of the Punjab to carve out a Sikhistan nor would they agree to drop their demand for Pakistan.[72] The Sikhs were told that they would have to trust the Muslims. Furthermore, attempts at negotiating with the Muslims were hampered by the forthcoming gurdwara elections. Not wishing to draw flak from the pro-Congress camp, Giani Kartar Singh, who had all along been inclined to favour an alliance between the Sikhs and the Muslims, wisely decided against consorting too closely with the Muslim League.[73]

The Congress, on the other hand, had displayed a markedly more positive attitude towards the Sikhs. The Congress needed the Sikhs. It had been reluctant to accept the Cabinet Mission's proposals because of the fear that the formation of groups dominated by the Muslim League could be a major hindrance to the effective functioning of a central government. Nehru had confidently predicted that there was a four-to-one chance that the NWFP would decide against grouping, making the Muslim-dominated Group B untenable.[74] By wooing the Sikhs, the Congress was evidently

trying to raise the odds against the survival of the Muslim-dominated Group B.

Encouraged by sympathetic messages from Congress leaders, the Panthic Board began negotiations with the Congress on cooperation in the interim government. The Congress Working Committee on 9 August pledged all possible assistance to the Sikhs to redress their grievances and secure safeguards for the protection of their interests in the Punjab. It also agreed that the defence portfolio in the interim government should go to the Sikhs, in recognition of their martial tradition.[75] On the basis of the Congress resolution, the Sikhs were finally persuaded to reverse their earlier decision to boycott the government and assembly, and on 14 August announced that they would participate in the constituent assembly.

PARTITION AND HOLOCAUST

As 1946 passed into 1947, communal relations between Muslims and Sikhs in the Punjab steadily deteriorated. All previous attempts, in the preceding months, to bring about an understanding between the Muslim League and the Akali Dal had come to nought. Patience with the Muslims was also wearing increasingly thin. Fed with stories of communal carnage in parts of north India, and irritated by the constant acrimony in the interim government, as well as the Muslim League's decision to boycott the constituent assembly, the Sikhs were beginning to feel that the break-up of India might after all become a reality.

Developments in the Punjab in late 1946 and early 1947 had not given the Sikhs much cause for optimism. The Muslim League, denied of government despite winning the maximum number of Muslim seats, had started a campaign of open hostility against the coalition government. It organised boycotts, protest meetings, processions and demonstrations throughout the Punjab, and business was suspended in Muslim quarters. There were signs that both the Muslim and non-Muslim communities were preparing themselves for civil war. Intelligence reports revealed that membership to private armies like the Hindu Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh and the Muslim League National Guards had increased significantly since the 1946 elections.[76]

The general atmosphere of tension and 'communal ill-feeling' deeply disturbed the Sikhs. They saw the agitation not simply as targeted against the coalition government, but as proof of Muslim animosity against the Sikhs, a feeling reinforced when Sikh policemen were occasionally singled out for brutal attacks by Muslim mobs.[77] Believing that the Muslims had developed a widespread and well-trained semi-military

organisation to forcibly secure the Punjab for Pakistan,[78] Sikh leaders began calling for the formation of a Sikh army to be prepared for an eventual showdown with the Muslims.[79]

The sense of desperation felt by the Sikh community was heightened by Clement Attlee's announcement on 20 February 1947 that the British would transfer power by a 'date not later than June 1948'. The announcement increased the tempo of communal activities in the Punjab. The Muslim League now felt that it was imperative for it to secure control of the Punjab if it was to make a fair bid for Pakistan. The deteriorating communal conditions in the Punjab proved too much of a strain for Khizar, and in March 1947 he announced his resignation. With his resignation, the coalition government collapsed, snapping the fragile peace in the Punjab.

In the months following Khizar's resignation, violent clashes between the Sikhs and Muslims erupted with disturbing regularity. The Sikhs were especially hard-hit in areas where they were hopelessly outnumbered by the Muslims, especially in the districts of western Punjab. The Sikhs began gearing themselves for civil war. Akali leaders got in touch with rulers of the Sikh states for possible assistance, and *jathedars* were briefed to get their jathas ready for the defence of the community.[80] Preparations were made for the regimentation and arming of Sikh militias to protect themselves and to exact their revenge on the Muslims when the opportunity came.[81] Numbers swelled in the Akali Sena as the Sikhs no longer saw any hope of a Sikh–Muslim rapprochement.

Resigned to the fact that Pakistan could no longer be avoided, and convinced that conciliation with the Muslim League was now out of the question, Sikh politicians began clamouring for a partition of the province. If they could not prevent Pakistan, then they were going to make sure that the Muslims would not get the entire Punjab. When the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution of 8 March calling for a division of the Punjab into 'two provinces, so that the predominantly Muslim part may be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim part', the Sikhs quickly latched on to the idea and began pressing the view that the only solution to the Punjab problem lay in the partition of the province.[82] In early April, Sikh and Hindu members of the legislative assembly called for a partition of the Punjab as the 'immediate administrative problem which should have first priority'.[83]

It did not take Mountbatten, British India's last Viceroy, long to accept the inevitability of partition. The antipathy between the Congress and the Muslim League was such that a unitary India was simply impossible. Mountbatten thus came up with a plan which would divide the subcontinent into two dominions of Pakistan and India. The legislative

assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab would vote on whether their respective provinces would join the existing constituent assembly or form an altogether new one which would then frame a constitution for Pakistan. Once this division of the country was endorsed, a Boundary Commission would be set up to decide on the demarcation of boundaries. On 3 June 1947, the Mountbatten Plan was announced and publicly accepted by Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh on behalf of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities respectively.[84]

The implications of a partition of the Punjab on the basis of contiguous areas of Muslim and non-Muslim districts as provided by the 3 June Plan were very grim for the Sikhs. Concentrated in the central divisions of Lahore and Jullunder, the Sikhs would be split down the middle should a partition line be drawn on the basis of Muslim and non-Muslim majority districts. Lahore, Rawalpindi and Multan divisions, all Muslim majority areas, but with half a million Sikhs and many of Sikhism's most sacred places, including the birthplace of Guru Nanak, would go to Pakistan. The fertile colony lands in the south-western districts of Montgomery and Lyallpur would certainly be lost to the Muslims once a partition on population basis was effected. Having pushed for partition, Sikh leaders were quick to point out that the only partition line acceptable to the community would be along the Chenab river.[85]

Akali leaders met Lord Ismay and insisted that partition of the Punjab should not be done 'merely on the basis of counting of heads'. They insisted that landed property and the location of ancient shrines were factors that should be borne in mind while the British decided on the line of partition. According to the Sikhs, the Muslims could have Rawalpindi and Multan Divisions, while Ambala and Jullunder Divisions should go to the non-Muslims. Lahore Division, although a Muslim majority region, should not be given to the Muslims but administered by a joint council until a boundary commission was able to finalise matters on frontiers and population transfers.[86]

There was little in the 3 June Plan, however, that gave cause for the Sikhs to be sanguine that the ultimate line of division of the province would be drawn in their favour. A provisional boundary line had already been drawn dividing the province between the Muslim majority and non-Muslim majority districts. The Sikhs were indeed wary that the Boundary Commission, which was to eventually determine the boundary between Indian and Pakistani Punjab, should not depart very much from the provisional line.

Mountbatten had not given the Sikhs any assurances such as to give cause for optimism. He had earlier stated that once the partition of the

Punjab was decided upon, it would indeed require a miracle to keep the Sikh community intact.[87] The Sikhs were too scattered in the Punjab, and although they formed 10 per cent of the population in eight districts west of the Beas–Sutlej, Muslims dominated in six of these districts.[88] Mountbatten made it quite clear that Sikh claims of property qualifications as a factor in the partition of the Punjab could not be given much weightage.[89]

Perhaps the biggest obstacle that prevented the Sikhs from influencing the boundary decision in their favour was the urgency and haste with which Mountbatten went about his task of winding up British rule in India. After much cajoling and arm twisting, Mountbatten had achieved the formidable feat of getting the Muslim League and the Congress to agree to his plan; he was certainly not prepared to see it wrecked on account of the Sikhs. Jinnah, who had already grudgingly agreed to the partition of the Punjab and Bengal, could hardly be expected to accept the idea of excluding Muslim majority districts in the Punjab from Pakistan.

So, after accepting the 3 June Plan, the Sikhs found themselves, not for the first time, in a quandary. Partition would divide the community and leave them as weakened minorities in both Pakistan and Hindustan. At the same time, while the Sikhs were strongly opposed to Pakistan, they did not relish absorption by a Hindu majority Hindustan either.

At this point the Sikhs, advised by some British sympathisers, began to explore a third possibility. The Sikhs could cast their votes with the Muslims, and take their place in the new state of Pakistan. This would ensure that the Sikh community would remain by and large intact, and at least within Pakistan the Sikhs could form a fairly significant 14 per cent of the population; on the other hand, they would be hopelessly submerged in a vast Hindu majority in Hindustan.

This scheme was vigorously pursued by Penderel Moon and Major J.M. Short, two British officers who were associated with the Sikhs. Penderel Moon, a minister in the Muslim princely state of Bahawalpur and a former member of the Indian Civil Service who knew the Punjab intimately, was convinced that a division of the Punjab would be 'fatal...to the Sikh community' and that the best option remained for the Sikhs to throw in their lot with the Muslims and take their place in Pakistan.[90] He suggested that the Sikhs secure from the Muslims special privileges as a minority in western Punjab or in Pakistan as a whole. He reasoned that the Muslims would, in consideration of their own interests, be amenable to such suggestions.[91]

Major J.M. Short, a retired officer of the Indian Army who had served with the Sikh regiments and knew them well, wrote to Cripps urging him

to use his influence with Nehru to get the Congress to persuade the Sikhs to elect into Pakistan. He argued that by keeping the Sikhs intact as a unit in Pakistan, the Congress would have its surest guarantee of a strong Indian Union.[92]

The exhortations of Penderel Moon and J.M. Short found a receptive ear in Giani Kartar Singh, who had not yet given up hope of arriving at some form of agreement with the Muslim League. But Giani Kartar Singh was a lone voice in the Sikh community. Anti-Muslim sentiment was running high within the Sikh community after the events of the preceding months; Sikh–Muslim rapprochement, at that point in time, was simply out of the question. Muslim League members in the Punjab who approached the Sikhs, indicating that they would be given special consideration if they threw in their lot with the Muslims were met with rebuffs.[93] Sikh intransigence was only matched by Jinnah's coldness towards any form of agreement with the Sikhs. He reportedly told the Sikhs that 'they could go to the devil in their own way. It was they who had demanded the partition of the Punjab. They could now take the consequences'.[94]

With that, the final opportunity of finding a place for the Sikhs in Pakistan evaporated. The partition of the Punjab was endorsed on 23 June 1947 when the East Punjab assembly voted decisively in favour of a division of the province. With partition now decided upon, the Sikhs knew that the fate of the community rested on the decision of the Boundary Commission. The Akali Dal and other Sikh organisations subsequently channelled their energies into rousing the Sikhs to bring pressure on the Boundary Commission. On 8 July, a province-wide 'protest day' was organised by the Sikhs to greet Sir Cyril Radcliffe's (Chairman-designate of the Boundary Commission) arrival in India. Reports were received that the Sikhs were making active preparations for resistance, and oaths to resist were being taken.[95] These activities were evidently carried out with the intention to impress the Boundary Commission that 'any partition that did not secure the integrity and solidarity of the Sikhs would be unacceptable and would create a difficult situation'.[96]

Sikh representatives submitted a lengthy memorandum to the Punjab Boundary Commission, arguing for the inclusion into eastern Punjab of portions of Muslim majority districts including significant portions of Lahore, Lyallpur, Gujranwala and Sialkot. They claimed that these regions should rightfully be given to the Sikhs in consideration of the land revenue paid by the Sikh peasants who farmed the land there, the position of Sikh historical and religious sites and the landholdings of the Sikhs in those areas.[97]

The Governor's office in Lahore was flooded with calls from Sikh

representatives, asking that Nankana Sahib be conceded to the community, at least one canal system from Montgomery district be left in eastern Punjab, and arrangements be made to transfer Sikhs from western Punjab into eastern Punjab. In one meeting with the Governor, Giani Kartar Singh broke down and cried, which Jenkins noted 'was the nearest thing to an ultimatum yet given on behalf of the Sikhs'.[98] Despite such emotional appeals, the Sikhs were invariably told that there was little the Governor could do for them. Partition had been conceded at their request; the fate of the community now hung on the findings of the Boundary Commission.

Meanwhile, civic order in the Punjab was crumbling rapidly. Communal unrest was particularly rife in the districts of Amritsar and Lahore. In a fortnight in May, communal clashes resulted in more than a thousand casualties.[99] The Sikhs were determined to be prepared this time. The Akali Dal began organising guards to protect their holy places. Sikh jathas were organised, militias strengthened and weapons stockpiled.[100] The Akali Sena and Shahidi Jatha, private Sikh armies, went on a recruitment drive, and established branches in all Sikh villages throughout the Punjab.[101]

On 18 July 1947, the Indian Independence Act was passed by the British parliament. The transfer of power had been effected, but the settlement of the boundary of east and west Punjab was postponed. This caused tremendous confusion to the Sikhs, especially those in the Muslim majority districts. They were not sure whether they were now on Pakistani or Indian territory.

As confusion, fear and anxiety set in, 'the alert went from one Sikh settlement to the next'.[102] Frustrated by the failure of their leaders at the negotiating table and craving for revenge on the Muslims, Sikhs started to make plans to meet partition on their own terms. This time they were not going to be caught off guard.

The British soon received reports that there would be large-scale murder of Muslims in eastern Punjab, while in western Punjab Sikh saboteurs, mainly ex-soldiers trained in explosives and firearms, were producing bombs to blow up trains and destroy canal headworks.[103] Intelligence reports even implicated Master Tara Singh in plots to blow up trains and assassinate Jinnah during the latter's swearing-in as Governor-General of Pakistan on 14 August.[104]

Mountbatten had received early warnings of the intentions of the Sikhs. Pamphlets were found circulating amongst the Sikhs, telling them to exact revenge on the Muslims and appealing for contributions to a 'war fund'.[105] Evan Jenkins, Governor of the Punjab, had repeatedly warned Mountbatten that the Sikhs were getting ready for a showdown with the Muslims.[106]

Despite these warnings, Mountbatten chose to do nothing. He decided not to aggravate matters by arresting suspected Sikh leaders at this juncture, preferring to pin his hopes on the Punjab Boundary Force.[107] But, as events turned out, the 23,000 strong Boundary Force could do little against the dispersed but coordinated attacks by Sikh jathas on Muslim villages and unescorted Muslim refugees fleeing across the frontier.[108] These well-organised jathas operated almost with impunity in the new border areas of Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur and Jullunder.[109]

In August 1947, it was quite clear that the Sikhs had painted themselves into a corner. Driven by uncertainty about Muslim intentions towards minorities should the Punjab become a part of Pakistan, the Sikhs demanded a partition of the Punjab. However, when partition was accepted and endorsed by the British, the Congress and the Muslim League, the Sikhs found that their community actually stood to lose most from a division of the Punjab. Still, there was a way out for them: negotiate a deal with the Muslim League whereby non-Punjabi speaking divisions of the Punjab would be left with Hindustan, while the rest of the Punjab, with the Sikh community intact, would be incorporated into Pakistan. But despite the counsels and efforts of their British sympathisers, the Sikhs had refused to agree to any deal with the Muslim League. The last hope of salvaging the integrity of the Sikh community was now left to the departing British. They would decide where the boundary between east and west Punjab would lie. But the distribution of the Sikhs across the most likely dividing line negated any possibility of preserving the unity of the community. But while negotiations were going on, Sikh propaganda continued to keep their tempers inflamed. Many of them seemed convinced that sooner or later, they would have to fight to protect what they deemed to be their rights. In the districts, Sikhs got organised to strike when the opportunity came.

On 15 August 1947, as Britain ended her rule in the subcontinent and India rejoiced in her new-found freedom, the Sikhs started on their revenge, determined to register their firm and final response to Pakistan.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have suggested that Sikh response to the demand for Pakistan was no mere 'knee-jerk' reaction shaped by an implacable antipathy to the idea of Pakistan. Rather, throughout the 1940s, as the reality of British departure loomed large, the Sikhs, led mainly by the Shiromani Akali Dal, sought various ways to safeguard their political future. Their virulent rhetoric against Pakistan was prompted less by their

innate hostility to the abstract idea of a Muslim state than by a genuine fear of being a politically subjugated minority in a Muslim- or Hindu-dominated post-independence Punjab. From 1940 to 1947, Sikh responses, shaped by ideological, factional and personality factors, swung from one position to another as they struggled to keep abreast of the rapidly changing political situation in the Punjab and at the all-India level. The Baldev–Sikander Pact of 1942, the concept of Azad Punjab in 1943, the Akali–Congress–Unionist electoral alliance of 1945-46, the Akali–Muslim League negotiations of 1946, and finally the acceptance of the partition of the Punjab in the wake of the collapse of the Khizar ministry in March 1947 all attest to the attempts of the Sikhs to secure sufficient political safeguards for themselves as the curtain began to fall on the British Raj.

Having decided on partition, the Sikhs found that what was to ultimately determine their fate was a counting of heads. The brute force of demography not only sidelined the Sikhs but also presented them with a decision that split the community across the Great Divide of India and Pakistan. Faced with this awful verdict, the Sikhs took the final initiative that was to result in the communal violence of 1947.

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Notes

1. See for example M. Edwardes, *The Last Years of British India* (London, 1963); H.V. Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain, India and Pakistan* (Karachi, 1985); E.W.R. Lumby, *The Transfer of Power* (London, 1954); and B.N. Pandey, *The Break-up of British India* (London, 1969).
2. B.R. Nayar, *Minority Politics in the Punjab* (Princeton, 1967); Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol. 2 (Princeton, 1967); Rajiv Kapur, *Sikh Separatism: The Politics of Faith* (London, 1986); J.S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab* (The New Cambridge History of India, II. 3) (Cambridge, 1990).
3. Indu Banga, 'The Crisis of Sikh Politics (1940-1947)' in Joseph T.O'Connell, Milton Israel and Willard G. Oxtoby (eds), with W.H. Mcleod and J.S. Grewal (visiting eds), *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century* (South Asian Studies Papers, 3), (Toronto, 1988).
4. Fortnightly Report on the situation in the Punjab (hereafter FR), 31 March 1940, Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab, L/P&J/5/243, 1940, India Office Library and Records, London (hereafter IOLR).
5. Other major Sikh political groups in the 1940s included the loyalist Chief Khalsa

Diwan and its legislative wing, the Khalsa Nationalist Party, Congressite Sikhs and Communist Sikhs. There was also the pro-Congress Central Akali Dal, led by Baba Kharak Singh, a rival of Master Tara Singh. See Banga, 'Crisis of Sikh Politics', 233.

6. *The Tribune* (Lahore), 27 March 1940.
7. Statement of the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal in ibid., 30 March 1940.
8. Ibid., 2 April and 3 April 1940.
9. Stephen Oren, 'The Sikhs, Congress, and the Unionists in British Punjab, 1937-45', in *Modern Asian Studies* (hereafter *MAS*), 8, 3 (1974), 397-418.
10. FR, 13 March 1940, L/P&J/5/243, 1940, IOLR.
11. Note by Major J.M. Short on Sikh–Unionist Relations, n.d., in Papers of Major John McLoughin Short, MSS.EUR.F.198/3-4, IOLR (hereafter J.M. Short Papers).
12. *The Tribune*, 5 April 1940.
13. Ibid., 28 May 1940.
14. FR, July 1940, L/P&J/5/243, 1940, IOLR.
15. *The Tribune*, 11 April 1940; 27 May 1940; 9 June 1940; and 27 July 1940.
16. For a study of the effects of the communist movement in the Punjab on the Indian army, see Bhagwan Josh, *The Communist Movement in the Punjab* (Delhi, 1979), 148-61.
17. S. Rai, *Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab* (Delhi, 1984), 269, n. 250.
18. Linlithgow to Amery, 6 March 1942, in N. Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby (eds), *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power 1942-47*, vol. 1 (London, 1970), 328 (hereafter *TP*); see also note by Sir Herbert Emerson, Governor of the Punjab from 1933-38, who warned of potential Sikh trouble if 'local option' was included in the draft declaration, in 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for India', 3 March 1942, ibid., vol. 1, 302-3.
19. In addition to a meeting with the All-Parties Sikh delegation, Cripps interviewed K.S. Majithia of the Chief Khalsa Dewan and members of the Khalsa Defence of India League. Cripps was advised by Glancy that the All-Parties delegation represented only a section of Sikh political opinion. 'Report on Mission to India: Memorandum by Lord Privy Seal', 6 July 1942, ibid., vol. 2, 320.
20. Note on Cripps's interview with Sikh delegates, 27 March 1942, ibid., vol. 1, 496.
21. Sikh All-Parties Committee to Cripps, 31 March 1942, ibid., vol. 2, 582.
22. Quoted in Rai, *Partition of the Punjab* (London, 1965), 36.
23. A.R.H. Copley, *The Political Career of Charkravarty Rajagopalachari* (Delhi, 1978), 279.
24. For details of the pact, see N.N. Mitra (ed.), *Indian Annual Register*, (hereafter *AIR*), Calcutta, 1942, vol. 1, 344-46; and *The Tribune*, 16 June 1942.
25. Notably Baba Kharak Singh of the Central Akali Dal party, who, in an Akhand Conference in Ludhiana, criticised the Akali leadership and called on Baldev Singh to resign. *IAR*, 1942, vol. 2, 299.
26. 'Note on Sikhs', 14 July 1942, L/WS/2/44, IOLR.
27. Glancy to Linlithgow, 28 November 1942, in *TP*, vol. 3, 319.
28. *The Tribune*, 24 October 1931.

29. *Parliamentary Debates*, (Hansard), Fifth Series, House of Commons, vol. 379, 1942.
30. Presidential Address, All India Akali Conference, 14 March 1943, in *IAR*, 1943, vol. 1, 294.
31. *IAR*, 1943, vol. 1, 298.
32. Bhagat Singh Tangh, *Pothari viewpoints concerning Azad Punjab* (Amritsar, 1943), 16-21, as cited in B.R. Nayar, *Minority Politics in the Punjab* (Princeton, 1967), 85.
33. All-Parties Sikh Committee to Cripps, 31 March 1942, in *TP*, vol. 1, 582.
34. Glancy to Linlithgow, 1 May 1942, in ibid., vol. 2, 8.
35. Master Tara Singh to Cripps, 4 May 1942, in ibid., 26-27.
36. All India Akali Conference, 14 March 1943, *IAR*, vol. 1, 294.
37. Glancy to Linlithgow, 1 May 1942, *TP*, vol. 2, 8.
38. Linlithgow to Amery, 5 September 1942, ibid., 913.
39. Banga, 'Crisis of Sikh Politics', 242.
40. All India Sikh Youth Conference, 1943, *IAR*, vol. 1, 298.
41. *The Tribune*, 22 January 1943.
42. Rajagopalachari's proposal as quoted in *IAR*, 1944, vol. 2, 130.
43. Proceedings of All-Parties Sikh Conference, Amritsar, 22 August 1945, *IAR*, vol. 2, 210.
44. Although Master Tara Singh had a substantial personal following in the Akali Dal, there was a faction of avowedly anti-British Akalis, led by Udham Singh Nagoke and Ishar Singh Majhail, who were opposed to his leadership. See 'Note by Governor on the Punjab Sikh Organisations' in appendix of interview between Governor of the Punjab and Lord Ismay, 3 April 1947, in Kirpal Singh (ed.), *Select Documents on the Partition of Punjab, 1947: India and Pakistan* (hereafter *Select Documents*), (Delhi, 1991), 38.
45. Press Statement by Master Tara Singh in *The Tribune*, 11 August 1944.
46. Proceedings of Akali Conference, 14-15 October 1944, *IAR*, vol. 2, 218-19.
47. FR, 30 September 1944, L/P&J/5/243, 1944, IOLR.
48. Statement by Master Tara Sigh, *The Tribune*, 11 August 1944.
49. R.J. Moore, *Escape from Empire: The Attlee Government and the Indian Problem* (Oxford, 1983), 56.
50. *IAR*, 1946, vol. 1, 230.
51. *The Tribune*, 25 February 1946.
52. FR, Punjab, 15 February 1947, L/P&J/5/243, 1947, IOLR.
53. Account of Mian Mumtaz Daultana as recorded in A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1986), 151.
54. *The Tribune*, 3 March 1946.
55. Ibid.
56. Jenkins to Wavell, 15 February, in *TP*, vol. 9, 721.
57. Stafford Cripps, statement in the House of Commons, 18 July 1946, *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 425.
58. Meeting between Cabinet Mission, Wavell and representatives of the Sikh community, 5 April 1946, in *TP*, vol. 7, 138.

59. Ibid., p. 140.
60. Meeting between Cabinet Mission, Wavell and S. Baldev Singh, 5 April 1946, ibid., 141.
61. Jinnah to Pethick-Lawrence, 12 May 1946, in ibid., 516; Maulana Azad to Pethick-Lawrence, 6 May 1946, in ibid., 496.
62. Broadcast by Secretary of State for India on Cabinet Mission's Proposals, 16 May 1946, in ibid., 592.
63. Statement from Cabinet Mission, 16 May 1946, in ibid., 582-94.
64. Wavell's broadcast, 17 May 1946, ibid., 611.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Proceedings of the Sikh Panthic Conference, 10 July 1946, *IAR*, vol. 2, 205-6.
69. Ujjal Singh to Ismay, 22 April 1947, in *Select Documents*, 47-48.
70. Jenkins to Wavell, 29 May 1946, *TP*, vol. 7, 724-25.
71. Jenkins to Wavell, 27 May 1946, ibid., 710-11.
72. Note of meeting between the Cabinet Mission and the Nawab of Mamdot, 12 April 1946 in ibid., vol. 7, 91.
73. Jenkins to Colville, 5 December 1946, ibid., vol. 9, 285-86.
74. Nehru's Statement, 10 July 1946 in M.L. Gwyer and A. Appadorai (eds), *Speeches and Documents of the Indian Constitution, 1921-1947*, vol. II (Bombay, 1957), 613.
75. *The Tribune*, 10 August 1946.
76. FR, 15 January 1947, L/P&J/5/243, 1947, IOLR.
77. FR, 28 February 1947, ibid.
78. S. Gurbachan Singh Talib (compiler), *Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab 1947* (Delhi, 1991), 21.
79. Ibid.
80. Note by Governor of the Punjab on Sikh organisations, *Select Documents*, 1 April 1947.
81. FR, 31 March 1947, L/P&J/5/243, 1947, IOLR.
82. Resolution of Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal, 16 April 1947, in *Select Documents*, 42-43.
83. Letter from Sikh and Hindu MLCs to Nehru, 2 April 1947, in *TP*, vol. 10, 88.
84. Statement of 3 June Plan, 3 June 1947 in *TP*, vol. 11, 94-101; texts of broadcasts by Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh, in ibid., 94-101.
85. Statements by various Sikh leaders in *The Tribune*, 4 June 1947.
86. Ismay to Mountbatten, 30 April 1947, in *Select Documents*, 51.
87. Mountbatten's Broadcast, 3 June 1947, in *TP*, vol. 11, 87.
88. O.H.K. Spate, 'The Partition of the Punjab and Bengal', in *The Geographical Journal*, vol. cx, 6 (July-December 1947).
89. Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten* (London, 1954), 109.
90. Penderel Moon to Sujan Singh, 8 June 1947, in J.M. Short Papers.
91. P. Moon, *Divide and Quit* (London, 1962), 84-86.

92. J.M. Short to Cripps, 18 June 1947, in J.M. Short Papers.
93. Moon to Ismay, 27 June 1947, in *Select Documents*, 122.
94. Thompson to Corfield, 2 June 1947, in *TP*, vol. 11, 38.
95. Proceedings of the Partition Council, 10 July 1947, in *Select Documents*, 151-52.
96. Reuter Indian Report, 8 July 1947, in *TP*, vol. 12, 17.
97. 'Sikh memorandum to the Punjab Boundary Commission', July 1947, in Mian Muhammud Sadullah, et al., *The Partition of the Punjab, 1947: A Compilation of Official Documents* (Lahore, 1983), vol. 1, 347-97.
98. Record of interview between Jenkins and Giani Kartar Singh, 10 July 1947, *TP*, vol. 12, 71-74.
99. FR, 15 May 1947, L/P&J/5/243, 1947, IOLR.
100. Ibid.
101. FR, 31 May 1947, ibid.
102. Hugh Tinker, *Experiment with Freedom*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 132.
103. Record of interview between Jenkins and Kartar Singh, 10 July 1947, *TP*, vol. 12, 71-74; Interview of Mountbatten with Jinnah, Liaquat Ali, Vallabhai Patel and Captain Savage, 5 August 1947, ibid., 538-39.
104. Ibid.
105. Jenkins to Mountbatten, 9 April 1947, ibid., vol. 10, 172 and enclosures, 174-75.
106. Jenkins to Mountbatten, 7 June 1947, ibid., vol. 11, 194-95; Jenkins to Mountbatten, 10 July 1947, ibid., vol. 12, 71-74.
107. Note to Abell, 21 July 1974, ibid., vol. 12, 278.
108. See Robin Jeffrey, 'The Punjab Boundary Force and the Problem of Order in August 1947', *MAS*, 8, 4 (1974), 491-520.
109. Jenkins to Mountbatten, 13 August 1947, *TP*, vol. 12, 700-2.

An Early Sikh Scriptural Tradition: The Guru Nanak Dev University Manuscript 1245

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The process of compilation of the Sikh scripture seems to have started much earlier than the tradition would have us believe. This is the conclusion one draws from a comparative analysis of certain old manuscripts, including the two available Goindval volumes (*pothīs*), the Guru Nanak Dev University manuscript # 1245 and the Kartarpur manuscript. MS 1245 reflects an intermittent stage in the evolution of the Sikh scripture. Evidently Guru Arjan worked on certain pre-canonical scriptural traditions before he produced a 'final' text of the Adi Granth in 1604 C.E.

In his perceptive article on 'Scripture as Form and Concept', Wilfred Cantwell Smith refers to the general idea of a set of divinely inspired utterances in a fixed written form, but suitable for oral (recitation and song) presentation. He argues that scripture as a religious phenomenon gradually emerged and developed in the Near East in a process of crystallisation whose virtually complete stage comes with the Qur'an. He then suggests that the creation of Sikh scripture was influenced by the Qur'an. He further argues that the place of the Adi Granth in the personal piety and corporate polity of the Sikh community is closer to the Islamic tradition rather than the classical Hindu tradition.[1] Smith's view may be accepted to a certain extent if we limit ourselves to the general category of scripture as a form and as a concept. The creation of a unified scripture for the Sikh community was certainly inspired by the Islamic tradition. However,

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apart from this indirect influence there is no evidence of any direct influence of the Qur'an on the structure or content of the Sikh scripture. For instance, the *raga* organisation of the Adi Granth can be understood only in the context of Indian scriptural traditions. The Qur'an does not provide the model for it. Moreover, it is quite evident from the works of the Gurus that they were self-consciously involved in the creation of a new scripture parallel to the Vedas and the Qur'an.

The present essay seeks to study the textual evolution and process that led to the creation of a new scripture at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It offers an examination of a newly found old manuscript which illuminates that process. A rare manuscript was purchased in 1987 by Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) from Harbhajan Singh and Harcharan Singh Chavla, antique and manuscript dealers in Bazar Mai Sevan (now Jallianwala Bagh), Amritsar, at a cost of Rs 7,500 at the recommendations of Piar Singh. It was entered in the Catalogue of Rare Collections of the Bhai Gurdas Library on 30 March 1987 with accession number MS 1245. In his two-page recommendations on 21 March 1987, Piar Singh had stated: 'This *bīṛ* ["recension"] is very unique (*vilakhaṇ*) and deserves to be secured for the library.'

MS 1245 neither bears the signature symbol of its writer nor the year of its writing. At present the information about its movement is not available. Generally speaking, people in India do not have a genuine concern for locating and preserving old manuscripts, except for a few private owners. Thus there is nothing unusual about the lack of information about the actual history of the manuscript. While on a research trip to India in connection with my doctoral work I examined the manuscript for two days on 30-31 May 1990 at the rare books section of the GNDU library. Although the manuscript was still intact in its orginal (re)binding, it had become so brittle that it required the immediate attention of experts for its proper care and preservation. I have in my possession a number of photographs of this manuscript which were taken with the permission of the University authorities at Amritsar.

1. EXTERNAL FEATURES OF THE MANUSCRIPT

In order to place the document in its proper historical perspective, let us begin with the study of its external features. First, the opening four folios of the manuscript are profusely decorated with artwork. Particularly, the finely illuminated octagonal circle (*aṣṭākarī chakkar*)

on the second folio reflects the geometric art motifs which are normally available in the manuscripts of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. For instance, one can see such art motifs reflected in the opening folios of the Goindval volumes and the Kartarpur manuscript. In decorating the opening folios of the written collections of *gurbāṇī* ('Guru's utterances') the Sikh scribes were, in fact, following the contemporary example of magnificently calligraphed and illuminated copies of the Qur'an.

Second, the introductory note written at the beginning of the manuscript claims that 'there is a benedictory autograph written in Guru Hargobind's blessed hand on the fourth leaf' (ਚੌਥੇ ਪੱਤਰ ਤੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਦਸਤੇ ਮੁਬਾਰਕ ਨਾਲ ਨੀਸ਼ਾਣ ਮੰਗਲਾਚਰਣ ਹੈ).[2] This is not correct. An examination of the manuscript has revealed that a different piece of paper, containing the *Mul Mantar* written in Guru Tegh Bahadur's hand, was pasted much later on the fourth decorated page.[3] The owner of the manuscript must have received the autograph from the ninth Guru and pasted it in the blank folio of his scriptural relic to preserve it for posterity. The presence of this autograph, however, cannot be used to make the claim that the document was written during Guru Tegh Bahadur's period.[4] Rather, it proves another significant point, that the owner of the manuscript belonged to the mainline Sikh tradition.[5]

Third, the dealer's note claims that the manuscript contains a hymn written in Bhai Buddha's hand on the third decorated page. This was perhaps intended to follow a contemporary Muslim tradition to get the Qur'anic *fātihā* written by a revered figure at the time of writing of a new copy of the Qur'an. In this case the following hymn of Guru Amar Das, which appears in slightly different form in *Vār Vihāgaṛā*, is written on the third page of the manuscript in a different hand:

> (ਗੁ) ਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੇਵਹ ਸਦਾ ਸਾਚਾ (ਅ) ਨਦਿਨ ਸਹਜਿ ਪਿਆਰ। ਸਦਾ ਅੰਨੰਦਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਗੁਣ ਸਾਚੇ ਅਰਧਿ ਉਰਿਧਿ ਉਰਿਧਾਰਿ। ਅੰਦਰਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮੁ ਵਸਿਆ ਸਾਚਾ ਧੁਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਿ। ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਆਪੇ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ।
>
> The devotees of the Guru eternally serve the True One by remaining absorbed in spontaneous love day and night. Always in joy, they sing the praises of the True Lord from the innermost core of their hearts. The divine Beloved abides within them as it is written in their destiny by the Creator from the very beginning. In his grace, Nanak, the Lord himself has granted union to them.[6]

If the dealer's claim that Bhai Buddha wrote this hymn in his own hand is based on sound family tradition, then we may assume his

involvement in the creation of the scripture. It is quite possible that the manuscript was placed in the custody of Bhai Buddha. His descendants may have preserved it as a scriptural relic through the process of handing it over to the next generation. However, Sant Baba Darshan Singh, the present incumbent on the seat of Bhai Buddha, has no knowledge of this manuscript.[7] It means that the family had lost its memory a long time ago, perhaps when they disposed of the manuscript to some dealer due to its incomplete nature.

Fourth, folio 1255a of the manuscript contains the death dates of the first five Gurus. The long eulogistic description of Guru Amar Das's death (ਸਮਤੁ ੧੬੩੧ ਵਰਖੇ ਮਾਹ ਭਾਦਉ ਸੁਦੀ ੧੫ ਪੂਰਨਮਾ ਕੈ ਦਿਨਿ ਮੰਗਲਵਾਰ ਮਹਾ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਆਦਿ ਅਮਰੁ ਸਾ ਕਲਜੁਗ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ਕਰ�ि ਕੈ ਅਮਰੁ ਵਰਤਾਇਉਸੁ ਜਿਨਾ ਜੰਤਾ ਡਿਠਾ ਅਤੈ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਸੇ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਤੇ ਰਹੇ ਅਮਰੁ ਹੋਏ ਅੰਤਿ ਅਮਰ ਵਿਚਿ ਅਮਰੁ ਸਮਾਣਾ) is particularly noteworthy. It may indicate that the scribe was a close associate of the third Guru, possibly a member of the Bhalla family (like Bhai Gurdas?) or a descendant of a *Mañjī-bardār,* a Sikh missionary appointed by the third Guru.[8] Balwant Singh Dhillon apparently associates this manuscript with the Mina tradition.[9] But there is no evidence to support this contention. If this was the case, there should have been some reference to Prithi Chand or Miharvan in the column of the death dates of the Gurus. Moreover, an extra-canonical hymn in the Asa mode refers to the Minas for instigating Sulhi Khan to attack the Guru's establishment: 'They [Minas] approached the [Mughal] ruler to attack us. They created a false propaganda with the show of worldly wealth' (ਉਨਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਭੂਪਤੁ ਜਾਇ ਚੜਾਇਆ। ਪਰਪੰਚ ਝੂਠਾ ਦਿਖਲਾਈ ਮਾਇਆ।).[10] How can such a hymn be included in the manuscript if it is a Mina collection? Furthermore, the resemblance of the *Japjī* text with that of Harji's *Japu parmārath* points towards the possibility that both were perhaps copied from a common earlier source. It does not prove the Mina origins of the GNDU text at all.

Finally, a careful examination of the manuscript reveals that its writing work from the beginning to the end had been done by one hand only. The handwriting of the scribe is exceptionally neat and legible. The Gurmukhi orthography is still in the process of development. To a large extent its style is very similar to the Gurmukhi script of the Kartarpur manuscript. The most distinctive difference, however, is in the formation of certain letters and the vowel signs. For instance, a dot is used for the vowel sign *hannā* ('-ā') instead of a half vertical stroke, whereas the vowel sign *hoṛā* ('-o') is still written in its archaic form. The vowel *ūṛā* (ੳ,'u') is written with an open end like the symbol of *oaṅkār* (ੴ), whereas the vowels *aiṛā*

(ਅ,'a') and *iṁī* (ੲ,'i') are written in their early Takari forms. Similarly, the consonant *chhachchhā* (ਛ, 'chh') is still written as ਓ in its earlier Sharda form, while the other consonants such as *hāhā* (ਹ, 'h'), *ghagghā* (ਘ, 'gh'), *chachā* (ਚ, 'ch'), *ṇāṇā* (ਣ, 'ṇ') and *lallā* (ਲ, 'l') are written in their early Takari forms.[11] Thus on the basis of archaic orthography the GNDU manuscript can be placed between the Goindval *pothīs* and Kartarpur *bīṛ*.

2. DATING OF THE MANUSCRIPT

For the purpose of the dating of MS 1245 we need to examine the actual contents of the manuscript along with its external features. Piar Singh has rightly placed this document before the writing of the Kartarpur bīṛ in his examination of the manuscripts of the Adi Granth. However, his dating of the Kartarpur bīṛ during the period of the sixth Guru is wrong.[12] That manuscript was certainly completed in 1604 C.E. and this date is recorded in the handwriting of the primary scribe who prepared the table of contents. On the basis of my personal examination of the Kartarpur bīṛ I can confirm that there was no tinkering with the original writing of the following entry: 'Having completed the pothī, (the scribe) has reached (to the indexing of it) on *saṁbat* 1661 *mitī bhādauṁ vadī ekam* 1' (ਸੰਬਤ ੧੬੬੧ ਮਿਤਿ ਭਾਦਉ ਵਦੀ ੲੇਕਮ ੧ ਪੋਥੀ ਲਿਖਿ ਪਹੁਚੇ). This date corresponds to 1 August 1604 C.E.

On the basis of the table on folio 1255a of MS 1245 containing the death dates of the first five Gurus only, Piar Singh argues that this manuscript was written immediately after Guru Arjan's death. This assertion may be questioned on the following grounds. First, the table of death dates is written unconventionally on the blank folio before the end of the manuscript. In most of the early manuscripts the table of death dates is either found at the very beginning (immediately after the content index) or at the very end of the volume. In the present case, it was most probably written on the blank folio after Guru Arjan's death, which provided the historical context to record these dates for posterity. Even in the Kartarpur bīṛ the table of death dates of the first five Gurus was recorded much later, and its entry in the table of contents was recorded with a different pen. From the photograph of this folio (which is in my possession) of the Kartarpur bīṛ it is quite evident that the words *jotī joti samāvaṇe kā chalitar* ('death dates of the Gurus on folio 41') were certainly inserted later in the table of contents. Bhai Jodh Singh confirms this fact.[13]

Second, the actual contents of the GNDU volume clearly suggest

its compilation before 1604 C.E., the year of the completion of the Kartarpur bīṛ. Although the bulk of Guru Arjan's hymns are available in the GNDU volume, there are certain instances of the recording of only the opening lines of his hymns, followed by blank spaces. Clearly, those hymns were not available to the scribe in their final form. Moreover, four hymns of Guru Arjan in the *devgandhārī* raga (੧. ਠਾਕੁਰ ਹੋਇ ਆਪ ਦਇਆਲ, ੨. ਅਪੁਨੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਬਿਨਉ ਕਹਿਆ, ੩. ਅਨਾਥ ਨਾਥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਹਮਾਰੇ, ੪. ਪ੍ਰਭ ਇਹੈ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਮੇਰਾ) and three other hymns—one each in *gūjarī* (੧ ਸਮਰਥ ਸਰਨ ਕੋ ਦਾਤਾ), *sūhī* (ਦਰਸਨ ਕੋ ਲੋਚੈ ਸਭ ਕੋਈ) and *bilāval* (ਮੁ ਲਾਲਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਬਨੀ) ragas, respectively—are not to be found in the GNDU volume. These hymns were added in the later Kartarpur manuscript. Similarly, the absence of several other *shaloks* and hymns in the GNDU volume clearly places the document historically before the Kartarpur bīṛ.[14] More evidence of this nature will be provided in the next section.

Finally, let us try to date the GNDU manuscript. There are certain hymns by Guru Arjan referring to the events in the life of Guru Hargobind.[15] Their presence in the GNDU volume clearly indicates that it was compiled after 1595 C.E., the year of Guru Hargobind's birth. Thus we may historically place the document somewhere between 1595 and 1604. In his doctoral thesis, Gurinder Singh Mann has suggested that the GNDU manuscript was prepared in or around the year 1600.[16] There is a Sikh tradition that some people represented to Emperor Akbar that Guru Arjan was compiling a book in which the Muslim and Hindu prophets were reviled. When the emperor met the Guru towards the end of 1598, he had seen some collection of Sikh writings and found nothing objectionable in it.[17] Perhaps it was the GNDU manuscript under preparation at that time. We may thus suggest 1599 to be a safe date for its compilation.

3. INTERNAL FEATURES OF THE MANUSCRIPT

To determine the age of the manuscript from external features only is no merit in itself, it is merely a promise of merit. At times external features could be misleading. The real merit of the manuscript, therefore, lies in its contents. Thus the texual critic must judge the manuscript by its contents. If the standard rule of textual criticism that 'the shorter reading is to be preferred to the longer one' *(Brevior lectio praeferenda verbosiori)* is considered, the text of this manuscript dates to a period earlier than the famous Kartarpur manuscript. Another rule, that 'the more difficult reading is generally preferable' *(Proclivi lectioni praestat ardua)*, may be equally applied to the GNDU text since it contains archaic linguistic expressions which were

standardised in the Kartarpur volume. Moreover, its reading explains the origins of variations, which will become clear as we proceed to examine certain texts and Guru Arjan's editing principles. It certainly illuminates the process of the compilation of the Adi Granth by the fifth Guru in 1604.

The manuscript has a total number of 1267 folios. It is in the form of an incomplete draft on which the compiler still seemed to be working. In a number of places the layout of planning may be seen from the recording of only the first lines of certain hymns followed by blank spaces. Such instances can be seen in folios 207a-b, 769b-770a, 1066b, 1236a-1242a, 1245b-1246a, 1247a-1248a, 1254a-b and 1262b. This manuscript is typically known for its variant readings. There are a number of texts in this volume that were revised in the final version of the Adi Granth. It also contains certain extra-canonical hymns which were edited out in the final version.[18] The issue of extra-canonical hymns requires detailed analysis in itself, and it will be discussed in a separate paper. Some of the major characteristic features of MS 1245 are given below.

Introductory Section

This section opens with the liturgical prayers. The Morning Prayer contains Guru Nanak's *Japjī* (*japu mahalu 1,* ff. 27b-33a) and the Evening Prayer consists of '*Sodar* and four hymns' (*sodaru tathā chāre śabad,* ff. 35a-36b). Like the Kartarpur bīṛ, MS 1245 does not contain the *So Purakh* text (a collection of four hymns, the first two of them by Guru Ram Das and one each by Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan respectively). This clearly indicates that it became part of the Evening Prayer after the compilation of the Adi Granth in 1604. Again, the late Evening Prayer *(Sohilā)* is not to be found in the introductory section of MS 1245. Thus, the liturgical section of this volume clearly points towards an earlier stage of its evolution.

The Main Section

The main section has a different raga sequence, and the index of individual hymns of each raga section is written separately at the beginning of that section. Obviously the convention of writing an index had begun by this time, since there is no index of individual hymns to be found in the Goindval volumes. On the basis of a discrepancy between the sequence of certain hymns in the index and their actual position in the main text in the *sirī* raga, for instance, Piar Singh

argues that the compiler of this manuscript was certainly copying its index from some other source.[19] This supports the general assumption of manuscriptology that scribes usually copied from more than one manuscript at times. It may also reflect the pre-canonical stage of a particular document. Moreover, the discrepancy between the index and text is frequently encountered in the early manuscripts of the *Sūr Sāgar*.[20] Even Bhai Jodh Singh has recorded a number of such instances from the Kartarpur manuscript.[21]

MS 1245 begins with the *sirī* raga followed by the usual *mājh, gauṛī, āsā, gūjarī, devgandhārī, bihāgāṛā* and *vaḍahaṅs* ragas. Thereafter, it diverges from the standard pattern and follows its own sequence of *dhanāsarī, jaitasarī, soraṭhi, kalayāṇ, naṭ-narāiṇ, ṭoḍi, bairāṛī, tilaṅg, goṇḍ-bilāval, sūhī, bilāval, rāmakalī, mālī-gauṛā, mārū, kedārā, tukhārī, bhairauṁ, basant, sāraṅg, malār, kanaṛā* and *prābhātī* ragas. Particularly, the position of *soraṭhi, kalayāṇ* and *naṭ-narāiṇ* (placed here as 11th, 12th and 13th in the raga sequence) changes in the standard version, where they are placed as 9th, 29th and 19th respectively. It is, however, important to note that this manuscript does contain all the manjor 30 ragas of the Adi Granth. Once the sequence of these ragas was fixed in the Kartarpur volume in 1604, it was faithfully followed in all later manuscripts.

In the GNDU volume each raga has subdivisions based on the length of the compositions, beginning with the short *padā* genre, followed by other poetic forms (*aṣṭapadī, chhant* and other longer works) and ending with the longer or ballad genre. Evidently the present sequence of subdivisions had already developed when this manuscript was written. It is, however, important to note that Guru Amar Das's *Anandu* ('Bliss') is located on folio 881a after Guru Nanak's *Siddh Goṣṭ* and before *Vār Rāmakalī* of the third Guru. In this respect the GNDU volume follows the sequence of the second volume of the Goindval pothīs.[22] This close correspondence clearly shows a textual relationship between the two documents. In the final text of the Adi Garnth, however, Guru Arjan juxtaposed the *Anandu*, Guru Amar Das's hymn of joy, and the *Sadu* ('Call'), Sundar's dirge on that Guru's death, to stress the theme of balanced life.

Status of the Vārs ('Ballads'):

The GNDU manuscript contains a total number of 21 *vārs* (including the mention of the ballad by Satta and Balvand), which is one less than the 22 of the standard version of the Adi Granth. It does not contain Guru Arjan's *Vār Basant*, which unlike other vārs, has only

three stanzas. It is important to note that this vār was recorded in a blank folio in the Kartarpur manuscript much later, and there is no mention of this in the index.[23] Let us examine cetain distinctive features of the vārs in the GNDU volume.

In the first place, the vārs of this manuscript are still in their pre-canonical stage. For instance, the *shaloks* in the vārs are not assigned their proper authorship such as M1, M2, M3 M4 and M5. It is quite noteworthy that this convention was later introduced with a different pen in the text of the vārs in the Kartarpur bīṛ.[24] In certain cases in the GNDU text, the shaloks have yet to be selected for the *pauṛīs* ('stanzas'). For instance, in folios 482b, 483a and 483b there are blank spaces to be filled in with the shaloks for the pauṛīs numbering 18, 20 and 21 respectively in the vār of Guru Amar Das in the gūjarī mode. These blank spaces clearly illuminate the textual process of how the vārs were being fixed for the first time in the GNDU volume. This process acquires an added significance from the fact that the vārs are not to be found in the two available Goindval pothīs.

Second, there is an interesting instance in this volume where the compiler had written an editorial note after the 27th stanza of Guru Nanak's *Vār Malār.* The note on folio 1182a reads: 'This stanza is [actually] number twenty-eight' (ਏਹ ਪਉੜੀ ਅਠਾਈਹਵੀਂ ਐਸੀ). This note clearly indicates that the last stanza numbering 28 (ਸਭੇ ਵਰਤੈ ਚਲਤੁ ਵਖਾਣਿਆ), which was added by Guru Arjan himself to the *Vār Malār,* should change places with Guru Nanak's stanza numbering 27 (ਤੂ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਆਪਿ ਬਣਤ ਬਣਾਈ ।) in the final text. In the standard version of the Adi Granth, the title of the stanza numbering 27 reads: 'The new stanza by the fifth Guru' (ਪਉੜੀ ਨਵੀ ਮ: ਪ). The position of the above stanza of Guru Nanak is fixed at the end.[25] This editorial process also proves another significant point that there is a close correspondence between the GNDU volume and the Kartarpur bīṛ. Thus it establishes a clear textual relationship between these two manuscripts.

Third, seven vārs of the GNDU volume are assigned the specific heroic tunes (*dhunīs*) to which they are supposed to be sung. In most cases, these tunes are not written at the beginning of their text in different raga sections, rather they are mentioned in the index only.[26] The only exception is Guru Ram Das's *Vār Vaḍahaṅs* where it is specifically stated at the beginning of its text on folio 551a that 'it is to be sung to the tune of a ballad of Lal and Bahalim' (ਲਾਲ ਬਹਲੀਮ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ ਓਪਰਿ ਗਾਵਣੀ). It should be exphasised here that the two additional heroic tunes were assigned to Guru Nanak's *Vār Mājh* and Guru Arjan's *Vār Rāmakalī* in the later Kartarpur volume.

Finally, there is no recording of such words as *śudh* ('pure' or 'correct') or *śudh kīchai* ('make corrections') at the end of the vārs in the GNDU text, thus reflecting the pre-canonical nature of this document. This convention was used for the first time in the Kartarpur manuscript by Guru Arjan to mark his personal approval of the content, form and organisation of the vārs in particular raga sections. This is quite evident from the inscription of śudh in the margins at the end of 16 vārs in the Kartarpur bīṛ.[27] It also highlights the editorial process through which the blank spaces in the vārs of the GNDU text were duly filled in the Kartarpur volume.

Status of the Bhagat Bānī

The most distinctive feature of the GNDU volume is that it contains the writings of the Gurus and those bards closely associated with the Sikh court. Apart from the panegyrics (*savayye*) of the bards (ff. 1264-67) in praise of the Gurus, it contains Mardana's shalok (f. 515) as well as Sundar's *Sadu* (ff. 858-59). The vār by Satta and Balvand in the rāmakalī mode is not to be found in the main text, although its mention has been made at the end of the index. This was definitely incorporated in the later Kartarpur manuscript. Piar Singh maintains that the compiler of the GNDU manuscript acknowledged only the *bāṇī* of the Sikh Gurus and the Sikh bards.[28] This suggestion raises important questions: Does this mean that the compiler was drawing a line between the Sikh writings and the non-Sikh writings of the Bhagats? Was there any tension between the followers of the Bhagats and the Sikhs that led to the exclusion of the *bhagat-bāṇī* from the Sikh scriptural tradition at that particular moment? Was the Sikh community consciousness heightened at that time to such an extent that it revised its earlier inclusive ideal provided by the Goindval pothīs? By raising these questions, however, one must use caution against reading too much into that particular situation.

It is true that the GNDU volume does not contain the bhagat-bāṇī as such. We may suggest that Guru Arjan's primary concern was to fix the hymns of the Gurus first, and then to deal with the issue of the hymns of the Bhagats. The presence of Kabir's shaloks in both *Vār Sūhī* and *Vār Rāmakalī* of Guru Amar Das (followed by the Guru's responses to the issues raised by the Bhagat), however, provides clear evidence that the compiler of this volume had every intention of including the bhagat-bāṇī in the Sikh scriptural tradition.[29] Presumably he was collecting the hymns of the Bhagats separately in another

volume to include them later on in the final recension. This is perhaps the reason why the Kartarpur manuscript does not contain the index of the individual hymns of the bhagat-bāṇī, which was included en bloc after the Gurus' works at the end of each raga section.

The Epilogue

The arrangement of the concluding section of this volume is not yet fixed, nor its content determined. In the first place, the titles of the epilogue of the volume appear in their earlier forms, which were standardised in the Kartarpur volume. For instance, the title of the Gurus' shaloks surplus to the *vārs* is written as *Śalok Vārāṅ Te Bāhari* (ਸਲੋਕ ਵਾਰਾ ਤੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ) on folio 1232a. In a similar manner, the title of the panegyrics by a bard named Kali in praise of Guru Angad appears as *Savayye Gurū Aṅgad Ke Kālai Bhaṭṭi Kīte* (ਸਵਈਏ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਕੇ ਕਾਲੈ ਭਟਿ ਕੀਤੇ).[30]

Second, in the text *Śalok Vārāṅ Te Bāhari* there are 35 shaloks of Guru Nanak (ff. 1232a-1235a), the opening lines of 62 shaloks of Guru Amar Das (ff. 1236a-1242b), 28 shaloks of Guru Ram Das (ff. 1243a-1246a) and 22 shaloks of Guru Arjan (ff. 1247a-1248a), followed by the opening line of the *Mundāvaṇi*. Apart from certain variant readings, some shaloks are missing in this section. There are also certain extra-canonical shaloks in this volume. All these points clearly refer to its pre-canonical stage.

Third, the text *Śalok Sahaṅskriti Ke* (ਸਲੋਕ ਸਹੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਕੇ) has 62 stanzas of Guru Arjan, some of which are written with opening verses (numbering 13, 14, and 43-62) only, leaving blank spaces to be filled later. Guru Nanak's shaloks are not to be found in this text. It is followed by 24 stanzas of Guru Arjan's *Gāthā* (ff. 1254a-1254b, verses 6-22 are written with opening lines only). Then comes the table of death dates of the first five Gurus in folio 1255a, which was written unconventionally before the end of the manuscript. This was perhaps inserted later on in the blank folio.

Fourth, an extra-canonical text *Ratan Mālā* (ਰਾਗੁ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ਰਤਨ ਮਾਲਾ) attributed to Guru Nanak is found on folio 1257a. (This text was edited out in the final version of the Adi Granth due to its emphasis upon the *haṭṭha yoga* ideals.) It is followed by eleven panegyrics of Guru Arjan (ff. 1259a-1260b). Then come 22 stanzas of Guru Arjan's *Phunahe* (ff. 1261a-1262b) and the opening lines of nine stanzas of his *Chaubole* (f. 1262b).

Fifth, there are 20 panegyrics by Guru Arjan in praise of Guru Nanak (ਮਹਲੈ ਪਹਿਲੈ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਕੇ ਮੁਖਵਾਕ), which are found at two

different places in this volume (ff. 1259a-1260b, 1263a-1263b). The panegyrics by the bards (*bhaṭṭāṅ de savayye*) in praise of the Gurus are still in their earlier short form. The manuscript contains only 32 panegyrics (ff. 1263b-1266b) as compared with 123 *savayyās* found in the standard version of the Adi Granth. By the time this manuscript was written some of the bards had not yet appeared in the court of the Guru.

Finally, Guru Arjan's concluding shalok *terā kītā jāto nāhīṅ* (ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਤੋ ਨਾਹੀ...) is not to be found in this volume. Obviously this shalok was composed in gratitude at a time when the final text of the Adi Granth was prepared in 1604. It comes after the *Mundāvaṇī* in the Kartarpur manuscript.

All these internal features of the MS 1245 place the document well before the writing of the Kartarpur bīṛ. However, Balwant Singh Dhillon uses certain features such as repetitions, omissions, apocrypha and the discrepancy between the index and text to discredit MS 1245 as a legitimate source in the compilation of the Sikh scripture. His arguments are based on the premise that in order to maintain the traditional view it would be best for the faithful to deny the very existence of early manuscripts. For instance, he completely fails to understand the issue of variant readings of certain hymns in the following observation:

> Similarly in *raga* Bhairo the lines of hymn No. 51 ਹਥਿ [sic] ਕੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਦਾ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵਹਿ) have been inverted, and at the end abortive attempt has been made to record another hymn which begins with the original first line (ਭੈ ਕਉ ਭਉ ਪੜਿਆ) of this hymn. Evidently, the scribe, in his attempt to confuse the hymns of Guru Arjan, had split the text of some hymns into two to compose a new hymn.[31]

Here the author attributes the motive of 'forgery' to the scribe of the GNDU manuscript. This is simply not the case. One can see the same *Bhairo* hymn (ਭੈਰੋ ਮਹਲ ੫। ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਦਾ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਈ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਪੁਰਨ ਧਾਮ...) repeated in the Kartarpur bīṛ on folio 836/1 with the marginal note: 'This hymn is repeated here, its actual place is at [number] fifty-two' (ਏਹੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਦੁਹਰਾਗਤਿ ਚੜਿਆ ਹੈ ਬਾਵੰਜਹ ਰੈ).[32] The hymn that appears at number 52 in folio 834/1 (ਭੈਰਉ ਮਹਲਾ ੫। ਭੈ ਕਉ ਭਉ ਪੜਿਆ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ।...) slightly differs from the above hymn in terms of wording and sequence of lines. The following three conclusions can be drawn from this interesting instance.

First, Guru Arjan himself fixed the final reading of his *Bhairo* hymn in the Kartarpur bīṛ and crossed out the second reading on folio

836/1. His editorial note further highlights the extraordinary care with which the scripture was prepared. Second, the commonality of the variant readings of certain hymns in the GNDU volume and the Kartarpur bīṛ establishes a clear textual relationship between the two documents. Finally, the issue of variant readings of certain hymns will be discussed at length in the next section. It will be shown that it was the result of the liberty taken by the Sikh musicians in devotional singing.

4. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The recently published *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* describes the role of Guru Arjan in the creation of a new scripture as follows:

> The making of the Granth involved sustained labour and rigorous intellectual discipline. Selections had to be made from a vast mass of material. What was genuine had to be sifted from what was counterfeit. Then the selected material had to be assigned to appropriate musical measures, edited and recast where necessary, and transcribed in a minutely laid-out order. Gurū Arjan accomplished the task with extraordinary exactness. [33]

Surely the process involved 'editing' and 'recasting' of certain hymns in the making of the Sikh canon. We will discuss this process in detail in this section.

In order to understand the issue of variant readings of the GNDU text let us examine certain hymns more thoroughly. We may begin with the textual analysis of the opening passage of Guru Nanak's *Japjī* and end with Guru Arjan's hymns in the *tilaṅg* mode.

Japjī: *The Early Morning Prayer*

The GNDU manuscript provides an early version of the Morning Prayer before its standardisation. It begins as follows:

> ੧ੴ
> ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਜਪੁ । ਮਹਲੁ ।੧ ।
> ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖਵਾਰ । ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇਇ ਲਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਵਤਾਰ । ਭੁਖਿਆ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਜੇ ਬਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਭਾਰ । ਸਹੰਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਨਿ ਤ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ । ਕਿਉ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਉ ਕੂੜੇ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ । ਹੁਕਮ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ।੧ ।[34]

> There is One Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality. He is the Creator, without fear and devoid of enmity. He is immortal, never incarnated, self-existent, known by grace through the True Guru. Japu Mahalu 1.
> Through ritual purity he can never be known though one cleanse oneself a hundred thousand times. Silent reflection will never reveal him though one dwell absorbed in the deepest meditation. Though one gather vast riches, the hunger remains, no cunning will help in the hereafter. How is Truth to be attained, how the veil of falsehood torn aside? Nanak, thus it is written: Submit to God's Order (*hukam*), walk in its way. (1)[35]

A comparative analysis of this text with the standard version of the *Japjī* reveals the following important differences, which illuminate different stages in the process of its development. First, the Mul Mantar is given in its earlier form, containing the phrase *satgurū parsādi* ('by the grace of the True Guru') of the Goindval pothīs instead of *gur parsādi* ('by the grace of the Guru') of the Adi Granth. This early form of the Mul Mantar is employed five times only in the GNDU text.[36]

Second, the title of the composition is mentioned as *japu mahalu 1* (ਜਪੁ। ਮਹਲੁ ੧ ।), indicating specifically the authorship of Guru Nanak. Here the use of term *mahalu* is very significant, since it reflects an earlier convention followed in the Goindval pothīs. It was employed for a principality held by a chieftain in the Mughal empire of Akbar. It was from its contemporary usage that the term mahalā was adapted in the spiritual domain to refer to the Sikh Gurus who held the office of Guruship.[37] In the standard version, however, the symbol mahalu1 is omitted, perhaps consciously to assign divine authorship to the text. Guru Arjan seems to have indicated that the ultimate source of all the bāṇī is the Eternal Guru, who revealed himself through Guru Nanak and his successors. It would be understandable for this fundamental belief to be acknowedged right in the beginning.

Third, the most distinctive difference is that the introductory couplet of the *Japjī* is missing in the earlier text. In the standard version it reads, 'The Eternal One, from the beginning, through all time, present now, the Everlasting Reality'[38] (ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ । ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ।). Two explanations may be offered here. The author of this shalok is Guru Nanak himself because of the frequent usage of the word *sachu* in his works. But it was added by Guru Arjan much later when he produced the final text of the *Japjī*. Second, this shalok is also repeated with a slight difference as an introductory

shalok (ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ। ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭਿ ਸਚੁ। 'The Eternal One, from the beginning, through all time, present now, the Everlasting Reality') to the 17th aṣṭapadī or octave of the *Sukhmanī*.[39] This fact alone apparently makes it the composition of Guru Arjan, who would have expressed Guru Nanak's intention and teachings in his own words. By adding his own shalok at the beginning of the *Japjī* the fifth Guru must have intended to stress the unity of Guruship. This may be another reason why he did not write the symbol mahalā 1 with the title of the *Japjī* in the standard version.

Finally, the first stanza of the *Japjī* that appears here has some linguistic variations. Evidently Guru Arjan modified the language of certain words (ਜੇਇ/ਜੇ, ਉਤਰੈ/ਉਤਰੀ, ਬਨਾ/ਬੰਨਾ, ਸਹੰਸ/ਸਹਸ, ਹੋਨਿ/ਹੋਹਿ, ਕਿਉ/ਕਿਵ) and replaced them with more grammatically and metrically sound constructions in order to standardise the text. For instance, the use of the verb *utarī* (ਉਤਰੀ, 'be removed') fits well with the feminine noun *bhukh* (ਭੁਖ, 'hunger'), whereas the use of its synonymous variant *utarai* (ਉਤਰੈ) in this case would be regarded as a 'colloquial expression'.[40] Similarly the word *jei* (ਜੇਇ, 'even if') with a long syllable was replaced with its short synonym *je* (ਜੇ) to fit the metre. It should, however, be emphasised that the meaning of the text remains the same in spite of this revision.

Guru Arjan's Tilang Hymns

It has been suggested that the tilang raga has a special appropriateness for the hymns associated with Islam. A great deal of Persian and Islamic loan words are to be found in this raga.[41] It appears that the tilang raga was quite popular among the Muslim singers (particularly the Sufis or dervishes) of the Punjab in the sixteenth century.[42] There are only five hymns of Guru Arjan in this mode in the standard version of the Adi Granth.[43] It is interesting to note that MS 1245 provides the earlier forms of these hymns, all of which were revised in the final version of the Kartarpur volume. They illuminate both the original context of their first utterance and their subsequent standardisation in the final text. The following concerns are noteworthy in the redaction process at work in the revision of these hymns.

Fixing of the Sequence of Verses in a Hymn

In the standard version of the Adi Granth, the second shabad of Guru Arjan in the tilang mode begins with the line: 'There is no other

apart from You' (ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ ।).[44] Although the same line is mentioned in the index of MS 1245, the main text begins as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫
ਸਭ ਊਪਰਿ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਦਾਤਾਰੁ । ਤੇਰੀ ਟੇਕ ਤੇਰਾ ਆਧਾਰੁ । ਰਹਾਉ । ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ । ਤੂ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਸੋ ਹੋਇ । ਤੇਰਾ ਜੋਰੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਮਨਿ ਟੇਕ । ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਜਪਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕੁ ।੧ ।...[45]

Tilang Mahala 5
Surpassing all, O Supreme Lord, is your support and succour. *rahāu.*
There is no other apart from You. Whatever You will, O Creator Lord, comes to pass. Your power is the *man's* only support. Contemplate ever and ever, Nanak, the One [and the only Lord].(1)...

The comparison of this text with its standard form clearly indicates that Guru Arjan changed the order of the verse in the *rahāu* (literally 'pause' or 'stop') which normally represents the central idea of the hymn and which is used as a refrain (or *sathāī*)in a musical performance. In this instance, he fixed it after the first verse (or *antarā*) of the hymn. It may also indicate that each verse of a hymn must be understood as an independent unit in itself. This seems to be the case especially in instances where there is no thematic development of an idea over the different verses of a hymn.[46] It should also be emphasised here that this earlier form of Guru Arjan's tilang hymn confirms an important fact concerning the oral transmission of bāṇī in the Sikh community. The hymns of the Gurus were primarily intended to be sung in a congregational setting. Thus this earlier text was certainly popular in the kirtan ('devotional singing') sessions during Sikh worship.

Although the rahāu verse normally comes after the first verse of a hymn, this convention is not followed universally in the Adi Granth. For instance, the opening verse of Guru Arjan's fifth hymn in tilang mode reads: 'O wise nobleman! contemplate in your heart how the True King, the Liberator, comes to abide in the *man* and body through love' (ਮੀਰਾ ਦਾਨਾ ਦਿਲ ਸੋਚ । ਮੁਹਬਤੇ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਬਸੈ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹ ਬੰਦੀ ਮੋਚੁ । ਰਹਾਉ ।).[47] Guru Arjan fixed this rahāu verse right at the beginning in the standard text. It had been written after the first verse in the GNDU text. The following is the earlier reading:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ।
ਦੀਦਨੇ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਛੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਹਿਸਕਾ ਮੋਲੁ । ਪਾਕ ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰੁ ਤੂ ਖੁਦੁ ਖਸਮੁ ਵਡਾ ਅਤੋਲੁ ।੧ । ਮੀਰਾ ਦਾਨਾ ਦਿਲ ਸੋਚੁ । ਮੁਹਬਤੇ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਬਸੈ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਬੰਦੀ ਮੋਚੁ । ਰਹਾਉ ।...[48]

Tilang Mahala 5.
There can be no price on beholding the Lord. You yourself are the holy Nourisher, vastly beyond all measuring. (1)
O wise nobleman! contemplate in your heart how the True Lord, the Liberator, comes to abide in the *man* and body through love. *rahāu* ...

The hymn appears to have been addressed to a Muslim nobleman, probably the Nawab of Lahore,[49] who was invited to follow the path of love as enunciated by the Guru. Apart from the position of the rahāu verse, this text contains the word *sāhibu* ('Lord') instead of *śāh* ('King') of the final form, which was introduced by Guru Arjan for metrical purposes. These minor textual variations, which do not alter the original meaning at all, can best be explained as the result of the liberty taken by the Sikh musicians in singing.[50]

Linguistic Modifications of Certain Words in a Hymn

In the standard version, Guru Arjan's third hymn in tilang raga begins with the rahāu verse: 'Gracious, gracious is the Lord. My Lord is gracious indeed. He bestows bounties on all creatures' (ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ। ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ। ਜੀਅ ਸਗਲ ਕਉ ਦੇਇ ਦਾਨੁ। ਰਹਾਉ)[51] Its earlier form, however, reads as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫।
ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ। ਹੰਉ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੁ ਸਗਲ ਜੀਆ ਕੰਉ ਦੇਹਿਗਾ ਦਾਨੁ। ਰਹਾਉ। ਕਾਹੇ ਰੇ ਡੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀਆ ਤਓ ਨਓ ਰਾਖੈਗਾ ਰਾਖਨਹਾਰਾ। ਜਿਨਿ ਪੈਦਾਇਸ ਤੁ ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰਾ।੧। ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਈ ਮੇਦਨੀ ਸੋਈ ਕਰੈਗਾ ਸਾਰਾ। ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਮਾਲਕੁ ਦਿਲਾ ਦਾ ਸਾਚਾ ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰਾ।੨।[52]
Gracious, gracious is the [divine] Beloved. I sacrifice myself to him who bestows bounties on all creatures. *rahāu.*
O creature of God! why do you waver? The Protector shall protect you. He who has created you, shall preserve you too. (1)
He who has created the whole world, looks after it as well. Present in every heart, the Lord is the heart's (only) true Guardian. (2)...

The comparative examination of this text with its standard version reveals certain linguistic variations. For instance, the first line in the standard version, *miharvānu sāhibu miharvānu,* is written in the earlier text here as *miharvānu piārā miharvānu;* that is, in the final text the word sāhibu ('Lord') replaces piārā ('Beloved'). The phrase *haum kurbānu* ('I sacrifice myself') was dropped from the second line. In

its stead a new line, *sāhibu merā miharvānu* ('My Lord is Gracious'), was added, putting emphasis upon the divine nature of graciousness. The remainder of the rahāu verse was recast as *jīa sagal kau dehi dānu* ('He bestows bounties on all creatures') to create better metrical and rhyming effect.

The language of the first verse of the hymn was modified in the final text (ਤੂ ਕਾਹੇ ਡੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਰਾਖੈਗਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ। ਜਿਨਿ ਪੈਦਾਇਸ ਤੂ ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰੁ ।੧ ।) without changing the original meaning. In the first place, the musical filler *re* ('O') is replaced with the personal pronoun *tūṁ* (ਤੂ, 'you') in order to establish personal contact with the audience. Second, the short phrase *tau nau* ('to you') is replaced by a singular oblique pronoun *tudhu* (ਤੁਧੁ, 'you') to shorten the syllables for metrical purposes. Third, the word *rākhanahārā* (ਰਾਖਨਹਾਰਾ, 'Protector') is replaced with *sirjaṇahāru* (ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ, 'Creator') to change the end rhyme. Similarly, minor linguistic modifications were made in other verses of the hymn to standardise the text. It should, however, be emphasised here that this revision is in keeping with both the rhythm and the meaning of the hymn.

The fourth hymn of Guru Arjan in the tilaṅg raga begins with the line: 'O Creator! [I am] yearning [for You] through [my love for your] creation' (ਕਰਤੇ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਮੁਸਤਾਕੁ ।).[53] Although the same line appears in the index of the GNDU volume, the complete hymn in the main text reads as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫।
ਕਰਤਾ ਕੁਦਰਤੇ ਮੁਸਤਾਕੁ। ਦੀਨ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਏਕੁ ਤੂ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਖਲਕ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਪਾਕੁ। ਰਹਾਉ। ਖਿਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਥਪਿ ਉਥਾਪਦਾ ਅਚਰਜੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਰੂਪੁ। ਕਵਣੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਚਲਤ ਤੇਰੇ ਅੰਧਿਆਰੇ ਮਹਿ ਦੀਪੁ ।੧। ਖੁਦ ਖਸਮ ਖਲਕ ਜਹਾਨੁ ਅਲਹੁ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਖੁਦਾਹਿ। ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਰੈਨਿ ਤੁਝੈ ਅਰਾਧਤੇ ਸੇ ਕਿਉ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਜਾਹਿ ।੨। ਅਜਰਾਈਅਈਰੁ ਬੰਦੇ ਜਿਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਅਧਾਰੁ। ਗੁਨਹ ਓਨ ਕੇ ਅਛੂ ਜੋ ਜਨ ਦੇਖਤੇ ਦੀਦਾਰੁ ।੩। ਦੁਨੀਆ ਚੀਜ ਫਲਹਾਲ ਸਗਲੀ ਸਚੁ ਸੁਖ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਉ। ਮਿਲਿ ਪੀਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੂਝਿਆ ਸਦਾ ਏਕਸੁ ਗਾਉ ।੪।੪।[54]

Tilang Mahala 5.
Creator! [I am] yearning [for You] through [my love for your] creation. You are the only One [who is my true support] in both this world and the next, [even though] You remain apart from all your creation. *rahāhu.*
You have the power to create and destroy in an instant! Wondrous is your form! Who can know your wonders? You are like a Lamp in the darkness.(1)
You yourself are the Master of creation, the gracious Allah, the Lord (*khudā'i*). How can they who remember You day and night go to hell!? (2)

The people who take shelter with You shall find the angel of death ('Azrael') friendly. Those servants who crave for your vision (*dīdār*) will have their sins forgiven. (3)
All the objects of the world are short-lived. Your Name [brings] to all true joy. By meeting with the Pir, Nanak, this realization has come: that one should ever sing [the glory of] the One Lord. (4)

Evidently, Guru Arjan made an exceptionally free use of Persian and Islamic loan words in this hymn. Particularly the use of such poetic items as *musatāku* (<*mushtāq*, 'yearning') and *dīdār* ('vision of the beloved') reminds one of the typical vocabulary of Muslim lyrical poetry, with its extensive debt to the language of the courtly (and mystical) *ghazal*.[55] The major points that emerge from the discussion of this hymn are given below.

First, Guru Arjan modified the language of the rahāu verse through the substitution of the words *karate* ('O Creator!') and *kudartīm* ('with the creation') for *karatā* ('Creator') and *kudarat'i* ('in the creation'), in order to recast the Persian words into Punjabi constructions. For instance, the Punjabi word karate (ਕਰਤੇ, 'O Creator!') is used as a noun in the vocative case when addressing *Akal Purakh* ('Timeless One') directly, which shows an intimate relationship with the divine. Similarly the word kudartīm (ਕੁਦਰਤੀ, 'with the creation') is employed to express an intimate relationship with the creation. The phrase *acharaju terā rūpu* ('wondrous is your form') in the first verse is replaced with *acharaj tere rūp* ('wondrous are your forms') to get the plural expression for stressing the nature of divine immanence. The interrogative pronoun *kavaṇu* ('who?') is replaced by *kauṇu* to fit the metre. Similarly, the phrase *dinu raini tujhai arādate* ('[they who] remember You day and night') is replaced with *dinasu raiṇi ji tudhu arādhe* ('[he who] remembers You day and night') to create a singular form of the expression.

Second, Guru Arjan employed the Islamic words for the Supreme Being, such as the Arabic *alahu* (<*allāh*) and Persian *khudāi* (<*khudā'ī*) to address his Muslim audience. He also refers to *ajarāīlu* ('Azrael'), the angel of death from the Islamic celestial hierarchy. The obscure phrase *ajarāīaīru bande* (ਅਜਰਾਈਅਈਰੁ ਬੰਦੇ) in the early text must have been popular in the village communities. If the canon of unusual readings (*lectiones arduae*) is applied to this phrase to determine the age of the document, then MS 1245 will certainly come out to be much older than the Kartarpur manuscript. It was replaced by *ajarāīlu yāru bande* (ਅਜਰਾਈਲੁ ਯਾਰੁ ਬੰਦੇ, 'Azrael is that person's friend') in the standard text which is more intelligible in the present

context. Further, the use of such words as *aphū* (<*'afū*, 'be forgiven'), *gunaha* (<*gunāh*, 'sins') and *dojaki* (<*dozakh*, 'hell') reflect the concern of contemporary Islam with hell-fire eschatology. Guru Arjan addressed this theme because his Muslim audience must have been deeply concerned with the forgiveness of 'sins' to escape the punishment of hell. He offered them a way out of their predicament in the prescription of *nām-simaraṇ* (ਦਿਨਸੁ ਰੈਣਿ ਜਿ ਤੁਧੁ ਅਰਾਧੇ ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਜਾਇ, 'How can he who remembers You day and night go to hell?'). In fact, he was inviting them to follow the path of the Guru by addressing them in their own terms.

Third, the Persian loan-word *philahāl* (<*fī'l-ḥāl*, 'transitory') links the meaning of the hymn to the *memento mori* theme of the Punjabi Sufi literature, which stresses the transitoriness of worldly things.[56] The most significant point in Guru Arjan's revision of this hymn, however, can be seen in substituting in the final text the phrase *gur mili nānak būjhiā* (ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੂਝਿਆ, 'By meeting with the Guru, Nanak, this realization has come') for *mili pīr nānak būjhiā* (ਮਿਖਿ ਪੀਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੂਝਿਆ, 'By meeting with the Pir, Nanak, this realization has come'). It suggests that the hymn was originally directed at a Muslim audience, for which the role of the 'Pir' would be a relevant feature of spiritual development.

Finally, the language and style of the tilaṅg hymns clearly presuppose Muslim audiences, and it is quite possible that a significant number of Muslims were attracted to the Sikh faith due to its universal appeal and significance.[57] Like Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan frequently employed Persian and Islamic loan words to reach out to his Muslim audience in the countryside, but the truth which he wished to express was his own.[58]

Fixing of the Musical Mode of a Hymn

The GNDU manuscript contains a hymn in the tilaṅg raga, the revised text of which is to be found in the sūhī mode in the standard version of the Adi Granth.[59]. The earlier reading is as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫।
ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਸੈ ਸਿਖੜਾ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ। ਆਖਾ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜੀਅ ਦੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਜਣੁ ਦੇ ਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ। ਸੋਈ ਦਸਿ ਉਪਦੇਸੜਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਅਲਤ ਨ ਕਤਹੂ ਜਾਇ। ਹੰਉ ਏਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੈ ਕੂੰ ਭੇਵਸਾ ਮੈ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਦੇਇ ਬਤਾਇ। ਹੰਉ ਆਇਆ ਦੂਰਹੁ ਚਲਿ ਕੈ ਮੈ ਤਕੀ ਤਉ ਸਰਨਾਇ। ਮੈ ਆਸਾ ਰਖੀ ਚਿਤੁ ਮੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਭੇ ਦੁਖੁ ਗਵਾਇ। ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲੇ ਭਾਈੜੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੁ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਇ। ਤਿਆਗਿ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸੜਾ ਨੰਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ। ਹੁੰਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ

ਹੁਕਮਾਉ । ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਖਜਾਨਾ ਬਖਸਿਆ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀਆ ਪਸਾਉ । ਬਹੁੜਿ ਨ ਤਿਸਨਾ ਭੁਖੜੀ ਹੰਉ ਰਜਾ ਤਿਪਤਿ ਅਘਾਇ ।੧।੫।

Tilang Mahala 5.

Whichever disciple of the Guru I meet I bow low to touch his feet. I state my heart's agony to him so that he may help me meet my Guru and friend. I seek instructions from him to control my endlessly straying mind. I will sacrifice my *man* to you, if you show me the true path. I have come from far to seek your protection. I cherish the hope in my heart that you will remove all my sufferings. Follow this true path, my brother, and do the bidding of the Guru. Renounce the [evil] inclinations of your mind and refrain from loving the other. In this way you will have the holy vision of the Lord, and no calamity will come to you. I myself do not know how to speak, I have only conveyed the order [of the Lord]. The Lord has blessed me with the treasure of devotion and it is this which the servant Nanak celebrates. I am now completely satiated and my craving no longer exists.[60]

The comparative analysis of this text with its standard form in the sūhī mode reveals a number of interesting points. First, there is a marginal note in a different hand on folio 682a of the GNDU manuscript (ਸੂਹੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ,' It is taken to the *sūhī* mode') to clarify that this hymn is repeated in the sūhī mode on folio 729b, with the addition of the first line appearing at the end as well. This editorial comment clearly indicates that the decision to put this hymn in the sūhī raga was taken by the time of the composition of this earlier recension.

Second, the reason for fixing this hymn in the sūhī raga is based on thematic consideration. Even in the GNDU manuscript its second appearance is entitled *guṇavantī* ('virtuous woman'), which fits very well in the sequence of the preceding two hymns of Guru Nanak entitled *kuchajjī* ('slovenly or uncultured woman') and *suchajjī* ('skilful or cultured woman') respectively.[61] Here, one can easily discern the step-wise progression of the theme of spiritual development of a woman-soul yearning for the union with her divine Husband, which is the characteristic feature of the sūhī raga.

Third, the linguistic examination of the cluster of three hymns (that is, two hymns by Guru Nanak and one by Guru Arjan in this context) clearly suggests that Guru Arjan had very carefully reworked the poetic genre of *kāfi* and the south-western style (*ḍakkhaṇī*), which was given definitive form by Guru Nanak himself.[62] The expression *haṁ ehu manu taiṁ kūṁ ḍevāsāṁ* (ਹੰਉ ਏਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੈ ਕੂੰ ਡੇਵਸਾ, 'I will sacrifice

my *man* to you') clearly points towards the ḍakkhaṇī style, although the language is not always maintained throughout Guru Arjan's hymn. It is quite possible, that the hymn was originally intended for a south-western audience — of the Multan area.

Fourth, in the first line of the final reading (ਜੋ ਦੀਸੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਿਖੜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ, 'Whichever disciple of the Guru I meet I bow to him to touch his feet') one can easily see the addition of an oblique pronoun *tisu* ('him') and an honorific particle *jīu* (which may refer to a highly respected person in this context) at the end. Here the word *jīu* is intended as a musical device. There is also the repositioning of individual words in the phrase *jo gur dīsai sikkhaṛā* (ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਸੈ ਸਿਖੜਾ). Similarly, there are some minor linguistic improvisations to be found in other lines of the final reading. For instance, the following three stages may be discerned in this process of linguistic revision:

1. ਤਿਆਗਿ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸੜਾ ਨੰਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ।[63]
   ('Renounce the [evil] inclinations of your mind and refrain from loving the other.')
2. ਤਿਆਗੇ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਾਵੜਾ ਨਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ।[64]
   ('Renounce the [evil] inclinations of your mind and refrain from loving the other.')
3. ਤਿਆਗੇ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ ਜੀਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਾਵੜਾ ਨਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ ਜੀਉ।[65]
   ('Renounce the [evil] inclinations of your mind, Sir; and refrain from loving the other, Sir!')

Clearly, these linguistic modifications at different stages of textual transmission are meant to provide grammatically sound constructions and to create better metrical and rhythmic effects. For instance, the addition of jīu in the final text increases the singability of the hymn and adds 'sweetness' to its tonal effect.[66] It should, however, be emphasised that the original meaning of the text remains intact in spite of this linguistic revision.

Finally, the most significant point about the standard version is that the first line is repeated at the end as well. This is clearly intended to put emphasis on the veneration of the worthy 'Sikh of the Guru' (*gur sikkhaṛā*), who must have been responsible for bringing people into the Sikh fold.[67] In particular, the original form of the line (ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਸੈ ਸਿਖੜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ, 'whichever disciple of

the Guru I meet I bow to him to touch his feet, Sir!')is retained in this case to show the identity of the role of the Guru and that of a Sikh.

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis of this paper has revealed that MS 1245 represents an early stage in the evolution of the Sikh canon. It can be placed between the Goindval volumes and the celebrated Kartarpur manuscript. Its collation with other manuscripts illuminates the editorial process through which the 'final' text was prepared by Guru Arjan in 1604 C.E. The fifth Guru applied meticulous standards to give the scripture its unique form, with regard to both its content and its style. In the process he frequently revised the received texts to achieve liguistic modifications, especially through the substitution of synonyms for certain words. He used the best possible words to crystallise the divine message. As fifth 'Nanak' he had the authority to do so. He took extraordinary care to maintain the original meaning and rhythm which he revised for the final text.

The examination of MS 1245 reveals that certain hymns were collected directly from a singing tradition. All those hymns were quite popular in the *kīrtan* sessions during Sikh worship. Thus it confirms an important fact concerning the oral transmission of the bāṇī within the early Sikh community. The issue of variant readings of certain texts can also be explained as the result of the liberty taken by the Sikh musicians in devotional singing. The dual recording of certain hymns in different ragas was also due to the fact that they were being sung in those ragas by different musicians. But the organisation of those hymns in the final text was primarily based on thematic considerations rather than strictly on musical mode.

It should be emphasised that MS 1245 illuminates the textual process through which the evolution of the Sikh scripture took place. It is this process that helps in establishing the final map of the Adi Granth. Its textual relationship with the Goindval pothīs and the Kartarpur bīṛ is quite obvious. In fact, it helps to establish the authenticity of the Kartarpur bīṛ beyond the shadow of a doubt. Although it soon became irrelevant to the mainstream Sikhs because of its incomplete nature, it survived only as a scriptural relic. The history of its movement still needs to be explored.

In sum, MS 1245 is of rare value to the textual critic. The issues pertaining to its origin, history and place in the formation of the Sikh canon call for a serious scholarly debate. It also demands a

thorough philological analysis. Its further scrutiny will certainly illuminate the linguistic forms used in the late sixteenth century in north India. It may also be helpful in understanding the language of other early New Indo-Aryan (NIA) texts.

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Notes

1. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *What Is Scripture?* (Fortress Press, 1993), 47-48.
2. GNDU MS 1245. See the manuscript note by Harbhajan Singh and Harcharan Singh Chavla.
3. The handwriting of the Mul Mantar tallies exactly with the writing style of Guru Tegh Bahadur, given in Ganda Singh (samp.), *Hukam-nāme* (Patiala, 1967), 75.
4. See Kharak Singh (ed.), 'Blasphemous Attacks', *Abstracts of Sikh Studies* (January 1993), 22.
5. Piar Singh, for instance, maintains that the compiler had no connection with any dissident group of Miharban or Ram Rai. See his *Gāthā Srī Ādi Granth* (Amritsar, 1992), 170.
6. M3, *Vār Vihāgaṛā*, 1(18), AG, 551. The manuscript note by Harbhajan Singh and Harcharan Singh Chavla claims that Bhai Buddha wrote this hymn in his own hand. However, no evidence is cited in support of this claim.
7. See Kharak Singh, 'Blasphemous Attacks', 16.
8. Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 169.
9. Balwant Singh Dhillon, 'Myth of an Early Draft of the Adi Granth (MS 1245)', *Abstracts of Sikh Studies* (July 1993), 84-85.
10. GNDU MS 1245, f. 398. This hymn specifically refers to the incident when Sulhi Khan's horse bolted and fell into the brick-kiln. Also see M5, *Bilāval* 104, AG, 825.
11. For details, see Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 173.
12. Ibid., 204.
13. Bhai Jodh Singh, *Srī Kartārpurī Bīṛ de Darśan* (Patiala, 1968), 4.
14. For complete details of missing hymns, see Dhillon, 'Myth of an Early Draft', 89-91.
15. For details, see Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jalandar: Abs Publications, 1988), 140, 148, 158 and 170.
16. Gurinder Singh Mann, 'The Making of the Sikh Scripture' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1993).
17. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs* (Patiala, 1989), 31-32. According to Badauni and Sujan Rai, the meeting took place at Goindval (see *Khulāsātut Twārikh*, 425 and *Akbarnāmā*, 514).
18. For details, see Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 172; and Dhillon, 'Myth of an Early Draft', 91-92.
19. Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 143.

20. Professor Kenneth E. Bryant of the University of British Columbia shared this information with me when I presented this paper.
21. Jodh Singh, *Kartārpurī Bīṛ*, 5-6.
22. Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 94.
23. Jodh Singh, *Kartārpurī Bīṛ*, 37 and 110.
24. Ibid., 52, 54, 61, 72, 75, 76, 78, 80, 82 and 90. The author rightly points out that the authorship of the shaloks was not recorded in the original inscribing of the vārs, but was inserted later with a thin pen.
25. M1, *Vār Malār*, (27/28), AG 1291.
26. GNDU MS 1245, ff. 160 (M5, *Vār Gauṛī*), 343 (M1, *Vār Āsā*), 457 (M3, *Vār Gūjarī*), 524 (M4, *Vār Vaḍahaṅs*), 1098 (M4, *Vār Sāraṅg*), 1151 (M1, *Vār Malār*) and 1185 (M4, *Vār Kānaṛā*).
27. Jodh Singh, *Kartārpurī Bīṛ*, 55, 62, 73, 76, 78, 80, 83, 93, 99, 105, 113, 115 and 116. The only exception is the recording of śudh at the end of Guru Arjan's hymns in the ṭoḍī raga (f. 532).
28. Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 171.
29. Ibid., 159-60 and GNDU MS 1245, ff. 889b-890a.
30. GNDU MS 1245, f. 1263b. For other titles see ff. 1263a, 1264b, 1265b and 1266b.
31. Dhillon, 'Myth of an Early Draft', 79-80.
32. See Jodh Singh, *Kartārpurī Bīṛ*, 108. For other such instances, see Kartarpur MS, ff. 96/2, 415/1, 483/1, 511/1 and 550/2.
33. Harbans Singh (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol. I (Patiala, 1992), 190.
34. GNDU MS 1245, f. 27b.
35. W.H. McLeod (trans. and ed.), *Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism* (Manchester University Press, 1984), 86.
36. For details, see Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 137.
37. See Pashaura Singh, 'The Text and Meaning of the Adi Granth' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1991), 114-15.
38. McLeod, *Textual Sources*, 86.
39. M5, *Gaurī Sukhmanī* (17), AG, 285.
40. For more details, see Piar Singh, *Gāthā*, 139-41.
41. C. Shackle, 'Approaches to Persian Loans in the *Adi Granth*', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 41, 1 (1978), 81-83.
42. Piara Singh Padam, *Śrī Gurū Granth Prakāś* (Patiala, 1990), 278.
43. M5, *Tilaṅg* 1-5, AG, 723-24.
44. M5, *Tilaṅg* 2, AG, 723-24.
45. GNDU MS 1245, f. 681b.
46. Mukund Lath, '*Bhajan* as Song: Towards an Oral Stemma of Nāmdev's *padas*', in Monika Thiel-Horstmann (ed.), *Bhakti in Current Research, 1979-1982* (Berlin, 1983), 231-32.
47. M5, *Tilaṅg* 5, AG, 724.
48. GNDU MS 1245, f. 682b.
49. See *Śabadārath Śrī Gurū Granth Sāhib Ji*, Vol. II (Amritsar, 1979), 724.
50. Lath, '*Bhajan* as Song', 230.
51. M5, *Tilaṅg* 3, AG, 724.
52. GNDU MS 1245, ff. 681b-682a.
53. M5, *Tilaṅg* 5, AG, 724.
54. GNDU MS 1245, f. 682a.
55. Shackle, 'Approaches to Persian Loans', 86-87.
56. For more details, see Shackle, 'Approaches to Persian Loans', 83 and 89.

57. The conversion of Muslims to the Sikh faith was one of the charges laid against Guru Arjan by Emperor Jahangir in his *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*. See Ganda Singh, *Guru Arjan's Martyrdom: Reinterpreted* (Patiala, 1969), 10-15.
58. Christopher Shackle mentions a class of Muslim poets (shā'ir), drawn from the Sufi circles, which constituted the elite of the countryside. The Guru's appeal was naturally directed at the Muslim audience of the shāi'r. See C. Shackle, 'Early Muslim Vernacular Poetry in the Indus Valley: Its Contexts and its Character' (a paper read at a Seminar at the University of Heidelberg, 1989), 13.
59. M5, *Sūhī* 3, AG, 763.
60. GNDU MS 1245, ff. 682a-682b.
61. GNDU MS 1245, ff. 728b-729b. Also see AG, 762-763.
62. The label *ḍakkhaṇā* (in place of the usual shalok) in the Adi Granth is not a separate metrical category, but rather an indication that the verse is written in a language intended to reflect that of the south, as defined from the Amritsar area, particularly the Multan area. It is, therefore, quite appropriate to call this idiom the ḍakkhaṇī style. See Shackle, 'Early Muslim Vernacular Poetry', 13. For more details on this style, see his, 'The South-western Style in the *Guru Granth Sahib*', *Journal of Sikh Studies*, V, 1 (1978), 69-87.
63. GNDU MS 1245, f. 682b.
64. GNDU MS 1245, f. 729b.
65. *Śabadārath*, Vol. III, 763.
66. The word jiu was also added to Guru Nanak's preceding two hymns in order to achieve uniformity in rhyme and metre. Earlier readings of these hymns do not contain this word in the end rhyme. See GNDU MS 1245, ff. 729a-729b.
67. See Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History*, 145: 'In the compositions of Guru Arjan, we come across the figure of worshipable Sikh who converted men to Sikhism.'

The Fatal Environment Revisited: A Tale of Two Punjabs

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In the late 1980s, Pakistan adopted an ambitious approach to the challenge of ecologically 'sustainable development' while Indian leaders were more cautious. Differences in national policy styles blur at the ground level in the two Punjabs, where farmers' pesticides and water use indicate a clear priority to short-term economic growth. The low salience of merging environmental problems reflects structural factors and the strength of political and economic constituencies, such as pesticides manufacturers. This essay is based upon field observations and secondary data. Since the latter is extremely limited, the paper urges attention to ecological consequences of agrarian change.

In 1987, mounting international concern about the ecological consequences of the unbridled pursuit of economic growth was underscored in South Asia by a crippling drought. Empty wells and thirsty cattle on desolate landscapes evoked visions of a 'fatal environment' of famine and anarchy that periodically threatens to defeat human ambitions and technology.[1] During the same year, the landmark Brundtland Commission report, *Our Common Future*, extended a potential reprieve if the global community renounced its profligate past for an ecologically enlightened 'sustainable development'. Such development would seek to meet 'the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.[2] India and Pakistan have since addressed the challenge of sustainable development in different ways, reflecting distinctive national policy styles that emerged after independence. Yet sharp contrasts visible at the national policy level are more apparent than real. At the ground level in their respective Punjabs, institutional structures and political and economic constituencies remain myopically focused on short-term economic growth, as indicated by trends in pesticides and water use, and by the paucity of information on the environment.

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sought to coordinate measures to address them. The NCS recalls earlier 'massive' Pakistani programmes enacted during the 1960s for irrigation development and land reclamation, which contrasted sharply with lower-profile Indian strategies.[15]

Pakistan's NCS was based upon a major national study of the nation's environment initiated in 1986. The NCS proposed radical change from past practices geared to short-term growth, in an elaborate agenda of 68 programmes to be implemented by the coordinated initiatives of the government, its departments, districts and also communities, individuals, corporations and non-governmental organisations.[16] Its recommendations won official approval in early 1992, but the entire programme fell victim to political instability, which was aggravated by successive governments' tendency to jettison their predecessors' programmes. Some Pakistani officials suggested that the NCS was lost in the shuffle when Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto succeeded Nawaz Sharif in 1993.[17]

Structural factors and constituency pressures help explain the scope of policy change in Pakistan. Radical departures from past practice were facilitated by an authoritarian political system that centralised power and limited public participation in policy making. Considering that policy processes were particularly exclusionary under the regime led by the late General Mohammad Zia-ul Haq,[18] the extent of grass-roots participation in the formulation of the Pakistani NCS was striking.[19]

If domestic debate and participation were relatively limited in Pakistan,[20] external constituencies played a much larger role in environmental policy making than they did in India.[21] The Geneva-based International Union for the Conservation of Nature spearheaded the preparation of World Conservation Strategies for low income countries, and its staff worked closely with their Pakistani colleagues.[22]

In India, by contrast, the nation's relatively democratic and decentralised political structure promoted an incremental approach to decision making because of the need for negotiation and compromise, which inhibited radical change. Historically, Indian officials had given considerable weightage to domestic considerations and constituencies, and screened external prescriptions with care. This was particularly true of Northern advice to moderate economic growth in the interest of environmental protection, which was sometimes regarded in India as meddlesome 'green imperialism' or 'ecomessianism'.[23]

Preparations for the 1992 Earth Summit nevertheless generated considerable pressure for the global diffusion of environmental concern and commitment to 'sustainable development'. Its meaning and implications were unclear, but few world leaders apart from former US President

George Bush risked opprobrium for undermining international agreements to safeguard the global commons. India's commitment was expressed in a policy statement released in 1992 by the Minister of State for Environment and Forests. It included many prescriptions for environmental change, but like many of the Earth Summit resolutions, said little about strategies for addressing contradictions among them, or about implementation in general.[24]

Some of the impediments to 'sustainable agriculture' in South Asia were implied in Pakistani NCS documents noting that, ironically, pesticide use was rising in Pakistan as it was declining in the industrialised world, in response to consumer concern.[25] A greater irony was not mentioned by either NCS: namely, that both the Indian and Pakistani states have actively promoted pesticide use in strategies for agricultural growth.

Since the green revolution pesticide use in Pakistan increased five-fold, from 905 tonnes in 1981 to nearly 5,000 tonnes in 1990.[26] It increased in India by 12 per cent annually, but officials planned to further increase consumption from 80,000 tonnes in 1990 to 100,000 tonnes in 1995.[27] The role of the two governments in promoting potentially dangerous chemicals is explored following a brief discussion of environmental implications of increasing pesticides use in the two Punjabs.

THE PESTICIDES PARADIGM

Considerably more is known about the potential hazards of pesticides than about ways in which they have harmed the Punjabs' environment, and specifically, their soils, water and animal and plant life. Information is also sketchy concerning adverse effects on pesticide users, although the magnitude of the problem is suggested by World Health Organisation statistics showing that India accounts for over one-third of an estimated 500,000 acute pesticide poisonings each year.[28] Studies showing high levels of pesticide residues in Punjabi diets may signal future health problems, but here too, information is fragmentary.[29]

Indian and Pakistani farmers use far less pesticides per hectare than their American counterparts, but potential hazards are compounded in South Asia by three factors. First, as David Bull elaborates in considerable detail, safety precautions and equipment are rare in low-income countries, and their overwhelmingly illiterate labour forces have virtually no access to information about toxicity and remedies.[30]

Second, the need for precautions is even more critical in India and Pakistan than in the industrialised world, because almost all of the 'dirty dozen' pesticides that are banned or severely restricted in the latter are

freely used in India and Pakistan. The 'dirty dozen' have been linked to problems including cancer, heart disease and organ damage, as well as birth defects and sterility.[31]

Third, pesticide use is concentrated in particular regions where commercial agriculture prevails. For example, India's Punjab occupies less than 3 per cent of the nation's total geographic area, but it uses 11 per cent of the country's insecticides.[32] Risks associated with pesticides use are regionally concentrated as a result. DDT residues have been found in typical Punjabi diets on both sides of the border, but only limited information is available to the public about their implications or about ways to minimise health risks.[33]

The green revolution illustrated that the socio-economic context in which technology is applied exerts considerable influence on the distribution of costs and benefits. On both sides of the Punjab border, lack of knowledge about health effects of pesticide application may reflect class and gender bias. In the Indian Punjab, Gian Singh reported an increase in abortions and birth complications related to a growing tendency to use female family labour for insecticide spraying to save farm labour costs, but offered no documentation.[34] In Pakistani Punjab, skin diseases developed by cotton pickers were dismissed by pesticide manufacturers and officials. As Ilyas commented dryly, 'Cotton pickers, one supposes, are not very important members of humanity. They are poor, they are tenants and labourers, and above all, they are women'.[35]

Sometimes pesticides are more toxic to humans than species identified as 'pests'.[36] The targets of pesticides have shown a remarkable ability to develop resistance to even the most formidable weapons in chemical manufacturers' arsenals, leading farmers to use ever-increasing doses of more deadly and often more costly chemicals.[37] The 'pesticide treadmill' is vividly illustrated by statistics showing that in the United States, pesticide use rose by 500 per cent between 1950 and 1986, but in 1986, one-fifth of the country's crops were lost to pests, the same percentage as in 1950.[38] Discussions with Indian farmers and also a senior economist at the Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana suggest that in the Indian Punjab, also, a 'pesticide treadmill' has helped insects keep pace with rising pesticide applications.[39] The problem is not simply a technical question but a political one as well.[40] On both sides of the Indo-Pakistani border, government and consumer concerns about the effects of toxic chemical use have been overridden by institutional and political support for increased pesticide use.

SQUARING THE CIRCLE

The governments' role in promoting the use of hazardous materials that may harm humans and the environment has drawn limited scholarly attention. Since this is particularly true of governments in low-income countries, conventional social science wisdom on the subject often reflects a perspective that is insightful, but increasingly oversimplified and even misleading. It derives from the classic study by David Weir and Mark Schapiro, *Circle of Poison*, that highlights the role of MNCs in the export of pesticides banned in the industrialised world to poor countries, who in turn export contaminated produce back to the rich countries.[41] Governments receiving toxic pesticides are portrayed as passive victims of forces based in the industrialised world, frozen in a posture of dependency.[42]

Recent studies show a more complex picture involving a broader range of actors and motivations. For example, Robert Paarlberg discusses the active role of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in promoting pesticide use and the support that the World Bank provides by default.[43] An important study of pesticide policy in the United States illuminates reasons why governments are often ambivalent about pesticides yet lend them powerful support in the interests of short-term agricultural productivity.[44]

In both India and Pakistan, official ambivalence is reflected in the frequently expressed view that pesticides are a 'necessary evil' that help to produce food for growing populations.[45] In practice, ambivalence is resolved by the clear priority to agricultural productivity, which contrasts with environmental consequences of pesticide use that are unknown, diffuse and perhaps detectible only over the long term.

While the logic underlying government approval of pesticides is obvious, the problem is that one of its key premises may be false. The facile equation of pesticide use with increased food supplies is challenged by empirical evidence that clearly links pesticide use in low-income countries to export crops rather than food for poor domestic constituencies.[46] In Pakistan, for example, agricultural extension personnel sprayed the country's major export commodities, rice and cotton, with heavily subsidised pesticides until 1980.[47] Also, increased food supplies do not necessarily reach the poor.[48]

Pesticides were increasingly used on domestic staple food crops as farmers in both Punjabs adopted the green revolution's high-yielding varieties of seeds. Such seeds are less resistant to pests than traditional varieties, and especially when farmers practise monoculture by limiting the number of varieties sown. Monoculture is associated with 'modern'

industrialised farming, but while its efficiency may increase farmers' profits, it also concentrates risks of pest attacks and adverse environmental consequences.[49]

Traditionally, farmers used ju-jitsu strategies against insect pests that utilise their natural enemies, such as birds, and intercropping rather than monoculture. Such tactics are key elements of 'integrated pest management' (IPM), which constitutes a low-cost alternative to 'tanks and planes' pesticides applications.[50] The military analogy is particularly apt when pesticides are applied indiscriminately as a wide-spectrum prophylactic measure rather than a strategically aimed response to specific pest outbreaks.[51]

IPM has been practised on a very limited scale in South Asia. It is unlikely to win acceptance as a viable alternative to chemical use, partly because it lacks institutional support at every level of decision making. At the ground level, IPM requires coordination among research and extension personnel and farmers, which is not easily achieved.[52] At the international level, chemical companies have long-established ties with agencies such as the FAO; as a result, that agency has provided IPM only lukewarm support.[53]

At the national level, Ilyas notes the significance of shared priorities and perspectives of chemical manufacturers and Agriculture Department officials in Pakistan.[54] Pesticides production holds an important niche in Indian and Pakistani strategies for industrial growth.[55] India's industrial strategy is to accelerate pesticides production and use, to serve the ninth largest market for pesticides in the world. Officials also promote exports to neighbouring countries.[56]

In both Punjabs, official support for pesticides use is expressed through the mass media, which still often refers to pesticides and herbicides as 'medicine'. It is necessitated when state-supported institutions develop seeds vulnerable to infestations and reinforced by agricultural extension staff who lack the time, resources and knowledge to devise IPM strategies with clients. A common practice is broad-spectrum pesticide applications according to a fixed schedule rather than to specific problems.[57] This is considerably easier on officials, but inefficient and potentially hazardous from an ecological perspective.

THE SOCIETAL RESPONSE

Farmers interviewed in both Punjabs expressed concern about pesticide residues and resentment against rising costs and need for pesticides. Yet there was little or no organised opposition to pesticide use in the early to

mid-1990s.[58] Several factors explain why pressure to use pesticides was not offset by countervailing forces.

The preceding discussion indicates reasons why pesticides did not emerge as a policy issue on public agendas in either Punjab during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Pesticides also failed to become a political issue; as a result, officials gave more weight to organised forces with a clear economic stake in the issue.[59] Political parties showed little interest in pesticide abuse, partly because it is difficult to reap political rewards for raising the issue, but easy to become bogged down in complex and confusing technical questions. Nor was pesticides abuse a priority concern for farmers' organisations. That may reflect the subordinate socio-economic position of many of those most directly affected by agrochemicals abuse, as well as the limited extent of voluntary organisations in both Punjabs.[60]

Like many government officials, the farmers interviewed about pesticide use accepted pesticides as a 'necessary evil'. Farmers who expressed misgivings said they were powerless to influence decisions made in distant cities; nor could they expect support from the non-farming general public. US experience suggests that even among a relatively educated population, public concern about possible health risks associated with the consumption of pesticides residues is sporadic and tied to well-publicised events or consumer alerts. In South Asia, weak regulatory capacity limits dissemination of information to alert consumers about specific hazards. The most significant problem related to pesticides in India occurred when toxic pesticides components leaked from a Union Carbide Corporation subsidiary in Bhopal in 1984, killing more than 3,000 persons. The Bhopal disaster may have stirred more debate about the costs and benefits of pesticides among Western environmentalists than it did in India, where attention focused on the larger risks of industrial location.[61]

In summary, biased and fragmentary information structures result in choices for officials and citizens that may distort reality. In both India and Pakistan, the debate over pesticide use has been framed in a false dichotomy of pesticide use versus foodgrain production.[62] For consumers, the choice may appear to be between the consumption of pesticides or pests, which leads many to gamble on pesticides.[63] Their preferences reinforce incentives encouraging pesticides use by farmers. Farmers' initial decisions to use pesticides and crop varieties that are vulnerable to infestation set patterns that are difficult to break.

WATER USE

During the past three decades, farmers in both Punjabs have used increasing amounts of irrigation water, but they have not always used it well. In Pakistan, for example, the availability and use of water increased by 42 per cent between 1971 and 1986, but there was no significant gain in water use efficiency or productivity.[64] As a result, crops have been ill-served by irrigation facilities and often vulnerable to waterlogging and/or salinity. At the same time, much of the life-giving power of the earth's most critical resource was simply lost.

Implications of inefficient water use are illustrated more graphically in the Indian Punjab, where the water-table, or sub-surface water supply, is declining by about 1 foot each year. Continued decline might place groundwater supplies beyond the reach of farmers who cannot afford costly tube-wells and other facilities to lift water from far beneath the surface.[65]

In different ways, institutional structure promotes inefficient water use in the two Punjabs. Both inherited a massive canal irrigation system from British colonial rule. Its centralised delivery system provided water for a late nineteenth century version of sustainable subsistence rather than development or growth.[66] After independence, Pakistani officials built upon their institutional legacy of large-scale irrigation projects while Indian leaders emphasised small-scale irrigation development. Private tube-wells proliferated in the Indian Punjab but were limited across the border.[67] India's small-scale private tube-wells helped to resolve the state's waterlogging problems, but they introduced the more intractable problem of groundwater depletion.

There is no institutional structure to regulate groundwater use in either Punjab, and both governments have hesitated to invite the fire-storm of controversy and opposition that would thwart any move to restrict private property rights. In the meantime, official policies encourage wasteful water use through lavish subsidies on energy needed to extract groundwater, and on canal irrigation water. Low rates that do not reflect the cost or use of scarce resources reflect farmers' political influence at the state or province level, where water and electricity rates are determined.[68] Farmers' short-term victories mean that they have no real incentive to economise on water use.[69]

The Indian Punjab government's reluctance to provide incentives for conservation is reflected in Planning Department documents, such as those for the state's Eighth Five Year Plan. The Plan notes Punjab's dismal average energy utilisation efficiency of 25 per cent and compares it to the United States average of 55-60 per cent, without noting that US energy

efficiency compares unfavourably with that of Japan and other major industrialised countries. Proposed measures to achieve greater efficiency were vaguely expressed, and did not include rate increases.[70]

CONCLUSION

While domestic and external environmental constituencies won a prominent position for the conservation of natural resources on Pakistan's policy agenda, the NCS was not tied to a concrete programme of action that did not depend upon complex coordinated action and political commitment. As a result, Pakistan's 'massive' and ambitious environmental programme was vulnerable to changing official and donor agency priorities even before it could be put into practice. India's more modest programme claimed a less prominent position on the national policy agenda, and its relatively low priority was clear from the outset.

Differences in national policy approaches are blurred in the two Punjabs, where institutions and political constituencies focus attention on short-term economic growth. Pesticides and water are both treated as renewable resources, and 'externalities' associated with their misuse have drawn limited attention from officials and scholars.

By the early 1990s, urban pollution had become a staple conversation topic in both Punjabs, but the less visible manifestations of environmental degradation did not prompt organised citizens' demands for action. Many Punjabis were more preoccupied with the degradation of the social environment, where losses were clearly visible in human lives and suffering. In the Indian Punjab, many of those interviewed in 1994 were shell-shocked by 10 years of random violence, and said its suppression did not mean that underlying grievances were resolved.[71] While the Indian Punjab remained embroiled in essentially domestic battles, Pakistani Punjab was swept by international currents, and a spillover trade in guns and narcotics ravaged its social landscape.[72] As guns became the currency of the realm in both Punjabs, the 'fatal environment' became concrete reality rather than a neo-Malthusian doomsayer's threat to the physical environment, which could be ignored.

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Notes

1. The term comes from Walt Whitman's poem, 'From Far Dakota's Canons', cited in Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment* (Atheneum, 1985), 11.
2. World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (Oxford University Press, 1987), 43.
3. Muhammad Ilyas, 'The Killing Fields', *The Herald Annual* (1), 1991, 143; Barbara Dinham, *The Pesticide Hazard* (Zed, 1993), 169; G.S. Dhaliwal and V.K. Dilawari, 'Impact of Green Revolution on Environment', in B.S. Hansra and A.N. Shukla (eds), *Social, Economic and Political Implications of Green Revolution in India* (Classical, 1991), 196.
4. B.D. Dhawan, 'Ground Water Depletion in Punjab', *Economic and Political Weekly* (Bombay), 30 October 1993.
5. The United Nations estimates that India's population will grow by 1.8 per cent each year during the decade ending in 2000, while Pakistan's may increase by 2.7 per cent annually during the same period. United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, 1993* (Oxford, 1993), 181, table 23.
6. David Goodman and Michael Redclift, *Refashioning Nature* (Routledge, 1991); K. John Mammen, 'Food Security Endangered', *Indian Express*, 20 January 1994, 8; and Vandana Shiva, *The Violence of the Green Revolution* (Other India, 1992). On industrial tomatoes, see Jim Hightower's classic, *Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times* (Schenkman, 1973).
7. For an analysis of ambiguities and contradictions, see Michael Redclift, *Sustainable Development: Exploring the Contradictions* (Methuen, 1987); W.M. Adams, *Green Development* (Routledge, 1990); and Wolfgang Sachs (ed.), *Global Ecology* (Zed, 1993).
8. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 (typescript, United Nations, 1992), 14 (104), 76-107.
9. See works by Vandana Shiva, including *Violence of the Green Revolution*; C.H. Hanumantha Rao, *Agricultural Growth, Rural Poverty and Environmental Degradation in India* (Oxford University Press, 1994); and Kanchan Chopra, *Agricultural Development in Punjab* (Vikas, 1991).
10. During those visits I interviewed a limited number of farmers, officials, scholars and agricultural scientists.
11. Arnold Heidenheimer, Hugh Heclo and Carolyn Adams, *Comparative Public Policy* (St. Martin's, 1990), 350-52.
12. Aloys Michel, *The Indus Rivers* (Yale University Press, 1969), 463.
13. Charles Lindblom, 'The Science of Muddling Through', *Public Administration Review*, 19, 1 (1959).
14. For example, Michel, *The Indus Rivers*; Walter Falcon and Carl Gotsch, 'Paths of Rural Change: Two Approaches with the Same Results', *Asian Review*, 1 (4), 1968; Holly Sims, *Political Regimes, Public Policy and Economic Development* (Sage Publications, 1988).
15. Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert* (Viking, 1986), 480; Holly Sims, 'Issue, Salience and Regime Responsiveness: The Politics of Reclamation', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 28 (2), 1990, 199.

16. International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), *NGOs and Pakistan's National Conservation Strategy*, Ottawa, 1992.
17. Telephone interviews from Albany, N.Y., April 1994.
18. Jeffrey Key, 'Nongovernmental Organisations as Strategic Organisations: The Politics of Voluntarism in Pakistan', unpublished Ph.D. diss., Department of Political Science, University of Texas at Austin, August 1990; Holly Sims, 'Democratisation and the Revitalisation of Civil Society', in Rasul Rais (ed.), *Political Development and Democracy in Pakistan* (Oxford University Press, 1994).
19. Dedicated environmentalists such as Syed Ayub Qutub and Aban Marker Kabraji, who were instrumental in the preparation of Pakistan's NCS, also deserve credit in this regard.
20. Arif Hasan and Ameneh Azam Ali, 'Environmental Problems in Pakistan; their Origins and Development and the Threats that they pose to Substainable Development', *Environment and Urbanization*, 4 (1), 1992, 19.
21. George Rosen, *Western Economists and Eastern Societies* (Johns Hopkins, 1985), 186; Sims, *Political Regimes*, 39-40.
22. On the IUCN, see W.M. Adams, *Green Development* (Routledge, 1991).
23. Vandana Shiva, 'The Greening of the Global Reach', in Sachs (ed.), *Global Ecology*; and Eduardo Gudynas, 'The Fallacy of Ecomessianism', ibid.
24. *The Hindu Survey of the Environment* (Madras), 1993, 135-51.
25. Secretariat, Government of Pakistan, *National Conservation Strategy*, 2nd Draft, Islamabad: September 1990, Vol. 2, Chs. 7, 9-11.
26. Ilyas, 'The Killing Fields', 141.
27. Dinham, *The Pesticide Hazard*, 159.
28. Aparna Viswanathan, 'Indian Summer', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31 August 1991, 2039; Dinesh Mohan, 'Food vs Limbs', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 22, 28 March 1987. Professor Mohan said in an interview in Delhi during February 1994, that many pesticide poisonings are suicide attempts.
29. Ilyas, 'Killing Fields', 143; Dinham, *The Pesticide Hazard*, 169; Dhaliwal and Dilawari, 'Impact of Green Revolution'.
30. David Bull, *A Growing Problem: Pesticides and the Third World Poor* (Oxfam, 1982).
31. Viswanathan, 'Indian Summer', 2039.
32. Dinham, *The Pesticide Hazard*, 159.
33. Ilyas, 'Killing Fields', 143; Dhaliwal and Dilawari, 'Impact of Green Revolution', 196; Graham Mathews, 'Pesticide Registration, Formulation and Application in India', *Chemistry and Industry*, 4, 15 February 1993, 115-18.
34. Gian Singh, *Environmental Deterioration in India— Causes and Control with Special Reference to Punjab* (Agricole, 1991), 143.
35. Ilyas, 'Killing Fields', 143.
36. Sims, *Political Regimes*, 154.
37. Bull, *A Growing Problem*; Pakistan Secretariat, National Conservation Strategy, 2nd Draft, September 1990, Chs. 7, 11; Kailash Mehrotra, 'Pesticide Resistance in India', *Chemistry and Industry*, 11, 7 June 1993, 399-403.
38. Goodman and Redclift, *Refashioning Nature*, 217.

39. Interview in Ludhiana, February 1994.
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Strengthening Capitalist Agriculture: The Impact of Overseas Remittances in Rural Central Punjab in the 1970s

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The great international migratory movements of the 1970s, especially those from South and Southeast Asia to the Gulf States, revitalised academic interest in studying the impact of remittances on the local/regional economy of the labour-exporting societies. Numerous studies have since appeared attempting to identify the precise nature of the impact both at the micro and macroeconomic levels. Much of the empirical evidence is, however, inconclusive. Many studies identify migration as a 'survivalist' strategy in which remittances are used mainly for consumption. On the other hand, several studies identify migration as an 'accumulation' strategy with remittances being utilised productively.

This paper demonstrates the impact of remittances on the village agrarian economies of rural Punjab as a result of the increased momentum in overseas migration during the 1950s and 1960s. In contrast with various other studies of the 'remittance factor' in both the Punjab and other labour-exporting regions, it is argued that given the specific characteristics of the migrants, remittances were utilised in a 'productive' manner and were a significant factor in aiding the agricultural and economic prosperity of the Punjab, especially of the doab region. It is argued that the mode of remittance utilisation led to productivity-increasing investments in agriculture and, perhaps more importantly, to the 'unlocking' of the highly rigid land market. Remittances had two interrelated effects on the agrarian economies of the villages under study. First, they led to increased concentration of landholding in the hands of migrant households and second, they regenerated a lease market in land where the main beneficiaries were the rich peasant households, many of whom themselves had migrants abroad. By acquiring more land under informal tenancy arrangements, these households were able to increase the size of their operational holdings and make optimal use of agrarian capital.

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is primarily to illustrate that under specific historical conditions remittances can play an important role in the development and strengthening of capitalist relations in agriculture. By looking closely at the ways in which the remittances were utilised, it will be argued that as well as allowing the villages studied to adopt fully the green revolution package they, at the same time, created an agrarian structure conducive to further capitalist accumulation and expanded reproduction. However, a few words of warning are required. Many conclusions reached in the paper remain tentative, and some of the hypotheses advanced require a far more rigorous treatment than has been allowed for. The situations in the villages examined appear atypical and therefore few generalisations can be made at the district, let alone the state level. Data presented in the tables was collected in the course of fieldwork in the region over a period of four months in the summer of 1977. Several villages were studied, with three being scrutinised in some considerable depth and detail. The villages under study were relatively prosperous in terms of agricultural income as reflected in high yields, irrigation intensity and infrastructural developments; all had virtually completely adopted the green revolution technology. In addition, the selected villages had experienced high rates of overseas migration, especially since the post-independence period.

The Punjab, referred to usually as the land of peasant proprietors, has unquestionably been regarded as one of the most prosperous agricultural regions of the Indian Union. Advocates of the green revolution are quick to point out the outstanding, though unevenly distributed, success achieved through their strategy in the Punjab.[1] Major comments made in this paper refer generally to the central regions of Punjab, but more specifically to the Jullundur district. The Jullundur doab is one of the most densely populated regions of the Punjab, but is at the same time one of the most prosperous—a combination of regular rainfall, rich alluvial soils and extensive areas irrigated by canals and wells made it one of the richest areas of north India all through the Mughal, Sikh, British and post-colonial periods.

Fundamental changes in the agrarian conditions in Punjab begin to appear with the creation of private property and hence a land market under British colonial policy. Punjab came under the *mahalwari* land revenue settlement—this was essentially no more than a variant of the *ryotwari* system prevalent in other parts of India. The land revenue demand for the Punjab was finalised at a value of 'half the net produce' payable in cash terms, but given that it was fixed for 30 years at a time it decreased rapidly

in real terms over the years. As the effects of the British land policy on the Punjab are well documented,[2] only an outline of those having a prominent irreversible impact on agrarian conditions is highlighted here.

By the end of the nineteenth century, British administrators had become increasingly concerned about the rising indebtedness of the Punjab peasantry and the rapid transfer of land from the historically dominant agricultural castes. These developments represented an acute political danger to the colonial regime for two important reasons. First, most of the Punjab army was recruited from these agricultural castes and hence the potential containment of the army was at stake, and second, because of the rising indebtedness, a political crisis similar to the Deccan Riots of 1875 was anticipated.[3]

In response to this ensuing political crisis, the colonial government enacted the Land Alienation Act in 1900. This act, along with subsequent legislation in 1913, reinforced the local character of the land market and re-established the superiority of the traditional agricultural castes in the ownership of landed property. These Acts, however, did not in any way halt the alienation of land; they merely altered the direction of the land transfer. Large Sikh Jat landowners in the central and eastern districts and the rich Muslim landowners in the western districts began to amass landholding at the expense of the weaker and more 'extravagant' peasant classes. Thus, the period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sees the emergence and dominance of the rural areas by agricultural moneylenders and traders. The increasing concentration in landholding was in part helped by the rising value of land which itself was specifically a consequence of the fall in the real value of land revenue demand all through the early part of the twentieth century. Indeed, by the mid-1930s, rich peasants had begun to dominate the rural economy, a feature which was quite consistent with developments in other parts of India.[4]

To give an indication of the extent of this emerging socio-economic differentiation, by 1939, 82 per cent of the peasants (i.e., those owning less than 10 acres of land) only owned 24 per cent of the total cultivated area, whereas the remaining 18 per cent held 76 per cent of the land.[5] Land under tenancy (mostly tenants-at-will) amounted to almost 50 per cent and there had emerged a sizeable class of agricultural landless labourers. The 1931 Census, for example, estimated the number to be 12.4 per cent of the rural population.

Productive forces during the colonial period were certainly not stagnant. The establishment of the canal colonies greatly increased the net cultivated area and cropping intensities. With the growing involvement of Punjab cotton and wheat in world markets, various high-yielding varieties

were introduced to increase yields and hence production. The extension of these high-yielding varieties, in particular American cotton and I-R 8 wheat, however, still remained limited to only small areas of the province.[6]

After independence and partition in 1947 the Indian Punjab went into a period of relative stagnation, and it was not until the mid-1960s, with the rapid development of productive forces, that one sees a clear break from the past: yields doubled within a few years as a consequence of the widespread adoption of high-yielding varieties (HYVs)—initially of wheat but also of cotton, maize and more lately of rice—and the heavy use of chemical fertilisers and capital inputs. As a result, irrigation and cropping intensities underwent a marked improvement. The increase in capital inputs into agriculture, aided by liberal advance of institutional credit, was of critical importance; the extent of this increased mechanisation as reflected in Jullundur district is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1
Agricultural Machinery and Implements in Jullundur, Tehsil-wise, 1972

	Ploughs			*Cane Crushers*					
Tehsil	*Wooden*	*Iron*	*Total*	*Power*	*Bull-ocks*	*Total*	*Trac-tors*	*Oil eng. pump sets*	*Elec. Pump tube-wells*
Jullundur	7144	17158	24302	178	2171	2349	1736	5749	4015
Nakodar	13680	16616	30296	122	3168	3290	1023	8505	1217
Phillaur	6462	14181	20643	626	3693	4319	1091	4805	2249
Nawanshahr	10798	21790	32588	389	5094	5483	1167	6261	1568
Total 1972	38084	69745	107829	1315	14126	15441	5017	25320	9049
Total 1966	68573	45341	113914	299	19292	19591	813	1854	4306

Source: District Statistical Abstract (Jullundur, 1973-74), p. 150.

The 1971 Agricultural Census data gives some illustrations of the degree of penetration of capitalism into agriculture. Of the total working population, 42.6 per cent could be categorised as peasant cultivators and 20.1 per cent as agricultural labourers. In Jullundur the comparable figures were 33 per cent and 18 per cent respectively. The Jullundur district also has one of the highest urbanisation rates. In 1971, 30 per cent of the district could be considered as urbanised—a figure exceeding that for Punjab as a whole. To give some indication of the 'relative agricultural prosperity' in the region, gross area of crops irrigated as a proportion of total cropped

area was already as high as 83 per cent in 1971-72 and rose to 89 per cent during 1976-77.

ROLE OF REMITTANCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALIST RELATIONS

The role of remittances, whether from towns to countryside or from international migration, in influencing capitalist development, especially in their effect on transforming the agrarian structure, is far from clear. Broadly speaking, there are two opposing theoretical tendencies.

The neoclassical school who are mostly adherents of W.A. Lewis, usually see capitalist development in terms of a shift from a low productivity agricultural population to the high productivity manufacturing sector. Put crudely, it is argued that since only the poorest migrate, their wages, reflected in their remittances, redistribute income in their favour, narrowing rural income differentials. Often international migration is seen as a way out, for as Griffin has argued 'the series of allegations against migration...are almost entirely false. The migration of ordinary working people to higher paid jobs abroad, whenever feasible, is in principle a major avenue of escape from poverty and oppression'.[7]

Griffin, continuing on the theme of intra-national rural–urban migration, states:

> Internal migration is likely to improve the distribution of income in rural areas...and accelerate capital formation and technical change on small peasant farms. Migration, in effect, allows the peasantry to overcome the imperfections of the rural credit market by creating opportunities to amass finance capital in the cities for subsequent use in agriculture....Migration [is also] a way for some members of the peasantry to accumulate 'human capital'.[8]

The second theoretical orientation is associated with the Centre–Periphery or Dependency theorists,[9] who argue that migration and hence remittances lead to even greater inequalities in the rural areas of emigration. It is asserted that migration blocks balanced development and leads to increased dependency, presumably through increased consumption of Western consumer durables, although this latter argument is not always coherently or explicitly stated. A 1978 survey article by Rempel and Lobdell on the effects of remittances on the rural areas came to the following conclusion:

> Although such remittances serve as a useful income redistribution

function, they can also be seen as the means of maintaining the traditional system in the rural areas. The need for any one village to adopt to a changing environment is reduced precisely because of remittances. Therefore, it is not merely a matter of a failure to use the remittances for developmental purposes, they may be used for the opposite purpose of delaying changes required for rural development.[10]

The literature on the impact of remittances on the Punjab also reflects the two diverging views presented above. Both Helweg[11] and La Brack[12] have spoken favourably about their impact, the latter referring to migrants as the 'new patrons'. Kessinger[13] and Ballard,[14] however, have tended to undervalue their contribution. Ballard, for instance, having considered the comparative impact of remittances on Jullundur and Mirpur villages argues, '*What has been most crucial has been the local entrepreneurial activity in agriculture, industry and commerce and the growth of a flourishing symbiosis between these sectors. Migrant remittances may have added gilt to the gingerbread but they have not produced the gingerbread itself*' (emphasis added).[15]

The main objective here is to demonstrate that under the specific historical conditions prevalent in Punjab agriculture, remittances, by providing off-farm income and changing the structure of the land and lease markets, played a vital role in economic development. In the villages that were studied, remittances proved to be a crucial accelerating factor in the process of differentiation of the peasantry and, therefore, contributed significantly to strengthening the development of capitalism in agriculture.

That productive uses of remittances were made, rests on two important assumptions: the first relates to the nature and intensity of migration—most of it was overseas and hence the absolute value of remittances would be far greater; second, and perhaps more important, given the class characteristics of these migrants, productive use was perceived to be the only outlet for their accumulated surpluses. It needs to be borne in mind that the majority of these overseas migrants were peasant proprietors, initially coming from the middle peasant category but more lately from the rich peasant one.[16] Thus, given these specific conditions, remittances have the potential to accelerate the process of development of peasant capitalism which had already started with the advent of the green revolution in the 1960s.

PATTERN OF MIGRATION AND THE EXTENT OF THE REMITTANCE FLOW

The Jullundur district, along with neighbouring areas like Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana, has a long tradition of migration. This district, as well as the villages studied, provided migrants to the canal colonies in the 1880s, to other industrial cities in India, for example, Jamshedpur and overseas to Australia, Malaysia, Fiji and Canada in the early half of the twentieth century.[17] The period of mass migration from the Punjab is usually considered to be the 1950s and 1960s. An early study by Rose stated that migrants from Punjab constituted four-fifths of the total Indian immigrants into Britain up to 1968.[18] Rose's estimates suggest that by 1968, when the Commonwealth Immigration Act came into force, there would be at least 200,000 migrants from the Punjab. As was pointed out earlier, most of these migrants were landed Sikh Jats initially coming from the middle peasant category. More recent estimates by La Brack put the number of Sikhs in the UK between 300000–500000.[19]

Determinants of international migration are rather complex, but many researchers have suggested that most migratory movements arise from the existence of prior links between sending and receiving countries and are based on such variables as colonisation, political influence, trade, investment or other cultural ties. These foregoing factors also constitute important explanations for Punjabi overseas migration. Although there are a number of major socio-economic causes that can be readily listed, an important causal factor is the Sikhs' traditional ties with the British—their loyalty to the British during the Indian Mutiny, their apparent 'martial' qualities which made them the backbone of the British Army and allegedly the 'pampered minority' of the Raj. These colonial links increased the international mobility of the Punjabis, and still remain an important variable in explanations of the dispersion and emergence of the Punjabi diaspora. It was inevitable, therefore, that when there was increase in demand for unskilled wage labour in Britain, the Sikhs would respond by migrating.

The period of mass migration comes to an abrupt end in 1968 with the passing of the Commonwealth Immigration Act. Since then immigration from the Indian subcontinent has been strictly restricted. A majority of the migrants in the 1970s have comprised elderly dependents and more significantly so, of male spouses of rich peasant origin. It needs to be remembered that this migration occurred and is indeed still occurring to other areas of settlement of the Sikh diaspora from a very localised region

and even then from a cluster of villages of the district at a rate estimated to be around 100000 per annum.

There is, unfortunately, very little published data on the extent of remittance inflow into Punjab but an estimate in 1977 by the Punjab Finance Minister put the official foreign remittance inflow at around £20 million per annum. Government officials, however, guesstimate the amount to be at least four times as great during the late 1960s and early 1970s. During this crucial period, a very large percentage of the total remittances came through unofficial 'black market' channels in which £1 sterling was reportedly being exchanged for around Rs 30 compared with the official exchange rate of around Rs 16-17. Helweg and La Brack have both attempted to estimate remittance inflows and the latter has suggested that of the $2 billion coming from abroad, about half a billion finds its way into Punjab.[20]

The 'unofficial' remittance flow from Britain had somewhat begun to diminish from the mid-1970s onwards, especially after the Indian government started to inaugurate favourable terms and facilities for non-resident Indians (NRIs) to open up convertible sterling accounts. This was quickly manifested in the mushrooming of Indian banks in Britain during this period. However, it needs to be reiterated that the rural areas being examined are unlikely to have suffered significantly from this decrease because of the new compensating 'inflow' from Punjabi migrant workers benefiting from the construction boom in the Gulf States.

MODES OF REMITTANCE UTILISATION

Observations made during fieldwork suggested that the way in which remittances were utilised was highly dependent on the initial size of holdings of the peasant migrant family household. For example:

1. Poor peasants (owning up to 5 acres), forming a very small number of the total migrant families, mainly utilised remittances for purchasing more agricultural land and on installation of a tube-well or a pumping engine.
2. Middle peasants (owning up to 10 acres), forming the greatest number in the initial period, again put purchases of agricultural land as their first priority, followed by installing irrigation technology, purchasing tractors and other agricultural implements and more lately, house construction in both the village and the main neighbouring city.
3. Rich peasants (owning up to 25 acres), migrated only in rare instances

initially. It was not until the middle peasants began to compete with them for the limited village agrarian resources, did they consider the migration option seriously. In the earlier period they apparently had been quite content with their dominant position in the village socio-economic hierarchy. The uppermost priority of these peasant households tended to be purchases of agricultural machinery, mainly tractors, investments in small-scale industry, petrol stations, shares in transport companies, etc. Many were recipients of rental income from shops, particularly so in the largest village Jandiala.

Thus the priority list for utilising remittances by the peasant migrant households can be summarised as follows: (*a*) Purchases of agricultural land; (*b*) productivity-raising investments in land, e.g., tractors, tube-wells and wheat threshers, etc.; (*c*) house construction (this activity became very popular in the 1970s, no doubt reflecting both decreased land mobility and a means of raising social status. The land market remained more or less 'frozen' as very little land was offered on the market either in their villages or in the neighbouring ones); and (*d*) miscellaneous—shops, small-scale industry, shares in transport companies, cold stores, hotels, cinemas and warehouses.

Most of the remittances, therefore, were absorbed within the local agrarian economy. There are very few early examples of urban industry-oriented investments by migrants, although this was anticipated by government officials to be their next direction. For example, in 1977, within four months of opening, the Indian Investment Centre in Chandigarh received 100 applications from NRIs to set up a varied number of small- and medium-scale industrial units with proposals to invest ranging from Rs 1 lakh to 50 lakhs. However, every effort by the non-resident prospective entrepreneurs to set up industrial units was met with bureaucratic delays of at least six months, often leading to frustration and resentment.[21] Some of the remittances, although forming a very small proportion of the total, have also been utilised in the development of village infrastructure, e.g., 'pukka roads', schools, colleges and hospitals. Very often these medical centres, schools, colleges and places of worship were opened up after vociferous community/village fund-raising campaigns from the various Sikh areas of settlement in Britain. Collectively, these 'philanthropic' investments should be seen as being quite important in aiding the general circulation and movement of commodities which is crucial for the further strengthening of commodity relations and the eventual dominance of the capitalist mode of production.

It is recognised that any attempt to assess the 'productive' and

'unproductive' uses of remitted income is problematic. The assessment partly depends upon the level of analysis under consideration. For example, improvements in the quality of housing, expenditures on imported luxury consumer goods or on lavish marriage ceremonies do raise the prestige and social status of migrant households, enabling them greater access to village agrarian resources and improving the marriage prospects of their children. Thus for the migrant household concerned such 'investment' will yield considerable productivity gains even though these expenditures may be considered by 'outsider' researchers to have been wasteful. The external benefits of such 'consumptive' expenditures are an important source for improving the efficiency of the human resource base. In our survey villages, increased house-building activity did stimulate the local construction industry and generate much needed employment opportunities. Where the funds were used for philanthropic purposes, for example, to improve schools, colleges or hospitals or other community facilities, the repercussions of overseas migrant labour are of benefit to the entire village. On the edge of the village of Sang Dhesian, for instance, a migrant-income-funded hospital provides health care facilities and a college similarly funded, intermediate educational facilities for girls from several neighbouring villages.[22]

An additional problem in trying to identify what is 'productive' or 'unproductive' expenditure is the lack of consideration given to the local or regional multiplier effects of the remitted income, especially in terms of employment generation. Furthermore, it is possible that remittances enable the release of alternative capital for productive uses. As far as migrant households are concerned remittance monies merely represent *one component of total household income* and thus it becomes impossible to identify the exact use to which the remitted income is put.

Bearing in mind the constraints highlighted above, it is not being argued here that all of the remittances were used for 'productive' purposes, only that, given the migrants' class origins, pressure on them to consume was far less. There is no doubt that some remittances did get spent on elaborate marriage ceremonies and/or on purchases of luxury consumer durables. It was not surprising to find, for example, that most migrant households had acquired electric fans, radios and mopeds, and it can be argued that these expenditures facilitate the monetisation and circulation of commodities generally.

Nor is it being implied that other regions will generally experience similar modes of remittance utilisation. There is plentiful anecdotal evidence for the Punjab and elsewhere in India to support alternative forms of remittance utilisation. For example, it has been argued by Chayanov[23]

for Russia and by Kessinger[24] for Punjab that outside earnings can typically be used by peasants to counteract the possible differentiation effects of uneven agrarian performance. In retrospect Kessinger certainly appears to have underestimated the potential role played by remittances in his survey village which, incidentally, also lies in the same tehsil as our villages. However, evidence gathered from our fieldwork strongly indicates that remittances and their form of utilisation enhanced the process of capitalist differentiation of the peasantry in the Punjab.

As an alternative mode of remittance utilisation take the case of village Baladiya. The village lies in a drought-plagued barren region north of Bombay. It is estimated that at least 2000 of its 4500 population is overseas, mainly in the UK. The majority of the Indian public sector and commercial banks have established branches there, with total deposits exceeding £10 million. A large percentage of the remittances have ended up being used on 'unproductive' luxury consumer goods.[25]

A more typical picture for many of the migrant villages is that depicted by the conditions in Dayalpur, located just off the main road between Nawanshahar and Phillaur. This village boasts the following: TV antennae on every roof, colour televisions, VCRs, cassette players, refrigerators and imported telephones in most houses. Out of the village population of 1600, around 700, mostly Sikh Jats, are overseas. Around 80 per cent of the mail handled by the village post office is overseas related. The village is proud of its 150-line electronic telephone exchange and a 25-bed, well-equipped, migrant-funded hospital. However, all is not well in this village. Loneliness and boredom *'inhabits the village that is just not in keeping with its affluence. In one of those savage ironies of fate, as money has poured into Dayalpur, life has ebbed away'* (emphasis added). The author's sobering conclusion reads:

> *Dayalpur may have found a foolproof method to send its men abroad, but it has no way of giving meaning to the life of its citizens who walk around in a haze of alcohol or opium generated stupor. For Dayalpur, the price of a foreign-earned prosperity may finally be a heavy one'*[26] (emphasis added).

Finally, it is also possible to conceive of a situation similar to the one illustrated by the neighbouring district of Ludhiana, where vast surpluses of capital accumulated through profitable use of the green revolution technology by rich peasants may be used for unproductive purposes like money-lending at usurious interest rates, to strengthen pre-capitalist relations of production.[27] It may suffice to say that in the villages that were

studied, such 'unproductive' uses were not found to be of any great significance.

To get a clear example of 'productive' remittance utilisation, we can consider the characteristics of tractor-owning families in our selected villages. As can be seen from Table 2, there is a significant correlation between the number of migrant families and the total number of tractor-owning families in all villages. The majority of the tractors were, furthermore, paid for in cash. A significant number of these tractors even came from abroad as 'gifts'. According to Helweg the Massey Ferguson Tractor Company delivered 1038 tractors to Punjab between 24 October and 31 August 1970, paid for in sterling by Indians in England.[28]

Table 2
Characteristics of Tractor-Owning Households in Selected Villages (1977)

	Jandiala	*Rurka*	*Sang Dhesian*	*Dhahan*	*Moranwali*	*Total*
Total no. of tractor-owning families	27	24	8	8	13	80
No. of migrant families	22	17	6	6	13	64
No. of non-migrant families	5	7	2	2	0	16
Mode of payment						
Cash	24	19	4	7	13	67
Loan	3	5	4	1	0	13
Tractors coming from abroad	4	3	0	1	2	10

Source: Personal interviews with migrant families.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF REMITTANCES ON THE VILLAGE AGRARIAN STRUCTURE

The overall effects of overseas remittances may be summarised as follows: they led to the creation of an agrarian structure which was conducive to further capital accumulation and transformation. An attempt is made in this section to pin-point some of the emerging capitalist relations and to identify and separate the effects of remittances from the more general effects of the development of productive forces and changing production relations associated with the green revolution technology. One general conclusion that emerges is that remittances had the effect of increasing both land values and concentration of holding in landed property. General trends in land values and land transfers in the three villages under study are set out in Table 3.[29]

Table 3

Total Land Transfers and Average Price per Acre, 1950-76*

Year	*Jandiala*			*Rurka*			*Sang Dhesian*		
	Acres Transferred	*Average Price per Acre (Rs.)*	Index No. 1950-51 1951 = 100	*Acres Transferred*	*Average Price per Acre (Rs)*	Index No.	*Acres Transferred*	*Average Price per Acre (Rs)*	*Index No.*
1950-51	39	3316	100	16	2850	100	2	5343	100
1951-52	32	3208		9	2412		3	3633	
1952-53	24	4590	148	2	7042	268	–	–	–
1953-54	5	4332	133	–	–	–	–	–	–
1954-55	1	4000	123	–	–	–	–	–	–
1955-56	7	5086	156	7	3029	115	–	–	–
1956-57	50	2662	82	19	4747	180	–	–	–
1957-58	42	3008	92	65	3477	132	2	5830	130
1958-59	73	2734	84	52	3693	140	2	5600	125
1959-60	79	2734	84	19	2292	87	–	–	–
1960-61	39	2483	76	71	2081	113	–	–	–
1961-62	29	3496	107	27	4605	175	26	2572	57
1962-63	94	3733	114	50	4795	182	5	7060	157
1963-64	20	3655	112	51	5375	204	–	–	–
1964-65	45	6438	197	86	6183	235	4	7825	174
1965-66	38	7142	219	47	9270	352	10	12350	275
1966-67	46	8282	257	45	14435	549	5	8757	195

Table 3 contd.

Year	*Jandiala*			*Rurka*			*Sang Dhesian*		
	Acres Transferred	*Average Price per Acre (Rs.)*	Index No. 1950-51 1951 = 100	*Acres Transferred*	*Average Price per Acre (Rs)*	Index No.	*Acres Transferred*	*Average Price per Acre (Rs)*	*Index No.*
1967-68	19	13489	414	28	12750	485	2	17700	394
1968-69	14	7446	228	27	20129	765	1	16750	373
1969-70	22	18500	567	14	38885	1364	1	36500	813
1970-71	34	34849	1068	1	29500	1121	3	35833	798
1971-72	38	28850	885	51	15171	577	5	17000	379
1972-73	21	34812	1067	33	26358	1002	19	22221	445
1973-74	73	13812	423	37	14068	538	2	39950	890
1974-75	20	14517	445	19	21842	830	4	22750	507
1975-76	62	17101	524	27	19288	733	1	42090	938

Source: Village Notebooks (*Lal Kitabs*).

Notes: * During the period 1950-76, the percentages of total village areas transferred were: Jandiala—28.4 per cent, Rurka—26.2 per cent, Sang Dhesian—20.1 per cent . Above data only shows land transfer within the villages. It excludes land purchase in neighbouring/other villages.

Given the scramble to acquire as much land as possible, especially in the period of the greatest remittance flow, that is, during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and given the natural rigidity of the land market, land values increased sharply in both nominal and real terms. These dramatic inflationary trends in land values shown in Table 3 do not appear to be replicated elsewhere in the Punjab, even in the model Intensive Area Development Programme district, Ludhiana. As a consequence of these land market transactions a considerable number of migrant families, through acquiring more land, joined the ranks of the new rich peasant class. This newly acquired upward social mobility (from middle to rich peasant status) is clearly visible from our sample village Dhahan (see Table 4).

Table 4
Social Mobility of Migrant Households in Dhahan (1977)

	No. of Migrant Holdings	*Area owned (Acres)*	*No. of Migrant Holdings after Purchases*	*Area Owned After Purchase (Acres)*
Landless	1	0	0	0
Poor Peasants	2	7	0	0
Middle Peasants	13	92.5	3	20
Rich Peasants	6	74	18	250
Landlords	3	92	4	125
Total	25	265.5	25	395

Source: Personal interviews with migrant households.

This trend in upward social mobility was in fact observable in all of the villages that were under investigation. As a consequence the percentage of total cultivated land under migrant households increased considerably; nearly 70 per cent of the total cultivated area in the villages under scrutiny was under migrant control by 1977.

Who then were the dispossessed? First, rising land values made it worthwhile for many poorer peasant and artisan households to sell their meagre plots of land in these villages. Instances were cited of many such households buying double the amount of land elsewhere, either in other villages of the district or in neighbouring states. Second, some households, including those from the upper strata, sold off their land and migrated to the cities; in other words, many became 'voluntarily proletarianised' or chose to become permanent urban dwellers.

Given that data on the actual volume of remittances into these villages is very scanty and that these were also green revolution villages, can it be

implied that the cause of rise in land values and increased concentration in land-ownership was due to the effects of remittances and not just the impact of relative prosperity ushered in by the green revolution strategy?

It needs to be remembered that despite the increasing concentration in land-ownership and other agricultural assets, the majority of the peasant holdings are still of less than 10 acres as can be seen from the landholding data of the selected villages (see Table 5).

Table 5
Percentage Distribution of Ownership Holdings of Total Members of the Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies (1977)

Size of Holdings	*Jandiala*		*Rurka*		*Sang Dhesian*	
	% Holdings	*% Acres*	*% Holdings*	*% Acres*	*% Holdings*	*% Acres*
Landless	37.1	–	24.1	–	19.3	–
0–2.5	28.8	19.1	36.7	19.7	37.2	18.2
2.51–5	23.2	36	20.6	24.1	17.2	21.7
5.01–10	7.6	22.9	13.9	34.7	23.4	47.
10.01–25	3.1	18.9	4.7	21.5	2.8	13.2
25+	0.2	3.1	–	–	–	–

Source: *Land Registry of Village Co-Op Credit Societies.*

Given these conditions, despite rising net returns per acre (Tables 6 and 7 give some indication of the profitability levels associated with the full adoption of the green revolution package) it is very unlikely that such land transfers could have taken place or could be capable of being financed except through the availability of extra off-farm income, that is, remittances. In other words, the surplus funds needed to finance to rising value of land could not have been accumulated from the surplus generated via agricultural production alone.

Table 6
Net Returns per Quintal of HYV Wheat—Punjab (in Rs per Quintal)

Year	*Total Cost*	*Procurement Price*	*Profit Margin*
1969-70	62.90	76	20.8
1970-71	61.04	76	23.8
1971-72	59.71	76	27.3
1973-74	74.34	105	41.2

Source: A. Mitra, *Terms of Trade and Class Relations* (Frank Cass, London, 1976).

Table 7
Wheat—Yields per Acre and Gross Value Output (Punjab)

Year	*Quintals per Acre*	*Index No.*	*Gross Value Output **	*Index No.*
1960-61	5.03	100	190.28	100
1965-66	5.00	94	313	165
1969-70	9.08	182	752.55	369
1971-72	9.74	194	764.78	402
1972-73	9.04	180	692.28	364
1973-74	8.27	178	1032.36	543
1974-75	9.69	193	1050.40	532
1975-76	9.60	191	1014.43	533

Source: Calculated from Table 3.7, Statistical Abstract, Punjab (Chandigarh, 1976).
Note: * Harvest prices instead of procurement prices are used; the former are closer to market prices being obtained by the peasants.

Considering Tables 3, 6 and 7 together, during the crucial years 1969-72, when land values were at their peak and remittances were at their highest, gross value output remained almost stagnant. This stagnation primarily reflected the fact that during these years procurement prices for wheat remained fixed at Rs 76 per quintal. These crucial years, then, clearly demonstrate the greatest divergence between land prices and gross value output. A strong feasible explanation lies in the injection of vast amounts of off-farm income into the village agrarian economy. Some have argued that in the Punjab, the agricultural co-operatives, given their historically successful operations, have played an important role in providing institutional credit for land purchases and implements, but the published data does not support such a contention because loans given for the purposes of land purchases were negligible.[30]

Thus the accumulation of land (and other productive farm assets such as tractors and complementary machinery) in the hands of the rich peasants has gone a long way in firmly rooting capitalist relations in agriculture. It is generally argued that during this process of transition to capitalism, land will increasingly become concentrated in fewer and fewer hands until there is a clear emergence of two antagonistic classes—the capitalists and the agricultural proletariat. However, as will be argued below, given the complexity of the Punjab social formation, concentration of landholding need not be a necessary precondition for the development of capitalism in Punjab agriculture.

KAUTSKY–LENIN DEBATE AND LIMITS TO CAPITALIST CONCENTRATION IN PUNJAB AGRICULTURE

The 'classical' trajectory of capitalist concentration in agriculture is perhaps the most controversial and misunderstood aspect of the Marxist-Leninist theory of capitalist development as applied to agriculture. Kautsky in his 'The Agrarian Question—A Review of the Tendencies in Modern Agriculture and Agrarian Policy', arguably provides the first extensive discussion of the process of economic concentration in agriculture under capitalism. The classical case of *concentration* and *centralisation* in industry, however, was initially outlined by Marx towards the end of the nineteenth century. It is perhaps worth recalling that by *concentration* Marx was referring to the tendency of larger capital to expand more rapidly through faster accumulation, while by *centralisation*, he meant the amalgamation or bringing together of atomistic capitals under unified control; that is, under a single operator.

A major controversy amongst the Marxists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and contemporary Marxists arose over the question of whether the 'laws' of *concentration* and *centralisation* of capital applied in the same way in capitalist agriculture as they did in manufacturing.[31] The main impediments to the operation of this 'law' of capital are primarily related to the specific features of land as a means or factor of production relative to other factors. In the first instance, land is fixed spatially—it is usually very difficult to increase the acreage under cultivation in the short or even the medium term. Second, and perhaps more important, land is restricted by virtue of being in private ownership. Part VI, and particularly Chapter 47, of Marx's third volume of *Das Kapital* clearly illustrates the barriers constituted by restricted private property (hence absolute ground rent) to capitalist production in agriculture. In other words, in countries with large peasant populations and highly concentrated landholding, the usual case in most developing countries today, the payment of pre-capitalist 'hunger rents' by a mass of petty peasants and tenants acts as an insurmountable barrier to capitalist penetration in agriculture. The root cause of the existence of high pre-capitalist rents is precisely the monopoly of landed property and the consequent landlessness or the near propertylessness of a high proportion of the working population and their struggle for livelihood within agriculture in the absence of alternative job opportunities.

However, perhaps as a safeguard against being too carried away by the above argument, it needs to be emphasised that historically capitalism has

always succeeded in overcoming this barrier constituted by pre-capitalist ground rent. The obstacle was overcome in the past when capitalist investment embodying technically improved production methods was undertaken and when more and more branches came under the control of capitalist production with the consequent result of an improvement in productive forces. At the general level, it will be accepted that the tendency towards *concentration* and *centralisation* also operates in capitalist agriculture. What is required is a more concrete and comprehensive analysis of the concrete situation of the Punjab peasantry. Only then will it be possible to identify specifically how the existence of private landed property modifies or affects the operation of the tendency towards concentration and centralisation of capital.[32] The Marxist theory of absolute ground rent, it is argued, enables us to specify theoretically the manner in which capitalist development in agriculture differs from industry and at the same time allows us to understand why the process of *concentration* is likely to be different or operate in a modified form.

The first and foremost reason why the tendency will operate in a more modified form is due to the existence of monopolised landed property. Under these circumstances the expansion of the scale of production or accumulation becomes very difficult. Since all of the land is already occupied, the only way of enlarging the surface area of the farm is by centralising several plots. In the Punjab, especially in the villages under study, land transfers remained restricted primarily because the acquisition of land by migrant families would have led to an even greater fragmentation in landholding and consequently inefficient utilisation of agrarian capital. It is precisely because of this reason one has seen a continuous outward movement by rich peasants into areas such as the Terai region of western Uttar Pradesh and into Rajasthan where acquisition of continuous surface area did not act as a constraint on accumulation. Ladejinsky, describing the plight of the nascent 'gentleman farmer' capitalist stated:

> The medical doctor from Jullundur who turned part-time farmer is sitting pretty. The 15 acres purchased four years ago have tripled in value...his only vexation is whether or not he will succeed in buying another 10 acres he has his eyes on... and what a disappointed man he will be if they escape him.[33]

There is, therefore, acute land hunger in the Punjab. For the purpose of acquiring a piece of land, endless litigation goes on from generation to generation and from court to court. In this process, many of the petty producers are economically ruined, families are estranged and murders committed. Any peasant who mortgages his land or sells any portion of it,

falls in the estimation of his fellow cultivators and loses his social status. Sometimes it becomes difficult for him to marry his children and only in extreme circumstances will a mortgage or sale take place. Commenting on the rigidity of the land market as elaborated upon by Kautsky, Lenin remarked that:

> acquiring the small plots is a difficult matter partly because the small plots are occupied by agricultural labourers (whom the big farmer needs) and partly by small peasants who are *the masters of the art of maintaining their hold by reducing consumption to an unbelievable minimum* (emphasis added).[34]

A further limit on agrarian capitalism as outlined by Kautsky was the shortage of workers in the countryside. Due to the migration of rural workers, the big landowners are compelled to apportion land to labourers to create a small peasantry and to provide labour power for the landlord. Kautsky further argued that when small producers were disappearing very fast the big landowners will attempt to strengthen or revive them by the sale or lease of land. Although it would be futile to argue that such conditions prevail in the specificity of the Punjab situation, recent events in Punjab do, however, illustrate the modified way in which the existence of a specific type of labour force inhibits the wholesale domination of capitalist production through productive investments. For a variety of complex socio-economic reasons, the two important ones being the migration of traditional agricultural and skilled rural labour overseas including to the Gulf States and the general enhancement of the socio-economic status of the *dalit* agricultural labourers especially in terms of their increased ability to organise and bargain for higher wages and acquire non-agricultural employment, there has been an influx of '*purabia*' agricultural labour from the eastern states. The overall effect of this inward labour migration has been to depress real wages received by agricultural labour households to such an extent that productive investments in agriculture can be temporarily postponed.[35]

The third limit on the further growth of agrarian capitalism is imposed by the independent development of usury. Lenin emphasised the critical role of usury as an example of a difficult barrier which stands in the way of capitalist development. Considering whether usury acted as a factor and a motive force of differentiation or whether it retarded differentiation, he concluded 'the independent development of merchant's and usurer's capital in our countryside retards the differentiation of the peasantry',[36] and thereby fetters agrarian capitalism. There is some evidence for Punjab which appears to suggest agrarian capitalism halting in mid-track with

parasitic and unproductive capital once again threatening to dominate and become a fetter on agricultural production. There were genuine fears that if this 'regressive' tendency amongst capitalist farmers continued, production relations similar to those existing prior to the green revolution era would reappear but at a higher technical level of production.[37]

Such, therefore, are the barriers to the process of concentration and centralisation of capital in agriculture. As pointed out earlier, for the Punjab at least, rigidity of the land market constitutes the principal barrier. So far in this discussion we have ignored the role of the state. The state, as is well documented for several Third World regions, also plays an important role in reviving or maintaining small-scale production. Given that often the national economy is unable to generate sufficient employment in the urban centres, the state has little alternative except to attempt to create a viable small peasantry, especially through providing: (*a*) low interest institutional credit; (*b*) subsidised inputs through agricultural co-operative credit societies; (*c*) providing knowledge of agricultural techniques especially through agricultural universities; and finally (*d*) and perhaps more importantly, through supporting an agricultural prices policy which offers favourable returns for cultivators.

Of course, the above arguments are open to criticism. For example, it is often argued that only the rich peasants benefit from institutional credit and subsidised inputs, that agricultural universities act as powerful lobbies for rich peasant demands and that despite the state setting high procurement prices, poor peasants fail to benefit because of the increased cost and credit intensity of cultivation and the unfavourable terms of trade obtained by them. Despite the uneven distribution of gains, and there is ample evidence to suggest that class differentiation has been accelerated by the relative worsening of the distribution of farm income and assets amongst differing peasant classes, the viability of petty family production has undoubtedly been strengthened, primarily because of the state policies discussed above.

How has the modified tendency towards *concentration* operated in the context of the Punjab? The hypothesis being advanced here is that differentiation or what is the same thing, capitalist concentration in terms of surface area, is a *sufficient* condition for the development of capitalism in agriculture but not a *necessary* one. To establish *concentration*, we need to speak of the scale on which production is carried out not, as is often the case, of the surface area of the farms. To quote Lenin, 'the fact that large landed property is one of the conditions of large scale production, does not in the least signify that it is a sufficient condition'.[38] Kautsky and later

Lenin, therefore, repeatedly warned of the dangers of taking simply the physical area of the farms as an accurate index of their scale of production.

Given the difficulties involved in accumulation through expansion of the physical area of farms, the only other form of accumulation in agriculture, namely the intensive application of capital to a given area, acquires special significance. It becomes possible to raise output (and surplus per unit of area) by applying both more constant and variable capital, that is, through '*capital intensification*'. Evidence, based on numerous micro-level studies on labour and capital absorption in the Punjab, has shown the extent to which middle and rich peasant households make intensive applications of both constant and variable capital. According to H.K. Manmohan Singh:[39]

> The data on investment show that the households operating 10-15 acres are the most dynamic category. More than half of investment on improvement of land (56%) is made by this group. This group also makes the highest proportionate investment on purchase of land, which is indicative of increasing concentration of landownership with upper middle and large farmers. Of total investment, 40% is on implements.

Thus it follows that any study of capitalist concentration in agriculture must place emphasis on all the economic indices and not just on the concentration of land area alone.

If, as in the case of the Punjab, the region was undergoing a process of rapid capitalist penetration, this will ultimately be reflected in the increasing concentration of operated area. It is precisely in this context that migration and remittances begin to play an important role in strengthening the process of capitalist production. I will now try to outline more elaborately the way in which migration and remittances were able to play such an important role in the Punjab.

Given that there is tremendous competition for land and that there are ceilings on land-ownership but none on lease holdings, one would, ceteris paribus, expect to see the emergence of large-scale production with a mixture of owned and leased-in land. Such large-scale production is indeed emerging, especially with increased mechanisation of all operations, in many parts of India, but primarily so in high agricultural growth areas like Punjab, Haryana and western U.P.[40] In the villages that were selected for fieldwork this phenomenon is more profound and outwardly manifested especially because of the impact of overseas migration and remittances.

For a variety of economic reasons traditional tenants have been pushed down into the ranks of the agricultural proletariat. Where petty tenants

have not been evicted by landlords, economic pressures have forced them out of cultivation, particularly in view of the increased cost and credit intensity of the agricultural technology based on privately controlled irrigation (pumps and tube-wells) and purchased inputs (fertilisers and pesticides) in the context of a highly imperfect credit market. As Bardhan[41] has clearly demonstrated using Farm Management Survey data for Ferozepur, nearly 25 per cent of primarily tenant farms belonged to the less than 10 acres farm size in 1956-57. By 1969-70, however, not a single primarily tenant farm belonged to that category. Furthermore, according to the National Sample Survey (NSS) data for Punjab (including Haryana) in 1970-71, even though 9 per cent of the rural households did not *own* any land, as many as 54 per cent did not *operate* any land; the corresponding figures for 1960-61 were 12 per cent and 39 per cent respectively. Indeed, of all the Indian states, Punjab and Haryana have seen the sharpest rise in non-cultivating households between 1960-61 and 1970-71. The ultimate result is, of course, reflected in a very significant increase in agricultural labourers as a proportion of rural workers accounting for 20.11 per cent in 1971. Moreover, as Bardhan, using NSS data has shown, there has been an unambiguous increase in inequality in the distribution of operated area over the period 1960-61 and 1970-71. Table 8 below outlines the prevailing tenurial condition in the three selected villages:

Table 8
Land Tenure in Selected Villages of Punjab

Year	*Village*	*Total Cultivated*	*Self-Cultivated*	*Batai*	*Hala*	*Relatives*
1971-72	Jandiala	2999 (100)	2418 (80.6)	315 (10.5)	201 (6.7)	65 (2.1)
1976-77	Rurka	2775 (100)	2145 (77.3)	175 (6.3)	375 (13.5)	80 (2.9)
1972-73	Sang Dhesian	412 (100)	204 (49.5)	110 (26.7)	71 (17.2)	27 (6.6)

Source: *Village Jamabandies* (1977).
Note: Figures in brackets are percentages.

Data on the evolution of land tenure in these villages shows a substantial increase in the area under self-cultivation after 1960-61. Self-cultivation continues to be the dominant form of tenure. This is of course to be expected, especially after the mid-1960s, because of the increasing profitability associated with the green revolution. The above data on tenancy relations admittedly does not reflect an unambiguous impact of remittances and migration—superficially at least it seems that the impact differed between the larger and smaller villages. The larger villages like Jandiala and Rurka show a high proportion of the area under

Table 9

Agro-economic Activities of Migrant Families in Village Dhahan

eased in acres)	*Type of Tenure*	*Land Purchased since 1950 (acres)*	*Investments in Irrigation and Agricultural Machinery*	*Wage Labour hired (permanent)*	*Other Investments H = Housing*	*Other Comments*
–	–	5.5	1 tube-well, 1 pumping engine, 1 tractor, 1 wheat thresher	1 (Bihar)	H = 20000	
9	batai	7	2 tube-wells, 1 tractor, 1 wheat thresher	1 (Bihar)	H = 40000 *	Shares had a return of 4000 pa.
–	batai	–	1 wheat thresher	–	H = –	A non-cultivating household. This elderly man lives alone in the village; all the sons are abroad.
–	3 hala 17 batai	7	1 tube-well	–	H = 40000	Non-cultivating household. Only 2 elderly men & 1 son living in the village.
–	–	20	1 tube-well, 1 pumping engine, 1 wheat thresher	1 (Bihar)	H = 20000	
–	–	4	1 tube-well, 1 pumping engine, 1 wheat thresher	–	H = 40000	
–	–	10	1 tube-well, 1 wheat thresher	–	H = 50000	
–	–	7	1 wheat thresher, 2 pumping engine	–	H = 20000	He himself & his sons are abroad. Land being cultivated by his brothers.
–	batai	–	1 tube-well	–	H = 10000	Elderly couple live alone in the village.
–	–	4	1 tractor (from abroad), 1 tube-well, 1 wheat thresher, 1 bore	–	H = 25000	
–	–	2	1 pumping engine, 1 tube-well, 1 wheat thresher	–	H = 15000	
–	4 hala 6 batai	4	1 tube-well, 1 pumping engine, 1 wheat thresher	–	H = 70000	

Table 9 contd.

Name of Migrant Family	*No. of Migrants*	*Total Land Owned (acres)*	*Leased out (acres)*	*Leased in (acres)*	*Type of Tenure*	*Land Purchased since 1950 (acres)*	*Investments in Irrigation and Agricultural Machinery*	*Wage Labour hired (permanent)*	*Other Investments H = Housing*	*Other Comments*
										after by their nephew.
Gurmail Singh	3	33	–	–	–]	24	1 tractor, 2 tube-wells, 1 pumping engine, 2-3 bores, 1 wheat thresher	3	H = 10000	Joint household—richest house of the village.
Isher Singh	2	14	14	–	hala	5	1 pumping engine	–	H = 25000	
Sohan Singh	1	14	14	–	hala	–	1 tube-well, 1 engine, 1 wheat thresher	–	H = 15000	
Sem Singh Gill	1	30	–	–	–	–	1 tractor, 1 tube-well, 1 engine, 1 wheat thresher	1 (Bihar)	H = 10000	
Karam Singh	1	30	–	–	5 on mortgage	–	1 pumping engine, 1 tractor, 1 tube-well, 1 wheat thresher	–	H = 30000	Joint holding but brothers on the verge of separating .
Prakash Singh	1	12	12	–	hala	12	1 tractor (later sold), 2 pump engines	–	H = 25000	
Gurdev Singh	1	16	–	–	–	–	1 tube-well, 1 pumping engine	–	H = 10000	
Piara Singh	1	5	–	–	–	2	1 pumping engine, 1 wheat thresher	–	H = 30000	
Pakhar Singh	1	7	7	–	hala	–		–	–	

Note: * Shares in Onkar Bus Company.

self-cultivation. It is quite reasonable to argue, however, that the impact of migration and remittances on tenurial conditions in Sang Dhesian (and Dhahan) may be more indicative of the real situation. This can be qualified by one important factor which shows up the limitations of the data presented in Table 8. It is well known that the *Jamabandies* kept by *patwaris* only show *registered tenants*. As a consequence of the various Security of Land Tenure Acts it is now generally believed that the village lease markets operate on an *oral* basis. The *patwari*'s figures would fail to catch these 'disguised' tenancies which are quite widely prevalent particularly in these villages.

As the agro-economic data for Dhahan in Table 9 shows, given that the village experienced a high level of overseas migration by landed peasants (hence a large number of elderly dependents) one would expect to see the widespread prevalence of *batai* (sharecropping) and *hala* (fixed-rent tenancy) tenurial arrangements. It is precisely in these conditions of ample availability of land for leasing, that rich peasants were able to establish themselves as the dominant tenants. For the migrant household, as the data from Dhahan confirms, the type of tenancy under which land was leased-out depended very much on the family's particular migration pattern. If the migrant family still had dependents in the village, it was advantageous for them to lease-out land on batai. If, however, all of the family members were living abroad, leasing out on hala appeared the most favoured alternative. The hala rental would then be collected either by a relative still resident in the village or by a relative from another village or the migrant himself may make periodic returns to the village to collect it.

The thrust of the argument here is that migration and remittances enabled large-scale production and intensive farm cultivation through 'unlocking' of the lease market. The main beneficiaries of this 'unlocking' have been the rich peasants who remained behind and it is this class of rich peasants, adequately backed by overseas remittances themselves, who have emerged as full-fledged capitalist farmers. At the same time it is precisely this class which began to hire permanent labour, particularly from the eastern states.

Thus a paradoxical situation arises: while a majority of the migrant peasant households have accumulated land and other agricultural assets, only a minority is able to reap full benefits from these investments. The real beneficiaries of these developments are the upper crusts of the village peasantry who are left behind; the majority, though not necessarily all, also having overseas migration connections. Given that the law favours the tenant and that there is no risk to the rich peasants from leasing in land, this process avoids the conspicuousness of an immediate land transfer and

provides the justification and implied threat to acquire formal ownership whenever necessary because of having exercised *operational* control for some years. Indeed it is possible to cite numerous instances of migrant families rushing back to Punjab to secure their legal ownership rights. The emerging property structure and property relations have created problems which are particularly acute for the wholly migrated nuclear families; they are in many cases forced to mortgage their land. These ongoing processes only go to alienate the migrants even further from the socio-economic environment prevalent in the villages, casting doubt on their eventual return.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, overseas migration has undoubtedly facilitated the emergence of a class of dominant tenants, who are already socially, politically and economically powerful by reason of belonging to the dominant class in the rural areas. Their bargaining power, especially in areas like our overseas migration villages where there is an unusual amount of land entering the lease market, is strengthened even further. The lessor gives preference to larger farmers not only because of minimal risk of default on rental payments but also because of their supposed superior advantage in the credit and product markets and hence the assurance overall of high value of output per acre and a higher rental. The phenomenon discussed above is not peculiar to Punjab alone and indeed has emerged as a major characteristic of lease relations in Indian agriculture, particularly in areas of high agricultural growth. Under our specific conditions, migration and remittances fuelled this process of polarisation in rural areas and capitalist concentration in agriculture. Concentration of the operational area, facilitated by migration and remittances, leads to a special and higher form of large-scale capitalist farming in which several large estates (accumulated by migrant families) are combined to form a single economic unit managed by a single rich peasant household.

Concentration in agriculture as experienced in the 'classical' case was a long-term process but the mere fact that this concentration (purely in terms of surface area) is not proceeding rapidly in Punjab, does not in any way invalidate the process. In Punjab, capitalist accumulation has taken place as a result of *intensification of capital* in a given area and over time, and as the process continues, it is likely to manifest itself in increasing concentration of non-landed assets, for example, in equipment and productive capital like tractors, in output and employment on a minority of large holdings. What we have argued above is that increasing concentra-

tion in area, that is, accumulation resulting from capitalist development, which is of course the classical case of capitalist concentration in agriculture, is a *sufficient* indicator for the emergence of a capitalist concentration tendency, *but* is by no means a *necessary* one. What we have witnessed in Punjab was a process of capital intensification, the application of more constant capital (fertilisers, irrigation, high-yielding seeds, etc.) and variable capital (labour) to a given area. Migration and remittances fuelled this process both in terms of increasing economic concentration especially in terms of productive capital and in the institution of newly emerging property relations.

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Notes

1. See for instance G.K. Chadha, *The State and Rural Economic Transformation: The Case of Punjab, 1950-1985* (Sage, 1986). For an environmentalist 'failure' of the green revolution strategy see Vandana Shiva, 'The Green Revolution in the Punjab', *The Ecologist*, 21, 2 (1991); and D.S. Kang, 'Environmental Problems of the Green Revolution with a focus on Punjab, India', in Richard Barrett (ed.), *International Dimensions of the Environmentalist Crisis* (Westview, 1982).
2. For different aspects of British policy in the Punjab, see T.G. Kessinger, *Vilyatpur 1848-1968: Social and Economic Change in a North Indian Village* (University of California Press, 1974); Shigemochi Hirashima, *The Structure of Disparity in Developing Agriculture* (Institute of Developing Economies, Tokyo, 1978), Chs 1-4; Imran Ali, *Punjab Under Imperialism* (Princeton University Press, 1988), esp. Chs 5 and 6; see also R. Fox, *Lions of Punjab: Culture in the Making* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), esp. Ch. 3.
3. The question of indebtedness among the Punjab peasantry during the colonial period has been extensively discussed. See, for example, the classic work of Malcolm Lyall Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (Oxford University Press, 1947). N. Gerald Barrier has written a number of books and articles relating to the issue of land alienation legislation and its effects. See especially his The Punjab Land Alienation Bill of 1900 (Duke University Monograph No. 3, 1966).
4. See the essays by N. Charlesworth and D. Washbrook in C. Dewey and A.G. Hopkins (eds), *The Imperial Impact: Studies in the Economic History of Africa and India* (London: Athlone Press for the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1978).
5. For details of degree of concentration in land-ownership, see, H. Calvert, *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab: Being Some Studies in Punjab Rural Economics* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1992); and also Dewey and Hopkins, *The Imperial Impact*.

6. For an extended discussion of the 'globalisation' of the Punjab economy see Ali, *Punjab under Imperialism*; and especially Fox, *Lions of Punjab*.
7. Keith Griffin, 'On the Emigration of the Peasantry', *World Development* 4 (1976), 353.
8. Griffin, 'On the Emigration', 359.
9. See for example M. Nikolinakos, 'Notes Toward a General Theory of Migration in Late Capitalism', *Race and Class* XVII, 1 (1975); and A. Ward, 'European Capitalism's Reserve Army', *Monthly Review* 27, 6 (1975).
10. H. Rempel and R.A. Lobdell, 'The Role of Urban to Rural Remittances in Rural Development', *Journal of Development Studies* (1978), 336-37.
11. A. Helweg, *Sikhs in England* (Oxford University Press, 1986).
12. Bruce La Brack, 'The New Patrons: Sikhs Overseas' in N. Gerald Barrier and Verne A. Dusenberry (eds), *The Sikh Diaspora: Migration and the Experience beyond Punjab* (Delhi: Chanakya Publications, 1989).
13. See Kessinger, *Vilyatpur*.
14. Roger Ballard has written a number of articles on the effects of international migration on the village economies of Mirpur (Pakistan) and Punjabi villages of Jullundur. See especially his 'The Context and Consequences of Migration: Jullundur and Mirpur Compared', *New Community* 11, 4 (1983).
15. Ballard, 'The Context and Consequences', 122.
16. One general criticism of the literature available is that it has tended to ignore the specific class origins of the migrants. A greater number of the migrants are often regarded as coming from the poorest strata of the village (i.e., landless labourers and poor peasant households), and all the remittances they send back are assumed to be used up either to pay off their debts or are used up on consumptive expenditures.
17. This international migration has led to the emergence of a thriving Punjabi diaspora spread across the globe. See for example Barrier and Dusenberry, *The Sikh Diaspora*.
18. E.J.B. Rose and Associates, *Colour and Citizenship: A Report on British Race Relations* (Oxford University Press, 1969).
19. La Brack, 'The New Patrons'.
20. Ibid.
21. Quoted in 'Overseas Indians Eager to Invest', *Economic Times* (New Delhi), 13 August 1977. In recent years both the Indian and Punjab governments have woken up to the potential 'development agent' role of NRIs and have consequently instituted a number of incentive schemes to woo NRI investments.
22. At the time of writing, a number of prominent migrant families from a cluster of villages around Dhahan were busy collecting funds for a major hospital project based at the edge of the village to be financed entirely out of migrant-remitted income.
23. See A. V. Chayanov, *The Theory of Peasant Economy* (Homewood, Illinois, 1966).
24. See Kessinger, *Vilyatpur*.
25. This village boasts ownership of four Mercedes and scores of Indian-made cars and Western style country houses with attached garages. Sometimes the cars stay locked up in the garage until the migrant returns. For the girls of Baladiya, their great ambition is to be chosen as a bride by a man earning good money abroad. The demand for educated girls continues to grow and the more ambitious mothers send their daughters

to private schools to learn English. For details see S. Venkat Narayan, 'Poor Millionaires', *Sunday Times* (London), 18 January 1975.

26. For more details see Ramesh Vinayak, 'The Price of Prosperity', *India Today* (New Delhi), 15 July 1992, 23.
27. See 'Arrested Green Revolution', *Economic and Political Weekly* (Bombay) (hereafter *EPW*) (21-28 June 1975).
28. For a case study of the impact of remittances on a Punjabi village see Helweg, *Sikhs in England.*
29. These crude average land transfer and value figures need to be treated with great caution. Land values are influenced greatly by the size of the plot being transferred, the number of total transactions in any particular year, the quality of the land being transferred (i.e. whether it is irrigated, unirrigated or uncultivable because of soil salinity) and proximity to the main village/market site.
30. Data published by the Registrar of Punjab Co-Operative Credit Societies in 1974-75 shows that loans advanced for the purpose of purchase of land only constituted *3.89* per cent (Rs. 62.28 lakhs) of the total loans advanced, whereas loans for purchase of tractors and installation of tube-wells constituted *25.31* per cent and *45.05* per cent, respectively.
31. According to V.I. Lenin, 'There cannot be any doubt that in agriculture the process of the development of capitalism is immeasurably more complex and assumes incomparably more diverse forms', V. I. Lenin, *Complete Collected Works*, 45 Vols (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1980), Vol. 4, 111.
32. Lenin, in his *Collected Works*, Vol. 4 was at pains to point out the many diverse forms in which capitalism in agriculture manifests itself. For example, Lenin, quoting Kautsky argued:

    There is not the slightest doubt...we are prepared to accept this a priori...that agriculture does not develop according to the same pattern as industry...it is subject to special laws. *The task is to investigate whether capital is bringing agriculture under its domination and how it is dominating it, how it transforms it, how it invalidates old forms of production and forms of property and creates the need for new forms* (112, emphasis added).
33. See W. Ladejinsky, 'Green Revolution in Punjab: A Field Trip', *EPW* (June 1969), A-75.
34. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 4, 134.
35. The Jat landowners have found the cheap labour of Purabias as a convenient way of dispensing with the services of the traditional village agricultural labourers. The landlord–labour relations have increasingly deteriorated, especially as a result of the sharpened economic and political contradictions in the countryside. For an account of the effects of migratory labour see S.S. Gill, 'Migratory Labour in Punjab Agriculture', *PSE Economic Analyst*, 3 and 4: 1 and 2 (1986), 110-23.
36. V.I. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), 188.
37. For evidence of this see 'Arrested Green Revolution'. A more rigorous analysis of such pre-capitalist relations is provided by the semi-feudal school (of Indian agriculture) whose contributors among others, include A. Bhaduri, Pradhan Prasad, N.K. Chandra and R. Sau. For an overview of the 'mode of production' debates see Utsa

Patnaik, *Peasant Class Differentiation: A Study in Method with Reference to Haryana* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987).

38. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, 131.

39. H.K. Manmohan Singh, 'Population Pressure and Labour Absorbability in Agriculture and Related Activities: Analysis and Suggestions Based on Field Studies Conducted in Punjab', *EPW* (17 March 1979).

40. A number of research articles have observed this growing phenomenon of the dominant tenant class approximating the rich peasant class. See esp., M.V. Nadkarni: 'Tenants from the Dominant Class: A Developing Contradiction in Land Reforms', *EPW*, Review of Agriculture (December 1976); K.N. Raj: 'Ownership and Distribution of Land, *Indian Economic Review* (April 1970); P. Bardhan: 'Trends in Land Relations: A Note', *EPW* (Annual No. 1970); P. Bardhan: 'Variations in Extent and Form of Agricultural Tenancy—II—Analysis of Indian Data across Regions and over Time', *EPW* (18 September 1976); M.L. Dantwala and C.H. Shah: 'Pre-reform and Post-reform Agrarian Structure', *Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics* (July-Sept. 1971); V.S. Vyas: 'Tenancy in a Dynamic Setting', *EPW*, Review of Agriculture (June 1970); V.M. Raj: 'Village Lease Markets for Agricultural Land: Some Approaches for Analysis', *EPW*, Review of Agriculture (June 1974); H. Bhardwaj: 'Tenurial Conditions and Mode of Exploitation: A Study of Some Villages in Orissa', *EPW* (Annual No. 1975).

41. See Bardhan, 'Variations in Agricultural Tenancy–II' 1544-46.

The Punjabi Pioneer Experience in America: Recognition or Denial?

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This article reviews the experience of Punjabi pioneers in California with particular reference to Punjabi-Mexican families of the early settlers. It argues that their history confirms the flexibility of ethnic identity and culture, and helps to displace the old anthropological concept of 'culture' marching in bounded units through time and space. The Punjabi pioneers to America in the early twentieth century encountered more constraints than opportunities when they migrated, but they created a complex and interesting history which deserves full recognition, one from which both scholars and more recent Punjabi immigrants have much to learn.

Most of the early Punjabi immigrants from India experienced family life in the US as members of a biethnic community, as husbands of women of Mexican and Mexican-American ancestry. These men were not only the pioneer immigrants to America from the Punjab, they were the pioneer immigrants to America from India. Yet the historical memory of their experience has been very selectively constituted, celebrating their political life but erasing their family life.[1] Clearly the family life of the pioneer Punjabis presents a problem to the immigrants from India who followed them decades later, for not only did these Punjabi men marry out of caste, community and religion in making these marriages in America, in many cases they left behind Punjabi spouses (and sometimes children). Later immigrants from India, confronted with the so-called 'Mexican-Hindu' or Punjabi-Mexican families, have not known quite how to deal with the fact of the several hundred biethnic marriages and children. Here I want to place the Punjabi pioneer experience in its historical context and argue that scholars of both South Asia and America, as well as later South Asian immigrants, have much to learn from a full recognition and analysis of

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that experience. In particular, those currently concerned with 'post-modern' identity formations should recognise that identity has always been historically contingent, that immigrants and members of their host societies have always experienced ruptures and redefinitions of self as a consequence of settling and unsettling encounters.[2]

THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY CONTEXT

The situation in early twentieth century America presented the men from India with many constraints and few opportunities, and they made the most of the opportunities. They entered the US just before immigration laws began to discriminate against all Asians, in 1917 (the Barred Zone Act) and 1924 (the National Origins Quota Act). As they began farming in California, the state enacted laws (in 1913 and 1920) against the owning and leasing of agricultural land by non-citizens ('aliens ineligible to citizenship'), laws to which they were subjected in 1923. They were also prevented from marrying women of other 'races', by state anti-miscegenation laws (California's was repealed in 1948).[3] Yet these men persevered. Unable to bring their wives and families from India because of the tightened immigration laws, those who wanted a stable family life in the US married predominantly Spanish-speaking women, producing families known locally as 'Mexican-Hindus'.[4] (In early twentieth century US, 'Hindu' meant a person from India, not necessarily a person who was a Hindu by religion.) Their children, the second generation, grew up valuing their 'Hindu' heritage highly, and they and their descendants continue to claim 'Hindu' (South Asian) ethnicity.

The origins of the Punjabi-Mexican community lie in the Imperial Valley along California's southern border, a valley the Punjabis likened to those in the Punjab[5] as they flocked there to work the newly irrigated land in the first decade of the twentieth century. The inauguration of the Imperial Irrigation District in 1911 signalled the valley's transformation from a barren desert to a major centre of agricultural production in California. By 1919 there were six towns in the Imperial Valley with populations ranging from 1000 to 7000, and nine newspapers were being published.[6] The Punjabis encountered both legal constraints and social stereotypes based on race and national origin as they worked alongside others to develop the valley.

Men of many nationalities came to work in the valley, but those who controlled it were native-born whites. Indigenous Cocopah Indians, Mexicans crossing the border to escape the turmoil of the 1910 Revolution and blacks recruited from the American south were all enlisted to pick

cotton and do other agricultural labour. The Punjabis made their first appearance as farm labourers in 1909 and 1910—the names of 18 men in the 1910 US Census of Population are unmistakably Punjabi (although misspelled).[7] The 1920 Census counted 43453 people in the county, with Mexicans, Japanese and American blacks especially prominent (15 per cent, 5 per cent and 4 per cent of the population, respectively); the Punjabis were as numerous as the Swiss and German immigrants (about 250 of each).[8] Initially there was some ethnic specialisation in farming, with the Japanese farmers growing brush-covered cantaloupe, tomatoes and squash and the Swiss opening dairies,[9] but they learned from each other and such differences lessened.

In the early years, women were scarce in the Imperial Valley. The 1910 Census gives a sex ratio in the new county of almost 2:1—8900 males to 4691 females. By 1920 the population was 40 per cent female, with greater imbalances among the immigrant groups. The foreign-born whites (72 per cent of them from Mexico) were 37 per cent female and the Japanese were 28 per cent female, while the American blacks were 43 per cent female. There were no women from India and only two of the 88 Chinese residents were female.[10] Since most women shared fully in the hard work on the family farms,[11] wives were wanted; men went back to their homelands for brides, or sent for them. Many early Swiss and Japanese wives were 'mail order' or 'picture brides',[12] but by the time the Punjabis wanted to bring spouses from India they could not legally do so. Racial and ethnic diversity was accompanied by segregation and discrimination based on both race and class. Like many other farmers, the Punjabis lived along the country roads and canals and came into town primarily for business or recreation. But they were not free to go where they wished.[13] The towns in the valley developed 'foreign sections' on the east side of the railroad tracks. One Punjabi old-timer explained: 'There was discrimination then, in El Centro the same; even water; nobody served you. So the Mexicans, the Japanese, the China people opened places and served everybody.'[14] Punjabis also owned bars in the foreign sections of Brawley and El Centro, and law and order enforcement was more lax in those sections. As families settled in the valley, the local school systems reflected the racial, ethnic and class divisions, with separate schools serving the various sections of the towns.[15]

Newcomers could get a start in the early days of Imperial Valley agriculture. Even small farmers without much capital could grow crops familiar to them from previous experience. Homesteaders could file for 320 acres (two quarter sections), and they experimented with field or garden crops. Cotton had the largest acreage in 1920 and lettuce became the most important truck crop, with the third largest acreage in 1930.[16]

Cotton was risky because of fluctuations in the world market and its susceptibility to pests, while lettuce was risky because of the costly investment and the importance of 'hitting the (eastern) market' when the price was right. Punjabi farmers were among the first to grow these risky but profitable crops.

Grain crops planted and harvested with work animals gave way rapidly to cash crops produced with tractors, specialised irrigation equipment, fertilizers and pesticides. As individual and corporate landholdings became larger by the decade, especially after 1940,[17] the agricultural industry became dominated by big growers, shippers (shipping companies) and bankers. Small farmers were at a disadvantage since shipping costs and the price the produce would bring at its destination could not be predicted. Only labour costs could be partially controlled by farmers, so access to labour was crucial and so was access to credit from local bankers who knew the farmers well and could set their own lending policies. Farmers could also sometimes secure advances from shippers. Tenant farming became dominant in the Imperial Valley, and it was associated with undesirable features: it meant an unstable, highly speculative, specialised type of farming with high seasonal labour requirements. Tenancy also could mean insecurity and instability of land occupancy and ownership; most large companies and absentee owners leased for only three years at a time.[18] But the Imperial Valley's highly competitive agricultural economy was fast becoming a major if not the major producing region in California.[19]

The Punjabis were early participants in this growing Imperial Valley economy and they soon began to lease and buy land, despite opposition. In 1910, the *Holtville Tribune* printed a critical article on 'the Hindu and his habits and why he should be prohibited at once from landing in California.' Noting that a few Hindus had appeared on the streets of Holtville, the writer opined that 'Cotton picking time is attracting a doubtful looking bunch of all shades and kinds,' people who threatened the 'college-bred population, its culture and refinement'.[20] After 1913, admission through legal channels was difficult, and the 1917 Immigration Law barred most Asians, but men from India continued to arrive in the Imperial Valley. By 1918 the press betrayed the worry that they were becoming 'a menace to the whole valley' for a new reason: the Hindu was 'no longer a day laborer. He has quickly attained the point where he is only willing to farm [for] himself, and his low standard of living makes it impossible for the American to compete with him.'[21] By the 1920s, the Secretary of the El Centro Chamber of Commerce was saying: 'We need

the labor of the Mexicans. They are not like the Japs and Hindus. They don't come to stay. They are satisfied to labor.'[22]

Certainly the Punjabis had moved up from their status as 'laborers' in the 1910 Census. They were listed as 'ranchers' in local directories of 1912-26, and they were early telephone subscribers and senders of foreign money orders from the Holtville post office by 1913.[23] Whereas in other parts of California, Punjabi men stayed in labour camps or rooming houses, in the Imperial Valley they lived in wooden shacks on the land they were farming, typically in households of two to four persons. (Better housing was usually not available to them or even desired, since many leased different acreage from year to year.) Leases recorded in the country courthouse show many Punjabi partnerships,[24] and despite a series of cotton bankruptcies after World War I, Punjabis were becoming successful farmers in the Valley.[25] Even the potentially serious setback posed by the 1923 Supreme Court decision that persons from India, although Caucasian, were not 'white persons' in the popular meaning of the term and were therefore (like other Asians) 'aliens ineligible to citizenship' did not stop them. The 1923 ruling meant that the Punjabis, according to California's Alien Land Laws, could not lease or own agricultural land, but they found ways of working around these laws[26] and stayed on in the US, establishing families.

'AMERICAN' MARRIAGES

There were customary and legal constraints on the Punjabi men even in the domestic arena. Because California's anti-miscegenation laws prohibited marriages between people of different races, and most people classified the Punjabis as non-white, marriage for the Punjabi men was not a simple matter of choosing among the single women in the Imperial Valley. And even after marriage, the demographic patterns of marriage and childbearing testify to the difficult conditions the Punjabi men and their families experienced in rural California.[27] Family members' testimonies of conflict and accommodation within the biethnic families speak vividly about the social world in which the Punjabi pioneers lived. As the most wealthy and prominent men among the Punjabis began marrying, their marriages were front page news. Sher Singh, a Holtville cotton farmer, reportedly took out a licence for a Mexican bride in March of 1931.[28] When another well-to-do Holtville cotton farmer, B.K. Singh, married the 16-year old daughter of one of his tenants in 1918, it was headlined 'Hindu Weds White Girl by Stealing Away to Arizona.'[29] The article doubted that the clerk in Yuma had acted legally, since Imperial

County would not issue a licence for a Punjabi and a white woman. The men even had difficulty employing white women as house cleaners and cooks.[30]

Local Anglo opinion, however, did approve the Punjabi men's relationships with 'Mexican girls'. The official witnesses for the first and fourth such marriages included a prominent Anglo farmer and the County Horticultural Commissioner,[31] and marriage licences were soon issued routinely to Punjabi men and women of Mexican ancestry. These early marriages did cause conflict between Punjabi and Mexican men in the area,[32] and the women were generally perceived to be moving away from the growing Mexican-American community and into a 'Mexican-Hindu' community dominated by the Punjabi men.

Cotton was the crop which brought together most of the Punjabis and the women they married. Mexican families displaced by the Mexican Revolution were moving across the border into the United States, finding work in cotton fields from Texas to Southern California. This was family labour, and women and children worked alongside men.[33] The labour market and the Punjabi-Mexican marriage networks began in El Paso, Texas, and extended to California's Imperial Valley.[34] One marriage to a Punjabi led to others as the Mexican women called relatives and friends and helped arrange more matches.

In southern California, the Punjabi-Hispanic marriages began in 1916,[35] when Sher Singh and Antonia Alvarez married; in 1917, Sher's partner Gopal Singh married Antonia's sister Anna Anita. The weddings were civil ceremonies in El Centro, the first one witnessed by a leading Anglo farmer and Gopal Singh, the second witnessed by the first couple. The women had been picking cotton on the Punjabis' land. Like others who were to marry Punjabis, these sisters had moved from Mexico with their mother to El Paso and then the Imperial Valley. The brides were 18 and 21, the men were 36 and 37. By 1919 two of their sisters and a niece had also married Punjabis.[36] No attempts were made to carry out Punjabi marriage customs. One wife remembers that when she married, 'another Hindu offered me money, but my husband did not accept, saying "we are not in our country." '[37]

The sister–partner marriage patterns produced complex relationships, linking many Mexican women and Punjabi partners (for example, one can diagram linkages between members of the Duarte, Aguirre, Villa, Wilson, Rasul, Mallobox, Deen, Singh and Din families). The household arrangements were complex as well, with partners commonly residing in joint households with their brides. The men and women lived in wooden buildings on the land they were leasing, out along the irrigation canals and

country roads. The Sikh men took off their turbans but kept on the iron wrist bangles, and husbands or bachelor partners taught the Hispanic wives how to prepare Punjabi-style vegetables and chicken curry. Some of these bachelor householders stayed on as helpful 'uncles' when the children came.

Table 1 below shows the distribution of marriages made by the Punjabis in California through 1949 by type of spouse and region. The table places couples in the region where they first settled, where their initial children were born. It ends with 1949 because after that date it was possible to bring wives or brides from India.[38]

Table 1
Spouses of Asian Indians in California, 1913-1949

Counties	*Hispanic*		*Anglo*		*Black*		*Indian*		*American Indian*		*Total*	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yuba Sutter Sacramento San Joaquin	45	50 6	25	28.1	9	10.1	8	9.0	2	2.3	89	23.6
Fresco Tulare Kings	38	76	11	22.0	0	0	1	2.0	0	0	50	13.2
Imperial Los Angeles San Diego	221	92 5	12	5.0	6	2.5	0	0	0	0	239	63.2
Totals	304	80	48	12.7	15	4.0	9	2.4	2	.5	378	100

Source: Karen Leonard, family reconstitution from county records (vital statistics, civil and criminal records) and interviews with informants.

These marriage networks were based in the Imperial Valley, where almost two-thirds of the couples lived and 93 per cent of the wives were Hispanic. Most marriages occurred there or in adjacent San Diego or Yuma, and most children were born and spent their early years in the valley, but the geographic range was initially very wide. The marriages involved Sikh, Muslim and Hindu Punjabis from all over California, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Texas and even Mexico and Canada for the first decade or so. The men travelled great distances for their own and others' marriages—at least 70 men married outside of California but settled in California. Many of the women were recent immigrants from Mexico. Up in northern California, only about half the wives were Spanish

speakers, while another 40 per cent spoke English and 9 per cent spoke Punjabi. Family and community life developed somewhat differently in the northern, central and southern regions because of these facts.[39]

The marriages differed greatly from those arranged back in India in terms of age, religion and spousal background. The age difference by sex was quite systematic: for the first generation couples, the average age at marriage for the men was 35 and for the women 23; the median ages were 34 and 20.[40] Religious boundaries important in India were not tightly maintained in California: an early intermarriage involved a Sikh man in the San Joaquin Valley and the daughter of Punjabi Muslim immigrants to Canada,[41] and Sikhs, Muslims and Mexicans witnessed each other's marriages frequently. Most couples were married in civil ceremonies, although there were a few Catholic weddings.

While the 25 earliest marriages had included a variety of spouses,[42] the balance soon shifted heavily to Hispanic women. The most important reason for this was California's anti-miscegenation laws, voided only in 1948, which prohibited marriages between persons of different races. When a man and woman applied for a marriage licence, the country clerk had to fill out the blank for 'race' on the licence with the same word. For the Punjabis and their intended spouses, clerks sometimes wrote 'brown', sometimes 'black', and sometimes 'white', depending on the applicants' skin colouring (and also on the county); Hispanic women provided the best matches. Another reason for the marriages to Hispanic women lay in the tendency for women married to Punjabis to arrange similar matches for their female relatives. Then there was some pressure from other Punjabis against marriages with black women. In northern California, however, the smaller and more diverse groups of wives included several well-respected black women.[43]

The stories most people told about these marriages involved some kind of courtship, some choice on the part of the woman. One woman told of her husband-to-be cavorting on his horse in the row ahead of her as she picked cotton, while his partner dropped a gaily coloured handkerchief over her sister's hair. Another woman, whose uncle was weighmaster to Punjabi cotton growers, fell in love with the boss at first sight. And a daughter talked of how her mother met her father: 'She worked for my father, although not very hard—she was a very beautiful woman!'[44]

Often the situation was such that marriage was the best available option for these women, especially when the groom was one's boss or another man of the farmer class. As one man said of his parents' marriage: 'Pakistanis were growing cotton on both sides of Dogwood. When they hired workers, my mother was among them. Tom whistled at her and she

liked him. Lupe's parents were happy, she had married a boss.' One woman told of her situation, deserted at 18 with two children and how she decided to make what turned out to be a successful marriage.

> Through my sister and her husband who was Hindu, I met my husband. I was thinking, now what am I going to do, left alone with two children and without being able to work. He was a nice person and single, so to get a father and home for my children I married him.

There were stories of occasional bride purchase by the Punjabis, and there were also stories of love matches; both were outnumbered by accounts which emphasised economic security as the woman's basic motivation.[45]

One daughter speculated about an instrumental motive when she said, 'I think in the old times the Mexican women were like an instrument to the Hindu people because they wanted children to buy properties in the children's names, because they could not buy any property in their own names.'[46] But the allegation of a narrow economic motivation for the marriages is not correct, although new immigrants from India, anxious to explain the marriages out of caste and community, told me that the wives could hold land for the men and often did so. As *India West* put it in a story praising one pioneer: 'To counter loneliness and to gain the rights of property-ownership he did not, like many others, re-marry Mexican girls here.'[47] However, the men were not barred from owning and leasing land until 1923 (when they lost access to citizenship and came under the jurisdiction of the Alien Land Laws), and the biethnic marriage pattern was established well before that date. In any case, the wives acquired the status of their husbands upon marriage, not the reverse.[48] Furthermore, the begetting of children, who were American citizens by birth and therefore able to hold land, was not the main motivation for these marriages, since most Punjabis in the Imperial Valley did not begin putting land in the names of their children until 1934, well after most marriages had occurred and many children had been born.[49] So these marriages were not opportunistic attempts to secure land but commitments to permanent residence in the United States. They reflect the men's decisions not to return to India and their families there.

PUNJABI MEXICAN LIFE

The Punjabi-Mexican families, wherever they settled in California, but particularly in the Imperial Valley, formed a distinctive new community. Outsiders viewed the men, women and children as a community, terming them Hindus, Mexican-Hindus or Hindu-Mexicans. There were collective

activities—weddings, dinners and dances, holiday outings—in which both men and women participated. The men developed new networks through their experiences as shipmates and workmates in California agriculture (with Hindu bosses, Hindu crews, Hindu camps). Networks based on kinship, so fundamental to Punjabi society, were weak in California since usually only one or two members of a coparcenary group had migrated. But the men's places of origin in India, along with religion and caste, continued to be important means of identifying and differentiating them. Among the women, places of origin in Mexico were relatively unimportant. Kinship was the most obvious basis of the female networks, and the *compadrazgo* or godparent system supplemented this (the system of fictive kinship or sponsorship through the Catholic Church).[50] However, since the godparents were almost entirely drawn from within the Punjabi-Mexican community, the compadrazgo system functioned primarily to strengthen relationships between the Punjabi-Mexican couples, not to integrate the Punjabi men into the local Mexican-American communities.

The wives of the Punjabis learned little about the religious, caste and regional networks stemming from the Punjab. Securely based in female kin groups here, most of them had little curiosity about India. Examples of their comments are:

> My husband was a member of the Singh religion...he was twenty, twenty-one years older than me [sic] but this race does not look old.... My husband's partner told me that if a Muslim came to the door, the Hindu would not let him in but would talk to him outside.

Or 'Oh, yes, we ate beef, but there was another kind of Hindu, called Mohammedan, and they didn't eat pork'; 'Her three husbands were all Mohameds, though I'm not sure, one couldn't eat beef and another pork...;' 'My husband told me the Hindus and the Pakistanis do not like each other in India, but here they are all united.'[51]

There were very few relationships between Hispanic wives and the few Punjabi wives in California. There were no women from India in the Imperial Valley, the stronghold of Punjabi-Mexican family life. In northern California, there were four wives from India, one in the Yuba City area and three others in Loomis and near Orangevale; the latter three were relatively isolated, from each other as well as from other Punjabi-fathered families. The 'real Indian' families in rural California, before the late 1940s, were far from being centres of Punjabi community life; rather, they were isolated and set apart.[52]

The Punjabi men built a strong Punjabi network as they moved and worked throughout California. The Sikh temple at Stockton, the only one

in the state until 1947, drew not only Sikhs but all the Punjabi men and their families for political and social activities, while the Ghadar party[53] and the drive for United States citizenship also mobilised Punjabi men and money. The women and children were not well-integrated into most of these activities; even though some wives and children travelled with the men to agricultural jobs all over the state, many others went to the Stockton temple regularly, and most were familiar with Punjabi political leaders and economic brokers. And the female view of the men's activities was often quite different from the male view. The women and children have their own, distinctive memories of the Stockton Sikh temple. For them, it was a stopping place on travels around the state, a place to sleep and eat Punjabi food, a place to see many 'uncles' and other Punjabi-Mexican children. Here children from the Imperial Valley met those coming over from Phoenix and elsewhere to work in the northern California orchards. Usually the women and children went to the movies or for ice-cream in downtown Stockton while the men talked politics (in Punjabi) at the temple. At the temple, the women smoked together in the bathrooms and gossiped (in Spanish or English) while the children played.[54]

The Punjabi men's relations with Mexican-Americans and local Mexican-American society were not close, despite some similarities between the men and women which were most striking at the time these marriages began to occur. Like Mexicans, the Punjabis were discriminated against by white society. At least half of the women, like the men, were pioneers in a new country and from a group also entering the agricultural economy as labourers. The signatures of bride and groom alike on the marriage certificates testify to low levels of literacy. The men were learning Spanish to deal with Mexican agricultural labourers and to speak to their wives. Yet the men from India did not associate themselves with Mexican-American culture or institutions. Relatively few were close to their wives' male relatives. There were men, particularly those whose wives died and left them with children to raise, who 'turned Mexican' as their wives' relatives and their own children socialised them through domestic life. But Punjabi male camaraderie did not include Mexican men. The all-male socialising and drinking groups which met in the town parks, in bars and in each other's homes conversed in Punjabi and excluded all who could not speak or follow that language.

Within the homes, both vigorous contests and loving accommodations could characterise the Punjabi-Mexican marriages. Relationships with women in the American west involved some very real adaptations and discomforts for the Punjabi men as they learned new relationships between

love, marriage and divorce. Above all, the men learned about women's right to divorce. Mola Singh eloquently testified about his experiences:

> In this country, it's a different class of people. You can't force love here, women go where they want to, even if they're married, even with three or four kids. In India, you could only get a divorce after India got freedom. Here, women go away, here it's different. The woman is the boss in this country. A woman can have four husbands, a man can have two or three women. What you gonna do, that's the way with love.... Sometimes I feel like I'm suffering here, you know, trouble at home. Here, when you marry, you have woman trouble, kid trouble, not like in India. When I got here, I saw, you have liberty, women have liberty, you know. The way it is here, I've been separated, divorced. In India, you stay together all your life. In this country, you have love. When you love a person, you stay with her, with her kids and everything. I divorced Carmen, when she went away to Mexico. I couldn't do anything, so I filed for divorce. She had two more kids by then. My wife in India, she'd died already by that time. Yes, I knew about divorce. In this country, I no sleep. Everybody was divorced, I could see what they were doing. It's only normal, you see the customs of the country, and so you have to do that. In this country, when she wants to go, my wife, she says, 'All right, sonny honey, I'm going', and I say, 'I can't stop you.' It's because of love, therefore I couldn't stop her.[55]

The themes of Mola Singh's narrative—romantic love as the basis of marriage, men's inability to exercise effective control over women, the ever-present possibility of divorce—lie behind the relatively high incidence of murder, divorce and remarriage in this community.[56] There were also many stable, happy marriages among these couples. The long-lasting couples successfully negotiated certain immediate obstacles, such as expectations that a wife would cook and clean for several partners as well as her husband. Surprisingly, the existence of wives and children back in India did not prove a major source of marital instability in California. Some of the women knew their husbands had been married in India, while others found out later or preferred not to know. Some men had lost their Indian wives in the 1918 influenza epidemic but kept in touch with relatives and sent money to those children who had survived. One man arranged for his brother back in the Punjab to take over responsibility for his wife and daughter. Some husbands simply stopped writing, but many others did tell their California wives about their Indian wives and families and sent remittances for years.[57] The diversion of funds to India became an issue within some families, but most Punjabi-Mexican wives and

children accepted that as a minimal fulfilment of Indian family responsibilities. The relative in India, distanced by law as well as geography, had little reality in the early decades of Punjabi-Mexican family life in California.

Some degree of bilingualism characterised the successful marriages, although few of the men were rated excellent speakers of Spanish and no wife ever really learned to speak Punjabi well (many understood it adequately). But real mastery of a common language seemed relatively unimportant; in any case, many people argued that there were similarities between Punjabi and Spanish. 'Spanish is just like Punjabi, really', they said, illustrating the point with examples of similar words and grammatical constructions. Not only language, but other aspects of Punjabi and Mexican culture were viewed as essentially similar, and the long-time spouses expressed respect for each other's cultures.[58] Unable to visit the Punjab in the early decades of their marriages, the woman found it harder to learn about Punjabi culture,[59] but many men reported on similarities. Rather than emphasise or even mention the anti-miscegenation laws which played a major role in determining their choice of spouses, the men and their descendants talked about the similar physical appearance of the Punjabi men and Mexican women. Further, they argued that Mexicans and Punjabis shared the same material culture. As Mola Singh, who has 13 children from three marriages with Mexican women, put it:

> I no have to explain anything Hindu to my Mexican family—cooking the same, only talk different. I explain them, customary India, same Mexico. Everything same, only language different. They make roti over there, sit on floor, all custom India the same Mexico, living custom; I go to Mexico two three times, you know, not too far. All same India, all the same. Adobe house, Mexico, sit on floor, to make tortilla, *roti* you know, all kinds of food; eat here plate, some place got table, bench. India the same, eat floor, two board cutting, make bench.[60]

Not only did the men view the women as coming from a similar material culture, some of these long-time wives came to view themselves as 'Hindu'. They meant that they cooked Indian food, they conducted their households in a 'Hindu' fashion to suit their husbands, and they were cut off from Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. They did not mean they had changed their religion, but they identified themselves with their husbands and the other Punjabi men rather than with any Mexican-American community.[61]

Another important characteristic of the happy marriages was respect for both religions and mutual support of religious observances. The very

few men said to have converted to Catholicism also remained Hindu or Sikh in important ways. And the couples and their children in these long-lasting marriages voiced a strong belief that there was only one God. As Mola and Susanna Singh said, Susanna speaking first: 'Well, God gives a lot of different languages, you know, but I don't think so many Gods;' while Mola said, 'Only one God.'[62]

The children's religious training was not a vigorously contested matter between Punjabi husbands and Mexican wives. The men encouraged their wives to continue their own religious beliefs and practices and themselves served as godfathers in the compadrazgo system. They wanted to inculcate respect for Sikhism, Hinduism or Islam while they encouraged their children to practise Catholicism (or whatever form of Christianity their wives practised).

For the children born to these biethnic couples, cultural identity could be problematic, both within and outside the family. Socialisation into an essentially Mexican-American domestic culture marked their early years. The babies' names, their home language, their religious training, all reflected the mothers' authority in the domestic realm. Almost all of the children born to these couples were given Hispanic rather than Indian first names, so that their names seem both strange and beautiful: Maria Jesusita Singh, Jose Akbar Khan, Armando Chand. A few fathers insisted upon recording Indian names for their sons, but these were seldom used. In the home, most children spoke Spanish with their mothers and Spanish or English with their fathers; few learned to speak Punjabi. (Older boys, prominent among them Mexican step-sons, who worked in the fields with 'Hindu crews' did learn Punjabi appropriate to the work situation.) Aunts and grandmothers, godmothers and other children reinforced the Spanish-speaking culture of the mothers, and most of the Punjabi-Mexican children attended schools in which Spanish-speaking children predominated. Outsiders usually classified these Punjabi-Mexican children as 'Mexicans': to this day, some people in the Imperial Valley think of Singh as a Mexican-American surname. But the 'Mexican' identification caused difficulties for the children. There was prejudice from Mexican-Americans, and the Punjabi men had such pride in their heritage that the children ultimately grew curious about and proud of their 'Hindu side' as well.

The wives and children learned little about Indian religious beliefs and practices during the men's early decades in California. Many Muslim, Hindu and Sikh men did not even transmit correct English terms for their religious faiths to their children. Thus some members of the second generation continue to refer to all of the Punjabi men as Hindus without

realising it is usually a misnomer, and a few men are designated by such improbable names as Ali Singh or Ghulam Singh. Others refer to the Singhs or the Mohammeds, knowing the men were not really Hindus but unsure of the correct religious terms. The fathers were mostly unable to read, teach or explain their own religious texts, if they had copies. Furthermore, the children did not know the Punjabi language, much less Arabic, so that the beauties of the Granth Sahib or the Quran were inaccessible to them. The Roman Catholic Church was clearly hospitable to these families, allowing the Punjabi men to stand as godfathers in church ceremonies and Hispanising their names on baptismal certificates, and in some cases, allowing the Punjabi men to be married in religious rites without any meaningful evidence of conversion to Catholicism.[63] The idea of religion continued to receive the men's support, in the best tradition of Indian tolerance. The men reasoned that the inculcation of religion was a woman's responsibility, so it followed that in these biethnic families the children should be brought up in the wife's religion.

Most of the external signs differentiating Sikh, Muslim and Hindu in India had disappeared. In outward appearance, the Sikhs initially had been marked by the beard, long hair and turban required by orthodox Sikhism. Retention of these characteristics proved difficult in the face of American prejudice. Moreover, many wives preferred their men to be clean-shaven. Several women explicitly linked the giving up of the turban and beard to their wedding day. 'The labor camp men wore turbans and the family men took them off', said one daughter.[64] There was no case of a Sikh son of a Mexican mother wearing the turban, and even the sons of the two 'real' Sikh couples in central and northern California did not wear turbans. Some Sikhs and Muslims maintained social distance based on religious boundaries stemming from India while others did not; it was just as common for the children to pick up prejudices against other Punjabis in the same religious category as in different ones.[65]

While the Punjabi-Mexican children grew up taking great pride in their Indian heritage, most of the Punjabi men who married and founded families in California deliberately or otherwise de-emphasised Punjabi language and culture. One reason was the demands made on their time by work. Thus one daughter reported revealingly, 'My dad talked about India to his grandchildren, he had time then.' But another reason was commitment to their new country. They accepted the restrictions on immigration as permanent and considered their children Americans. Another daughter remembers her shock and sense of loss when her father suddenly stopped the evening sessions of Punjabi lessons and stories about the Punjab—he announced that since his children were Americans, they had no need to

learn his language and culture. Other fathers gruffly turned back queries about the Punjab and its language, stating that they were here now and there was no point learning about India.[66]

But if the men and their families had travelled far from India, India came to them in the form of a massive immigration from South Asia after 1965. The arrival of large numbers of new immigrants from South Asia after 1965 has irrevocably altered the social landscape and the ways in which the Punjabi pioneers and their descendants construct their identities.[67] Members of the second generation who have tended to identify themselves as Hindu or East Indian have found little in common with the new immigrants from India and Pakistan, and the new immigrants bring with them boundaries which had been non-existent or blurred by the earlier immigrants. The 'old Hindus' had all been from one province, all Punjabi speakers. Furthermore, they were rural people, largely uneducated in any language. They made major adaptations to live and farm in the United States, changing dress and diet, learning new languages and marrying new wives from different cultural backgrounds. They depended upon local people—bankers, farmers, storekeepers, landowners and county officials—for their very livelihood. Colonial subjects when they came, they fought for India's freedom, but also for their political rights in the United States.

The barriers to meaningful relations with the Punjabi homeland made these early immigrants and their families unconcerned with judgments which might be formed about them back in India. They proceeded to become both 'Hindu' and 'American' in ways ranging from adopting new concepts of marriage based on romantic love to religious practices which treated men and women equally. The 'Hindu' category in the United States included all the early immigrants. Personal names lost much of the religious and regional meaning they held back in the Punjab and religious differences receded in importance, particularly for the children. Most members of the second generation married outside the Punjabi-Mexican community. Despite these changes and the adoption of a strong 'American' component of individual identity, most Punjabi-Mexicans have retained an allegiance to an identity as 'Hindus'. Even the early immigrants' spouses, predominantly Hispanic women, actively contributed to the construction and maintenance of a 'Hindu' identity in the United States, an identity necessarily very different from that being constructed now by the more recent immigrant families from South Asia.[68]

CONCLUSION

The experiences of the Punjabi pioneers and their families draw attention to the ongoing process of identity and community formation, to the flexibility of ethnic identity and of culture. They contribute to theories displacing the old anthropological concept of 'cultures' marching in bounded units through time and space, to new theories about 'connected social fields'[69] which can be moved, stretched and interwoven in multiple ways.

James Clifford refers to them as 'changed by their travel but marked by places of origin',[70] and it is time to place scholarly attention on the first part of his statement rather than the last. The history the Punjabi pioneers and their descendants have written in America is no less authentic for the changes brought about by context, generation and gender.[71] Contrasts between Punjabis in the Punjab and their various places of settlement outside India are to be expected and provide opportunities for comparative social science research. Norman Buchignani and Bruce La Brack make this point about Sikh immigrants in California and Canada, as does Verne Dusenbery about Sikh immigrants in Canada and Singapore.[72] The Punjabi immigrants abroad will construct new personal, ethnic and national identities in the diaspora countries, and they will do so through engagement with the very different and very particular context in which they are settling. As Stuart Hall remarked, 'All identity is constructed across difference',[73] and there are significant differences in the demographic constellations and national projects that Punjabis are encountering in their places of settlement outside the Punjab. The title of a recent article by Paul Gilroy put it well: 'It Ain't Where You're From, It's Where You're At' (and the British Punjabi singer Apache Indian nicely illustrates the argument therein).[74] Other writers remind us of the power relations embedded in 'situatedness' and the 'politics of location.'[75] Again, the point is that identities are formed in interaction with other particular economic, political and social settings, and the 'Punjabi cultural identity', constructed and changed over time back in the Punjab,[76] is sure to be transformed, many layered and diverse in the diaspora setting. The Punjabi pioneers to America in the early twentieth century encountered more constraints than opportunities when they migrated, but they created a complex and interesting history which deserves full recognition, one from which both scholars and more recent Punjabi immigrants have much to learn.

Notes

1. See the entries in Jane Singh, ed., *South Asians in North America: An Annotated and Selected Bibliography* (Berkeley: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, 1988); Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University Press, 2nd edn, 1992); Joan M. Jensen, *Passage from India: Asian Indian Immigrants in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); John Stratton Hawley and Gurinder Singh Mann (eds), *Studying the Sikhs: Issues for North America* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993). Anannya Bhattacharjee notices a 'selective amnesia' about the early immigrants (which she attributes, I think incorrectly, to their political radicalness). 'The Habit of Ex-Nomination: Nation, Woman, and the Indian Immigrant Bourgeoisie', *Public Culture*, 5:1, (fall 1992), 32. Omar Afzal refers to the 'failure' of the early Muslim families: 'An Overview of Asian-Indian Muslims in the United States,' in Omar Khalidi (ed.), *Indian Muslims in North America* (Watertown MA: South Asia Press, n.d. [1990?], 10-11. See Karen Isaksen Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices: California's Punjabi Mexican Americans* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), for a detailed history of family life.
2. Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity', especially, 275-77, in Stuart Hall, David Held and Tony McGrew (eds), *Modernity and its Futures* (London: Polity Press, 1992); Paul Gilroy, *There ain't No Blacks in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), especially, 154-56); Homi Bhabha, 'Interrogating Identity', in Homi Bhabha (ed.), *Identity* (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1987), 5-11.
3. For the various laws, see Harold S. Jacoby, 'Administrative Restriction of Asian Immigration into the United States, 1907-1917', *Population Review* 25 (1982), 35-40, and 'More sinned Against than Sinning', *Pacific Historian* 11: 4, 1-2, 8. The 1917 bill correlated physical with cultural distance and denied entry to immigrants from areas west of the 110th and east of the 50th meridian (Asia). US Statutes at Large, 1915-1917, 'An Act to Regulate the Immigration of Aliens to, and the Residence of Aliens in, the United States' 64th Congress, P.L. 876, 2nd sess., Vol. 39, pt. I, ch. 29, for the specific meridians in the 1917 law. For the Alien Land Laws, devised to halt the rapid Japanese progress in agriculture, see Karen Leonard, 'Punjabi Farmers and California's Alien Land Law', *Agricultural History* 59: 4, 549-62; and 'The Pakhar Singh Murders: A Punjabi Response to California's Alien Land Law', *Amerasia Journal* 11:1 (1984), 75-87.
4. They were also called 'Mexidus' or 'Half and Halves'.
5. Karen Leonard, 'Finding One's Own Place: The Imposition of Asian Landscapes on Rural California', in James Ferguson, Akhil Gupta, and Liisa Malkki (eds), *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology* (forthcoming).
6. *El Centro Progress* (El Centro), 5 December 1919, 33, 44, 80, 122.
7. US National Archives, Record Group 29, Census of US Population, Imperial County, California, 1910 (manuscript census).
8. US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: Population, 1920* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1992), Vol. III, 109-10, 112-17, 123-24. Imperial County had the highest proportion among California counties of people born in Mexico, 14.7 per cent, followed by Ventura County with 14.1 per cent and San Bernardino County with 9.7 per cent. Allyn

Campbell Loosley, 'Foreign Born Population of California, 1848-1920', Master's Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1927, 114-15. People from India were not counted in the 1920 Census, but I rely on a handcount (of 268) done by an Imperial County resident, Ram Chand, cited in 'Survey of Race Relations', Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, California, #232. Ram Chand, p. 4, interviewed by W.C. Smith, 1 June 1924, El Centro.

9. Joseph J. Anderholt and Dorothy M. Anderholt (eds), *The History of the Imperial Valley Swiss* (Holtville: Imperial Valley Swiss Club, 1984), 7-8, 10.
10. US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States taken in the year of 1910: Abstract of the Census with Supplement for California* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 601 for the 1910 Census sex ratio; for 1920, US Department of Commerce, *Fourteenth Census: Population, 1920*, Vol. III: 113, 131.
11. F.C. Farr, *The History of Imperial County, California* (Berkeley: Elms and Frank, 1918), 480. Accounts by the early Swiss women stress the difficulties posed by the hot climate, living in tents or dirt-floored shelters, the lack of ice, electricity or running water, and the suspenseful fording of irrigation ditches in horse and buggy. Anderholt and Anderholt, *Imperial Valley Swiss*.
12. See Shiro Fujioka, 'Traces of a Journey', translated by Mabel Saito Hall for Sucheng Chan from *Ayumi No Ato*, Japanese, published in Los Angeles by Kanko Koenkai (1957), 464-65, for an account of the first Japanese bride's arrival in the Imperial Valley.
13. A cattle rancher recounted that during the early 1910s a Cahuilla Indian was refused a meal in a Brawley restaurant and a 'colored' cowboy met critical comments from other guests in a rooming house in Imperial, although 'the old Chinese restaurant on Main Street was a reliable and hospitable place'. Lester Reed, *Oldtimers of Southeastern California* (Redlands: Lester Reed, 1967), 11, 115, 198.
14. Quote from Mola Singh, Selma, 1982. In a 1921 court case, the defence attorney for one Bishen Singh, charged with attacking Amar Singh with an axe in Brawley, alleged that Amar Singh provoked the attack by saying, 'Before we were in town and now we're in Mexican town, so let's fight.' Landmarks in the court case included the Chinese store and the Filipino Hotel. Criminal Case 987, Office of the County Clerk, Imperial County, 1921.
15. Kathryn Cramp, Louise F. Shields and Charles A. Thomsen, Study of the Mexican Population in Imperial Valley, California, University of California, Berkeley, Bancroft Library, mimeo, 1926, 15-19. Only Holtville remained small and homogeneous enough to avoid this kind of segregation—few Mexicans, Japanese or blacks settled there.
16. William Irvin Darnell, 'The Imperial Valley: Its Physical and Cultural Geography', Master's thesis, San Diego State College, 90-91, 95.
17. Ibid., 90-105; Adon Poli, *Land Ownership and Operating Tenure in Imperial Valley, California* (Berkeley: US Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1942); and Robert L. Finley, 'An Economic History of the Imperial Valley of California to 1971', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1974, 158.
18. See Poli, *Land Ownership*, 48, for 1910-20, and 49-51; Cramp, Shields and Thomsen, Mexican Population, 2, for absentee owners.
19. By the measure of value of production per acre, the Imperial Valley was the most productive: Howard F. Gregor, 'Regional Hierarchies in California Agricultural

Production: 1939-1954', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 53 (1963), 30.

20. *Holtville Tribune* (Holtville), 16 September 1910.
21. Ibid., 4 February 1918. As early as 1907, the *California Fruit Grower* had predicted that Indian men working in the Fresno vineyards would not long be satisfied to labour in the fields: 'The Labour Problem', 24 August 1907, 1.
22. Mr Robert Hays, in Paul Taylor, 'Field Notes' for his book, 'Mexican Labor in the United States, 1927-1930', circa 1928.
23. The local directories are in the Imperial Public Library, now relocated in El Centro. Early issues were titled *Imperial Valley Business and Resident Directory* (1912-13), *Thurston's Imperial Valley Directory* (1914-21), and finally *Imperial Valley Directory* (1924-26). For telephone subscribers, *Imperial County Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company*, 15 April 1918 (in the Pioneers Museum, Imperial). US Postmaster General, 'Register of Money Orders Issued, Jan. 2, 1909 through Nov. 5, 1910, and July 16, 1912, through Dec. 18, 1913'. Joseph Anderholt directed me to these in the Holtville City Hall.
24. Dr Sucheng Chan, University of California, Santa Barbara, made her notes on these leases available to me. These leases, like other early sources, show the Sikhs arriving slightly later than the Punjabi Muslims and Hindus. Many partnership disputes appear in local civil and criminal case records, since litigation was constantly resorted to when the verbal contracts were not kept. In one case, the court helped set up an arbitration board with seven members elected by both parties, all of them Punjabis from Calipatria (one Muslim, one Hindu and five Sikhs). The defendant was indebted to the plaintiff for two years of labour performed, and in the end the sheriff sold the cotton crop to secure payment: Civil Case 11015, Office of the County Clerk, Imperial County (Moola Singh vs. Georgia May Singh), 1923. 'Hindoo' or 'Hindu' was a category in the court records: Cramp, Shields and Thomson, Mexican Population, 12.
25. For the bankruptcies, see US Government, Los Angeles District Court, 'Bankruptcy Records for Indexes I, II, and III (1907-1917, 1917-1925, 1925-1932)', Laguna Niguel Federal Archives. Length of residence in the same locality and the establishment of stable tenancy relationships with landowners undoubtedly helped Punjabi farmers succeed, much as has been shown for California's Japanese farmers then: Robert Higgs, 'The Wealth of Japanese Tenant Farmers in California, 1909', *Agricultural History* 53:2 (1979), 492.
26. Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, 55-57.
27. See ibid., 73-78, for details about childbearing, fertility and mortality, and 106-14 for details about murders, divorce and remarriage.
28. Probably the March licence could not be implemented; in any case, Sher Singh took out another licence (for another woman, too) in November: *Holtville Tribune*, 16 March and 10 November 1916.
29. *El Centro Progress*, 5 April 1918.
30. Interview with Mola Singh, Selma, 1982.
31. The Judge in a bankruptcy case said, 'Your wife is a Mexican girl, isn't she?' US Government, 'Bankruptcy Records', case number 6212 (Refugio Gonzalez Deol). The Anglo witnesses to the 1916 and 1917 marriages were Arthur Shephard and County Horticultural Commissioner F.W. Waite.

32. In 1918, the *El Centro Progress* headlined 'Race Riot is Staged', a fight between Mexicans and Punjabis in the cotton fields near Heber over a Punjabi's marriage to a Mexican woman: *Holtville Tribune* clipping dated 9 (month torn off) 1918. Four years later, two Mexican men abducted two Mexican women, sisters, who had married Punjabis: *Holtville Tribune*, 9 March and 10 March 1922; confirmed by Janie Diwan Poonian, daughter of one of the women, Yuba City, 1982.

33. Rosalinda M. Gonzalez, 'Chicanas and Mexican Immigrant Families 1920-1940: Women's Subordination and Family Exploitation', in Joan Jensen and Lois Scharf (eds), *Decades of Discontent* (Greenwood Press, 1983), p. 63; Ruth Allen, *The Labor of Women in the Production of Cotton* (Chicago, 1933). Cotton picking was the only outdoor work done by Jat Sikh women in all three Central Punjab regions: Joyce Pettigrew, *Robber Noblemen: A Study of the Political System of the Sikh Jats* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), 48; Malcolm Lyall Darling, *Rusticus Loquitur* (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1930), 175-76; Michelle Maskiell, 'Women's Work and the Household Economy in Punjab', 16th Conference on South Asia, Madison, Wisconsin, 1987, 3 and 7.

34. Taylor, 'Field Notes', file on labour contractors and agencies, 103-107a. Some early Punjabi-Mexican marriages took place in El Paso; others took place in Canutillo, Texas, where Punjabis were farming cotton, and in Las Cruces, New Mexico, where there was no waiting period. See the many autobiographical statements in Manuel Gamio (ed.), *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant* (New York: Dover Publications, 1971).

35. Two Punjabis had taken wives in northern California: in 1913, one Alice Singh, Canadian-born, married a Sikh in Sacramento, and in the same year Rosa Domingo, a common-law wife, was murdered by her Muslim husband in Contra Costa County. Sacramento County marriage licence 40:459 for the marriage of Alice Singh and Dayal Singh, 15 May 1913; the *Contra Costa Gazette* (Sacramento), 25 October 1913, for the murder (Harold Jacoby told me of this story).

36. Marriage licences 5:164 and 5:388, Imperial County Recorder's Office, El Centro; and marriage licence 5:447, Imperial County Recorder's Office. Marrying sisters may not have been unusual for Punjabis. 'The Hindus here married sisters, yeah, same as back in the Punjab', said Mola Singh (Selma, 1982).

37. Interview with Teresa Garewal, Holtville, 1981.

38. My categories are based upon marriage, settlement, and social network patterns. Copies of the master list of couples are in three University of California libraries: Irvine, Berkeley (the South/Southeast Asia Library Gadar Collection), and Los Angeles. I define marriages here as relationships which were long-lasting and/or produced children; most were legal marriages, although I made no effort to track down all marriage certificates. I included couples through 1949 because it took a few years to be confident about the extension of citizenship to Asian Indians in 1946.

39. By the late 1920s some Punjabi-Mexican families had settled in the southern San Joaquin Valley, and in the 1930s some families moved to northern California, the Yuba City/Marysville area, and to Arizona, in and near Phoenix.

40. Computer analysis of marriage licences for apparent first marriages in this country gave these figures (for 101 Punjabi men).

41. For Rosemary Khan and Ram Rattan Singh, see San Joaquin county birth certificate 3950-288 (1927) and death certificate 3950-485 (1927); Tulare county birth certificate

22 (1930); Fresno county birth certificate 17:275 (1931). I could not trace any descendants.

42. See Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices* 68 and 248, for analysis of these 25 marriages (through 1918).

43. The 'Constitution and By-Laws of the Hindustanee's Welfare and Reform Society of America', (n.p. [Imperial]: Hindustanees' Welfare and Reform Society of America, n.d. [circa 1914] contained a clause warning the men not to marry 'colored' women. To explain this, one man said, 'why should the Punjabis ally themselves with a group hated by the whites, when they had similar problems and could fight them better alone?'

44. Nellie Soto Shine, Huntington Beach, 1982; Janie Poonian, Yuba City, 1982; Rose Chell Canaris, Calexico, 1987 (interviewed by Lupe Beltran).

45. Interviews with Joe Mallobox, El Centro, 1982; Karmelita Kakar, San Jose, 1981; Teja and Kay Dillon, Fresno, 1982 (by Sarah Leonard); Lucy Sekhon, San Diego, 1982; Kishen Singh Deol, Corona, 1981; Lola Dhillon, Holtville, 1981. Sally Maynez Dhalliwal told of a Punjabi who gave her father money when he went to El Paso and asked him to bring back a woman; her dad spent the money and said he could not find one (Holtville, 1983).

46. Norma Saikhon, Brawley, 1981 (interviewed by Ernesto Vargas).

47. Ramesh Murarka, 'Pratap Singh Brar—Pioneering Spirit Overcame 37 Years of Loneliness', *India West*, 3 July 1981, 12-13 (Brar lived in Fresno).

48. A woman marrying an ineligible alien became ineligible herself. The Cable Act, in effect from 1922 through 1931, provided that female (but not male) citizens marrying aliens ineligible for citizenship lost their citizenship: US Statutes at Large, 'An Act Relative to the Naturalization and Citizenship of Married Women', P.L. 1021-22, 67th Congress, 2nd sess., Vol. 42, pt. 1, ch. 411. Section 370 was repealed in 1931. Perhaps some Punjabis and Anglos were unaware of this, since some wives seemingly did hold land for the men.

49. Before 1934, only three Imperial Valley farmers had registered as guardians, in 1929, 1932 and 1933. Probate records, Imperial County, California, and Maricopa County, Arizona. The Punjabis adopted that strategy only after the 1933 Imperial County indictment of some Punjabis and Anglos for conspiring to evade the Alien Land Law by forming corporations.

50. Non-Catholic Punjabi men seem to have been accepted as godfathers by Catholic churches throughout the American Southwest, albeit sometimes given Hispanic first names on official documents (for example, Arturo Gangara for Ganga Ram). The reasons for this are not entirely clear but it did not lead to conversions to Catholicism.

51. Interviews with Teresa Garewal, Holtville, 1981; Lucy Sekhon, San Diego, 1982; Sophia Din, Brawley, 1981; and Emma Smiley, Sacramento, 1982.

52. See Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, 93-95.

53. See Puri, *Ghadar Movement*. Puri does include material on the Punjabis' family life too.

54. Interviews with Isabel Singh Garcia, Yuba City, 1982; Karmelita Kakar, San Jose, 1982; and Alfred Sidhu, Sacramento, 1982.

55. Interview with Mola Singh, Selma, 1982.

56. See Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, 106-14.

57. Interviews with Mary Garewal Gill, Holtville, 1981; Kishen S. Deol, Corona, 1981; Alfred Sidhu, Sacramento, 1982; Mary S. Rai, Yuba City, 1981.

58. Interviews with Mola Singh, Selma, 1983; Rose Chell Canaris, 1987; Savarn Singh, El Centro, 1984; Mrs. Ganga Singh Bhatti, taped in Live Oak, 1989 (by Ted S. Sibia of Davis—thanks to him for the tape).

59. After the citizenship law changed in 1946, some wives visited their husbands' home villages in India: Interviews with Lala Garewal, Holtville, 1981; Sophia Din, Brawley, 1981; Mary Garewal Gill, Holtville, 1982; Anna Sandhu, Calipatria, 1982; Caroline Shine Sunghera, Huntington Beach 1982; Laura Sedoo, Fresno, 1982; Irene Afzal Khan, Willows, 1988.

60. Interview with Mola Singh, Selma, 1981.

61. This sense of 'being Hindu' is discussed in Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, 131 and 206.

62. Interview with Mola and Susanna Mesa Rodriguez Singh, Selma, 1983.

63. Catholic Church records, Holtville; and examples from elsewhere from Karmelita Kakar, San Jose, 1982, and Helen Ram Walsh, Hercules, 1988. Marriages without conversion occurred in the Imperial Valley (Sally Maynez to Aya S. Dhaliwal) and elsewhere (Susanna Mesa Rodriguez and Mola Singh in Selma).

64. Interviews with Lala Garewal and Mary Garewal Gill, Holtville, 1981, and Verdie Montgomery, Sacramento, 1982.

65. Descendants of Muslims differentiated by language and caste (Pushtu and Urdu, Rajput and Arain); descendants of Sikhs talked about caste and regional origin (Jat and Chuhra, Malwa, Doaba and Majha).

66. Amelia Singh Netervala, Los Angeles, 1988; Janie Diwan Poonian, Yuba City, 1982.

67. For the challenges the new immigrants presented to the old ones and their families, see Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, Chs 9-11.

68. Karen Leonard, 'Ethnic Identity and Gender: South Asians in the United States', in Milton Israel and N.K. Wagle (eds), *Ethnicity, Identity and Migration* (Toronto: Center for South Asian Studies, University of Toronto, 1992).

69. The phrase is Sally Falk Moore's, *Social Facts and Fabrications* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 4-5; and see James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference', *Cultural Anthropology* 7:1 (1992), 6-23.

70. James Clifford, 'Notes on Theory and Travel', in James Clifford and Vivek Dhareshwar (eds), *Travelling Theory Travelling Theorists* (Santa Cruz: Center for Cultural Studies, 1989), 188.

71. I have argued this quite forcefully in 'Flawed Transmission? Punjabi Pioneers in California', in a forthcoming book edited by Pashaura Singh from the University of Michigan.

72. Norman Buchignani, 'Conception of Sikh Culture in the Development of a Comparative Analysis of the Sikh Diaspora', in Joseph T. O'Connell, Milton Israel, Willard G. Oxtoboy with W.H. McLeod and J.S. Grewal (eds), *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto, Center for South Asian Studies, 1988), 287-90; Bruce La Brack, 'California's "Punjabi Century": Changing Punjabi/Sikh Identities', paper given at the First International Conference on Punjab Studies, Coventry University, 26 June 1994; Verne A. Dusenbery, 'The Poetics and

Politics of Nationalism and Multiculturalism: Diasporan Sikhs in Pluralist Politics', *American Ethnologist* (Forthcoming).

73. See Stuart Hall's discussion, 'New Ethnicities' in Michael Kieth and Steve Pile (eds), *Place and Politics of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1993), 252, 259.

74. Paul Gilroy, 'It Ain't Where You're From, It's Where You're At: The Dialectics of Diasporic Identification', *Third Text* (1987), 3-16.

75. See Parminder Bachu, 'Multiple Migrants and Multiple Diasporas: Cultural Reproduction and Transformation among British Punjabi Women in the 1990s Britain', paper presented at the First International Conference on Punjab Studies, Coventry University, 26 June, 1994.

76. See Harjot S. Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Three papers presented at the First International Conference on Punjab Studies, Coventry University, 25 June 1994, are also relevant: Indu Banga, 'Arya Samaj and Punjabi identity'; Anil Sethi, '"Hindu Water", "Muslim Water": Syncretism, Commensality and Community in late 19th and early 20th Century Punjab'; and Darshan Singh, 'Shah Mohammad and Punjabi Identity'.

Book Reviews

Contents

The Evolution of a Sikh Community in Britain: Religious and Social Change amongst the Sikhs of Leeds and Bradford, Sewa Singh Kalsi (Leeds University: Community Religions Project, 1992). Pages 226. £8.50. Paperback. ISBN 1-871363-03-9.

Most current studies, both of Sikh communities and of Sikhism, tend to be remarkably bland in character. Sikhism tends to be represented as a single coherent orthodoxy about which all devotees of Nanak are agreed, the role of caste and sectarian divisions is either overlooked or vigorously denied, and local communities presented as if they, too, were the basis of a coherent and undifferentiated Sikh social universe. Yet, although one can well appreciate the political pressures which lead towards such representations, the reality—as anyone who is familiar with Sikhism and Sikh communities at first hand is well aware—is normally quite different. In this context Sewa Singh Kalsi's detailed and illuminating study of caste and sectarian differentiation amongst Punjabi settlers in Leeds is a most refreshing change.

His book is a major contribution to our understanding of the religious dimension of the South Asian presence in Britain, and further underlines the value of the Leeds Community Religions Project's monograph series as a source of closely observed accounts of the religious practices of Britain's minority communities. While lightly edited and swiftly published doctoral theses rarely make for easy reading, for their authors are often busy seeking to establish their academic credibility by developing a complex and usually impenetrable theoretical perspective, this volume presents no such problems. On the contrary Kalsi is determinedly descriptive in his approach, and largely avoids theoretical debate. Hence he makes little effort to explore the precise meaning of any of his terms, so much so that even such crucial concepts as 'community' and 'Sikh' are left unexamined. Hence in the introductory sections of the volume commonplace popular assumptions, and not least those about orthodoxy and homogeneity, are simply taken as self-evident. Likewise the title of the book is something of a misnomer: anyone who looks to this volume for a detailed analysis of religious and social change, or even for an account of the way in which the Sikh settlement in Leeds and Bradford has evolved and developed over time, will be disappointed. Yet it would be quite wrong to conclude that this account is of little merit. Paradoxically enough, its

failure to grapple with any knotty issues of theory is its greatest strength, for it allows the complexities of a thoroughly diverse (and therefore anything but homogeneous and orthodox) empirical reality to shine through without serious encumbrance.

Had the author been more concerned with theoretical issues, he would surely have had to face up to a serious contradiction which is no less pressing in Leeds than in any other Punjabi context: is there any such thing as a 'Sikh community'? And is there any *one* phenomenon which we can confidently identify as 'Sikhism'? Or are such notions little more than convenient ideological fictions, manufactured primarily for the benefit of outsiders? Had Kalsi sought to address these issues directly, there is little doubt that his account would have become a great deal more tangled and uncertain. But given its theoretically largely innocent construction, it presents more analytically minded readers with a particularly rich source of data with which to explore these issues for themselves.

What, then, does this volume have to tell us in empirical terms? Two main themes emerge. First, that loyalties of *caste* remain a crucial component of the way in which settlers organise their everyday social lives, and second that *sect*—here to be understood as those who are drawn together under the influence of either a living or recently deceased spiritual teacher—is an equally crucial component of most forms of religious activity.

A wide range of castes are represented in the two cities of Leeds and Bradford: in addition to the ubiquitous Jats, a significant number of Ramgarhia, Chamar, Julaha, Jhir, Bhatra, Nai, and Khatri families have also settled in the area. Yet, although each of these caste groups can be clearly and unambiguously identified, not least because the rule of endogamy ensures that the members of each are involved in a wholly separate kinship network, in what sense are they 'Sikhs'? As Kalsi makes clear, each one of these castes except the Jats also includes a more or less explicit Hindu component, in the sense of incorporating people who have not taken the names Singh or Kaur, let alone adopting the beard and turban. But while non-adoption of the symbols of the Khalsa does not necessarily make one 'not a Sikh', even amongst the homogeneously Sikh Jats who take it for granted that that is what Sikhs *ought* to do, Kalsi nevertheless takes it for granted that the Chamars should be counted as Sikhs, even though very few take Sikh names, or wear beard and turban, and where their focus of *religious* attention largely overlooks Gobind Singh in favour of Nanak's teachings, mediated through their own favoured Guru Ravidas.

Nor is that all. When the very first gurdwara in Leeds was established

in 1958 it was—unsurprisingly—strongly cross-caste and cross-sectarian in character. Its first President was a Ramgarhia, its vice-President a Brahmin (and therefore nominally a Hindu!), and its Secretary a Julaha, while members of the committee, themselves affiliated to a wide range of castes, included both *keshadaris* and non-*keshadaris*. However, as Kalsi demonstrates, the original united *sangat* gradually began to split apart as the settlement grew in size. By 1986 at least eight gurdwaras could be found in the city, and doubtless there are more by now. Such developments are by no means unique to Leeds. What, then, causes all this fission?

Caste, or more specifically inter-caste rivalry, is clearly a major factor. Tensions and conflicts remembered from the subcontinent are still very much alive. Hence 'untouchable' Chamars regularly found themselves being sidelined by higher caste fellow-settlers who remained as fearful as ever of the former leather-workers' power to pollute. Small wonder, therefore, that the victims of such exclusionism moved off and began to worship on their own account as soon as they possibly could. But caste divisions did not end there. Even amongst the so-called 'clean' excluders, caste difference soon became a vehicle for factionalism, most especially with respect to the control of gurdwara management committees. While Kalsi's account touches but lightly on these disputes, their acrimonious progress further reinforced caste boundaries. Hence, just as amongst the Chamars, dissident groups often split away to establish separate gurdwaras of their own. Thus at least three Leeds gurdwaras which he lists have quite explicit caste affiliations, while most of the others are more or less exclusively controlled by members of a particular caste.

But lest readers be mistaken, it should be emphasised for the record that just because a gurdwara is *controlled* by a specific caste, it does not necessarily follow that all those who *worship* there will necessarily be members of that caste. To be sure there may be a preference to search out 'one's own' gurdwara; but as Kalsi himself makes clear, those simply seeking to pay their respects to the Guru may often choose to do so elsewhere if that is more convenient. Even so, caste-based organisation of gurdwaras is in many ways but the tip of the iceberg. Behind it lies the formation of formal caste associations which have been very active in the collection of funds to purchase property within which caste members could meet and to organise a wide variety of religious, social and leisure activities, as well as to fulfil such classical functions as the collective revision of marriage rules and the resolution, or at least the attempted resolution, of disputes between caste members. Kalsi provides a very clear account of the development of these activities, and the often widely

differing trajectories followed by the four most numerous castes in the area, the Jats, the Ramgarhias, the Bhatras and the Ravidasis/Chamars.

Yet while caste by definition differentiates, it is by no means the only, or even the most important, source of collective aggregation, especially in religious terms. It is here that the sect, and the appeal of figures whom Kalsi terms 'holy men', come into their own.

Since serious religious practice in a Punjabi context almost invariably takes the form of a spiritual quest, which is in turn normally articulated around the person of a charismatic spiritual leader, either living or dead; it is around the activities of these mobilisers and regenerators of religious belief and practice—11 of whom are identified as having a significant following in Leeds and Bradford in the chapter on 'holy men'—that Kalsi's account springs most vigorously to life. So who are these 'holy men', what do they teach, and with what impact on their followers, and indeed just who are their followers? While such questions are all too often left floating in the wind, the great value of this account is that it actually allows one to provide some answers.

So what do we find? Variety is once again the most salient theme. Some groups find inspiration in the teachings of long-dead saints such as Guru Ravi Das, who may in turn be given a status little short of that of the 10 Sikh Gurus themselves. Other groups, such as the Namdharis, the Radhasoamis and the Nirankaris retain the tradition of a living *Satguru*. For them the Satguru is by definition the fount of all authority as well as the best available route to enlightenment: those who take this position often routinely offer *mattha tekna*, direct to the Guru himself; this is in turn justified by perceiving their Guru as a spiritual heir of Nanak himself—thereby more or less overtly rejecting the conventional view that the direct line of succession came to an end with the death of Guru Gobind Singh. Last but not least there is a group of devotees who have gathered around living teachers who have established a spiritual vocation in their own right.

As one might expect, the content of their teachings is also very varied. There are common themes, of course. Given their diasporic location in the midst of a hostile society which is also strongly committed to secularisation, 'back to basics' is a frequent theme. But which basics? As Kalsi shows, this can range from a Nanak-style sharpening of one's personal spiritual awareness at one end of the scale, right through to conformity with essentially behavioural demands of the *khalsa* at the other, though once again there is no uniformity of interpretation with respect to almost any aspect of belief or practice. Nor is it hard to see why. Since every spiritual master, and every sectarian movement, necessarily develops his (and its) own distinct perspective, both the theological perspective and the

behavioural conventions which each presses forward vary. Hence, even though they may all be operating within the context of a single 'Sikh' tradition, actual practice as between each group can vary enormously; indeed as Kalsi shows, the permutations available are almost endless.

What, though, draws each separate group of devotees together? Much depends on the charisma of the teacher himself or, more to the point, on the effectiveness of his local deputies. But while purely spiritual issues clearly loom large in the process, it would be a mistake to assume that this is all that matters. Thus while teachers invariably insist that their teaching is of universal relevance, and thus in no way caste-specific, empirical observation reveals that practice is often otherwise. In this case a central aim of at least two of the groups which Kalsi explores—the Ravidas Sabha and Bhatra Sangat—is quite clearly to advance their relative status in the face of higher caste disparagement; and while higher caste groups have much less need to deploy counter-measures of this kind, Kalsi's own analysis makes it quite clear that most of the other sectarian groups whom he identifies are also more or less strongly caste linked.

Yet perhaps the most striking aspect of this component of the study is both the intensely *personal* quality of the religious experience that it reveals, as well as what one might describe as its 'unreformed' character. Amongst the strongly spiritually committed, it is taken for granted that long-dead saints can and do regularly reappear to give *darshan* to their devotees amongst the living, and that in doing so they will leave all sorts of miraculous signs of their presence; and since the Ultimate is seen as both transcendent and immediately immanent, those who lose themselves in an understanding of *Satnam* are likewise regarded as thereby gaining all manner of occult powers, including the ability to foretell the future, to heal the sick, and to make the barren fertile.

While beliefs and practices of this kind are, of course, a routine aspect of Sikh—and indeed of Punjabi—life both in the Punjab itself and throughout the diaspora, it is striking that they rarely find much mention in the literature. Nor is it hard to see why. Ever since Punjabis began to have to defend themselves against a Christian missionary onslaught which suggested that anything which failed to conform to a narrow Protestant vision of legitimacy in religious practice was stupid and despicable superstition, a whole range of issues which lay—and still lie—at the heart of popular religion in the Punjab have been unilaterally excluded from academic debate.

Whether or not Kalsi was aware of the service that he was doing to more open scholarship by simply recording the exceedingly varied character of popular religious practice amongst the Sikhs in Leeds in a

straightforward and untheorised way, he certainly deserves to be congratulated on his achievement. Since the material it contains cries out to be made sense of, I will be recommending this book strongly to all my students.

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The Settlement Literature of the Greater Punjab, Clive J. Dewey (Delhi: Manohar, 1991). Pages 107. Rs 250. Hardback. ISBN 81-85425-22-1.

Settlement literature is among the most important documentation available to historians of British rule in the Punjab. Not only does it contain a mass of information about Punjab's changing rural society during the colonial era, but it also provides valuable insights into the intellectual structures developed by the British to understand and rule Punjabi society. In this volume, Clive Dewey provides both a useful handlist to aid historians in locating and using this literature, and an insightful introduction to the intellectual context that shaped it and gave it a central place in the structure of British colonial rule.

Dewey's handlist is a model for this sort of bibliographic guide. It includes the official literature produced in connection with the British land settlements of the 'Greater Punjab'—the settlement reports, assessment reports, gazetteers and codes of customary law. In addition to the districts of the Punjab province at the time of partition, the region covered by the book includes the Delhi territory and the North West Frontier Province, but not the Punjab princely states.

The aim, as Dewey notes in the preface, is to present for working historians the 'necessary, "operative" information in a readily-accessible form'(p. 7). The listings are arranged both according to place (district and *tehsil*), to facilitate the work of agrarian historians interested in the run of reports dealing with a specific area, *and* according to author, to facilitate the work of those tracing the changing ideas and approaches of particular settlement officials. Entries for each settlement officer include limited biographical data and references to other published works and unpublished papers of these officials. (This double system of listing also helps readers to cross-check entries and to spot errors or omissions.) The handlist is geared particularly to users of the India Office Library (IOL) in London, and gives IOL call marks for most entries. Locations for

documents in India and Pakistan are not listed unless copies are unavailable at the India Office.

The handlist will prove particularly valuable in facilitating access to the 300 assessment reports that are listed. Assessment reports were generally not published and many are to be found only in Punjab government proceedings. Dewey's listing of proceedings numbers for most assessment reports will greatly enhance their accessibility. This is particularly important since the assessment reports, as Dewey points out, superseded the settlement reports as sources for information about changes in rural society after 1900 as the settlement reports became shorter, more standardised in form, and more perfunctory.

Perhaps most remarkable is Dewey's brief introduction to the literature. The settlement literature of the Punjab was central, he argues, to the development in the 1870s and 1880s of an intellectual approach to Punjab society that shaped profoundly the subsequent structure of colonial administration in the province. The key to this was the application of 'historicist', evolutionary thinking to the understanding of Punjabi rural society. Drawing on intellectual trends in social scientific thinking prominent in late nineteenth century Britain, the British saw in Punjabi rural society evidence of the evolutionary role that families, tribes and village communities played in the movement from 'status to contract', from communal land control to individual property rights. While British rule itself inevitably encouraged movement toward individual rights, the stability of Punjabi society under the rule of the British depended, as most settlement officers saw it, on the continuing social cohesion provided by these intermediary groups as gradual change occurred. The knowledge accumulated within the Punjab's settlement literature was thus increasingly viewed by British officials as central not only to the collection of revenue but, more importantly, to the development of a stable, colonial 'science' of administration, that took cognisance of the social structure of rural Punjabi society.

The great settlement officers of the Punjab thus became, ultimately, the most prominent colonial administrators of Punjab, the men whose intellectual and administrative outlooks defined the course of colonial administration in the province. The strength of this short handlist lies both in its practical use as a guide to the settlement literature, and in its definition of the intellectual significance of this body of literature as a key to the understanding of British colonial administration in the Punjab.

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Sikhism and Christianity— A Comparative Study, W. Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi (London: Macmillan, 1993). Pages xii and 221. £10.99. Paperback. ISBN 0333541073.

Sadly this book is the last to be produced by the partnership of Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi. To both we owe a considerable debt of gratitude for the way in which over at least the last two decades they have brought the Sikh understanding of human life and our relationship to God to the attention of those involved in religious education. It was good that before he died Piara Sambhi knew that this book was ready for publication. It is a pioneering and valuable work which, because of its limited length, gives a broad outline of the theologies and practices of the two faiths in question. As the authors readily acknowledge, there is still considerable scope for the exploration at greater depth of the themes with which they deal.

The task before the authors was fraught with difficulties: the temptation to draw superficial parallels of belief; the problem of finding adequate English equivalents for Punjabi theological words; the need to find ways of remaining faithful to, and reflecting, the differing methods of theological reflection; the need for a modern translation of the Sikh scriptures into English and, not least, the near impossibility of definitive statements about the faiths, since faith is essentially idiosyncratic in nature.

Their response to their subject is logical and deals with essential issues in an informative as well as reflective manner. Chapters cover the background from which the faiths emerged—'Derived Religions?'; 'God', 'Jesus and the Gurus', 'Spiritual Liberation and Salvation', 'The Scriptures', 'Worship', 'Personal Devotion', 'Ceremonies', 'Authority', 'Ethics' and, finally, 'Attitudes to Other Religions'.

It is inevitable that both Christian and Sikh sensitivities will be strained on occasions through the choice of vocabulary or the theological stance taken. Thus, for instance, in the discussion of the context in which the faiths arose, there will be Sikhs who reject the use of the term 'parental tradition', with reference to Hinduism even though the authors deal tactfully with this issue. By the same token some Christians may find it difficult to acknowledge the 'I am' saying of Jesus to be his *ipsissima verba* rather than claims made by the Early Church through the author of the Fourth Gospel. Yet, such is the perverse nature of religious faith that the authors would be pilloried by others if they did not indicate these were Jesus's own words!

As one who comes from a theologically liberal wing of the Church I would have preferred to have seen the authors deal with Biblical texts in a less literalistic manner and similarly have been more explicit in

acknowledging theological stances of a nature less conservative than those expressed. Perhaps the most significant example of this is in the set of questions and answers on page 28:

Q. Is Jesus God, or just a godly man?
A. He is God.
Q. Does he differ from the God encountered in the Jewish tradition?
A. No.

The more profound approach in dealing with the Trinity in a previous paragraph is overturned here by these blunt statements that reflect nothing of the subtlety of the dictum that 'God was in Christ'.

It would have been useful if another reader had looked over the final manuscript particularly since the style of some sentences needs clarification, for example, on page 46 where it is pointed out that in translations of the Sikh scriptures into English the use of the male pronoun and male names of the divine taken from Hindu mythology 'can easily lead writers (about Sikhism) into presenting *a male concept of God as being Sikh.*'

However, these criticisms do not lessen the value in which I hold this book. It reflects inter-faith dialogue at its best in which those involved in such dialogue are not seen to be scoring theological points, but exploring each other's faith in a way that enhances one's understanding of the ways of God. If one's faith has not been challenged or changed in this way, perhaps the dialogue has been in vain. I hope the book will not be used simply as a text book but as a chart, mapping out the areas for theological exploration by Sikhs and Christians together. To this end let me suggest an additional point for the section on possible attitudes to religions other than one's own. It is that we might maintain a position of what Lockhead calls 'faithful agnosticism': we remain faithful to our own religious exploration and convictions, recognising that God only is the judge of how we and those of other faiths fare in the providence of God. The book is a fitting tribute to the memory of Piara Singh Sambhi whose life was spent in fostering the cause of mutual understanding. I hope it will inspire others to continue his work.

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Hindu Children in Britain, Robert Jackson and Eleanor Nesbitt (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books, 1993). Pages x and 240. £15.95. Paperback, ISBN 0-948080-73-6.

In recent years a number of publications have appeared on the British Hindu diaspora. All of these accounts have shared the common theme that Hinduism in Britain is extremely diverse—those who could be called 'Hindu' come from a variety of backgrounds in India, and belong to a host of different groupings. Indeed, one of the authors of *Hindu Children in Britain*, Eleanor Nesbitt, has shown in earlier work on Valmiki and Ravidasi communities in Britain that the boundaries between Hindus and other religious groups such as Sikhs are sometimes extremely difficult to define. Despite these difficulties the authors of this work take as their starting point the assumption that the various Hindu traditions share a common 'family likeness' which is summed up by the notion of *sanatana dharma*. It is those who adhere to this dharma (in all its manifest forms, including 'sectarian' groups) that form the subject matter of this very well informed and readable book.

Although Hindus (and members of other South Asian religious communities) have been migrating to Britain for over a century, the majority of Hindus now living in Britain have arrived within the past half century. But a large proportion of Hindus in Britain are not 'immigrants'; they were born in the country, have British citizenship, and have very strong roots in British life. These children are now coming of age, and in a few years will be assuming positions of authority and responsibility within Hindu temples and communities. For the future of Hinduism in Britain it is very important that they understand and are attached to the cultural and religious traditions of India. For the academic observer it is very useful to know the mechanisms by which such attachment is being created, and how successful the transmission of Hinduism to the new generation will be.

This volume takes as its subject matter this very concern. The research—conducted over a five-year period—has involved asking Hindu children in the Midlands city of Coventry (in particular a group of 12 children as 'case studies') about various aspects of their religious and cultural lives. Despite parents' fears about the materialism, secularism and immorality of British life, the findings of Jackson and Nesbitt's research suggest that Hindu children are internalising many of the aspects of their ancestral traditions and are accommodating these traditions to their own situations. For example, the materialistic technology of video has become an important medium of Hindu religiosity—not only through the frequent viewing of Hindi religious films, but also through the use of video cameras

at important family events. Thus not only do children participate in festivities such as weddings, *Diwali*, and *Raksha Bandhan*, they also have the chance to relive these events again and again at home on their television, perhaps seeing and learning about elements of these festivals that they would otherwise have missed.

The learning about Hindu traditions also occurs at a much more formal level—at weekend supplementary classes held in temples, homes or public buildings. The authors provide a detailed discussion of a national survey they conducted on the variety of Hindu classes, together with a more in-depth account of classes held in the Coventry area. These classes usually include the teaching of Hindi or Gujarati, as well as discussion of what are considered core Hindu teachings and values—such as the Mahabharat and Ramayan, *puja* and worship, and the ideas and stories behind Hindu iconography. Also implicit within such teaching is the sense of Hindu cultural identity, that is what it means to be a Hindu (in terms of dress, deportment, diet and so on). In some cases formal nurture classes are run by and for members of sectarian groups—*sampradayas*—where teaching specifically emphasises attachment to the values of the sampradaya. Thus ISKCON (Hare Krishna) classes stress the importance of Krishna as the supreme god, and the Bhagavad Gita and Swami Prabhupada as ways of knowing Krishna. One example of the work children in this class were required to do was 'what would you tell your school teacher if she asked you what you believed?'—demonstrating a strong awareness that ISKCON children (along with all Hindus) do not share the same religious beliefs and outlooks as their secular/Christian teachers.

The difference between Hindu children and the non-Hindu society around them is of course an important context in which they live and attempt to develop their sense of religion and ethnicity. At the same time, however, they are not the same as their parents either—especially if the parents were born in India or East Africa. Jackson and Nesbitt rightly eschew notions of a 'half-way generation', or 'between two cultures' or outright generational conflict. But as they show, Hindu children in Britain are growing up to be different from their parents, and so it is inevitable that their religious attachment will be part of this process. As the authors show, it is possible to sketch some of the possible developments—the incorporation of Hindu festivals into the British climate and working week, the use of material technology for religious purposes as mentioned above, and the ability of Hindu children to move between cultural worlds with ease and without conflict. As they note: 'The nine year old girl who has the lead part in the Pied Piper at school, or who enjoys football, is the

same child who sits in her summer shorts at home informally practising a Punjabi folk song or a Hindi film song...' (p. 175).

These children are both British *and* Hindu, and for them there is no real contradiction between these two concepts. But although it is possible to sketch these developments, it is not so easy to measure the changes that are occurring—that is, how different the children are from their parents, or to what extent the various forms of Hinduism are *changing* between the generations.

These are very important issues for the future of Hinduism in Britain, and Jackson and Nesbitt provide an excellent outline of what has been happening within one part of the British Hindu population (in Coventry). It is very likely that the book will not only affect the ways in which outsiders (such as teachers and academics) view Hindu children, but may well feed into how British Hindus themselves attempt to deal with the issues facing them.

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Devotional Literature in South Asia: Current Research, 1985-88, ed., R.S. McGregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Pages xv and 321. £60. Hardback. ISBN 0-521-41311-7.

This book is a collection of papers which were read at the Fourth Conference on Devotional Literature in New Indo-Aryan Languages, held in Cambridge in 1988. This was one of a series of conferences which are held every three years at a different location with the aim of being a forum for reports on current research in this field. Since the meeting in Cambridge, conferences have been held in Paris in 1991 and in Seattle in 1994. I was able to attend the Cambridge conference and thus my appreciation of this volume is linked to my memories of the conference.

It is important to bear in mind that the conference did not have a pre-defined theme and that the 27 papers presented demonstrated the wide diversity of approaches pursued by the scholars who attended the conference. Despite this McGregor has managed to group the papers under a number of headings that illustrate the range of subjects addressed. These are as follows: Sacred Places and Sites, Formulation and Transmission of Religious Attitudes, Interaction between Islamic and Indian Religious Attitudes, Literary and Religious Traditions in Maharashtra, Some Par-

ticular Expressions of Sūfī Presence in North India, Some Topics in the Kṛṣṇa Poetry of North India, Discussions of the Rāma Traditions in North and North-east India, and Modernisation in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.

Clearly it would not be possible to discuss all the papers in this volume here and so I will limit myself to discussion of those papers which seem to have the closest relationship to Punjabi studies and in particular with the study of the Ādi Granth.

Winand M. Callewaert's paper, 'Singers' Repertoires in Western India', is based on his work which has included many years of searching in Rajasthan for manuscripts and microfilming and editing texts of the works of some of the leading figures in the *Sant bhakti* movement. In his paper he argues that, based on his researches, the songs of the *bhagats* Kabīr, Nāmdev and Ravidās—as found in manuscripts in Rajasthan and in the Ādi Granth—clearly reveal a considerable period of oral transmission before they were ever written down in manuscript form. This is in itself not a revolutionary observation, but what makes his argument of note is the concept that it is possible to learn more about the songs by studying how they were transmitted than by seeking to reconstruct 'original' versions of such songs.

Monika Thiel-Horstmann's paper 'An Oral Theology: Dādūpanthī Homilies', is based on research into the Rajasthani Sant tradition called the *Dādūpanth*. She discusses two issues. First, the use of the *sākhī* in oral teachings, which she argues has a special function as a valid basis for proof (*pramāṇa*). Second she argues against the notion put forward by R.M. Steinmann and D. Gold (see D. Gold, *The Lord as Guru: Hindi Sants in the North Indian Tradition* [New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press 1987]) that the term *satguru* in Sant usage refers to a human guru rather than an inner revelation or god. She presents evidence relating to Dādū and argues that in his tradition the term satguru does refer to an internal revelation and not an external human guru.

Catharina Kiehnle's, 'Authorship and Redactorship of the Jñāndev Gāthā', is based upon her researches into Maharashtrian bhakti literature. Her paper examines the function of the 'signature' (*mudrikā*) of Jñāndev in the large number of songs, around 1250, which are attributed to him and questions how many of them can be by the same original composer. She argues that the 'signature' of the poet can signify much more than simple authorship and how a contemporary trend to limit their significance has apparently inflated the number of songs by Jñāndev to such a large figure. Her conclusion is that this body of literature represents a multi-

layered corpus within which the earliest songs by Jñāndev are mixed in with later works by his 'real or would-be followers' (p. 135).

Denis Matringe's, 'Kṛṣṇaite and Ṅāth Elements in the Poetry of the Eighteenth-Century Punjabi Sūfī Bullhe Śāh', is the only paper in this volume which addresses a topic specifically related to the Punjab. It is a fascinating study of how the poetry of Bullhe Śāh includes non-Islamic elements drawn from the religious traditions of the Punjab. It clearly documents the occurrences of Kṛṣṇa bhakti and *Nātha* themes with numerous examples from his verses. In doing so it reveals the way Bullhe Śāh drew upon the syncretic nature of the Punjabi culture of his times in order to convey his essential teachings.

From my observations on these papers it will be evident that I consider the greatest strength of the works in this volume to relate to the issues surrounding the ways in which devotional literature in the bhakti period was created and transmitted. Indeed, in this regard, these papers form an important contribution to this debate. Moreover, it is an issue that is of relevance to all who are interested in the study of the Ādi Granth and its contents. Because it is evident that an examination of the processes that were active in the creation of the devotional literatures of India during the bhakti movement may be able to shed light on the circumstances which surrounded the creation and initial oral transmission of the songs of the bhagats and the early gurus.

Many of the other papers in the volume are also of great interest in relation to the development of Kṛṣṇa bhakti during this period, in particular K.E. Bryant's paper on metre in the *padas* of Sūrdās, R.S. McGregor's paper on Nanddās and Rupert Snell's paper on Dhruvdās are all noteworthy.

One problem with academic publications such as this is their price. At £60 I doubt that many individuals would be willing to buy this book. Especially when probably they only want to read one or two of the articles in the volume. However, for a library wishing to maintain coverage of developments in this field this is a very attractive volume. For it brings together a wide range of papers and gives a clear picture of contemporary debates and issues in research on devotional literature in South Asia.

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The Sikhs, Gene R. Thursby,(Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992). Pages xiv and 42, 48 pp. of plates. $45.75. Paperback. ISBN 9004095543.

The expansion of the field of Sikh studies, both directly through university curricula in diverse disciplines which concentrate upon or include the study of the Sikhs and indirectly within the larger sphere of Punjabi studies, is manifest in the proliferation of publishing within the field. One such example is *The Sikhs* by Gene R. Thursby, Professor of Religion at the University of Florida. A part of the Iconography of Religions series published under the aegis of the State University Groningen, it contains a brief textual introduction to supplement the nearly 50 plates which form the core of the study. The plates themselves can be categorised into two groups: representations of traditional religious art and photographs of ritual practices and their sites. Thursby ties together the two main sections of *The Sikhs*, textual and pictorial, by setting the context for his iconographic interpretations in the narrative of Sikhism he constructs in his introduction.

Thursby's narrative begins by placing the Sikh community within its geographical context and quickly moves into a definition of who is a Sikh. Thursby conscientiously relies on an 'orthodox' definition and suggests that his choice of photographs must be seen in this context. He then discusses *gurmat*, the teachings of the Guru, placing them within the historical context of the lives of the 10 Gurus. Thursby then examines *gurbani*, the word of the Guru, and the role of the Guru Granth Sahib within the Sikh faith. He concludes the textual portion of his study with a survey of the history of the Sikh community and the present state of Sikh studies. This introductory text is followed by a number of plates which portray different aspects of Sikh belief and practice.

Thursby presents an interesting perspective on Sikhism through the collection of plates assembled in this study. In those focused on religious art, Thursby provides cogent iconographic insights. Thursby's emphasis on art which depicts the Sikh Gurus is coupled with in-depth discussions of the theological importance of their teachings. Through such art, Thursby is able to illustrate competently the basic premises upon which Sikhism is based. Additionally, his discussion of the representation of Guru Gobind Singh in Sikh religious art brings to bear upon the reader the contemporary relevance of historical Sikh political struggles. The attributes of both martial qualities and martyr in representations of the Guru, as Thursby points out, have taken on great religious and cultural importance in the lives of contemporary Sikhs. Such attributes are also manifest in the art focused on Baba Dip Singh who was martyred while defending

the Golden Temple from Afghan invaders in the eighteenth century. In explaining the iconography in this art, Thursby seems to capture many aspects of Sikh tradition.

Despite this contribution to Sikh scholarship, Thursby replicates certain features of the scholarly tradition on Sikhism which undermine the strength of his study. Thursby begins *The Sikhs* with the premise that Sikhism evolved in a 'Sanskritic culture'. This is perhaps the most contentious argument in his narrative and, because of the limitations it places upon the interpretation of the images he presents, is a flaw in the study. Thursby not only limits the sphere of influences upon Sikhism to 'Sanskritic culture' in his interpretation of Sikh iconography, but presents such an interpretation as part of a normative intellectual trend. Thursby writes:

> There is a growing scholarly consensus about the historical and cultural background to the early Sikh community. According to this interpretation, while the teachings of Nanak had little in common with either conventional or mystical Islam, they did have a close connection with the Nirguna Sampraday or Sant tradition of Hinduism.

Such a presupposition to an understanding of the Sikhs is flawed because there are many ways in which an Islamic influence, both doctrinal and mystical, overtly manifests itself in Sikhism. The ardent monotheism of Sikhism can be interpreted as one such manifestation. Clearer links between the two religious traditions occur between Sikhism and the Sufi tradition of Islam. The relevance of the Sufi tradition, with its attendant *pirs* and shrines, was of immense importance in the spread of Islam in South Asia, but especially in the Punjab where a strong pir tradition survives to this day. Explicit Sufi influence within the Sikh tradition is witnessed through both the Sufi saints whose writings are recorded in the Guru Granth Sahib and in the teachings of Guru Nanak himself.

Thursby's restriction of the contextual scope in which Sikhism emerged limits the efficacy of his iconographic interpretation. He ignores important links which draw Sikh iconography into a close relationship with Islamic motifs. For example, Thursby writes extensively about the importance of the 10 Gurus, especially Guru Nanak, and the manner in which they are represented in Sikh art. Yet, he fails to comment on the cap worn by Guru Nanak in one plate, a cap commonly recognised as part of Sufi attire. Thursby also shows a plate of the Gurmukhi script without commenting on the border surrounding the text in this picture, a border which is influenced by Islamic art and its use of geometric design. Thursby's greatest oversight in this area is in the realm of architecture.

While he notes the importance of the Golden Temple, Amritsar, to the Sikhs, he fails to mention the Islamic influence in the architectural features of the complex, manifestations of which range from the type of domes utilised to the geometric designs in the marble floors. Such shortcomings in the interpretations of the iconography of the Sikhs deny the living heritage of Sikhism as seen through its symbols and allow seventeenth century Sikh–Muslim political conflict to impinge upon and deny the rich evidence of earlier cultural co-existence and exchange.

In addition to this limited interpretation of Sikh religious and cultural heritage, the photographs chosen by Thursby for this study tend to over-emphasise the ritualistic aspects of Sikhism. Portraying important rituals such as *akhand paths*, the unbroken reading of the Guru Granth Sahib, or wedding ceremonies without amply demonstrating the more philosophical aspects of the Sikh tradition leaves the reader with a skewed perspective of Sikh religious life. Thursby's decision to portray Sikh religious ceremonies and religious actions leaves one with only a shallow insight into the world of Sikh religion, the rituals of which are perhaps best understood within a more comprehensive study of Sikh life.

With contemporary political concerns often thrusting Punjab into the world's eye, the publication of works on the Sikhs is welcome. For those unfamiliar with the field of Sikh studies, *The Sikhs* offers both a narrative and visual overview of Sikh cultural life. Yet, for those with prior knowledge of either the South Asian religious landscape or with a background in Sikh and/or Punjabi studies, *The Sikhs* falls into the standard narratives of Sikh studies; narratives which are now under the process of revision.

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Chhotu Ram. In the Eyes of His Contemporaries, ed., Pardaman Singh (New Delhi, Gitanjali Publishing House, 1992). Pages xiv and 191. Rs 190. Hardback. ISBN 81-85060-40-1.

Chhotu Ram's career has excited increasing interest since the creation of the state of Haryana and the emergence of agrarian interests in Indian politics. His organisation of the middle peasant Jat classes in the Unionist Party of the 1930s is seen as foreshadowing the Lok Dal of Charan Singh, whilst his advocacy of the Bhakra Dam Project is rightly recognised as

preparing the ground for the present prosperity of the Haryana farmers. This collection of reminiscences thus forms part of a burgeoning literature.

Pardaman Singh acknowledges from the outset the difficulty of compiling recollections some 40 years after Chhotu Ram's death. He also admits that this collection is 'uneven'. He nevertheless claims with some justification that the 'pot-pourri' contains 'additional' and 'valuable historical source material' relating to Chhotu Ram and his times.

The most useful insights concern Chhotu Ram's staunch support for the Arya Samaj and his devotion to Swami Swatantra Nand. They point to the fact that standard accounts are far too simplistic when they automatically link the Arya Samaj with the growth of communalism in the Punjab. Indeed, current research suggests that Chhotu Ram was by no means unique in combining devotion to Arya ideals with a pragmatic secular approach to politics.

The compilation also provides a brief but fascinating glimpse into the role of traditional entertainers in popularising the Unionist message at the village level. It is a great pity that the contribution of the singer, Piyare Lal, could not have been expanded. Chhotu Ram's daughter, Bhagwani Devi, provides a similarly brief but riveting recollection.

Political opponents as well as clients attest to Chhotu Ram's genorosity and compassion. The accounts of Deva Singh, Ram Sarup and Hari Singh each embellish the picture of the Jat leader as a generous patron of students from poor rural backgrounds. Rattan Singh and Abdul Majid Khan, amongst others, attest to Chhotu Ram's equally genuine concern for the well-being of opponents—a trait which stands in such marked contrast to the mores of contemporary South Asian politicians.

There is, however, much dross amidst these valuable insights. Many contributions are hackneyed and repetitive. Their inclusion detracts from the collection's overall impact. The editor has trawled his net too widely. The scanty recollections of former British officials, for example, do not warrant inclusion. By tacking them on at the end, Pardaman Singh concludes this labour of love on a lower note than is otherwise merited.

Ian Talbot
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Delhi, Khushwant Singh (New Delhi: Penguin, 1990). Pages xxi and 319. £4.99. Paperback. ISBN 0-14-012619-8

Delhi is a rollicking romp through seven centuries of history. The cavalcade of characters include Ghiasuddin Balban, Tamerlane, Aurangzeb, Nadir Shah, Bahadur Shah and an uncomplimentary portrait of Gandhi. The stories spanning this vast historical period are partly linked together by the constant backdrop of the Delhi setting. The other thread is provided by the relationship between the narrator, a sexually athletic but ageing Sikh journalist, and his hermaphrodite lover, Bhagmati.

The novel's earthy Rabelaisian humour may be too much for some readers to stomach, but tucked away amongst the prurience there are marvellously evocative descriptions of Delhi's surroundings and past glories. The fourth chapter, for example, provides a wonderful vignette of the great thirteenth century Sufi *pir*, Nizamuddin Chishti, and his *khanqah*. The atmosphere of the *mushaira* in its late Mughal heyday is perfectly captured in the account of Meer Taqi Meer. The brutal events surrounding the 1857 revolt also leap from the page. Nearer our own period, the author draws on his family history to produce an especially illuminating insights into the building of New Delhi. The psychology of the RSS is equally well treated in the story set at the time of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. The book finishes on the sombre note of the 1984 Delhi riots which followed Indira Gandhi's assasination.

Delhi lacks the compassion which is the hallmark of Khushwant Singh's most famous novel, *Train to Pakistan*. *Delhi's* two contemporary protagonists, Bhagmati and the Sikh narrator, never entirely engage the reader's emotions. Their physical deterioration is realistically depicted with the passage of time, but their interior life is largely neglected. They thus remain rather one dimensional in character.

The writing is all on a level and in place even a little monotonous. Even the murder of the simple-minded *chowkidar*, Budh Singh, at the end of the book is devoid of the poignancy of Jugga Singh's self-sacrificing death in *Train to Pakistan*. Khushwant Singh appears in fact to have circumscribed the emotional life of his characters in order to excessively flesh out their sexual activities. The book's raciness is undoubtedly part of its appeal for some readers. The danger is that Khushwant Singh's vision of the past might be taken seriously. For his fantasy of Muslim-ruled India outdoes any European Orientalist imagination of the 'exotic East'. One wonders why he goes out of his way to reinforce the image of the 'decadent' Orient. Does it reflect the exaggerated sources he uncritically used in his research, or are baser motives at play? Readers whose appetite

has been whetted for a serious study of Delhi's social history would be well advised to turn to the immensely interesting collection by R.E. Frykenberg, *Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986).

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Emergency Sahib, Robin Schlaefli (London: R.J. Leach and Co., 1992). Pages 159. £16.95. Hardback. ISBN 1-873050-1-0.

Within the caste-ridden military elite of colonial India, very few British officers came from commercial or suburban backgrounds. Hardly any were not pukka Britons. This alone makes the delightful wartime memoirs of Robin Schlaefli—an improbable sahib who was half-Swiss, born in Croydon and destined for a career in insurance—of unusual interest to social historians of the British Raj.

Originally commissioned in the Queen's Regiment (a British Army unit) in 1941, Schlaefli was transferred to the Indian Army a year later as an Emergency Commissioned Officer—the 'Emergency Sahib' of the title. He served much of the war in the newly formed Machine Gun battalion of the 11 Sikhs. As the Indian Army expanded to meet the needs of the conflict, he enjoyed rapid promotion—arriving in India as a fresh-faced, gangling 'one-pip wonder' and leaving three years later as battle-hardened (if malarial) Acting Major.

Like many ECOs, Schlaefli encountered at first hand the irksome snobbery of colonial military society; and he was disappointed to find that the regular officers initially treated him with social and professional disdain. (Indians with the King's Commission, he is careful to point out, often had to endure more hurtful slights). But modern war is a great leveller—even in India—and the shared experience of campaign hardship helped to rub smooth the rough edges of class and racial prejudice. Furthermore, pressing military need overrode the demands of social control—by VJ-Day, 31000 Britons (many of them middle class 'boxwallahs') and 15000 Indians had received wartime commissions, altering forever the tone of the Indian Army officer corps (and with it the politics of the Raj).

The Sikh Regiment in which Schlaefli served was composed not only of Sikhs, but also of Punjabi Muslims—'PMs' in Indian Army parlance—although the two Indian communities were wisely segregated into separate

companies. Schlaefli sketches some telling vignettes of life in this heterogeneous unit—the devoted sepoys studying their drill books like sacred texts, determined to memorise every word; the British officers taking elaborate care to avoid giving offence to the religious feelings of the men; the largely untroubled communal relationships; and the excellent discipline, disturbed only by allegations of favouritism or by unwanted homosexual advances. It is quite clear from his account that the sepoys were not mere mercenaries: although army pay was excellent—at least compared with what sepoys could have earned elsewhere—only a strong sense of honour could have accounted for the superb fighting spirit of the men. (Recent scholarship has largely confirmed his impressions).

The climax of the book (of rather less interest to historians of the Punjab) concerns the fighting in Burma in 1944-45, which culminated in the capture of Mandalay and Rangoon (the former after vicious close-quarter combat). All the hazards and misery of the campaign are recalled—the disturbing, inexplicable cacophony of the jungle at night; the monsoon rains, which filled dugouts and turned tracks into quagmires; the gorging leeches; and of course the Japanese, 'the worst creatures in the jungle'— fanatics who had to be flushed from their underground hideouts with torrents of blazing petrol. Even half a century later, Schlaefli's erstwhile enemies are still demonised as the 'Japs', as if he remains reluctant to dignify them with a more than monosyllabic appellation.

All this is described in the blunt, soldierly prose of a form-filling Adjutant who later taught in the Royal Army Educational Corps. He is not John Masters, nor was meant to be. But somehow the unadorned writing adds to the poignancy of his recollections. Particularly affecting is his account of life as an army private in Britain in the summer of 1940. It perfectly evokes the bumbling amateurism and hopeless naivete of the half-trained, half-armed men who would have had to face the Wehrmacht had it landed. Did British soldiers *really* march along leafy lanes in rural Essex in September 1940 stolidly singing 'there was jam, jam, mixed up with the ham, in the Quartermasters stores'? They probably did. Never such innocence again.

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Lahore: A Sentimental Journey, Pran Nevile (New Delhi: Allied Publishers Limited, 1993). Pages xx and 193. Rs 175. Hardback. ISBN 81-7023-253-8.

Pran Nevile was so anxious not to tarnish youthful memories of Lahore that he deliberately passed up opportunities to return to his birthplace during the preparation of this publication. The end result is a lovingly produced portrayal of the city during the final decade of British rule.

The author conjures up the vibrancy of Lahore's bazaars and *mohallas*, fairs and *melas* in a racy and eminently readable literary style. The chapter on kite fighting at Basant time is especially evocative and is reason enough to purchase the work. Almost as impressive is Pran Nevile's ability to recall obscure names and faces from half a century ago. Thus we learn that 'Gobind Ram Kahan Chand, the most renowned sharbat makers of the city, had their main shop in Kasera bazar and branches at Anarkali and Nisbet road' (p. 138) and that 'Dhani Ram Bhalla was the first Hindu to enter (the shoe trade and ran) the biggest of (the stores) Bhalla Shoe Co.' (p. 27).

These Hindu names remind us of the important role which non-Muslims played in Lahore's commercial and social life in the pre-partition period. Pran Nevile also provides us with pictures of the school days at DAV High School, the great Hindu fair of Bhadarkali held each June at Devi Mandir, and the Ramlila processions. But this is not a book dominated by nostalgia for Lahore's Hindu past. More space is devoted to accounts of student pranks and visits to the cinema or the races, than to religious celebrations. If the book has any didactic purpose, as opposed to entertaining the reader, it is to draw attention to Lahore's 'composite culture' in the pre-partition era.

Pran Nevile notes the joint celebration of festivals and the fact that the Madho Lal Hussain mausoleum near the Shalimar gardens attracted large crowds belonging to all communities. He refers to his Muslim school-friends and the fact that 'Hindu and Muslim boys mixed freely in a friendly atmosphere' at Government College (p. 151). Such statements are not merely sentimental yearning for a less violent and complicated age, but derive from social reality. But the picture of communal harmony should not be overdone. Pran Nevile may have not wished to reawaken painful memories, but his final chapter on Lahore in the war years reads strangely without reference to the growing communal tension. Nor could this merely be laid at the door of externally generated political rivalries. The non-Muslim population's domination of the city's commercial life which he has so amply illustrated was a long-standing sore. Religion could more often

divide communities than unite them as the author must himself have been aware at the time of the Shahidganj Mosque agitation.

This misgiving apart, the author is to be congratulated on producing such a readable and informative study. Lahore of the late colonial era is brought alive in a manner in which it has never been before. The book deserves a wide readership. It is to be hoped that a second edition might include a glossary and bibliography to assist the general reader.

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