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The Impact of Customary Law on Punjabi Muslim Women

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British rule in the Punjab unlike in other areas of the subcontinent privileged custom over religious law with respect to personal law. The introduction of the Islamic law would have increased women's rights with regard to divorce, marriage and inheritance. A consequence of allowing women to freely inherit property however would have been the breakup of large landholdings. The latter prospect was regarded as injurious to stability in the region which had proved the importance of its loyalty at the time of the 1857 Revolt. Hence customary practice was enshrined in the Punjab Law Act of 1872. By the 1930s, sections of the urban Punjabi Muslim community were beginning to question the perpetuation of unislamic practice to the detriment of the female populace. The British however continued to uphold the importance of the tribe and of custom for political purposes.

When Punjab was annexed by the British in 1849, they developed a paternalistic system of government which came to be known as 'the Punjab School'. What made the Punjab administration more despotic than that of the rest of India was the fact that the district officials combined in their persons both the judicial and the executive authority.[1] After the revolt of 1857, for which the corrupt and complex courts of the North-West Province were largely held responsible, Punjab's simple and summary judicial system was held up as an efficient example.[2] Civil procedure in the courts of the North Western Province was complicated, costly and universally disliked. It was based on the Bengal Regulations, where the judiciary was clearly separated from the executive. This Regulation system never gained popularity outside Bengal. It was because of the dissatisfaction with the workability of the Bengal Regulations that Punjab administration was organized on totally different principles, and made into a non-regulation provinces[3] Commissioner. The District administration was similar, but the District Magistrate and his subordinates exercised more extensive criminal jurisdiction in the non-regulation provinces than in the regulation provinces.[4]
The British built a complicated legal system in India, for while they based public law on the principles of a free market and the British concept of private property,

they based personal law on local custom and religion.[5] In the rest of India they made religion the basis of personal law but in the Punjab they based personal law on local customs. This decision can be traced back to Governor-General Dalhousie's Annexation Dispatch, in which he had called for upholding 'Native Institutions and practices as far as they are consistent with the distribution of justice'. By passing the Punjab Laws Act of 1872, customary law was adopted over religious law as the personal law of the province.[6]

In order to record and utilise the local customs of Punjab, it was necessary to understand the principles of social organization from which the customs had evolved.[7] In trying to explain the foundations of customary law, C. L. Tupper, an administrator who drew up a compendium of 'customary law', found the institution of the 'tribe' to be central to understanding it. While the nature and constitution of the tribe varied in different parts of India, what it had in common was a belief in patrilineal descent from a common ancestor. The tribe was a 'race of origin' and influenced the customs practised on the basis of the memory of the common ancestor.[8] Sir Denzil Ibbetson, who carried out the Punjab Census of 1881, described the tribe as 'far more permanent and indestructible than caste'.[9] His interpretation of the nature of Punjab society dominated British understanding of the area right up to 1947. He held the immense influence exercised by Muslims in Punjab to be responsible for the suppression of Brahminism and its caste restrictions.[10] Ibbetson declared that as a result, the restriction on marriage with another caste was neglected, and what became important was the tribe. It was argued by Tupper that the basis of the Punjabi custom was the cohesion of the tribe, the family and the village, and not the sanction of religious law.[11] A prime example of the primacy given to custom in the Punjabi village was over the issue of inheritance of land. Since control of land continued to be the main source of authority and status, and daughters were married outside the clan but within the tribe, they did not inherit land, as that would have meant land passing outside the close-knit clan.[12]

By adopting customary law the British had opted to protect the tribal structure of Punjabi society, and base their rule on a social organization that they considered to be central to it. The alternative would have been to base their legal system on religion, as the Mughals had done, but , Tupper argued, in that respect the British were at a disadvantage, since they did not belong to any of the religions practiced by the Punjabis.[13] By basing British rule in Punjab on the protection and maintenance of 'tribal' structure, the British hoped to preserve the kind of stability that the province had shown in 1857. If the British had adopted religious law as personal law in Punjab, as they had done in the rest of India, they would have upset the *status quo* and the social cohesion of the 'tribes', a risk they were not willing to take after the experience of 1857. In that year, a widespread uprising against British rule took place, often referred to as the sepoy mutiny by the British, especially in the area from Delhi through the Gangetic plain. Punjab was relatively unaffected, and the British succeeded in restoring their authority in 1858.

After the cataclysmic events of 1857, the British were aware that Punjab had not only remained loyal, but had also supplied troops to quell the uprising in northern India. By 1860, Canning had decided on a policy of conciliation of the landlord class, not only in Oudh, but also in the Bengal Presidency and in the Punjab. He pursued a policy of combining property with authority among the aristocracy, and felt that their separation was not desireable.[14] He reversed the policy which had been followed in the past ten years, of reducing the power of the large landed families. Robert Montgomery, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab, regarded the aristocracy as 'a great bulwark for the state'.[15]

Muslims made up 56 per cent of the population, and were concentrated in the western part of the province.[16] The western part of the Punjab, unlike the eastern region, did not benefit from sufficient monsoonal rains for settled agriculture to flourish. Since the main source of income for the government was from agricultural revenue, they increased agricultural production by canal colonization. The colonization, which began after 1885, was based on a network of canals which extended from the rivers and spread over the mostly uncultivated plains of western Punjab.[17] As a result of this, the canal irrigated area of Punjab increased from three to fourteen million acres in the period from 1885 to 1947.

British policy was to colonize the canal areas by castes which ranked high in economic position and social status in their home districts. The non-landed poor, who were either of the menial or service castes, did not get any land. Fifty acres or more were allotted to the large landlords or the *rais*. Large landlords were those who did not cultivate the land themselves but instead lived on rental earnings from tenants or labourers. *Rais* were those men who had the capital to invest in land, and were influential in their areas. These privileged sections of society were also given horse-breeding grants. In this way, the British not only reinforced the existing social hierarchy, but also provided for themselves an influential section of the society which owed its allegiance and loyalty to them. It is pertinent from the point of view of this study that most of these grants were awarded to men from western Punjab, where the large Muslim landlords were concentrated, and which now constitutes Pakistan.

Most of these landed gentry grants were made during and just after World War I, and were in direct proportion to the contribution these grantees had made to the war effort. If these estates fell into debt, they were brought under the protection of the Court of Wards, and the local deputy commissioner supervised their management until they became financially solvent. However, the extent of assistance from the government to the estates depended on the political importance of the family.[18]

The Muslim middle class, those involved in professions and small businesses, was small, since most Muslims lived in rural areas of western Punjab. The most powerful class amongst the Muslims of this area, as has been seen, was that of the large landlords. They increasingly came to dominate the politics of the province as supporters of the British rule in India. Culturally their influence was

conservative, and did not favour any improvement in the rights and status of Muslim women.

The founders of the Punjab school, John and Henry Lawrence, regarded the role of the rural population, and in particular the aristocracy, crucial to the maintenance of order.[19] They were of the view that if the aristocrats were integrated into the administrative system, British rule in India would acquire firm foundations in the Indian soil. The revolt of 1857 had only strengthened the belief that the urban class could not be relied upon for support and therefore the rural aristocracy must be bolstered through their policies.[20] S. S. Thorburn, an I.C.S. officer who had close experience of the peasant problems in the Punjab, wrote:

> So long as the peasantry of these sentinel districts on the frontier province of India is contented, the Government of a handful of foreigners like we are will be strong and popular. With a discontented peasantry our position of rulers would be so critical.[21]

C. L. Tupper, who had served in the Government of Punjab and had made a compilation of the local customs with the help of the settlement and tribal records, said that the government was interested in maintaining the village community, and where it did not exist, the policy of the Government was to construct it.[22] He argued that the Government could have a strong hold over the people through the tribe and the clan, and that it was easier to deal with the people when they were a part of an organization than when they were just independent individuals. Tribal structures, he argued, had the advantage of encouraging joint agricultural ownership which made the colonization of Punjab easier.[23]

CUSTOMARY LAW AND WOMEN

As the British Government recognized the centrality of the tribal and kinship groups in Punjab society, therefore they accepted customary law as being of foremost importance. In the days immediately after the establishment of the Board of Administration, customary law was shaped by the judicial decisions of the deputy commissioners and settlement officers.[24] What these officers considered right and expedient influenced their own decision-making, but they were advised by men from amongst the people whose opinions mattered.[25]

The attitude of the Government in Punjab to the status of women in society was reflected very early on in the days of the Board of Administration. The Board had a statement of tribal customs prepared by collecting representatives of all classes from different parts of Punjab. Where the Board was of the opinion that the customs were degrading to the female sex, especially concerning betrothal, marriage and divorce, they were modified according to the British concept of propriety. The Board issued these statements as guides to the judges who, however, were given the instructions to decide the cases according to 'justice, equity and good conscience'.[26]

There was a great deal of divergence between the moral standards of the British rulers and the native citizens. This was apparent in their perception of criminal offenses. One example of this is cattle stealing, which was a serious crime for the Board, but in Punjabi culture it was regarded as an expression of manhood. Adultery and seduction were regarded by the European rulers as acts not deserving anything more than a few months in jail, but for the native it was a heinous crime justifying murder by the aggrieved husband or guardian.[27]

It was in 1854, under John Lawrence the Chief Commissioner, that the order to compile the Punjab Civil Code was given. The Punjab Civil Code was only meant to act as a manual and a guide for the magistrates, it was not the law.[28] This necessitated the passing of the Punjab Laws Act IV of 1872, which consolidated all previous legal provisions and re-enacted them.[29] Till the 1st of June, 1872, and the passing of the Act, it was never very clear whether the religious personal law or the local custom of the parties was to decide a case. The Punjab Laws Act resolved this confusion.[30]

The Punjab Laws Act of 1872 laid down that the Mohammadan or Hindu law, or the lex locii, or any other system of law may be followed, if it is not opposed to morality, public policy or positive law.[31] For those who claimed that they were governed by custom, the responsibility rested on them to prove it, and also to prove what was the custom that they were governed by. However, if they were unable to do this, then the religious personal law was to be applied to them.[32] The exact wording of this Act, which was to revolutionize the legal system of Punjab for a long time to come was:-

The rule of decision shall be-

a) any custom applicable to the parties concerned, which is not contrary to justice, equity or good conscience, and has not been by this or any other enactment altered or In questions regarding succession, special property of females, betrothal, marriage, divorce, dower, adoption, guardianship, minority, bastardy, family-relations, wills, legacies, gifts, partitions, or any religious usage or abolished, and has not been declared to be void by any competent authority;

b) the Mohammadan law, in cases where the parties are Muhammadans, and the Hindu law, in cases where the parties are Hindus, except in so far as such law has been altered or abolished by legislative enactment, or is opposed to the provisions of this Act, or has been modified by any such custom as is above referred to.[33]

The Punjab Laws Act of 1872 gave custom the force of law, but there was no certain knowledge of the nature of the custom.[34] The Government of India advised a compilation of customary law which would tap all the sources of

customary law, in particular the record of tribal customs made during the settlements since 1864. This compilation would, like the Punjab Civil Code, have no force of law, but would only be a manual to guide the officers. The existence of a custom would still have to be established by independent evidenceor precedent.[35] In 1873 the Punjab Government employed Tupper to draw up questions for Settlement Officers dealing with the subjects mentioned in section 5 of the Punjab Laws Act. Tupper detailed these questions and the answers to them, and the decisions of the Court, in the three volumes on Punjab Customary Law that he compiled.

It is interesting to see the legal and social status that Muslim women had in the customary law of Punjab according to C. L. Tupper. Under Mohammadan Law, Tupper said, a woman having attained puberty could enter a marriage contract with whoever she wanted to, and the guardian could not interfere. But, he quoted the Punjab Civil Code as saying that only the guardians or parents could make a marriage contract for the woman.[36] Within Punjab there were variations of age at which marriage took place. According to P. N. Thappar, a Settlement Officer, in Jhelum tehsil, there was no age restriction to marriage, while in the Chakwal tehsil the people were guided by the Shariat. G. C. Walker, another settlement officer has recorded that in the Lahore District, among the Arains and the Rajputs, the age of marriage varied anywhere between six and sixteen for the former, and six to twenty for the latter.[37]

The law pertaining to child marriage had changed for the worse. The Punjab Civil Code had stated that infant marriages which had not been consummated could be annulled, and the child could marry again. But the Code had made allowances for the native custom, and declared that both the parents and the child could be sued for damages if the marriage vows were broken.[38] This modification of native custom in the Code was done away, and marriage came to be considered legal, even without consummation having taken place. Tupper had argued that child marriage must be discouraged, and the law modified accordingly. It seems that the Civil Code had liberalized the law concerning child marriage, easing the constraints on their remarriage on attaining adulthood. But the law had reverted to the orthodox native custom of infant marriage by the time that Tupper had begun to make a compendium of customary laws.

Tupper had discussed inter-caste marriage, advising the courts not to uphold the customs which discouraged it. The social penalty against such marriages, he argues, is enough, without needing the support of the courts.[39] The ruling of the court, he argued, should be in favour of the custom allowing it, as doubt should not be cast on marriages which had been consummated.[40] Tupper had upheld the comparatively liberal Mohammadan Law which allows women having attained puberty to contract themselves in marriage without requiring the permission of a guardian or a parent if the match be equal.[41] On conjugal rights, the Punjab Civil Code had taken a very conservative position. If the courts were satisfied that the husband would treat the woman well if she returned to him, than if she persisted in refusing herself to him, the court could send her to jail in an

effort to enforce its decree.[42] But this was a controversial position. In 1860 the Judicial Commissioner passed a circular which said that, compulsion should only be used where it could be proved that the woman's refusal was due to the influence of her friends. This became law, but was annulled by the Punjab Laws Act IV of 1872, which gave the power of decision to the courts, and the latter were to rely on the local custom.[43]

Married women were subject to customary law, and that law disqualified them from entering into any kind of contracts. It was only if the husband had given her the management of his affairs, that she would have been a free agent enough to enter a contract.[44] On the subject of divorce Tupper maintained the religious law, drawing on the authority of Baillie's *Digest* and Macnaghten on *Mohammadan Law*. Quoting Macnaghten on the two forms of Muslim divorce; *talak*, he writes, is the arbitrary act of the husband, while *khula* is where the wife 'gives the husband consideration to be released from the marriage tie', and for maintenance, the divorced Muslim woman was only eligible for the remaining unpaid dower. Nor was the amount of dower recoverable to exceed the amount considered reasonable with reference to the husband's income. The amount stipulated in the contract could be ignored on this ground.[45] The custom of divorce recorded at the end of the nineteenth century in the Lahore District reflects the vulnerability and insecurity of women. Amongst the Hindus there was no custom of divorce, except in the urban areas, where the man could put away his wife if she was proved to be unchaste. The Muslim women, according to this record, can seek divorce only in a case where there was a change of religion, but the husband could divorce his wife for disobedience or misbehaviour, and she could still only be entitled to dower and not maintenance.[46]

On the question of guardianship and minority, Tupper's customary law seems to reflect the conventional morality prevalent in the province, sometimes adopting the Mohammadan law as the norm, and at other times going by the non-religious custom. However, what stands out is the extent to which the status quo was maintained. He continued to discuss infant marriage as if it was the norm, declaring that the father rather than the husband will have the custody of the married female infant. Muslim widows rights vis-a-vis the custody of their children remained unaffected by Hindu custom. On remarriage her rights to the custody of the children remained the same as if she had not remarried, viz. she had to give up the son when he turned seven, and the daughter when she reached puberty.[47]

Under Hindu law, according to Macnaghten, a female and her property remained in the guardianship of a male for ever. The guardian might change from father to husband on marriage, and from husband to sons or grandsons, if she became a widow. In point of fact, females are kept in a continual state of pupillage. This was confirmed by the record of customs in the Lahore district, where it was declared that an unmarried woman remained under the guardianship of her father or his heirs, while a married woman is under the guardianship of her

husband, and if he is deceased, of his heirs. But the Punjab Laws Act changed all that in 1872. The Court of Wards was to take charge of her property, but if the Court felt that she was mature and sensible, no person was to be made her guardian. This was a significant step towards recognizing the female as an independent adult rather than as a mere dependent of the male. Court judgements of both 1875 and 1879 show to what extent the British lawmakers and administrators were willing to go along with the native customs, and avoid encroaching on personal law for fear of strong negative reaction. Thus the court decisions of 1875 and 1879 went in favour of infant marriages arranged by the father or the grandfather. The judgement said that the infant on attaining maturity could not break the marriage contract.[48]

The legal status of women obtaining in the Punjab is reflected in the fact that the concept of women's separate property rarely existed. She was totally dependent on the husband, and subject to his will, and after his death she became dependent on his male relatives.[49] According to Macnaghten, the husband had the power to use the woman's private property and use it when faced with distress. She was under his control even in regard to her own property. The male-oriented nature of inheritance was reflected in the fact that if a woman had sons, she could not give the property she had earned by her own labour to someone else. However, this was the Rivaj-i-Am and not the Muslim personal law.[50] According to Charles A. Roe, the Settlement Officer in the Multan District during the period 1873 to 1879, daughters amongst Hindus did not inherit property when there were sons, and that applied to most of the Muslims as well. However, he says, there was general agreement that a daughter could take whatever the father gave her at marriage.[51] In the Lahore district it was the same, that the daughters have no rights of inheritance of property, but the daughter or the sister could inherit property if there was no male collateral nearer than in the fifth generation among the Arains, Dogars or Rajputs.[52] The widow got only maintenance when her husband died leaving behind one or more sons, but where there were no male lineal descendants, she got her husband's property for life, and enjoyed the same rights over it that her husband enjoyed while he was alive.[53]

Customary law regarding the alienation of property did not follow either Hindu or Mohammadan Law. Customary law itself varied from region to region, and there was no uniformity in it. The underprivileged status of daughters is apparent in the fact that very often male collaterals had a right to object to alienation of ancestral landed property to daughters or their sons.[54] But there were instances when gifts to daughters and their sons were upheld. However, there was a qualification to this custom, for if the daughters were married to a kinsman related through males to the father, then the property was not likely to go out of the family, and in that instance there might not be an objection to the gifting of the property.[55] But if the daughters married outside of the *got*, they and their children became outsiders, and hence vulnerable to objection if their father gifted them any property. Lest any doubt be left pertaining to the position of the daughter in the family, she was to have no voice in her father's disposition of his property, which

was 'entirely in accordance with the general position assigned to women by customary law.'[56]

It was the adoption of customary law as the law of the land for Punjab which had a very regressive effect on the legal and social status of women in Punjab. The Punjab Laws Act of 1872 had made it clear that the Personal Laws would be decided according to the customary law rather than the religious law. The customary law was influenced by Hindu law and customs, so the adoption of these customs meant that the losers were the Muslim women of Punjab. There is no evidence to show that the passing of the Punjab Laws Act met with any kind of resistance from the Muslim community or any other group. If anything, the British Government in India had opted for the maintenance of the status quo, and in fact if they had chosen to adopt the religious personal law instead, it might have provoked an adverse reaction.

PROTECTION OF THE LANDED INTERESTS AND THE CONTINUED SUBORDINATE STATUS OF WOMEN

Since the British policy rested on shoring up the power and influence of the agricultural classes, in order to protect them, the Alienation of Land Act of 1900 was passed. This Act prevented the transfer of land to non-agricultural tribes. The passing of this Act reinforced the importance of the tribal identity, for land could not be passed from what the British defined as the agricultural tribes to non-agricultural tribes. This was a controversial bill, which was passed after a great deal of discussion within the Government, and had met with resistance from no less a personage than the Governor of Punjab, Mackworth Young.[57] It was a political measure which was taken to safeguard and consolidate the group which facilitated British rule over the province.

The British in Punjab, by passing legislation which prevented the transfer of land from what they categorized as agricultural tribes to non-agricultural tribes went against their own basic doctrine of allowing market forces to function unhindered. However, the government was faced with peasant impoverishment, and one way out was to protect the peasant from the moneylender by removing his right to alienate land.[58] What the British feared most was any kind of social upheaval and discontent, and that is precisely what the transfer of land was doing in the village communities.

The passing of the Land Alienation Act was a political measure which reinforced the economic power of the landed classes, be it the peasant or the landlord, and rescued him from the power of the money-lending trading classes. Since the Act allowed alienation of land to agricultural classes only, the big landlord became the moneylender to the smaller peasants, and eventually ending up buying their land. It brought about a divide between the landed rural and the urban population. When the Government of India Act of 1919 provided for

elections and a legislative council in Punjab, and a separate rural and urban electorate, it accentuated the divide. After the 1921 elections in Punjab, Sir Fazli Hussain formed a party from amongst the elected rural members, and called it the Rural Party. Two years later, the agriculturists under his leadership formed the Punjab National Unionist Party, with the aim of protecting the rural interests.The Government was accused of protecting the landed and Muslim interests, because the trading tribes were primarily Hindus.[59]

The Unionist Party cut across all religious barriers. By the 1930s the Muslims of the urban areas were practicing Shariat as their personal law, but the rural leadership hung onto customary law because it protected their interest. In 1931, Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, one of the big landlords of Punjab, brought a bill before the Punjab Legislative Council which would make into law the custom of primogeniture in his family, it triggered off an intense debate and controversy. Many of the Muslim members of the Legislative Council did not want to be party to legislation which, they felt, went against the injunctions of the Shariat. However, a majority of the Muslim members of the Council, under the influence of the Government and the Unionist Party, passed the Bill. The debate on the issue of the impartibility of Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana's estate brought out in the open to what extent the acceptability of customary law as practiced in Punjab, was being challenged by increasing numbers of Muslims, especially those from the urban areas. At the heart of the challenge being posed to customary law was the question of the inheritance rights of Muslim women.

One of the main points of criticism was that the Bill, if passed, would deprive women of their fair share. Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, the Muslim representative from Amritsar city, declared, while discussing the Bill, 'I thought that time had come when Hindus also should follow the Mohammadan law in this respect and give a share to women, to their daughters and their wives. But here in this House in the year 1932, we are taking away the right of a wife, the right of a daughter and of others to get a share in the property.'[60] However, Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq was not the only one to focus on the effect of this legislation on Muslim women, Pir Akbar Ali, the Muslim representative from Ferozepore rural, also joined in. He said, 'The spirit of the times is towards democracy, but alas! in this Council, in this responsible House, we are passing measures which will not only deprive women of their due share, but throw them also on the whim and mercy of the eldest member of the House.'[61] Chaudri Muhammad Abdul Rahman Khan, the Muslim representative from Jullundur rural, compared the 'deplorable condition' of women of India with that of western women. He said that, while in the west every effort was being made to emancipate them and to establish equality between men and women, in India they were being deprived of the rights that had already been granted to them by the Holy Prophet and God.[62]

The Bill was passed because the Government supported it. The enactment of the Bill brought to the forefront the inherent conflict for the Muslim members of the Council between the edicts of Islam embodied in the Shariat, and the Rivaj-i-Am which was followed by most Muslims in the rural areas. After the passage of Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana's bill in 1931, Malik Din Muhammad, the member of the Punjab Legislative Council from Lahore, initiated a bill which called for the supersession of the customary law by the Shariat.[63] The British circulated the bill for opinion to the districts, only to discover that it met with a great deal of resistance from the rural Muslim Punjabis. They seemed to regard it as a threat to the entire system on which the society was functioning, and consequently they were hostile to any daughters inheriting land. They argued that it was enough that they be given a dowry. They also said that the passing of such a bill was likely to undermine the Land Alienation Act, and lead to the ruination of the agriculturists.[64] The Unionists blocked the bill and it never came before the Punjab Council for division.

The preservation of the landed estates was guaranteed by the prevention of inheritance of land to daughters. Since most of the marriages in the Punjab were exogamous in nature, that is while they married within the tribe but outside the clan, they did not inherit any land or property. What the daughters did get was dowry, which might vary with the income and tradition of the family. This prevented an outsider from acquiring property ownership in the village, and kept the close tribal system intact. C. L. Tupper explained the reasoning behind this custom.

> (the villagers) would assign property, now much more in lands than in cattle, to the hands best able to hold it safely and to use it to advantage, that is, to those of the heirs determined by the system of agnatic kinship, or of relationship exclusively through males. This would be the more necessary, as, the daughters marrying outside the clan, their children would belong to another stock.[65]

There was a feeling that the agnatic theory had been pushed too far by the Chief Court.[66] Sir Mohammed Shafi, that eminent lawyer from Lahore, who was also nominated to the Viceroy's Council, had also voiced the concern that the agnatic theory had been carried too far by Sir Meredyth Plowden and Sir Charles Roe, both judges of the Lahore Chief Court.[67] Sir Shafi was quick to point out that there was no word in the Punjabi language for an ancestor beyond the great-grandfather, so even the agnatic theory should have limits to its application. It was argued that there was a growing feeling in favour of the rights of females, and codification would only stultify a custom which might be modified over time. Codification, it was argued, would stop progress.[68]

Codification was seen as not only ensuring the continuance of the village and the tribal system, but also synonymous with the relegating of women to a very subservient status. The disintegration of the village community was also seen as the rise of individualism and the awarding of increasing rights to women.[69] The

most devastating criticism of how the Chief Court of Punjab had distorted customary law came from Justice Rossignol who declared, 'the Privy Council has laid down that custom is whatever is proved to be the active custom. Unfortunately the Chief Court had not always acted upon this dictum, but have extended custom by logical process...'[70] It was this compulsion which made the British policy-makers in the Punjab very recalcitrant about giving females any significant inheritance rights to property. Customary law as it developed increasingly came to rest on the principle that daughters and their sons and sisters and their sons would be excluded from inheritance by their male collaterals. This came to be accepted by most British administrators and jurists of Punjab as an established custom. As one eminent historian of Punjab has written, 'In political terms, the enunciation of such an underlying rule of inheritance, in spite of its roots in kinship structure, helped to define the indigenous foundations of customary law as a rationalized system of law supported by the colonial state.'[71]

CONCLUSION

The edifice on which the British had built the structure of their administration in Punjab rested on the maintenance of a society held together by tribal cohesion. The whole emphasis was on reinforcing the tribal nature of the society because, it was argued, that it would be easier to manage and govern Punjab which was tribally organized than a society in which individualism had crept in. It was with this in mind that the local customs of the various tribes were given the force of law and customary law became the foundation of the legal system which came to govern Punjab. With the passing of the Punjab Laws Act of 1872 it was laid down that even when it came to personal law, the various communities of Punjab were to be governed by their customary law rather than the religious personal law. This was unprecedented, for in all other provinces the religious law was the personal law of all the communities.

The proprietorship of land was a key element in the tribal system that the British sought to maintain in Punjab. Since in most of Punjab the marriages were exogamous in nature, that is, daughters married within the tribe but outside the clan, they did not inherit any land because the outsider would have access to property within the village. The jurists of British Punjab made this into an all-pervasive law, and applied it universally even where the custom was not the same or had been modified because of the endogamous marriages taking place within the village.

The Muslim women of Punjab were adversely affected by the abandonment of the religious personal law in favour of customary law. Not only did they lose out in terms of the inheritance of property, but also when it came to divorce and marriage laws. The Islamic law, Shariat, was much more magnanimous towards women than the customary law, which was basically Hindu in its content. As a result the Muslim women of Punjab were often deprived of rights that Muslim women in other parts of India were enjoying, like the right to

divorce, to enter marriage at puberty on a woman's own volition, for the Shariat treated marriage as merely a contract between two individuals, and finally the right to inherit property.

It was from this position of disadvantage, which suited the British rulers to maintain, that the Muslim women struggled to emerge. It was an inevitable process and part of the modernization that India as a whole was undergoing. The Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana bill, which established the principle of primogeniture on his estate, and then the bill moved by Malik Mohammed Din for replacing customary law with the Shariat, are evidence of the fact that Punjab was undergoing a change. The debate which ensued when these bills were moved, had the rights of Muslim women at the center of the controversy. This was a radical change in the history of the social and cultural life of the province. It was this same trend and transformation in the intellectual attitudes of Muslims which led to the passing of the Shariat Act of 1937 at the centre, which was piloted by Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The issue of Muslim women's emancipation in Punjab had come to be closely intertwined with the rising consciousness amongst Muslims of their Islamic identity. An obvious divide had also emerged between the urban and the rural Muslims, with the former wanting to adopt Shariat as their personal law and the latter opposing it. The British policy of maintaining the status quo made them cast their dice in favour of keeping women subjugated, and deprived of their rights.

Editorial Note: The theme of this paper is considered in further detail in D. Saiyed, *Muslim Women of the British Punjab:From Seclusion to Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998).

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Pakistan, Partition, and Gender: Fashioning the shape of Pakistani womanhood

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This paper explores the neglected area of female experiences during the 1947 Partition and its aftermath in the Pakistan Punjab. It argues that notions of womanhood played a formative influence in the development of national identity. Moreover, the experiences of migration, the abduction and rehabilitation arising from Partition helped to create a template for Pakisatani womanhood which has impressed both official and popular perceptions about the roles women should play and their relationship with the new state.

The recent fiftieth anniversary of Partition, combined with the persistent problem of communal tension in parts of the subcontinent, has raised its profile as a subject for renewed exploration, with the emphasis on fresh approaches to understanding why, how and with what consequences Partition took place. As the dedication of a recent study of the gendered impact of Partition suggests - 'to all those women who survived Partition and lived to tell the tale' - women were particularly affected, and affected in particular ways, by the violence, dislocation and displacement generated by the division of British India in 1947. Their memories and testimonies have come to be viewed as one of the main repositories of experiences about what Partition really meant in the lives of ordinary South Asian people.[1] As yet, however, the analysis generated by this shift in perspective has been undertaken mainly in relation to developments on the Indian side of the new border. Apart from the valuable work of Nighat Said Khan, what is still largely missing from the overall picture is discussion of the gendered consequences for Muslim women and Pakistan.[2]

This article, therefore, addresses this gap. Its broader purpose is to apply some of the insights generated elsewhere to a part of the world which is only just beginning really to be examined in this fresh way. It seeks to do this by focussing on the 'plight' of Muslim women during and after Partition and then by examining ways in which issues concerning women and the nation's

identity intersected during Pakistan's early sensitive years. The location for much of what occurred and what is discussed here was inevitably the Panjab, at least when dealing with the immediate impact of Partition.[3] But the creation of Pakistan generated a clearly defined geographical space within which certain kinds of female activities could take place, and where issues of gender, class and identity could interact with significant results for the relationship between women and the new state.

1997 obviously marked the anniversary of, alongside that of independence and the partitioning of British India, one of the largest demographic upheavals ever to have taken place, involving an estimated 16 million refugees moving between India and Pakistan. While the main migration itself was concentrated mostly in the months immediately following independence, its 'lifespan' was far longer for the violence which prompted so many of the so-called refugees or migrants to uproot themselves had started well before August 1947. In addition, waves of migrants continued to flow across the borders for a number of years largely in response to new outbreaks, or the threat, of communal violence. It took until the 1950s for many Muslim families from North India finally to make the decision to move, usually westwards, to Pakistan.

Most analyses of Partition, however, have tended to concentrate on the political manoeuvres and the ending of empire which led to the division taking place. The mechanics of Partition itself have been far less well recorded, especially the process of dislocation by which people became migrants, how they attempted to re-build their lives and what help was provided by the new states. In the immediate aftermath of Partition, a number of personal accounts were published, but it is only relatively recently that historians have begun to examine in greater depth the dislocation and violence involved, often using oral history to draw on the memories of those who experienced Partition first-hand. Another interesting aspect of these efforts has been the extent to which literature has come to be used as a source through which to disentangle the sensitivities of Partition. Many contemporary writers, both Indian and Pakistani, employed fiction as a way of exploring the horrors of Partition, and historians, while recognising the limitations inherent in material of this kind, have been able to draw meaningful insights into the emotional upheavals of the time from this body of literature.[4]

Perhaps one of the most interesting 'breakthroughs' associated with recent new approaches to Partition has been the way in which historians have started to consider the consequences of Partition from the standpoint of gender, in particular the impact which it had on women caught up in the trauma of the times. Andrew Major, for instance, citing Nehru's well-known comment that 1947 had 'seen terrible happenings in northern India and women have perhaps been the chief sufferers', demonstrates very vividly in his article on the abduction of women in the Punjab the full immediate horror of the treatment meted out to them: 'molestation, rape, mutilation, abduction, forcible

conversion, [forcible] marriage and death'.[5]

Indeed, research on the Indian side of the border to investigate what Partition 'meant' for women has progressed at a fairly brisk pace, motivated to a large extent by more recent outbreaks of communal violence during the mid-1980s. Studies by, among others, Urvashi Butalia, Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, demonstrate that Partition was certainly not a 'gender neutral process' and that any understanding of Partition would be incomplete without taking proper account of gender.[6] They point to how important realignments of family and community identities posed a significant challenge to the identity of the new India forged through Partition.[7] These studies also raise interesting questions about the agency of women during this period. Rather than simply 'suffering', it would seem that Indian women, frequently from the Panjab, played an active role by taking part in the reconstruction and rebuilding of their families and communities and also sometimes by providing moral support or backing for at least a proportion of the violence which occurred. In other words, they could be 'resisters' and 'perpetrators' as well as the more familiar 'victims' of communal conflict. Indeed, for Urvashi Butalia, aspects of this kind of female agency were seriously flawed precisely because of the way that it reinforced patriarchy, contributing to the 'imaging' of the new India which continued, by and large, to view women as symbolic attributes of the nation.[8]

Most of this research on women and Partition, therefore, has concentrated either on developments in India or on imagery connected to a nation which was dominated by its Hindu majority and identity. What of developments in Pakistan? How did Partition influence the processes which 'shaped' the new Pakistani woman? It would seem that there are indeed parallels but equally some distinctions between the two 'stories', perhaps linked to differences between the communities involved and the broader contexts in which they found themselves. Compared with India, on the one hand, and other parts of the so-called Muslim world - particularly West Asia, the Middle East and North Africa - relatively little historical attention has been paid to the subject of either women or gender in the context of Pakistan. Both Gail Minault and Barbara Metcalf have addressed the specific history of Muslim women in South Asia, but the emphasis of their pioneering efforts has been on the attitude and approaches of religious and social reformers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries towards perceived 'problems' of how to educate women to play a more significant role in society.[9] Likewise, there has certainly been acknowledgement of but not as yet a great deal of hard information about the growing contribution of certain groups of Muslim women to so-called communal politics of the period, and the movement of women into the public and therefore more overtly political arena which manifested itself during the last couple of decades of British rule.[10] With the exception of Khawar Mumtaz and Farida Shaheed's *Women of Pakistan* and work by Ayesha Jalal, however, there has been little exploration of the inter-connected questions of women and

gender in relation to post-Partition developments in Pakistan.[11]

Perhaps this situation is not so strange when one considers the general difficulties which have tended to hamper any kind of work on Pakistan's history. Pakistan's own pattern of political development and the problems which it has faced since 1947 have not proved especially kind to historians. All the same, bearing in mind the extent to which national identity and state-building in other places have harnessed themselves to issues connected with gender and the condition of womanhood in particular, the case of Pakistan cries out for more to be done, if only to highlight similarities in terms of experience with elsewhere. Of course, the symbolic importance of 'womanhood' to the idea of the 'community' and/or 'nation', and its identity, is now well-established. Women have long been assigned the role of the bearers of cultural values, the carriers of traditions and the symbols of the community, and much literature has been devoted to exploring the connections between national identity and gender. Recognition of the 'gender dynamics of nationalism' has prompted investigations into the relationship between nationalism and images of women, the links between the consolidation of power by new states and laws concerning women, and why it has been that movements for national freedom have not always subsequently extended principles of autonomy and liberation to their citizens irrespective of gender.[12] The interplay between gender and national identity both at the time of Partition and subsequently during the new state's formative years, therefore, ought to be able to offer valuable insights into how far these kinds of questions can be applied and answered in relation to Pakistan.

The frenzy of communal violence which accompanied Partition affected men and women belonging to all communities. Hundreds of thousands of people from all generations experienced uncertainty and upheaval as law and order collapsed around them. Hate, fear and mistrust were generated on a massive scale. However, while the overwhelming impression of Partition is one of communal brutality, there were also examples of great humanity as members of one community frequently took enormous risks to protect people belonging to another. Partition, therefore, defies easy analysis in terms of how it affected people's lives, but, both directly and indirectly, the fall-out was great. Piecing together its impact on particular groups, however, is much more difficult than producing sweeping generalisations about its consequences. And for some groups, the difficulties involved in this process of 'uncovering' have been enhanced by their relative invisibility in terms of official and semi-official sources.

This has been particularly the case for women during and after Partition. Apart from the issue of 'abducted women' and their recovery and rehabilitation, on which a lot of the early attention of the new authorities was concentrated in the months immediately following Partition, women do not figure very prominently in official records generated at the time. For this reason the whole business of abducted women, which was relatively well-documented, has come to assume great significance in recent attempts to achieve a gender-

sensitive understanding of Partition and its aftermath. Not surprisingly, bearing in mind the greater availability of sources in India, the focus of these attempts has tended to be on exploring the repercussions of abduction in relation to Indian, that is Hindu and Sikh, women. The challenge, therefore, is to piece together the story of abducted women from the Muslim or Pakistani point of view, for, as with developments in India, responses and reactions to these women throws light on perceptions and expectations of womanhood in the new state and helps to connect gender and identity during this important formative phase in Pakistan's history.[13]

Estimates of the number of women apparently abducted ranged from about 25,000 to 29,000 Hindu and Sikh women, and 12,000 to 15,000 Muslim women.[14] The significance and urgency of the problem of how to identify and recover these women can be judged from the fact that some of the first meetings between the new governments of Pakistan and India in Lahore in September and December 1947 were held to tackle this problem. While the numbers were not perhaps huge in overall terms, they assumed great significance precisely because of what they symbolised. Hence the two governments took the decision on 6 December 1947 to recover and remove women to the 'correct' country, against any preference which the women themselves might have expressed. In other words, the wishes of the women were irrelevant - they had no choice but willy-nilly to be rescued and repatriated, and any children which they may have produced in the interim were to be left behind, with retrospective effect from 1 March 1947. Muslims were to be sent to Pakistan, and non-Muslims to India. Some of the participants at the meetings protested on the grounds that this decision contradicted the women's fundamental human rights but their objections were overruled. Women, from the point of view of Pakistani and Indian representatives alike, symbolised the honour of the community and the nation, and needed to be brought back within the fold of both for honour to be properly restored. Re-establishing the balance by locating and exchanging women still left alive was perceived as central to the process of constructing the identity of the new nations, and the continued 'loss' of women remained a sore which would only fester if it was not treated swiftly.[15]

The issue of abducted women, however, was not exactly the same for the two governments. There was an imbalance between the number of missing Muslim women on the one hand and non-Muslim women on the other, which may have affected the relative importance which they ascribed to dealing with the problem. Both sets of officials, however, generally acknowledged that 'Sikhs in East Panjab probably killed far more Muslim women than Muslims did vice versa in West Panjab ... [while] there were probably far more alive abducted women in the West Panjab than in the East'. This 'discrepancy', it has been suggested, could have been linked to differences in terms of the outlook of the communities involved. For Muslim, unlike Sikh and Hindu, men, the conversion of and marriage to non-Muslim women was a viable option, which

may have enabled relatively larger numbers of Hindu and even Sikh women to be 'absorbed' during the turmoil into Muslim or Pakistani society in this fashion.[16] According to Ritu Menon, 'the experience of Pakistan sugggests that the recovery [of abducted women] programme was neither so charged with significance or as zealous in its effort to restore moral order' as was the case of India, possibly as the result of less preoccupation in Pakistan with 'the question of moral sanction and "acceptability".'[17]

But distinctions of this sort do not mean that absorbing abducted Muslim women into Pakistani society once they had been located was straightforward. Just as Indian officials had to employ images of Bharat Mata [Mother India] and draw on ancient tales involving the goddess Parvati in order to encourage people there to ignore the problem of the 'pollution' which abduction had attached to their womenfolk and which threatened to hamper their re-absorption, so too Pakistani officials had to cajole their citizens to welcome back and provide support for recovered Muslim women - not necessarily an easy thing for them bearing in mind the very real dishonour associated with these women's experiences.[18] Much rhetoric had to be expended by Pakistani politicians and bureaucrats, like their Indian counterparts, in official efforts to overcome popular reluctance against accepting back these abducted women. And it was not just the cool reception towards their 'own' women which was perceived to be a problem on both sides of the border in the months following Partition. One British observer in Pakistani Panjab in 1948, noted the obvious reluctance among Muslims there to assist in the repatriation to India of Sikh and Hindu women. From his point of view, the fact remained that 'whatever the leaders may say, the plight of these women does not seriously touch the public conscience ... enough to induce him to cooperate against his own community to secure the release of a woman of a community he hates.'[19]

Thus, 're-absorbing' their own 'dishonoured' women did prove problematic for the new Pakistan as it was, albeit to different degrees, for India. As in India, there was a high degree of reluctance to take many of the affected women back into the folds of their families or communities, which created the need for the state to provide alternative new homes for them. While the Pakistani press, by and large, was inclined or persuaded to paint a relatively positive picture of society's response, social barriers to the resettlement of dishonoured women were great. Indeed, the 'rigidities of society', in the form of its 'obsession' with concepts of honour, may help to explain what has been seen as 'the state's initial disinclination to aid and abet the rehabilitation of abducted women', whether or not this may have involved 'an inversion of Islamic morality.[20] The record of the Pakistani authorities during this period immediately following Partition creates the impression that they tried to set their actions within a moral framework which repeatedly stressed the religious duty of Muslims to protect the weak and needy among them, but, alongside this, the 'dishonour' connected with the problem of abducted women meant that there was frequently a considerable gulf between the rhetoric and the realities of the

time. During an 'Abducted Womens' Week', which was launched in Pakistan on 16 February 1948 with the aim of promoting greater public cooperation, the pro-refugee newspaper *Dawn* reminded its readers of the precedent set back in the days of the Prophet Muhammad when men were encouraged to marry widows produced by war. The newspaper accordingly called on Pakistani men to cooperate with the Widow Remarriage Committee and marry lone women who had been casualties of the violence in one way or another. It quoted one *maulana* and refugee 'spokesman' who announced

> 'it is the obligation of the society, and if we fail to do our duty towards these unfortunate creatures, the consequences will be foul and cruel, giving rise to many "immoral and unislamic practices". Our society at large stands to suffer.'[21]

Interestingly, in this case, the official response from young men was reported to have been 'very heartening' but apparently young women due to various, unspecified, considerations did not come forward with sufficient enthusiasm to help themselves.[22] Time and again, however, in Pakistan as in India, the 'national good' was linked to 'national honour', with the connection hinging on the eradication of the 'dishonour' inflicted upon the women of the new nation.

At same time, the circumstances surrounding Partition did allow certain groups of Pakistani women to come forward in other, perhaps more assertive, ways. As was the case in India, a large proportion of the recovery and rehabilitation work involving various categories of refugee women in the Panjab, was carried out by women, particularly so-called social workers. A strong tradition of social welfare had developed during the nationalist struggle across the subcontinent and drawn many women, usually Hindus, to these kinds of activities. Partition seems to have opened up similar opportunities for active welfare work to Muslim women, generally from relatively privileged backgrounds, stimulating, in the words of Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan, a 'social revolution, the like of which history has no parallel for [in terms of] the speed and non-violence with which it established itself and spread'.[23]

Initially, the Pakistan Women's Volunteer Service [PWVS] was set up to channel this involvement. Groups of Muslim women in the Panjab and across the country came out of their homes and involved themselves in the day-to-day tasks of organising relief in refugee camps; collecting and distributing goods, clothing, medicine and money; running and helping in clinics and hospitals; and opening and operating dispensaries, schools and industrial homes. Women volunteers under Begum Liaquat's guidance apparently quickly established 'an employment exchange bureau, a 'lost and found' bureau, a marriage bureau, a widows' home and a home for abducted women.'[24] A short-term spin-off associated with these developments was the formation of the Pakistan Women's National Guard [PWNG] and the Pakistan Women's Naval Reserve [PWNR] which aimed to teach their members the basics of nursing and

to train them in physical fitness and methods of defence. But while their duties also included an important element of social welfare work[25], the PWNG and the PWNR created 'a public controversy' and were attacked in the press for allowing women to march with their heads uncovered to the extent that 'as a compromise a *dupatta* was added to the uniform' to provide a more modest covering. The PWVS, in contrast, received a good press, largely because 'social welfare was viewed as an extension of a woman's domestic role'[26], leading to newspapers frequently praising the good deeds performed by Pakistani women social workers, 'gallant ladies' without whose assistance 'the stupendous task [of recovering abducted women] could not have been successfully tackled by the authorities'.[27]

Under these circumstances, politicians as well as religious leaders sought to incorporate women in their targeted audiences. Jinnah, for instance, made repeated and deliberate reference to both men *and* women in his speeches during Pakistan's early days which called for resolve within the new nation to deal with its many challenges.[28] *Ulama*, likewise, sometimes surprised their audiences by addressing women directly. For instance, the *imam* delivering the Id prayers at the Badshahi mosque in Lahore in late 1947 included in his sermon a call to 'the women of Pakistan' to play their part in the life of the nation, words which apparently had not been heard from that particular pulpit before.[29]

Partition, it would seem, created opportunities for women in Pakistan to demonstrate their value to the new nation, as well as public acknowledgement of their worth. Despite contradictions inherent in the way that abducted women were discussed in theory and treated in practice, the combined effect of female activism and political rhetoric was to identify the harnessing of appropriate female activities to the 'health' of the nation. But this emphasis on the importance of the commitment of Pakistani women to the future well-being of the new nation was, perhaps, only to be expected. Studies on the evolving position of Muslim women in British India have suggested that the impact of social, in particular educational, reforms was to draw some of them, usually belonging to at least middle class if not elite families, into political activity, particularly in support of campaigns such as the Khilafat movement of the 1920s, and this reflected the general movement towards greater female involvement in the more overtly politicised 'public sphere'.[30] By the time of the Second World War, Muslim League politicians had managed to persuade growing numbers of Muslim women from these backgrounds to support the demand for a separate Muslim state. Jinnah's speech, for instance, in support of a resolution moved at the 1938 Muslim League session which argued for opportunities to enable women to participate in the development of the 'Muslim nation', had called for more Muslim women to be drawn into 'nationalist' activity'. In his words:

> 'No nation can make progress without the cooperation of its women. If Muslim women support their men as they did in the days of the

Prophet of Islam, we should soon realise our goal'.[31]

But, appealing to Muslim women in this way for their support, in effect meant that they were being asked to add their weight to a political movement which had already come to speak for many of 'their men'. However flattering Jinnah's attention to them as women, it does seem that Muslim women were not expected to deviate from the path already identified for them by their male counterparts. In other words, they were expected to accommodate, if not subordinate, their needs to the demands of the Indian Muslim community as a whole, and be content that, in this way, their rights as Muslim women would be enhanced and protected. Fatima Jinnah, who was actively organising Muslim women for the Muslim League from 1940, epitomised this duel responsibility. On the one hand, her visibility both during and after the Muslim League's movement for Pakistan established her as a symbol of modern Muslim womanhood, educated, professional and potentially independent. But, as her careful positioning of her *dupatta* on her head in public signified, she also recognised the need to safeguard her modesty in a self-consciously 'Islamic' way and not challenge prevailing ideas about what constituted female modesty or respectability.[32]

So, despite some limited legal 'advances' prior to independence represented by the Muslim Shariat Application Act of 1937 and the Muslim Marriage Dissolution Act of 1939, it would seem that Muslim women's concerns in India by the 1940s to a large extent were swallowed up in the 'grand narrative of Pakistan', in other words their concerns as women were subordinated to the wider 'nationalist agenda'. Indeed, the enthusiasm among certain groups of Muslim women for the idea of a Pakistan should not conceal the fact that there could be tension between their nationalist and feminist aspirations. Mumtaz Shah Nawaz' novel, *The Heart Divided*, for instance, was written at the time that India was moving towards Partition by a female Muslim League activist whose personal experiences paralleled those of one of the main characters, Zohra. The plot clearly highlights the process of 'reconciliation' which these kinds of Muslim women had to rationalise in order to throw their energies behind the demand for Pakistan. It also exposes the rather idealistic expectations which they had of the proposed state, and the extent to which men and women could possess different agendas for the future, with the former talking about Pakistan in terms of a state in which 'all men [would] be equal' while the latter sought 'a society where women [would] get their birthright'.[33] At the same time, while many committed female supporters of the demand for Pakistan may well have been drawn to the Muslim League because they expected that this would guarantee a secure and improved status for themselves, supporting the Muslim League was increasingly what these women's male relations were doing, and so their political participation could equally be seen in terms of a common desire to protect particular family or elite interests. To a great extent, 'debates about equality and around education and work were

always narrowly confined to the public arena. In private, women achieved minimal gains. And so while 'middle-class women demanded and attained gains in the public domain ... the gains did not radically alter the discursive construction of gender' ... While women were not excluded from the public ... they were differentially inserted within it [and] their distinctiveness was emphasized.'[34] A female presence in the streets and in public places 'became an acceptable necessity', if not an unavoidable cost of Pakistan becoming a modern Muslim nation.[35]

Kumari Jayawardena has argued that 'women's movements do not occur in a vacuum, but correspond to, and to some extent are determined by, the wider social movements of which they form part'.[36] This reality certainly rings true as far as developments involving women in Pakistan during its early years were concerned. The main women's organisation to emerge out of the confusion created by Partition was APWA - the All-Pakistan Women's Association - which clearly reflected the political temperature of the time. As Ayesha Jalal has explained, its creation, rather than simply emerging in an organic fashion to meet the challenges of the time, was closely connected to an incident early in 1949 when all the women members of the ruling Muslim League walked out of a Council meeting in protest at its refusal to consider electing a woman candidate to the office of Joint Secretary. Yet APWA, once established, remained firmly within the fold of the new political establishment in Pakistan precisely because so many of its members had strong personal, family ties with Pakistan's new political elite.[37] In other words, APWA received the all-important blessing of the government - Begum Liaqat Ali, 'the dynamo in silk', who was its founder, was undoubtably able to take advantage of her position as the wife of Pakistan's then Prime Minister.[38]

APWA members certainly played a valuable role in drawing attention to issues concerning migrant, destitute women, and in their later defence of women's rights in legal terms. Thus, APWA represented perhaps the most 'visible' example of female agency during this period of the late 1940s and early 1950s, but the potential impact of the organisation seems to have been severely limited by the 'character' of those who belonged to it. Defending and extending Muslim women's rights in the public domain had been established by the 1950s as something which was expected of a 'modern' Muslim state. But while identifying and reinforcing women's rights continued to be part of the agenda of reform in many parts of the Muslim world where states sought to be taken seriously as 'modern', the general pattern of developments was one, as in Turkey, Egypt and Iran, for example, in which female activity was controlled and constrained from above. This also appears to have been the case to a large extent in Pakistan during the 1950s and affected expectations of Pakistani womanhood as a result. While APWA was not an official state-run organisation, it was very closely connected to the government. The privileged backgrounds of APWA members, apart from anything else, helped to inhibit the demands which APWA as an organisation made on the state. Indeed,

Ayesha Jalal has suggested that the extension of patronage by new Pakistani state to an organisation such as APWA was more of a 'political calculation than a commitment to female emancipation', precisely because of APWA's class origins and hence probably class accommodations.[39]

In addition, the nation's focus on the violence which affected the lives of so many women caught up in Partition encouraged Pakistanis, both male and female, to 'overlook' the fact that treatment of a similar nature had been meted out to women from other communities. APWA's members, thus, found that they needed to demonstrate a deeply patriotic stance in order to 'legitimise' their activities. To criticise the new state and the arguments on which it had been founded would have been to undermine their position within society as well as to damage the collective identity with which Pakistan now provided them. Begum Liaquat, therefore, consistently stressed APWA's 'national' responsibilities, echoing an earlier speech which she had given to the PWNR, when she had explained that it was the duty of Pakistan's women

> 'to work towards the defence, development and betterment of the country and this is not the time for the 40 million women of Pakistan to sit quietly in their homes. They have to come out of their homes to learn to work and then teach others to do so'.[40]

Pakistan's women, in their different ways, were expected 'to fight till the end' to defend Pakistan's interests. On the one hand, it was almost expected that voices would be heard arguing to secure women's rights if Pakistan was going to be able to call itself a modern Muslim state. On the other hand, these rights had to be articulated in ways which did not undermine the 'Muslim-ness' or 'nation-hood' of the new state, since this was the basis on which its creation had been sanctioned. APWA, fitted these needs well.

Throughout the period Pakistani women and their bodies continued to serve as markers of the new nation's identity. This was clearly demonstrated, once the turmoil of Partition itself subsided, in terms of the clothes which they were encouraged to wear. In Pakistan at this time, women were expected to wear Pakistani clothing both for reasons associated with modesty and to reinforce national identity. This necessity meant women rejecting the trend towards western-style clothes among urban Pakistani men which continued from the pre-independence days.[41] It also meant identifying female clothes which could be regarded as 'Pakistani' rather than 'Indian', in order to distinguish the two nations. The *sari, kurta-pajama* and *gharara* continued to be worn by Pakistani women during the 1950s, but the direct association between these garments and India meant that, over the decade, there was a steady drift towards the more 'authentically' Pakistani *shalwar qamiz* which was commonly associated with Muslim Panjab. Thus, gradually, urban women, elite or otherwise, 'cooperated' by conforming to new kinds of cultural norms which reinforced Pakistan's still fragile early identity.

Many obvious parallels, therefore, exist between the situation which

developed in Pakistan and the experiences of other parts of the world where close yet complex relationships have also developed between 'the woman question' and 'the nation', particularly during periods of rapid political change. In the case of Pakistan, the violence which accompanied the birth of the new state had direct and severe repercussions for women which the state tried to manage in order to be able to assert its own identity as quickly as possible. As elsewhere, women were seen as a crucial component in the construction of the new nation and were encouraged to participate in the process of building it, but the actual commitment to women's issues by the state was limited even though it sought to control, directly or indirectly, what was achieved.

Pakistan, like India, witnessed first-hand the contradictions implicit in official attitudes and policies towards the problem of abducted women in particular and the role of Pakistani womanhood more generally. Compared with India, however, where so much discussion on the issue took place within the Constituent Assembly, Pakistan remained relatively 'silent' at the official level which complicates the task of uncovering and reconstructing events and attitudes. All the same, here as in other societies the process of nation-building became a determining factor in shaping the space available to women with long-term and complicated consequences.[42] Through support given to APWA, the Pakistani state effectively absolved itself of some of its responsibilities to convert rhetoric into action but this limited the possibilities of a more challenging women's movement from emerging for some considerable time. There were challenges issued by Pakistani women to the religious *status quo* which was emerging by the 1950s - APWA's involvement in the Commission on Marriage and Family Laws set up in 1955 helped to pave the way for the important Family Law Ordinances of the early 1960s even though the organisation was accused by some of its critics of failing to press the government for speedy enough action on this front. However, the vast majority of APWA activities, as well as those of other women's groups which functioned during the 1950s, remained firmly located within the sphere of social welfare. This helped to justify their claims 'to operate outside the domestic frontiers' but in the process helped to reinforce a framework of respectability which it was difficult to dismantle and which shaped the realities of Pakistani womanhood at this time.[43]

It is clear that developments triggered off by Partition exposed and emphasized the complexity of relationships between gender, identity and the nation in Pakistan as in India and in many other parts of the world. The creation of Pakistan, in many ways, weakened the old boundaries that had demarcated and delineated the space within which South Asia Muslim women had, by and large, lived, and posed new sets of challenges for those who were willing or able to respond to them. In the late 1940s and 1950s, the state could not afford to be neutral when it came to issues concerning or involving women, and Pakistan's subsequent history illustrates how far gender has continued to be a vitally important element in processes of identity formation which have taken

place there. Partition and the upheavals which it generated, in many ways, helped to create a template for Pakistani womanhood which remained firmly impressed upon the nation, both at the official level and in popular perceptions about what roles women should play in society and what relationships they should have with the new state.

To a great extent, this reality [and the extent to which it was appreciated by some women at the time] was highlighted by an article published in *Dawn* in January 1948 which summed up many of the dilemmas faced by Pakistani women trying to locate the all-important space for a new identity for themselves after 1947. According to the writer, Pakistan's birth had raised complex and perplexing problems, not least of which was the question of what to do about the question of women moving about in public: 'Should we, the women of Pakistan', she asked,

> 'continue to veil our faces and take a back seat or should we cast aside the *burqa* and its restrictions and prejudices and step forward to claim our rightful place as equal partners of our menfolk in the service of our nation? The task is not as easy as it may appear. Often it is not within our power to decide whether we should go veiled or not. Men have a great deal to say on the matter and as we are both socially and economically dependant upon them, their word is law in the majority of Pakistani households. The very fact that the more intellectual among the males are the more zealous supporters of our anti-*purdah* drive, while the most relentless opponents are generally uneducated, narrow-minded and reactionaries should encourage us to proceed with our fight .. For the nation to rise to its full stature, men and women must march side by side ... we should use our freedom not for social or moral excesses but in social services and intellectual pursuits. Even when we shed the veil, we should remain true Muslims at heart.'[44]

Questions such as these are still being raised in relation to the role of women in today's Pakistan.

Notes

1. Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*, Rutgers University Press, New Jersey, 1998.
2. Nighat Said Khan, 'Identity, Violence and Women: a reflection on the Partition of India 1947', in Nighat Said Khan, Rubina Saigol, Afiya Shehrbano Zia, eds., *Locating the Self: Perspectives on Women and Multiple Identities*, ASR Publications, Lahore, 1994, pp. 157-71.
3. Other Pakistani provinces such as Sind, which did receive relatively large numbers of refugees, were one step removed from the violence and dislocation experienced further north, and, while dealing with lone women

in refugee camps proved problematic for the authorities there, the challenge was a qualitatively different one and requires its own separate discussion.

4. Mushirul Hasan, ed., *India Partitioned: the other face of freedom*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1995, brings together a range of literary and non-literary interpretations and impressions of the time, while Ian Talbot, in his chapter on 'The Partition Experience: Literature, Meaning and Culture', in *Freedom's Cry: The Popular Dimension in the Pakistan Movement and Partition Experience in North-West India*, OUP, Karachi, 1996, explores the potential of literary sources in relation to changing sensitivities and collective representations.
5. Andrew J. Major, 'The Chief Sufferers: Abduction of Women during the Partition of the Punjab', *South Asia*, Vol. XVIII, Special Issue, 1995, pp. 57-72.
6. Urvashi Butalia, 'Muslims and Hindus, Men and Women: communal stereotypes and the partition of India', in Tanika Sarkar & Urvashi Butalia, eds., *Women and Right Wing Movements: Indian Experiences*, Zed Books, London, 1995, pp. 58-81.
7. Ritu Menon, 'Reproducing the Legitimate Community: secularity, sexuality and the state in postpartition India', in Patricia Jeffrey & Amrita Basu, eds., *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism and Politicized Religion in South Asia*, Routledge, London, 1998,p. 21.
8. Urvashi Butalia, 'Muslims and Hindus'.
9. For their most recent writings, see Barbara D. Metcalf, *Perfecting Muslim Women: Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi's Bihishti Zewar*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1992, and Gail Minault, *Secluded Scholars: Women's Education and Muslim Social Reform in India*, OUP, Delhi, 1998.
10. A study by Azra Asghar Ali of 'The emergence of feminism among Indian Muslim women, 1920-47', OUP, Karachi, forthcoming, may go some way to filling in these gaps, together with Dushka Saiyid's *Muslim Women of the British Punjab: from Seclusion to Politics*, Macmillan, London, 1998, and Siobhan Hurley's 1998 London University Ph.D. on the Begums of Bhopal.
11. Khawar Mumtaz & Farida Shaheed, eds., *Women of Pakistan: two steps forward, one step back?*, Zed Books, London, 1987, Ayesha Jalal, 'The Convenience of Subservience: women and the state in Pakistan', in D. Kandiyoti, ed., *Women, Islam and the State*, Macmillan, London, 1991. An interesting article by Shahnaz Rouse, 'The Outsider(s) Within: Sovereignty and Citizenship in Pakistan', in Patricia Jeffery and Amrita Basu, eds., *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism and Politicised Religion in South Asia*, Routledge, London, 1998, pp. 53-70, raises connections between gender and politics during the Zia period, as does another article by Rouse, 'Discourse on Gender in Pakistan: Convergence and Contradiction' in Douglas Allen, ed., *Religion and Political Conflict in South Asia*, Delhi, OUP, 1993, pp. 87-112.

12. Literature in this field has burgeoned in recent years: Kumari Jayawardena's *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, Zed Books, London, 1986, together with Floya Anthias & Nira Yuval Davis, *Woman-Nation-State*, Macmillan, London, 1989, are often credited with having triggered off other studies, such as Valentine Moghadam, ed., *Gender and National Identity: women and politics in Muslim societies*, Zed Books, London, 1994, which look more specifically at developments within the so-called Muslim world.
13. Historians have used Partition literature to explore the sensitive issue of abduction, see Ian Talbot's discussion of the Urdu short story, *Lajwanti* by Rajinder Singh Bedi which takes as its subject the recovery and rehabilitation of abducted women in the Indian Panjab, in *Freedom's Cry*, pp. 139-41.
14. Urvashi Butalia, 'Community, State and Gender: on women's agency during Partition', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, 7, p. 12.
15. Extract from report by HS Stephenson, Lahore, to UK High Commissioner, Karachi, 7 December 1947, DO 142/440, Public Records Office [henceforth known as PRO].
16. Shattock, 'Appreciation of the East Panjab [March 1948]', DO 142/239, PRO.
17. Ritu Menon, 'Reproducing the Legitimate Community', p. 30.
18. Afiya Zia, in a study of contemporary issues surrounding rape in Pakistan, has highlighted the absence of a linguistic term for rape in the languages of Pakistan and instead the use of 'euphemisms such as *izzat khona/izzat looti jana* (loss of virtue/theft of virtue) or *bay-izzat karna* (causing one to lose one's honor)', thus emphasizing the extent to which rape is perceived as a crime of honour to either a woman's male relations or the wider community to which she belongs, see Afiya Sherbano Zia, *Sex Crime in the Islamic Context: Rape, Class and Gender in Pakistan*, ASR Publications, Lahore, 1994, p.18.
19. Extract of report from HS Stephenson, Lahore, to UK High Commissioner, Karachi, 24 May 1948, DO 142/440, PRO.
20. Ayesha Jalal, 'The Convenience of Subservience', p. 88.
21. *Dawn*, 12 February 1948, p. 4.
22. *Dawn*, 19 February 1948, p. 4. This evaluation clashes to some extent with claims that all unattached women were successfully married off before leaving the camps, see Ritu Menon, 'Reproducing the Legitimate Community', p. 30.
23. Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan, 'The History of APWA is the History of the Women's Movement in Pakistan', Karachi, 1968, cited in Sylvia A. Chipp, *The Role of Women Elites in a Modernizing Country: the All-Pakistan Women's Association*, Syracuse University Ph.D., 1970, p. 70.
24. Sylvia Chipp, 'Tradition vs. Change: the All Pakistan Women's

Association', *Islam and the Modern Age*, Vol. 1, 3, 1970, p. 69.
25. Ibid, pp. 69-70.
26. Khawar Mumtaz and Farida Shaheed, eds., *Women of Pakistan*, p. 52.
27. DO 142/438, PRO.
28. Review of events in Pakistan 11-18 September 1947, DO 142/419, PRO.
29. 'The Punjab Refugees', *Manchester Guardian*, 8 November 1948.
30. Hina Jillani, 'Pakistan's Women's Movements for Social and Political Change', in Kishwar Naheed, ed., *Women: myth and realities*, Sange-e-Meel Publications, Lahore, 1993, p. 279.
31. Riswan Ahmad, *'Sayings of the Quaid-i-Azam': Mohammed Ali Jinnah*, Quaid Foundation, Karachi, 1993, p. 105, quoted in Akbar S. Ahmed, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity: the search for Saladin*, Routledge, London, 1997, p. 60.
32. Akbar S. Ahmed, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity*, pp. 12, 100.
33. Mumtaz Shah Nawaz, *The Heart Divided*, Mumtaz Publications, Lahore, 1957, discussed by Ian Talbot in *Freedom's Cry*, pp. 109-112.
34. Rouse, 'The Outsider(s) Within', p. 56.
35. Khawar Mumtaz and Farida Shaheed, eds., *Women of Pakistan*, p. 51.
36. Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, Zed Books, London, 1986, p. 10.
37. Ayesha Jalal, 'The Convenience of Subservience'; Sylvia Chipp, 'Tradition vs. Modernity', p. 70.
38. Kay Miles, *The Dynamo in Silk: A Brief Biographical Sketch of Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan*, APWA Information and Research Bureau, Karachi, 1963.
39. Ayesha Jalal, 'The Convenience of Subservience', p. 90.
40. Begum H.I. Ahmed, *Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan*, Kifayat Academy, Karachi, 1975, p. 34, quoted in Khawar Mumtaz and Farida Shaheed, eds., *Women of Pakistan*, p. 51.
41. Shahnaz Rouse, 'The Outside(s) Within', p. 57.
42. Parvin Paidar, *Women and the Political Process in twentieth-century Iran*, CUP, Cambridge, 1995, p. 22.
43. Ayesha Jalal, 'The Convenience of Subservience', p. 92.
44. *Dawn*, 20 January 1947, p. 6.

Ties that Double Bind: The Visibility of the Timber Contractor in Colonial north India

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This article sheds light on how Indian merchant capital took advantage of the new opportunities for growth in forested tracts under the British empire, and asks how intermediaries, in the processes of exchange and trade, reshaped the way resources were used. As a foray into the social relations of timber trade, the article assesses the larger links between authority (represented by the colonial state) and market (whose facilitators were largely timber contractors) from the mid-nineteenth century to the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Introduction

The trading community's access to timber was not contingent upon its direct control over forests but rather on its expertise and networks which enabled the manufacturing and trade of timber. Their social networks facilitated the extraction of a resource which, by the middle of the nineteenth century became inextricably interwoven into an economy that went well beyond the local domain. According to government reports:

> They [timber traders] can always supply timber for great work cheaper than the forest department, who are compelled to fell on a system which necessarily entails much labour in removing the logs. If we then desire to preserve the forests from which the traders bring their timber, we must refuse to deal with these people at all, and we must rely, as far as possible, on the timber resources which are under the control of the British governments.[1]

> Although the forest department has not been established primarily as a source of revenue, it is nevertheless desirable that its timber operations should not be carried on at a loss; but in order to ascertain whether this is the case or not; it seems necessary that a more perfect system of account than at present exists should be adopted. Until this is done, it will be impossible to ascertain how the timber operations are really

> renumerative or constitute a charge against the revenues of the forest department.[2]

The nature of timber economy in the late nineteenth and early twentiethcentury colonial north India was more than complex.[3] Even as that economy manifested itself in colonial state enterprises producing railway sleepers and new cantonment towns, the commodification of timber extended beyond the logic of the colonial enterprise to include, among others, the domain of an indigenous trading community. As a foray into the social relations of timber trade, this article assesses the larger links between authority (represented by the colonial state) and market (whose facilitators were largely timber contractors). In particular, the trading community's access to timber was not contingent upon its direct control over forests but rather on its expertise and networks which enabled the manufacturing and trade of timber.[4] These social networks facilitated the extraction of a resource which, by the middle of the nineteenth century became inextricably interwoven into an economy that went well beyond the local domain. A cursory nod to the 'invisible hand' of the market is no substitute for a precise understanding of how and why timber contractors proved vital to the timber economy of the region.

Much of the historical scholarship on forestry has treated the commodification of timber as a given. On the one hand are Richard Grove and Ravi Rajan who have pointed out the conservation agenda of forestry[5],and on the other hand are Ramachandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil who link colonial forest policies to the revenue and strategic needs of the British empire.[6] The legislation of various forest policies which gave the state a considerable amount of control over forest management including the commercial management over forests, has also been dealt with in depth by most works. The commercial working of forests occurred at various levels and at different paces in various parts of the sub-continent. But none of this scholarship has systematically addressed either the physical mobility of timber or the nature of the commercial interests which proved integral to the robust timber market of north India.[7]

Richard Tucker's work on commercial groups in colonial north India is important, but remains rather sketchy; moreover, he primarily uses colonial sources.[8] In emphasising the regionality of timber markets, the specialisation of timber trade and the absence of private entrepreneurship in lumber technology or private-land management, Tucker lays out the terrain but does not explain why the nature of timber economy acquired the hue it did. Nor does he give us any description of timber merchants or contractors. In a more recent article Tucker notes the indigenous socio-economic system of the region in order to describe how the timber economy penetrated a local region.[9] But, his approach is contextualised in the `sociology of forest depletion,'[10] and as Tucker himself suggests, the subject still awaits fuller treatment.[11] Harlpriya Rangan comes close to laying out the social and economic landscape of timber as she describes how the legality of forest management practices was challenged by powerful

groups such as landlords and merchants within civil society in the neighbouring area of Uttar Pradesh.[12] However, since she contextualises the issues within a broader argument of deforestation and modes of access for resource extraction, she does not detail the interests of the trading community itself.

There are two possible reasons for this absence of commercial description in the historical literature. First, since the commodification of timber has been treated within the colonial logic, the focus remains on the site of its production - the forest- where the tale of timber management does begin and where the state, in one of its incarnations as the Forest Department, is most visible. The colonial state's perception of forest space was distinct in both botanical and social terms. Even as the colonial taxonomy of 'forest capital' altered between major and minor forest produce,[13] the state distinguished between commercial (what it perceived to be largely a colonial domain) and subsistence economy (which the state associated with local communities). These distinctions were legitimated and buttressed by the forest laws of 1865, 1878, 1892 and 1927 which, among other things, regulated forest access of local communities and prohibited them to engage in any timber enterprise. Commercially marketable timber provided the basis for the mapping of forests into categories of reserved, protected and civil. Forests under local rajas were either leased by the British or were administered according to approximations of British forest management.[14] This was to ensure that the colonial state retained a monopoly over the commercial value of the forests.

However, to presume that the colonial state was the only beneficiary of the timber trade is somewhat misplaced for it not only obfuscates the presence of other benefactors, especially an indigenous trading community who benefited tremendously from this trade, but it also precludes the exploitative nature of this community. The historical narrative of timber management goes beyond the actual administration of forest space. The trading community's access to timber was not continent upon its direct control over forests but upon its networks and expertise of transport networks and marketing centres which enabled the manufacturing and trade of timber. It is at these sites, which marked the rites of passage of timber, and where one is able to detail the commercial groups, that the limitations of a history of timber which does not move outside forests becomes clear.

The second reason for a gap in historiography is that since the emphasis has been on the manner in which colonial laws shaped the imagining of forests and the way local access was linked to colonial logic of property ownership, the actors remain the state in its various incamations (Forest Department and Land Revenue Department to name a couple) and those local communities who are regarded as 'marginal.' Recent work on forestry in South Asia has questioned this simplistic state-society dichotomy, broken down the category of the community and contextualised the environment in broader tenns.[15] It has been convincingly argued that no consensus existed within the colonial state over the management of forests, and the state rhetoric, especially

from the late nineteenth century, was shaped by intra-department (Forest) and inter-departmental (Forest and Land Revenue Departments) conflicts.[16] In the case of the Himalayan Punjab, Vasant Saberwal has shown how until the end of the nineteenth century, the interests of the Forest Department were largely commercial in nature. However certain groups such as the trading communities continue to be marginalised.

In studying how Indian merchant capital took advantage of the new opportunities for growth in forested tracts under the British empire and in asking how intermediaries, in the processes of exchange and trade, reshaped the way resources were used, this article zooms in on the trans-Dhauladhar region which comprises the outer Himalayan range and which forms part of present day Himachal Pradesh. The essay focuses on the hill states of Chamba and Bashahr - both of which were under local rajas - in which commercial timbering gained considerable significance, and the Kangra district, which the British acquired directly from the Sikhs in 1849. Each region, characterised by an integrated economy linking forestry, agriculture and husbandry, has a river, which functioned as the main conduit for timber and other forest products. The species of timber identified for commercial reasons were *deodar* (*Cedrus deodara*), which, along with *kail* (*Blue pine*), silver fir and spruce grew between the altitude of 5,000 and 8,000 feet in the Chamba, Bashahr and Kulu regions. Chil (*Pinus longifolia*) occupied the lower portions of the Bashahr and Kangra region between 2,500 and 5,000 feet.

Although the manner in which timber acquired prominence in the colonial nomenclature was new, forests were very much part of the pre-colonial economy as well. Local rajas recognised the importance of wood for fuel, timber for building purposes, and pastoral grounds for local and nomadic lifetsyle as an integral component of the local economy.[17] With a favourable land-man ratio and a relatively low commercial pressure on forests, none of the forest uses posed a perceived or actual threat to forest area or to land cultivation.[18] Forest products were traded in extensively and, while timber did not foreshadow the local economy, it was used extensively for construction purposes and the boat-building industry.[19]

Timber Markets: Old or New?

The term *mercatus*[20] variously suggests the physical locale of the market place, the actual process of exchange and movement of commodities and people, and the idea of a new economic order.[21] Jane Alexander, for example, makes a clear distinction between trade, traders and trading in her work on Java.[22] A trader's perspective conceptualises markets as social systems, drawing attention to the types of traders and to the relationships which link them into complex trading networks.[23] The economic, in this case, can be treated either as embedded in the social or completely separate from it. Either way, the idea of a market as an abstract, self-regulating entity which owed its

rise to capitalism[24] has been questioned by many who treat the role of the market in the provision of goods and services, and the meaning, organisation and autonomy of market processes, as separate.[25] Markets are the products of long drawn-out processes of institution-building that incorporate prevailing relations of power and cultural formations.[26] A new economic order does not result in the disembeddedness of markets from their social context and their elevation to a position of self-regulating entities (for that would eventually buy into the argument of the market as a self-regulating entity).[27] Rather, these markets get re-contextualised (or re-embedded) within a partially altered social and economic context.

Within the colonial Indian context, the embeddedness of the market has been translated into the existence of caste and kinship networks. Existing historiography on trading communities suggests that in cases where indigenous merchants collaborated with and adjusted to British rule, their position was secured although subordinated by the nineteenth century. This `survival' thesis by the Cambridge School has indeed enriched the scholarship on the subject.[28] In response to scholars like David Washbrook, who has explained the inefficacy of colonial policies to the state's conflicting concerns of capitalist development and social stability,[29] scholars such as David Rudner have argued that the circumvention of colonial financial laws was primarily due to the institutional involvement of caste in commercial activities.[30] Taking the case of the *Chettiars* in South India, Rudner has shown that their commercial success was in large part due to their social organisation which was adapted and functional to business success. The contrast between the Chettiars in the south and the merchant castes *(Khatris and Suds* in particular) in the north has to do primarly with the former using more sophisticated instruments of credit, and having far stronger trans-oceanic links.

My purpose here is not merely to provide an appositional view to the collaboration or survival thesis. Rather, it is to contextualise the trading community's negotiations with forest laws through its own social and political terrain without separating commercial transactions from social relations, even as the colonial financial and commercial legislation introduced distinct categories of the public and the private.[31] Bayly has mainly looked at the Gangetic plains while this study looks at the hill and montane regions in relation to the merchant castes based in the plains.

The extent to which the timber economy gained momentum by the middle of the nineteenth century was unprecedented in northern India. Although new laws were introduced, old social networks continued to work within the new patterns of state authority. For instance, the networks of caste and kinship alliances for gathering market information and raising cash loans - to name two issues - were not new. I now turn to the tension between the resource requirements of the colonial state which passed laws that shaped the timber economy and the trading community which facilitated it.

The Business of Timber

Timber traders were already operating in the forests of the Himalayan Punjab when the British annexed the region in 1849. Starting with the *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) forests in the plains in the 1820s, these merchants had penetrated the higher mountain valleys by the 1840s, and started working the deodar -rich forest regions.[32] Broadly referred to as contractors' and sometimes 'predators' in British records, they ranged from forest lessees who commanded large capital resources, to entrepreneurs who acted as middlemen for timber transport, labour and food supplies, to small-time traders who sold timber as a wholesale or retail commodity.[33] Most were organised in labour-intensive and capital-poor business enterprises and supplied timber primarily to the rapidly growing railway sector.[34]

With the increasing value of timber, the colonial state entered into negotiations with the hill chiefs, who controlled sizeable deodar forests, and who were already acquainted with high profits from timber sales by private traders. The British had tried to sign a contract with the Raja of Chamba for a supply of timber as early as 1839, but failed, since they had nothing substantially different or new to offer from the traders. In 1851, the government arranged with the Raja of Chamba to deliver 10,000 deodar logs annually to a British agent based at Shahpur at a rate equivalent to seven and half *annas* per cubic foot.[35] The Raja failed to honour the agreement; indeed not a tree was felled. The British received only one-third of the promised supply and it was largely inferior timber. Most of it had been cut in the earlier years, and a large proportion of it was decayed. The results were described as a lamentable failure by the British and the agency had to be abandoned in 1854.[36] Another agency at Madhopur met a similar fate.

The appointment of J. L. Stewart as the Conservator of Forests in Punjab in 1864 and the establishment of the Forest Department by 1865 marked the beginning of a new era of forest management in this Himalayan region. After a period of difficult and often unpredictable negotiations, the British were able to secure the forests of the Ravi and Chenab rivers in the Chamba State through a ninety-nine-year lease in 1864.[37] Having decided as early as the 1860s that it was going to manage forests directly - through the departmental agency system - the colonial state's dealings with private forest lessees was quite abrasive. The Forest Administration Reports have dozens of memoranda by both European and Indian traders and private agencies complaining against the goverment's high-handed dealings. For instance, an Armenian timber trader named Aratoon, who had been operating in the forests of Chamba and Bashahr since the early 1850s and had made his fortune by supplying timber to the north-west frontier regions, was asked to clear the forests of his timber within one season.[38] With claims to over 15,000 standing trees, 30,000 logs in the Sutlej river and established slides for transporting timber logs to rivers, Aratoon

filed several claims and counter-claims for his timber, but his forest leases were not honoured.[39]

The British objective in acquiring leases for private forests was not to trade as timber speculators, but to be the determining agency which managed and administered forests, and which ensured a regular and reliable supply of timber. Furthermore, the transaction costs were heavily stacked against the government in contractor-controlled production. The Forest Department argued that the contractors charged high commissions for the sale of timber, which the department wanted to avoid by acquiring direct forest leases. Such leases constituted another way to acquire political influence in the region. Implicit in state forestry was a critique of indigenous commercial interests as completely lacking long-term business interests as the department claimed that private interests sought to extract as much timber as quickly as possible and move on to other fields. Interestingly, the Forest Department adopted the rhetoric of conservation and forest regeneration only in the early twentieth century.[40] The position of timber contractors seemed precarious for a while. However, within a decade of the establishment of the Forest Department in 1865, the British soon realised the futility of administering forests and extracting timber simultaneously. It entailed much work which the Forest Department was simply not equipped to handle. The department bore the responsibility of not only launching the timber and working it down the rivers to the plains, but it also had to watch the state of the market and enter into competition with other traders, and even find customers other than the railway department, for its stock.[41] Several forest officials argued that timber extraction and its disposal were of a purely commercial nature which suited private enterprise better than a government department.[42]

After a tour of the Kulu forests in 1893, the Inspector General of Forests, Eardley-Wilmont, suggested a cessation of the departmental timber works in the protected and unclassed forests (while departmental extraction was to continue in the reserved forests and relatively remote areas).[43] The Forest Department resorted once again to a private agency system under which traders bought the right to fell specified standing timber and the winning contractor organised the entire operation from mountainside to market. By the 1870s, timber trade on the river Chenab was carried out by 'a number of men, chiefly Hindoos, from Jummoo, Wazirabad, Lahore and Amritsar, and Co.'[44] Although these realities forced the British to revise their strategies, the rhetoric of good business sense continued to shape their dealings with the traders.

Timber and the Trading Culture

Timber trade, in general, was segmented and specialised in nature.[45] Accordingly, traders were variously involved in buying standing trees from forests, running sale outlets near river banks, and buying and selling wholesale or retail timber.[46] Forest areas were auctioned and timber was felled into logs or

sawn into railway sleepers; marked and registered as private property of an individual or of a firm, and the felled timber was then transported to river-heads with the aid of labour; it was floated to the nearest collecting outlets at the foothills where it was collected, hoarded, dried and stacked in timber and sale depots; it was inspected for its quality and dimensions and auctioned for its final journey to its myriad destinations such as railway depots, barrack towns, sports equipment factories or furniture shops. The species of timber determined its client base; deodar was primarily used in railway sleepers while fuelwood used other softwoods such as spruce and fir. A detailed discussion of the various kinds of wood markets will be the subject of another study; suffice it is to note that timber remained in high demand so long as it had a niche in the market.

Conditions in the timber trade were rather difficult: transportation of timber in a period when communication and technology were not well developed or cost-efficient, and labour contracts that were always difficult to fulfil, were two aspects of this very complex and high-risk trade. Loss of timber to theft or river floods, the unpredictability of the timber market, the relatively short-life of timber as a commodity (timber decayed if left in water for a long period of time), and the large amount of capital needed to finance this trade were some of the risks involved. The mobility of timber, once it left the forests, was largely dictated by the seasonal flow of rivers, the availability of labour, and the operations of timber contractors. The speed and efficiency which the state desired were not always possible.

Most prominent forest lessees and contractors were outsiders to the hill states while maintaining commercial links with the Himalayan resources and populace. They were based in south and south-east Punjab - in the larger older plain cities such as Lahore and Amritsar - and had established trade networks.[47] Given the high risks involved in trade most contractors, very sensibly, reduced their risks by participating selectively in timber trade. Contracts for felling and transporting timber, and supplying labour and food grain were just some avenues through which contractors earned their wealth. Most worked with borrowed capital.[48] Credibility was an integral basis of this trade. In fact, many local timber contractors and merchants signed contracts through the British Spedding Company and rode on its commercial coat-tails at a one per cent commission.[49] The potential profit one could make from this trade ranged from 33 per cent of investment costs to over 100 per cent in one timber production cycle.

Given the regionality of timber trade, *arhatiyas* (commission agents or brokers) formed part of a vital link between the trader and the market. Forms of brokerage were complex, and at auctions, the traders, relying greatly on the information provided by the agents, would form cartels at timber markets to keep the prices low. These brokers usually made rounds of different timber towns and outlets, sometimes purchasing timber for traders on a one per cent commission basis.[50] This usually kept the traders at an advantageous position *vis-a-vis* the Forest Department.

In fact, the Forest Department was not as formidable as colonial records make it out to be. Ample documents voice the concerns of the Forest Department officials over various practices of private traders and agencies to defraud the department - felling unmarked trees, submitting low timber returns, tampering with trade marks notwithstanding licenses, and bribing forest officials.[51] The Forest Department had to face two other major problems. The first concerned itself with delayed credit payments.[52] Usually a unilateral agreement existed between timber contractors and the British that floating of timber would not be permitted unless forest dues were cleared. Purchasers were required to deposit ten per cent of the timber price at sale outlets, and the balance in two or three instalments within a specified time period. Some traders had dues which they never paid back to the Forest Department, which in turn, had to sign off these payments. In fact, the Conservator of Forests, Punjab, J.L.Stewart had argued against the system of delivering timber to purchasers before the entire cost had been obtained and had pointed to this practice as existing only in Punjab.[53]

Table One: Balance due to the forest department by forest contractors and distributors (value in rupees)

Year	Kangra	Kulu	Bashahr	Chamba	Total due to FD
1869-70	--------	26,280	1,932	2,796	--------
1888-89	2,549	457	5,131	155	--------
1899-1900	2,388	143	17,861	--------	--------
1913-14	1,240	2,141	28,129	--------	38,099
1919-20	4,203	150,247	442,873	--------	638,742

Source: Relevant Forest Department reports on the Punjab

The second problem for the Forest Department involved the illegal sale of timber by contractors. The Punjab Forest (Sale of Timber) Bill of 1912 was effectively passed to stem this problem.[54] A decade later, forest officials suggested the setting up of a Timber Traders Association Committee to make trade more transparent.[55] The Forest Department wanted to register all timber firms which included, among other things, a stipulation to keep open account books.[56] Because of the immense opposition from the trading community, the proposed legislation was not passed by the Punjab Legislative Council.

The colonial state standardised and attempted to simplify timber trade in order to make it legible for itself, while it had to incorporate the already existing, well-articulated indigenous commercial networks for an efficient

functioning of trade. Even as the trading community took cognisance of, and negotiated around imperial notions of control over nature and what it considered to be a 'scientific' basis of forest laws, it quickly became fluent in the language of these laws. Both the Forest Department and the trading community shared a commercial interest in forests. The business of timber was a complex co-operation (and source of tension) between forest departmental activity and private enterprise.

Trade and Caste Networks

The connective nature of caste and kinship networks in trade and the mobility of trading groups - both social and geographical - proved integral to timber trade in colonial north India. Although timber trade itself was the concern of the individual rather than of groups acting in common interest, the business was a connective enterprise, in that traders relied on their social and institutional networks. The manner in which contractors from the same caste co-operated closely with each other in competition with other social groups has been explained by Tucker.[57] A timber contractor could apply for short-term loans - most often needed at times of timber auctions - within his caste group and not have to come up with any special collateral.[58] Normal financing for a speculative and high-risk business like this would not have been otherwise possible.[59] Caste ties aided the merchants to command resources across great distances and keep the British out of their network, unlike in Burma where indigenous traders were eliminated by large European timber companies in the late nineteenth century.[60] Moreover the influence of the merchant class grew perceptibly as they found new routes of trade to replace the old, and as they discovered new markets. These trading communities were able to successfully manoeuvre through newly-established laws, gauge the seemingly free market, and keep their fingers on the pulse of timber prices through brokers and commission agents.

The second aspect of timber trade which is relevant for us is the mobility - both spatial and social - that characterised the trading communities. Despite detailed accounts of the activities of timber contractors, British records are silent about their social origins, since many of them were individually insignificant and remained largely anonymous. An account of these traders is interesting not so much in and of themselves but for the light it might throw on the trading culture of timber. The 1881 Punjab census describes the mercantile class as eminently well off. They were regarded as the most secure of all classes of the community, and the last that would need assistance in times of general want.[61] This group of mercantile castes held practically the entire commerce of the Punjab in its hands. With a few exceptions, almost all the mercantile and commercial transactions of the Province were conducted by one or another of the five castes: *Bania, Sud, Khatri, Arora,* and *Khoja.*[62] The

colonial records provide us with scattered references to timber traders. The casualties in the timber trade were heavy, and many names, scattered through forest records, disappear without a trace after a few years.[63] In order to understand the commercial culture of timber, I have traced the career of two prominent timber traders based on interviews with their surviving kin and employees.[64]

Some of the leading timber traders came from the Khatri caste, most of whom resided in the Punjab plains. They had long-established credit networks in Punjab, and were the most important commercial group involved in the petty trade of the province.[65] Although they comprised only seven per cent of the total population of Punjab in 1881, by 1914 they controlled more than half the total capital of the Punjabi economy.[66] The fields of banking and money lending were their forte. Bawa Dinga Singh, who became a partner in the famous Spedding & Company in 1924 was one prominent Khatri timber trader.[67] Born in 1881 in Vairowal near Amritsar, Dinga Singh was a mere matriculate when he joined the Spedding Company in Jhelum in 1901 as a broker. He made himself indispensable by his accurate speculations in the timber market and through his direct contacts with local buyers. By the time of his death in 1939, Dinga Singh had not only earned the tile of *Rai Bahadur (for* ensuring a regular supply of timber from the Kashmir region), but also owned 93 per cent of the company, and had as his employee a British private secretary who 'could not dare to correct his faulty and heavily accented English'.[68]

Another merchant community which produced several prominent timberbased families was the *Sud* community, found in the districts that lay below the hills on the northern border of the province from Ambala to Rawalpindi.[69] The *Suds* managed the extensive sugar trade of Ludhiana and the agricultural money-lending of the richest part of that district was entirely in their hands.[70] They controlled a ma or portion of credit and marketing of products such as wool, sugar, and grain in the town of Amritsar. Their banking interests and entrepreneurial nature explain their move to invest in other sectors.[71] Many *Sud* families involved with forest enterprises were based in the Hoshiarpur and Kangra region.[72] One of the prominent families was that of Jodha Mal Kuthiala.[73] Born in 1883 in Haroli in Una district, he joined his family business of supplying provisions to the princely hill states of Chamba, Mandi, Kangra and Jubbal in 1897. By the end of World War I Jodha Mal had acquired forest leases in the Shimla hill states and had also acquired the title of *Rai Bahadur* from the British for an uninterrupted supply of timber from the Kashmir forests.[74]

What gave caste its corporate form were the prominent men: both Dinga Slngh and Jodha Mal Kuthiala were exceptionally successful in integrating all aspects of timber extraction, from the bidding for forest contracts to the marketing of timber. Timber also created opportunities to expand laterally into other related businesses. For instance, by 1910, the Butail family - which belonged to the *Sud* caste - had established a large enterprise dealing not only

with timber extraction in the Shimla hills, but also with tea plantations in the Kangra region. It is clear that timber left a distinctive stamp on the organisation of indigenous commerce in Punjab.

These mercantile groups also gained fresh social ground as timber came to intersect with other interests and histories. For example, the *Suds* endeavoured to raise their caste status through their close alliance with the Raja of Jubbal. The *Raj guru* of Jubbal was the first to write a genealogy of the *Sud - Sood Vanshavali - in* which he claimed that the *Suds* were *Rajputs. This* led to a spate of histories being re-written about the *Suds*, backed by the Arya *Samaj ;* an action which raised a storm in conservative social circles.[75] There had already been several histories written about the origin of the *Khatris*, which had been traced to the *Kshatriyas,* at the end of the 19th and early 20th century.[76] These traders tried to translate the wealth accumulated through trade (including timber trade) into social status and power, thus validating the opinion that the market was not just for economic transactions.

The Politics of Access

By the end of the nineteenth century, access to forests and their products was shaped by forest laws and rules. That these laws were subject to contestation and negotiation in various forms and to various degrees has been dealt with by most historical works on forestry. While timber contractors largely operated on the basis of alliances constructed along a terrain of local authority, powerful traders such as Dinga Singh and Jodha Mal Kuthiala were able to appeal to various levels and kinds of authority, both British and indigenous. Their politics were to a large extent conditioned by their immediate economic considerations. For instance, since Dinga Singh worked in a British company, his relations with the British officials were very cordial. In fact, he was not only a member of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce, but by the end of the 1920s also had been nominated as a member of the Punjab Board of Forests; few Indian merchants won seats on official boards.[77] Similarly, when questioned about Jodha Mal Kuthiala's relations with the Forest Department, his grandson answered that to smooth relations, the public rhetoric was always a ceremonial 'yes sir'.[78] Clearly, financial transactions were smoother if traders tapped the right political avenues. Additional factors were stable finances and regular cash flows, a strong network of people which included political connections and trustworthy employees, and a good knowledge of forests.

While the Forest Department's share from reserved forests was usually much higher than private purchasers, the story was different in protected and unclassed forests. On an average, as evident in Table Two, the Forest Department's share in the extraction of timber was approximately half by the end of the nineteenth century and declined steadily in the first quarter of the twentieth century as private purchasers steadily bought more timber. The story

was very different for fuelwood, most of which was bought from and used in the Kangra region which was directly under British administration. But what is important to reiterate here is that the Forest Department and the trading community shared commercial interests in forests until the beginning of this century.[79]

Table Two: Extraction by Government and Private Agencies

Year	Agency	Timber (cubic ft.)	Fuel (cubic ft.)
1888-89	Govt.	1,215,923 (62.9 %)	4,940,226 (82.2 %)
	Purchasers	716,017	1,063,363
1899-1900	Govt.	1,038,852 (51.6 %)	4,279,715 (81.6 %)
	Purchasers	972,630	962,440
1913-14	Govt.	190,153 (4.4 %)	1,219,651 (25.7 %)
	Purchasers	4,115,457	3,515,899
1928-29	Govt.	1,196,000 (6%)	1,699,000 (30 %)
	Purchasers	2,040,000	2,768,000

Source: Relevant Forest Administration reports of the Punjab

The traders adopted a similar approach in private forests. The hill states of Chamba and Bashahr constituted secure political systems from the seventeenth century under both the Mughals and later under the Sikhs who ruled from Lahore and, demanded periodic demonstrations of allegiance and deference apart from the annual tribute.[80] Following the annexation of Punjab in 1849, the British assumed an active role in the local affairs of Kangra and Kulu which they directly acquired from the Sikhs. They also evinced keen interest in the political affairs of local rajas, notwithstanding the fact that they did not have territorial control over these states. Once the commercial value of forests in Chamba and Kulu was realised, the British sought to open these areas. Given their relative inaccessibility the British never attempted to conquer or annex either Chamba or Bashahr, but they acquired leases which gave them exclusive access to commercially viable forest regions.

However, the importance of forests for the British or, for that matter, for the rajas cannot be inferred from the simple extrapolation of economic interests. Forests were not only about territory and its flora and fauna. They were about people as well who lived around and were dependent upon forests for their livelihood. Thus, forests were also about sites where the rajas could demonstrate their power by exercising their authority over the people. For instance, the British had acquired the commercially valuable forests on a long-term lease of ninety-nine years from the Raja of Chamba in 1864. Forty years later, the next Raja of Chamba wanted his forests back and what makes the

negotiations between him and the Forest Department interesting is the former's claim to his right (as the state) of authority over people[81]:

> I beg leave to state once again how strongly I feel not having the reserved forests under state management. These forests form part and parcel of the Chamba state, and to be deprived of any share in the management is derogatory to the position of the ruler and tends to weaken his authority over his subjects. If the state cannot keep the prestige before the forest department, the authority of the ruler will be looked down upon and the interests of the state will suffer in many ways.

The authority which the Raja refers to was symbolically manifested in court ceremonies. Bernard Cohn has written about the idea of incorporation in the indigenous theory of rulership in India, in which the offering of *nazar* (gift) and *peshkash* (tribute) was part of a raja's ritual act of incorporation.[82] Even as the imperial rule sought to alter rituals in a way that marked the subordination of rajas to the British, most timber traders followed idioms that acknowledged the raja's authority. They supplicated the rajas through symbolic acts of deference, attending the *darbar* (royal court) and presenting gifts were two such gestures. Dinga Singh struck personal friendships with several local rajas in the hills. Jodha Mal Kuthiala had strengthened his close ties with the raja by establishing personal bonds.[83] `It was a shopkeeper's tactic. He was a good businessman', replied his grandson, when questioned about his grandfather's relations with the local rajas.

Conclusion

The Chipko movement in Gopeshwar in Uttar Pradesh was against the allocation of ash timber to a Ludhiana sports firm.[84] This article essentially tells the story of merchant capital which was to expand on the base built in pre-1947 and become a key player and arbitrer of the future of forests in the region. By the first quarter of the twentieth century timber was a major commercial commodity, respected for its economic value, subjected to trade marks and sale rules, and marketed as efficiently and profitably as possible. As a market for timber grew, the manipulation of timber trade became more complex; as the profits and risks in the trade rose, so did the stakes of all concerned. Along with the colonial state, timber traders were able to incorporate pre-existing networks of exchange, create new itineraries of trade, and initiate an outflow of forest products that was unprecedented in its nature. This trading community not only discerned the changing institutional framework of forest management, but it also assessed the commercial risks and insecurities that arose in this enterprise, and was able to successfully nurture and preserve itself despite a colonial overlay. Their community ties and institutions provided the trust and valuable commercial information, both of which were vital to timber trade. It is evident

that while the traders were socially embedded, they also operated selectively within the colonial logic.

The connections which developed between timber and those who bought, and sold and moved it as a commodity undermine any simple state logic. In tracing the ties of this trading community to the state, both invisible (as one traces middlemen known only by name in colonial records) and visible (as some were traced to the residences of their surviving kin and friends) the terrain of indigenous commerce becomes evident. Timber trade left its distinctive stamp on the organisation of indigenous commerce as forest laws determined access to timber and the institutional context underwent alteration. The trading community quickly learnt and relied on a language which spoke to the state – publicly, ceremoniously and rhetorically encapsulated in the phrase, 'yes sir'. On the other hand, the Forest Department relied greatly on an indigenous commercial nexus for information and support networks such as labour. In sum, both the colonial state and timber traders needed each other's resources and acknowledgement to pursue their respective interests in forests, but they also competed for the same profits with different motives. For the state, imperial needs of revenue and state infrastructure were foremost at least until the beginning of the twentieth century. For the timber traders, it was a commercial business venture.

Notes

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List of Abbreviations

Agr.-Agriculture; Govt.-Government; F.R.I.-Forest Research Institute; Ft.-Feet; H.S.A-Himachal State Archives; O.I.O.C.-Oriental and India Office Collection Records; Proc.-Proceedings; P.W.D.-Public Works Department; Rev.-Revenue; N.A.I.-National Archives of India; Secy.-Secretary.

1. Lieutenant-Colonel G.F. Pearson, Report on the Administration of the Forest Department in the Several Provinces under the Government of India, 1870-71 (Calcutta 1872), 9.

2. N.A.I., Forest Despatches from Secretary of State: Revenue & Agricultu Department, 1877-1880, no.11.
3. I make the distinction between timber and wood in commercial terms.Timbe connotes a commodity with specific property rights for specific purposes. It defined variously as a building, building material, wood for suitable ships an lumber. On the other hand wood is defined as a forest, or the 'substance' o trees. In other words, wood has many more meanings and uses that go beyon commercial use.
4. For difference between property and access rights see K. Sivaramakrishnan 'Co-managed Forests in West Bengal: Historical Perspective on Community an Control,' 49, in *Journal of Sustainable Forestry*, 7, 314 (1998), 23-51. While property rights are enforced through legal mechanisms created by the state access can vary in enforceability or justiciability, since it operates under a more hetrogeneous regime of social sanctions which do not always flow from the state.
5. Richard H. Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism 1600-1860* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1995); Ravi Rajan, 'Imperial Environmentalism: The Agendas and Ideologies of Natural Resource Management in British Colonial Forestry 1800-1945', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 1994. Grove and Rajan disagree over where these environmental concerns were developed. Grove places these concerns in colonies while Rajan locates the beginnings in Germany and France. For the difference between these two viewpoints see Mahesh Rangarajan, 'Environmental Histories of South Asia: A Review Essay,' *in Environment and History*, 2, (1996), 129-43.
6. Ramachandra Guha, *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya* (Delhi:Oxford University Press 1989); Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1992)
7. The spatial and social dimension has largely remained within the field of historical geography. A classic work remains Graeme Wynn, *Timber Colony: A Historical Geography of Early Nineteenth Century New Brunswick* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1981).
8. Richard P, Tucker, 'The Commercial Timber Economy Under Two Colonial Regimes in Asia,' in John Dargavel, Kay Dixon and Noel Semple (eds) *Changing Tropical Forests:Historical Perspectives on Today's Challenges in Asia, Australia and Oceania* (Canberra: Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies 1988), 219-229.
9. Richard P. Tucker, 'Forests of the Western Himalaya and the British Colonial System (1815-1914)', in Ajay S. Rawat (ed) *Indian Forestry: A Perspective* (New Delhi:Indus Publishing Company 1993), 163-192.
10. Ibid., 185.
11. Ibid., 183.

12. 'Contested Boundaries: State Policies, Forest Classifications, and Deforestation in the Garhwal Himalayas,' in *Antipode*, 27, 4 (1995), 343-362. For a more nuanced treatment of access and management regimes see her 'Property vs. Control: The State and Forest Management in the Indian Himalaya,' in *Development and Change*, 28, 1 (1997), 71-94.
13. Richard Tucker, 'Non-timber Forest Products Policy in the Western Himalayas under British Rule,' in Richard Grove, Vinita Damodaran & Satpal Sangwan (eds), *Nature and the Orient* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1998), 459-483.
14. N.A.I., Rev. & Agr. (Forests), A, nos. 11-15, letter from C.P. Fisher, Conservator of Forests, Punjab, to the Chief Secretary to Govt. Punjab (April 1908), 30.
15. I specifically refer to the work of K. Sivaramakrishnan; see his 'Forests, politics, and governance in Bengal, 1794-1994,' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Department of Anthropology, Yale University, 1996; 'A Limited Forest Conservancy in Southwest Bengal, 1864-1912,' in *The Journal of Asian Studies* (hereafter JAS), 56, 1 (February 1997), 75-112.
16. For instance see Vasant K. Saberwal, 'Pastoral politics: bureaucratic agendas, shepherd land use practices, and conservation policy in Himachal Pradesh, 1865-1994,' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, School of Forestry, Yale University (1997); Haripriva Rangan, *'Contested Boundaries.'*
17. William Moorecraft and G Trebeck, Travels in the Himalayan provinces of Hindustan and the Panjab, in Ladakh and Kashmir, in Peshawar, Kabul, Kunduz, and Bokhara from 1819-1825, vol. 11, prepared by H. H. Wilson (Delhi 1971. For an excellent overview of pre-colonial society see Chetan Singh, *Natural Premises: Ecology and Peasant Life in the Western Himalaya 1800-1950* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1998).
18. Tapan Raychaudhari and Irfan Habib (eds) *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol 1 (Delhi: Cambridge University Press 1982), 6.
19. J. Ph Vogel, catalogue of the Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba, (Calcutta 1909), 34.
20. The Latin term for trade or markets is *mercatus*; its cognate form *merx* means merchandis; mercor means to buy.
21. See Roy Dilley, *Contesting Markets: A General Introduction to Market Ideology, Imagery and Discourse*', in Roy Dilley (ed) Contesting Markets: Analyses of Ideology, Discourse and Practice (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 1992), 3.
22. Jane Alexander, *Trade, traders and trading in rural Java* (Singapore: Oxford University Press 1987).
23. Jennifer Alexander & Paul Alexander, 'What's a Fair Price? Price-Setting and Trading Partnerships in Javanese Markets,' 495, in *Man: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 26, 3 (September 1991), 493-512.

24. The idea of equating markets with Capitalism is evident in the writings of Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart 1957).
25. See Robert W. Hefner, *Market Cultures: Society and Morality in the New Asian Capitalisms* (Colorado: Westview Press 1998), 9.
26. Mark Granovetter, 'Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness, 481-482, in *American Journal of Sociology*, 91, 3 (November 1985), 481-510.
27. Robert W. Hefner, *Market Cultures*, 10. However, the idea of embeddedness or reembeddedness does not suggest something fixed or unalterable.
28. See C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983).
29. David Washbrook, 'Law, State and Agrarian Society in Colonial India,' in *Modern Asian Studies*, 15, 3 (1981), 646-721. For a broader argument see his 'South Asia, the World System, and World Capitalism,' in *JAS*, 49, 3 (August 1990), 479-508.
30. David W. Rudner had analyzed the social organization and the commercial role of caste in the Chettiar community in South India; see his *Caste and Capitalism in Colonial India:The Nattukottai Chettiars* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1994).
31. See Ritu Birla, 'Tricks of the Trade: The Invisible Hand and Other Regulations of Indigenous Commerce in Late 19th Century India,' paper presented at the *Association of Asian Studies*, Washington (March 1998).
32. Richard P. Tucker, 'The Forests of the Western Himalayas: The Legacy of British Colonial Administration,' 115, in *Journal of Forest History*, 26, 3 (1982), 112-123.
33. For a detailed description of the various types of traders see William Hooey, *A Monograph on Trade and Manufacture in North India* (Lucknow: American Methodist Mission Press, 1880).
34. See Ian J. Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850-1900* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1995).
35. O.I.O.C., E/4/845, Despatches to India and Bengal, no. 99 (22 July 1857).
36. H. Cleghorn, Report on the Forests of the Punjab and the Western Himalaya (Roorkee: 1864), 114.
37. Similarly, the Raja of Bashshar leased his forests to the British in 1864 for a period of fifty years.
38. N.A.I., P.W.D. (Forests), A, no. 113, 6 (March 1865), 12.
39. N.A.I., Progress Report of Forest Administration in Punjab for 1866, 9; O.I.O.C., L/E/594, India Despatches (Forests), 1867-1876, no. 31 (31 August 1870).

40. See Vasant K. Saberwal, 'Bureaucratic agendas and conservation policy in Himachal Pradesh, 1865-1994,' in *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* (hereafter IESHR), 34, 4 (1997), 466-498.
41. O.I.O.C., Rev. & Agr. Proc., (Forests), A, *'Report on the Timber Trade of the Punjab,'* nos. 6-7 (Feb. 1897), 20. The Rajputana line, the North-West railway line from Lahore to Poshawar, and the Lahore-Karachi line generated an enormous demand for timber.
42. R.S. Troup, Indian Forest Utilisation (Calcutta 1913), 288.
43. O.I.O.C., Rev. & Aer. Proe., (Forests), A, nos. 1-4 (Feb. 1893), 8.
44. N.A.I., Progress Report of Forest Administration in the Punjab, 1914 (Lahore 1915), 3.
45. For instance, timber for railways and fuel had entirely different markets and client-base.
46. N.A.I. Rev. & Agr. Proc. (Forests), A, nos. 6-8, *'Report on the Timber Trade of the Punjab,'* Appendix (Feb 1897).
47. J.S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1994), 110-111.
48. O.I.O.C., Rev. & Agr. Proc., (Forests), A, no. 27, *'Report on the Timber Trade of the Punjab,'* (Feb. 1897), 1 1.
49. For instance when the timber company Spedding and Dinga Singh Company acquired leases in the hill state of Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1930s, the leased forests were worth 30 million rupees. The company needed a starting capital of Rs. 2,000,000 to pay the state its share of royalty. The running capital was Rs. 4,000,000 per year; Interview with Raj Kiran, a company clerk in the 1940s (Delhi 1996). The revenue accruing from the Chamba forests alone to the Company in 1939 was Rs. 222,789; Administration Report on the Chamba State for 1939 (Lahore 1940), 2.
50. Report of the Punjab Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, 1929-30 (Calcutta 1930), 206.
51. The department had its share of defrauders from within as well. The case of a forest officer C.F. Amery in the 1870s was hushed up by making him resign quietly. Amery had privately arranged with a firm of timber contractors to manage some forests he had bought illegally from some *jagirdars* in the Simla District; See O.I.O.C., Rev. & Agr. Proc, (Forests), A, no. 2 (Jan. 1869), 14.
52. O.I.O.C., Rev. & Agr. Proc., (Forests), A, no. 27, *'Report on the Timber Trade of the Punjab,'* (Feb. 1897), 11.
53. It was not until the Indian Forest Act of 1927 that the Forest Department was able to introduce a levy on timber and other forest produce in state and private forests, which generated a liquid flow into its exchequer.
54. O.I.O.C., V/9/3410, Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, 1912, vol. 11 (Simla 1913).
55. F.R.I., Punjab Forest Conference, 1922 (Lahore 1922), 15.

56. This was to include systematising the engagement of forest and river-work labour, regularising labour rates, and organising and developing markets for Indian coniferous timber.
57. Richard Tucker, *'The Forests of the Western Himalaya.'*
58. For interrelations between social and economic institutions and reasons why traders utilized specific forms of business association, see Avner Greif, 'Reputation and Coalitions in Medieval Trade: Evidence on the Maghribi Traders,' in *The Journal of Economic History*, XLIX, 4 (December 1989), 857-882; 'Contract Enforceability and Economic Institutions in Early Trade: The Maghribi Traders' Coalition,' in *The American Economic Review*, 83, 3, (June 1993), 525-548. Although the context and time period are different, the manner in which economic and social institutions interacted are very similar.
59. Timber markets were not governed by a unified bank rate. The exchange and state banks up to the 1920s did not act as the primary source of finance. They provided loans which reached the internal money market, but then only by indirect routes and only through the mediation of men whose personal financial standing was well assured. Money could also be raised through indigenous merchants who raised their own capital; see C.J. Baker, 'The Markets,' in Sugata Bose (ed) *Credit, Markets and the Agrarian Economy of Colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1994), 136-196.
Money lent by Indian bankers to Indian traders was at an interest rate that varied between six to twelve per cent; see 'Report on Current Rates of Interest on Loan Transactions in the Punjab,' *Selections from the Records of the Government of the Punjab and its Dependencies* (Lahore 1876), n.s. XXII, 4-13.
60. This was primarily because Burmese traders faced difficulty in raising capital essential for forest leases. See Raymond L. Bryant, *The Political Ecology of Forestry in Burma, 1824-1994* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1997), 101.
61. D.C.J. Ibbetson, Census of 1881, vol. I (Calcutta, 1883), 385.
62. Ibid., 291.
63. See Thackeray, Indian Directory (Calcutta 1941); some of the names mentioned in the directory are Messrs. Tirath Ram Shah and Sons, Nawanshahar of Hazara District, Messrs. Sultan Singh & Co. of Lower Mall, Lahore, Lala Harkishen Lal & Sons, Lahore, and Messrs. Hayat & Sons, Sawmills of Jhelum. For names of other traders also see O.I.O.C., Rev. & Agr. Proc., (Forests), A, nos. 29-42, 'Proccedings of the Forest Conference held at Bilaspur, 21-22 April, 1914,' (June 1915), 210.
64. Methodologically, the strand of oral history used here concerns itself with the transmitted past - the past that the narrators have not personally lived through, but have learnt from earlier generations. The premise upon which I interviewed is that these pasts are complementary. Although the referential frames are different, the concerns traverse similar terrain. I believe that accounts based on collective and individual social memory are not 'ust constructions shaped by the concerns and needs of the present, but they are

more a reconstruction that adapts the image of the past to the beliefs of the present. Since the past in my study is still very recent (spanning a couple of generations), it has not been conceived and elaborated anew to a significant extent, but has been transmitted in a pattern that has endowed the present generation with a common heritage. The period following the nationalisation of forests in the early 1970s witnessed a decline of many of these family groups in the timber business. I am aware that many interviewees narrated stories of their forefathers in a manner which enabled them to establish a more dignified social position than in the present. And most interviewees are embittered with the Indian government for nationalising forests. They argue that timber is traded extensively and much of it is illegal. Some traders still have a tangential connection with the timber trade. While some are in small-time retail business, others are living off the investments their families made in the timber trade in the early part of the century. These accounts provide insight into well-established family values and is confirmed in some particulars with archival data. The interviews were carried out in Jammu, Pathankot, Chandigarh and Delhi.

65. Census of India, Punjab, part 1 (1921), 358. The Khatris comprised 58 per cent of the trading caste in Punjab.

66. Census of India, Punjab, part 1 (1921), 279. Due to legislations regarding ceilings in land holdings, the Hindu undivided family, and the loss of trade in Afghanistan, some of the Khatris moved into other businesses such as banking and moneylending. For instance, they had established the Punjab Material Improvement Society followed by the Punjab Banking Corporation in 1895. The Punjab National Bank in 1895 and the Bharat Insurance Company followed suit in 1896. See Richard G. Fox, *Lions of the Punjab: Culture in the Making* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1985).

67. The other two partners were F.W.V. Ellvers and P.D. Laithon, This was the only British timber company in North India and its name changed to Spedding, Dinga Singh & Company in 1924 when Dinga Singh became a partner; Interview with Mr. Prithi Rishi, Delhi, January 1996. Mr. Rishi was a friend of Sundar Singh, the now deceased son of Dinga Singh.

68. Interview with Raj Kiran, Delhi, April 6, 1995. Raj Kiran was a clerk in Dinga Singh's company in the 1940s. His father also worked as a clerk in the same company at the turn of the century. Relationships between a proprietor and their business clerks were vital, for the continuity and the credit of the family was usually entrusted in the hands of clerks. The clerks often passed on their employment to their sons, so that a hereditary relationship grew between the families of the principals and the clerks; see Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*.

69. Leighton W. Hazlehurst has looked at the town of Ramnagar in the mid 1960s which was a centre for Suds, many of whom had continued as forest lessees in the early post-independence period. See his *Entrepreneurship and the Merchant Castes in a Punjabi City* (Durham: Duke University Press 1966).

70. W. Crooke, The Tribes and Castes of the North-West Province and Oudh (Calcutta: Office of the Suptd. Govt. Printing 1896), 332.
71. Census of India, 191 1; vol. XIV, part I, 502.
72. District Gazetteer, Kangra, A (Lahore 1906). Other significant families were those of Gunga.r Mal Amarchand Banta and Lala Bhagmal Sud who worked in the Kulu and Chamba forests.
73. Based on several interviews with Jaswant Lal Kuthiala, the youngest son of Jodha Mal (Delhi, February 1996), and Joginder Lal Kuthiala, the grandson of Jodha Mal (Jammu, January 1996).
74. Ibid. Joginderlal Kuthiala explained how they got the family name Kuthialas comes from the word *`kothi wallah'* since they supplied all the daily provisions to princely states.
75. See Pamela Kanwar, 'The Horizon from Lower Bazaar,' *Imperial Simla: The Political Culture of the Raj* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1990), 146-224.
76. O.I.O.C., VT 2959, no. 136, Kunwar Chedda Singh, *Kshatriya aur Kshatriyam Kshatriya,* (Agra 1907); VT 14156.g.43, Shri Ghanshyam, *Khatri Kul Chandrika (1950 samavat); VT* 14156.13.g.35, Sarwan Lal Tandana, *The Kshatriya Prakasha,* Bombay (1891); J.S. Grewal, 'Business Communities of Punjab,' in D. Tripathi (ed) *Business Communities of India:A Historical Perspective* (New Delhi: Manohar 1984), 209-224.
77. Report of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce for the year 1912 (Delhi 1913), 22.
78. Joginder Singh Kuthiala (Jammu, February 1996).
79. There is ample evidence of this in general reports on forests for the time period. For a comprehensive account see Vasant Saberwal, "Bureaucratic agendas and conservation policy," *TESHR*, especially, 486-489.
80. See Chetan Singh, 'Forests, Pastoralists and Agrarian Society in Mughal India,' in David Arnold and Ramachandra Guha (eds) *Nature, Culture, Imperialism: Essays on the Environmental History of South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1995), 21-48; B.R. Grover, *'Relationship between the Lahore Darbar and Punjab Hill Chief during the first half of the 19th Century till 1846,'* Punjab History Conference, 17th session, Oct. 8-10 (1982), 230-240.
81. N.A.I., Rev. & Agr. (Forests), A, nos. 12-15, letter from the Raja of Chamba to the Commissioner, Lahore division (Oct. 6, 1906), 10.
82. Bernard Cohn, 'Representing Authority in Victoria India,' 172, in Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger (eds) *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983), 165-209.
83. The raja's sister had tied a *rakhi* to Jodhamal.
84. See Ramachandra Guha, *Unquiet Woods.*

Green Revolution and Agro-industrialisation: A Case Study of Primary Food Processing Industries in the Indian Punjab

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The economy of the Indian Punjab is undergoing a structural crisis at present in terms of slow down of overall growth especially in agriculture, rising unemployment, and social tensions after experiencing the Green Revolution in the 1970s and the early 1980s. This paper attempts an understanding of the process of agro-industrialisation in the Indian Punjab with a case study of small scale primary food processing industries. It looks into the emergence and growth of two such industries in relation to agricultural growth, their output and employment linkages and the entrepreneurial aspects in order to locate their potential role for the state economy. Though there have been significant production and consumption linkage effect of agro-expansion in general, the employment linkages of primary food processing industries are weak in terms of nature of employment and sources of labour. The entrepreneurship has been more of trading type and the investment of agricultural surplus in the wake of Green Revolution has not fructified into the industrial sector, nor have the farmers been able to make a successful entry. Consequently, the benefits of agro-industrialisation has not been realised by the state economy

Introduction

The phenomenon of Green Revolution in Indian agriculture, which was in fact experienced only by a few crops (mainly wheat and rice) and a few regions (Punjab, Haryana, and parts of U P, A P and Tamilnadu) has been subjected to a very critical analysis and evaluation from various aspects by the researchers. However, the process of agro-industrialisation which accompanied and followed this transformation of the agrarian sector in these regions has not been studied in significant detail, especially in Punjab.[1] The understanding of various aspects of this process is important because agro-industrialisation is a step towards industrialisation in the early stages of development in agricultural economies. In this context, this study looks at the process of agro-industrialisation with special

reference to food processing industries, as it took place in Punjab during the Green Revolution and post-Green Revolution period.

The significance of agro-industries lies in the fact that they are supposed to create employment opportunities, mobilise investible resources from the rural sector, promote agricultural production, make use of local resources, add value to the farm product, improve product quality, achieve efficient marketing, combat rural-urban migration and promote industrialisation in an agricultural economy. According to a criterion laid down by the Indian Planning Commission and approved by the National Development Council, an agro-industry is one which:

a) encourages greater input into agriculture;
b) leads to better processing and conversion of agricultural commodities;
c) ensures high returns on processed goods, and/or
d) increases agricultural productivity.[2]

Alternately, there are two types of agro-industries - processing and servicing - industries which utilise agricultural produce as inputs, and those which produce agricultural inputs and services. Since the present study deals only with the processing industries, it is important to look at the expected role of these industries in the development process. Agro-processing industries are those 'which use not less than 50 per cent of the raw material from agriculture and where the value added as a result of the processing undertaken is not more than 50 per cent of the final value of output'.[3]

Though the role of agro processing industries depends on the nature of the produce and the type of processing involved, they are expected to play, on a-priori grounds, an important role in promoting agricultural development at least in those areas from where the raw materials are drawn. Viewed from this angle, an assessment of the feedback effects of processing industries on the business of farming in the hinterland, forms an important part of the role of processing industries in development.

The second facet of their role is to bring about a greater integration in agricultural marketing. This integration may be vertical or horizontal. Whereas the former refers to the linking together of successive functions or operations in the production or marketing of a product under unified control, the latter means linking of different business units in the same stage of production or marketing under unified control. Whatever may be the form of integration, processing generally leads to the tying up of different on-farm and off-farm functions such as production, storage, transportation, wholesaling and distribution.[4] In fact, the modern processing plants not only create form utilities, but their integrated structure, combining processing and distribution, has led to the adding of place and time utilities as well.[5] Whereas form utility refers to value addition by way of processing or manufacturing which results in change in the form of produce, the time and place utilities are those types of value addition which take place when products are made available in specific places and at specific time. This value addition of time and place is performed by industries like processing units, and cold storage units.

Food processing industries have been and are among the most important industries during the early stages of industrialisation of an agricultural economy in almost all the countries of the world and it seems to be a logical step in the process of industrialisation.[6] The growth of these industries not only reduces raw material losses and generates off-farm employment, but also encourages agricultural production through assured market and remunerative prices and adds value to the primary product in various ways. The processed foods can be promising items in the exports from the developing countries and thus, may help in saving and earning foreign exchange.[7] Apart from this, these industries stimulate the growth of other industries like packaging, processing equipment, by-product extraction, etc.. as a result of multiplier effect.

The food processing industry can broadly be classified into two categories - primary and secondary. Primary processing industries process the agricultural output into a standard product with small costs, often relying on a by-product for profitability. These industries are generally less capital intensive and less sophisticated, and perform an essential function even in developing economies. It includes preserving and simple processing like paddy milling, wheat milling, etc. On the other hand, secondary processing industries use the products of primary processing industries as inputs to produce identifiable, differentiated, packaged food, often marketed with branding, advertising and promotion and they make real or apparent product innovations. These industries include baking, vegetable oils, instant foods, etc.[8]

The above discussion reveals that food processing industries lead to greater agricultural stability through the price and market support, greater employment opportunities and increased value addition to the primary product by way of creating time, place and form utilities. It is from these points of view that the proposed study assumes significance in the context of an agriculturally developed regional economy of Punjab, where large agricultural surpluses - food grain as well as investible - are available. The type of transformation which Punjab has had, may be witnessed by the whole country, when and if agricultural growth takes place. Therefore, it becomes desirable to look at the relevance of these industries in forging linkages between agriculture and industry and in sustaining the growth of agriculture and the rural sector because this sector in Punjab is experiencing the problems of high cost of cultivation, ecological degradation, near stagnant yields (especially in two major crops - wheat and rice) and the spectre of unemployment and underemployment.

An attempt has been made in this paper to look at the structure and functioning of the primary food processing industries in a Green Revolution region - Punjab, with the help of a sample study of two locally predominant primary food processing industries - paddy milling and oilseeds milling. Food products industry is one of the major industries of Punjab's industrial sector, both registered as well unregistered. It accounts for 15 per cent of the total number of units as well as employment in the registered factory sector of the State.[9] And in the unregistered sector, which accounted for 70 per cent of total industrial

workforce of the state in the mid 1980s, this industry had 80 per cent of its fixed assets, 60 percent of employment, 32 per cent of value added and 14 per cent of output.[10] Thus, the food processing industry in Punjab is dominated by small scale and unregistered units especially in primary food processing sector. And the sector grew much faster (14-18 per cent compound rate of growth per annum) than the factory sector (4-12 per cent) during the 1980s in terms of number of units, employment, fixed investment and output.[11] The employment, output and value added in the registered sector of this industry grew at rates of 4.35 per cent, 8.7 per cent and 7.9 per cent per annum respectively during the 1980s.[12] Market operations have an important bearing on the farming community who have become commodity producers. The ratio of marketed surplus to total production in wheat and rice has gone upto 70 per cent even in the case of small farmers with holdings of less than 10 acres each.[13] In this situation, farm surpluses can give a severe blow to the State economy because the production of food grains in other (consuming) States is also coming up fast. It is in this context that the study of food processing industries assumes significance, since they not only create time, place and form utilities and add value to the product, but also promote agricultural production through price and market support. Besides, they are a potential source of employment and an outlet for investment of agricultural surpluses. For large farmers, the Green Revolution has led to the accumulation of agricultural surpluses which have mostly been used for luxury consumption and in sectors like transport.[14] It is generally argued that farmers of Punjab lack industrial expertise and skill, and, hence, are unable to compete in the industrial sector where industry, at present, is mainly in the hands of the non-farming communities of the Hindu traders and the Ramgarhias (community of blacksmiths and carpenters by profession). An examination of the nature and background of entrepreneurs in food processing industry will provide inferences about the quality and potential of farmer entrepreneurs in this agriculture-related industry. Could it be possible for these people to enter and compete in the industrial field through food processing industries?

Further, the nature and sources of labour in these industries is an aspect to be studied because these industries, believed to be labour intensive, may be able to generate employment for the rural labour; also the nature and organisation of work may not require, in general, highly skilled labour to any large extent.

Objectives

The present study looks at the growth, structure and organisation of food processing industries in Punjab - a predominantly agricultural economy which is faced with the problems of high cost of cultivation, lack of diversification, rural unemployment and under-employment, and narrow industrial base. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. A study of the nature and size of major primary food processing industries in the state;

2. Examination of labour and value addition linkages of these industries; and
3. Study of investment pattern, sources of funds and use of agricultural surplus in this sector.

Whereas size and structure are studied in order to understand the dynamics of operations of this sector, an examination of the nature and sources of labour in food processing industries is an attempt to find out whether employment is seasonal or permanent, and to know who are the people employed in these industries? The analysis of nature and background of entrepreneurship and the source of investible funds provides an idea about the integration between marketing and processing, extent of investment of agricultural surpluses and the potential for investment by the farmers. The backward as well as forward integration has been studied by collecting information regarding the ownership of stores, transport and distributional network by the processors and their professional background, and the present allied/main occupation.

Methodology

Since primary processing industries dominate the industrial scene, the study pertains to these industries, both in terms of secondary data based analysis as well as primary survey based investigation. So far as the selection of a sample of food processing industries was concerned, a choice of certain categories of industry was essential since the sector is so diverse that it encompasses all processing activities from the primary to the highly sophisticated processing. Keeping in view the employment and value added significance, and the relevance of industries to the cropping pattern in the State, it was decided to take a sample of paddy mills and oilseeds mills, both of which, in most cases, were in the small scale sector. These two industries (paddy milling and oilseeds milling) accounted for 44 per cent of units, 66 per cent of employment, 71 per cent of fixed investment, and 86 per cent of output of small scale food processing sector of the state in the late 1980s.[15] And in the small scale agro processing sector of the state, paddy mills alone accounted for 39 per cent of output, 14 per cent of net value added, and 27 per cent of employment. The respective shares of oilseeds milling sector were 5 per cent, 2 per cent, and 3 per cent.[16]

Since Punjab has regional diversity both in agricultural as well as industrial development, it was considered more desirable and useful to take the sample of selected industries from two different districts - one, agriculturally and industrially developed, and the other relatively backward in both these respects. Viewed from this angle, and with an element of convenience, Ludhiana and Bathinda seemed to be the logical choices. Ludhiana, as is well known, is the pioneer in both agricultural as well as industrial development. It has the highest yields of the major crops in the State as well as in the country. Industrially also, the district stands apart, accounting for 29 per cent of the industrial employment in the organised sector of the State. It is the production centre of many consumer durables like bicycles and components, sewing machines, hosiery garments, and

80 percent in the case of small farms and about 95 per cent for large farms by the mid 1980s.[22]

By late 1980s, there were more than 1400 rice mills in the State[23] with a greater concentration in the central paddy belt of the state (Table 1). These rice mills accounted for 39 per cent of the output, 27 per cent of employment and 14 per cent of net value added in the small scale sector of the state.[24] Within the small scale food processing sector, rice mills now account for 20 per cent of number of units, 50 per cent of employment and fixed investment, and 70 per cent of production.[25] It was found that the milling capacity in the State was unevenly distributed among districts. The districts of Bathinda, Ludhiana, Faridkot and Jalandhar, which adopted paddy cultivation relatively recently were found to be deficit in paddy processing capacity. This led to inter-district movement of paddy for processing or periodic closure of mills which in turn increased the milling cost of paddy.[26] The 1980s saw a phenomenal growth of rice mills as compared to the 1970s. Locationally also, the growth was mainly in the cotton belt of the State i.e. in the districts of Sangrur, Bathinda, and Faridkot which took to paddy cultivation somewhat later (Table 1).

Table 1: Growth of Rice Mills in Punjab (District-wise number of mills)

District	1971/72	1979/80	1987/88
Amritsar	64	75	166
Gurdaspur	55	51	154
Ferozpur	45	71	180
Patiala	32	33	230
Kapurthala	24	55	109
Hoshiarpur	15	22	33
Bathinda	--	1	40
Ludhiana	--	7	75
Sangrur	--	58	200
Ropar	--	10	30
Jalandhar	--	7	43
Faridkot	--	54	141
Total	235	444	1401

Source: V K Gupta and P S George: *Modernisation of Rice Processing Industry in Punjab,* CMA Monograph No. 54, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, Oct. 1974, p. 20; and Directorate of Industries, Punjab, Chandigarh.

A major proportion of paddy (60 to 70 per cent of total market arrivals) in Punjab was purchased by the rice millers, followed by the Food Corporation of India and the State agencies. However, the share of procurement agencies in paddy purchases in the State has risen significantly in the recent past.[27]

Edible oils industry is another of the predominantly primary processing industries in Punjab State accounting for 5 per cent of output, about 2 per cent of net value added and 4.5 per cent of total employment in the small scale sector of the state.[28] Within the small scale food processing sector, oil mills account for more than 6 per cent of number of units, employment, production and 8 per cent of fixed investment.[29] The origin of this industry in Punjab can be traced to the conventional Bullock Ghani system and the village presses (Kohlus).[30] But over time, due to the technological changes and the increased volume of oilseeds production, the milling of oilseeds is now being performed on a larger, mechanised, industrial scale (Table 2).

Table 2: Growth of Small Scale Oil Mills in Punjab
(District-wise number of mills)

Year	1979/80			1987/88		
District	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Amritsar	--	--	--	10	12	22
Bathinda	--	--	--	3	17	20
Faridkot	1	39	40	7	56	63
Ferozpur	--	--	--	--	2	2
Gurdaspur	5	13	18	21	50	71
Hoshiarpur	--	--	--	7	4	11
Jalandhar	1	3	4	9	16	25
Kapurthala	--	--	--	1	6	7
Ludhiana	1	11	12	9	23	32
Patiala	3	15	18	6	14	20
Ropar	5	10	15	5	11	16
Sangrur	--	--	--	--	3	3
Total	16	91	107	78	214	292

Source: Directorate of Industries, Punjab, Chandigarh.

Locationally, oil mills became more rural due to the availability of infrastructure and the incentives by the government in these areas. This happened mainly in the districts of Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, and Amritsar. It is estimated that on an average, 30 per cent oil is recovered and 45 per cent oil cakes are produced from edible oilseeds. The remaining portion of the oilseeds comprises waste. The oil cakes produced in the expeller process contain 7 to 8 per cent oil. About 55 per cent of the total expeller oil cakes in India is used as cattle feed, whereas the remaining 45 per cent is processed by solvent extraction plants. This process

gives 6 per cent oil, 92.2 per cent oil cake and 1.8 per cent wastage.[31] There were 31 solvent extraction units in Punjab in 1984.[32]

Patterns of Ownership

The survey revealed that most of the units in both the industries in the two districts were owned by partners and in most cases, the number of partners were 2 or 3 and they were members of the same family (Tables 3 & 4). This points to the family-concern type of patterns of industrial ownership in a developing economy.

The most predominant type of ownership in rice milling was partnership in both the districts. Almost all the mills surveyed in both the districts had partnership form of ownership.[33] But so far as the number of partners in each unit were concerned, the majority of the mills (62 per cent) had 2 or 3 partners each. But there were even mills having 6 or more partners (26 per cent) (Tables 3 & 4). As far as the oil mills were concerned, the dominant type of ownership was partnership with 90 per cent of the units having such an organisation. This was so in both the districts. But the partners, in most cases, were family members only. As far as the nature of partnership was concerned, it was more widely distributed in Bathinda district (Tables 3 & 4).

Table 3: Distribution of Primary Processing Industries by Type of Ownership (Number of units)

Ownership Type	District and Industry								
	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Both		
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both
Proprietary	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3
Partnership	10	9	19	9	9	18	19	18	37
Total	10	10	20	10	10	20	20	20	40

Note: (tables 1- 13): RM-rice mills, OM-oil mills, and Both rice mills and oil mills taken together.
Source: (tables 1-13): Primary Survey.

Table 4: Nature of Partnership in Primary Processing Industries by Number of Partners

Number of Partners	Districts and Industries (No.of Units)								
	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Both		
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both
2 and 3	7	9	16	5	5	10	12	14	26
4 and 5	1	0	1	1	2	3	2	2	4
6 & above	2	0	2	3	2	5	5	2	7
Total	10	9	19	9	9	18	19	18	37

But here, it is pertinent to note that this nature of ownership (i.e. large number of partners) should not be taken to mean that diversification is taking place in ownership right in the primary processing industries, and that the grip of the joint family or family concern type of ownership is breaking down. In most of these cases, the partners were the members of the same family and generally directly related to the major owner, like sons, wife or brothers. However, there were a few instances of partnership between persons or families belonging to two different occupations and/or communities. A study of the family history of 18 trading firms in Punjab in the early 1970s also found that partnership in rice milling was basically an extension of partnership in grain trade and it was only partnership between immediate members of the same family.[34]

Green Revolution and Growth of Food Processing

On an average, the units were less than 10 years old and thus happened to be the direct result of increased agricultural output and prosperity of the Green Revolution period. But, the units in Ludhiana were relatively old, perhaps due to the lead the district took in both agricultural and industrial development. The emergence pattern (year of origin) suggests that almost all the rice mills surveyed were started only after the mid-1970s, most of them in the 1980s (Table 5). This is understandable since paddy cultivation became prominent in the State only in the early 1970s, and as a result, the rice mills sprang up in the subsequent years. Another study also revealed that more than two-third of the agro units, especially the large scale ones, were a post-1970 phenomenon.[35]

Since oilseeds had been a significant crop, both area as well as production-wise, even before the advent of Green Revolution, the emergence pattern of oil mills suggests no concentration during a particular period.[36] In fact,

there is substantial evidence that the area under oilseed crops and the production of oilseeds have been adversely affected by the Green Revolution crops in the State.[37] Thus, the surveyed mills did not show any evidence of mushrooming of oil mills during any particular period. There were among the sampled mills, even mills set up before 1975 (Table 5).[38]

Further, the capacity and working period of the rice mills in the two districts suggests that the mills in agriculturally and otherwise developed district had much larger capacity (almost all the mills had a capacity of 2 tonnes/hour or more each) and longer working period (5 to 7 months for all) compared to the ones in the relatively backward Bhatinda district.

Table 5: Distribution of Primary Processing Industries by Year of Origin (District and Industry-wise Number of Units)

Year of Origin	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Both		
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both
Upto 1975	0	2	2	1	2	3	1	4	5
1976-1980	3	3	6	3	2	5	6	5	11
1981-1985	7	2	9	6	4	10	13	6	19
1986	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	5	5
Total	10	10	20	10	10	20	20	20	40

Here, the average capacity was only 1.6 tonnes/hour, with 60 per cent of the mills having a capacity below 2 tonnes/hour each and 20 per cent of them working only for less than 5 months in a year.[39] The larger capacity and longer working period for the Ludhiana mills was due to the existence of the largest grain market of Asia (Khanna) in the district and the intensive cultivation of paddy in the district.

Also, the market and infrastructural facilities must have facilitated the relatively large-size and long-duration working of the rice mills. The large- sized mills will naturally require high initial and overall fixed capital investment and working capital. The data in table 6 confirms this wherein, on an average, Ludhiana mills had relatively large initial and present capital investment and much higher working capital requirements and average employment per unit.

Unlike rice milling, oil milling is not so seasonal in nature because two types of oil seeds - cotton and mustard - which are kharif and rabi crops

respectively are processed. However, oil mills also generally operate less than the full period of twelve months. But, still 60 per cent of the mills were able to operate for periods as long as 9 months or more. Only two mills in Bathinda district reported their operation period to be less than or just six months.

One reason for the low capacity utilisation was the non-availability of oilseeds (mustard and cotton seed) in sufficient quantity within the State. Interestingly, most of the mills were obtaining a major part of their raw material supplies from neighbouring States like Rajasthan and Haryana. This was making these mills footloose in their character like many other industries in the State such as bicycles, auto parts, and woollen hosiery. They are called footloose because they obtain their raw materials from outside and have their markets outside the State.

Though the rice mills in Ludhiana were older, the average initial fixed capital investment was still higher, perhaps due to the large size of the mills in the district. This large size of the Ludhiana district rice mills was evident from the employment figures also (Table 6). Whereas no mill in Bathinda had more than 40 workers, the mills in Ludhiana district employed 40 to 80 workers in a majority of the units.[40] But, there was not much of variation in the employment of skilled workers, except for one of the mills in Ludhiana which had more than 10 skilled workers. This may perhaps be either due to the limitation of need of skilled workers after a particular scale or because of the higher skill levels of common workers in Ludhiana where they must be performing the jobs of a skilled worker as well. This kind of substitution of workers cannot be ruled out in Punjab and particularly Ludhiana, where indigenous technologies have been in use for some time.

Table 6: Average Age and Size of Primary Processing Units by Investment, Employment, Working capital and Capacity

Average Variable	Districts and industries (No. of units)								
	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Both		
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both
Age of unit (years)	8.6	9.8	9.2	7.4	9.7	8.55	8	9.75	8.875
Fixed initial	5.9	4.47	5.18	5. 5	4.24	4.87	5.7	4.35	5.02
Capital investment present (Rs. lakh)	13.4	8.5	10.95	7.8	7.8	7.8	10.6	8.15	9.37
Employment Total (workers)	51	15	33	25	21	23	38	18	28
Skilled	8	2	5	5	3	4	6	3	4.5
Working capital (Rs. lakh)	16.8	7.6	12.2	9.6	5.8	7.7	13.2	6.7	9.95
Capacity (tonnes/hour)	2.8	5(ex- - pellers)		1.6	4(ex- - pellers)		2.2	4.5(ex- - pellers)	

The size of the oil mills in terms of number of expellers, initial fixed investment and present fixed capital investment did not show any large variations across districts. Most of the mills (85 per cent) were operating in shifts with a duration of 12 hours each. But, in terms of employment size, the units in Bathinda seemed to be relatively large with 40 per cent of them employing more than 20 workers each, though the predominant ones were those employing between 11 to 20 workers each. These units in Bathinda had more skilled workers per unit, with 70 per cent of them having 3 or more skilled workers each. It was so only in 30 per cent of units in Ludhiana (Table 6).

This clearly points to the effects of earlier and higher agricultural growth on the process of industrialisation in predominantly agricultural economies. Higher agricultural growth not only makes larger marketable surpluses available for processing, but also provides markets for processed products and funds for

investment outside agriculture. The units in the agriculturally developed district were not only large in capacity but also were working for longer periods.

Capacity Utilization in Rice Mills

Due to the seasonal operations of rice mills, there is bound to be under-utilisation of capacity. But, for the mills engaged in commercial operations, namely, buying, selling and storage of paddy and rice, as well as processing, the optimum level of capacity utilization may occur at comparatively low levels of utilization. While fixed costs decline as the level of capacity utilization increases, this can only be achieved by incurring a significant increase in variable costs both in milling (wages, fuel etc.), and in the purchase, storage and transport of paddy and rice. The cost of paddy purchase is the major element in variable costs, and the major element in total operating costs. Earlier studies on India[41] indicate that the cost of paddy frequently accounts for 90 per cent or more of the total operating costs.

There are considerable risks involved in locking up large quantities of capital by storing paddy over long periods due to the uncertainty of seasonal price movements. Given these risks, and the fact that variable costs constitute such a large proportion of total operating costs, decrease in the level of average costs as a result of increases in capacity utilisation is insignificant in the context of the total business operations. Thus, the level of installed capacity and therefore effective capacity, will reflect millers' preference for milling large quantities of paddy within a short period of time, enabling them to take full advantage of favourable movements in rice prices. Here, low throughputs do not indicate under-utilisation of capacity and they are determined by the price of paddy and the difficulty of predicting future prices of rice. Therefore, significant changes in government price policy with respect to paddy and rice also affect the level of optimum capacity.[42]

Sale of Products and By-Products

The functioning of an industrial unit depends a great deal on the efficiency of financial transactions of the firm. As regards the rice mills, 75 per cent of the rice milled goes to the government as levy quota,[43] thus leaving behind only 25 per cent for sale in the open market. The question asked was how much time it took to receive payment for this 25 per cent of rice sold to the traders in the open market.

The survey revealed that almost all the rice millers were able to obtain payments for their sales within 15 days. In some cases, even cash transactions were being practised. Custom- milling is in practice among the rice mills in Punjab. The millers do custom-milling for the wholesale traders and the government at the rate of Rs. 5 per quintal. This rate was only Rs. 2.25 per quintal in the early 1970s. Besides this rate, the millers retain paddy husk and rice

bran (the thin brown coating on the grain under the husk) which are now being marketed on a large scale in Punjab. Whereas rice bran is being used extensively in the manufacture of edible and non-edible oils, rice husk is used for steaming purposes in various industries like hosiery, oil milling, etc..

A few years ago, rice husk was a great nuisance to rice mill owners. They used to invite tenders to remove it from the mill compounds. Today, it is being used to generate steam and electricity. The husk is fed to boilers in place of coal to generate steam required for making partboiled rice. The excess steam is diverted to a turbine to generate electricity for the mill and run motors required in rice processing. Many of the mills today produce their own electricity, while some of them sell it. However, the calorific value of rice husk is only 66 per cent of coal, but for a rice mill owner it comes almost free. Even in the open market, husk was being sold at the rate of Rs. 50 per quintal in the early 1990s.

Similarly, rice bran is another very valuable by-product. If processed within a day of dehusking, rice bran yields an edible oil for which there are many extraction plants in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu. If not used quickly, rice bran is used for poultry and livestock feed manufacturing. Rice bran inedible oil is one of the best leather conditioners and is extensively used in the soap and pharmaceutical industry. Rice bran was being traded in Punjab at the rate of Rs. 2 per Kg. during the early 1990s.

The financial transactions of oil mills with regard to the sales of their output showed that there was no consistent pattern of receiving payments for sales of output. It varied between less than a week to about a month for different mills by different customers.

On the whole, besides some basic similarities in the organisation and functioning of rice mills in the two districts, there were clear differences in certain respects like size and working of the mills, all mainly due to the low level of development in one district in terms of agricultural production, rice cultivation, industrial progress, infrastructure etc. Thus, the economies of the districts, as such, had a significant impact on the functioning, structure and performance of the paddy milling industry in the two districts.

The comparative picture of the two districts in oil mills showed that the average age of the oil mills in both the districts was the same. This was so due to the fact that the southern region of Punjab, of which Bathinda is a part, was well known for its mustard and rapeseed production until the advent of irrigation and Green Revolution in this region. Thus, the Bathinda district has an equally strong and old history in oilseeds as Ludhiana might claim. Though the oil mills in Ludhiana had an edge over those in Bathinda in terms of size of unit, the average employment was found to be higher in oil mills in Bathinda district. This was due to the low level of mechanisation in oil mills in the district. For example, if there is an elevator in the mill, less number of workers are required.

Patterns and Nature of Employment

One of the major objectives of the study was to look into the nature and type of employment. The data on workers' background raises serious questions about the significance of such type of industries for the local economy from the employment generation point of view. Though both the industries provided only seasonal employment to workers, the startling fact that emerged was that most of the workers were migrants from States like UP, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, and West Bengal. No unit had all the workers from Punjab state alone (Table 7). In all the mills, the labour (unskilled) came from States like U P, Bihar and West Bengal. These workers were not only willing to work under any condition but also at relatively low wages which seem to be at par with agricultural wages in the State, though they are the highest in the country (Table 8).

Table 7: Distribution of Primary Processing Industries by Workers' Background (District and Sector-wise)

Background State	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Both		
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both
Punjab/UP	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Punjab/UP/ Bihar	8	2	10	3	0	3	11	2	13
UP/Bihar	1	6	7	4	9	13	5	15	20
UP/HP	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
UP/Bihar/ West Bengal	1	0	1	3	0	3	4	0	4
All	10	10	20	10	10	20	20	20	40

Table 8: Operation-wise Daily Agricultural Wages in Some States in 1990 (Rs.\day of 8 hours for male workers)

State and (District)	Operation			
	Harvesting	Other Agril. labour	Carpenter	Blacksmith
Assam(Golaghat)	22.00	30.00	40.00	--
Gujarat(Kaira)	15.00	15.00	40.00	40.00
Haryana(Panipat)	27.75	--	--	--
Himachal(Chowri)	20.00	20.00	45.00	40.00
Kerala(Kozhikode)	--	36.00	57.00	--
P.(Hoshangabad)	17.00	17.00	22.00	20.00
Orissa(Balasore)	25.00	25.00	35.00	30.00
Punjab(Ludhiana)	45.00(Sept.) 50.00(Oct.)	33.00(Sept.) 45.00(Oct.)	80.00	80.00
Rajasthan(Kota)	20.00	--	--	--
Tamilnadu(Thanjavur)	--	20.00	--	--
U.P. (Varanasi)	20.00	20.00	--	--

Source: Agricultural Situation in India, Feb. 1991, Pp.807 -808.

The skilled workers (not all of them), however, were from Punjab. Besides, all the clerical and managerial staff were also from the State itself. The most important reason cited by the millers for the absence of local Punjabi workers in this industry was their 'status consciousness' and refusal to do manual work in such a primary industry. The low wages was another factor responsible for their absence. On the other hand, migrant labour was available at relatively low wages and worked for longer hours. Therefore, the entrepreneurs preferred migrant labour.

Further, the employment in this industry is seasonal because most of the units operate for 6 months during a year.[44] Thus, except for a few permanent employees like accountants, chowkidars, etc., the other skilled and unskilled workers face seasonal unemployment, though of course some of them find employment in the agricultural and rural activities during the slack months. Another study also found that only about 78 per cent of the total employment was permanent in agro units. The extent of seasonal and casual employment was much more higher (44.7) in small scale units as against only 19 per cent in large units. Further, the employment was much more seasonal in agro-processing sector than in input-supplying sector. More than one-third of the workers were unskilled and their proportion was particularly high in agro-processing units; 38 per cent of the workers were migrants and their proportion was higher in agro-processing (43.4) than in input-supplying units (21.1).[45]

Most of the mills experienced labour shortage during the harvest season because the wages in agriculture, in general, and during the harvest season in

particular, were very high in the State (Table 8). As in rice mills, the workers of oil mills also were mainly migrants from States like UP, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh. In all the mills, the predominant majority of workers belonged to the States of UP and Bihar. Here too, the absence of local Punjabi workers was the result of factors discussed in this context in the case of rice mills. The working conditions in Punjab industry, in general, are long and strenuous and wages are low. Thus, what may be acceptable to a 'Bhaiya' (a migrant from U.P. or Bihar) may not be accepted by a Punjabi.[46]

Location of the Processing Units

Historical experience suggests that the primary processing industries are generally expected to be located near the centres of production of raw-materials.[47] The Punjab State as a whole is known for its agricultural surpluses and is a small State with well-developed infrastructure which has led largely to the mitigation of rural-urban disparities to a large extent. Yet, the regional disparities within the State can provide scope for the study of location patterns of primary processing industries.

In this context, whereas most of the oil mills in Ludhiana attributed their location in the district to the availability of raw materials and markets, and to the family background of the owners/entrepreneurs, in Bathinda, family background and the availability of government incentives were stated to be the major factors responsible for the location of units in the district (Table 9). The relatively lesser importance of the raw material factor in Ludhiana was due to the emerging footloose character of the oil mills because this central part of the State has lost in terms of its contribution to the production of oilseeds. The oil mills are dependent on imports of oilseeds from the States of Rajasthan and Haryana. This was very much a prevalent factor among the surveyed oil mills.

Whereas availability of raw materials and family background were responsible for the location of rice mills around Khanna in Ludhiana, in Bathinda, apart from these two factors, availability of government incentives was also found to be important (Table 9). This was so because Bathinda, being one of the centrally backward districts in the State, enjoyed certain government incentives, which along with the availability of raw materials in certain pockets of the district, attracted investment in rice mills. The predominance of factors of market availability and family background suggests that the Indian entrepreneur is still not free from his background and has not turned into an industrial capitalist.

Table 9: Frequency Distribution of Factors Responsible for the Choice of Location of Primary Processing Industries Districts and Industries (No. of Units)

Factor	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Both		
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both
Availability of raw material (ARM)	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	2
Family background (FB)	0	0	0	3	3	6	3	3	6
ARM and FB	8	0	8	0	1	1	8	1	9
ARM and Market	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
ARM and availability of infrastructure	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	2
ARM and govt. incentives	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Market and FB	0	8	8	0	1	1	0	9	9
FB and availability of govt. incentives	0	0	0	6	1	7	6	1	7
ARM, FB and govt. incentives	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Market, FB and infrastructure	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2
All	10	10	20	10	10	20	20	20	40

It is pertinent to note here that most of the predominant industries in the district of Ludhiana such as bicycle and components, steel rerolling, hosiery and some other rubber and metal based industries are footloose. But the acquisition of the footloose character by an industry like oil milling points to the market oriented and linkage- based production system of the units in Ludhiana wherein oil mills supply a major part of their output to vanaspati and ghee mills in the district, the State and the adjoining centres of vanaspati production. Besides, Ludhiana is the largest trade centre of the State and houses the largest grain market in Asia (Khanna).

Thus, the growth and survival of the oil mills is obtained, even without it being a centre of raw material. Even the oil mills of Bathinda district are dependent on this centre (Ludhiana) for their requirements of markets and machinery, though the district itself has an edible oil refining unit in Bathinda city.[48] Most of the vanaspati units are located in the towns of Khanna, Doraha (both Ludhiana district), Rajpura (Patiala), and Amritsar, besides Ludhiana itself.

Nature and Pattern of Entrepreneurship

In rice-milling, the immediate owners of the units had their background in occupations like agro-industry, commission agencies, and food grains trade. The pattern of father's occupation reveals that 60 per cent of the units have been set up by the offsprings of commission agents.[49] In both Ludhiana and Bathinda, most of the entrepreneurs in rice-milling had fathers engaged in a commission agency or agriculture (Tables 10 and 11).

Similarly, in the oil-milling industry, the owners predominantly belonged to trading and merchant occupations. In Bathinda, of the ten oil mill entrepreneurs studied, nine had fathers engaged in a commission agency. On the other hand, in Ludhiana, the ownership of oil mills originated from many walks of life, like trade, industry, shopkeeping and moneylending, both in terms of owner's previous occupation as well as father's occupation. In terms of caste background, the *Banias* (a caste which came to be looked upon as synonymous with business) own 60 per cent of the rice mills in both the districts (Table 12). Only 4 units in both the industries were owned by those with a background in agriculture and they came up in the 1980s.

Table 10: Number of Primary Processing Units by Owners' Previous Occupational Background by District and Industry

Occupational Category	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Total
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	
Agriculturist	1	0	1	2	1	3	4
Commission agent/foodgrain trader	2	1	3	2	4	6	9
Merchant/trader	1	2	3	1	2	3	6
Industrialist	3	3	6	3	2	5	11
Others	3	1	4	2	1	3	7
Small entrepreneur	0	3	3	0	0	0	3
All	10	10	20	10	10	20	40

Table 11: Number of Primary Processing Units by Occupational Background of Owners' Fathers by District and Industry

Occupational Category	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Total
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	
Agriculturist	3	0	3	2	1	3	6
Commission agent/ foodgrain trader	6	1	7	6	9	15	22
Industrialist	0	2	2	0	0	0	2
Village Money lender/ Shopkeeper	1	4	5	0	0	0	5
Others	0	3	3	2	0	2	5
All	10	10	20	10	10	20	40

In Bathinda, all the oil mills belong to *Banias*, except one which is owned by a *Jat* Sikh farmer. In Ludhiana, though *Banias* dominated the scene, there were also *Jain*, refugee and backward caste entrepreneurs engaged in this sector. *Jains* are also a trading caste, and can thus be equated with *Banias* for all practical purposes. On the other hand, the participation of a refugee and backward caste entrepreneur in oil-milling points to the diversification of entrepreneurial origins in a relatively industrialised district.

Table 12: Number of Primary Processing Units According to the Owners' Caste Background by District and Industry

Occupational Category	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Total
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	
Bania	6	6	12	6	9	15	27
Jat Skh	2	0	2	2	1	3	5
Khatri	2	1	3	0	0	0	3
Bania/Jat Sikh (partners)	0	1	0	2	0	2	2
Jain	0	2	2	0	0	0	2
Mehra (B.C.)	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
All	10	10	20	10	10	20	40

The trading background was also reflected in the reasons given by the entrepreneurs for entering this industry. Most of them had decided to start a rice mill due to their desire for more profit, and previous experience in the industry and related trade. While in Bathinda higher profit was the single most important reason for entry into both rice and oil mills for half the entrepreneurs studied, higher profit motive in combination with certain other factors (like relationship with agriculture, skill and parent unit's encouragement) acted as a driving force for the rest. In Ludhiana, though the profit motive per se was not predominant, it appears to have played a supportive role in prompting entrepreneurs to try their hand at processing activities.

A majority of the rice mill and oil mill owners (57 per cent) still had links with agricultural trade, in the sense that they were either simultaneously involved in trading of agricultural products or food grains, or their family concern and/or partners were engaged in it. This was more prevalent in rice mills and in Bathinda district. The more common types of integrated business were cotton ginning, oil mills, wholesale foodgrain trade and godowns, all directly related to the main

activity of food-processing. In Ludhiana, a departure from this pattern was found in only two cases, where the integrated business was a steel mill in one case and a petrol pump in the other. The predominant integrated activities of oil mill-owners were food and agro-processing in both Ludhiana and Bathinda.

Sources of Capital

Investible agricultural surplus has been an issue of serious discussion after the advent of the Green Revolution in the 1970s and the early 1980s. But there has been no study of how much surplus is available with the farmers, and how and in which direction it has been utilised in regions like Punjab. In this context, this study looks at the dent the farming community has made in the food-processing industry, which is supposed to be related to agriculture and easy to start.

The survey revealed that the source of funds of four rice mills out of the twenty studied was agriculture. In another three mills, funds were partly generated from agriculture since they were partnership firms of Banias and Jat Sikhs. In the case of oil mills, with the exception of one unit, the initial capital came from non-agricultural sources. Still, about half the entrepreneurs had links with agricultural trade, a pattern which was more pronounced in Bathinda than in Ludhiana (Table 13).

Table 13: Sources of Initial Capital Funds in Primary Processing Industries by District and Industry (No. of Units)

Source	Ludhiana			Bathinda			Total
	RM	OM	Both	RM	OM	Both	
Agriculture	2	0	2	2	1	3	5
Non-agriculture	7	10	17	6	9	15	32
Both	1	0	1	2	0	2	3
All	10	10	20	10	10	20	40

Obstacles to Entrepreneurship Among Farmers

Why is the farming community not coming forward to invest in industry, especially in agro-and food-processing is an important question. As agricultural development takes place in an agrarian economy, farmers are supposed to become more industrial in their approach, accumulate surpluses out of farming business, and invest these in activities away from farming where profit certainty and value addition are higher. There are instances of this phenomenon in states like Andhra

Pradesh and Gujarat, where farmer capitalists have become industrialists over time in the agriculturally developed regions of the state.[50] In Punjab itself, farmers have invested extensively in the transport sector.[51]

The survey data revealed that the lack of risk-taking capacity, the lack of adequate knowledge about industry and trade, and the lack of sufficient funds were strong factors hindering farmers in their endeavour to enter primary food processing industries in the state. Also, agricultural pursuits generally tie people to their land in rural areas, whereas non-agricultural occupations leave their incumbents foot loose. They are then relatively more free to move to new places for employment, should the occasion arise.[52]

What emerged from discussions with many owners was that the farmers, who are predominantly Jat Sikh by caste, are not used to doing 'the sitting job' which trade and industry essentially is. Even the lack of diversification in agriculture is a pointer to this. Despite this, some farmers have entered foodgrain trade and agro-industry in agriculturally highly developed regions like Ludhiana and have put up a good performance. This points to the hidden (passive) potential in this occupational community, which is known for its enterprise in agriculture, especially during the Green Revolution period.

Conclusions

The above analysis of primary processing industries reveals that the predominant mode of ownership was partnership in all the units studied. In majority of the cases, the partners were members or relatives of the same family. Since primary processing industries are based on agricultural output, the cropping pattern has a direct bearing on their emergence and growth. In Punjab, most of the rice milling units emerged on the scene only during the late 1970s and the early 1980s as a result of change in the cropping pattern in favour of paddy cultivation in the State. However, another primary processing industry - oil milling - was relatively free of such a tie-up with the cropping pattern and was 'footloose' in its raw material procurement. Most of the oil mills obtain their supplies from the neighbouring states of Haryana and Rajasthan and as far as Gujarat.

The proximity of the mills to the market place and urban centres had a clear impact on them in terms of their size and working pattern. The mills in the developed district were larger in size. The study shows that agricultural growth is the major determinant of the emergence and growth of food processing industries because it not only makes larger agricultural marketable surpluses available for processing but also provides markets for processed products and funds for investment by way of higher incomes for the rural families. But the findings on the employment aspects of food processing industry revealed that, though they are major sources of employment for the unskilled and semi-skilled migrant workers, they do not generate the type of employment which would suit the local literate rural youth. The existing pattern of employment not only excludes local people, but also the type and quality of jobs generated are poor. The wages in this

industry are as high as or even lower than that in the agricultural sector of the State. Thus, these jobs act as competitors to agricultural work and lead to labour shortage in rural areas during peak months.

The entrepreneurial aspects of the primary food processing industries suggest that these industries are by and large owned by persons from trading or merchant background which coincides with their caste as well. Many of the owners are commission agents who made their fortunes from foodgrain trade. Of late, there has been a marginal presence of Jat Sikh farmers, but they have not been able to do well. Over time, a class of agro-industrialists has emerged which owns small empires of agro-industries and agro-business.

The above account and analysis of the primary processing industries suggests that there is need to relook at the structure and organisation of food processing industries in the state as the growth and performance of such industries finally depends on the nature of ownership, organisational structure, and the scale of operations which in turn affect technology choice and business strategy.[53] The predominance of partnership mode of organisation of processing activity as against co-operative or public mode seems to have restricted the spread and spread effects of paddy and oilseeds milling in the state, which has happened in the states of Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh in India. The co-operative kind of organisation has the potential to encourage the participation of rich farmers in the process of agro-value addition.

The present type of ownership has also meant relatively small scale of operations for these units which did not permit larger integration of activities and, therefore, benefits of spread effect. Further, in the absence of alternative forms of organisation, the wider and larger mobilisation of capital and investible surpluses has not taken place in the state. An earlier study of the industry by the author showed that the small and unregistered sector had much lower labour and capital productivity and a much higher capital intensity compared to the registered factory sector.[54] Therefore, what is required for the food processing sector in Punjab is the large and medium scale units. Though this kind of industries may not be labour intensive, but whatever jobs they generate will be locally relevant.

What gives growth impetus is the backward linkages which have been weak in the case of agro-processing industries in Punjab, except that they use agricultural produce as raw material. The lack of industrial culture among the farming community, and the shy nature of trading capital have been hindering agro-industrialisation in the state. There is need to think in terms of organisational alternatives and policy thrust where primary producers can also participate in the process of value addition.

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38. During the 1950s, there were 12 units in cotton ginning and 28 in oilseed crushing in Ludhiana district (See Punjab District Gazetteer - Ludhiana, 1970). The Gazetteer noted that in the district, oilseed crushing, flour-milling, dal milling and cotton ginning were composite industries.

39. In the early 1970s, most of the rice mills in Punjab were of one tonne capacity each (See Gupta and George, 1974).

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Capital, State and Nation in India: Reflections with Reference to Punjab

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The dominant discourse on Centre-state relations in India focuses mainly on the question of distribution of administrative and financial powers between the Centre and the states. This article argues that behind the Centre-state conflicts lie deeper and structural issues relating to the question of one nationalism versus multiple nationalisms in India. The triangular relationship between Indian capitalism, the Indian State and Indian nationalism is the over-arching framework to locate this argument. The Centre-state conflicts in relation to Punjab are manifestations of long term and deeper conflicts between Indian nationalism and Punjabi nationalism.

This article reflects on the relationship between Capital, State and nation in entre-state relationships in India. The theoretical analysis which forms the bulk of the article is followed by case study material drawn from Punjab. The article is divided in two parts. In part I, the main part of the article, I have developed the framework to explain Centre-state relations in India and to argue that the relationship between Indian nationalism articulated by the Centre and the nationalisms based in the states is the fundamental cause of conflict between the Centre and the states. In part 11 I have tried to apply this framework to Punjab to highlight the crisis of Indian federalism in Punjab.

Part I

Introduction

The aim of this article is to argue that in explaining the structure of Centre-state relations in India, the historically-shaped triangular relationship between Indian capitalism, Indian State and Indian nationalism is of prime importance. By

using this framework of analysis, I hope to show that the key issue in those situations where there is a conflict between the Centre and the states, is the conflict between a unitarist Indian nationalism and the nationalism of the nations and potential nations situated in the concerned states. This article is part of a larger project to study the inter-relationship between Indian capitalism, Indian State and Indian nationalism for understanding the dynamics of macro political economy of India in general and that of the nature of Centre-state relations in particular. The scope of the article is, therefore, introductory and suggestive in character. It is hoped that the framework of analysis suggested here will make a departure from the dominant discourse on Centre-state relations in India which focuses mainly on the question of distribution of administrative and financial powers between the Centre and the states.[1] My contention is that behind the Centre-state conflicts lie deeper and structural issues relating to the question of one nationalism versus multiple nationalisms in India. I look upon the states in the Indian Union as geographical territories inhabited by different nationalisms and potential nationalisms in India. Linguistic identities are the nuclei around which the nationalisms in these linguistically-demarcated states are formed. I am using the words nationalism and potential nationalism to highlight the unevenness in the growth of nationalisms in the states. Tamilnadu, Kashmir, Assam and Punjab are examples of advanced nationalisms while Gujrat and Orissa could be considered as examples of potential Gujrati and Oriya nationalism. It is important to mention here that in Kashmir and Punjab, religion plays a double-edged role. It strengthens the power of resistance of the state-based nationalism against the Centre but creates fissures in the linguistic identities forming the basis of Kashmiri and Punjabi nationalism.

'Capital-State-Nation' Triangular Relationship

There is a growing consensus among scholars on two issues: one that the Indian Constitution contained a bias in favour of the Centre in the structure of Centre-state relations as enshrined in the Constitution[2] and two, the changes which have taken place since the framing of the Constitution have further strengthened the powers of the Centre.[3] I have examined these points in some detail in another paper which shows my broad agreement on these points.[4] I will, therefore, not repeat the arguments and evidence to prove these above-mentioned points and will instead focus on providing an explanation of the process of centralisation of economic and political power by assigning a key role to the triangular relationship between Indian capitalism, the Indian State and Indian nationalism.

Indian State And Indian Nationalism

A few introductory remarks are required concerning the Indian State. Given the structure of the Indian constitution, the power of the Indian State is articulated through the central government and the various state (provincial) governments. The aspect of the Indian State which is of foremost importance for us here, is the balance of power between the Central government and the state governments. Since this balance is decisively in favour of the Centre, we may characterise the Indian State as a Centralist State. The historical role of this Centralist Indian State has been as the architect and articulator of one unified Indian nationalism.[5] In other words, Indian nationalism is the ideology of the Centralist Indian State though at times, Indian nationalism may transform itself in an almost unnoticeable manner into Hindu nationalism. The two versions of Indian nationalism- secular and Hindu- are opposed to each other in their premises and perspectives in many ways but one aspect which unites them is their insistence on the denial of multiple nationalisms in India.

Indian Capitalism And Indian State

A State is situated in the context of a mode of production (feudal, capitalist, socialist). In the 1990's, the mode of production in Indian industry and agriculture is, undeniably, capitalist.[6] The Indian State is, therefore, situated, both globally and nationally, in the context of a capitalist mode of production. Within the capitalist mode of production, there are various forms/strategies of capital accumulation which are historically determined in a complex way. The specific character of the capitalist State shapes and is shaped by a specific capital accumulation strategy. The capital accumulation strategy followed in India has been shaped crucially by the Centralist character of the Indian State and by the ideology of Indian nationalism articulated by this State. The important point to note is that not only is the specific accumulation strategy legitimised by the ideology of Indian nationalism and then contributes to shaping the character of the Indian State as a centralist state, but also that Indian nationalism and its centralism necessitate the specific accumulation strategy followed in India.

Indian Capitalism And Indian Nationalism

A few words about the Capital - Nation relationship. Because of the existence of Nation States, the process of capital accumulation despite being global in scope, is most vitally influenced by the national context.[7] The specific way in which

the State is influenced by nationalism, affects the capital accumulation strategy in a nation-state.[8] The capital accumulation strategy followed in India can be characterised as relatively independent state capitalist development strategy.[9] The roots of this strategy lie in the national movement for independence from British imperialism. This strategy reflected the convergence of two perspectives in the national movement for independence. One was the perspective of the political leadership of the Indian National Congress which was the major political force behind the movement for independence. This leadership, especially Nehru, considered the role of State through the planning mechanism in a mixed economy (i.e. with both public and private sector) as crucial to industrialisation.[10] The other was the perspective of the Indian bourgeoisie which having experienced the role of the colonial State in obstructing the growth of indigenous Indian Capitalism, looked upon the independent national State as a source of strength and help for further capitalist expansion.[11] The ideology of Indian nationalism was common to both the perspectives and, therefore, Indian nationalism can be seen as the legitimising ideology behind the capital accumulation strategy followed in Independent India after 1947. The emphasis on maintaining relative independence from imperialism was also imparted by the national ideology of gaining and maintaining national sovereignty.

I am suggesting, therefore, that the driving force behind the capital accumulation strategy of relatively independent state capitalist development was the legitimising ideology of Indian nationalism. This strategy, in turn, by placing crucial reliance upon planning and, therefore, on the central government, legitimised centralisation of power in the central government and, therefore, the emergence of a centralist State.[12]

This accumulation strategy and the emergence of the centralist State which it legitimised, in turn, legitimised Indian nationalism. The important point I wish to emphasise which is often obfuscated in the discourse of Indian nationalism is that India contains within its geographical territory many nations and potential nations. The accumulation strategy of planned development by its emphasis on the crucial role of central government in central planning, justified the need for political unification of the country and such a political unification required subjugation of other national identities to one Indian identity. The weakening of Indian nationalism would be bound to have been seen in such an accumulation strategy as a blow to centralised planning which was considered central to this accumulation strategy.

A symbiotic triangular relationship thus emerged between Capital, State and the Nation. A specific form of capital accumulation arose out of the needs of emergence of a nation which by giving a specific role to the State, shaped the character of the State. For such an accumulation strategy to go on (once having been set into motion) and such a State having emerged, then needed a particular ideology of the nation. A nation needed a State and Capital, the Capital needed a Nation and a State and the State needed Capital and a Nation.

Indian State As A Centralist State

I am not proposing an inevitablist thesis that a national movement for independence everywhere will necessarily lead to the emergence of anti-imperialist nationalist ideology which becomes the ideology of the newly created State and that such an ideology and State would necessarily lead to the adoption of State - Capitalist development strategy of capital accumulation and because of such an accumulation strategy and nationalist ideology, the State will necessarily acquire the form of a Centralist State. One knows too well that national movements in other countries of the world (China, Vietnam, Angola, Cuba representing one type and the special case of Pakistan another type) have given birth to and have been shaped by entirely different ideologies. The new States that emerged were of an entirely different character and the process of reorganisation of the economy took a very different direction.[13] It is only by examining the specificity of the Indian situation (the level of mass mobilisation in the national movement, the relative weight of different classes, the ethnic composition of the mass movement and the political parties, the ideological tendencies in the leadership) that can give us the concrete character of the Capital-State-Nation relationship. The general theoretical point which emerges from our discussion is that in a multi-national society, an accumulation strategy and an ideology of one unifying nationalism (that legitimises the negation of diverse nationalisms) that relies upon the central role of the State for economic management and political unification, leads to the emergence of a Centralist State. The emergence of such a Centralist State has crucial implications for the manner in which such a State intervenes in situations of conflict between its long-term goal of one unitarist nationalism and the historical aspirations of other nations and potential nations that exit within the geographical boundaries of the nation state.

It may be fruitful to elaborate the point made above that Indian nationalism necessarily requires a Centralist State. The relationship between Indian nationalism and the Centralist State is obviously not a direct one; it is a mediated relationship. The mediation is provided by the political economy of the accumulation strategy in a multi-national country. The ideology of nationalism by its value-emphasis on sovereignty/independence/autonomy, puts the State in a crucial role in the accumulation strategy. The State in a multi-national country can carry on with this accumulation strategy only by empowering the Central government. This is so because the successful implementation of any economic development strategy (in any mode of production) requires political stability. It must be mentioned in passing here that I am discussing political stability within a given mode of production as one of the main pre-requisites of economic development. It is perfectly feasible to argue for the desirability or necessity of political instability which may

eventually lead to a transition to a new mode of production where this transition may be necessary for initiating economic development. Our reference situation here is economic development and political stability within the parameters of a capitalist mode of production in a multi-national country. Political stability in such a situation can be shattered either by class conflicts or nationalist conflicts. The capitalist development in a multi-national situation, therefore, requires the submerging of diverse national identities to one unifying national identity. In a multi-national country like India where the capitalist development strategy requires an active interventionist State, the successful implementation of this strategy requires the State to articulate the ideology of one unifying nationalism. And in a constitutional structure like India with divisions of State power between the Centre and the states (provinces), the ideology of one unifying nationalism necessitates a powerful Centre which, in turn, imparts a Centralist character to the State.

Indian Nationalism - The Ideology Of Indian State

That Indian nationalism is the ideology of the Indian State is not my discovery. It is a fairly well-established thesis with sufficient scholarly literature to support it.[14] What is new is my claim that this relationship be brought into the analysis of Indian macro political economy in its multi-national dimension.

What is significant in my claim is that the ideology (i.e. Indian nationalism) of the Indian State puts it in conflict with nationalism of the nations based in the States (i.e. provinces). Further, it must be qualified that since in the Hindi speaking states, Indian nationalism is itself the dominant ideological current, this conflict between Indian nationalism as the ideology of the Indian State and the nationalism of the nations based in the states is confined only to the non-Hindi speaking states. In the non-Hindi speaking states, the State power at the state (province) level articulates itself in an ambiguous and contradictory way. On the one hand, because of the State power being highly centralised at the Centre, the institutions of State power in the constituent states (provinces) find themselves increasingly forced to articulate the ideology of Indian nationalism and on the other, these institutions have to deal with the nationalist pressure of a nation based in a particular state (province) to articulate the ideology of nationalism of that nation. The exact nature of the contradictory pressures to which the State power in a constituent state (province) is subjected, is determined by the degree of development of nationalism (movements, organisations, ideology) in that particular state.

The constituent states where nationalism is well-developed (e.g. Kashmir, Punjab, Assam, Tamilnadu, Nagaland, Mizoram), the State power, if it is being articulated through a democratically elected government, comes under greater pressure from the nationalism of the nations located in these states than those states where nationalism is at an earlier or weak stage of development

(e.g. Gujrat, Maharashtra, Orissa). The Centre as the articulator of one unified Indian nationalism is, therefore, always suspicious of democratically elected governments in any of those states (provinces) where the nationalism of the nation based in that state is relatively well-developed. The increasing phenomena of the imposition of President's Rule in such states are not incidental- they are rooted in the structural conflict between one unified Indian nationalism articulated by the Centre and the nationalism of the nations based in such states.

Centre vs. States: One Nation vs. Many Nations

Those who are likely to question my formulation regarding the conflict between Indian nationalism articulated by the Centralist Indian State and nationalism of the nations based in non-Hindi speaking states, may argue in two fairly distinct ways.

One, that there does not exist any other nation in India apart from the Indian nation. Such a view may argue that there does exist nationalities or sub-nationalisms and there may be, at times, friction between Indian nationalism as the ideology of the Centralist Indian State and sub-nationalism/nationalities but this friction is temporary and manageable within the framework of Indian nationalism. In other words, various sub-nationalisms can co-exist more or less peacefully, though with occasional tensions, with Indian nationalism.

Second, that nations do exist and the nationalisms of these nations exist apart from the Indian nationalism articulated by the Centre but there is no conflict between Indian nationalism and the other nationalisms because Indian nationalism does not pose any threat to these nationalisms. This view may also argue that decentralisation has been a significant trend in Indian political economy and that decentralisation creates the required space for the existence and development of these nationalisms.[15]

The first objection to my formulation is based on a crucial distinction that is drawn between sub-nationalism and nationalities on the one hand and nationalism on the other. It is argued that sub-nationalism and nationalities do not aspire for a sovereign State while nationalism does. The weakness of such an argument is that what is considered sub-nationalism today may become potential nationalism tomorrow, a national liberation movement a day after and eventually a sovereign State. The movements for independence in Kashmir, Punjab, Assam, Nagaland are clear examples of this possible process of development.

As far as the second objection to my formulation is concerned, it is enough to mention that instead of decentralisation, there has been a clear movement towards centralisation and secondly that a very strong streak in Indian nationalism (i.e. of Hindu-Hindi nationalism) paralyses the capacity of Indian nationalism to co-exist conflict-free with other nationalisms in India.

Let me indicate here what is *not new* in what I am arguing and what is *new* in it even at the cost of some repetition. There is nothing new in arguing that the capital accumulation strategy in post-independent India has been State Capitalist development strategy. This position is fairly well-documented in the literature on the subject.[15] I have already mentioned above that it is not new to argue that the Indian state articulates the ideology of Indian Nationalism. On the third position mentioned earlier that the Indian state is a Centralist state, the literature on the subject of Indian State does not put it in this form but the growing trend towards centralisation is well recognised.[17]

What is certainly new in my argument is the way I have tried to integrate these three aspects of India's political economy viz. State capitalist development accumulation strategy, Indian State as a centralist state and Indian State as the articulator of the ideology of Indian nationalism to build the explanatory model for explaining the conflict between Indian nationalism and the nationalism of the nations and potential nations based in the non-Hindi speaking states. This conflict is at the core of the tensions between the Centre and the non-Hindi speaking States. The further strengthening of Indian nationalism will lead to still more empowerment of the centralist State, which will, in turn, put the centralist State in increased conflict with the provincial states in the non-Hindi part of India.

Centre-State Conflicts: Future Implications

If the argument about the structural character of the conflict between Indian nationalism and the nationalism of the nations based in the non-Hindi speaking states is valid, it has implications for the future destiny of Indian nationalism. Theoretically, there are two possibilities; one possibility is that the Indian constitution could be re-written through a new Constituent Assembly. This new Republic of India could contain constitutional provisions for autonomy to the constituent units, the centralist State gets reconstructed as a Decentralist (or Multi- national) State. Such restructuring could settle the conflict without any constituent state feeling the necessity to secede. This will maintain the existing territorial and geographical identity of India.

The second possibility is that the conflict instead of getting resolved in the manner visualised above, gets further sharpened. This sharpening conflict may eventually lead to armed conflict. This has further two possible alternatives: One, that the centralist State will transform itself into a repressive militarist State/fascist State and consequently, it will lead to long term repression in the foreseeable future of the nations struggling for freedom/secession.[18] The second, that the armed conflict will ruin the national economy and the likely heavy loss of lives will sap the moral and economic strength of the centralist State. The new independent sovereign states will be

born, especially if the international environment is helpful to the creation of such new states.

Let me very briefly discuss the feasibility of each of the two main possibilities and the strengths/weaknesses of the trends which open up either of these possibilities.

The first possibility, that the Indian centralist State may be reconstituted as a multi-national State through a new Constituent Assembly and constitution, is feasible if the Hindi-Hindu nationalism gets weakened to such an extent that it is not seen as a threat by any of the non-Hindi nations. Hindi-Hindu nationalism may weaken because of the emergence of nationalist movements by non-Hindi nationalist groups within the Hindi region. The movements for Uttrakhand, Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh are such examples. It seems unlikely, however, that Hindi-Hindu nationalism will eventually get so weakened that it is not perceived by the nations in the non-Hindi states as posing a threat to their identity. Though this point obviously needs much more substantiation, I will indicate just three forces which are likely to seriously jeopardise the possibility of weakening of the Hindi-Hindu nationalism. One, the huge population, both in absolute and relative terms, inhabited by the Hindi speaking part of India. Two, the large territory of this area and third, the power of the entrenched bureaucracy from this region in the Centralist State.

If this first possibility of reconstituting Indian State into a multi-national State does not actually set in motion, the second possibility of sharpened conflict will have a higher probability of actualising itself. This will mean a series of long-term armed conflicts whose ultimate outcome is difficult to visualise - either disintegration of India as a territorial-geographical identity or a strong and powerful militarist state maintaining this territorial-geographical identity.

My framework of analysis does not preclude the possibility of accommodation and adjustment which Indian nationalism may attempt with the nations in the non-Hindi states. On the contrary, it suggests that given the economic and political interests of the power elite represented through the centralist State, Indian nationalism would rather choose an accommodation than secession by some of the nations in the non-Hindi states provided such an accommodation does not set in motion the process of undermining the power of the centralist elite. The bureaucracy, the big capitalist class, the nationalist intelligentsia and a section of the bourgeois political leadership who constitute the core of the Centralist elite normally take a long-term view of maintaining territorial integrity of India because it helps to perpetuate their politico-economic power and keeps alive their dream of one nation. This is responsible for various decisions of accommodations and adjustment taken in the past e.g. in Punjab and Assam. At the same time, however, this power elite does not hesitate to resort to the most repressive machinery of the modern Centralist State if their power interests demand it. In suggesting that it is more likely that

the second main possibility of sharpened conflict may materialise, I am suggesting that the avenues available for the centralist elite to accommodate and adjust are very limited. Though the growth of nationalist movements in the non-Hindi states is uneven, the advanced degree of confrontation which some of these movements (Kashmir, Punjab, Assam, north-east states) have reached demand escalating level of accommodation from the Centralist power elite represented in the centralist Indian State. The Centralist power elite is likely to view the escalating level of accommodation as a precursor to secession by some of the nations in the non-Hindi states and this power elite seems determined to crush any threat of secession.

Conclusion of Part I

The Centre-State relations in India will be the arena where the conflicts between Indian nationalism and the nationalisms of the nations based in the states will be fought out. As it has happened in the past sometimes, the short-term ephemeral political changes like the same party rule at the Centre and in the states or the same kind of coalition rule at the Centre and in the states, personal rapport between political leadership at the Centre and in the states may obfuscate this conflict. However, in the long-term, these short-term ephemeral changes will be over-taken by the more enduring historical basis of structural conflict between the Centre and the states. The forms and manifestations of these conflicts will be diverse, given the diversity and unevenness of different nationalisms in the states and consequently, the diversity of the relationships of these different nationalisms to Indian nationalism articulated by the Centre. The Indian capitalist class with the aim of preserving a unified national market for capital accumulation and expansion, will be an ally of the Centre in its conflict with the states. The ideology of 'one Indian nation' will be used as much by the big capitalist class to conceal its naked economic interests as by the Central State to generate sentiments of national unity and territorial integrity.

Two significant politico-economic developments in the 1990s India - the economic reforms initiated by the Centre and the rise to considerable political strength of the Hindutva forces - need to be mentioned in the context of the argument developed so far. Though economic reforms have given some powers to the states to negotiate with foreign capital, the major levers of economic policy (industrial policy, agricultural policy and in the new global context still more important monetary and fiscal policy) are still controlled by the Centre.[19] Some weakening of the planning mechanism has altered the mode of operation of the Centre's intervention in the economy, it has not weakened its powers to initiate policy changes and regulate the economy.

The rise of Hindutva forces may change the discourse of Indian nationalism from a secular one to a non-secular one but it does not change the role of the Centre as the articulator of a unitarist Indian nationalism. In fact, the Hindutva version of Indian nationalism is even more emphatic than the secular

one on nurturing and constructing one Indian identity.[20] The big Indian capitalist class finds the Hindutva forces at the Centre, as comfortable an ally in maintaining and strengthening a unified national market for capital accumulation as the secular Indian nationalists.[21]

Centre-state relations may disappear once in a while from the headlines in the media but the unresolved national question in India will keep this issue simmering for the future agenda of the political economy of India.

Part II

I have mentioned above that Punjab is one of the states in India where the state based nationalism is relatively more advanced. The forces which make Punjabi nationalism more advanced in its conflict with Indian nationalism, are also responsible for its internal weaknesses. Two socio-cultural dimensions of Punjabi society which sharpen its conflict with Indian nationalism are: Punjabi language and Sikh religion. Punjab, apart from Kashmir, is the only state in north India which is non-Hindi speaking. This aspect adds distinctiveness to Punjabi society vis-à-vis the Hindi-speaking states of north India and this distinctiveness sharpens the self-consciousness of distinct Punjabi nationalism vis-a -vis Hindi-oriented Indian nationalism. The movement for the creation of a Punjabi speaking state in 1950s and 1960s and the long-drawn out reluctance of the Indian State to accept this demand, has left a historical memory of a struggling and discriminated Punjabi nationhood in the collective consciousness of the Punjabi people.

Punjab is also the homeland of the Sikh people. This is the only state in India where the Sikhs are in majority. This further reinforces the distinctiveness of Punjabi identity from the Hindu-majority oriented Indian identity. The combination of a distinctive linguistic and religious identity sharpens the cultural conflict between Punjabi nationalism and Indian nationalism. In the contrast between Indian nationalism and Punjabi nationalism, the two most flashing images of Indian nationalism are Hindi as a language and Hindus as a religious majority. The counter images of Punjabi nationalism are Punjabi as a language and the Sikhs as a religious majority in Punjab. The distinct language and the distinct majority religion of the Punjabi people are sources of strength of Punjabi nationalism in its conflict with Indian nationalism. These sources of strength of Punjabi nationalism are also the sources of the internal weaknesses of Punjabi nationalism. The identification of Punjabi Hindus, a significant minority of the Punjabi people,[22] with Punjabi nationalism is different from the identification of Punjabi Sikhs with Punjabi nationalism. The Punjabi part of the Punjabi Hindu identity makes the Punjabi Hindus identify with Punjabi nationalism in a somewhat similar fashion to the identification of the Punjabi Sikhs with Punjabi nationalism but the Hindu part of their identity makes the Punjabi Hindus share a sense of identity with Hindu-majority Indian

nationalism. For some well-off urban Punjabi Hindus, Hindi language also is a part of their collective cultural identity and this aspect of their cultural identity makes them feel some sense of solidarity and identification with Hindi-oriented Indian nationalism. It may not be wrong to say that to a considerable extent the sense of identity some Punjabi Hindus feel towards Hindi language and Indian nationalism is borne out of the fear and the sense of insecurity which the image of a Sikh-majority oriented Punjabi nationalism generates among them. Punjabi nationalism is poised for a critical future; it can be more inclusive and powerful or it can be sectarian and thus weaker. A historically progressive Punjabi nationalism must be able to negotiate a platform, voice and image which expresses the aspirations- linguistic, religious, economic and political- of *all* Punjabi people.[23]

The Indian State with its historic mission to build a unified Indian nationalism, will view the possible emergence of a stronger Punjabi nationalism as a threat to its own historic mission. The Indian capitalist class also will be opposed to Punjabi nationalism because the economic interests of this class demand a unified Indian market and any challenge to Indian nationalism is viewed by this class as a potential threat to the consolidation of a unified Indian market. It is this perspective of this class which made it oppose the principle of the creation of states on linguistic basis.[24]

Punjabi nationalism is thus pitted against not only its internal weaknesses but also against the more powerful combined forces of Indian nationalism, Indian State and Indian capital. Punjabi nationalism can hope to mount a serious challenge to this troika of Indian nationalism, Indian State and Indian capital by overcoming its internal frictions and by forging alliances and solidarity with nationalisms in the other states of India where struggles against this troika are being waged.

(Acknowledgement: I wish to thank Meena Dhanda, Barbara Harriss-White, Bhagwan Josh and Ian Talbot for comments on earlier drafts of this article. The responsibility for the views expressed and any errors is mine. My thanks also to Sue Mulholland and Abigail Ball for the efficient typing of this article.)

Notes

1. Movements in India', *op. cit.* pp 24 & 31. N.R. Inamdar, 'Distribution of Powers between the Unions and the States' in M V Nadkarni *et al* (eds), *India: The Emerging Challenges* (Delhi: Sage, 1991), A. Ray 'The Governor's Office: Sarkaria Commission's Response to a Tension Area in India's Federal System' in Nadkarni, *ibid*; B.S. Grewal, *Centre-State Financial Relations in India* (Patiala: Panjabi University Press, 1975) and H. Rao, *Federal State Financial Relations (Theories and Principles)* (Delhi: Ashish, 1994) are some examples of this

discourse. J. Alam in his paper 'Class, Political and National Dimensions of the State Autonomy Movements in India', *Social Scientist*, No. 111, August 1982 makes some attempt to go beyond this discourse but by focusing excessively on what he calls the conflict between the non-monopoly bourgeoisie in the states and the big bourgeoisie dominant at the Centre in Centre-State relations, he under-emphasises the nationalist dimension in the Centre-State conflicts.

2. M. Bhattacharya, 'The Mind of the Founding Fathers' in N. Mukarji and B Arora (eds) *Federalism in India: Origins and Development* (Delhi: Vikas, 1992); Govt of India, *Commission on Centre-State Relations; Report Part I* (1988) and G Austin, *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation* (London: Oxford university Press (OUP) 1966).

3. A Mitra, 'Will Growth and Centralised Fiscal Arrangements Do?' in I.S. Gulati (ed) *Centre-State Budgetary Transfers* (Bombay: OUP, 1987); T. Sathyamurthy, 'Centralised State Power and Decentralised politics', *Economic and Political Weekly*, March 30, 1996; I.S. Gulati, 'Introduction' to I.S. Gulati (ed) *ibid* and Govt of India, *Commission on Centre-State Relations: Report Part II* (1987).

4. P. Singh, 'Federal Financial Arrangements in India with Special Reference to Punjab', *Austrian Journal of Development Studies*, 9, 3 (1993).

5. A. Banerjee, 'Federalism and Nationalism', in Mukarji and Arora, *Federalism in India: Origins and Development*; K.A. Ramasubramaniam, 'Historical Development and Essential Features of the Federal System' in Mukarji and Arora, *ibid* and A. Nandy, 'Federalism, the Ideology of the State and Cultural Pluralism', in Mukarji and Arora, *ibid.*

6. A. Sen, 'Modes of Production and Social Formation in India', in B. Berberoglu, *Class, State and Development in India* (Delhi: Sage, 1992); P. Chattopadhyay, 'India's Capitalist Industrialisation: An Introductory Outline' in Berberoglu, *ibid* and T. Sathyamurthy (ed) *Industry and Agriculture in India Since Independence* (Delhi: OUP, 1995). For an earlier period, see U. Patnaik, 'The Agrarian Question and the Development of Capitalism in India' (Delhi: OUP, 1986) and U. Patnaik (ed), *Agrarian Relations and Accumulation: The 'Mode of Production' Debate in India* (Bombay: OUP, 1986).

7. B. Jessop, *State Theory: Putting Capitalist States in their Place* (Cambridge/Oxford: Polity Press/Basil Blackwell, 1990).

8. Jessop, *ibid.*

9. P. Patnaik, 'Imperialism and the Growth of Indian Capitalism' in R. Blackburn (ed), *The Explosions in the Indian Subcontinent* (Harmonsworth: Penguin, 1975); M. Desai, 'India: Contradictions of

Slow Capitalist Development' in Blackburn, *ibid,* A.R. Desai, *India's Path of Development: A Marxist Analysis* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1984) and A. Sen, *The State, Industrialisation and Class Formations in India* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982).

10. B. Chandra, *The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India: Economic Policies of Indian Political Leadership 1880-1905* (Delhi: Peoples Publishing House, 1969) and S. Chakravarty, *Development Planning: The Indian Experience* (Delhi: OUP, 1987/89).
11. B. Chandra, 'The Indian Capitalist Class and Imperialism Before 1947' in Berberoglu, *op. cit.* and A Mukherjee 'Indian Capitalist Class and the Public Sector 1930-47', *Economic and Political Weekly,* January 17, 1976.
12. P Bardhan, *The Political Economy of Development in India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984/89).
13. H. Alavi, 'The State in Post-Colonial Societies', *New Left Review* No. 74, 1972.
14. A.R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1959); J. Acharya, *Nehru Socialism: Colonialism, Capitalism and Ideology* (Delhi: Indian Publishers Distributors, 1993); S. Joshi & B. Josh, *Struggle for Hegemony in India Vol III 1920-47: Culture, Community and Power* (Delhi: Sage, 1994) and A. Nandy in Mukarji and Arora, *Federalism in India: Origins and Development.*
15. P. Brass, 'Pluralism, Regionalism and Decentralising Tendencies in Contemporary Indian Politics' in A. Wilson & D. Dalton (eds), *The States of South Asia* (London: Hurst and Co, 1989).
16. C. Bettelheim, *India Independent* (London: Macgibbon & Key, 1968); T. Byres, 'State, Class and Planning' in T. Byres (ed), *The State and Development Planning in India* (Delhi: OUP, 1993), P. Chattopadhyay, 'State Capitalism in India', *Monthly Review,* **21**, 10, March 1971; M. Desai in Blackburn, *Explosions in Indian Subcontinent, op. cit.*; A.R. Desai, *India's Path of Development,* op. cit.; *J. Acharya,* Nehru Socialism, op. cit.
17. T. Sathyamurthy, *'Centralised State Power. .'* op. cit; A. Mitra in I.S. Gulati, *op. cit.*; Govt of India (1988) *op. cit.* and P. Singh, 'Federal Financial Arrangements in India ...' *op. cit.*
18. R. Singh, 'Theorising Communalism in India' in R. Singh, *Marxism and Indian Politics* (Delhi: Ajanta, 1990) and R. Singh, 'On Hindu Fascism' in R. Singh, *Five Lecturers in Marxist Mode* (Delhi, Ajanta, 1993).
19. S. Guhan, 'Centre and State in the Reform Process' in R. Cassen and V. Joshi (eds), *India: The Future of Economic Reform* (Delhi; OUP, 1995).
20. R. Singh, 'On Hindu Fascism', *op. cit.*

21. J. Banaji, 'Globalisation and the Indian Business', a paper presented at the Contemporary South Asia Seminar Series, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, Trinity Term, Oxford (unpublished).

22. The data from the last census conducted in 1991 shows that Sikhs constitute 62.95%, Hindus 34.46%, Muslims 1.18%, Christians 1.11% and 'other religions' 0.30% of the total Punjab population. See *Statistical Abstract of Punjab 1997)*, Govt of Punjab, pp 80-83.

23. Some of the issues raised here, are discussed more extensively in Pritam Singh and Shinder Singh Thandi (eds), *Punjabi Identity in a Global Context* (OUP, forthcoming).

24. In 1969, at the 42nd Annual Session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Kirloskar as the President of FICCI, in his speech moving the 'Resolution on National Integration and the Business Community', remarked that the two most serious constitutional and administrative blunders committed by the Indian State were: (1) the adoption of a federal constitution and on top of that, (2) the reorganisation of the federating units into linguistic units. See J. Alam, 'Class, Political and National Dimensions of the State Autonomy.

Book Reviews

Contents

M. H. Edney, *Mapping an Empire: the Geographical Construction of British India, 1765-1843,* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), xxii and 458pp. £27.95 (hb).ISBN 0-226-18487-0.

Matthew Edney's impressively researched and copiously illustrated account of the mapping of India from 1765 to 1843 has a dual thrust. His primary theme, framed by James Rennell's extensive survey of Bengal in the 1760s and George Everest's retirement as surveyor general of India in 1843, chronicles the attempt and ultimate failure to create a unified and consistent cartographic image of India. At the same time, he also explores the epistemologies and methodologies in the context of what Edney calls 'the ideals and practices of knowledge creation in the later Enlightenment' (p.xiii).

Edney's cartographical history spans the early surveys in Bengal and Madras, the founding of the surveyor general's office, the transition from route and topographical surveys to the Great Trigonometrical Survey established in 1817, and the establishment in the 1820s of the *Atlas of India*, which marked the triumph of triangulation as a means of uniform measurement, and which throughout the 19th and into the 20th century served as the official cartographic image of British India. In Edney's view, uniformity was never really achieved, but instead consistently compromised by variations in the method, competency, and conflicting demands of topographical and other kinds of surveys.

He notes the ambiguous position of the cadastral or revenue survey as an activity essentially separate from the scheme of a comprehensive map based on trigonometrical principles. Throughout his narrative, Edney offers instructive and entertaining expositions of how surveyors surveyed, what kinds of problems they had, and how they and their superiors perceived their role. In the epistemological context of this study, that role, as Edney himself perceives it, was inextricably bound up with imperialism, because both map-making and imperialism are fundamentally concerned with territory and knowledge. To govern a country, one must know it, and indeed must create it by naming and filling its spaces on a map. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the creation of a map of India also reflected a concept of knowledge that replaced political and cultural diversity with cartographical uniformity, and, in the scientific technique employed to make the map, reinforced Britain's claim to superiority over India by means of its claim to scientific preeminence.

In his analysis of the ideology of map-making, Edney relates his work to Ronald Inden's demonstration of an essentialist opposition constructed by the British to distinguish themselves from the Indians, as in Indian 'dreamy imagination' as opposed to European 'practical reason', and in the notion of India as 'simple and unchanging', as contrasted to a West capable of progress and change (p.33). He has, he notes, been especially influenced by C. A. Bayley's argument that the British, caught up themselves in myths of coherence, order, and rigor, and viewing Indian society as hierarchically organised by degrees of purity and pollution, failed to see the important changes taking place

in Indian society and culture after 1750 (p. 34). In short, Edney himself argues the British archive merely described a British India, 'a rational and ordered space that could be managed and governed in a rational and ordered manner' (p. 34).

Edney's analysis of the concept of imperial space in India chimes also with recent studies of geography and literature, a subject discussed recently in the *Times Literary Supplement* (11 Sept 1998) by John Kerrigan. Kerrigan notes how maps themselves, inevitably selective and arbitrary, are cultural texts 'the sites of multiple narratives of production and interpretation'. (*Times Literary Supplement* 4) Edney himself alludes to Jorge Louis Borges' fantasy of an empire whose geographers constructed a map as large as the empire itself (p. 1), and Kerrigan notes that Conrad's Marlow was attracted as a child to the blank spaces in the European maps of Africa. Richard Waswo, in *From Virgil to Vietnam*, a book reviewed in an earlier issue of this journal, has examined in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Forster's *A Passage to India* the notion that landscape itself is associated with western perceptions of otherness, and can ultimately defeat the attempt of European culture-bringers to impose or inscribe an imperial space on 'wilderness'. Edney's book makes a significant contribution to these closely intertwined themes of map-making, imperial space, and the cultural resonances of our concept of geography.

Although Edney's study concludes in 1843, three years before the British entered the Punjab, there are resonances for Punjab studies, among them the geopolitical imperative to bring imperial space into the Indus valley, which from London or Calcutta may have been seen in one dimension as a cartographical imperative. With respect to revenue surveys and assessments in the province, there is also the pattern of an attempt to achieve uniformity, coherence and rigor that was continually compromised. As Stokes came to perceive, utilitarian ideology was often set aside by the demands of pragmatic local practice, to which may be added a lack of competent personnel, and the vagaries of drought and flood. Furthermore, as Edney also notes, the perceptions embedded in the survey and assessment process reflected British ideologies more often than Indian realities. Edney's discussion of imperial space may have further uses in Punjab studies, as, for example, in the way the British perceived the creation of the canal colonies.

Edney expresses the hope that his cartographic study, which touches upon the history of science and ideology of British India, will also interest scholars in cultural studies and cultural history. This reviewer certainly hopes that such will be the case.

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P. Cross and G. Tawadros (eds), *Avtarjeet Dhanjal* (London: Institute of International Visual Arts, 1997), 95 pp. £15.00 (pb). ISBN 1- 899846-11-5.

This book was published to coincide with an exhibition of the sculpture of Avarjeet Dhanjal. The book is lavishly illustrated with photographs of the work and the text is a biographical essay by Brian McAvera that is divided into thematic sections which identify different stages in the artist's career. Dhanjal's work is immediately recognisable as what has popularly become known as 'abstract' or 'modern' art. The exegetical tone of the essay signals an acknowledgement on the author's part that those uninitiated in the history of modern art may find Dhanjal's oeuvre hard to come to terms with. Dhanjals's work from the mid 1960s to that of the late 1990s varies a great deal. Changes in his interests, materials, and context have contributed to an oeuvre where visual discontinuity is more obvious than any overall style. Moreover, since the early 1980s, much of Dhanjal's work attempts to precipitate an awareness of its situatedness in a specific environment. This creates a particular problem for the photographer and the critic of his work who are both faced with attempting to communicate something of the physical experience of the work using two-dimensional means.

The work's abstraction, the absence of an identifiable visual style, and the physical absence of the sculpture from the experience of reading makes the author's task of helping the reader to begin to overcome her distance from the work all the more challenging. These obstacles to a meaningful encounter with Dhanjal's sculpture, however, are sometimes overlooked as a consequence of the author's use of Dhanjal's biography to frame the structure of his essay. Since the fifteenth century art historians and critics have been writing biographies of artists, especially if they have led interesting lives, but the usefulness of this strategy as a basis for the critical discussion of their art is patchy at best. In this book, the emphasis on biography is particularly problematic and seems to be driven as much by the fact that Dhanjal has had an interesting life as by the relevance of his biography for understanding his work. This points to the central dilemma of the book and to an issue which the author never resolves. Dhanjal's work invokes the modernist tradition whose basic assumption is that the meaning and value of art derives from its formal qualities, not its subject matter or content. A key claim of this tradition is that the 'language' of the abstract qualities of form, colour, mass, space, are essentially the 'grammar' of a universal aesthetic. Anyone, irrespective of gender, class, ethnicity, age, language can make art on these terms and anyone can appreciate its universal aesthetic qualities.

It is from the feeling of a need to defend Dhanjal's adherence to these principles in his work that the author defines and locates Dhanjal as an Asian artist working in post-war Britain who *does not* produce political or confrontational work about his experience of being an Asian artist working in post-war Britain. Mc Avera does this against what he sees as a tendency to

valorise those Asian artists whose work relies on subject matter or content which is primarily political and confrontational. Here the author cites as evidence the 1989 exhibition curated by Rasheed Araeen, *The Other Story* at the Hayward Gallery which included Dhanjal's work. However, despite the inclusion of Dhanjal's work in the exhibition, McAvera contends 'unlike many of the other participants, he did not produce issue based work and was marganalised as such'.

Now, this may be a legitimate criticism of the exhibition, but it is undermined as a defence of Dhanjal by the author's lengthy discussion of Dhanjal's Punjabi background and his extended emigration, via Africa, to Britain. Surely, the point the author wants to make about Dhanjal's work, and the defence of it against the political commitment of other Asian artists, is that we do not need to know anything about Dhanjal to appreciate it. With its abstract concentration on the form and material of sculpture, his work is deliberately and aggressively anti-biographical. It as almost as though, despite himself, the author cannot get over his experience of the oddity of a Sikh modernist. This impression is most powerfully conveyed on two facing pages of illustrations (pages 14 and 15). On the left are three photographs taken by Dhanjal titled 'Scenes from the Punjab' including a photograph of a shop selling pictures of the Sikh Gurus, a photograph of men making *chapatis*, and a photograph of water buffalo in a lake with a truck in it. On the opposite page are four pictures of Dhanjal's work from the early 1960s which are about as anonymously modernist as it is possible get. The juxtaposition of the detail of the Punjabi scenes with Dhanjal's work is as jarring as the contrast between Le Corbusier's Chandigarh and its context. While emphasising this kind of contrast in the discussion of Dhanjal's experience of Chandigarh, however, there is no comment on how such tensions might manifest themselves in Dhanjal's work or, more to the point, why they seem so completely absent. Put another way, the book is obviously preoccupied by the contrast between Dhanjal's Punjabi background and his anonymously modernist work but, like the photographs, these aspects remain in unexplained contrast. Perhaps this is a symptom of the lack of a wider sense of the place of this kind of juxtaposition in the history of modern art. It can be argued that history is inextricable from the experience of emigration. Picasso was a Spaniard who moved to France, Kandinsky a Russian who moved to Germany, while Mondrian, DeKooning and Rothko were Europeans who moved to America, Gorky an Armanian who moved to America. Certainly all of them experienced emigration differently, but all ultimately go through the same problem of attempting to reconcile the uniqueness of their experience with the anonymity of the modernist aesthetic. This is not to imply that Dhanjal is unoriginal, but that the author need not be as preoccupied as he is with the exorcism of Dhanjal's life because the pattern of contrast between eventful lives and anonymous art is one of the most familiar motifs in the history of modern art. Likewise, Dhanjal's latter move towards site-specific sculpture is neither unique or surprising because it echoes a

tendency which has a long history in sculpture and has become well established in Britain.

This is an interesting book and Dhanjal's work is equally interesting but it would be easier to understand and make judgements about Dhanjal's work if it were critically located in the great modern traditions of which it is a part, rather than having its superficial uniqueness emphasised.

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Michael Angelo. *The Sikh Diaspora: Tradition and Change in an Immigrant Community*, (New York: Garland, 1997), x and 255 pp. $70.00 (hb). ISBN 0-81-5329857.

This study is essentially a sociological profile of a type of South Asian community which is quite widespread in industrialised countries, particularly North America. Such groups can be characterised as relatively well-educated, professionally-oriented, affluent cohorts of South Asian migrants and their children, most of whom have come to the West since the 1960s. The author concentrates on a small number of Punjabi Sikhs who live in upstate New York. While these Sikhs share a common socio-religious background, they do not reside in concentrated, contiguous areas (unlike the 'Little Indias' of Los Angeles, California, Brooklyn, New York, or Chicago), but are distributed throughout the Capital District region of New York. This Tri-Cities territory includes the cities of Albany (the State capital), Schenectady-Troy, and the Clifton Park areas, all in northern New York State.

From the title, *The Sikh Diaspora*, a reader might expect considerably more than is actually covered in the work. It is based on a sample of only thirty-five Sikh individuals who responded to (1) a questionnaire and (2) one or more follow-up interviews (of 45 minutes to 2-1/2 hours duration) in the period 1989-90. Unfortunately, the resulting data represents only one-third of the estimated 90-100 Sikhs who were present in the area at that time (out of a total of 2,694 Asian/Indian persons listed in the applicable 1990 US Census tracts). Thus, this seems more of a pilot project in scope and depth than the 'thick description' of Clifford Geertz that the author invokes in his section on methodology.

The thirteen chapters are divided as follows: chapters I through IV are brief outlines of the nature and scope of the research, related literature, methodology, and a very superficial history of the Sikh community in both South Asia and in the US. Chapters V through XII essentially report the data including the general demographics of the sample and comparisons of patterns of dating and marriage, family and kinship ties and obligations, social relations,

social and dietary habits, women's roles, religious practices, and celebration of holidays/festivals.

These chapters range from 10 to 15 pages each, a remarkably short space for sweeping comparisons of Sikh patterns in both the US and Indian contexts. Further, the basis of these comparisons is somewhat suspect. Many of the contrastive examples from India given by the author strike this reviewer as predicated upon 'ideal' normative cultural statements drawn from secondary works or informants' recollections. When the comparisons were informant generated, they seem rather uncritically accepted by the researcher as statements of objective reality rather than informants' interpretations, which may or may not reflect accurately contemporary practices of Punjabi Sikhs living in modern urban India.

This unfamiliarity with the South Asian context is demonstrated in several places. To illustrate only one, the author writes in his section on social and dietary habits:

> ...Those respondents claiming to practice Khalsa regulations were only slightly more conservative than their non-practicing Panth brethren...In contrast, however, the Khalsa respondents demonstrated a moderate to considerable deviation from traditional values/habits in the areas of food preference and alcohol consumption as well as music. The researcher could not explain this unexpected behavior, except to subscribe it to individual selectivity which members of the respondent community demonstrated on a frequent basis. (Chapter IX, p. 164)

Those familiar with Sikh practices in the India of the 1980s and 1990s would be a bit perplexed themselves! Why would consumption of liquor by educated urban Khalsa Sikh males seem so puzzling a finding for a researcher investigating their dietary patterns in the US.?

If you know little or nothing about the Diaspora Sikhs of North America, then this modest study would provide a broad, if superficial introduction to the historical and cultural contexts of their immigration and adjustment -- at least that professional, middle-class segment that is found today in nearly every major city in America and Canada.

Its limitations are numerous and stem largely from a tiny sample size which severely limits the degree to which the reader can confidently extrapolate its results outside the Tri-Cities area, let alone to New York City or State. Very little of the study seems based on participant-observation or long-term familiarity with the community and therefore relies perhaps too heavily on normative statements and secondary sources to describe putative social standards of behaviour in India and their expression in the US.

The bibliography is quite limited and does not reflect the quantity or quality of Diaspora Sikh literature that has been published in the last decade. It appears that little or no updating was done between finishing the study in 1990 and the 1997 publication date. For its size, this book is very expensive.

Zia had considerable legitimacy problems, the turnout for the referendum was embarrassingly low, and he came under pressure, both from the military and civil colleagues, to transfer power. However his choice of Prime Minster proved to be wrong as Junejo was not prepared to play second fiddle to the President. Zia was more successful in foreign relations - he improved relations with India, and he managed to extract considerable aid and military assistance from the USA in return for acting as a frontline state against the Soviet backed regime in Afghanistan. However Zia and the military-bureaucratic oligarchy made serious errors by misreading the Afghan conflict. Seeing it in the simplistic terms of Islam versus communism, underestimating Afghan nationalism and thus not availing themselves of the opportunities that arose. When differences between the Afghan leadership and Soviets emerged at various times, such as when Hafeezullah Amin stood up to the Soviets, Pakistan refused to do business with him.

Khan's narrative is interrupted by a brief period of retirement and he returned as a federal minister with the portfolio of accountability, working for Ghulam Ishaq Khan. This was a crucial period, which saw the titanic clash between the President and the Prime Minster Nawaz Sharif. Roedad clearly states that the clash was not inevitable until Nawaz Sharif declared war on Ghulam Ishaq Khan. He sustains the view that there was a difference of personality and lack of communication that aggravated misunderstanding between the two. The clash also raised the serious question of where sovereignty lay. With the death of Zia the army decided not to take over but it led to the emergence of three centres of power; the army, the President, and the Prime Minster. The balance and relations between the three were unclear and this raised issues concerning succession and which power centre had the final authority.

With reference to his portfolio of accountability, Khan investigated a number of allegations against Benazir Bhutto. The word accountability became a dirty word under Nawaz Sharif's administration as he hoped to use the charges as a bargaining counter for eliciting her support against the President. When Benazir was returned to office again all the charges were dropped. This was par for the course as politicians were hand in glove with the bureaucracy in acts of corruption, bribery and nepotism. Khan laments the failure of the accountability process as corruption in politics was reaching endemic proportions that were seriously affecting confidence in the Establishment. Khan invests considerable importance in the role of the judiciary in holding the future of Pakistan. For him the history of the Judiciary can be divided into two phases pre- and post- 1996 when the Judiciary refused to defer to the Executive over the appointment of judges. Up to this point the Judiciary simply rubber stamped the decisions of the Executive, legitimating military rule after military rule, but after this date it drew a line declaring its independence.

The striking aspect of these books is the lack of objective assessment of the debacle that led to the break up of Pakistan. Burney's editorials are

remarkably silent on what was then East Pakistan and he only mentions in passing the developments there which erupted into the storm that tore the country apart in 1971. Raza blames Mujibur Rahman but does not explain why he or the PPP were not prepared to accept the electoral verdict of the majority. He concedes that a confederal solution was better than civil war, but there was no certainty that once in power the Awami League, like most political parties, would have implemented its manifesto. Khan, on his reading of the Hamoodur Rahman Report, absolves Yayha Khan of wrongdoing, but he does not indicate who was then responsible.

Khan's optimism for the independence of the judiciary has proven to be premature at best and illusory at worst. Nawaz Sharif has added the scalp of the Chief Justice and the Chief of Army Staff to his collection and dominates Pakistan as an elected autocrat. Nawaz Sharif's dominance, however, like Khan's optimism, may also prove to be a passing phase. Overall these books make a worthy contribution to our understanding of Pakistan and will be quarried by scholars for the nuggets of information they contain.

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Victoria Schofield (ed), *Old Roads New Highways, Fifty years of Pakistan*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997), xx and 34pp. Rs 900 (hb). ISBN 0-19-577845.

In 1997-8, half a century from the turmoil of Partition, scenes of jubilation embraced the cities and towns of Pakistan and India. Indeed, it has been a time to reflect and reminisce whilst rejoicing at this major milestone in modern South Asian history. But, the questions whether the years have really witnessed significant advances in social fields and how far the masses have benefited from independence, still pose a formidable challenge. Various quality publications, both inside and outside Pakistan, have tried to confront the issue by focusing on diverse aspects of the country's life since 1947. To these numerous volumes Victoria Schofield's compendium of fifteen chapters categorised in three sections – the arts, major institutions and socio-economic development in Pakistan, makes a valuable and salutary addition.

In his foreword to this commemorative book, Sir Nicholas Barrington, while giving an overall optimistic synopsis of the main issues raised in the text, portrays the salient achievements of Pakistan over the last fifty years. A former British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Sir Barrington is aware of the severe social and economic impediments facing the nation though, to him, 'the main weakness is in poor indices for health and education' (p. xiii). The Foreword is humorous and informal in tone, a feature also evident in some other

contributions. Victoria Schofield's introduction defines Pakistan within a pertinent geographical and historical context. A reputable scholar of the region, Schofield summarises the changes Pakistan has steadily endured under the varying political regimes. In addition, particular attention has been paid to topics such as the India factor, the long martial law years and the contemporary fragile political environment. Although her introductory section is factual, there do exist a few discrepancies. For instance, the text confuses the location of the Tarbela and Mangla hydroelectric projects.

The first section of this book is devoted to the arts scene in Pakistan. Of special interest are Allchins's and Hashmi's chapters, examining vast fields including archaeology and the visual arts. To Allchins, the historic excavations and cities of ancient Pakistan can hold their own with those of any country (p.33). In its early years, the region which is today Pakistan experienced the emergence of a great civilisation in the Indus Valley, which the authors chart in a chronological manner. This chapter provides a crucial background to the ancient roots of modern Pakistan. It is, however, noteworthy that Mark Kenoyer's recent study on the ancient cities of the Indus Valley published by Oxford University Press, is a further in-depth treatment of this under-researched subject.

Kamil Mumtaz negotiates the architectural marvels of both modern-day Pakistan and its Mughal antecedents. He appreciates the genuine mixture of Western and Eastern styles in constructing major landmarks, though he is aggrieved over an occasional lack of contextuality. Like several other concerned Pakistanis he is not comfortable with the upstartish rush for non-thematic edifices. The section on the new capital city of Islamabad is quite illuminating: Mumtaz recognises the lack of an institutional infrastructure for young architects, although the establishment of a few centres on the pattern of the National College of Arts and the induction of vital new courses may fill in the existing void.

For many Pakistanis, the past fifty years have proven a passionate and unending struggle to establish democratic and participatory institutions guaranteeing a greater respect for human rights. For activists like Asma Jahangir, human development has persistently remained the focus of the current dilemma, especially for the disadvantaged Pakistanis. Undoubtedly, Jahangir's contribution makes an essential reading. In her view, 'Women's individual rights are constantly at conflict with some of the collective rights based on the cultural, religious and ethnic differences' (p.158). The lobbying of human rights has been, at time, arduous, especially under General Zia and even under the subsequent quasi-democratic regimes. The authors in this section, while dealing with the press, education and rural developments, duly recognise the urgency for nation-wide education as the sole engine of self-development. Zamir Niazi's piece on the newly-achieved freedom of the press highlights the valiant role played by several journalists against the odds. Interestingly, the author commences his article with two contrasting quotes from the Quaid-I-

Azam and General Zia-ul-Haq. The Quaid's view of the free and critical press is totally alien to Zia's view of a totalitarian system.

In the final section of the volume attention centres on the current economic and social disparities. For many, Omar Noman's discussion on the economy and related infra-structural problems will provide an introductory foreground. However, one may also be mindful of the fact that within Pakistan there exists a dire lack of intellectual research on diverse areas such as tourism, the humanities and natural sciences. Isobel Shaw, herself a pioneer of writing lucid travel accounts of Pakistan, has effectively described the varying landscapes of Pakistan besides identifying the immense economic and cultural potentials of this neglected sector.

Old Roads New Highways can be characterised as a useful text book, highlighting the main issues and problems that a third world country has been confronted with. Accompanying the text are numerous photographs – some a bit faded – illustrating the themes of various chapters. Oxford University Press has published this book as part of the 50th anniversary series. This laudable series covers a wider arena of Pakistan studies by providing a comprehensive array of scholarly works. Indeed, this commemorative volume deserves applause despite a few factual and textual errors.

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Yasmin Hameed and Asif Aslam Farrukhi (eds), *So That You Can Know Me: An Anthology of Pakistani Women Writers*, UNESCO Collection of Representative Works (Reading: Garnet Publishing, 1997), 167 pp, £6.95 (hb). ISBN 1-85964-114-8.

This attractively produced book was originally published by the Pakistani Academy of Letters in 1994 and subsequently in its present abridged form assisted by UNESCO's Funds-in-trust Programme. There are seventeen short stories, sixteen of which have been translated into English from the Punjabi, Pushto, Seraki, Sindhi and Urdu originals and only one written originally in English. The languages represented however are not evenly balanced since those written in Urdu far outnumber the others, some twelve of them as compared with solitary inclusions from the other languages of Pakistan. That is not entirely unexpected as Urdu writing has dominated the literary world of Pakistani writing until very recently. Muzaffar Iqbal, the guest editor of *Pakistani Literature*, the first volume of literary translations published by the Pakistani Academy of Letters, described Pakistani literature as the product of an 'organic development' in the interaction of Islamic civilisation with local traditions and Urdu, Pakistan's national language, as the linguistic medium of this synthesis. (M. Iqbal, 'Raison

d'etre', *Pakistani Literature*, vol.1,p.7, 1992). The literary pre-eminence of Urdu in Pakistan still remains firm but politically, and culturally, now has to accept the other literatures of the land - Balochi, Pashto, Punjabi, Seraiki, Sindhi - with their own literary traditions and modern developments along with English. Pakistanis in Pakistan, as distinct from the Pakistani diaspora, writing creatively in English, may not receive the promotional publicity accorded to their peer group in India but are an increasingly significant part of the country's contemporary writers.

So That You Can Know Me, as an anthology of women's writing from Pakistan where social changes in the lives of women have been facing severe tensions with the rise of religious conservatism and military dictatorships, might have reflected some of the sharpness and intensity of these confrontations. The general tone of the stories, however is more muted and the narratives, while generally conscious of the constraints on women's lives, do not venture into the realms of women's non conformity or rebellion, so vividly captured in Rukhsana Ahmad's translations of Urdu feminist poets from Pakistan *(We sinful Women*, London: Women's Press 1991). Protest and women's refusal to accept unjust social norms are conveyed in a few stories like Firdous Haider's Urdu Story, `The Cow' through symbolism and metaphor. The unnamed woman chained to an impotent husband, is visualised as a cow, who does break her chains, defies those who would stone her and returns having conceived life. Afzal Tauseef's story, `The Testimony', another translation from the Urdu original, locates her heroine also un-named in one of the many political trials and conspiracy cases that have punctuated Pakistani politics. Here the woman represents the courage of those prepared to uphold principles in the face of imprisonment, torture and hanging in sharp contrast to the male witness who is prepared to betray seven freedom fighters and send them to the gallows. The most explicit example of the emergent assertiveness in women throughout the world is found in Rukhsana Ahmad's piece, written in English, `The Spell and the Ever-Changing moon.' Tied to a violent and drunkard of a husband, Nisa is desperate enough to consult a woman whose magical rituals and potions have helped many in Lahore. Nisa changes from a fearful wife who submits to enforced sexual humiliation and physical violence at the hands of her husband - being a `shivering huddled creature into a calmer thinking woman.' (p137) She argues against her aunt who believes that women must endure whatever husbands do and finds the will to leave her husband and returns to her mother in Sialkot with `laboriously slow but determined' steps.(p140)

Whilst most of the stories are centred on the home those written from a child's perspective provide an agreeable change from the more familiar theme of marital relations, especially as there is scarcely any trace of either cloying sentimentality or juvenile precocity. `Munni Bibi Goes to The Fair' by the acclaimed Urdu writer, Hajra Masroor, whose first story was published in 1942 before she migrated to Pakistan in 1948, tells with cool detachment of a little girl's delightful day at the fair spoilt by the parents, discovery that her doll was given by the male servant's dancing girl lover. Little Sakina, in Parveen Malik's Punjabi

tale, 'The Magic Flower', absorbed in the stories of distant lands and magical deeds recounted by the school assistant, is deceived into looking for a magical flower which leads to her being raped.

Two pieces - one about an abducted woman during the Partition, and another about a childless woman - both reminiscent of works by Amrita Pritam, get treated with difference. In 'Banishment', an Urdu work by Jamila Hashmi, it is a Muslim woman who has been abducted by a Hindu man and forced to live as his wife, bear his children and dream of her middle class past and longing for her older brother. Time makes her mother-in-law, *Badi Ma,* trust her as the family's Lakshmi, yet she cannot accept her fate unlike Pooro, Pritam's abducted heroine in *Pinjar (The Skeleton)* who refused to return to her family in India. Hameedan, the childless wife in 'A Manly Act' by Neelam Ahmed Bashir, is as much the victim of the social stigma attached to barren women as Guleri in Amrita Pritman's much anthologised story 'Stench of Kerosene'. The difference lies in the motivation of the two wives and the means of destroying them. Both women are burnt to death - Hameedan by her husband through a cunning ploy and Guleri by her own hands. If the burden of responsibility, superficially, differs the ultimate responsibility lies with the husbands and their desire for wives who can bear their sons.

So That You Can Know Me provides the reader with a more informed view of the literary work of writers who happen to be women rather than feminist writing. Style and the craft of the short story, a particularly developed genre in Urdu and other literatures of the Subcontinent, are well represented in several of the selections despite very uneven translations. The editors obviously retained the blemishes found in the original 1994 version published by the Pakistani Academy of Letters, though such an accepted publishing practice could have been modified for Garnet Publishing's readers, in most cases, native users of English. Where the translations are skilful they approach the excellence of the original as in 'Millipede' by Kahlida Hussain, who is probably one of the finest Urdu writers today and who has been well served by her translators, Prof Muhammad Umar Memon and Wayne Husted, both at the University of Wisconsin. Written from the perspective of a man gradually losing his sanity, it is a story that can be read on many levels, a tour de force in its depiction of schizophrenia through the consciousness of the victim as well as the plight of many sensitive people alienated from a harsh society where 'emptiness continues...the emptiness inside ourselves.' (p124)

Bano Qudsia's 'Many Faces of Truth', another of the many Urdu stories in the anthology, embodies, with skill and an ironic humour, the only story set among the Pakistani diaspora in England. Ghulam Mohammed, once a poor man in a Punjab village, has risen to new heights as a hotelier in London and Birmingham. When his entrepreneurial gaze falls on an empty and derelict church which he wants to buy and re-develop as a mosque and Islamic centre there is total opposition from his British born children, his friends and business partner and even his wife who scorns his desire to rescue 'Houses of God in disrepair' considering their huge numbers throughout the world. Ghulam persists, only to be

killed during a National Front march, his body found beneath the church door, his cheque-book in his pocket ready to complete the deal.

An anthology that introduces its readers to unfamiliar writing, to authors whose stature in their own linguistic world is not recognised, requires more than a glossary which *So That You Can Know Me* does include. There is no introduction by the editors and no notes on the selected writers. The paucity of translations of contemporary South Asian literatures necessitates such additions for meaningful reception of the texts. Garnet, to which we are also in debt for novels by Arab women writers, should rectify this omission in their future publications.

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Manjit Singh, *Uneven Development in Agriculture and Labour Migration* (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1995), v and 219pp. Rs.350 (hb). ISBN 81-8592-27-2.

Over the last thirty years or so the Punjab rural and urban economy has undergone a fundamental change. Any visitor to the Punjab will be struck by two profound changes: the appearance of large numbers of migrant workers in both agricultural employment and industrial cities and the enhanced levels of urbanisation where even the small market towns are over-sprawling, blurring further the distinction between urban and rural areas. Increased labour mobility coupled with social mobility has produced a demographic mix very different from the earlier simplified accounts of Hindu-Sikh, urban-rural divide. Obviously the 'green revolution' has been the major catalyst for this change but there have been other important internal and external influences which have remained largely under researched. As a consequence of these changes the average Punjabi remains one of the most affluent citizens of India and the envy of other Indians especially those living in some of the lesser-developed states like Bihar and Orissa. The book under review, although containing chapters of varying quality, brings into sharp focus the demographic and the 'human dimensions' of development and change in Punjab. It attempts to illustrate how the economic transformation has affected and has been affected by the demographic and migratory changes unleashed by the forces of modernisation.

Manjit Singh has attempted to write an interesting but an ambitious book. The book is sub-divided into two parts. The first part, covering roughly the first three chapters, although mainly theoretical, provides a useful summary of the historical debates on the development of capitalism in agriculture and of models of internal labour migration. Furthermore, this section also attempts to locate the development of Punjab agriculture within the context of the often sterile 'mode of production' debate which took place among academics working

on Indian agriculture in the latter half of the 1970s and early 1980s. Successful development of capitalism in Punjab agriculture is contrasted with the backward agrarian structure of Bihar but, nevertheless, according to the author's understanding of the debate and his interpretation of capitalist relations, both regions have developed capitalist forms of agriculture, albeit at different levels. These contrasting types of agrarian structures are traced back to the colonial and post-colonial legacies inherited by the two regions. The resulting uneven development at the macro level is then used to model the process of labour migration from Bihar to Punjab. Punjab is desperate for labour during peak harvest times and Bihar represents a reservoir of unlimited supplies of cheap labour. Thus anything up to three lakh migrants were visiting Punjab during the early 1980s. This labour migration, however, merely perpetuates spatial inequalities even further. The author, rather unconvincingly, rejects the mainstream, neo-classical explanations for the persistence and perpetuation of unevenness and inequalities in the two regions and contends that the fate of the two regions is inter-linked with Punjabis 'fattening at the miseries and destitution' of the Biharis (p.viii). A pseudo-Marxist explanation follows which attempts to explain how unlimited Bihari migration at low and stable wages and poor working conditions remain the key to understanding Punjab's agricultural prosperity. Unfortunately, this alternative theoretical formulation is not explicitly developed and the reader is left wondering what form the `internal colonialism' or 'core-periphery' model in this specific context would look like.

The second part provides empirical evidence to support the author's view that low wages and poor working conditions of migrants have been as important in enabling the success of the green revolution as the availability of biological and mechanical technologies and the industriousness of the Jat peasantry. Based largely on fieldwork undertaken during 1980-1, the heyday of adoption of green revolution technology, chapters four and five detail the link between green revolution and labour demand, changing patterns of labour utilisation, magnitudes of migratory flows and wages and working conditions of migrants. Chapter five is particularly useful in providing interesting insights into the socio-economic background of migrants, problems migrants face during travel to and within Punjab, recruitment practices, strained relations between migrant and local labour and migrant experiences of being caught in the cross-fire during the Khalistan secessionist movement. Although the author's own fieldwork samples are small both in terms of number of migrants interviewed and districts of Punjab surveyed, some very useful generalisations are derived by utilising the work of other scholars especially those based at the Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana, a city which is invariably the first destination of migrants.

There are two main limitations of this particular book. Although the author has presented a good critical review of the models of internal labour migration especially as they apply to the Bihar-Punjab situation, very few lessons are drawn from the comparative experiences of other regions - whether

in India or in other parts of the global economy - which have also seen significant migratory movements. Here large migratory movements within Southern Africa, between Central America and USA and intra-Asian Pacific countries immediately come to mind. There now exists extensive literature and even specialist journals, which deal with the accelerating phenomenon of internal and international labour movements. Consultation of some of this literature would have enabled the author to highlight the specific characteristics and contexts of Bihar-Punjab migration and extend our knowledge beyond simplified explanations based on `push-pull' and Todaro-type migration models.

The second limitation is perhaps more significant and relates to the straightjacket that the author has imposed himself through using a Marxist-flavoured formulation in explaining Bihar-Punjab migratory flows. Movement of labour is seen wholly as a zero-sum game where Punjab is the only winner. In contrast, this movement should really be seen as a positive sum game where both regions benefit through mutual gain. To elaborate, just as Punjabi households benefits from the crores of rupees sent back by Punjabi migrants either living in other parts of India or overseas, so do Bihar households. Access to remittance income is an important component of a Bihari household's survivalist strategy as a discussion with any Bihari migrant worker in Punjab would confirm. Why else would they have been prepared to risk a militant's bullet? By focusing on a one-sided approach the author has missed an opportunity to demonstrate how uneven development can also create beneficial spillover effects. Experiences of other countries and regions show that in situations where there are limited local employment opportunities voluntary export of labour becomes an important source of subsistence income.

Despite the above limitations the author has done a commendable job in bringing together disparate but yet unexplored dimensions of Punjab's economic development. The book is a valuable addition to the sparse literature on Punjab's political economy and will hopefully act as a stimulus to a more systematic and detailed consideration of the role of migrant labour in the process of economic development.

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N K Joshi, *People's Path to Social Change: Essays and Reviews* (Delhi: Ajanta, 1997), vi and 200 pp, Rs 100 (pb) No ISBN

The Balraj Sahni Memorial Foundation, Chandigarh, brought out this book on the first anniversary of the death of N K Joshi, a Punjabi Communist activist

and journalist. He died at the age of 58 on 29th October 1996 in Chandigarh's PGI hospital after having been seriously injured in a car accident.

The book is divided into three parts. In the first part, some of Joshi's friends have written short pieces in remembrance of him. In the second part, articles written by Joshi between February 1967 and January 1969 in *People's Path* and one article written in *The Tribune*, 19th December 1991, have been put together. The third part contains some of the book reviews done by Joshi. Dates of these reviews and where they were published are, unfortunately, not mentioned. However, my guess is that most, if not all, of these were published in *The Tribune* in the 1990s.

In the Preface, it is mentioned that this collection is a 'small selection from Joshi's numerous writings on politics, economy, culture, arts and literature'. For the readers of *IJPS*, it may be of interest to know that this selection includes reviews of Pritam Singh and Shinder Thandi (eds) *Globalisation and the Region: Explorations in Punjabi Identity* and that of Gurharpal Singh and Ian Talbot (eds) *Punjabi Identity: Continuity and Change*. The selection, however, does not include the reviews done by Joshi of Darshan Tatla and Ian Talbot (eds) *Punjab* and Gurharpal Singh *Communism in Punjab*.

Joshi's friends - Amarjit Singh Deepak, Harkishen Singh Mehta, Narendra Kumar Oberoi, Satya P Gautam and Bhupindar Brar - who have written the remembrance pieces, have not only performed a humane duty of friendship by bringing this collection together, they have also contributed to furthering the cause of Punjab studies by providing us with the opportunity to know the viewpoint of the Maoist political tendency in Punjab as articulated by Joshi.

It is not easy to review a set of essays/reviews which deal with a diverse range of issues and have been written over a 30-year time period. I will attempt to highlight some themes which will, hopefully, be of general interest.

As an overall view, I felt that this book was a reminder and an evidence of the theoretical insulation of Punjabi Marxism. Joshi was, perhaps, one of the better informed (among Punjabi Marxists) on the wider development in theory, ideology and politics. Nevertheless, even Joshi's writings do not provide any evidence of the awareness of theoretical currents in Marxism beyond the writings of Lenin, Stalin and Mao. This signifies the theoretical underdevelopment of Marxism in Punjab.

Joshi was kind enough to tell me once that *Economic and Political Weekly* had asked him to comment on my article 'Marxism in Punjab' (*EPW*, March 1984) in which I had highlighted the theoretical backwardness of Marxism in Punjab. I wish that Joshi had written his response as it might have opened up the opportunity to debate the extent, roots and consequences of the theoretical backwardness of Punjabi Communism.

Joshi's political essays written in the 1960s articulate the then Maoist position of the critique of parliamentary left-wing politics in India. His essay on human rights written in 1991 ends with a hostile position towards the work of

international organisations in the field of human rights in India, which is the direct product of his economic reductionist approach.

In contrast, his review of Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha's book on the ecological movements in India shows his open-mindedness to new movements. Similarly, in his review of Douglas Allen's book *Religion and Political Conflict in South Asia*, he concludes - unusually for a Marxist - by acknowledging the progressive potentialities of some religious institutions and ideas.

Joshi wrote an interesting review in *Economic and Political Weekly* of Bhagwan Josh's *Communist Movement in Punjab*. In the context of Joshi's political career in Punjabi Communism, this review deserved to be included in this selection.

It would have been useful for those interested in Punjab Studies if a complete list of his writings had been provided. More biographical details on Joshi, in a chronological order, would have added to the usefulness of this praiseworthy collection. Joshi had been working on a book on the Ghaddar movement before he died. That task remains unfinished.

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Richard Saumarez Smith, *Rule by Record: Land Registration and Village Custom in Early British Punjab,* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), xiv and 451pp. Rs 695. ISBN 0-19-563673 2.

This book is a tragedy. It is tragic because Dr Smith has invested so much effort in his research, and has produced such negligible results. The record mountain has laboured to produce a mouse. One can see what attracted Dr Smith to his subject. The sources he has exploited – the village records generated by the Indian revenue system – are so detailed and so accurate as to defy belief; you can trace the fate of each field, each cultivator, over generations; there is nothing like them anywhere else in the third world. It should be possible to do almost anything with them; to answer any question about changes in Punjabi rural society, as a result of the coming of the British. And no one could accuse Dr Smith of sloth. He has devoted half a working lifetime to mastering the details of his maximal sample of eighty villages in and around Ludhiana. 'This study,' he says in the preface, 'has taken a long time to bring to fruition.' By my calculations, it has taken twenty-five years: four-and-a-half of them slaving in the archive mine in the revenue record room in Ludhiana. As a result, there are times at which Dr Smith seems to know each villager, each holding, by name. But what does it all add up to? What has he actually found out? The short answer is, virtually nothing. There is nothing in

Dr Smith's 451 pages which you could not find – far better expressed – in the settlement reports and district gazetters of the day. His greatest discovery – or rediscovery, since every settlement officer knew about it at the time – seems to be that, before the coming of the British, Punjabi cultivators counted in 'ploughs'. Holdings contained so many ploughs – and so did villages. A plough, in this sense, was more than an agricultural implement; it was more than a fixed area of land; it was a collection of shares in all the 'open fields' and common resources of the village, and the factors of production – labour, bullocks, seed – which were needed to exploit them. And that is it. If anything, it is rather more than it; because you can find much better explanations of how 'ploughs' worked in the nineteenth-century settlement literature.

So the question is: what went so badly wrong? Why did *Rule by Records* become such a dramatic warning to future research students: such a terrifying example of how not to do it, of industry misplaced? Dr Smith made, I think, two terrible mistakes. In the first place, his research is source-led instead of being led by problems. He should have done what any normal historian does: define a number of hypotheses – about changes in the agrarian society of the Punjab, as a result of the British annexation; then test them, one by one, by gathering every scrap of evidence he could from the full range of available sources. Instead, he restricted himself – apparently deliberately – to seeing what he could get out of a single cache of records: the village papers created in the course of the first regular settlement of Ludhiana (c. 1847-1853). His refusal to look at *any other sources* hopelessly impoverishes his work. His neglect of earlier and later records – on the specious grounds that it gave him greater 'control' – deprives his research of diachronic depth. His treatment of the Sikh revenue system is perfunctory in the extreme; he shows no interest in the village papers of subsequent British settlements; he has made no attempt to explore the revenue files of the district officers, although they must contain the most valuable information on the introduction of the British revenue system; he has not even read the tehsil assessment reports for Ludhiana, the most detailed analyses of local agrarian society ever written. He claims that this concentration on the village papers of a single settlement allowed him to focus on synchronic issues: on how the agrarian system worked at a specific point in time – and more particularly on the discrepancies between British perceptions and Punjabi realities. But the plain fact is that his limited range of sources stops him addressing synchronic problems properly. His refusal to consult judicial records robs him of the richest data on actual collisions between British categories and Punjabi expectations. I cannot think of any other book on Indian agrarian history which is marked by such a systematic disinterest in ninety per cent of the relevant records. Dr Smith's blinkers are *heroic*. Lord Acton said that historians achieve mastery through resolute self-limitation. *Rules by records* proves him wrong.

In the second place, Dr Smith is overwhelmed by detail. In fact he luxuriates in it. Every time one feels that he might be on the verge of some

Dr Smith's 451 pages which you could not find – far better expressed – in the settlement reports and district gazetters of the day. His greatest discovery – or rediscovery, since every settlement officer knew about it at the time – seems to be that, before the coming of the British, Punjabi cultivators counted in 'ploughs'. Holdings contained so many ploughs – and so did villages. A plough, in this sense, was more than an agricultural implement; it was more than a fixed area of land; it was a collection of shares in all the 'open fields' and common resources of the village, and the factors of production – labour, bullocks, seed – which were needed to exploit them. And that is it. If anything, it is rather more than it; because you can find much better explanations of how 'ploughs' worked in the nineteenth-century settlement literature.

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In the second place, Dr Smith is overwhelmed by detail. In fact he luxuriates in it. Every time one feels that he might be on the verge of some

luminous generalisation, off he goes: into the miniature of this villager, that holding. Whole pages degenerate into the thickest of examples: and all too often the examples illustrate nothing: they are examples for the sake of example. One could open the book at almost any page at random, and it would be the same. It is the antiquarian spirit: every fact is sacred, and every fact is as important as every other fact. The result of Dr Smith's obsession is excruciating tedium. Before I read *Rule by Records*, I thought that van den Dungen's *Punjab Tradition* was the most boring book on the history of the Punjab. Now I know that van den Dungen, as a mega-bore, has been hopelessly outclassed. I have difficulty believing that a single person will ever read *Rule by records* right through. Not even a professional historian of the Punjab could stand it.

One does, I suppose, learn a little from *Rule by Records* about the village papers of the first regular settlement of Ludhiana: about the tables they contain, about how they were compiled, about the information that can be extracted from them. There are also some very pretty technicolour maps of villages, showing how the shareholders' allotments were set out under different systems. There are even a few stimulating middle-range insights, buried in the dross: insights about the process of colonisation, for instance. But really, one could learn infinitely more about village tenures from Baden-Powell; and if one wants insights about agrarian society in the British Punjab, Kessinger's *Vilyatpur* offers ten times as many in a far more readable form. *Pace* Dr Smith, the village records of the rural Punjab still await the historian who can make sense of a fabulously rich source – by integrating them with other sources.

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Paul R. Brass, *Theft of an Idol: Text and Content in the Representation of Collective Violence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), xvi and 298 pp. (pb.). ISBN 0-691-02650-5.

Paul R. Brass's innovative ethnographic study of collective violence dealing with ethnic and communal violence, and other incidents of violence in North India, would make us rethink our theories, views, and policies that have failed to stem the escalating incidence of violence in India.

Professor Brass's argument briefly is that interethnic conflicts in modern societies impinge on the interests of the social and political groups, and the interpretations and explanations of the conflicts are a deeply contested terrain. In the case of riotous events there is a struggle amongst politicians, state authorities and media to promote their own interpretations, and to capture the meaning of these events in order to serve their diverse interests. This vortex of struggle affects the competing systems of knowledge. Social scientists search

for causes and journalistic accounts too are not free of subjectivity. The author, using the Faucauldian discourse analysis in the five Indian case studies of riotous events, demonstrates how the interpretations and 'constructions' by the politicians, media and state authorities, in terms of their effects and consequences, perpetuate the very system whose ills they seek to rectify.

In explaining riots and pogroms Brass takes issue with two broad conventional social science explanations: the 'classical sequential model', and the ecological approach. In the former certain antecedental psychological and historical factors under certain conditions lead to interethnic tension that requires a mere triggering event for riots to materialise. The ecological approach identifies and analyses demographic and other socio-political conditions that distinguish riot-prone from riot-free cities.

The author's first objection to these conventional academic accounts is that their claim to objectivity is untenable. His more substantive critique is that:

> these accounts.... eliminate[s] agency and responsibility from their explanations. They objectify a sequence or demographic situation and fail to identify specific persons, groups and organisations, and state agents who actually inaugurate and sustain riotous events and commit the arson, property destruction and murder.

Further, by referring to primordial antipathies, they cast blame widely and thus allow a protective smokescreen for political leaders, organisations and state agents that are directly or indirectly implicated in these events.

In understanding the dynamics of riots in areas where riots are endemic the author believes that all riot-prone cities and towns, to a lesser or greater degree, are marked by the presence of an 'institutionalised riot system', an informal network of actors, political and cultural groups and persons from different social categories (including lumpen fringe) that maintains communal and 'ethnic relations in a state of tension, of readiness for riot (pp 16-17)'. However, the ability of this network to operate is conditioned by the role of the local and state administration. A competent and impartial civil and police administration can check or contain riots while an inefficient and partisan administration will exacerbate them.

Brass relates riotous events to the broader political context. This covers routine politics in the Indian competitive polity as also movement politics within the parameters of parliamentary politics. He argues that riotous incidents are generally more common before and during elections and also at the time of mass mobilisation, especially when the political balance between the contending forces is changing.

One of the reasons for the persistence of riots in India, Brass argues, is that communal riots have larger political uses for both the secular nationalists and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). They help the former and the Muslim politicians in mobilising the support of the Muslim minority, and at the same time the BJP is able to consolidate its Hindu support base. This

instrumentalist construction seems to ignore the roles of commitment and ideology.

Further, not each and every one of the riotous events is made into a public issue, involving the magnification of the event, unless these provide political opportunities for one set of parties and leaders to blame their opponents for instigating riotous events or for their inability to control them (pp 26-27). Four of the five case studies fit into such 'opportunity structures'. Through these case studies, Brass demonstrates how rhetorical manipulation of the events and the political game of one-upmanship fail to provide remedies for the substantive issue of violence. Of the five two contrasting case studies, one noticed and the other unnoticed are very instructive for understanding the grim realities of rural violence in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP).

A violent incident that acquired a nationwide notoriety occurred in village Narayanpur (district Deoria) in January, 1980. An old woman was run over and killed by a private bus, and the ensuing quarrel over compensation led to village–police confrontation in which the police committed atrocities against the villagers, mostly Muslims, Harijans, and members of lower backward castes. Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi, who had just regained her office, visited the village in early February. She blamed severely the ruling non-Congress state government for its failure to protect minorities and the scheduled castes from police atrocities and exploitation. The state government downplayed the incident and reminded Mrs Gandhi of atrocities during the long period of Congress rule. This symbolic war of words reached a stage 'in which talk itself becomes not just a substitute for inaction, but a means of perpetuating the very system of abuses to which it draws attention.' (p 167)

The second case of police atrocities against villagers belonging to lower backward castes and untouchables occurred in village Kurman Purwa, district Gonda, in July, 1982. Unlike the Narayanpur case this incident was not manipulated by rival politicians for external use in the wider political arena. The district Congress leaders of the ruling party sorted it out locally. This unnoticed incident provides us with an important insight into the realities of day to day incidents of violence. In the case of Narayanpur, this reality was masked by the exaggerated rhetoric of the higher politics of the state and country in the struggle for power.

In his excellent analysis, Brass exposes the complex relationship between the police and politicians, and how police can indulge in intimidation, harassment and violence against ordinary citizens with impunity. The politicians' primary interest in this symbolic struggle is to control the police for their partisan ends. The more difficult remedial measures, 'the social, economic and institutional restructuring' are not on their agenda (pp 67-68, pp 200-202).

The last case study relates to a major Hindu-Muslim riot in Kanpur in the aftermath of the demolition of Babari Masjid in December 1992. The study presents the representations and explanations of the riot by the major contending political forces, the media and the local administration. It also

focuses on the role of one Kala Bachcha, a BJP municipal corporator, in the event. He was considered a hero and protector by some, mostly by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its related organisations (Sangh Parivar), and a major killer by others. He was killed in February, 1994 and this provoked another minor riot.

The 1992 riot that started with Muslims coming out on the street on the evening of December sixth, culminated in massive killings and destruction on the ninth and tenth December assuming virtually the form of a pogrom against the Muslims.

There are divergent voices as to whether the motivation of the crowd can be considered as an attack or as a reaction. BJP-Sangh Parivar leaders and communal Hindus blamed the Muslim community for starting the riot. Hindus, they argued, reacted after the provocation. These leaders buttress their case by using the 'essentialist' images of Muslims and Hindus, the former being 'aggressive', 'insidious' while Hindus are portrayed as 'placid', 'never on the offensive' etc. (pp 221-225).

Muslim leaders and clerics argued that the Muslims came out on the streets to express their resentment against the demolition of the Masjid. They also blamed the previous local heads of the civil and police administration for their partiality, and for the excessive use of force to control the Muslim mob. In the light of the overall evidence Brass exposes the BJP-RSS 'big lie' concerning Hindu action during the communal riots.

The second riotous incident after the killing of Kala Bachcha in February, 1994 was brought under prompt control by the firm and impartial local administration. The then state administration, led by the Samajwadi Party (SP) leader Mulayam Singh Yadav, gave a non-communal interpretation by attributing the killing as a part of routine crime. The local police stated that Kala Bachcha was a criminal involved in a number of cases of 'murder, loot, arson and rape' (p 224). The BJP leaders instead treated it as communal killing and blamed the state administration and the 'Muslims' for it.

Press reporting on this riotous event gave the impression of a 'spontaneous outburst of popular rage' after the killing. The author's reconstruction of the event, however, puts the blame on the BJP network that gets activated on such occasions. Further, the press treated the local police version of the event with incredulity and presented it in a communal light. Brass concludes: whatever the motives of the press the effect was plainly 'to blame the Muslims as a community for the killing of a person, with known criminal record' (p246). In this particular incident extra-local BJP leaders' aim was not to precipitate a riot but to magnify the whole event into a grand political event from which they could profit. Their attempt, however, was frustrated by the local administration.

As to the role of the main political parties in the riotous events the author exposes the insincerity and hypocrisy of the secular state authorities. During the long period of Congress rule in the post independence period the

state authorities have usually banned the RSS and related Hindu bodies along with one or two Muslim organisations, usually a weak Jamait-i-Islami. This clubbing of the two unequal bodies, when mostly it is Muslims who are killed, is treated as pandering to Hindu opinion. Left parties, like the CPM, apportion greater blame to Hindu militant organisations as compared to the Muslim organisations. The RSS-BJP group vaguely blame the Muslim criminal and communal elements for engineering riots, the Congress party gets the blame for shielding these elements. The author concludes:

> All these positions are, however, nothing but posturing. They fail to examine the actual dynamics of riots and pogroms or even the role of particular individuals, where they come from, how they become prominent, how they act with impunity and escape prosecution..When all or almost all known organisations and groups are posturing without examining what is actually happening... when one must presume they are all themselves somehow implicated... Some are directly implicated in fomenting riots and in protecting the rioters after facts. Those who are not directly implicated... are indirectly implicated by the very hypocrisy of their talk and action in relations to riots (p. 239).

Professor Brass sees a direct link between the struggle between three ideologies – Hindu nationalism, Muslim separatism, and secularism – and the modern nation state and the communal violence since the nineteenth century. The partition of India and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi discredited the two ideologies and secularism became the dominant ideology. In recent years the rise of Hindu nationalism, the Ram Janambhumi movement, and the arousal of deep feelings on the issue, have led to the escalation of Hindu-Muslim conflict. Brass puts the onus for the persistence of this conflict on the two ideologies: secularism and Hindu nationalism.

Secularism continues to be an ideology of a strong centralised state, with religion, communalism and Hindu-Muslim issues being at its centre. The other ideology of Hindu nationalism, based on one Hindu culture is characterised as a 'form of secular ideology of state exaltation'. Brass argues that both the ideologies lack a genuine ideology of secularism based on equal citizens of a free and democratic India.

The author's plea for genuine secularism is unexceptionable but genuine secularism need not be equated with Western secularism in the abstract. It seems Brass underrates the characteristic role of Indian social structure where popular movements, especially of 'the lower half of the Hindu Society', at different points in history have taken the route of cultural or religious revolt. Even in the contemporary period the concept of secularism can be enriched by the humanistic interpretation of religion. If some politicians and groups can distort religious beliefs to subserve their narrow interests there are other better and perhaps liberating possibilities as well.

In the fomenting and engineering of riots Brass assigns a crucial role to the 'institutionalised riot system', but such a network of persons and groups can

only operate where there is a certain degree of willingness and an acceptance of its agenda amongst at least a sizeable section of the populace. The system can not work in a social vacuum. Another issue that needs to be probed is how organisations like Sangh Parivar have been able to increase their influence in Hindu society while in contrast the secular organisations fighting for their cause find it so hard to succeed. Perhaps a more nuanced version of secularism attuned to the social realities of India may be the answer. However, this reviewer's disagreement on a few issues should not detract from the great value of this work for solving this intractable problem of violence.

M. S. Dhami
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Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab during the Late Eighteenth Century* (Delhi: Manohar, 1993), xv and 229 pp. Rs 200 (hb) ISBN 81-7304-033-8.

This is a welcome addition to the study of Punjab during the years when the highly centralised political authority of the Mughals was on the downward slide leaving increasing space for local and external ambitions to assume charge. Veena Sachdeva sets out to examine the political manoeuvring of local potentates and the nature of the economy of the region. In this work. Sachdeva presents a new perspective for an old problem.

In the course of her investigation Sachdeva has laboured hard to scrutinise extensively the available evidence in order to be able to obtain a clearer picture of the region ruled by 'seventy thousand sovereigns'. The author has grouped these on the basis of regions as these emerge rather than identify them on the basis of caste or religious affinities. Thus, political conduct and ambitions of local potentates of the hills, the upper doab and the lower doab have been examined separately. In the hills comparative political stability, similar to that characterising the period of the Mughals, was maintained on account of large resource base. In other regions, the erosion of Mughal authority and the invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali taken together created situations in which new and innumerable political centres emerged; these continued to struggle to acquire greater power. Much of these discussions would have created a better understanding of the developments if they had been analysed with a brief background of the struggles and the power games at the Mughal court which, in a manner, had created a vacuum that was exploited in diverse ways in different regions of the Mughal empire. For this, she could have easily made use of the findings available in some of the recent works on Punjab.

Sachdeva has gone into a detailed discussion of the administrative arrangements. One notices that many of the offices and positions of the Mughal

period like the *faujdars* and q*azis* continued to perform similar duties and functions even in areas where the new authority had no linkage with the Mughals during the latter's days of glory. It would have added value to the discussion if the author had noted the nature of change in the value of the office against the background of the fact that some of the `chieftaincies' were much smaller in size than the area assigned to these functionaries during the seventeenth century.

The chapter on the revenue administration would have emerged more interesting if a rationale for the differential rates of assessment fixed by new potentates had been given. One is also clueless about the considerations that influenced the extension of the *jagidari* system to cover such hereditary officials of many centuries, like the *muqaddams, chaudhuri* and q*anungos.* This change is significant in the light of the fact that in the earlier period remuneration of these officials was, in a way performance based: they received a percentage of the revenue collections.

Notwithstanding the critical comments, Sachdeva has produced an interesting analysis of the eighteenth century Punjab.

K.K. Trivedi
Jawaharlal Nehru University

Shirley Firth, *Dying, Death and Bereavement in a British Hindu Community* (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), xiv and 240pp. £22.95 (pb). ISBN 90-6831-76-0.

This book provides insight into the religious beliefs, traditions and rituals of a British Hindu community with respect to dying, death and bereavement. The prime focus of this volume is on individual Hindus observed in the context of their family and community; it also tells about the collective experiences of Hindu migrants as well as their perceptions about death and their reactions to the changes that take place in the diaspora. The book also examines the process of adaptation and change in the death rituals and the role of *pandits* (religious functionaries) and Hindu women in maintaining continuity.

Although the book concentrates on the death rituals of the Hindus in general and British Hindu migrants in particular, it opens up a new window into the cultural universe of Hindu society, particularly concerning the roles and status of Hindu men and women within the traditional social structure.

The book is divided into three parts; part one sets the context by introducing the main issues confronting members of the Hindu community with respect to death and bereavement in Britain. It provides valuable information about the nature of Hinduism in Britain, the settlement pattern of the Hindu community in a particular locality and the role of religious functionaries. For example, in the early days of settlement, a local Sikh led some Hindu funerals in Westmouth. Interestingly, as in the Westmouth Hindu community, a number of

Hindu funerals were also conducted at the local gurdwaras (Sikh temples) in Leeds which indicates the common heritage of both the Hindu and Sikh communities.

In the first part, the author also deals with some Hindu philosophical issues relating to the notion of *atma* (soul), *moksha* (spiritual liberation), *karma* (past deeds) and the doctrine of the transmigration of souls.

Part two discusses the concept of 'good' death by looking at the process of preparation for death, the pre- and post-funeral rituals, eg preparation of the body, procession to the cremation ground in India and the funeral and cremation in Britain. It also deals with the disposal of bones and ashes.

In part three the author examines the social and psychological dimensions of death, grief and mourning with particular concerns for death in hospitals and its implications for the Hindu community in Britain. The two case studies are most interesting manifestations of the concerns of members of the deceased's family. this conveys how Nalni and Maya felt about their father who was critically ill in the hospital:

> They were strange sounding hiccups so we told the nurse, and she just went up to him and she said he was making unnecessary noises and disturbing the other patients, and really, it was just because the tube was there, and it was not necessary for him to make this noise. She told us, 'He only makes this noise when you are here'. (p124)

The book highlights the differences between normative and operative dimensions of religious teachings in Hinduism and the Sikh tradition. For example, wailing, which Hindu and Sikh teaching discourages, nevertheless persists among the Hindus and Sikhs both in India and abroad, though in a slightly different manner.

Ritualised wailing and weeping have several functions. They reinforce social bonds, but also help the female mourners to begin expressing their grief. It is a common practice among Hindus and Sikhs to let the women mourners, especially close relations of the deceased, express their grief by weeping and wailing. It is regarded as a comforting ritual which releases the inner feelings associated with the loss of someone very close to the family.

The section on widows and widowhood provides invaluable insight into the workings of the traditional social structure of Hindu society with particular reference to the status of Hindu women in general and Hindu widows in particular. The author examines the ideal of Hindu womanhood which is based on the concept of *pativarta*, a perfect woman who dedicates her life to the well-being and long life of her husband, and the implications of this notion for the future of Hindu women and widows. Historically, a Hindu woman was to follow her husband onto the pyre in order to gain the status of a *suttee*, a goddess symbolising the perfect woman.

The author provides ample evidence for the persistence of traditional values concerning the role and status of Hindu women. She quotes Mahatma Gandhi who thought that adult widows should adopt *'satihood'*. For him, the

> 'real Hindu widow is a treasure...' who should cling to her suffering, thus providing herself not by mounting the funeral pyre at her husband's death, she would prove it with every breath that she breaths... She would shun creature comforts and delights of the sense... Knowing that the soul of him whom she married is not dead but still lives, she will never think or remarrying (p148 quoting Gandhi 1958 in Singh and Singh 1989).

The book contains first hand information on the plight of Hindu widows who are expected to behave according to the traditional cultural values. One of her informants, an elderly Kumhari woman, felt so impure and inauspicious that she did not go out for ten years. She had loved bright colours: 'I wore the brightest *bindi* in town'. Once this red mark was removed, she felt that 'this was it'. She was a bad omen to be shunned. She only wore white, and adopted an ascetic life style.

Shirley Firth's comments on the importance of the technique of participant observation are most helpful. She notes: 'While I was initially reluctant to intrude on the funerals and other rituals, it soon became clear that it is customary for friends, neighbours, professional associates and the wider community to attend. Paying respect to the deceased and the family is a social obligation, and one's presence is greatly appreciated' (p. xiv).

The book is an excellent addition to the literature on the social and cultural traditions of Hindus in general and the British Hindu community in particular. It is also a valuable resource for those engaged in the caring professions.

Sewa Singh Kalsi
University of Leeds

Professor Harbans Singh: an appreciation of a gentle man

'We feel as though we have lost a father', was the way that one of my friends in Patiala spoke to me of the Professor's death when I phoned him soon after it had taken place. In many ways he expressed my own feelings for when I joined Harbans Singh in 1983 to spend four months working on the Encyclopaedia at his invitation, it was almost as a father that he greeted me. At the time he was consoling the widow of his teacher but he found space to welcome unhurriedly this stranger from Britain. From that moment on he has played an important part in my life, as he has done in the lives of everyone who has known him.

Professor Harbans Singh was a scholar, and I use the word cautiously for it is a piece of devalued academic currency. Everyone seems to be a scholar nowadays. However, he was. His works bears testimony to this affirmation, and it is the *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* which will give him academic immortality. During recent years, since the loss of his beloved wife, Kailash, in 1992, to whom it is dedicated, and two strokes which had rendered him unable to write, his colleagues and friends lived in constant fear lest he might be cut off before the work was completed or, latterly, before it was published. Fortunately, the final volume was with the printer, and the first three were published before his death. The work is monumental and although it will be revised repeatedly during the next century, it is safe to argue that without his insight and stamina it would not have existed at all. I am certainly not aware of anyone else who could have succeeded in accomplishing this task. It would have taken a committee as, one day, the translation of the Guru Granth Sahib and the Dasam Granth for the twenty first century surely will, but Sikhs do not work through committees. The Panth, and the academic world were fortunate in having, in Harbans Singh, the one man who could persuade a galaxy of authors, Sikh and non-Sikh to contribute articles, such was his standing and the respect and affection in which he was held. Glancing through the mass of files which filled the basement of the Guru Gobind Singh Bhavan and rooms in his home, it was impossible not to notice that he was not always served well by those who were invited to write articles. One contributor was honest enough to reply that the thousand words that he had been given were much too few to cover such an important subject. He, therefore, wrote 5,000! It was left to sub editors to reduce the submission to the requested required length! The process did not end there. The edited version was received with courtesy and gratitude but then, perhaps in every case, the Professor himself, edited it and often rewrote it. On other occasions, material arrived four or five years late. Occasionally, nothing ever came. A new author had to be found or Harbans Singh had to write the article himself. Once a dreadful storm flooded the basement of the Bhavan and the files had to be rescued in a hurry, some were to be seen floating around the room. None was lost, but his colleague, Professor Harminder Singh Kohli, spent an anxious time watching the soggy documents drying in the early autumn

sun. Perhaps it was as well that Professor Harbans Singh seldom left his home at A1. He may not have known how near the project came to disaster. In the Encyclopaedia's preface, Professor Harbans Singh gratefully acknowledge the help of the University authorities, but most of all his staff of faithful assistants, especially during the last years when he was almost incapacitated. It was at this time their loyalty and affection were most demonstrated.

The *Encyclopaedia* was not Harbans Singh's only work, of course. He wrote on Guru Nanak, Guru Tegh Bahadur, and Guru Gobind Singh as well as the poet Bhai Vir Singh, but it was probably three other books which brought him most to the attention of the west and introduced Sikhism to many non-Sikhs. His *Berkeley Lectures on Sikhism*, delivered at the Californian university and then committed to book form, were servedly well received, as was his *Perspectives on Guru Nanak*, a collection of papers presented at an international conference to celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of Guru Nanak' birth. More personal is the *Heritage of the Sikhs* which he wrote in 1965 and reprinted with an additional chapter in 1984. This addition is well worth reading. It says much about the man. On 7 June 1984 Professor Harbans Singh was attending the PhD award ceremony of his son at Harvard University when one of his former colleagues whispered 'the direst words I have ever heard'. They were, 'The Golden Temple has been attacked and Bhindranwale killed'. The rest of the chapter is his personal commentary upon the events leading up to that tragedy and resulting from it. The fact that it is coloured by emotion renders it no less important than if it were coldly logical and analytical. Its worth lies in the fact that its author was a keen observer of events and a patriotic Sikh.

Professor Harbans Singh was Khalsa College, Amritsar, and Harvard educated, studying there under the eminent Wilfred Cantwell Smith whose vision of Religious Studies he shared. A witness to this the Guru Gobind Singh Bhavan is architecturally a land mark which is immediately noticed on entering the University campus. He, and Cantwell Smith envisaged it as a centre for inter-religious studies with a staff drawn from the world's major faiths. This aspiration was never fully realised. It must be a vision for others to turn into a reality. There is only so much that one person, even Sardar Sahib, as he affectionately known, can do in one lifetime! It is amazing that he achieved so much. He also lived to see both his children make a mark in Sikh studies, publishing important books, and to dangle his grand daughter on his knee. That, I know, satisfied him as much as anything else that he did.

We appreciate a scholar and a gentle man whose life and work commends the Sikh way of life as few others could.

W Owen Cole
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Roger Hooker

It is with sorrow that we report the sudden death of Roger Hooker, a contributor to this journal and to the Punjab Research Group. The Reverend Canon Dr Roger Hardham Hooker was about to retire as the Bishop of Birmingham's Adviser for Inter-Faith Relations. Both in India (in Uttar Pradesh) and Britain (in the West Midlands) he devoted himself, as both pastor and scholar, to increasing the understanding between Christians and people of other faiths. A fluent speaker of Hindi, Roger had obtained his Shastri in Sanskrit from Banaras Hindu University.

Shortly before his death Roger was delighted to receive advance copies of the most recent of his books *The Quest of Ajneya: A Christian Theological Appraisal of the Search for Meaning in His Three Hindi Language Novels*. This is available from Motilal Books (PO Box 324 Borehamwood, Herts WD6 1NB) and brings to a wider public his doctoral study of the Punjabi writer Ajneya's evolving religious understanding. In 1996 he joined a distinguished line of speakers with his Teape Lectures (in Delhi) entitled 'Narrating our Nations' in which he argued that by engaging with novels one could open up fruitful possibilities for Christian study and for dialogue and conversation.

Roger will be missed by people of many religious backgrounds - and Sikhs in Smethwick have held an *akhand path* as a token of their respect and affection for a remarkable man.

Eleanor Nesbitt,
University of Warwick

The Punjab has been one of the most important regions of the Indian subcontinent and has played a pivotal role in its political and economic development from ancient times. The *International Journal of Punjab Studies* provides interdisciplinary and comparative research on the historical pre-1947 Punjab, the Indian and Pakistani Punjab after 1947, and the Punjabi Diaspora. The Journal carries articles from an international list of contributors, with an interdisciplinary base that includes history, language and linguistics, literature, political science, economics, social anthropology, geography and theology.