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Military Imperatives and the Expansion of Agriculture in Colonial Punjab

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The following shows how military requirements led to the creation of institutions that eventually aided Punjab agriculture. These advantages led to the massive expansion of agricultural production in the province and supported the shift from subsistence farming to commercial production.[1] Indeed, the benefits that accrued to certain classes, particularly those making up the 'agricultural tribes' to which military recruitment was exclusively limited throughout most of colonial rule, led to widespread rural support for the Raj. This manifested itself in the 'loyalist' nature of Punjab politics almost until partition and was embodied in the Punjab Unionist Party, until the Muslim League was finally able to erode its dominance in 1946.[2]

The support for the British was based on the benefits that a paternalistic colonial state enabled the recruited peasantry to enjoy. Rural Punjab saw its interests served by the British Raj and put its weight behind it. In direct economic terms, Punjab benefited because it was the frontier and sections of its peasantry prospered because they were the backbone of the army created to defend the frontier.[3] Both these developments influenced the nature of politics in the province throughout colonial times – and have affected modern Pakistan as well. The following highlights an important aspect of the advantages of military expenditure for Punjab.

Introduction

Military history has almost exclusively dealt with fighting units or the history of their campaigns. However, the armed forces are not separable from the wider society. The soldiers are members of that society while the maintenance and operations of the forces have linkages with the economy. This article outlines how compulsions of guarding the north-west frontier inadvertently created Punjab's economic 'infrastructure'. It suggests that even in colonial India military expenditure had a positive impact, and looks at the implications for a region where a significant proportion of military activity was concentrated. Later, military men were given preferential allocation in the colonisation schemes of the great canal colonies. Thus, both Punjab and recruited Punjabis benefited from military expenditure and military imperatives.

Literature on the economic history of the province does not clearly address this indirect link between the military and the wider economy of the province. Studies of politics in colonial Punjab, too, do not encompass the general

ramifications of the militarisation of Punjab (and Punjabis) whereby its recruited peasantry remained loyal to the colonial state through the Unionist Party because they were the direct beneficiaries of the paternalism of the 'Punjab school'. The military apparatus and strategic concerns in colonial Punjab eventually influenced the economic and political spheres, too.

The Frontier Province

The north-west frontier of the British Empire in India was entirely along the ill-defined border of Punjab. The North-West Frontier Province was created only in 1901, and consisted of the 'Pathan districts' on Punjab's frontier.[4] Therefore, all the requirements of the military to protect the frontier had to be based either in the province or routed through it. Government orders from the beginning provided that the Board of Administration in Punjab was 'to maintain internal peace of the Province, and to guard the Western Frontier, from the northern borders of Sindh to Attock, as also the whole Huzara territory'. Only Peshawar on the entire frontier was to be 'held by the regular army'.[5] Thus, the Punjab government controlled the 500 miles of border from Sindh to the Kohat pass, the 100 miles of the Yusufzai frontier, and the 200 miles from Torbeila on the Indus to the Jhelum at Kagan in Hazara, a total of 800 miles, while the Indian army guarded just the Khyber.[6] This section shows how military investment resulted in the creation of a transport and communications network in Punjab.

Military Works for the Frontier

The establishment of the Frontier Force was only one of the six provisions that Dalhousie had deputed the Punjab administration to undertake in the defence of the frontier. The others included the formation of posts 'along the entire frontier line', the 'construction or repair of Frontier forts', their armament and garrison, 'the construction of roads', and 'the establishment of cantonments for the troops'.[7] Table 1 shows the work undertaken by the department immediately after annexation.

Table 1. Work completed or in progress by the Civil Engineer's Department, 1849-51

Type of buildings	Total	Cost
Military buildings (incl. 6 forts, 29 fortified posts, 5 cantonments)	40	2,52,913
Civil buildings (incl. 13 court-houses, 11 treasuries, 27 jails)	51	7,25,313
Public buildings (incl. 3 dispensaries, 'various' conservancies, 1 salt mine)	4	85,504
Total expenditure		10,63,730

Source: *PAR, 1849-51*, p. 128. Conservancies included drainage in cities, filling marshes, bridging minor waterways, etc.

The Civil Engineer's Department became the Public Works Department in 1856 but retained its military responsibilities.[8] The very nature of the work of the Punjab Civil Engineer's Department required military engineers[9] and in fulfilling these tasks, the public works department of the Punjab administration relied on them.[10] The Department was under the charge of Col. Napier and subordinate to him were 12 covenanted Executive Officers, 12 covenanted Assistant Civil Engineers, 15 uncovenanted Assistant Civil Engineers, 59 overseers and 12 native surveyors[11] making it 'one of the largest, if not the largest, Engineering Department in the Empire'.[12]

In the first years of British rule it was only to be expected that an unusual amount of activity would be centred around providing internal security as well as guarding the frontier. The Civil Engineer's Department was in the thick of the former, too. The government proposed to place serais, or hostelries, with encamping grounds for troops, guarded by police officers at convenient intervals, along the main lines of road: a set of buildings which within the same enclosure and precincts shall include the hostelry, with store-houses and accommodation for travellers, a police office (thana), and a taxing office (tehsil). Adjacent to these buildings would be marked encamping grounds for troops.[13]

The government also acknowledged that 'The great importance of Military works in these Territories will be perceived when it is remembered that some 55,000 Regular Troops are cantoned there, among which there are twelve European Regiments, with an aggregate strength of 12,000, and 3,400 European Artillery.'[14] The Punjab Irregular Frontier Force had additional requirements.

The major emphasis in securing the frontier was put on strengthening or building forts and fortifications along the long border. These activities were set in place as soon as the province was acquired.[15] By 1853, defensive works were well in progress in Leria in Hazara, on the Kohat and Bahadur Khel forts in Kohat, on the Duleepgarh and Lakki forts in Bannu, on the Akalgarh fort, in the cantonments under construction in Dera Ismail Khan and in Dera Ghazi Khan,

and on the other forts on the Derajat frontier[16] - covering the whole length from Hazara to Sind.

Of the main military stations in the province, Ambala, Ferozepur, and Jullundur, in the eastern half of the province, were in existence 'in a manner' before annexation.[17] The Lahore and Sialkot cantonments were built between 1849 and 1854, but after this 'important works' were carried on 'at Peshawur, Nowshera, Rawul Pindee, Mooltan, the Hill stations of Kussowlie and Dugshaie, and the sanataria of Murree and Dhurmshala'. The arsenals at Ferozepur and Jhelum were built and the Kohat Fort was almost completed during the same period, and new forts were planned at Multan and Attock. In addition, various 'accessory works' were going on in the various cantonments.[18]

Table 2. Expenditure in the Civil Engineer's Department, 1849-51

Nature of operations	Estimated Expenditures(Rs)
Military buildings	2,52,913
Civil and public works	8,54,718
Roads and bridges	20,57,788
Canals	52,76,972
Total	84,42,391

Source: *PAR, 1849-51*, p. 140. The expenditure on roads was also a 'military' activity as the early emphasis was on building the 'military road' from Lahore to Peshawar.

Road building, too, was a military activity at this time.[19] The construction of the 'military road' from Lahore to Peshawar 'first claim[ed] notice' of the Department though it was very diligent in building the Lahore-Multan and Lahore-Ferozepur 'military and commercial road[s]', constructing the entire Trans-Indus Derajat line connecting all the frontier posts on the Derajat, beginning the 'important military line' joining Attock to Kalabagh via Rawalpindi, and improving the difficult road through the Kohat pass into Peshawar valley.[20]

Needless to say, the Punjab Public Works Department ran up a very high bill for military purposes. Table 2 gives the expenditure for the first two years of British rule. The aggregate expenditure by the Department up to 1856 was Rs. 2,60,15,900. This was broken up into Rs. 1,14,21,000 on 'military', Rs. 1,12,24,600 on roads, Rs. 71,53,000 on canals, and Rs. 26,55,000 on 'civil and miscellaneous'.[21] In other words, the expenditure on roads and on military works amounted to 87 per cent of its cumulative expenditure for seven years.

The concerns about the frontier ensured that 'The Military Works of the province still form[ed] the most important class of those now being carried out by the officers of the Public Works Department' into the third decade of British

rule[22] and, indeed, into the twentieth century as well, even after the province was split. The activities of the Public Works Department demonstrated the significant interplay between the civil and military responsibilities of the Punjab government.

The Link: How 'Military Works' became 'Infrastructure'

Punjab benefited from this strategic necessity as it saw the benefits of a extensive network of military roads and railways, of post and telegraph linkages, and because of the construction of military cantonments. This paper shows that no other province experienced the advantages of such 'beneficent' colonial enterprise because no other province was militarily so crucial to the colonial state, or, rather, was so perceived by the authorities.

The analysis is primarily on the potential for 'multiplier' effects of military investment. It must be clearly stated at the outset that the British Government of India did not undertake these measures to create 'economic' benefits for the general populace of the province. The point is that although these 'investments' were purely for military purposes, benefits did 'trickle down' to those capable of taking advantage of better communication and transport facilities.

One of the major contributions of military engineers across the colony was the construction of roads: an army cannot march without them. Roads were built to take troops to the frontier, to link cantonments, and to enable the passage of food and other essentials of a campaign. They are even considered to have saved the British during the Mutiny.[23] In the days preceding the railways, they were the only means of movement of military columns. And even when the railways took over as a quicker mode of transport, roads were indispensable in the mountainous tracts of the frontier where the terrain precluded railway construction. These roads were not exclusively for military use and civilian traffic benefited greatly from this military investment, especially in those areas where commercial criteria had not enabled road construction.

The railways have a similar connection with Punjab. The role of the military in aiding railway construction in Punjab is clearly seen in the expansion of the 'strategic railways' which had no commercial basis for their existence, were usually in tracts which were equally uncommercial, and, therefore, were often loss-making. However, even in the strategic frontier districts, civilian traffic was allowed to avail itself of this network to transport men and goods. This sometimes provided the incentive and, indeed, the means for the more enterprising to set up as small-time traders supplying minor items to remote military bases.

Alongside roads and railways developed the post and telegraph system. Reliable information quickly communicated can change the outcome of military operations, and the authorities in India were well aware of the advantages of a good system. Though the initial impetus for the extension of the Post and Telegraph system in Punjab came from the military, its importance for civil administration was quickly realised, particularly during the Mutiny. Thereafter,

the commercial potential of a fast information channel became known, too. Information about prices, agricultural production, demands in distant markets, et al, became immediately available through the cable. Once again, investments to meet military requirements had resulted in wider commercial advantage for Punjab.

Cantonments were created as garrison towns where troops were stationed when not actually posted on the frontier. Given the nature and requirements of colonial rule and the experience of the Mutiny, British and native troops were physically separated from civilian society. Cantonments thus became a 'home' for thousands of men and often their families; physically segregated from the society immediately outside, yet a part of it. This was especially true in terms of the economic interactions between the 'demands' of the cantonments and the ability of those outside to 'supply' them. Cantonments can be seen as 'captive markets' with their requirements of food, clothing and lodgings for both servicemen and military animals. They were indeed small military towns. Though some of these needs were met by the army's Supply and Transport Corps, they were ultimately sourced from the civilian economy. The cantonments were 'markets' as they became places for buying and selling of products, whether produced locally, provincially or in other parts of India.

A salient feature of cantonments was that they were all inter-linked by road or rail, usually by both. They were, thus, not simply individual oases, but, collectively, a significantly large linkage of markets and of consumers. They frequently came up around major towns (Ambala, Jullundur, etc.), but some were built to meet purely military needs (Bakloh, Murree, etc.). Punjab's strategic location led to the largest concentration of cantonments in British India. This affected its 'urbanisation' and also resulted in a level of rural-urban economic interaction not seen anywhere else in the country.

In other words, the wider applications of the military investment in roads, railways, post and telegraph, and cantonments created an 'economic infrastructure' of markets, transport, and communications that significantly affected the emergence of the province as the 'granary of India' during colonial rule. Any kind of economic history of the province in this period is probably incomplete without incorporating this factor into its analysis.

Roads

The Grand Trunk road has been one of the most important public thoroughfares in Indian history. On annexation, 'The chief item on the programme which was soon drawn up [by the Chief Engineer] was the reconstruction of this ancient roadway right up to Peshawar to facilitate communication between the important military stations of Northern India'.[24] Other undertakings included 'Military Works' like the building of cantonments and forts, 'Public Works - for civil purposes', roads, and canals. Roads were classified as: '1st. - Military Roads', '2nd. - Roads for external commerce', and '3rd. - Roads for internal commerce', pointing to the Punjab government's priority. The government further specified

that, 'In this classification, the *primary* object is [to be] kept in view: lines designed directly for Military purposes may incidentally serve the ends of commerce; so, may commercial roads be occasionally be used for the transit of troops, stores and munitions'.[25] The object of the project is quoted at length to highlight the civil-military nature of the Grand Trunk Road in Punjab:

> From a political and military point of view its consequence can hardly be over-rated as binding together all our important Northern Cantonments and maintaining communication with Peshawar, our greatest frontier station. In this respect it is of the greatest strategic importance to the Punjab and to India. But to the Punjab it confers another great benefit by forming a great highway, passing through the upper districts and the chief cities commanding the entrance to Hazara and giving access at several points to Kashmir... . It thus constitutes a great artery from which numerous branches separate off in various directions. Lastly, it is the great outlet and channel for the import and export trade between India, Central Asia and the West.[26]

Arguably, the civil benefits were an after-thought, to justify the costs of meeting military needs. The total length of the Grand Trunk Road initially proposed was 568 miles (between Delhi and Peshawar), and, as it was primarily for military purposes, it had to be in working condition in all seasons.[27] The Lahore to Peshawar section was completed in 1853 with 103 'large' and 459 'minor' bridges, including 'floating bridges' of boats across the rivers Ravi, Chenab, Jhelum, and Indus. This is another indicator of the military nature of the road, that it was built to provide the quickest possible access to Peshawar, the largest military base on the frontier.

The next stage was from Lahore to the Sutlej river,[28] in the direction opposite to Peshawar. Lahore to Beas was a distance of 62 miles, and included a loop from Amritsar to the new cantonment town of Sialkot, joining the main Grand Trunk Road at Wazirabad. The Beas to Ludhiana section, constructed after 1857, passed through Phagwara and Jullundur - not the shortest way, but 'the best adapted both to the commercial and military needs of the Punjab'.

The final sector led from the Sutlej to Delhi.[29] From the Sutlej to Ferozepore was 4 miles, then 76 miles from Ferozepore to Ludhiana and a further 121 miles from Ludhiana to Karnal. Karnal and Delhi were already connected as the British had been entrenched at Delhi for a few decades. The Lahore-Ferozepore section passed through Ferozepore cantonment, 'ignoring the city altogether'.

The Grand Trunk Road was the most ambitious road project in Punjab under British rule. It was not the only one. Increasing military activity on the frontier from the 1870s saw the mileage of roads nearly double from 1,036 miles in 1872-73 to 2,142 miles in 1892-93.[30] By 1912, Punjab had 3,198 miles of metalled and 25,583 miles of unmetalled roads as table 3 shows.

Table 3. Mileage of Metalled and Unmetalled Roads in Punjab, 1890-1912

	Metalled			Unmetalled		
Year	Punjab(E)	Punjab(W)	Total	Punjab(E)	Punjab(W)	Total
1890	1,986	632	2,618	17,862	6,388	24,250
1895	1,999	648	2,647	17,840	6,319	24,154
1900	1,932	668	2,600	17,663	6,386	24,049
1905	2,101	1,132	3,233	17,196	8,077	25,273
1910	2,599	1,240	3,839	17,724	7,812	25,536
1912	2,697	1,221	3,918	17,500	8,083	25,853

Source: Calculated from the *Report on the Enquiry into the Rise of Prices in India, 1912, Vol. III*, pp. 474-477.[31]

The province had 7.5 per cent of all metalled roads in British India and almost a fifth of the unmetalled roads by 1912,[32] the latter being a very high proportion in relation to its size and population. It was also officially recognised that there were 'very few' roads as compared to the total area of India, but that the frontier was 'better in this respect'.[33] In 1919, the Military Works Services maintained 2,090 miles of metalled and 1,049 miles of unmetalled roads in the province from Imperial Military Funds.[34] Another indication that economic goals had not played the crucial part in the development of this facility in Punjab was that in 'Punjab, West', that half of the province closer to the frontier, the index number of metalled roads reached 190 by 1912, whereas it grew to 135 in 'Punjab, East' in the same period.[35]

In 1918, it was again reiterated that, 'On the Frontier where for military purposes roads are obviously vital to the defence of the Frontier, the roads have been improved by the Military Works officers who are hard at work improving them further.'[36] The connection with the army, begun in 1849, had only been strengthened over the next seven decades. The *Report on Roads* also noted that 'the railway facilities in India have lately proved totally inadequate for the country's needs and many towns on the North-West and Western Frontiers can with difficulty be supplied, there being no margin of carrying power left for emergencies or possible increase of traffic'. It recommended, 'both from a military and civil point of view', the improvement of the road system in British India.

Railways could be sabotaged and effective measures against local or trans-frontier emergencies could be seriously hampered. Therefore, 'To rely for transport in India, whether in peace or war, on railways alone, is a dangerous illusion'.[37] Thus, even though the railway provided much faster transport, the relevance of the older mode of communication had not diminished.

Railways

Railroad construction in Punjab began in the 1860s and there was a dramatic rise in its expansion, some of which was directly related to the increased military activities on the frontier. The government wanted to build the 'Great North Western Railroad' between Calcutta and Peshawar with almost identical intentions as seen above for the Grand Trunk Road.

It is sufficient to say that the Punjab section will, in a military and political point of view, be of more consequence than perhaps any other part of the Railway. Following generally the line of the present Grand Trunk Road, it will bind together the series of first-class Military stations held by the very flower of the Army, European and Native. It will connect the whole of these with the most salient point (Peshawar) of the most important of the several frontiers, by which the British Empire in the East is bounded. It will render the whole power of the Empire capable of being rapidly concentrated and brought to bear upon a spot of vital consequence to the politics of Central Asia and of the countries bordering Europe. Further, in a commercial point of view, the Punjab section will command a portion of the commerce between India and Central Asia.[38]

The Sind-Punjab and Delhi Guaranteed Railway Company was registered in 1855 and began its operations between Karachi and Kotri (both in Sindh) in 1861.[39] The Lahore to Amritsar section was completed by 1862 and extended east to Ghaziabad near Delhi and south to Multan by 1870. The Indus Valley State Railway built a line from Kotri to Lodhran and to Multan by 1878. Its line between Rawalpindi and Multan 'was built for strategic purposes and has only recently developed into one of economic importance'. Similarly, the Punjab Northern State Railway 'seems to have been actuated more by military than by commercial reasons when it constructed the line from Lahore to Jhelum in 1873 and to Peshawar by 1883'.

The railway in Punjab was so closely linked with military imperatives[40] that the state eventually took over its operations. The Punjab Northern (State) Railway was 'the first in India commenced under direct Government agency'.[41] In 1870, the Sind Railway, the Indus Steam Flotilla, the Punjab Railway, and the Delhi Railway were amalgamated into one company by an act of parliament, and the Secretary of State for India considered putting this company directly under the Government of India rather than with any provincial government.[42] In 1886, all these lines were taken over by the government as the North Western Railway System.[43]

Dewey has shown that the first railways in the province connected the cantonments of Meerut (in the United Provinces) and Lahore through three others in Punjab - Ambala, Jullundur and Amrtisar. The extension of this line to the frontier between 1878 and 1882 linked up seven other cantonments.[44]

The logistical problems faced by Roberts during the Afghan campaign of 1878 spurred the extension of the Punjab Northern Railway's line across river Indus to Peshawar.[45] In 1880, Roberts recommended that the government 'bridge the Indus and complete railway'[sic] as one of the measures with which

to contain Afghanistan.[46] It is no coincidence that all the 'frontier section (military)' lines of the North Western Railway date from this period. The first of these was ready in January 1880.[47]

Kitchener's tenure as Commander-in-Chief (1902-1909) provided the 'Kitchener scheme' for the re-organisation of the army. It also included the proposal for the construction of three 'strategic railways': one along the Kabul river or across the Khyber, the Khurram Valley line, and the Bombay-Sindh railway to link India's largest port with its most sensitive frontier.[48] The first two and a portion of the third were sanctioned and construction began in 1905. About the first two lines, the officials acknowledged that 'we doubt whether it would have been proposed or sanctioned except for the purpose of facilitating a military advance to Kabul'. The Bombay-Sindh line was likely to be loss-making as well, and it was suggested that the Secretary of State for India should therefore be given more details of its 'very great' military advantages, to induce him to sanction payment! Matters were delayed and it took the Third Afghan War in 1919 'to provide the impetus to push the railway through the Khyber.'[49]

From just 410 miles in 1872, the railway network grew to 600 miles in 1882, nearly trebled to 1,725 miles in 1892, and increased by over 2,000 miles more by 1902 to stand at 3,086 miles.[50] Roberts, who had strongly advocated that communications were the most effective defensive measure, noted at the time of his departure from India in 1893 that he had 'the supreme satisfaction of knowing that I left our North-West Frontier secure, so far as it was possible to make it so, hampered as we were by want of money. The necessary fortifications had been completed...and the roads and railways, in my estimation of such vast importance, had either been finished or were well advanced.'[51]

Table 4. Capital expenditure incurred on Military and Strategic Railways, 1884-1909

Section	Outlay to 1884-85	Outlay to 1909-10
(a) North-Western Railway (Pishin Section)	2,26,06,582	11,87,22,638
(b) North-Western Railway (Sind-Sagar Line)	3,92,863	5,77,13,714
(c) North-Western Railway (Kohat Thal Line)	---	42,69,166
(d) North-Western Railway (Nowshera-Durgai Line)	---	25,94,931
(e) North-Western Railway (Loi-Shilman Line)	---	46,14,216
Total Outlay	2,29,99,455	18,79,14,655

Source: Government of India, Railway Department, A Proceedings, November 1911, No. 4.

The capital expenditure on the 'frontier railways' from commencement of operations increased by over 700 per cent in 25 years. Table 4 details the expenditure. Significantly, all these railways were under the North Western Railway. Though the north-east frontier saw strategic road construction, Punjab alone benefited from strategic railways.[52] The military side of the railway in Punjab is also apparent in the accounts of the North Western Railway, where the capital account was divided into 'I. Military' and 'II. Commercial' sections.[53]

The following mileages were operated by the North Western Railway in 1910: Nowshera-Durgai - 40.25; Kohat-Thal - 61.75; Pishin Section - 538.85; Sind-Sagar, etc. - 616.19; Kalka-Simla - 59.92; and the mainline - 2416.64 miles.[54] Only the last two were not 'military' or 'strategic' or 'frontier' railways. In other words, of the total of 3,733.6 miles that the North Western Railway operated, more than a third was constructed to meet primarily military needs. Of the four non-commercial lines, three had negative 'net earnings',[55] that is they cost more than they earned commercially. By 1947, about forty per cent of the North Western Railways' lines, nearly 1,500 miles, were 'military frontier railways'. They put the entire network in deficit.[56] These lines would not have been constructed if the normal commercial criteria of railway extension had been applied.

By 1925, the North Western Railway alone consisted of 4,074.55 miles of 'open line', whereas the entire 'North Western Railway system' comprised of 5,828.14 miles of open line.[57] The total open mileage of the 'commercial section' of the North Western Railway was 2,602.35 while the 'frontier section (military)' was made up of 1,472.20 open miles. Between 1910 and 1925, the proportion of military to commercial lines had increased further, the former now standing at 36.13 per cent of the total open mileage. As Calvert summarised, 'the great railway system of the Punjab has been moulded by two outstanding features: the great rivers, running south-west with their broad sandy beds and shifting currents, encouraged the builders to lay the lines roughly parallel to them towards Multan, so as to reduce the number of expensive bridges; but military requirements required lines crossing these, running north-west to the frontier'.[58]

The significance of the North Western Railway System is better grasped in comparison with the other railway systems. In every year between 1880 and 1892, it had the highest open mileage of all the railway systems in British India.[59] In 1931, too, it was the largest, constituting nearly 23 per cent of the total open mileage in India, and operating a total of 7,092 miles, which was over 2,745 miles greater than the second largest, Eastern India Railways, which covered 4,347 miles.[60] By the 1920s, Punjab had 660 railway stations and 'very few places' were more than 25 miles from a railway line.[61]

The expanding and vast rail network had repercussions for roads as well. 'It has usually been found in the Punjab that the construction of a new line leads to demands for road communication which have not been experienced before, and it is a remarkable fact that the districts which are the best served by Railways are

identical with those which have shown the greatest activity in constructing metalled roads.'[62]

Thus, even though constructed for strategic purposes, the rail network directly assisted the transport of non-military men and material and connected the agricultural regions with ports that brought general economic benefits to the province.[63]

Post and Telegraph

Work on the telegraph network in Punjab began in the latter half of 1853 and by January 1855 Lahore had been connected to Peshawar - thus linking Calcutta with the north-west frontier, just as the road and rail systems had. In 1855, the electric telegraph extended east to west along the Grand Trunk Road from Karnal to Peshawar, a distance of 520 miles. There were five telegraph offices at Ambala, Jullundur, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Peshawar which, according to the government, 'are indeed the five most important places in a Civil, Military, and Political point of view'.[64]

Another analogy between the telegraph and road network was the crucial importance of swift information transfer that the government of Punjab realised during the disturbances of 1857.[65] This quickened the pace of the extension of telegraphy. By 1859 the connection to Multan was completed and the line extended from there to Karachi 'without a break'; a station had been opened in Amritsar; a branch line (purely for military needs) constructed between Rawalpindi and Murree; Ambala was linked to Simla where the Commander-in-Chief had his summer headquarters; and the electric cable over the Sutlej was completed.[66]

There were many expeditions against frontier tribes in the last few decades of the nineteenth century. Each one of them aided in the extension of telegraphic connections along the border, linking the troops positioned there with the larger military stations spread over Punjab. The expedition against the Jowakis in 1877-78 led to the construction of 35 miles of 'flying lines' between Kohat and Peshawar;[67] the Second Afghan War led to the erection of 200 miles of wire for the Kohat Field Force, 140 miles for the Kandahar Field Force, and the line from Peshawar to Jamrud for the Khyber Field Force;[68] while 'Field Force Operations in Waziristan in connection with the delimitation of the frontier' in 1894-95 resulted in 70 miles of 'field wire' between Dera Ismail Khan and Tank.[69]

The post and telegraph system grew alongside the railways and roads in Punjab[70] following the Grand Trunk Road and, as Sarkar noted, 'providing instantaneous communication between all the large northern stations'.[71] The same was true for the postal service. *Dak* bungalows[72] had been constructed by the East India Company at intervals of 10 miles on the Grand Trunk Road, and were placed under the local Executive Engineer, while those near post offices came under the Post Master General.

The number of post offices in Punjab grew from 425 in 1870-71 to 4,257 in 1931, a 901 per cent increase, while the corresponding rate of growth for British India was 774 per cent.[73] In 1901, a post office served 93 square miles and 11,578 people in Punjab while the figures for British India were 115 square miles and 19,719 people, respectively.[74] By 1931, each Punjab post office served 52 square miles and 7,708 people while the respective averages for India were 74 square miles and 14,039 persons. Also, one letter box in Punjab covered 13 square miles and 1,917 persons, while the figures were 21 square miles and 3,902 people, respectively for India.[75] As services improved, the differential remained.

Communications were also improved because of the canal colonies. By 1921, there were over 11 million acres of land irrigated by canals.[76] The Irrigation Department owned and worked a telegraphic system that connected every canal rest-house and every canal outpost at the headworks of a canal with the Canal Divisional Headquarters.[77]

The canal colonies had their own telegraphic system, too. Punjab was covered under a vast network of communications that enabled the transfer of military and other information. In the context of this paper, it is necessary to note that some of the information regularly carried on this well-connected post and telegraph system pertained to important agricultural information that affected both the production and the marketing of Punjab's considerable agricultural produce.[78] Once again, the link between the army's requirements and the wider impact of this on the province's economics is clearly suggested.

Cantonments

According to the Report of the Cantonment Reforms Committee:

> A cantonment is in its essence an area of land reserved for military requirements. It is intended to contain accommodation for troops, residential houses for officers, store houses, and offices for the various military services, ranges and parade grounds. Further, as the necessaries of life must be provided with the minimum of difficulty and as on sanitary and disciplinary grounds it is essential that the troops should be denied unrestricted access to the towns and cities of the country, provision has in all cases been made for the establishment of bazaars within the limits of the cantonments. These bazaars have been administered under a special code of rules and have been kept under strict control.[79]

In theory, therefore, a cantonment was an enclave in a civil district, self-contained and in a varying degree self-supporting, the civil inhabitants being subject to taxation of a municipal character, the income of which was devoted to the maintenance of public services within the cantonment limits.[80]

These army townships also aided in promoting commercial activity. They became markets that often blossomed into urban centres, particularly if the

'Bazaar has developed into a large town',[81] consuming much of the produce of the nearby countryside. There can be no doubt that their existence was purely because of the military.

In 1919, it was decided that 'a permanent base should be established at Lahore, which is centrally situated for supplies for troops operating in the North West Frontier'. This base was to include a Remount Depot, a Convalescent Horse Depot, a Military Grass Farm, a Stationery Depot, a Postal Depot, a Cattle Purchase Depot, a Medical Store Depot, a Red Cross Depot, a Grain Depot, an Engineers Park, the Lahore Corps Lines (accommodation for troops), a Supply Depot, and a Fuel Yard 'with the necessary subsidiary services such as railway sidings, water supply, electric power, metalled roads, etc.'[82] Some of these were purely military in character and would not have had much direct repercussion for the wider economy of the district, but many would have resulted in direct dealing with the local economy (the Military Grass Farm, the Grain Depot, the Cattle Purchase Depot, etc.). A similar connection with the surrounding areas would have been made in every cantonment.

By 1921 seven cities in Punjab were 'dominated by cantonments' where half or almost half the population lived.[83] These included Rawalpindi,[84] Ambala and Ferozepore. According to Dewey, Rawalpindi 'was so completely a creation of the Indian army that the role of military expenditure is beyond question: the defence budget dictated the pattern of its growth'. The army transformed the 'village of the rawals' into the third largest urban centre in Punjab, next only to Lahore and Amritsar. Ten other places were 'affected' by cantonments wherein a quarter of the people lived, or which had a minimum population of 5,000. Lahore, Jullundur and Sialkot fell into this category. Apart from these, there were nine cantonments in the hills.[85] The above categories did not include places like Amritsar where cantonments were relatively smaller and had less influence.

Murree was the 'hill station' attached to Rawalpindi where British troops went to escape the scorching Punjab summer.[86] The entire town grew up because of the army - all roads leading to it were strategic roads; the town itself consisted only of barracks or military buildings; its sanatorium was reserved for soldiers; and the only school there was for the sons of British other ranks. The shopkeepers of Rawalpindi, too, migrated there in the summer with the movement of the soldiers. The army would have similarly affected urbanisation in every cantonment.

The needs of Rawalpindi city and the cantonment were greater than could be provided within the district. Consequently exports were 'small' and imports 'very large'. The market was a large one, but it was locally so, and was not a centre of commerce. Therefore, 'Every kind of agricultural produce is in demand in Rawalpindi - wood, fodder, milk, eggs, cattle, sheep and all the multifarious requirements of a large city and a great cantonment are brought in daily by zamindars and find a ready sale'.[87]

The presence of cantonments influenced the pattern of urbanisation in an area. A cantonment was a permanent military camp that would mature into a

town. More importantly, it would influence surrounding areas. Cantonments had the needs of cities, and in this way were markets where everyday goods and services could be traded. With the linkage of cantonments by road and rail, a network of markets[88] emerged that enabled the Punjab farmer to sell some of his produce within the province. The presence of both a market and a transport system developed together because military stations had to be well connected.

Military matters dictated the expansion of these institutions[89] - they were not established to create economic benefits for the general populace of the province. The combination of a large market and a good system of transport and communications in a relatively prospering agricultural province could only have one outcome: Punjab's farmers benefited from the military importance of the province. As with the vast numbers recruited for the army from Punjab, this development of an 'infrastructure' suggests the potential for multiplier effects of military expenditure.

The huge investments because of the strategic necessity of frontier defence resulted in the development of institutions that directly aided the expansion and commercialisation of Punjab agriculture. The linkage between military imperatives and agricultural expansion is more clearly seen in the famous canal colonies. In this case, the desire was to directly benefit soldiers even as the state would raise higher revenues.

Expansion of Irrigation: Military Men and Canal Colonisation

This section suggests that the evolution of Punjab agriculture was promoted by the transport and communications network inadvertently created by military strategy, and the huge expansion of irrigation by the canal colonies where military men received preferential treatment. Thus, once again, the wider ramification of the army and its requirements seem to have benefited the province and particular sections of its peasantry.[90]

The most directly significant input in agriculture during colonial rule was the massive extension of irrigation through the construction of the canal colonies, and even this activity had strong military links. From the mid-1880s the province came in for rapid economic growth and major social engineering based on the irrigation projects and their colonisation. Vast areas of uncultivated land in the doabs of western and central Punjab were transformed into rich farming tracts. By 1936, the total area sown on only the permanently allotted land in the canal colonies had crossed 16 lakh acres - more than double the entire area irrigated by permanent canals in 1870.[91] The total area under crops in these colonies stood at nearly 32 million acres in 1922.[92] Table 5 shows the expansion of irrigation in the province over the decades.

Table 5. Acres irrigated by canals in Punjab, 1870-1940

Year	By Productive Works	By Unproductive Works	Total
1870	7,41,917	4,64,299	12,06,216
1880	6,98,631	8,67,246	15,65,877
1890	20,33,500	9,82,956	30,16,456
1900	46,42,852	13,57,699	60,00,551
1910	62,70,757	9,56,285	72,27,042
1920	95,05,633	7,68,057	1,02,73,690
1930	1,23,53,426	6,30,834	1,29,84,260
1940	1,27,37,000	8,51,000	1,35,88,000

Source: *Punjab Irrigation Report*;[93] Islam, M. M., *Irrigation, Agriculture and the Raj: Punjab, 1887-1947* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1997), Table C, p. 155 for 1940.

Note: 1. 'Permanent' canals were called 'major' canals from 1887, and 'productive' from 1921 while 'inundation' canals changed to 'minor' and 'unproductive'.

2. Areas irrigated include both kharif and rabi harvests.

3. Figure for 'permanent' canals in 1930 included 7,25,668 acres in Bahawalpur state supplied by the Sutlej Valley Project, excluded in the following figure.

4. '1870' = 1870-71 and so on.

The only 'permanent' canals in 1870 were the Western Jumna Canal and the Bari Doab Canal. By 1885 they also included the Swat River Canal, the Sirhind Canal, and the Lower Sohag and Para Canals. The Lower Chenab and the Sirsa Branch of the Western Jumna Canal were opened by 1890. In 1901, the Lower Jhelum Canal was opened, but Punjab lost the Swat River Canal to the newly created North West Frontier Province. By 1891 the Sidhnai Canal was working. The Upper Chenab Canal was opened in 1912 and the Lower Bari Doab Canal followed in the next year, with the Upper Jhelum Canal opening in 1914. The Sutlej Valley Project began supplying water from 1927. 'Inundation' canals in 1870 were the Delhi and Gurgaon Irrigation Works, the Upper Sutlej Inundation Canal, the Lower Sutlej and Chenab Inundation Canals, and the Indus Inundation Canals. By 1881, the Muzaffargarh Inundation Canal and the Shahpur Inundation Canal were also functioning. There was no addition to this category thereafter. The Upper Sutlej and the Indus Inundation Canals were transferred to 'major' works in 1902-03.[94]

The construction of canals opened up the tracts of the south-west where inadequate rainfall and poor alternative irrigation had prevented any noteworthy agricultural activity before. Nearly six million acres of canal irrigated land here were converted into one of the most prosperous agricultural tracts of the subcontinent.[95] Between 1871 and 1936, the crop acreage in the province had grown by 82 per cent[96] whereas the per capita output of all crops in Punjab had increased by nearly 45 per cent between 1891 and 1921.[97] By the 1920s, in a

'normal' year the value of crops grown on irrigated land was between Rs. 40 crores to Rs. 50 crores of which between Rs. 25 crores to Rs. 33 crores were 'entirely due to the canals'.[98]

By 1931, Punjab had 99,29,217 acres irrigated by 'government' canals, the largest area in British India, representing 46 per cent of total irrigation by such canals. This was more than two and a half times greater than in Madras, the province second to Punjab in this category, but larger in total area. Punjab also had the highest irrigated area constituting nearly half of the total irrigated area of British India.[99] These figures are remarkably high because the province made up 9.7 per cent of the total area of British India at this time.[100]

The above leaves no doubt about the importance of canal irrigation for the province. However, the canals were also a means of strengthening access to resources for favoured classes as the colonisation pattern clearly indicates. The canal colonies were ostensibly set up to ease demographic pressure in the central districts of Punjab by allowing agrarian groups there to move to the newly opened lands, and to set up ideal agricultural communities, without tenants if possible. It was hoped that they would aid agricultural improvements and increase productivity. The 'primary objective', however, was the expectation of financial returns from the investments. This was, in turn, based on the political economy of imperial relations between India and Britain where the colony had to specialise in agricultural production to fuel industrial progress in the metropolis.[101]

Richard Fox argues that the great colonial contradiction was between the need to 'extract the maximum land revenue from Indian agriculture with the minimum transformation in agrarian production and labor systems'. Also, the imperative to have India pay for its own administration 'required a revolutionary alteration in Indian labor and production systems through massive capital investment so that increased industrial and agricultural productivity would enrich the Raj'. The first led to the 'development of underdevelopment' as India paid the cost of its governance through the 'home charges'. Therefore, 'state capitalism' by way of the massive irrigation works was initiated to increase land revenue and export income to enable profitable governance.[102] However, the magnitude of the investment in Punjab irrigation was out of proportion to the rest of British India - and various sections of its populace were able to benefit from the agricultural expansion it supported. The all-India generalisation of the adverse effects of imperialism has to be tempered in the case of Punjab.[103]

Imran Ali contends that the 'real motivation' for canal construction went further.[104] The state was trying to 'entrench' itself in rural society as land grants earned the loyalty of those so favoured while consolidating their status and authority. These people in turn would then become vital props of the state. Military needs dictated the pattern of grants in the later years, often at the expense of established government policy.

The largest category of grants was to 'peasant grantees', the others being 'yeoman' and 'capitalist' grants.[105] The 'peasant' grantees could only belong to an 'agricultural caste'.[106] Though there were some minor differences in the

colonisation patterns of the various colonies, the Chenab Colony is a good example of the settlement scheme. Colonised between 1892 and 1905, it was the largest project where more than two million acres were finally allotted. Of this, almost 36 per cent of the land went to the Jats alone. Arains received nearly 11 per cent and the Kambohs were granted 3 per cent of the land, while the Rajput share was 3.3 per cent. About seven per cent of the land was distributed to 'elite castes' like the Syeds, Qureshis and Mughals among Muslims, and the Brahmins among Hindus. Moreover, all the colonists came from the central Punjab districts that the British associated with the best agriculturists of the province. In the earlier Sidhnai Colony, nearly three-fourths of the land had been allotted to the Jats, while in the Sohag Para Colony the Jat Sikhs alone received 38 per cent of the grants. In no colony was land designated for 'peasant grantees' allotted to non-landholding or menial castes.

Soldiers were given direct preference in addition to the general partiality towards the 'agricultural castes'.[107] In the colonies settled before the First World War, soldiers belonging only to these specified groups were granted land. Ex-servicemen belonging to these castes received about 1,60,000 acres of land in the Jhelum and Chenab colonies. In the Lower Bari Doab Canal, colonised between 1914-24, an initial reservation of 1,03,000 acres had been made for military men. However, the compulsions of the War led to a substantial increase in this figure as the province offered more land to the Government of India because of the large Punjabi contingent in the army. Finally, the amount allotted was 1,80,000 acres[108] - and this went to war veterans instead of to pensioners as in the earlier colonies. Pensioners were not ignored, however, as land was given to them from those kept for civilian grantees! With newer colonies the share of land allotted to military grantees increased. In the Nili Bar Colony, settled after 1926, this category alone received almost half as much land as that allotted to the entire civilian peasantry of Punjab.

The extension of the frontiers of agriculture led to an enormous increase in irrigation and in cultivated area and in output.[109] The first and direct benefits of these developments went to those who were privileged with land in the colonies. Production, productivity and profit were affected by the state's paternalistic policies - once again strengthening the hand of recruited peasants. In the words of a retired colonial officer:

> And [in Punjab] colonies were established, colonies in the Roman sense, whole districts or sub-divisions of small farmers, many of whom had served in the Indian army or whose fathers or brothers or sons had been killed or wounded or had won distinctions. It was a policy that convinced soldiers that this was a good government to serve. It brought soldiers, and particularly Punjabis, together, emphasized their sense of difference from the rest of India, set them apart as friends and servants of the Raj.[110]

'Infrastructure' and the Commercialisation of Punjab Agriculture

Apart from the main business of supplying water and colonising land on hither uncultivated tracts, the major benefit of canal colonies in aiding tl commercialisation of Punjab agriculture was by providing quick a means (communication through telegraphy. The headworks of each canal had telegraph system and this was used to disseminate information on price Bombay cotton prices were telegraphed to the main cotton markets in the can colonies by the Agricultural Department from 1917 and the government bore a the costs connected with this (about Rs. 20 per month per market) at least unt 1925.[111]

The government was involved in non-colony areas, too, and telegran giving cotton prices in Bombay were posted in the 'more important cottc markets in the Punjab' three times a week from November to February.[1 Though cotton is the only instance of direct evidence of this nature, it is possib that it happened for wheat and other crops whose production and marketing wei similarly dependent on prices external to Punjab.

With the emergence of the province as a major agricultural region of Britis India - and with the aim to maximise production and marketing to optimis revenue collection - the government began to address these issues more directl The extension of railway lines was seen to have the dual advantage of enablir the cultivators rid themselves of the *bania* intermediary and of attracting all th marketable produce of the surrounding locality. The opening of the Lahor Ajnala-Gurdaspur railway extension was lauded as it would redress th marketing of the produce of this fertile area that had so far suffered because ('the difficulty of putting it on the [railway]'. Similarly, with the possibility (canal construction in Shahpur and Gujrat districts, the railways were urged t ensure that lack of rail lines did not prevent marketing of surplus.[113] Th 'indirect marketing' through the *bania* was deemed 'unsatisfactory' and the ne railway projects attempted to have the cultivators, at least in the plains, withi twelve miles of their market town. 'Within this radius he should, wit reasonably good roads, be able to market direct.' Moreover, road building wa to be in conjunction with railway expansion to enable easier access to th railways.[114]

The Grand Trunk Road had aided commercial ventures from its earlie days.[115] The government bullock train went all the way to Lahore, carting ' large amount of private goods and a considerable number of passengers' as we as its usual transport of government stores. 'Private companies' that till 185 had not taken their carriages beyond Karnal now conducted business insid Punjab. As Sarkar noted, 'Incidentally a boon to commerce, this grand roac way had been constructed chiefly with the Military objective of linking togethe all the important military stations of the Punjab.'

The implication is that road and rail development stimulated economi activity. Dewey states that 'strategic railways' for military needs had a greate presence in Punjab than in any other part of colonial India and that the economi

effects of this promoted trade in these areas.[116] The records allow some measure of this. The section on the 'coaching traffic' of the North Western Railway's balance sheet for 1910 had separate entries for 'ordinary passengers' (Rs.1,28,88,705) and 'military passengers' (Rs.3,09,286), 'passengers' luggage' (Rs.2,54,085) and 'military baggage' (Rs.30,204), and 'ordinary carriages, horses and dogs' (Rs.1,38,579) and 'military carriages, horses and dogs' (Rs.30,890). Similarly, the accounts for 'goods traffic' carried 'merchandise, general' (Rs.2,33,00,859), 'military stores' (Rs.1,34,458), 'revenue stores' (Rs.5,50,262), 'coal for the public' (Rs.4,01,480), 'coal for the railway' (Rs.12,36,096), 'livestock, public' (Rs.1,44,710) and, 'military livestock' (Rs.4,980).[117] This is not a complete list of the accounts but a pointer to the relatively high amount of the civilian activity of the railways.

The railways enabled all the major agricultural tracts of the province to become easily accessible to Karachi (in Sindh and the nearest port to Punjab).[118] Similarly, the line from Rewari to Ferozepore directly connected Punjab to Bombay.[119] The opening up of the railway link to Karachi removed one of the main hurdles to the export of Punjab crops outside India, as it was the port closest to the land-locked province. However, the volume of traffic from Punjab in the 'record export year' of 1917 brought out the 'extreme difficulty' of handling such heavy export traffic with the existing capacity on the railways. It was therefore recommended that future reconstruction 'must take into consideration not only the volume of traffic already reached, but the further increase of traffic due to extension of irrigation in the Punjab and Sind...'.[120] Railway and canal extension would become complementary.[121]

Railways and roads, in particular, had an important part in Punjab's external agricultural trade. 'Every mile of railway and road newly opened brings some fresh village within a comparatively easy access to these [overseas] markets and enables it to enjoy to the full the effect of a short harvest in the Argentine or Canada'.[122]

Another advantage that the vast transport network, particularly the railways, provided was the equalisation of prices over the province. As early as 1892 it was noted that the difference between harvest prices obtained by zamindars in the villages of Amritsar district and the market prices in the city[123] was 'steadily decreasing'. In fact, 'Those [villages] lying near the railway can almost always, if they choose, command a price for their wheat which is only 5 per cent. lower than that ruling in the city'.[124] The price of wheat in the three important markets of Delhi, Multan and Peshawar in 1861 was Rs. 8, 16.5 and 29.25 per *seer*, respectively, but by 1901 the difference was negligible in comparison at Rs. 13.31, 14.35 and 15.12 per *seer*, respectively.[125]

The extension of the railway system spurred the growth of some agro-industries, too. The opening of the Delhi-Ambala-Kalka railway in 1892 and the extension of the Southern Punjab Railway to Kaithal in 1899 provided a 'considerable stimulus to trade' which enabled cotton ginning factories to come up at Samalkha, Panipat, Karnal and at Kaithal near the railway stations. This was only to increase with the extension of the railways to Jind which 'opened

up' a new part of Karnal district.[126] The railways gained, too. It was thought that 'there is not a single one of the feeder line projects which have been carried out in recent years in the Canal Colonies and the Central Punjab, which is not working at a considerable profit'.[127]

By the mid-1920s, under government initiative, an elaborate system of grain elevators was being designed to enable quicker movement of produce. It was envisaged that cultivators would bring their produce to the nearest 'country elevators' where it would be removed into the elevators and automatically cleaned, weighed, and binned. The grain could then be directly moved by rail to the merchant who had bought it from the cultivator, going from the railway station closest to the latter straight to Lahore or any other major grain market in Punjab - or to Karachi or another port, if the eventual purchaser was exporting it.[128] Thus, a method to streamline the transport of grain was being envisaged by the government to further augment the potential of an agriculturally important province. Between 1908 and 1924, the export of wheat alone by rail had increased by 213 per cent, from 6 lakh tons to 16.8 lakh tons.[129]

It has been shown how the initial impetus to the development of roads, railways and the post and telegraphs system in Punjab came from the military imperatives of guarding against a Russian invasion. The above indicate some of the ways in which this infrastructure aided the expansion and commercialisation of agriculture in the province. Moreover, cantonments, as we have seen became permanent markets[130] where a large number of troops and military animals were garrisoned. Their requirements of food, fodder, and provisions would also have helped in absorbing Punjab's agricultural produce. It has not been possible to give figures of demand or consumption in cantonments, but the fact that Punjab had the largest concentration of cantonments in India suggests that the very presence of these military camps would only have aided the overall trends in provincial agriculture that have been discussed earlier.

Calvert sums it succinctly: 'The expansion of agriculture, the construction of great works of irrigation, the introduction of railways and of metalled roads were all inter-dependent; railways and canals were built by Government with the aid of borrowed capital, and the roads from the increasing revenue which the resultant expansion of cultivation brought in.'[131] In addition, there was the incalculable benefit of the goodwill of a prospering, recruited peasantry.

Conclusion

The need to guard the north-west frontier of British India against the threat of a Russian, Afghan or a combined Russo-Afghan incursion was one of the most pressing strategic issues for the colonial state from the latter half of the nineteenth century. Most of the activities instituted to guard against this threat were based in Punjab for the province bordered the uncontrollable areas held by the intransigent frontier tribes, beyond which lay Afghanistan. Military expenditure on frontier defence resulted in the development of an infrastructure that sustained the huge expansion of agricultural production in Punjab.

The province had come a long way from the early years of British rule when surplus produce was wasted because of a lack of adequate marketing facilities.[132] The extension of irrigation through the canal colonies and the development of marketing and communication facilities remedied the above defects and the change was seen to be dramatic:

> People nowadays find it difficult to understand the state of Punjab before the present great system of communications was created; there was very little trade between village and town, little enough between neighbouring villages, and none of great value between places far apart. Each place consumed what it produced and could find no use for any surplus; a cultivator one year had little to sell and the next could not get a purchaser for his bumper crops. There was no outlet for any quantity above what the immediate locality wanted and so there was nothing to gain from producing it; in short, the cultivation of wheat was restricted by the lack of an export market, and it will be restricted again if the export market is put beyond the reach of the producer.[133]

The agriculturists from central Punjab established on the colonies responded quickly to the market and gained most out of it both in their home districts and as canal grantees. A disproportionate benefit of agricultural growth was going to particular sections of Punjabis, the recruited 'agricultural tribes'. Some of this they achieved by their own skill and initiative, but important privileges were provided by the state. Moreover, the province became extremely important for revenue collection, and profitability for both the Punjab zamindar and for the Punjab government was ensured. State, economy, and certain sections of Punjab society were closely linked to the great agricultural boom. The interaction was mutually beneficial as rural Punjab responded by supporting the state through the loyalist politics of the Unionist Party.[134]

Notes

1. See, Mazumder, R. K., 'The Making of Punjab: Colonial Power, the Indian Army and Recruited Peasants, 1849-1939 (University of London: Unpublished PhD Thesis, 2001), 79-90.
2. For details of how colonial policy favoured recruited peasants and military sections see ibid., 95-136. The unique nature of politics in Punjab, where colonialism was constrained and nationalism restricted because of the wider impact of the 'Punjabisation' of the Indian army, is detailed in ibid., 226-273.
3. For the 'Punjabisation' of the Indian army see ibid., 17-53, and for the benefits of military pay and pensions to Punjab's recruited peasantry see ibid., chapters 4 and 5.
4. The province was created to bring 'the management of political relations with the trans-frontier tribes' under the 'direct control' of the Government of India.

Punjab Administration Report, 1911-12, 26; [hereafter, *PAR*]. However, Punjab remained the logistical backbone of the defence of the frontier.
5. *PAR, 1849-51*, 35.
6. *PAR, 1851-53*, 29.
7. *PAR, 1849-51*, 48.
8. *PAR, 1854-56*, 3.
9. The following were under the aegis of the Civil Engineer's Department: 'I. - Cantonments, Forts, and other Military buildings for the Punjab frontier force. II. - Public works and edifices, and offices for Civil purposes. III. - Roads, bridges and viaducts. IV. - Canals'. *PAR, 1849-51*, 126.
10. The following were the Department's responsibilities in 1849: Lt. Taylor was in charge of the Lahore-Peshawar Road; Lt. Dyas was in charge of the Bari Doab Canal; Lt. Anderson had the Multan canals under his charge; Maj. Longden supervised the Hasli Canal; Lt. Lamb was in charge of the Amritsar-Lahore Road; Lt. Nightingale was in charge of tracing roads; Lt. Henderson had charge of the Attock Bridge; Lt. Hutchinson was in charge of the 'military roads' in the Derajat. *PAR, 1849-51*, 141. Derajat was the generic term used for the whole area of Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Fateh Khan, though the last became a part of the British district of Dera Ghazi Khan.
11. *PAR, 1849-51*, 125.
12. *PAR, 1854-56*, 3.
13. *PAR, 1849-51*, 126.
14. *PAR, 1854-56*, 62.
15. *PAR, 1849-51*,41-45 had extensive detail of all the important frontier posts, their garrisons, their physical conditions, and the work required bringing them up to standard.
16. *PAR, 1851-53*, 148-149.
17.'It is to be remembered, however, that the Punjab Administration has had not only to build cantonments for the Punjab Proper, but also to re-build most of the European Barracks (always the heaviest item in the charges) in the old territories East of the Sutlej.' *PAR, 1854-56*, 81.
18. Ibid., 62-63.
19. Details in the following section. Here it is mentioned to show that military roads, too, were made by the civil government and should be included in the military expenditure of the Public Works Department, highlighting the full significance of this Department's military activity.
20. *PAR, 1849-51*, 128-130.
21. *PAR, 1854-56*, 65.
22. *PAR, 1867-68*, 54.
23. See, *PAR, 1849-51*, p. 128; *PAR, 1856-58*, 7. Also, Sarkar, K. M., *The Grand Trunk Road in the Punjab, 1849-1886* (New Delhi: Nirmal Publishers, reprint 1986), 51. He goes as far as to say that 'the Grand Trunk Road saved India'.

24. Sarkar, *Grand Trunk Road*, x.
25. *PAR, 1849-51*, 128. Emphasis in original.
26. 'Administration Report, 1852-53'[sic] quoted in Sarkar, *Grand Trunk Road*, 11-12. Most likely, *PAR, 1851-53*.
27. Paragraph based on Sarkar, *Grand Trunk Road*, 15-22. The distances were: Lahore to the Chenab river through Gujranwala - 59 miles; between the Chenab and the Jhelum rivers - 40 miles; through Jhelum district to Rawalpindi district - 39 miles; 60 miles through Rawalpindi district to the Chalbat river; 44.5 miles from the Chalbat to Akora in Attock district; and, finally, 34 miles from Akora to Peshawar. The total distance was about 275.5 miles.
28. Paragraph based on Sarkar, *Grand Trunk Road*, 25-26.
29. Lahore to Ludhiana was connected by a 'double line': one via Ferozepore (military needs dominated) and the other through Amritsar and Jullunder (commercial reasons in play here). Sarkar, *Grand Trunk Road*, 25.
30. Banerjee, Himadri, *Agrarian Society of the Punjab (1849-1900)* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1982), 70.
31. [Hereafter, *RERPI, Vol. III*]. There appear to be some discrepancies in the mileage as later years sometimes show a lower figure. One of the explanations for this in *RERPI, Vol. III* was, 'The records previous to 1901 were destroyed, hence the discrepancy in mileage cannot be explained'. [Note (c) on p. 474]. At other times, incorrect classification, usually of unmetalled as metalled, led to correction once the error was noticed, and it was appropriately updated in the next year. However, the broad trend of the figures, and the argument based on them, is not affected.
32. Calculated from *RERPI, Vol. III*, 475, 477.
33. *Notes on Mechanical Transport, 1917*, 2.
34. *Administration Report of Military Works Services for the year 1919-20*, Appendix III. [Hereafter, *ARMWS*].
35. *RERPI, Vol. III*, 475-476. Most of the canal colonies were also built in the western half of the province.
36. Paragraph based on Montagu [Adviser on Mechanical Transport Services in India] to Quarter Master General in India, 10 April 1918. *Report on Roads*, 1.
37. Ibid., 7-8.
38. *PAR, 1854-56*, 51-52.
39. Paragraph based on Calvert, H., *Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab* (Lahore: The Civil and Military Gazette Ltd., 2nd edn. 1936), 107-108.
40. From 1900, the opening or extension of any railway line in Punjab had to be directly brought to the notice of the General Officer Commanding the district in which the work was being undertaken by the staff officer on the spot - the latter was not to wait for intimation by railway authorities. *Punjab Command Orders, 1900*, Command Order 187, 67.
41. *PAR, 1868-69*, 93.
42. *PAR, 1870-71*, 80.

43. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 108.
44. Dewey, Clive, 'Some Consequences of Military Expenditure in British India: The Case of the Upper Sind Sagar Doab, 1849-1947', 139 in Dewey, Clive (ed.), *Arrested Development in India: The Historical Dimension* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1988).
45. Roberts offered a contrary strategy to a 1885 Defence Committee on frontier matters: '...the majority of the members laid greater stress on the necessity for constructing numerous fortifications, than upon lines of communication, which I conceived to be of infinitely greater importance, as bringing all the strategical points on the frontier into direct communication with the railway system of India...'. Roberts, Field Marshal Frederick Sleigh, *Forty-one Years in India: From Subaltern to Commander-in-Chief*, Vol. II (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1897), 407-408.
46. Roberts to Foreign Secretary, India, 4 April 1880 in Robson, Brian (ed.), *Roberts in India: The Military Papers of Field Marshal Lord Roberts, 1876-1893* (London: Allan Sutton, 1993), 183.
47. *History of Indian Railways - constructed and in progress corrected up to 31st March 1925*, 146-147. [Hereafter, *History of Indian Railways, 1925*].
48. Paragraph based on *Report of a Committee on Special Military Expenditure*, xxix-xxxiii.
49. Robson, *Roberts in India*, xviii.
50. Banerjee, *Agrarian Society*, 70.
51. Roberts, *Forty-one Years*, Vol. II, 408.
52. *RERPI, Vol. III*, 474-477.
53. Government of India, Railway Department, Railway Statistics, B Proceedings, August 1911, No. 81/1, 1.
54. Ibid., 1, 4.
55. Only the Nowshera-Durgai Line made a profit (of Rs. 17,461) in the second half of 1910. The Kohat-Thal Line had 'negative net earnings' of Rs. 69,160; the Pishin Section ran at a loss of Rs. 55,609; and the Sind Sagar and constituent sections lost Rs. 18,255. These figures are only for the second half of the financial year 1910.
56. Dewey, 'Military Expenditure', 138.
57. Paragraph based on *History of Indian Railways, 1925*, 145-147.
58. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 109.
59. *RERPI, Vol. III*, 464-465.
60. The following is the mileage of the other railway systems which had more than 3,000 'open' miles: Bombay, Baroda and Central India - 3,944; Great Indian Peninsula - 3,725; Bengal-Nagpur - 3,417; Madras and Southern Mahratta - 3,229. *Statistical Abstract for British India with Statistics, where available, relating to certain Indian States, from 1922-23 to 1931-32*, Table No. 196, 548-553, [hereafter *SABI, 1931-32*]. Some of these systems operated across larger geographical areas than the North Western Railway.

61. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 109.
62. Secretary, Public Works Department (Buildings & Roads Branch), Government of Punjab to Secretary, Railway Board, 14 February 1916. Government of India, Railway Department, Railway Statistics, B, April 1919, Nos. 187P.16/1-2.
63. For a study of the economic impact of railways in a correspondingly early stage in England see, Hawke, G. R., *Railways and Economic Growth in England and Wales, 1840-1870* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).
64. Paragraph based on *PAR, 1854-56*, 69-70.
65. '...it is indeed hard to describe *how useful* the Telegraph has proved to the Punjab Administration during the crisis of 1857. It may be truly said that, for months, the Military and Political correspondence of the Punjab Government was carried on by Telegraphs.' *PAR, 1856-58*, 28. Emphasis in original. Also, Thorburn, S. S., *The Punjab in Peace and War* (London & Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Son, 1904), 186-187.
66. *PAR, 1858-59*, 390.
67. *Administration Report of the Indian Telegraph Department, for 1877-78*, para. 60. [Hereafter, *ARITD*].
68. *ARITD, 1878-79*, 11-14.
69. *ARITD, 1894-95*, 28.
70. In 1880-81, there were 808.87 miles of telegraph along roads and 238.2 miles along railways in Punjab. Calculated from *ARITD, 1880-81*, Appendix I.
71. Paragraph based on Sarkar, *Grand Trunk Road*, 48-49.
72. 'Dak' literally means post. These were officially constructed places where the post changed hand between horse riders.
73. From *Annual Report on the Operations of the Post Office in India, for the year 1870-71*, Appendix I, [hereafter, *IPOR*]; and *Indian Posts and Telegraph Department, Annual Report for the year 1931-32*, Appendix III(a), Part I. [Hereafter, *IP&TDR*]. The post and telegraph departments had separate reports till 1911-12, thereafter it was combined.
74. *IPOR, 1901-02*, Appendix I. A Punjab letter box served 39 square miles and 4,935 people whereas the Indian figures were 37 square miles and 6,386 persons.
75. *IP&TDR, 1931-32*, Appendix III(a), Part II.
76. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 121.
77. Commissioner, Multan Division to Additional Secretary, Punjab, 27 June 1916. Government of Punjab, Commerce and Industry Department, A Proceedings, August 1916, Nos. 34-35.
78. See last section.
79. *Report of the Cantonment Reforms Committee, 1921*, Appendix I, Annexure II, para. 1, [hereafter, *CRCR*].
80. *CRCR*, para. 2.
81. *CRCR*, Appendix I, Annexure II, para. 3.

82. *ARMWS, 1919-20*, 9.
83. Paragraph based on Dewey, 'Military Expenditure', 123-125.
84. 'The cantonment is the largest and most important in the Punjab, and perhaps in India.' *Rawalpindi District Gazetteer, 1907*, 228.
85. Places 'dominated by cantonments' were Rawalpindi, Ambala, Ferozepore, Nowshera (Peshawar), Abbottabad (Hazara), Risalpur (Peshawar), Bannu, and Campbellpur (Attock). Districts in the NWFP are in brackets. Those 'affected by cantonments' were Lahore, Jullundur, Peshawar, Delhi, Sialkot, Kohat, Multan, Jhelum, Mardan, and Dera Ismail Khan. Cantonments in the hills were Dagshai, Kasauli, Jutogh, Subathu in the Simla Hills, Bakloh and Balun (Gurdaspur), Dharamshala (Kangra), Cherat (Peshawar), and Murree (Rawalpindi). Districts in brackets.
86. Paragraph based on Dewey, 'Military Expenditure', 130-131.
87. Paragraph based on *Rawalpindi District Gazetteer, 1907*, 173.
88. The population of a selection of the cantonments (and not the cities) in 1921 were as follows: Rawalpindi - 46,000; Ambala - 48,000; Ferozepore - 25,000; Nowshera - 17,000; Lahore - 25,000; Peshawar - 25,000; Jullundur - 12,000; Sialkot - 15,000; Multan - 12,000. From Dewey, 'Military Expenditure', 124.
89. 'It may be truly affirmed that, at the rainy season of that year [1857], if there had not been this good [Grand Trunk] road, if the line had been in the same condition as it was five years ago, the vast amounts of material and munitions of war could hot have reached the scenes of action; and that, without this road, it might hardly have been possible to take Delhi, at least till the autumn of 1857. From this case we learn the paramount necessity of improving our means of military communications.' *PAR, 1856-58*, 7.
90. Imran Ali, in specific reference to the canal colonies, questions how the Punjab economy could have 'experienced significant growth and yet have remained backward, or even have acquired through the very process of growth further structural resistances to change'. According to him, the political, military and revenue compulsions of the colonial state, and the uses that colony land were put to, lay behind this contradiction. See Ali, Imran, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), vii, 237-244. This article is not concerned with the long-term impact of colonial rule on Punjab's economy, but rather on the more immediate effects of it on recruited groups and the consequent perception among them that the state was beneficent, and with how military considerations affected Punjab. The recruited peasantry benefited from the agricultural expansion, were particularly favoured in canal colonisation, and this was another tangible reason for their support of the government. Nothing more is suggested here.
91. 16,19,589 acres were sown on permanently allotted land in the canal colonies in 1936-37 while the total irrigation from all permanent canals in 1870 was 7,41,917 acres. *Annual Report on the Punjab Colonies, for the year ending 30th September 1937*, p. 30, [hereafter, *ARPC, 1937*]; *Revenue Report of the*

Irrigation Department, Punjab, for the year 1877-78, 2, [hereafter, *PIR, 1877-78* (Punjab Irrigation Report)].
92. Trevaskis, H. K., *The Punjab of To-day* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1931), 433.
93. *PIR, 1877-78*; *PIR, 1881-82*.
94. *PIR, 1877-78, 1881-82, 1885-86, 1936-37*.
95. Talbot, Ian, *Punjab and the Raj, 1849-1947* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1988), 39.
96. Total crop acreage in 1871 was 1,79,28,140 and had shot up to 3,26,43,277 acres in 1936. *Report on the Revenue Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies for 1871-72*, Statement No. XXIX, [hereafter *RAR*]; *Report on the Seasons and Crops of the Punjab for the Agricultural year ending 30th June 1937*, Statement III, [hereafter, *RSCP*].
97. Talbot, *Punjab*, 39.
98. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 126.
99. Total irrigated acreage was 1,42,67,056 in Punjab and 2,87,28,580 for British India. *SABI, 1931-32*, Table No. 164, 467.
100. Calculated from ibid., Table 1, 2-3.
101. See Islam, *Irrigation*, 18-19.
102. Fox, Richard G., *Lions of the Punjab: Culture in the Making* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 15-24, 53.
103. Also see Islam, *Irrigation*, 146.
104. Paragraph based on Ali, *Punjab*, 13-14.
105. Paragraph based on ibid., 45-47, 49-51.
106. The 'agricultural castes' were synonymous with the 'martial races' that the army exclusively recruited from. See, Mazumder, 'The Making of Punjab, 95-100, 106.
107. Paragraph based on ibid., 32-33, 55, 114.
108. The eventual allocation in all the colonies, including the above figure, was over 4.2 lakh acres of land which were granted to 6,000 commissioned and non-commissioned officers. Islam, *Irrigation*, p. 143. The 'accepted standard of allotment was 50 acres for Commissioned Officers, 25 acres for Non-Commissioned Officers and men'. Leigh M. S., The *Punjab and the War* (Lahore: Superintendent of Government Printing, Punjab, 1922), 283.
109. Details in Mazumder, 'The Making of Punjab', 79-86.
110. Mason, Philip, *A Matter of Honour: An Account of the Indian Army, Its Officers and Men* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974), 388.
111. Evidence of D. Milne, Director of Agriculture, Punjab in *Royal Commission on Agriculture in India, 1927*, Vol. VIII (*Evidence taken in the Punjab*), 216. [Hereafter, Milne's Evidence, and *RCAI*, Vol. VIII, respectively].
112. Milne's Evidence, 221.
113. Senior Secretary to the Financial Commissioners, Punjab, to Public Works Department (Buildings & Roads Branch) Secretary, Punjab, 16 August 1915,

paras 5 and 6 in Government of India, Railway Department, Project, B Proceedings, April 1919, Nos. 187P.16/1-2.

114. Quotations from the Evidence of K. G. Mitchell, Secretary, Communications Board, Punjab in *RCAI,* Vol. VIII, 505.

115. Paragraph based on Sarkar, *Grand Trunk Road*, 47, 51.

116. Dewey, 'Military Expenditure', 139.

117. Government of India, Railway Department, Railway Statistics, B Proceedings, August 1911, No. 74/1, 18-19. Figures in brackets are value of goods carried in each category. The accounts are 'for the half year', suggesting the total for the year would be greater.

118. Banerjee, *Agrarian Society*, 50-51.

119. *Report on the Material Progress of the Punjab for the decade 1881-1891*, 21.

120. Government of India, Railway Department, Way & Works, A Proceedings, May 1920, Nos. 1-6, 2.

121. 'Railways were as essential to the big canals as canals have been to some of the railways.' Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 15.

122. *Lahore District Gazetteer, 1916*, 147.

123. Amritsar was 'the most important market for wheat in the province'. *Amritsar Settlement Report, 1940*, 3.

124. *Amritsar Assessment Report, 1892*, 18.

125. Banerjee, 'Growth of Commercial Agriculture in the Punjab During the Second Half of the 19th Century', *Panjab Past and Present*, April 1978, 227.

126. *Karnal District Gazetteer, 1918*, 140.

127. Government of India, Railway Department, Project, B Proceedings, April 1919, Nos. 187P.16/1-2, para 5.

128. *Memorandum on Grain Elevators in India* by Messrs. Govan Brothers, Ltd., Delhi, in *RCAI,* Vol. VIII, 25.

129. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 135.

130. The earlier section on cantonments gave the size of the human population in some of them, pointing to the size of the market these military stations had become.

131. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 107.

132. The very good harvests in the first three years of annexation, where production far exceeded consumption, could not be optimally utilised as 'there [was] not a sufficient market to secure its sale at remunerative prices'. Further, a lack of transportation and neighbouring markets meant that there was no place 'to which any great quantity of grain could be exported'. *PAR, 1849-51*, 95.

133. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare*, 280.

134. For the electoral dominance of the Unionists upto 1937, see Mazumder, 'The Making of Punjab', 263-273.

The Learning of Punjabi by Punjabi Muslims: A Historical Account

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The colonial privileging of Urdu reinforced by Pakistan's nation building demands has resulted in the downgrading of the Punjabi language. Although it is the mother tongue of the Punjabi Muslim community, it has been relegated to the language of 'the home.' This article seeks to understand the circumstances in which this situation has arisen. It then goes on to look at the hard struggle of language activists since Pakistan's creation, to champion Punjabi in the face of popular prejudice and official disapproval. The work of the Punjabi Adabi Board is examined along with that of such leading figures as Faqir Mohammad Faqir and Mohammad Masood. While limited progress has been made in the growth of Punjabi as a language of instruction, a wary state has ensured that this is provided within an 'ideologically correct' framework.

Punjabi had never been used in the official domains of power or taught at a high level, or in its own right, before the coming of the British. However, there is evidence that at the primary level, children were taught some books in Punjabi. Moreover, it was informally learned by a number of people, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims. Let is first take the evidence about it being taught at some level. This evidence comes from *Hear Ranjha*, the famous tale of two lovers in verse narrated by Waris Shah among others, and has been mentioned by many people including G.M.D. Suti (1941). The lines from *Heer* are as follows:

> *Parhan fazil dars durvesh mufti Khoob kudh alhan parkaria neen*
> *Taleel, Meezan to Sarf Bahai, Sarf-e-Meer bhi yad pukaria neen*
> *Quzi, Qutab te kanz, Anwa Baran, Masoodian jald savaria neen.*

The learned ascetics and judges learned the art of correct pronunciation. They read books on Arabic grammar by heart. Books on logic and Islamic law were compared with manuscripts for correction. A number of other books are mentioned and then come two lines which mention the following books:

> Ik nazam de *Dara Harkaran* Parhde *Nam-e-Haq* a te *Khalig Barian* neen
> *Gulistan, Bostan* nal *Bahar Danish, Tooti Nama* te *Raziq Barian neen*
> *Minisha 'at Nisab* te *Abul Fazlan, Shahnamion, Wahid Barian neen*
>
> (Sabir 1986: 16)

Most of the books mentioned in these lines were in standard texts in Arabic and Persian taught in the madrassas. Indeed, some of them are taught even now in Pakinstan's madrassas.

Out of these Muhammad Shafi, the informant of Sufi, places only *Anwa Baran* (or *Baran An wa*) among the Punjabi books (Sufi 1941: 109). Both Shafi and Sabir place *Raziq Ban, Wahid Bari* and *Nam-e-Haq* among Persian books (Sabir 1982: 620-621; Sufi 1941: 109). But there is a copy of a certain *Wahid Bari,* the name of whose author is lost, in the British Library. It was probably written in 1621-22 in order to teach Persian to students on the pattern of the well known *Khaliq Bari.* The meanings of Persian words were conveyed through their Punjabi equivalents. The difference was that in *Khaliq Bari* the lexicon was in Hindvi (old Urdu). Persian and Arabic while in *Wahid Bari* the facilitating language is Punjabi. An example from it makes this clear:

Madar, man; biradar bhai
Pidar, bap; eenga; parjai

The meaning of Persian words explained through Punjabi ones are as follows:

Punjabi	**Persian**	**English**
mau	*madar*	mother
bhai	*biradar*	brother
bap	*pider*	father
partjai	*eenga*	brother's wife

In short, Punjabi was not taught for itself but facilitated the learning of Persian. It was the means to an educational end – the learning of Persian. Sheerani mentions the Wahid Bari though the date of the manuscript available to him was 1034 A.H. (1663-1664). He also mentions a number of other such books:

Raziq Bari by Ismail 1071 (1660-61).
Raziq Bari by Mustafa 1085 A.H. (1674-74).
Izad Bari by Kharmal 1105 A.H.(1693-93).
Allah Bari by Ummeed 1196 (A.H.(1782).
Nasir Bari by Mufti Shamsuddin 1208 A.H. (1793-94).
San 'at Bari by Ganesh Das Budhra 1220 A.H. (1805).
Qadir Bari by Muzaffar 1223 A.H. (1808).
Wase' Bari by Yakdil 1231 A.H. (1815-16).
Rahmat Bari by Maulvi Rahmat Ullah 1232 A.H. (1816-17)
Farsi Nama by Abdur Rahman Qasuri (n.d)
Nisab-e-Zaroori by Khuda Baksh (n.d)
Bad Sahel (n.d)
Azam Bari (n.d)
Sadiq Bari (n.d)
Azam Bari (n.d) and
Farsi Nama by Sheikh Mohammad (Sheerani 1934: 119).

Although these books were meant to teach Persian or the rudiments of Islam, they need Punjabi as the language of explanation. This tradition had been established by *Abu Nasr Farahi* when he wrote his *Nisab ul Sabiyan* in 617 A.H. (8 January 1660-27) January 1661) in Persian to teach Arabic to Afghan children. A number of such *nisabs*, including one by Amir Khusro were written upto the tenth century. Hindi *nisabs* came to be written 'probably from the 10th century Hijri [15th century] (Sheerani n.d.: 7). A certain Hakeem Yusufi, who migrated from Hirat (Iran) to India wrote *Insha-i-Yusufi*. He gives Hindi equivalents for parts of the human anatomy. The famous *Khaliq Bari* is part of this tradition but, according to Sheerani, it was written by Ziauddin Khusro, not the famous Amir Khusro, in 1621-22. *Khaliq Bari* is in the mixed language of Hindi, Persian and Arabic. It was meant to teach Persian to the children of north India (Sheeani n.d). As such, one wonders whether books like the *Wahid Bari* could not have been placed among Punjabi books by Shafi and Sabir? A major complitcation, however, is that there were several books of the same title so that we can never be sure exactly which book Waris Shah had in mind. However, in fact that Persian was taught through both Punjabi and old Urdu (Hindvi) to Punjabi children, cannot be denied.

Other older books of Punjabi, out of which the *Pakki Roti* is part of the M.A. course in Pakistan and therefore well known, were meant to explain the rudiments of Islam to students in their mother tongue. *Pakki Roti* is in the form of questions and answers. For instance, the question is 'If somebody asks you as to when to perform ablutions you reply as follows'. The reply is the accepted Sunni teaching on the subject. Complications and controversial matters are avoided and the answers would probably be acceptable to most Punjabi Muslims. A number of other such books in manuscript form are given in various catalogues in the British Library (Blumhardt 1893; Haq 1993; Quraishi 1990; Shackle 1977). The manuscripts located in Pakistan libraries however, are not catalogued. Among the 34 manuscripts catalogued by Christopher Shackle (1977), Muhammad Yar has authored eleven. He lived in Kotkala in Shahpur (Sargodha district). He calls his language 'Jhangi' at places. It is, as to be expected, a mixture of the languages, which are called Siraiki and Punjabi nowadays.

The earliest works of Muhammad Yar seem to have been written in 1196 A.H. (1792) while the latest is dated around 1244 A.H. (1828-29). The books were copied by his grandson Faiz Mohammad in 1271 A.H. (1854-55). The *Pand Nama;, Afrinash Nama; Tuhfat al-Fiqh* and *Bina al-Mominin* are treatises on Islamic rituals and fundamental beliefs while the *Nafi al-Salat* is on the benefits of prayers. Among the hagiographical works are those on saints (*Siharfi Hazrat Pir* and *Nafi al-Kaunain*) and the Prophet of Islam (*Tuhfat al-Saluk, Tarvij Nama, Siharfi Hazrat Rusul-i-Maqbul*). These, as well as other works, are all religious.

Another major writer was Maulvi Abdullah Abidi (d. 1664) who was born in village Malka Hans of Sahiwal district but lived and died in Lahore. His language too has Multani (now called Siraiki) forms and it is his work Baran

Anwa which is referred to in Heer mentioned earlier. The importance of Abdullah for students is thus described by Shackle:

> The comprehensive character of Abdi's [sic] writings has, however ensured them a uniquely important and influential position as manuals of instruction; and they have been frequently published, usually in collections of twelve treaties entitled *Baran Anva* (Shackle 1997: 39).

Let us new describe *Baran Anwa* and other works of a religious kind which were read both by students and other Punjabi Muslims. The following manuscripts, seen by the author, are being mentioned very briefly by way of illustrating this genre of Punjabi writing.

(1) **Baran Anwa**. By Abdullah Abidi Lahori. This is handwritten manuscript in *nastaliq* (i.e. the script in which Persian and Urdu are written now) in Punjabi verse. It begins, as usual, with *hamd* and *naat* and goes on to describe Islamic rituals: ablutions, prayers, fasting, giving alms and so on. It also discusses the rituals and regulations concerning purity with special reference to women. Thus there are long sections on pregnancy, menstruation, divorce etc. The second part is full of historical anecdotes with reference to authorities like Masoodi. It is a voluminous book and is definitely the one mentioned in *Heer Ranjah* by Waris Shah.

(2) **Fiqqu Asghar.** By Faqir Habib Darzi bin Tayyab Gujrat. This is a handwritten manuscript in *naskh* (the script of Arabic). It is written in black ink and there are about twelve lines per page. The author explains Islamic rituals and other matters pertaining to faith in Punjabi verse. The sub-titles are in Persian.

(3) **Muqaddimat ul Anwar.** by Abdul Faqir. This is also a handwritten manuscript in *naskh*. Islamic injuctions pertaining to marriage, inheritance, sartorial property etc. are explained in Punjabi verse while the sub-titles are in Persian. The point of view is very stringent and puritanical. Women, for instance, are forbidden even to use the *dandasa* – a bark of a tree which cleans the teeth and makes the lips red.

(4) **Zibah Nama.** Handwritten manuscript in *naskh* probably written during King Muhammad Shah's reign (1719-48) as a couplet in it suggests. It was probably copied in 1860-61 as it contains the date 1277 A.H. It explains Islamic injunctions pertaining to the sacrifice of animals, hunting and lays down rules as to which meats are kosher and which are not.

(5) **Anwa-i-Faqir.** This too is a handwritten manuscript in *naskh* probably by Faqir Habib. The sub-headings are in Persian and it has been copied by someone called Karm Uddin from Jhelum. The date on it is Ziqad 1277 A.H. (May-June 1861). This too is on faith and the tone is puritanical and reformist.

(6) **Intikhab ul Kutab: Punjabi Nazm.** The name of the author is probably Kamal ud Din but this particular manuscript was copied by Nur Ahmed

of Kolia in 1261 A.H. (21 January 1806-10 January 1807). It too is handwritten in Punjabi *naskh* and the sub-headings are in Persian. It presents Islamic teachings in verse on bathing, funeral prayers, burial, congregational prayers, marriage, sacifice of animals and as to which meat is kosher.

(7) **Mitthi Roti: Punjabi** by Qadir Baksh. This is a printed copy in Punjabi *nastliq* dated 1883. It too described Islamic injunctions about all aspects of life including coitus. There are many references to Islamic works, which suggest that it might have been intended for the use of learned people.

(8) **Nijat al-Mominin.** A religious treatise written in 1086 A.H. (1675) by Maulana Abd al-Kirim (1657-1707) of Jhang district.

(9) **Kissa Kumad.** Written by Ashraf in nastaliq. This is an allegorical poem on the sugarcane which describes itself as being cut and ground.

(10) **Kissa Umar Khattah.** An account in verse of the war of Caliph Umar with the infidel king Tal written by Hafiz Muizuddin of Takht Hazara in 1176 A.H. (1762-63).

(11) **Raushan D.H.** Written by Fard Faqir of Gujrat, Christopher Shackle calls it 'one of the best-known of all the many basic treaties on Islam to have been composed in Punjabi verse' (Shackle 1977: 46).

(12) **Raddulimubtad' in.** This is an anonymous treatise in Punjabi verse against disbelief, polytheism and heresy written in 1788 A.H. (1814)

(13) **Anwa Barak Allah** by Hafiz Barak (d. 1871) It is a book in Punjabi verse on the Sunni law of the Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence. It was probably written in 1254 A.H. (1838) and printed several times later (for biographical note see Bhatti 1982: 119-138).

Besides the religious works mentioned above, there are the classical romantic tales of famous lovers (Yusuf-Zulaikha, Heer Ranjha, Laila-Majnun etc.) A somewhat unusual story is about the King Akbar who wants to test the chastity of the Begum of Hyderbad. The Begum, dressed as boy, is brought to the King but successfully resists him. The manuscript, in Punjabi verse, is written in the *nastaliq* script but the heading and all other details are lost. Another story uses characters from a tale which must have originated before Islam.

Qissa Raja Kam Roop O Rani Luttan by Maulvi Ahmed Yar. This is a handwritten manuscript in *nastaliq* in Punjabi verse. The sub-headings are in Persian. It is like other romantic love legends with beautiful women and handsome men in a supernatural, pre-modern setting. The copy seen by me was incomplete and ends at page 120 because it was originally bound with some other book. The author starts with a supplication to Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani who will presumably bless love affairs as passionate as the one narrated here.

Apart from the above manuscripts personally inspected by the author, there are many others such manuscripts mentioned by different people scattered in South Asia and other parts of the world. A number of printed books, some of them based on the above mentioned manuscripts, are also in circulation. There are called 'chapbooks' by Hanaway and Nasir who have listed them in their very

useful bibliography of words of this kind available in Pakistani cities (Hanaway and Nasir 1996: 455-615). Shahbaz Malik, a research scholar on Punjabi, has mentioned them in his bibliography called *Punjabi Kitabiat* (1991). They are also listed in several bibliographies of printed books in the British Library.

These books appear to fall into two major categories; those which are meant to make Muslims conscious of or knowledgeable about the rudiments of their faith and those which are about romantic love. Those in the first category have probably been written by *maulvis* because they present a very strict and highly purutanical view of the *sharia'h*. Some, such as one version of the Pakki Roti, prohibits music calling it a great sin just as it prohibits sodomy with boys and women. Those in the second category are tales in which romantic love and sometimes making love and drinking are shown without disapproval. These represent a more tolerant, more worldly or realistic, world view which existed side by side with the stricter one and is much in evidence in both Persian and Arabic tales. None of these books are meant to teach Punjabi as such. Punjabi serves as the means to an end – the end being socialization of Muslim children in this case or, simply, the pleasure of listening to a good story.

In short, although activists of the Punjabi movement make much of the teaching of Punjabi, they ignore the fact that it was not taught for itself in pre-British times. Moreover, although some of them refer to Hafiz Mahmood Sheerani's article mentioned earlier, they generally fail to mention to fact that Sheerani was trying to prove that Urdu, and not only Punjabi, were taught in the Punjab at this period (see references to the teaching of Punjabi in Yameen 1969: 10-11). Sheerani mentions not only the *Khaliq Bari* but also the *Zauq ul Sabyan* written in circa 1207 A.H. (1792-93) by Hafiz Ahsan Ullah of Lahore. The language of this book is the same Urdu (or Hindvi) which is used in the *Khaliq Bari*. Again. Like the *Khaliq Bari*, it too was meant to acquaint students with the vocabulary of Persian through Urdu. According to its author, who was a teacher, the Punjabi boys for whom it was intended understood it without any difficulty which, says Sheerani, suggests that Urdu was not unfamiliar for Punjabis (Sheerani 1934: 125).

If the students did understand Urdu it would not be surprising. Punjabi and Urdu share many core vocabulary items, the teaching of Persian through books like the *Khaliq Bari* must have familiarised Punjabi students with Urdu words and even before the British period there was communication between Punjab and north India where Urdu literature was coming into its own. In short, the situation in the Punjab on the eve of the British arrival was that Persian was the court language of the Sikhs. It was taught through Punjabi and Urdu at the primary level but those languages were facilitators at best and were not valued in their own right.

Punjabi on the Eve of British Rule

When the British arrived the schools in the Punjab could be divided, following Leitner, into *maktabs*, madrassas, *patshalas*, Gurmukhi and Mahajani schools.

The *mektab* was a Persian school while the madrassas was an Arabic one. The *patshalas* were Sanskrit schools while the Gurmukhi schools taught Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script. In the Mahajani schools the Landi or Sarifi script was taught to commercial people (Leitner 1882: 10).

The Sikhs considered it a religious duty to learn Gurmukhi enough to be able to read the Sikh holy books. Those following an advanced course studied, among other things, Gurmukhi grammar and prosody (Ibid, 32). The child gegan his studies at the age of six. He, or she, then proceeded to learn the Gurmukhi alphabet of which Guru Angad himself wrote a primer. The primer, being written by such an eminent spiritual leader, was in itself religious. It was, however, the means to an even more religious end – to enable the child to read the *Adi Granth*, a sacred book of the Sikhs. After this other works, such as *Hanuman Natak*, a Punjabi adaptation of a Hindi drama, were taught. Other subjects, such as elementary medicine and rhetoric, were also taught in Gurmukhi to Sikh children. According to Leitner, there were many people who knew Gurmukhi when he was collecting information for his report (1880s). Urdu, however, had been brought in and was being established slowly by the government (Leitner 1882: 35-37).

Some educational reports, such as that of 1857, tell us those students were first taught to read books in Persian without knowing their meaning. Later, they would translate them literally word by word, into the vernacular, but there was no attempt at explanation' (Leitner 1882: 60). This 'vernacular' was Punjabi which was not taught but was used, as we have seen, as a medium of instruction at least at the lower level before the British conquest. This practice continued even after the conquest and Leitner mentions that in 'most kor'an schools some elementary religious books in Urdu, Persian or Punjabi are taught' (1882: 68). The Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepur also reported that books on the rituals of Islam, which have been mentioned earlier, were taught in some of the Persian Quran schools (Edn. P. 1883: 10). However, none of these informants has specified which out of the books listed were in Punjabi.

Female education is generally said to have always been neglected among Muslims but, according to Leitner, 'Among Muhammadans nearly all girls were taught the Koran, nor could a Sikh women claim the title and privileges of a "learner" unless she was able to read the Granth' (1882: 98). He also gives a Punjabi song which the women had made (loc.cit). Girls were also taught 'the Koran together with little boys, and Urdu or Perso-Punjabi religious books, stories of prophets, etc. The Sikh girls read the Granth and other books in Gurmukhi (Leitner 1882: 107). For the Sikhs even Nazeer Ahmad's *Mirat ul Urus* had been translated into Gurmukhi. Leitner suggests that there had been a decline in female teaching since the British conquest because 'formerly the mother could teach the child Punjabi. Now, wherever the child learns Urdu, the teaching power of the mother is lost' (Leitner 1882: 108).

Some British officers, besides the enthusiastic Leitner, had suggested that Punjabi should be taught first to children and only after that should they proceed to other languages (Leitner 1882: 110-112). Leitner, of course, defended this

proposition with much fervour because the thesis he argues in his report is that, because of British rule:

> the true education of the Punjab was crippled, checked, and is nearly destroyed ... (and our system stands convicted of worse than official failure (Leitner 1882:1).

The removal of Persian from its position of honour and the introduction of Urdu, argues Leitner, are language-reaching policies which have alienated Punjabis both from their traditional high culture as well as the prevalent popular culture. Among other things Leitner provides a brief history of the traditional schools in the Punjab.

Besides ordinary mosque, or Quran, schools there were some well known schools both of Sikhs and Muslims. For instance there was Mian Sahib Qadri's school at Batala which was supported by a landed estate which was withdrawn by the British. Another such school, which also closed down for the same reason, was Maulvi Sheikh Ahmed's school in Sialkot. Then there were: Mian Faiz's school at Gujranwala famous for Persian, Bara Mian's school at Lahore; Khwaja Suleman's school at Dera Ghazi Khan; Mian Abdul Hakim's school at Gujranwala and so on. All these schools are advertised as great centres of Persian and Arabic studies (Leitner 1882), but Punjabi books like *Pakki Roti* might also have been taught there.

Punjabi and the British Conquest

Immediately after the annexation, court circulars and notices were published in Punjabi. The missionaries, true to their conviction that the Bible should be available in a reader's mother tongue, distributed bibles in Punjabi (Singh, A 1877: 479). Moreover, the government realised that Punjabi could not be ignored since it was the language of 17,000,000 people. In a note about its importance for the functionaries of the state it was written:

> Punjabi is of special importance as being the language of our Sikh soldiers. It is of the greatest importance that the officers in Sikh regiments should be able to converse freely in Punjabi. Too many of them employ Hindustani.
>
> There is a great deal of tea grown in the Northern Panjab. The European [sic] employed there must be able to speak Panjabi (Committee 1909:116).

However, the official vernacular which the British adopted in the Punjab was Urdu. Reasons for doing this have been given earlier (Rahman 1996: 192-194). Let us go over them briefly, however, to put things in a historical perspective.

Since the British had done away with Persian in 1836 they did not allow it to continue as an official language in the Punjab where it had that status both in the Mughal and the Sikh courts. They, therefore, asked the advice of their field officers about the language to be used in the lower domains of power. Very few

among them favoured the teaching of Punjabi. Most officers, indeed, were prejudiced against it. Their views, spread over a copious correspondence, can be summed up as follows: that Punjabi is a rustic dialect not fit for serious business; that Urdu is an advanced and more sophisticated form of Punjabi and that simple Urdu is easily understood in the Punjab (for the original letters expressing these views see Chaudhry, 1997).

In addition to this prejudices there were some apprehension, though it is expressed at very few places and then only in passing, that the British feared the symbolic power (and hence the political potential) of the Gurmukhi script. Thus the Commissioner and Superintendent of the Delhi Division wrote in a letter to the Secretary of the Punjab Government on 16 June 1862:

> it will be a stultification of our whole educational system to adopt Punjabee as our Court language. Here we are teaching the population to read and write Oordoo... Besides, I think that any measure which would revive the Goormukhee, which is the written Punjabee tongue would be a political error (Chaudhry 1977: 66-67).

This occurs among the opinions sought from commissioners of the Punjab in the 1860s, about three years after the Punjabis had shown their loyalty to the British in the events of 1857.

However, as noted earlier, not all the British officers agreed with this neglect of Punjabi. Some of them, for example, J. Wilson, Deputy Commissioner of Shahpur (in 1894) and Robert Cust (in a letter of 2 June 1862), advocated the cause of Punjabi but to no avail (for details see Rahman 1996: 194-196). The officers who refused to accept their point of view, and who were in a majority, were implacable in their prejudice against Punjabi. During this period both Muslims and Hindus developed consciousness about their identity. Religion, language, script, vocabulary and literary tradition were all seen as belonging to one or the other identity. Especially relevant for our purposes is the way Hindi and Hindu identity converged as is very competently described by Christopher King (1994). Simultaneously, Urdu too became a part, and symbol, of the Indian Muslim identity. Thus the Punjabi Muslims began to identify with Urdu rather than Punjabi during the Hindi-Urdu controversy which began in the 1860s and went on in one way or the other till the partition of India in 1947.

Besides British officers, mostly Sikhs and Hindus kept insisting that Punjabi should be taught in the Punjab. In 1867, for instance, Jumna Dass, a tutor to some Sardars (chiefs) suggested that the teaching of Gurmukhi, being a sacred obligation, should be established by the British at Amballa (Dass 1867: 39). Later Hukum Singh, Pundit Rikhi Kesh and Bhai Chiranjeet Singh wrote a memorandum with a view to persuading the Punjab University Senate to introduce Punjabi as a language of examinations. Among other things they argued that books on grammar, composition and poetry existed in Punjabi and that Sikhs, Khatris and Hindus would welcome the introduction of their mother tongue as a school subject. It is significant that they did not mention the Punjabi

Muslims whose mother tongue too was Punjabi but who had begun to identify with Urdu, which was becoming a Muslim religious identity symbol, by this date. Reminiscent of later debates about the teaching of Punjabi in Pakistan, they said that they only wanted Punjabi to be 'taught up to the middle school examination in Government schools, like other languages. It is, however, by no means contemplated that Urdu should be supplanted by the Punjabi in the Province' (Singh *et.al* 1877: 473). Similar reasons were advanced by Sardar Attar Singh for the teaching of Punjabi. But the Sardar added a political reason to persuade the British to teach it. He wrote:

> The Sikhs who form the most important class of the inhabitants, after whom the province is called (the land of Sikhs, and not Hindus or Muhammadans), and who are the most faithful subjects, have Gurmukhi characters and Punjabi language for their religious and worldly affairs. To reject this language, therefore, would be to dishearten those people (Singh 1877: 478-479).

At that time Punjabi was taught in the Normal Female School at Lahore, in the Sat Sabha of the Punjab and several private schools. However, the government did not examine candidates in the language except, of course, its own civil and military officers. The members of the University Senate who debated proposal XI, about allowing Punjabi to be a subject of examinations, were mostly British officers. General Maclagan, Major Holroyd and Perkins opposed Punjabi while Dr. Leitner, Brandreth, Pandit Manphul and Sodi Hukum Singh supported it. Hukum Singh even asserted that the 'books usually taught in Government schools exist in the Punjabi language' while Brandreth pointed out that 'there were many well known and popular books in Punjabi before the English came'. However, the opponents considered it below the dignity of a university to teach what they called a 'rustic' tongue. Moreover, they felt that if Punjabi were allowed, the flood gates of languages would burst open and Balochi, Pashto, Jatki etc would all clamour for admission. The debate, therefore, ended in a defeat for the pro-Punjabi lobby (PUC 1877: 445-454).

Although the Muslims in general showed little enthusiasm for owning Punjabi, some of their representatives did not oppose it either. Indeed, Nawab Abdul Majid Khan and Fakir Sayad Kamar ud Din, both members of the senate of the Punjab University College, submitted memoranda recommending that the vernacular languages, including Punjabi, should not be excluded from the examination list, nor should they be completely neglected (Native Members 1879: 943).

Meanwhile, a number of private bodies, such as the Singh Sabha, promoted the teaching of Punjabi but mainly among the Sikhs. The Singh Sabha too petitioned the Punjab University College to associate its members in a sub-committee to be set up for the teaching of Punjabi and that the entrance examination, which was in Urdu and Hindi, should also be given in Punjabi (Singh Sabha 1881: 223).

This was conceded and Punjabi became one of the options for school examinations. Sikh children could also study Gurmukhi if they wanted to, but employment was only available in Urdu in the lower and English in the higher domains of power. The report of 1901 tells us that 'Gurmukhi is taught in the Oriental College' (Edn.P 1901: 16). However, because a major motivation for all formal education, including the learning of languages, was employment by the state, the Gurmukhi classes did not become popular (Edn.P 1906: 15).

Those who desired to give Punjabi a more pronounced role in the education of Punjabis suggested changes. J.C. Goldsby, the Officiating Director of Public Instruction of the Punjab, wrote to the senior Secretary to the Financial Commissioner in this context as follows:

> It is a question between Punjabi and Urdu, and if the question is decided by the districts or divisions, there is no doubt that Urdu will invariably be chosen because of its practical utility. But Punjabi has a strong claim to be the language of the home in most cases; and more might be done to encourage the use of it, or at any rate to remove the impression that it is being purposely neglected (Goldsby, 1908).

However, the report on education of 1907-8 does say that Hindu and Sikh girls were learning Gurmukhi in greater proportion than boys while Muslims, both girls and boys did not learn it (Edn.P 1908: 22). The report of 1910-11 remarks that the demand for Gurmukhi has increased even among the boys in the Lahore and Multan divisions, mostly in Lyallpur (Edn.P 1911: 5). Such yearly fluctuations, however, did not change the general pattern, which the report of 1916 sums up as follows:

> Urdu continues to be in favour as the school vernacular for boys. Gurmukhi or Punjabi schools for boys and girls numbered 446 with 20,347 scholars, but three-quarters of the latter were girls (Edn.P 1916: 16).

Punjabi Muslims generally spoke Punjabi at home and in informal domains, among friends, in the bazaar etc, but they wrote in Urdu (or English) and they used Urdu for political speech-making, serious discussions and other formal domains. Mohammad Iqbal, the national poet of Pakistan, is said to have spoken the Sialkoti variety of Punjabi but he wrote only in Urdu, Persian and English throughout his life. In the only interview he gave in Punjabi in December 1930 to the editor of the Punjabi magazine *Sarang*, Iqbal made it clear that he did not write in Punjabi because his intellectual training had not opened up that option for him. He did, however, enjoy the language and appreciated the mystic content of its best poetic literature.

Of course, ordinary Punjabis too enjoy listening to Punjabi jokes, songs and poetry. Indeed, that is why poets like Imam Din and Ustad Daman (1911-1984) were and remain so immensely popular. According to Son Anand, an inhabitant of old Lahore, Daman 'is still a household name for all those who lived in the

crowded "mohallas" and frequented the Punjab "mushairas"'. He held audiences spellbound and was often in trouble for making fun of the authorities. Daman was anti-establishment, irreverent and humorous. These characteristics, and the fact that he used words which had an immediate appeal being those of the mother tongue, made him a great success with Punjabi audiences (Anand 1998: 38-41). But pleasure was one thing and politics another. The Urdu-Punjabi controversy was an extension of the Urdu-Hindi controversy. The political need of the time, as perceived by Muslim leaders in the heat of the Pakistan movement, was to insist on a common Muslim identity of which Urdu played an integral part. Moreover, having studied Urdu at school, the Punjabi intellectuals had complete command over its written form and literary tradition. Like Iqbal, all the great intellectuals of the Punjab such as Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Sa'adat Hasan Manto, wrote in Urdu. Urdu was also the language of journalism – the *Paisa Akhbar*, the *Zamindar* of the irrepressible Zafar Ali Khan and the *Nawa-i-Waqt* of Hameed Nizami being household names – which, like literature, was concentrated in Lahore. Indeed, Zafar Ali Khan modernised the Urdu language and became immensely popular as did Chiragh Hasan Hasrat whose witty columns were enjoyed by all those who read Urdu (Anand 1998: 173-177). Urdu was not only the adopted language of the inteliigentsia of the Punjab. It was the symbol of their Muslim identity. That is why they opposed those who advocated the teaching of Punjabi.

Such was the anti-Punjabi fervour of the leading Punjabi Muslims that when Dr. P.L. Chatterjee, the Bengali Vice Chancellor of Punjab University, declared in his convocation address at the University in 1908, that Punjabi, the real vernacular language of the Punjab, should replace Urdu, the Muslims condemned him vehemently. The Muslim League held a meeting at Amritsar to condemn him in December. The newspapers carried the controversy for several months. The *Paisa Akhbar,* a popular Urdu newspaper of Lahore, wrote articles not only about Chatterji's ideas but also on the subject of the medium of instruction. Most writers, following editorial policy, said that Punjabi was not capable of being used as a medium of instruction even at the primary level (see file of *Paisa Akhbar* December 1908 till April 1909). One contributor wrote that the educated Sikhs and Hindus, who used to speak Urdu earlier, had started speaking Punjabi out of prejudice against Urdu. However, he added, working class people – porters, cooks, gardeners etc – still spoke Urdu (*Paisa Akhbar* 16 July 1909). Another argument against Punjabi was that it consisted of dialects which changed after every few miles and had no standard form (*Paisa Akhbar* 7 June 1909). Most people, however, felt that the promotion of Punjabi was a conspiracy to weaken Urdu and, by implication, Muslims (for a detailed defence of Urdu in pre-partition days see M.R.T 1942; for the controversy of 1908 see Khawaja, 1982).

In short, most of the arguments were the same which were used by the functionaries of the state and right wing intellectuals in Pakistan later. The difference was that in pre-partition India almost all notable Punjabi Muslims united to oppose their own mother tongue in support of Urdu. In Pakistan, on

the other hand, identity-conscious Punjabis and their left-leaning sympathisers supported Punjabi much as the Sikhs and Hindus had done earlier while establishment and right-wing people supported Urdu. The question was one of the politics of identity in both cases: before the partition almost all Punjabi Muslim leaders and intellectuals insisted on their Muslim identity so as to give a united front to the Hindus and Sikhs; in Pakistan some Punjabi intellectuals felt that the cost of renouncing their Punjabi identity was excessive while the others felt that it was necessary to prevent the rise of ethnicity which, in their view, would break up Pakistan. On the eve of the partition, then, Punjabi was not owned by the Muslims.

Punjabi in Pakistan – the Work of Faqir Mohammad Faqir

Although most educated Punjabis supported Urdu for political reasons and took pride in it, there were some who felt that the loss of Punjabi was too dear a price to pay for these attitudes. One such person was Faqir Mohammad, who later took the poetic nom de plume of Faqir, thus becoming Faqir Mohammad Faqir. He was born on 5 June 1900 at Gujranwala. His ancestors had migrated from Kashmir and practised oriental medicine. Faqir was only fifteen years old when his father, Mian Lal Deen, died. It was then that the young Faqir wrote his first couplet in Punjabi.

He then got his Punjabi verse corrected, as was the custom of the times, from Imam Din and Ibrahim Adil in Gujranwala. He also started reciting his Punjabi verse in the meetings of the Anjuman Himayat-e-Islam where great poets – Altaf Husain Hali, Zafar Ali Khan and Mohammad Iqbal among them – read out inspiring nationalistic poems in Urdu. For a living, Faqir earned a diploma from the King Edward Medical College and practiced medicine, even performing operations of the eye according to witnesses (Akram 1992: 16). In 1920 he left both Gujranwala and medicine and became first a government contractor and then the owner of a construction business, in Lahore. But the honorary title of doctor had been bestowed upon him by his admirers is still a part of his legendary name – Dr. Faqir Ahmad Faqir. It was this man who first became a champion of Punjabi. He was an established Punjabi poet by the 1950s, the first collection of his verse having been published in 1941, but more than that he had dedication, the energy and the confidence to initiate movements and keep them going. Faqir supported Punjabi even before the partition and later, when the Sikh-Muslim riots had made it a tabooed subject in Pakistan because of its associations with the Sikhs, he still supported it. Soon after the establishment of Pakistan he decided to initiate a movement for the promotion of Punjabi. Initially he met with refusals. Even those who sympathised with his ideas, such as Sir Shahabuddin, an eminent politician and member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, declined to join him in this politically suspect venture. Eventually, however, he managed to persuade Abid Ali Abid, a noted intellectual and Principal of Dyal Singh College in Lahore, to hold a meeting of pro-Punjabi

intellectuals. Faqir himself did all the hard work. In one of his articles he writes:

> I myself went to distribute the invitations to all the invitees.... Except in one or two houses. I had to spend at least half the day in just delivering the invitations.... (My translation from the Punjabi of Akram 1992: 20).

At last Faqir's efforts bore fruit. In the first week of July 1951 the first Punjabi meeting was held. The invitees were distinguished men of letters, distinguished, of course, in Urdu. Among them were Maulana Abdul Majeed Salik, Feroze Uddin, Dr. Mohammad Din Taseer, Abdul Majeed Bhatti, Ustad Karam Amritsari, Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum, Mian Alias and others. Abid Ali Abid, the host, was also among the participants and Faqir, the indefatigable activist of the Punjabi language, listened keenly as Maulana Salik, the president, gave his speech. He says he was surprised that Salik fully agreed with him but this was hardly surprising because opponents of the idea would hardly have bothered to participate in the meeting. At the end of the deliberations the participants agreed to establish the Pak Punjabi League with Salik as president and Faqir as secretary. Both of them were also entrusted with the task of the publication of a monthly called *Punjabi* which first saw the light of day in September 1951. The purpose of this magazine was to induce the Urdu-using intellectuals of the Punjab to write in Punjabi. And, indeed, to a certain extent the magazine did succeed in making eminent literary figures, such as Ghulam Rasul Mehr, Zafar Ali Khan, Shorish Kashmiri, Hameed Nizami, Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabussum, Waqar Ambalvi, Qateel Shifai, Syed Murtaza Jilani, Dr. Mohammad Baqar, Dr. Abdus Salam Khurshid, write in Punjabi.

Faqir Ahmad Faqir, however, did not rest content with this achievement. He also organized the first Punjabi conference at Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) in 1952. In this, among other things, it was resolved that Punjabi should be taught from Class I upto the M.A level. Since then every conference, every Punjabi language activist, every Punjabi newspaper or magazine has reiterated this demand.

Another major achievement of this conference was that it created an organisation to provide reading material in Punjabi. This organisation was called the Punjabi Adabi Akadmi (Punjabi Literary Academy). It too was headed by a committed activist, Mohammad Baqir, who worked on the lines of Faqir Mohammad Faqir. According to the latter:

> Dr. Mohammad Baqir started working with full power as soon as he took charge of The Academy. The result of this was that after a few months of running around he succeeded in obtaining a grant of Rs. 20,000 from the central government. During this time the Academy also made Rs. 7,900 from the sale of books.
> (Quoted in Akram 1992: 23. My translation from Punjabi)

The books which were sold were the Academy's own publications – classics of Punjabi literature like the poetic works of Bulleh Shah; the *Heer* of Waris Shah; *Mirza Sahiban* of Peeloo and Hafiz Barkhurdar; *Bol Fareedi*, the poetic works of the poet-saint Fariduddin Masood Ganj Shakar (1175-1265); the poetic works of Ali Haider; *Kakare*, the collection of the poems of Syed Hashim Shah; the *Saif ul Mulook* of Mian Mohammad Baksh and several epic poems (*vars*) as well as different versions of rhymed folk tales. In addition to these literary classics the Academy also published textbooks for Class 1 and 2 as well as a textbook for B.A. in Punjabi. This book was entitled *Lahran*, a title which was used later for a well-known periodical of Punjabi.

For some time Mian Bashir Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of the Punjab University, appeared to have been converted to Punjabi. This was a feather in the cap for Faqir who wrote that the Vice Chancellor's statement, that the progress of Punjabi would not harm Urdu, was very welcome. He pointed out that the pro-Punjabi press had requested the university to re-start the Honours, High Proficiency and Proficiency in Punjabi classes which it had stopped earlier. Moreover, the government was also requested to make Punjabi the medium of instruction at the primary level. But, lamented the writer, the university's decision-makers had not taken any concrete steps in favour of Punjabi despite its Vice Chancellor's statement in support of it (Faqir 1953a: 2-3).

The contributors of *Punjabi*, being eminent writers of Urdu and Pakistani nationalists, insisted and reiterated that the domains of Urdu would not be intruded upon. For them Urdu deserved the honour of being a national language (the other being Bengali after 1954); and it also deserved to be the medium of instruction in senior classes; and the language of national communication. Their only concern was that Punjabi should not be completely ignored and devalued. That is why, even when they demanded the use of Punjabi in certain domains, they distanced themselves from the Punjabi of the Sikhs. Indeed, some of them used the term 'Pak Punjabi' for the variety of Punjabi they wanted to promote (Ambalvi 1955: 9). Hence, one finds that Hameed Nizami, the founding editor of the *Nawai Waqt*, an Urdu newspaper known for its aggressive nationalism and right wing views, advocated the teaching of Punjabi to little children. Recounting his personal experience, he said that his own children expressed themselves more fluently in Punjabi than in Urdu whereas he and his wife had always used Urdu earlier (Nizami 1951: 11-12).

The effort to teach Punjabi floundered on the rock of culture shame and prejudice. As there are many sources indicating that the Punjabis have some sort of affectionate contempt or culture shame about their language (see Mobbs 1991: 245; Mansoor 1993: 119 for surveys of opinions about it), there is no need to labour that point. What is relevant here is to relate this culture shame to the teaching of the language here. The first point to note is that this culture shame gives rise to, and is in turn fed by, myths of various kinds. The most common ones are that Punjabi is a dialect not a language; that it is so full of invectives and dirty words that it cannot be used for serious matters; that it is a rustic language and its vocabulary is so limited that it cannot be used for intellectual

expression; that it lends itself to jokes and is essentially non-serious and therefore unsuitable for serious matters; and that it has no literature, or at least no modern prose literature, in it etc. etc. Most of these prejudices, as we have seen earlier, were also part of the British attitude towards Punjabi. Whether they were internalised by Punjabi Muslims because of Persianisation during Mughal rule; the privileging of English and Urdu during British rule; contact with Urdu speakers; or the fact that Urdu was the language of creative literature and lower level jobs in the Punjab; cannot be determined. What is known is that, at least since the nineteenth century, Punjabi Muslims have held and still hold such prejudiced myths about their mother tongue Punjabi.

Most Punjabi activists have spent a lot of time and effort to refute these myths. The early articles in *Punjabi* in the nineteen fifties began these efforts and even today, after nearly half a century, the same arguments and counter-arguments are being exchanged. Sardar Mohammad Khan, writing in 1957, argued that Punjabi cannot be a 'dialect' in isolation. It must be the dialect of some language (Khan 1957: 26). But by 'dialect' the opponents of Punjabi mean that it has not been standardised. The answer to this is that standardisation, which is part of language planning (corpus planning to be precise), is an activity which needs not only linguistic expertise but also a definite policy, money and administrative power. It can only be accomplished by powerful agencies, such as governments, which privilege one variety of the language; print its grammar and dictionaries and, above all, use it in the domains of power beginning with schools (Cooper 1989: 131-144). So, the fact that there was no standardised norm of Punjabi in the fifties did not mean that there was anything intrinsically deficient about the language. What it meant was that the government had been indifferent to it which brings one back to what the activists advocated all along, begin by teaching Punjabi. The printing of the school texts would by itself begin the process of creating a standard norm.

The other arguments are also part of the non-use of the language in the domains of education, administration, commerce, judiciary and the media. All languages are adequate for the expression of the social reality of the societies in which they are born. However, it is only when they are used in other domains, domains which modernity has brought in, that, their vocabulary expands. To some extent it expands by borrowing from other languages spontaneously but for the most part, language planners create new terms. This process, called modernisation or neologism, is necessary when 'a language is extended for new functions and topics' and takes place even in developed, modern societies though not to the extent it occurs in developing ones (Cooper 1989: 149). But this, too, is done by powerful language-planning institutions, generally state supported ones. In the case of Punjabi the state did nothing of the kind. Hence, if Punjabi is deficient in modern terms (technical, administrative, philosophical, legal etc), it is not an inherent limitation but merely lack of language planning. Once again, the fault is that of the state and not that of Punjabi.

The absence of books is also the consequence of lack of state patronage and non-use in any of the domains where books are required. In short, the use (or

intent to use) of the language comes first. Language planning activities follow as a consequence and the language gets standardised and modernised later. This sequence was not always adequately comprehended either by the supporters or by the opponents of Punjabi. Thus they talked, generally in emotional terms, about the merits and demerits of the language rather than about the role of the state and the modernization of pre-modern languages through language planning.

One myth, which is somewhat baffling at first sight, is that of the alleged vulgarity of Punjabi. The typical refutation of the charge, a charge levelled again and again and once by no less a person than Mian Tufail Mohammad, the head of the Jamaat-i-Islami in 1992, is that all languages have 'dirty words' (Khan 1957: 29). Mian Tufail was condemned by a large number of Punjabi activists (Baloch 1992), but the fact remains that he said what many Punjabis believe about their language. What requires explanation is that such an absurd myth should exist at all. It probably came to exist, and still exists, because Punjabi is not used in the formal domains, the domains of impersonal interaction. The norms of interaction in the formal domains preclude personal, egalitarian, give and take. Thus one does not use the incentives which one uses with one's companions and friends. Moreover, since the abstract and learned terms used in the domains of formal learning and law are generally borrowed from a foreign language, they do not strike one as earthy and vulgar. Since Punjabi has never been used in these domains, it lacks these words. Thus, when the familiar Punjabi words for the body and its functions are used, they strike the listener as vulgar and unsophisticated. The classical poets of Punjabi solved this problem, like Urdu and English poets, by borrowing words from Persian just as the English poets borrowed from Latin and Greek. For instance Waris Shah, describing the beauty of Heer's body, said:

> *Kajoor shana suraen banke, saq husn o sutoon pahar vichhon*
> (Fair and rounded like swollen water bags were her beautiful buttocks
> Her legs were as if sculptors had carved them out of the mountain
> [in which Farhad had carved out a canal for his beloved Sheereen i.e mountain famous for love]

The term *suraen* for buttocks is from Persian and is also used in classical Urdu poetry. The commonly used terms, both in Punjabi and Urdu, would be considered far too obscene to be used in literature (also see Muhammad n.d: 162-169). Similarly Hafiz Barkhurdar and Waris Shah both use the term '*chati*' (breast, chest) for their heroine's breasts. The term *chati* is a neutral term which can be used for men, women, children and animals for the upper, front portion of the anatomy. To express the feminine beauty of this part of the heroine's body, the poet resorts to metaphorical language. The use of the Punjabi term would have been considered coarse and unseemly. This literary strategy, the use of terms from another language, is quite common in Urdu as well as English. In Urdu such terms are borrowed from Arabic and Persian while in English they come from Latin and Greek.

The point, then, is that Punjabi literature resorts to the same stylistic strategies as other literatures of the world when dealing with tabooed areas. The popular impression that Punjabi has no 'polite' equivalents of tabooed terms is based on ignorance of Punjabi literature. This ignorance is but inevitable in a country where Punjabi is used only in the informal domains and educated people code-switch increasingly to English when they venture into areas which are even remotely connected with sex. Thus even the Punjabi words for wife and woman are falling into disuse as people prefer to use the circumlocution *bacche* (literally, children), family, and *kar vale* (the people of the household) instead of *run, zanani* and *voti*. To conclude, all the myths about the inadequacy of Punjabi are consequences of its non-use and marginalisation by the state. Hence, whether they fully understood the role of power in language planning and use or not, Punjabi activists were right when they insisted that their language should be taught at some levels if it was ever to take its place as a respectable language.

However, lack of understanding of the political dimensions of language policy (and use), also resulted in enabling the Punjabis to believe in some self-congratulatory and ego-boosting myths. One is that the Punjabis are so large hearted and generous that they have accommodated Urdu even by sacrificing their own language. A variant of this myth is that Punjabis, being truly Islamic and nationalistic, care more for Urdu, which symbolises the Islamic and Pakistani identity, than their own mother tongue. Still another variant is that, being ardent lovers of Urdu, the Punjabis have forgotten their mother tongue in their enthusiasm for Urdu. These myths are wrong because they do not take culture-shame, language-policy, political and economic reasons into account at all. More politically aware Punjabi activists, like Shafqat Tanvir Mirza, argue that the predominantly Punjabi ruling elite gives Urdu more importance than the other indigenous languages of the country in order to keep the country united through the symbolism of one national language; to increase its power base and in order to keep the centre stronger than the periphery. By appearing to sacrifice their own mother tongue the elite can resist the pressure of other ethnic language-based pressure groups to make itself stronger at the expense of the Punjabi-dominated centre (Mirza 1994: 91). This, indeed, is the consequence of the policy of marginalising Punjabi. However, it appears to me that many decisions of the ruling elite, as indeed of other human beings, are not so calculated and rational. It is more likely that the low esteem of Punjabi; the idea that it is not suitable for formal domains; is as much part of the Punjabi ruling elite's world view as it is of other educated Punjabis. To this, perhaps, one may add the conscious feeling that any encouragement of their own mother tongue will embolden the speakers of other indigenous languages to demand more rights and privileges for their languages thus jeopardising the position of Urdu as a national language. In short, the Punjabi elite's marginalisation of Punjabi is not because of generosity or disinterested love of the country but a mixture of culture shame, prejudice against its own language and the desire to keep the centre, and therefore itself, dominant in Pakistan.

Punjabi Teaching in Pakistan (1950s and 1960s)

The University of the Punjab permitted students to take Punjabi as an optional language in the early fifties. Critics said that there would be no students who would study it. Faqir Ahmad Faqir agreed but, nothing daunted, suggested that it should be compulsory not optional (Faqir 1953b). This did not, however, come to pass. In 1954 the question of Bengali being accepted as a national language of Pakistan was very much in the air. The greatest opponent of the proposal was Maulvi Abdul Haq who still insisted that Urdu alone could symbolise the unity of the Pakistani nation. The Punjab Youth League's secretary, Farooq Qureshi, took this opportunity to demand that they would celebrate a Punjabi Day. This was probably the first time that the fair of Shah Hussain was used in March 1954 to raise the demand of Punjabi being made an official language. The post-graduates' union of Punjab University decided to hold a discussion on the issue. The Vice Chancellor; M. Sharif, who was sympathetic to Punjabi and who, above all, did not want the students to get out of hand presided. Masood Khaddarposh, who was present, relates how the students became so unruly in their enthusiasm that they drowned everybody's speech in full-throated shouts if someone used a non-Punjabi word in the speech. Khaddarposh says that he went on the stage, congratulated the students on becoming free of the oppression of other languages, and said that a new policy consistent with independence should now be created. Then only would there be people who would deliver speeches without putting in Urdu and English words in them (handwritten report by Masood in my personal collection). Although Masood perceived the students' exuberance as their desire to discard Urdu and English, such a conclusion is not warranted because the students respond in the same enthusiastic manner to Punjabi *mushairas*, debates, discussions and other cultural events even now. In a *mushaira* at F.C. College Lahore on 17 February 1998 the students were equally exuberant (*Savera* March 1998: 44). It appears that they take Punjabi as part of fun and, since it is a change from the languages they use in the formal domains, they tend to relax and take the whole thing as entertainment. This does not mean, however, that they hold Punjabi in prestige and want to discard other languages.

A concrete step in favour of teaching Punjabi was that in 1961 the Board of Secondary Education accepted it as an optional language in schools from class 6 till 12 F. A. In 1962 Abdul Majeed Bhatti and Mohammad Afzal Khan wrote the first book for class 6 (Sultana 1975: 27). This was, of course, a triumph for the Punjabi activists especially because this was the Ayub Khan era when the centre, being dominated by the military and the higher bureaucracy, was highly intolerant of multi-lingualism and multi-culturalism. Indeed, since West Pakistan was one unit, the indigenous languages were at the lowest ebb of their fortunes. Ayub Khan's centrist government looked at language-based assertions of identity with great suspicion. In the case of Punjabi it was felt that the Punjabi activists would join the Sikhs across the border to undermine the two-nation theory on the basis of which Pakistan was made. Thus the Punjabi Majlis,

an organization to promote Punjabi, was banned in 1959 while the Punjabi Group of the Writer's Guild was banned in 1963. Despite these setbacks the sixties saw something of a renaissance of Punjabi literary and cultural life (for details see Rahman 1996: 200-202) which need not be repeated. An important development, which bears repetition, is that short stories, plays and poems which were produced during this period laid the foundation for the M.A in Punjabi which started in the 1970s at the Punjab University.

The Reaction to Nur Khan's Education Policy

Ayub Khan's government was toppled in March 1969 by students and politicians. In his place came General Yahya Khan who imposed martial law while promising elections and transition to democracy. Yahya Khan, like Ayub before him, appointed a commission headed by Air Marshal Nur Khan to propose changes in the education policy. Nur Khan's emphasis was on the nation and hence he favoured the two national languages, Urdu and Bengali, while ignoring all the other indigenous languages of the country. The reaction to this by the Sindhi and Punjabi activists is given in Rahman (1996: 118 and 203). Here, reference will be made to those aspects of language teaching which have not been given sufficient space in my previous book.

About 500 Punjabi activists presented a memorandum on behalf of 13 pro-Punjabi organizations to General Yahya Khan on 31 August 1989 (*Dawn* 2 September 1969). Among them were the Punjabi Adabi Sangat, Majlis Shah Hussain, Punjabi Adabi Society, Majlis Mian Mohammad, Majlis-e-Bahu, Majlis Waris Shah, Majlis Shah Murad and Rahs Rang, a dramatic group of Lahore. The writers of the document took their stand on social justice possibly because Ayub Khan's regime had enriched a very narrow elite and, in reaction to that, ideas like socialism, Islamic socialism and social justice were in the air. The document said:

> Languages used by different classes of the people are often taken as representatives of their social placing and economic background and aptly reflect the stratification that has taken [place] in our society. If we have to safeguard ourselves against this perpetuation of privileges, which has been rightly marked as a major social problem, we shall have to give these languages of the masses their due in society (Memorandum 1969: 5).

This reference to social stratification was all the more forceful because Nur Khan himself had spoken out against the privileged position of English and that there was a caste-like distinction between Urdu and English medium students (Edn. Pro 1969: 3; 15-17). Now the activists of Punjabi argued that there was another caste-like distinction too – between the users of Urdu and those who knew only Punjabi. Indeed, the knowledge of only Punjabi was considered ignorance – so low had the language policies of the past and the present brought down Punjabi. This, said the Punjabi activists, could only be reversed if Punjabi

was taught. The practical steps they recommended have been given in my book *Language and Politics in Pakistan* (1996: 203) and it would be repetitive to enumerate them in detail. Suffice it say that they wanted it as a medium of instruction for adults and at the primary level and an optional subject at all others. They also felt that the language should be honoured by introducing it at the highest level in the university.

The September 1969 issue of *Punjabi Adab* also devoted itself to the education policy. Well-known figures such as Masood Khaddarposh, Shafqat Tanwir Mirza, Safdar Mir (Zeno), Asif Khan, among others, wrote in favour of Punjabi. It was in the sixties too that the Punjabi language movement came to have a slightly left of centre image. This image came from the fact that the Communist Party favoured the languages of the common people. According to Safdar Mir, Eric Cyprian, an important member of the party in the 1940s, said it was necessary to use Punjabi to communicate with the people (Interview in *Viewpoint*, 25 Jan 1990). Earlier, in the forties too some leftists, such as Mrs Freda Bedi, wife of the Communist leader of Lahore B.P.L Bedi, addressed 'rural audiences in Punjabi from a public platform' (Anand 1998: 16). Although Punjabi did not become the preferred language of the Communist Party in Pakistan, leftists did sympathise with it. Thus there were avowed socialists like Major Ishaque, Safdar Mir and Ahmad Rahi in the movement. Moreover the anti-establishment, rebellious themes of Najam Hussain Bhatti's plays were left-leaning. In any case, supporting any Pakistani language other than Urdu was seen as being leftist by the establishment. The Punjabi activists, however, made Shah Hussain, a sufi saint, their symbol of inspiration. Shah Hussain is said to have rebelled against orthodoxy by having fallen in love with a boy (Madho Lal), drinking wine and dancing and was, therefore, an anti-establishment symbol. Moreover, the Punjabi activists took to celebrating the anniversary of his death in the Mela-e-Chiraghan with much fanfare. They also danced on the day much to the disapproval of the puritanical revivalists of the Jamaat-i-Islami and ordinary, somewhat orthodox, middle class Punjabis. Thus, when 100 Punjabi writers demanded all regional languages as media of instruction on 5 April 1965 at the Mela-e-Chiraghan (*Pakistan Times* 6 April 1965), the demand must have appeared as part of a conspiracy to undermine the foundations of orthodoxy to many people.

The Department of Punjabi at the Punjab University

The demand for opening the Punjabi department at the university became stronger. Apart from the old champions of Punjabi like Faqir Mohammad Faqir, even people otherwise associated with Urdu like Dr Waheed Qureshi, voiced this demand on 5 August 1969. General Bakhtiar Rana, a member of the Punjabi Adabi League, also made the same demand and numerous small organizations lent their voices to it. The Punjabi Adabi Sangat, for instance, gave several statements in the press demanding M.A in Punjabi (*Muzawat* 24 August 1970).

Faqir Mohammad Faqir's role in the establishment of the master's degree at the Punjab University has acquired legendary overtones. Junaid Akram, his biographer, says that he met Alauddin Siddiqui, the Vice Chancellor of the University, and persuaded him not to oppose the idea. Finding the Vice Chancellor willing he met members of the Academic Council and other decision-making bodies and won their approval (Akram 1992: 56). The popular legend has it that he lay down in the office of the Vice Chancellor saying that he would live on the floor unless the M.A was instituted. The Vice Chancellor, completely dismayed by these unorthodox tactics, made the required promises to persuade Faqir to lift the siege. According to Syed Akhtar Jafri, who has written a critical appreciation of Faqir's life and works, he was helped by Abdul Majeed Bhatti and Rauf Shaikh who visited the opponents of Punjabi and persuaded them by all means orthodox and unorthodox (Jafri 1991: 37). In any case in 1970 the M.A Punjabi classes began at the Oriental College, Punjab University, Lahore. Faqir Mohammad Faqir's jubilation knew no bounds. According to a witness, Arshad Meer, he celebrated this great advance in the status of Punjabi at Gujranwala. The Vice Chancellor, Waheed Qureshi, Mian Mohammad Shafi and other notables attended. Faqir paid homage to the Vice Chancellor in verse and the activists of the Punjabi movement felt that their dream had come true.

The first members of the faculty in the Punjabi Department were people who lacked formal degrees in the language but were known for having written in it. Among others were Alauddin Siddiqui, the Vice Chancellor, himself; Ashfaq Ahmad, the noted Urdu dramatist and short story writer; Khizar Tameemi, Sharif Kunjahi and Qayyum Nazar (Akram 1992: 56). In the beginning, under the influence of Dr. Waheed Qureshi, right wing views dominated. Even Bulleh Shah was not taught because of his allegedly 'heretical' views (Saleem. Int. 1999). Punjabi was also taught at the masters level in the Shah Hussain College in Lahore in the early seventies. Ahmed Saleem, one of the lecturers in the early years, said that all lecturers were volunteers in that college and the students took the university examination as private candidates (Saleem. Int. 1999).

In 1973 Najam Hussain Syed, a well known intellectual whose book on Punjabi literature *Recurrent Patterns in Punjabi Poetry* (1986) is still a milestone in the field, was invited to chair the new department. Najam, himself a creative writer of somewhat left-of-the centre orientation, made a comprehensive curriculum for the M.A which did not exclude leftist, identity-conscious, Punjabi literature (Syed. Int. 1999). His colleagues were Asif Khan, Sharif Kunjahi and Abbas Jalalpuri. All of them were part time lecturers and Najam himself was on deputation from government service. Najam and his colleagues, being liberal in views, included the socio-economic background in which literary texts are created as part of the curriculum. They even taught Gurmukhi, though it was not part of the approved curriculum, so as to enable students to study Punjabi literature from India. The teaching of Gurmukhi was especially suspect in the eyes of their right-wing opponents because they thought Indian Punjabi literature would dilute the ideological orientation of sudents. Later, when Zia ul Haq took over, all institutions had to move towards the right because the regime was not

only centrist, like all previous regimes, but legitimized itself so emphatically in the name of Islam that it became paranoid even about trivialities (Khan, Asif. Int. 1999). Thus, according to Khalid Humayun, lecturer at the Department of Punjabi, some lines of Anwar Masood's humorous poem '*Aj Ki Pakaye?*' (What shall we cook today?) were expunged because they referred to Pakistan's friendship with the U.S.A (Humayun 1986: 231).

Shahbaz Malik, who became the chairman of the Punjabi Department during Zia ul Haq's days, was known for his rightist views. It was during his tenure that most of the changes mentioned above, such as the exclusion of identity-conscious, political or Sikh literature, took place. Complaints against the department kept coming (*Sajjan* 30 September 1989), but Shahbaz Malik continued to head it (see his interview in Chowdhry 1991). Khalid Humayun complained that so absurd was the ideological witch-hunting at this period that theses on Ustad Daman and the folk songs of the Punjab were accused of subverting the ideology of Pakistan – the former because Daman had criticised martial law; the latter because popular values were contrary to those which the state supported (Humayun 1990. Also Humayun. Int. 1999). In an interview Afzal Randhawa, a prominent writer of Punjabi, also accuses the Punjab University authorities of being selective allegedly for both personal and ideological reasons, about the texts to be taught to students (Randhawa 1990: 15).

Masood Khaddarposh and Punjabi-Teaching

During the seventies and early eighties, a new figure came to invigorate, and even dominate at times, the Punjabi scene. This was the somewhat enigmatic figure of Mohammad Masood who was popularly known as Masood Khaddarposh (that is, one who wears rough cotton clothes). Masood was an Indian (and then Pakistan) Civil Service officer. The ICS-CSP cadre as a whole was known for being very Anglicized and alienated from the people and their indigenous culture. Masood, however, proved himself to be different when he associated with the tribal people of India, called the bheels and won their trust. They are said to have called him Masood Bhagwan (god). Later, in Pakistan he wrote a 'Minute of Dissent' to the *Sind Hari Commision Report* (1950). The Hari (peasant) of Sind was supposed to be the worse example of feudal oppression in Pakistan. The main report, being written under the influence of the feudal lobby, did not highlight the injustices done to the *Haris*. Masood's 'Minute of Dissent', however, did so. The press, therefore, welcomed it as enthusiastically as it condemned the main report. The chief minister of Sindh, Ayub Khuhro, himself a Sindhi feudal lord, remarked in March 1951 'the problem of *haris* does not exist in the province it exists only in some newspaper offices'. This made Masood even more popular and he came to be known as Masood of the Hari Report. What Masood's minute of dissent was about can best be understood only by reading it but even its opponent, Ayub Khuhro's historian daughter Hameeda Khuhro, condemns it in no worse terms than this:

> This [Masood's Minute] did not concern itself with the terms of reference but was a diatribe on the iniquities of the *zamindar* and their supposed penchant for women and an idle life; their cruelty towards the cultivators whom they treated like 'slaves'; the evils of absentee landlordism of which there could have been hardly any example in Sind at that period! He then wrote an essay on Islamic history and his opinion of the rights of 'peasant proprietors' in the Holy Quran of which he also said, 'Barring a few exceptions, the precepts of the Quran in this regard have not been practiced by the Musalmans throughout the Islamic history' (Khuhro 1998: 393).

But, however much Hameeda might ridicule Masood, people agreed with him. The 'Minute', therefore, increased his prestige very much.

Later, this unusual bureaucrat became even more unique, indeed legendary, because he started dressing up in *khaddar* which the impeccably dressed South Asian officers, both civilian and military, never wore in public till the 1970s when Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto gave respectability to this dress by wearing it in public. Thus, instead of the usual suit complete with necktie, Masood often turned up in the indigenous *shalwar kameez* which was taboo in official circles. So it was this legendary, somewhat enigmatic, figure who became a champion of Punjabi. Even while he was in service he often used Punjabi in conversation. This, however, was hardly unusual. What was somewhat unusual was that he often asked people to give evidence in Punjabi because he felt they would express themselves more clearly in the mother tongue. Even more unusual, and bordering on the eccentric this time, was his insistence that prayers should be said in Punjabi because one should know what one was saying to God (Akhtar 1986). This alienated the ulema but, luckily for Masood, the idea was generally ignored and the religious opposition against him did not become widespread. After his retirement Masood became the convener of the Punjabi Forum, an organization for the promotion of Punjabi.

Now it was this man who wrote in favour of using Punjabi in different domains and, above all, of teaching it. His arguments referred to the Quran (that God guides people in their own language); conspiracy theories (that the Jews wanted only one international language) and ideas of cultural preservation, ease of developing new concepts in the mother-tongue and so on (Masood 1969). Masood was an energetic man and, having been in the machinery of the state, he believed in influencing the decision-makers in the state apparatus. Thus, apart from writing articles, memoranda, letters to the editor and making speeches from different platforms, he also wrote letters to high government officials asking them to take steps to teach Punjabi. Among others, he wrote to the president, the governor, cabinet ministers like Abdus Sattar Niazi and Dr. Mahbub ul Haq, and the chairman of the Literacy Commission to make policies in favour of teaching Punjabi. When the state functionaries did not respond satisfactorily he released his letters, or a summary of his efforts to persuade them, to the press. A typical release of 16 September 1984 states:

> At last I went personally just last month to Islamabad to speak to the present head of the Literacy Commission and I quoted several verses from the Quran to make it clear that all education and literacy must be imparted in the mother tongue.

Among his several interviews in the press, in Punjabi, Urdu and English, the one which had circulation outside the Punjabi-language activists was the one which I.A Rehman published in the *Herald* (July 1984). In this Masood pointed out that he had advocated multi-lingualism in Pakistan for more than 25 years. He denied that Urdu was necessary even as a link language but conceded that it should be retained. All Pakistani languages, he said, should be national languages and should be taught in the Punjab (Rehman 1984).

Masood's hour of triumph came when on 2 January 1985 he collected some leading figures of the country including Dr. Mubashar Hasan, said to be the architect and theoretician of Z.A. Bhutto's left-leaning Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), A.H. Kardar, Fakhar Zaman (PPP senator and Punjabi writer), Mazhar Ali Khan (editor of *Viewpoint*), Abdullah Malik (the famous Urdu novelist) and Mumtaz Daultana (famous politician) and made them agree to adopt a charter for the 'restoration of the cultural dignity of the Punjabi-speaking people of Pakistan'. The teaching of Punjabi was the focus of this charter. The basic thesis was that colonial values had deprived the Punjabis of the use of their language in formal domains. Now, if the lost dignity of the language was to be reclaimed, it was necessary to use it in the administration and the judiciary. But this meant that it should be taught first and this is what the 139 signatories of the charter vowed to bring about (*Viewpoint* 10 Jan 1985; *The Muslim* 3 Jan 1985).

These were Zia ul Haq years and the presence of known leftists among the signatories, people like C.R. Aslam, Mazhar Ali Khan, Safdar Mir, Mabashar Hasan, alarmed the right wing. The press, especially the Urdu press, attacked the charter when it did not ignore it. The charter, therefore, became as politically controversial, as much a part of the ongoing left-right debate, as most other intellectual matters did at that time. In the same way the International Punjabi Conference of 1986, organized by Fakhar Zaman in Lahore also became controversial. This conference has been described earlier (Rahman 1996: 205-206) and all its proceedings have been collected in one volume (Qaisar & Pal 1988), so there is no point in describing it here except to say that the demand for teaching Punjabi was not only the subject of resolutions but also an issue around which many of the papers revolved.

The second International Punjabi Conference, after having been postponed several times, was held from 26 to 29 December 1992. Fakhar Zaman, its convenor, was also the Chairman of the Academy of Letters and had much power being close to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto who was enjoying her second tenure in government. But, possibly because the PPP did not want to confront centrist military and the bureaucracy and the bias against Punjabi was well entrenched in the establishment, the conference lacked the fervent anti-establishment enthusiasm of the 1986 conference which had become a political

statement against Zia ul Haq's martial law. Once again the teaching of Punjabi was a crucial issue. Although Fakhar Zaman did say that Punjabi would become a medium of instruction (Ghumman 1995: 300) everybody seemed to feel that no substantial change would be made.

Neutralising the Ideological Threat from Punjabi

Although Punjabi was taught to so few children, the state ensured that the textbooks for teaching it were saturated with state-sponsored ideology. Several steps were taken for this purpose. In 1986, 2009 primary schools of the Punjab were selected and 46,930 pupils of class 1 were interviewed. The idea was to write down the words they used so that words common to Punjabi and Urdu could be identified. N.K. Shaheen Malik, the Director of the Project, made some textbooks called *Entry Vocabulary of Pre-School Children* based upon his major finding that 68.8 per cent words of small children were common to Punjabi and Urdu while only 27.7 per cent words belonged only to Punjabi (Malik n.d. 14). The idea, however, was not so much to teach Punjabi as to point out that teaching Punjabi children through Urdu was justified because children understood new concepts in a language which was so close to their own that they were already familiar with it. However, the project did deal with the teaching of Punjabi too. This teaching was very little but such as it was, it had to be ideologically correct. Thus, in a workshop for teachers of Punjabi held in April 1986, care was taken to emphasize that 'Musalmani' and not 'Sikhi' Punjabi should be taught (Malik 1986: 19).

The Punjabi textbooks, like the textbooks in the other Pakistani languages, are saturated with ideological moralising. The three main themes here too are Islam, Pakistani nationalism and glorification of war and the military. The items (prose or verse) on these subjects out of the total number of items in the textbooks were as follows:

Textbook	Percentage of ideological items
Class 6th (*Punjabi Di Paehli kitab* 1998)	50.33
Class 7th (*Punjabi Di Doosri Kitab* 1991)	06.42
Class 8th (*Punjabi Di Teesri Kibab* 1998)	35.13

The preface of all these books explicitly states that the student should learn Punjabi in the light of Islam, the ideology of Pakistan and nationalism. In short, while some of the activists of the Punjabi movement point to Punjabi literature as an antidote to establishment views, the actual teaching of it by the state does not allow such views to be disseminated through textbooks.

Efforts to Popularise Punjabi

Between 1980 and 1986 the Punjabi Adabi Board got around a hundred books written in Punjabi. These books were written by well known writers on subjects as wide ranging as folk songs (*Lok Geet* by Tanwir Bukhari) to fiction,

biography, religion and history. There were books on Harappa and other cities and even books on games and womens' problems. The books were not written in only the Lahori dialect (the language of institutions working in Lahore and most Punjabi language activities) but included those in Siraiki, such as Musarrat Kalonchvi's *Vaddian da Adar* (1986), too. This was in keeping with the policy of the Punjabi Adabi Board, which considers Siraiki only a dialect of Punjabi and not a separate language, and agrees to promote its teaching in this capacity. It is also because of this policy that the Punjabi activists have never opposed the teaching of Siraiki literature.

The demand for teaching Punjabi took three forms in the 1990s. First, there was the old demand that it should be made the medium of instruction at the primary level. Secondly, there was the demand that serious efforts should be made for teaching it in schools where it was an option. Thirdly, that the masters courses should be comprehensive and not propagandist i.e that they should not exclude the literature of the Sikhs or anti-establishment Pakistanis. Eminent figures like Hanif Ramey, chief minister of the Punjab in the PPP government, launched a campaign for introducing Punjabi at the primary level in November 1991 at Pakpattan, for symbolic effect, from the shrine of the sufi saint and first poet of Punjabi, Baba Fariduddin Masood Ganj Shakar (*Frontier Post* 25 November 1991). He also announced the creation of yet another organization, Punjab Eka (Punjabi union), to work towards this aim but, like all the other such organizations, its efforts proved futile.

Those who demanded more serious efforts in teaching it pointed out from various fora, including Punjabi publications like *Sajjan, Maan Boli* etc, that schools did not encourage students to take Punjabi; Punjabi textbooks were not available; teachers were not available and so on. State functionaries, like Zulfiqar Khosa, the Minister of Education of the Punjab in 1990 (the first tenure of Benazir Bhutto) reiterated the old excuse that, since Punjabi was divided into dialects, it could not be used as a medium of instruction at all (*Sajjan* 27 April 1990).

Increase in the Teaching of Punjabi

Although government policy towards the teaching of Punjabi did not change significantly, it had to accommodate itself to the presence of an increasing number of graduates in the language which the Punjab University was turning out every year. They had to be absorbed somewhere and generally it was college and school teaching they aimed at. However, very few schools and colleges offered Punjabi. It was, after all, a ghettoizing language with little prestige in society. It was not useful for procuring jobs either. Thus all private schools eschewed it altogether. As for the state run Urdu medium schools in the Punjab, they too refused to hire teachers though here and there, because of the personal efforts of one person or the other, teachers were hired and the subject was introduced. It appears that the government did not spend much money on hiring teachers in schools and lecturers in colleges to teach Punjabi. The *Lahran* of

November 1987 gives the insignificant figure of only 7 lecturers in the whole province. Other people give similarly depressing figures (see Milr 1989a who claims that in Lahore there were 6 vacancies for Punjabi; 115 for English, 85 for Urdu, 9 for Persian and 6 for Arabic), and laments that the new graduates (with M.A in Punjabi) were jobless (1989b). The regular students in the department were around 40 during the eighties but since Punjab University allows candidates to take the examination privately (that is, without attending classes), many students obtain the M.A degree in it. They can even obtain the degree only after having acquired another, more instrumentally useful one, but even so quite a large number of M.A in Punjabi degree holders do enter the extremely limited job market of Punjabi teaching as several articles point out (see the editorials of *Sajjan* 25 May 1989 and 14 March 1969). The Punjabi activists often claim that a large number of students were keen to study Punjabi (Milr 1989b) but the sad truth is that, given the lack of prestige and jobs, students take Punjabi as a 'soft' option. Indeed, the high percentage of students who pass in Punjabi at all levels (Appendix 1), and even take Punjabi in the civil service examination without having studied it before (Appendix 2), prove that it is not a difficult subject. Indeed, there are reports that examination papers at some levels are so easy as to ensure that everybody passes. Thus the M.A in Punjabi is often seem as being of lower academic standard than other M.As.

The charge of Punjabi being a 'soft' option is resented and indignantly refuted by some supporters of the subject. In formal interviews Punjabi activists claim that students are denied Punjabi and are keen to study it. Informal conversations with students and teachers, however, reveal that Punjabi is taken as an easy option. Such kinds of revelations are given only in confidence but sometimes they are given in formal interviews too. For instance, the monthly Punjabi *Likhari* (January 1997) interviewed several lecturers in Punjabi in government colleges and it emerged from the interviews that these lecturers knew that students were attracted to Punjabi to get high marks. Out of six lecturers five conceded that the main attraction was the possibility of getting high marks. The sixth one, Ibad Nabael, said that although previously this was the main motivation, students had started taking genuine interest in Punjabi now because some studied it as an option in schools too (Nabael 1997: 63). Almost everybody had some complaint against the syllabi. In a penetrating essay Shafqat Tanwir Mirza has pointed out that Punjabi textbooks excluded the best known writers such as Asaf Khan, Abdul Majid Bhatti, Shahbaz Malik, Afzal Ahsan Randhawa, Saleem Khan Bimmi and so on. Instead, they had included Ataul Haq Qasmi and Safraz Zahida whose contribution was very little (Mirza 1995 b) (also see another critical article on the Text Book Board by Mirza in *The Nation* 20 October 1996). In interviews with me, Najam Husain Syed, Asaf Khan and Khalid Humayun, all connected with the teaching of Punjabi at the highest level, said that the standard of the M.A was below that of the M.A of other languages in Pakistan and also below the standard of the M.A in Punjabi in India (Syed. Int.; Khan. Asif Int.; and Humayun. Int. 1999).

In 1994 there was again a spurt of activity in favour of teaching Punjabi. A number of organizations and individuals issued statements in favour of it and 125 members of the Punjab Assembly signed a resolution for the teaching of Punjabi in the provincial assembly. Fakhar Zaman, in charge of the Cultural Wing of the PPP, addressed a forum organized by the Urdu daily *Jang* in which a number of well known Punjabi intellectuals also spoke (Shafqat Tanwir Mirza, Abdul Rashid Bhatti, Afzal Ahsan Randhawa, Akhtar Husain Akhtar, Abdul Ghani Shah among them). He promised much but no major change took place (*Jang* 17 Jan 1994). Arif Nikai, Chief Minister of the Punjab, set up a committee for the promotion of Punjabi language and culture with a budget of 50 million rupees. An important aspect of promotion was making Punjabi compulsory not just in state run Urdu schools but even in English-medium schools which were mostly in private hands. Moreover, at the primary level, it would be a medium of instruction (*Pakistan Times* 20 June 1996). But all these ambitious intentions came to nothing and before long Benazir's PPP government, of which Nikai was a member, was thrown out.

In the late nineties the movement for teaching Punjabi became weaker. Either for this reason, or for some other, at least one Punjabi organization adopted angry, even chauvinistic, tones while advocating the age-old demands about promoting Punjabi. This was Lok Seva Pakistan of which Nazeer Kahut, who was at daggers drawn against the Mohajirs having lived and observed the militancy of their political party, the MQM, at Karachi, was the leader. In one of his press conferences he said that if 'Punjabi was not taught at the primary level, Pakistan would break up' and that Pakistani Punjabi children should be allowed to go to the Indian Punjab to get educated in their mother-tongue (Nazeer 1994: 15).

However, as mentioned earlier, for utilitarian and historical reasons, the Punjabi middle class is not keen to teach Punjabi to its children. A survey carried out by the U.S Aid on primary education in 1986 revealed that about 65 per cent of the interviewees in the Punjab were against the teaching of Punjabi even in the first three classes of school. Even this number might be high because 'the Siraiki speaking sections wanted it taught and/or used all day' because language identity is stronger there (Jones *et. al* 1986: 38). It seems that this attitude towards Punjabi has not changed. While talking informally to parents, teachers and students during the field work for this study, I found that it was only rarely that anybody wanted to study Punjabi or be taught other subjects in it. In a survey of the opinions of students of matriculation (that is, aged 15 years), very few Punjabi students demanded that Punjabi should be used as a medium of instruction or even be taught as a subject. The following figures were obtained in this survey of 1407 students:

Questions	Madrassas (N=131)	Punjabi-speakers (N=372)	Urdu-medium (N=520)	Elitist (N=97)	English-medium Cadet Colleges (N=86)	Ordinary (N=119)
Q-2 What should be the medium of instruction in schools?	Nil	Nil (with English (0.27)	0.22	02.06	Nil	01.04
Q-3(a) Desired as the only language to be taught as a subject?	0.76	0.27	0.22	Nil	Nil	Nil
Q-3(b) Desired to be taught in addition to other languages?	06.87	13.45	12.55	06.18	03.49	01.04
*Q-6 Do you think jobs in your province should be available in (a) English (b) Urdu (c) the mother tongue of the majority of the people in your province (d) any other language , please specify?	04.58	16.94	0.22	06.19	02.33 (with Urdu and English)	Nil

*Students who have ticked merely 'the language of the majority the people' have not been included here. A more clear indicator is the number of Punjabi-speakers who want their language for this domain.

Source: Survey carried out by the author in 1999-2000. Question 3, which has been broken into two parts here is as follows in the questionnaire: Q-3 : Which language or languages out of the following should be taught in schools (you can tick more than one language if you wish): (a) English_____ (b) Urdu_____(c) Arabic_____(d) Persian_____(e) Pashto_____(f) Sindhi_____ (g) Baluchi_____(h) Brahvi_____(i) Punjabi_____ (j) Any other (name it)_____
All figures, except those in brackets, are percentages.

However, in response to Q.4 Should your Mother Tongue be used as Medium of Instruction in schools (if it is not being used)? Yes__ No__. 40.32 per cent students answered 'Yes'; 58.33 per cent said 'No' and 1.34 per cent did not respond at all. This question, however, always elicits a more 'ethnic' response than other questions of a similar nature where students appear to bring pragmatic and practical factors into consideration not only for themselves but for other students as well. This is probably because people evaluate language according to their position in the power index (who uses them and where and whether they lead to powerful positions in society).

Several Punjabi publications, such as the monthly *Ravel*, kept reporting that a movement for teaching Punjabi was going on. A number of enthusiasts did

promise books for students and teachers were demanded (several issues of *Ravel* in 1991-92). The *Maan Boli Parhao* movement held workshops (13 Oct 1991 at Gujar Khan reported in *Ravel* November 1991). The movement got more momentum in 1994 but nothing substantial came about. Punjabi publications pounced upon every little event, for example a school's headmaster starting classes in Punjabi, a teacher reporting success and so on, but no major breakthrough came about.

Informal Learning of Punjabi

This account of Punjabi activists' failure appears to suggest that literacy in Punjabi must be almost non-existent. However, there is a considerable body of the public, ordinary people and not only activists, who read chapbooks in Punjabi. Among other people, the Punjabi scholar and activist Asif Khan told me that his mother knew a number of Punjabi poems which she would read out to him (Khan 1998: 51 and Int. 1999). Punjabi is also the informal medium of instruction in the rural schools of the Punjab. According to Ahmed Saleem, for instance, he was taught in Punjabi at the primary level in the fifties and even now the teaching at that level is actually in Punjabi though the textbooks are in Urdu. Some madrassas also reported that they used in Punjabi to explain difficult concepts to younger students. In the cities, however, Urdu is mostly used even for teaching though here too Punjabi sometimes takes over as the language of explanation (Saleem. Int. 1999). Books containing stories in verse and prose as well as other matters of popular interest are still available in the older, inner city bazaars of the cities of Punjab. As mentioned earlier, Hanaway and Nasir (1996) have listed hundreds of such chapbooks and the present author has read many of them. As in the case of Pashto, they are of three major kinds: religious; romantic and utilitarian. The religious ones generally have the same themes and even the same titles as their predecessors mentioned earlier (*Nur Nama, Jang Nama, Lahad Nama* etc). The romances are about the mythical lovers such as Laila Majnun, Mirza Sahiban, Heer Ranjha, Sassi Punnun etc. but they are much smaller than the classical books available in Punjabi and other languages. They are in simple Punjabi verse and do not exceed sixty or so pages. There are also stories about princes and princesses from exotic countries in the *Alf Laila*, fairytale, tradition. The utilitarian books, again as in the case of Pashto, are about magic, astrology, sexology, medicine and more mundane matters such as letter writing. Almost all the myths of Pashto books, whether they are about the qualities of plants, medicines, women or about invoking the supernatural – are also part of these books. This is not surprising since the pre-modern, magical worldview of the Pashto books is also one which the common people of the Punjab share even now.

Apart from chapbooks, serious literature in Punjabi is also read by a number of people though it is not possible to determine their numbers. According to Ahmed Saleem, he met many students and lecturers who had taught themselves Gurmukhi. Moreover, private study circles such as the one organized by Sarwat

Mohiuddin in Islamabad, teach Punjabi classical literature and the kind of language necessary for understanding it. Visitors sometimes bring books in Gurmukhi from the Indian Punjab and they are passed around among the cognoscenti (Saleem. Int. 1999).

Thus, while Punjabi is not taught, it is still learned both at the elitist level by language activists and at the popular one by ordinary people who still remain comfortable in the pre-modern worldview of popular texts which they read for pleasure.

Notes

1. However, Punjabi was not discouraged by some British officers in the Sikh regiments as the following report indicates:

   > With an *esprit de corps* that does him honour, he [the Commanding Officer] desires to have his men animated with the old warlike spirit of Sikhs, and fancies that the national feeling can best be preserved, by their being educated in their own familiar tongue (Edn.P 1864: 69).

Captain Fuller, the Director of Public Instruction who wrote the above report, was not otherwise in favour of teaching Punjabi, which he considered 'a barbarous dialect'. However, he, and other British officers, felt that the creation of in-group, or nationalistic, feeling in the army under British command would help in using sections of the army against Indians of other nationalities while teaching it to all could set them against the British themselves. In any case by 1858, the British were sure of the loyalty of Punjabi soldiers and the reasons for not teaching Punjabi do not appear to be fear of consolidation and revolt.

2. Incidentally, Aurangzeb is reported to have said in his harangue to his tutor:

   > Can we repeat our prayers, or acquire a knowledge of law and of the sciences, only through the medium of Arabic? May not our devotions be offered up as acceptably, and solid information communicated as easily, in our mother tongue? (Bernier 1826: 178). No answer is given by any historian to this question but Imam Abu Hanifa, founder of the Hanfi school of Islamic jurisprudence said that languages other than Arabic, such as Persian, could be used for prayers. The *Ain ul Hidaya* which records this opinion also adds that Imam Hanifa eventually agreed with the other scholars of law and that the overwhelming consensus now is that prayers may only be said in Arabic (Ali c. 12C: 349).

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Centre - Periphery tensions in a globalising world: The case of India and the Punjab

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Almost all material on the Punjab's relationship with the Punjabi Diaspora seems to focus on questions of identity and changing identity rather than on relations between the Diaspora and their state of origin. To the International Relations scholar the Punjab and its Diaspora has, to date, primarily evoked images of a tired Delhi government dealing with illegal external funds emanating from the Diaspora for an independent Khalistan. But that was before the buzzword Globalisation hit the Political Science headlines. Globalisation, it is suggested, has changed relationships between states and their regions, between states and their Diasporas. There are two issues here, which in the case of India and specifically the Punjab have to be combined: the relationship between the centre and the periphery and the relationship between the periphery and the Diaspora -- and how globalisation has affected both issues.

During the last 20 odd years the globe has progressively become a smaller place. Technology and economic development are at the basis of the new phenomenon called globalisation. Not all countries followed this path at the same time, especially India, which was largely a closed economy for the first 45 years after independence. Globalisation had become a buzzword, but India remained longer than others, untouched by the economic, political and social consequences of the movement.

A shift in Indian economic policy was therefore largely overdue especially because of the global changes of the early 1990s. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent demise of the Soviet Union the only alternative economic model to the capitalist market system had been removed. The traditional Indian stand of non-alignment in international affairs became obsolete. In fact the world had broken up into a multitude of facets where trade blocks of different sorts were emerging as the dominant grouping. Regionalism determined what block one was a part of and South Asia was left high and dry with its regional problems whilst others co-operated to further economic welfare and relations. The subcontinental interrelations have been filled with strife: wars and civil wars have made the region look unsafe to outside investors. Compared to India, the South East Asian region and China who were politically more stable, looked (until recently) far more favourable for investment, and funds have been flowing to that region to the detriment of India and the rest of the subcontinent.

The Indian economic reforms were the start of the globalisation process on the subcontinent. One could also argue that the reforms were a direct result of

the globalisation process across the rest of the globe, forcing India to follow suit. Slowly but surely large multinational companies came and conquered the Indian market. By the mid-nineties McDonalds and the like were prominent in all urban areas.

Yet despite India's opening up to the wider world, one specific group was kept at bay: the Indian Diaspora. India had developed a curious way of dealing with its Diaspora – unlike any other nation, post independence India has maintained that those Indians who leave their country of origin forfeited their rights as Indians and have to integrate into their host societies. Reality though has shown that the Indian Diaspora generally maintains a distinct and separate nature from the host society and maintains regional and family based ties with the place of their origin despite what India's policies might dictate.

The paper will first give some background as to why India developed such a policy of disinterest and disinvolvement which lies at the base of low NRI investment today. It will then go on to analyse the position of the regions, looking at the Punjab and how individual states have tried to turn central policy around to their own advantage in the light of today's globalisation debate.

In this paper the term NRIs (Non Resident Indians) will include all people of Indian origin who left in the pre-independence period, and all non resident Indians, those who have retained their Indian passports and those who have adopted the nationality of their host country. When referring to NRI investments, primarily Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) is referred to and not remittances sent back home to families or savings put into special bank accounts.

Historical Background

Before the Second World War India maintained a nationalist policy. The government of India recognised that it bore responsibility for its overseas' population, and used its voice in all forums to propagate this claim. It also recognised the Diaspora as being part of the nationalist movement, which was to rid India of colonialism. To this end the Government of India sent deputations to different parts of the Empire to report on particular problems concerning the Indian Diaspora. As a result it is interesting to note that there is a significant shift in policy at the time of independence.

The Nehruvian doctrine

The Nehruvian doctrine adopted in 1947 not only excluded the issue of expatriate Indians totally from Indian foreign and domestic policy formulation, but actively encouraged the Diaspora to integrate into their host societies. The exclusion of a policy towards expatriate Indians was facilitated by India's independent and closed model of economic development, which actively discriminated against outside involvement.

This policy developed because at independence India had to take some ideological and political stands. As far as imperialism was concerned, India's

new government was committed to the permanent withdrawal of colonial rule from Africa and all other colonised nations. Nehru decided to actively support the struggle against the British in East Africa despite the interests of some Indian entrepreneurs in the region.

In the post-war era the world was reorganising itself into power blocks, based on politico-economic systems and beliefs. Nehru realised that any form of alignment would be detrimental to India and a third way was devised. He dreamt of combining economic mobilisation with political conciliation, a Soviet style economy with western policy.[1] Seeing India, as the model for all decolonising nations, Nehru wanted a 'third world block' to follow certain moral principles based on anti-imperialism and non-dependency, and India had to go ahead with the good example. This also meant making friends with the countries fighting off the imperial system, and those who had already gained independence. A strong line on the fate of a small Indian minority in those countries, who had left India voluntarily to make a better life for themselves, would have been counterproductive for India. India soon spread the message that Indians who had left their country of origin to seek fortune abroad had to integrate with the local population, support their struggle and even put the indigenous peoples' needs first. According to Nehru they had come to be economically successful as guests in these countries, now they owed their hosts support in their new political path.

The Nehruvian policy was maintained throughout the first 45 years following independence. As a result of this policy India lost out in her development, as financial contributions from the Diaspora were discouraged.

The Changes Since 1991

The new Diaspora

Over the years the profile of the Diaspora changed. Whilst the original Diaspora was a direct product of the imperial era, the 1960s and 1970s brought about a new labour exodus, this time to the Middle East and Gulf countries. The salaries promised to these new migrants were higher than back home and would allow for substantial savings. These emigrants differed from previous expatriate Indians in one fundamental way: their expatriation was to be temporary. But there has also been permanent emigration in the form of the 'brain drain' where young doctors, scientists, lawyers and computer specialists left India for the US, Canada or Australia to have a better life. There again the gain was phenomenal: huge salaries, good education and health care for the families and after a few years possibly the passport of the chosen place.

All these 'new' categories of NRIs made substantial money and maintained informal family ties with their region of origin. Throughout its economic development in the 1970s and 1980s India tried to make some room for the remittances coming from the Gulf, but failed to open up the economy for any serious NRI investment which went beyond the family/state border. The government's economic mismanagement was so great that in the late 1980s the

'hot money' coming from the Gulf was being withdrawn, leaving India with a foreign exchange crisis without precedence. Yet despite the profile of the Diaspora having changed significantly, the Indian policy was still largely inadequate.

The economic crisis in 1991

The government led by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and his Finance Minister, the economist Dr. Manmohan Singh, embarked on immediate and extensive reforms. The government's first priority was to stop the slide and restore India's credibility both domestically and internationally. To achieve these, immediate measures to avert default in international payments and restore the macro economic balance had to be taken.

External capital was now allowed into 34 major areas from which non-Indian capital had previously been excluded, for example, in telecom, power and oil exploration. Foreign investors could now acquire majority share holding in Indian companies. The private sector was now allowed to enter some areas which had remained reserved exclusively for the public sector, such as road building and aviation; tariffs were slashed (from 300 percent in 1991 to 50 percent in 1995) and the rupee was made convertible on the trade account.[2] The government risked two devaluations of the rupee so that India would integrate more easily into the world economy.

Part and parcel of the reforms was the reduction of bureaucratic processes, which had taken so much time and energy for any industry that wanted to expand, or any investment to be approved.

The NRI option

There were special concessions for the NRIs to invest their wealth into the Indian industry, set up new industrial ventures or simply deposit foreign currency on Indian bank accounts. They were mainly:
- 100 percent investment into 34 high priority industries;
- Real estate development (non repatriable)
- Portfolio limit up from 5 percent to 24 percent
- Technical collaborations allowed without RBI approval
- Special development bonds
- Property laws changed
- Non declaration of foreign currency held abroad upon return

But a great deal of bureaucracy remained in the system and although this was a step in the right direction, investment procedures had not really been simplified. For NRIs who would have wanted to bring in their savings and invest into industry or buy property, the fact that non-repatriation was still the norm on many investments served as a major disincentive.

This ambivalent policy was based on the argument that 'national economic sovereignty' was threatened by liberalisation that opened India to the world.

These have been the standard arguments of the political left and the Hindu nationalists.[3] They argued that the reforms only touched a fraction of the Indian population and that the masses had nothing to gain but everything to lose. Indian industrialists complained of the reforms, as it took away the protectionism they had become used to and exposed their weakness to competition. The outside investor, and that included the NRI, was still the economic predator who wanted to take advantage of the Indian economy for his own benefit. He was relying too much on imported machinery, rather than using the indigenous options and did not reinvest the profits made within the country, but took it all abroad. The resulting reality was that the rhetoric of change did not translate into action.

The BJP Government

Since 1997 there has been a new government in power led by the BJP party. However, it is still a coalition government largely reliant on smaller parties of the extreme right and regional parties. As a result of the nature of the alliance, any kind of policy takes a very long time to push through since the agreement of many different parties is needed.

The reform process has continued, albeit at a very slow rate. According to government's own publications:

> While foreign investment is welcomed in wide-ranging activities, simultaneous measures have been introduced in the form of dividend balancing, foreign exchange neutrality, foreign equity cap, etc. based on sectoral sensitivities with a view to providing a level playing field to the domestic industry and also protect national interest.[4]

As a result, FDI has flown into India but has fluctuated depending on political stability and the stability of the Rupee. NRI investments have remained a small percentage of FDI, hovering between 8 percent and 15 percent over the 9 years following the reforms.

The NRI Relationship: The Last Investors in India

The NRI demands included requests for the reforms to be seen through so that investment was made not only possible but also efficient. They also include better terms and conditions for investment, streamlining the procedures so that confusion about how to invest was reduced;[5] the bureaucracy to be reduced; [6] FERA to be reviewed; the RBI to be given full autonomy to formulate interest, monetary and exchange rate policies; all quantitative restrictions on imports to be abolished and India to join GATT.[7]

The question of dual nationality was probably the most contentious one. The request was given even more emphasis with the opening up of the Indian economy and the calls to the NRI community to invest in India. The NRIs felt that given the right to Indian citizenship would make investing in India easier,

as under NRI regulations they were not allowed to remain in the country for longer than 180 days at a time.

When parliamentary representation had been suggested at a Lok Sabha debate there was the following reaction:

> ... If they are given the right of getting elected here and are given the citizenship the culture of this country will be changed. Everywhere we will hear pop music and see peep shows. God knows what else will be seen here. We will be finished and they will dominate. We will not be able to stop that situation.[8]

The Indian Attitude

There is evidence to show that the Indian perception of the NRI is at the base of the indifferent, sometimes difficult relationship between the Diaspora and the government. In effect, all those who left India did so for economic gain, to live a better life elsewhere. As a result the relationship is based on a considerable level of mistrust.

In ancient old tradition an Indian who went overseas lost his caste and with it his place in society. This was ancient Hinduism's way of protecting Indian society from change. There is still a kind of feeling of superiority of those who were born and raised in India as opposed to those who were not.[9] It is a question of perception.

Modern Indians still look at the Indian Diaspora as some sort of twisted outcasts. Their money is welcome but they are not. They are essentially not Indian anymore; corrupted by the civilisation they have chosen to settle in. In addition there is also a feeling that when Indians went abroad they exploited the local people there in order to make money; once unwanted in the host country they seek to come back to India.[10] This attitude is especially common when one deals with parts of the Diaspora which had to undergo hardships in times of crisis such as the Ugandan and Fijian Asians.

Of course there are Indians who have realised that the stereotypes of the low caste expatriate who left his mother country for material gain is not accurate More often than not they include those middle class Indians who have sent their children abroad to make a better life for themselves. But they are few in absolute numbers. It is not in the consciousness or perception of most ordinary Indians that the Diaspora has retained their cultural roots and traditions despite the odds.

Globalisation: What Does it Mean for India and has it made a Difference?

Today the social science scene is dominated by the term globalisation. True radicals argue that globalisation is not only real, but a new phenomenon the effects of which can be felt everywhere. As the global market place has developed, state sovereignty has been reduced and politicians have lost many of their options to influence events.

What effect has the social science buzzword of the 90s had on India? For one there was the opening up of the economy in 1991. But were the economic reforms a result of globalisation forces taking over the other parts of the globe, in effect pushing India to open up, or were they simply the start of the globalisation process for India? This is a little bit like the chicken and egg question, since all these processes are interrelated. What is sure however is that with the 1991 economic reforms India joined the global market place where economic actors were competing with political ones for the realms of power. In 1991 Finance Minister Dr.Manmohan Singh outlined what he thought to be the way ahead for India:

> Self-reliance in today's world of integrated global markets cannot be achieved merely by reducing import dependence and insulating the economy from the world. Following that path will only lead to more import controls and promote inefficiency and corruption. It will perpetuate an environment in which the Indian entrepreneurs will not have the flexibility they need to compete with other developing countries in world markets. The resulting inability to export will actually make us more, rather than less dependent on the outside world. Our vision of a self-reliant economy has to be of an economy which can meet all its import requirements through exports, without undue dependence on artificial external props such as foreign aid.[11]

It was then that India entered the era of globalisation. Multi-national corporations (MNCs) brought with them western style operating systems and institutions. The IT industry especially started to boom. What impact was there on boundaries and institutions of Indian regional and national politics?

Giddens argues that globalisation cannot only be seen in economic terms but is also a set of processes affecting culture and politics by creating pressures for local autonomy, reviving local cultural identity and weakening the hold of national institutions. According to Giddens 'globalising forces mean that national economic policy can't be as effective as it once was and nations have to rethink their identities.'[12] For India this has meant that the Nehruvian state structure created at independence has been challenged in economic and political terms. Since 1991 the eternal Congress party, in power for almost 40 years has had to relinquish power to coalition governments put together in part by regional parties. This has had wide ranging consequences for policy making at the centre. The concept of *Swadeshi* or economic self-reliance has been replaced by an active economic foreign policy in which individual states leave their marks.

Effectively, this means that the individual states of the federal structure that is India have started to discover the concept of power vis-à-vis the central government. While this might have helped India's economic development it has certainly created strains at the political level where potential fragmentation of individual states could in the future become contentious issues. One could argue that globalisation has also led to a crisis of expectations and accountability

where governments lose control over national economies. In India is has traditionally been the role of the state to be a manager of the national economy, giving the central government the legitimacy it lacked through cultural and ethnic cohesion. The state in India has consequently been a strong intervener in and regulator of the national economy. One of the reasons that the new economic policy advocating economic openness has not been pushed as far as expected is because less intervention from the centre could weaken the forces of national unity, which in turn would undermine the economic power of the central state.[13] While the central government has stalled in the process of economic reforms, various states, including Kerala, Maharashrtra, Gujerat and the Punjab have tried independently to mobilize funds and investments from the Indian Diaspora originating from those regions. Though still bound by the central directives of the state bank and the government they are making an independent effort for the economic development of their region.

The process of globalisation has also led to the reduction of geographical, spatial and temporal factors as constraints to the developed society. This is a direct consequence of the advance of information and communication technology. For India this was particularly important, since information technology has been the one growing industry in the last 10 years. India could not be left unaffected by a process which became linked to computers and the Internet, since it is the largest exporters of software engineers and technologists. Although telephones, computers and Internet connections might not be present in every household, they are available for the public at large in all urban areas in public market places. This again has meant the readjustment of societal thought and action away from the national towards international and global spheres.

The process of Globalisation has also led to the creation of supranational economic and transnational political and social organisations. Given this trend it would be quite normal to argue that non-state actors such as the Indian Diaspora would play a significant role in India's development. Strangely enough this has not been the case at all - India, as seen above had developed an unusual relationship with the NRIs.

The Regions, The Diaspora and Globalisation

India's major states have different political histories and contemporary patterns of politics, yet contained as they are within the framework of India's federal democracy they also have important features in common.

For all the overwhelming economic power wielded by the centre in India's form of federalism, and the interventions of bodies such as the Planning Commission or the Finance Commission, which advise on the allocation of public sector resources between the central government and the states, it 'appears evident that there are inherent political-economic constraints on the centre's ability to impart significant progressiveness to its investment or transfers to backward states'.[14] The interdependence of levels of the state domestic product and their rates of growth, and levels and rates of growth of state developmental expenditure remains strong, notwithstanding the efforts of

the central government to bring about greater inter-state equity alongside fiscal discipline:

> Contrary to the predictions of neo-classical growth theory... (there are)... widening interstate disparities... mainly caused by the allocation of private investments which, in turn, has been influenced by the inequitable spread of infrastructure. The inequitable nature of public expenditure spread across states is attributed to the inability of the intergovernmental transfer mechanism to adequately offset the fiscal disabilities of the poorer states as well as (the) regressive nature of the invisible interstate transfers.[15]

Since 1991 various State governments in India have announced progressive new industrial policies to bring their respective States on top of the industrial map of the country. It is in fact essential that for the economic reforms in India to succeed, the spirit of liberalisation have to percolate down to the state levels. It is also essential that this happen at a fairly evenly distributed level. The State government's role is crucial for the reforms to achieve the best results. As far as keeping pace with the economic reforms is concerned, some States have responded far more quickly to attract investment in new industries than others. Regional imbalances are very likely to get aggravated because of the varying attitudes of the leadership in the States. The incentives offered by different State governments for NRIs are more or less similar. However the difference lies in the implementation of economic reform policies by the different States. While some State governments are serious in attracting more NRI investments by providing better services and removing procedural hassles certain other State Governments provide lip service only. While highly developed States with good infrastructure facilities and positive Government attitudes have attracted NRI investments, others, which are less serious about economic reforms, have obtained a paltry sum of NRI investments.

The concentration of the approvals of NRI investment has been high in the industrialised States of the country, namely Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Delhi. States such as Bihar or Himachal Pradesh have received lesser amounts. In general one can say that NRI investment has been higher in Western and Southern India than in the North or in the East. This is consonance with the industrial development of these regions. It is also linked to two other variables: first and foremost the tradition of expatriation from the individual state (which in the case of Kerala and the Punjab is very high), where these emigrants went to (South East Asia and Africa as opposed to the US or the UK) and the political stability which almost automatically excludes the North East or Jammu and Kashmir. In States such as Maharashtra and Gujarat NRI investment is further encouraged by an already existing industrial base which in turn also attracts funds from expatriates from other Indian States.

This trend, if further continued, would create more regional disparities among the regions and the States, and the policy of balanced regional growth

might be defeated. It also poses an interesting question whether the apparent divergences could be explained in terms of the differences in the individual political regimes of the various states.

The Punjab: a breakaway state, new reasons because of economic prosperity?

The Punjab has realised that more autonomy is needed at the state level to increase the level of investments and as a result the Akali government has publicly stated that unless the centre changed its ways there were dangers of India's structure crumbling:

> Mr Balian pointed out that almost every state was demanding more rights. Some states were of the view that the Centre should retain only certain basic functions: that of defence, external affairs, finance and communications. All other departments should be shifted to the states.[16]

The Punjab has a very long tradition of emigration to all parts of the globe, but mainly to the richer, western world such as Britain, Canada, the US and Australia. Primarily a rural economy, the Punjab still maintained an excellent track record compared to other Indian states with respect to infrastructure including transport, electricity and water supply. This was offset by the state being landlocked and in the India-Pakistan border region. The Punjabi Diaspora, largely of rural descent continued to maintain links with their villages by sending remittances to their families. These remittances had a major economic and social impact on the receiving areas.[17] Further Diaspora-state ties were developed through the Khalistan separatist movement in the early to late 1980s. In fact in the early part of the 1990s the long history of terrorism fuelled by the Khalistan movement made Punjab a less attractive place for NRI investment.

With the advent of the Akali led coalition government a new industrial policy was launched in spring 1996 to attract foreign investment from all sources. The incentives offered sought to attract fresh investment to further boost the growth of industry in the state; avoid multiplicity of incentives so that they would be easy to interpret and administer; offset the locational disadvantages of the State and create more jobs through increased investment in the industrial sector.[18] The promotion of NRI investments included the setting up of an exclusive Focal Point in Mohali for NRI entrepreneurs; the reservation of industrial plots for allotment in all Focal Points and Industrial Estates in the State; the giving of preference to NRI entrepreneurs by State Industrial Development and other promotional Corporations while finalising proposals for joint ventures/ assisted sector projects; and the creation of a special cell in the Udyog Sahayak, Directorate of Industries, to provide a single window facility and to ensure time bound clearance to all investment proposals received from NRIs.[19] The state government also brought out its own guide for NRI investment emphasising in its introduction that the 'potential of NRI contribution to India's economic and technological development is immense and remains untapped.' Rather than seeing the NRIs as a whole group the pamphlet

addresses NRIs originally from the Punjab and recognises that expatriate Punjabis have already done a lot by donating funds for schools, hospitals, community projects, temples and Gurudwaras. 'Punjabis are the unique NRIs who cherish the memory of their motherland and remain always attached'.[20] The guide explains the various investment incentives which include amongst others a subsidy of 30 percent (up to Rs.50 lakh) of fixed capital investment in border districts, and 20 percent in the rest of the state. The other investment opportunities for NRIs are the same as in other states, yet clearly redescribed in this pamphlet under the headings of repatriable and non repatraible investments. Furthermore, the documentation provides contact addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the relevant people and sections to help any NRI interested in investing in the State. There is also the NRI Sabha Punjab, an organisation primarily concerned with NRI matters such as protecting their rights with respect to property, advancing NRI interest with the State and Central Governments, help NRIs invest in the Punjab and providing a forum for discussion and co-operation.[21] When one searches for individual state websites the ones on the Punjab surely predominate. Many of them address queries for the NRI investor.

In addition the last few years have seen a slow but steady increase of IT technology taking a foothold in the state. The Earth Station and information Technology Park at Mohali is being developed by the Punjab State Electronics Development and Production Corporation (ECP). The main features included in this project are the development of a Software Technology Park, Hardware Technology Park, and Institution of Information Technology and an allotment for the setting up of an electronics industry. Similar parks have been set up at Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune, Bhubaneshwar and Noida and have proved very successful.

Punjab rates its strengths as having a hard-working population, a visionary and responsive administration, the highest per capita income in India (high purchasing power), abundant and cheap power and water supply, harmonious industrial relations, a strong infrastructure, a strong agriculture and a well developed small and medium scale industrial base, a fully developed export base, well developed financial services with a stock exchange and an excellent quality of life.[22]

The above has shown that although the centre government has over the years of liberalisation not necessarily shown great interest in NRI involvement and NRI investments, some individual states, notably the Punjab have realised that here lies an untapped opportunity. At this stage the opportunity might not be fully taken advantage of, but over the last few years (since the new coalition government took charge in Chandigarh) the State government has got moving vis-à-vis potential NRI investments.

The list of foreign technical/financial collaboration cases approved by all sectors from August 1991-August 1999 for all NRIs gave the following data: total number of foreign collaboration: 966 worth a total of 755.498 lakh Rupees. 23 of these collaborations had been approved for the Punjab (worth only 6082 lakh Rupees) and 38 for Haryana (worth 22 806 lakh Rupees). Most of the

collaborations in the Punjab had been approved since 1997, but still the Punjab is listed as the 11th state for FDI according to the Indian Investment Centre. The states of Maharashtra, Gujerat, and the cities of Bangalore and Hyderabad have performed best with respect to attracting NRI direct investments. Although there is a clear shift towards attracting more foreign investment since 1997, the Punjab is still not doing quite as well as it could (compared to Haryana for example) A lot of that is due to the fact that Haryana attracts investment through industrial cities such as Gurgaon and Faridabad, where foreign investment procedures are simplified and streamlined. In the Punjab the technology park at Mohali has started to attract similar interest, but not at the same level as in other industrial centres.

The arguments highlighted in the earlier section of this paper on globalisation emphasised the fact that such development might lead to new and intensified tensions between the State government and the Centre as policies of liberalisation are not sufficient for the individual state, or as at a state level, the disparities between NRI inflows and other FDI become too great. This is a little similar what remittances did at the village level 20-25 years ago. The Punjab in particular has a history of secessionist movements based on religious differentiation. The process of globalisation may bring increased secessionist pressures on the government in Delhi as the centre looses control over aspects of state economic developments and policies. Already the present government is struggling with a coalition based primarily on regional parties advocating what is best for their state. As competition for FDI increases, there will be more strife between the regions and interstate sharing and equalisation will be reduced.

Conclusion

The effects of globalisation are to be seen in India in many ways. For one there was the opening up of the economy in 1991, the fast increase of information technology and communication increasing India's participation in the global market place. Globalisation has also affected the relationship between the State and the Diaspora. For one it has given several facets to this already complex relationship, involving not only the central government but also the state of origin in the triangular relationship of Diaspora- host country - home country. This paper has tried to show that Centre- States' attitudes vis-à-vis NRI investments differ substantially and that as a result there is increased tension between the centre and the periphery in India.

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Agricultural Economy of the Punjab at the Crossroads

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After attaining an exemplary growth in production, Punjab agriculture has reached at the cross-roads from where sustaining growth appears to be an arduous task. The margin of profit from the major crops has stabilized and in real terms is on the decline. The farm size is dwindling, resulting in the majority of farmers being pushed below the poverty line. Dairying as a subsidiary enterprise is increasingly burdened with uneconomical animal population which do not find alternative use. The lack of institutional credit and over-investment in agriculture has further aggravated the problem. The main hope lies in the fast suction of population from agriculture to secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy. The policy measures to increase the farm size, making agriculture export oriented, expansion of institutional credit to meet the requirements of farmers and integrated price and food subsidy programme are the most desired steps to ease the situation.

Punjab is one of the smallest states of India, having 5 million hectares which form only 1.53 per cent of geographical area, about 3.0 per cent of cultivated area and 4.2 per cent of the country's cropped area.[1] As much as 84% of the total geographical area of the state area is under cultivation, of which 94% is irrigated. Because of its outstanding contribution to the agricultural economy of India, the state has earned the status of 'Food Basket of the Country' and 'Granary of India'. The state also has the distinction of producing 1 per cent rice, 2 per cent wheat and 2 per cent cotton of the world. The state also produces 10% milk, 25% honey and 20% mushroom of the country.[2]

The major achievements in grain production were possible due to intensive use of agricultural inputs. The state consumes 10 per cent fertilizers (157.8 kg/ha), 60 per cent of total herbicides and 11 per cent of total pesticides used in India.[3] There is also a large scale of farm machinery in the Punjab. During 1998, the state had 3.65 lakh tractors, 1.45 lakh seed drills, 5.40 lakh sprayers, 3.25 lakh threshers, 7300 harvester-combines and 10.9 lakh tubewells.[4] Thus, the farm machinery alone accounts for 7000 crores of capital investment.[5]

After attaining an exemplary rise in production, Punjab agriculture is at a stage beyond which sustaining the growth rate is an arduous task. Being mainly an agricultural economy, the overall development of the state has slowed down. During

1993-94, the per capita income was Rs 4022/- annum which increased to Rs 4371 in 1996-97 showing a growth of 8.7% against a comparative figure of 17.51% for the country as a whole. The average annual growth rate in the state agriculture including livestock has declined from 5.44% during 6th plan to 3.0% in 8th plan which is projected to fall further to 2.38% in the 9th plan (Table 1). Thus, the Punjab farm economy has reached at a stage rendering the fate of large agricultural population in doldrums.

Table 1: Average Annual Compound Growth Rate in Punjab (%)

Sector	6th Plan 1980-81 to 1984-85	7th Plan 1985-86 to 1989-90	Annual Plans 1990-91to 1992-93	8th Plan 1993-94 to 1997-98	9th Plan (Tentative)
Agriculture (*Including livestock)*	5.44	5.29	3.00	3.00	2.38
Manu-facturing	8.22	9.58	7.23	9.92	9.51
Tertiary Sector	5.14	5.22	3.77	4.08	4.30
Overall Economy	5.23	5.98	3.59	4.81	4.96

Source: *Economic Survey of Punjab*, 1998-99 and background note of Department of Planning, Government of Punjab, 1998

There are numerous causes for the deteriorating economic conditions of the Punjab farmers, and only some of these are detailed here.

Declining Prosperity in Agriculture

Inspite of increase in prices of agricultural products, the input prices are also going up with almost the same speed. The crop productivity, on the other hand, has stabilized resulting in slower increase in monetary returns. The per hectare return over variable cost from wheat has gone up from Rs 1056 in 1970-71 to Rs 11855 in 1996-97 (see Table 2 for returns on major crops). The comparative figures in case of paddy have shown an increase from Rs 1919 in 1978-79 to Rs 11940 in 1996-97. The income from cotton crop has gone up from Rs 1075 in 1972-73 to Rs 9400 per

hectare in 1996-97, but the year to year fluctuations have been shown to be very high. The real income from wheat and cotton was quite attractive in 1991-92, but this has drastically gone down in the latter period.

A perusal of Table 2 would give a comprehensive scenario of changing economic returns from Punjab agriculture. The gross return from wheat over the last three decades has gone up by almost 10 times while the return over variable cost has escalated by about 11 times and the net return by 13 times.[6] But when net returns are deflated by the wholesale price index (WPI), it increased by just by 62 per cent over that of base year of 1970-71. The real profitability of rice crop has not been able to keep pace even with wheat crop and the net return deflated by WPI have been almost flattened ever since the introduction of this crop in the Punjab State in mid seventies, showing an increase of only 25% during the last 15 years. The third major crop, that is, cotton has been highly volatile in terms of inter-temporal profitability, mainly due to the absence of stable productivity, effective and remunerative price support and procurement policies. Therefore, in spite of much publicised gains of green revolution, the rise in the economic status of farmers, in real terms, is not all that impressive.

The paddy-wheat, the most dominant crop rotation in the state agriculture, thus promised an annual net return of Rs 9000 per hectare or return over variable cost of Rs 23800 per hectare in 1996-97 (Table 2). The per capita income at current prices in the Punjab State during 1996-97 was Rs 18213.[7] Taking the family size of 6, the average family income works out to Rs 1,09,300 per annum. To enjoy the economic status at par with an average Punjabi family, the farmers (owner-operator) should have 4.55 hectares of normal land.[8] In the existing set up with about 14 per cent leased in land and 10 per cent income derived from subsidiary farm occupations, particularly dairying, an average farmer is required to have an operational holding of 4.5 hectares.[9] Viewing it from the per capita income of India at current prices, which was Rs 10771/annum in 1996-97 and works out to about Rs 65000/- per family against which the farm size of 2.5 hectares of purely owner operated or 6.5 hectares of tenant cultivated operational holding under Punjab conditions is required.[10] On the basis of this and Table 3, it can be said that nearly 45% of farming population in Punjab are not enjoying the economic status even equivalent to an average family in India. The comparison made above refers to per capita income in Punjab versus per capita income in India. If the comparison is made between farming and non-farming population within Punjab, this indicates that the inter-sectoral disparity has been highly skewed against the farming sector.[11]

The cost of living is also increasing because of the fast increase in the general price index. In order to keep pace with the consumption trends in society, the farmers are having to spend beyond their capacity for which they have either to go into debt or to dispose of their assets, particularly land. As a consequence of decline

Table 2: PROFIT MARGINS FROM MAJOR CROPS IN PUNJAB (Rs/hectare)

Year	WHEAT CROP				RICE CROP				COTTON CROP			
	Gross Return	Return over operational cost	Net Return	Net return deflated**	Gross Return	Return over operational cost	Net Return	Net Return deflated**	Gross Return	Return over operational cost	Net Return	Net Return deflated**
1970-71	1982.53	1055.54	327.94	327.94								
1971-72	2219.14	1131.32	449.89	422.04								
1972-73	1844.93	871.77	194.39	152.70					1933.74	1074.74	397.78	342.32
1973-74	2860.01	1613.41	822.87	631.52					2521.05	1482.78	656.32	577.24
1974-75	3420.15	1881.79	751.50	466.48	2460.72	1919.97	-433.61	-247.92	2846.12	1451.74	568.65	325.13
1975-76	2733.94	1099.95	101.62	62.77					1968.36	546.75	-185.95	-107.55
1976-77	2831.41	1153.85	219.52	132.16								
1977-78	2855.72	1019.12	133.36	79.81								
1978-79	3399.05	1578.99	358.12	202.44	4263.50	1919.97	844.17	454.34				
1979-80	3540.38	1613.65	378.55	179.15					2753.35	1221.53	201.64	93.01
1980-81	3579.18	1399.50	139.71	60.27					3462.68	1534.69	376.83	146.46
1981-82	4682.78	2300.25	906.59	366.00	6605.49	2973.00	1131.60	402.28	4778.04	2665.31	1361.01	483.83
1982-83	5093.02	2552.83	864.94	315.21	7153.06	3509.83	1347.24	466.82	3553.69	1585.93	272.48	94.41
1983-84	5008.06	2362.19	465.49	163.10	7494.41	3425.71	1012.00	320.25	2900.84	718.41	-542.86	-171.79
1984-85	6114.51	3116.32	959.79	315.82	7521.40	3015.34	505.09	149.26	7005.03	4362.10	2477.60	732.15
1985-86	6769.54	3667.22	1381.70	426.58	7784.71	3594.51	1144.73	319.94	6701.02	3850.16	2007.35	561.03
1986-87	5716.40	2560.35	409.44	121.86	8884.55	4484.43	1494.34	396.59	6550.18	3224.83	1231.36	328.19
1987-88	7340.97	3940.98	1397.55	378.23	9608.14	4929.22	1760.32	434.22	12750.71	9124.25	6156.54	1633.90
1988-89	8262.96	4652.65	1576.75	412.01	9610.36	5107.30	1925.65	442.37	8181.78	4644.19	1667.36	411.29
1989-90	8886.78	5133.19	1895.25	560.23	10885.66	6181.60	2100.01	348.67	11727.58	7528.21	3525.90	809.99
1990-91	9441.05	5093.05	1408.62	291.40	11350.24	5622.61	1267.82	199.22	9536.94	4297.34	778.73	129.29
1991-92	12446.12	7607.89	3171.16	589.33	12922.08	7054.77	2531.28	378.65	20302.66	14242.69	7855.16	1234.31
1992-93	14498.19	8754.63	3552.67	559.30	16470.16	9854.73	3818.95	520.58	14517.34	7973.40	2691.09	402.56
1993-94	17667.54	11071.76	4118.17	571.33	19169.91	11374.37	4576.28	584.45	16619.18	9573.77	2756.54	375.76
1994-95	16477.86	9677.86	2879.83	387.65	18972.71	10603.13	3724.22	441.78	25690.22	16748.86	8379.19	1070.14
1995-96	16982.00	9966.00	2768.00	360.86	19203.00	10403.00	3403.00	379.50	22100.00	12600.00	3800.00	450.72
1996-97*	19055.00	11855.00	4255.00	531.88	21240.00	11940.00	4740.00	504.20	19600.00	9400.00	300.00	33.46

*Estimated Source: *Cost of cultivation of principal crops in India, Government of India*, 1996

** deflated by wholesale price index with 1970-71 as the base year.

in profitability in agriculture, the rental value of land has gone down causing further decline in income. The value of real estate, particularly farm land has also declined due to general economic depression. Therefore, it has become difficult for the farmers to repay the debt even by selling land.[12]

Declining Farm Size

Apart from the vast majority of farming population living below the minimum economic level, there is a trend of decline in farm size overtime due to increasing pressure of population on farms. The data presented in Table 3 clearly indicates a fast decline in the size of operational holdings in the Punjab. Nearly 46 per cent farms are of less than 2 hectares. As against 38.6 per cent of farms below 2 hectare in 1981, the number has gone up to 45.6 per cent in 1990-91. On the other hand, the percentage of medium and large farms has declined over this period.

Apparently, a farmer owing 2.5 hectare of land after toiling under unhygienic conditions and under high degree of risks, gets about Rs 5000/- per month, which is less than the monetary gains even of a freshly appointed clerk. Viewing it from the angle of poverty line, the farmers with less than one hectare of operational holding, having no supplementary source of income and constituting 26.5% of the farmers of the state are, by and large, worse off.[13]

Table 3: Size of Operational Holding in Punjab

Category	Farm Size	Per cent of farm holdings	
		1980-81	1990-91
Marginal	1 ha	19.2	26.5
Small	1 - 2 ha	19.4	19.1
Semi medium	2 - 4 ha	28.0	25.9
Medium	4 - 10 ha	26.2	23.4
Large	> 10ha	7.2	6.1

Source: *Statistical Abstract of Punjab*, 1985 and 1998

The following could be considered the contributory factors for the increasing pressure of population on land in the state:

a) No lower limit on size of holding.
b) Influx of population from other states.
c) Checks on the mobility of farming population to other states imposed by the legislative measures relating to the purchase of land in the neighbouring

states like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

d) The relatively slow absorption of the population by the secondary and tertiary sectors.

One of the long term solutions to the problem of continuing population pressure on land is to facilitate large scale capital intensive farming. Liberalizing the land lease market so that small farmers could lease out their land without any fear and seek alternative employment opportunities would help in the growth of large scale farming. The interest of landowners owing large farms might have to be protected through legislative measures.

The small farmers should be provided with non-farm employment through encouraging rural industries.[14] The mobility of the Punjab farmers has also been checked through legislation by the neighbouring states. Such legislation needs to be repealed so that they can shift to other states and purchase marginal land for improvement. The flow of migratory labour from other states, which is estimated at 25 lakhs per annum[15] is also required to be regulated to reduce pressure of population on agriculture and also to combat the developing slums in the cities of Punjab. To divert the population away from agriculture, job opportunities need to be provided to the rural youth in Punjab. For this purpose even the recruitment quota of the state in defence services and other central services needs to be increased.

Livestock Enterprises

About one third of the farm income is contributed by livestock enterprises in Punjab. Thus, contribution of this sector to the tune of 14 per cent of State Domestic Product has vital scope for further improvement. The number of cattle and buffaloes in the state has gone up from 7186 thousand in 1972 to 8410 thousand in 1990.[16] The average yield per animal comes to only 3.0 lit/day[17] which is too low in comparison to high cost of feed and fodder making dairy farming an uneconomical proposition. The unproductive and uneconomical animals that are putting heavy burden on the livestock economy of the state must find alternative use. The establishment of meat processing plants could go a long way in the management of unproductive animals and in earning much needed foreign exchange through exports. The proper education of general public to change their attitude in this regard is necessary. The systematic animals improvement programme through animal breeding and veterinary services also needs to be undertaken with a greater zeal.

Weather and Price Uncertainties

The weather uncertainties, inhibiting the farmers to carry out the sowing, harvesting and other agronomic operations in time has increased recently. Water-logging conditions in the cotton belt of Punjab due to seepage from canals and excessive rains has aggravated the situation, leading to further deterioration. In the central districts, the water table has declined substantially due to excess drawl of sweet water for raising paddy. As a consequence, the farmers have to make a heavy investment for installation of deeper tubewells.

It might be useful to mention some of the recent weather and market conditions and their impact on farmers' incomes. The potato crop was damaged in December 1997 due to severe frost. The excessive rains at the time for wheat marketing and harvesting of sunflower in May and June 1997 damaged both the crops, deteriorating the quality of the products. The production of sugarcane surpassed the mill intake, resulting in severe marketing problems. Some of the farmers had even to burn the crop to vacate the fields for sowing of the next crop. The persistent rains in 1997 from September to December adversely affected the cotton crop followed by late sowing of wheat crop. As a result the cotton production in the state during 1997 was the lowest over the last three decades. The untimely winter rains resulted in ruination of the potato crop and unseasonal rains in March/April affected the wheat and sunflower crops again. The high temperature in May and June 1998 damaged the tomato crop completely and affected the germination of cotton crop. Most of farmers had to sell paddy at a low price in the year 2000 due to non-procurement by the government agencies on the pretext of grain discolouration.

Lack of Institutional Credit

In spite of serious effort made by the Government, institutional credit is not coming up to the required needs of the farmers. As a result, the farmers have to depend, by and large, upon the commission agents to meet the credit needs who charge very high rate of interest apart from indulging in a number of other mal-practices. In a recent study on tractor markets carried out by the authors, it was revealed that to purchase old tractors, the farmers had borrowed on an average, thirty per cent funds from the private sources of finance and none from institutional sources mainly because of cumbersome procedures involved in taking out a loan, lack of timely availability of institutional credit and various other problems related particularly to the adverse publicity at the time of loan recovery.[18]

In most of the cases, farmers hesitate and are even unable to obtain loans from institutional credit agencies. Better intimacy between farmers and credit institution needs to be developed to make them come out of the clutches of private money-lenders (mainly the commission agents) who still account for about 60 per cent of

the total advances given to farmers.[19] The exorbitant interest rates and malpractices adopted by the non-institutional sources still make true the observation made in the nineteenth century that '*the farmer is born in debt, living in debt and bequeathing in debt.*'

The over-investment in farm machinery can also be corrected through improved credit system. As many as 25 per cent of the new tractors in Punjab have been purchased on credit through Land Development Banks. In some areas where the number of tractors per 100 hectares is high, credit for such purpose should be discouraged. For example; in Dhar block of Gurdaspur, there were only 0.24 tractors/100 ha of cultivated area in 1994-95 compared to 12.36 in Moga-1 block of Moga district.[20] The project formulation and evaluation for every individual case of farm financing by the banking institutions is essential for wise investment in the agricultural sector.

Over-Investment

The over investment in fixed capital particularly in farm machinery has led to escalation in the cost of production. For example the number of tractors in the Punjab have gone up from 1.25 lakh in 1980-81 to 3.65 lakh in 1997-98[21], the total value of farm machinery in Punjab is thus estimated at Rs 7000 crores.[22] Moreover, the concentration of tractors in some areas is so high that the machines do not find custom hiring and off farm work apart from lesser on-farm use due to dwindling sizes of operational holdings. The survey carried out by the authors has revealed that 19 per cent of the tractor sellers sold the tractors due to their uneconomical use on the farm.[23] This is a clear cut indication of over-investment in agricultural sector. Further, the distribution of machinery from one block to another varies widely which calls for normalization of its distribution through discriminating loans for different areas.

Lack of Education

Illiteracy is the root cause of most of social and economic problems. The population census date of 1991 revealed that in the Punjab, rural literacy was only 52.8 per cent as against 72 per cent literacy in the urban sector (Table 4). The enrolment data of 1992 to 1995 in the different colleges of Punjab provides a vital clue that the rural sector is lagging much behind the urban sector.[24]

Table 4: Literacy Rate in Punjab, 1991

Category	Rural	Urban	Overall
Male	60.71	77.26	65.66
Female	43.85	66.12	50.41
Total	52.77	72.08	58.51

Source: *Economic Survey of Punjab*, 1995

Further, the quality of rural education has declined sharply, which is quite evident from the admission to the professional courses. There is very low percentage of the rural students admitted in medical, agriculture, veterinary, arts and science, teachers' training, engineering and physical education courses, despite the fact that the rural population accounts for three-fourth of the total population.[25] The declining standard of rural school education is mainly responsible for decline in the admission of rural population into technical courses.

Modern agriculture demands superior management. It is, therefore, of immense importance to impart technical and vocational training to the rural masses to help them move out of agriculture. In this connection, vocational courses like computer education, home science, electricians, pharmacists, artificial insemination, tailoring, machinery repair, agro-industries, etc. need to be developed for the rural people.

Quality and Timely Supply of Inputs

Throughout the world, agriculture is being subsidized. However, the mode of subsidies on farm inputs available in India is debatable and needs to be corrected. Taking into account the economic backwardness of the farm sector, there is need to provide only those input subsidies which percolate down to the target group of farmers. The other and rather more feasible alternative is to provide remunerative output prices to the farmers and only poor targeted group of consumers be given food subsidy.

The subsidy on fertilizers provided by the government also does not get percolated down to the farmers because the lesser efficient fertilizer production units are provided with huge subsidy. Thus, it is a direct support to the manufacturing units, rather than to the agriculture sector.

Ensuring timely and quality inputs is still more important in agriculture to enable farmers to carry out the seasonal operations in time and get better results.

Export-Oriented Agriculture

The major crops of Punjab are wheat, rice and cotton. The export of wheat and rice is difficult due to the need of meeting country's food requirements. The cotton belt has suffered a serious setback due to water-logging and attack by pests and diseases. There is an urgent need to take correcting measures in this regard. The sugar mills in the cotton belt also do not find much justification.

Still some hope of generating exportable surplus is there which could be tapped in the following ways:

- Agri-climatic regional planning approach could be followed through demarcation of areas for *basmati* production, durum wheat, *desi* cotton, vegetables, fruits (grapes and kinnow) cultivation, menthal, celery, agro-forestry, etc.
- Emphasis on dairy, poultry, mushroom cultivation and honey-bee needs to be increased.
- Contractual farming for agro-processing like tomato, peas, chillies, menthal, sugarcane is essential. Processing of garlic and onion is another area with a great potential.
- Land route to neighbouring countries can reduce the cost of transportation significantly making state agriculture more competitive in the world market.

About 9 per cent of the geographical area of the state along the Shivalik hills having undulating topography, popularly known as the *Kandi* belt, needs vigorous development efforts in terms of horticulture, forestry and vegetable crops. This area has marginal lands where the crop productivity is very low and the farm size is also smaller. For better returns from this area the farmers can be encouraged to take up these enterprises along with dairying through institutional support particularly credit supply, processing and marketing infrastructure.

The agriculture in the state has given rise to numerous environmental problems like declining water table in the central districts, water logging in the south-western part of the Punjab, deteriorating soil health, excessive use of pesticides/herbicides leading to creation of sources of new pests/weeds biotypes and pathogen strains. To compensate, the state should get royalty on food grains from consuming states.

Conclusion

The Punjab state has made rapid progress in the field of agriculture. As a result of this, the country, which was in the grip of serious food shortages, has started generating exportable surpluses. But during the nineties, the productivity of major crops in the state has almost stagnated and as a result the real profit margins are on

the decline. The dwindling farm size, weather and price uncertainties and over-investment in agriculture has made it still more uneconomical. There is thus a strong case for expanding the non-farm sector for generating employment for surplus farm population, for making agriculture export oriented and for institutionalising the farm credit system.

Notes

1. Joginder Singh, G.S. Dhaliwal and N.S. Randhawa. (1997) *Changing Scenario of Punjab Agriculture.* Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh.
2. Economic Adviser to Punjab Government, (1999-2000) *Economic Survey of Punjab*, Chandigarh.
3. Economic Adviser to Punjab Government, (1998) *Statistical Abstract,* Chandigarh.
4. Department of Agriculture, Punjab (1998-99) *Agriculture in Punjab,* Chandigarh.
5. Calculated on the basis of average price of machinery worked out in the report Joginder Singh and B R Jindal,(1993) *Tractorisation of Punjab Agriculture - Socio-economic Considerations* (Unpublished Report) Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.
6. Gross return refers to the value of main product and by-product. Return over variable cost means gross return minus operational costs such as cost of seed, fertilizers, pesticides, labour, diesel, oil, etc. The net return is obtained by deducting even the fixed costs such as land rent depreciation and interest on fixed investment from return over variable cost.
7. Department of Economics and Sociology, Punjab Agricultural University, *Farmers and Farming in Punjab.* Proceedings of Brain Storming Meeting, October, 1998.
8. Joginder Singh and D.K. Grover, *Punjab Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project - A Socio-economic Survey,* Unpublished) World Bank Report, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, November, 1996.
9. The leased in 14% deducted from the average operational holding and 10% increase in farm income by way of dairy farming makes the real farm size as 4.5 hectares.
10. Department of Economics and Sociology, Punjab Agricultural University, *Farmers and Farming in Punjab.* Proceedings of Brain Storming Meeting, October, 1998.
11. Farming sector employed 62 per cent population in the state contributing 44 per cent of State income, while the non-farming population accounted

for 38 per cent population contributing 56 per cent of state domestic product. Source cited in note 3 above.

12. Joginder Singh, *Changing Structure of Land Market in Agrarian State of India Punjab - A Survey Report* (1999) (Unpublished) Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.
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16. Joginder Singh and D.K. Grover. (1998) *A Study of Agro-climatic Regional Planning in Punjab.* Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (Unpublished Report).
17. ibid.
18. Joginder Singh and J.S. Kolar. (1998) Why farmers are forced to sell tractors? *The Tribune* (Chandigarh) 6 June.
19. H. S. Shergil. (1998) *Rural Credit and Indebtedness in Punjab.* A monograph. Institute for Development and Communication, Chandigarh.
20. Joginder Singh and J.S. Kolar. (1998) Why farmers are forced to sell tractors? *The Tribune* (Chandigarh) 6 June.
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24. Economic Adviser to Punjab Government, *Economic Survey of Punjab*, 1998-99, Chandigarh.
25. ibid.

Book Reviews

Contents of Vol. 8 No. 2

J.S. Grewal and Indu Banga (eds.), *Lala Lajpat Rai in Retrospect: Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Concerns* (Chandigarh: Panjab University, 2000), xv and 404 pp. Rs 350 (hb). ISBN 81-85322-26-0.

The last two decades of the twentieth century saw a renewed interest in the issue of nationalism, the particular ways it developed in colonial states, and its role in the formation of post-colonial states. In the South Asian context, this interest has produced a myriad of studies on the major players who shaped a colonial and post-colonial nationalism as well as a vast theoretical corpus that tries to build an overall framework in order to understand nationalism's basic functionings. Many of the papers collected in this volume fall into the former category, a detailed study of one of India's foremost nationalists, Lala Lajpat Rai, while leaving much of the latter category for the reader to grapple with on his or her own. The few essays that do attempt to explore the life and times of Lajpat Rai with an eye towards recent theory are quite successful.

Grewal and Banga have collected twenty-six revised papers that were given at Panjab University's seminar on Lala Lajpat Rai in May 2000. The essays cover Lajpat Rai's whole life, from childhood to death, and come from many academic disciplines including history, economics, sociology, and women's studies. Two opening essays by Ravinder Kumar and T.R. Sharma identify three contentious issues which will dominate the debates in the volume: Lajpat Rai's views on gender relations, his solutions to the problem of the depressed classes, and his position in the nationalist political scene (an issue that often morphs into a debate over the extent of his communalist views). While other issues are covered, such as his years in exile and his economic plans, most essays revolve around the three aforementioned themes in some manner.

Some of the best papers in the collection are grouped around the issue of Lajpat Rai's view of women. Both Sunita Pathania's and Kumool Abbi's papers combine sound historical analysis with contemporary critical theory. Pathania uses Partha Chatterjee's insights contained in his ground-breaking work *The Nation and Its Fragments* to demonstrate how nationalist leaders used women as symbols and signifiers of the unique Indian identity in contradistinction to the colonizing British. She argues that:

> While acknowledging the need for recognition of women's humanity, widening her role in society through extension of her areas of influence, enhancing her abilities through education and health, in Lajpat Rai's thought a women's existence as an autonomous human being living for herself is not recognized. One almost gets the feeling that women's status, position and even her health are to be improved in the interest of the future development of the community and the nation' (p. 218).

She concludes that, 'Lala Lajpat Rai never viewed the patriarchal social structure that promotes and sustains male superiority and control over women as

offensive enough to merit demolition' (p. 219). Abbi also cleverly uses Chatterjee, as well as Clifford Geertz, to place Lajpat Rai's thoughts within his cultural milieu. Thus, she finds that he 'combines certain radical liberal values with some from conservatism, which epitomised his personality and showed him to be a product of his times' (p. 230). The use of critical theory in these two papers adds a depth that is often not found in the rest of the volume.

With regard to subaltern studies, two papers specifically address Lala Lajpat Rai's views on the depressed classes. S.K. Gupta argues that Lajpat Rai combined personal conviction and political strategy in his formulations on the dalit question. On the personal side, it seems that Lajpat Rai wanted to rid India of any caste distinctions because of his religious beliefs. His promotion of the Arya Samaj *shuddhi* initiation, his speeches on equality which challenged his fellow Hindus to re-evaluate their caste beliefs, and his desire for a united India all suggest this fact. However, Gupta is also keenly aware of Lajpat Rai's political motivations. Lajpat Rai recognized the strategic importance of including more people in the category of Hindu for representation purposes as well as the deleterious effects of Christian proselytization that centered on equality. Thus, ridding India of the depressed classes, for Lajpat Rai, was both a personal belief and a political strategy. Harish C. Sharma's analysis is a bit less forgiving of Lajpat Rai. Sharma does claim that Lajpat Rai was ideologically opposed to 'watertight' caste distinctions, but he also demonstrates that Lajpat Rai did believe in some kind of separation based on merit, a separation that looked an awful lot like a modified caste system. Lajpat Rai also lays much of the blame on the British for perpetuating caste in order to serve their own interests. Here, Lajpat Rai seems to be abrogating some responsibility for the problem of caste. Sharma's analysis demonstrates how Lajpat Rai himself was struggling with these issues and coming to terms with them throughout his life.

As for the issue of Lajpat Rai's role in the nationalist political scene, and by extension his views on communalism, most of the papers seek to subvert the classic 'Lal, Bal, Pal' triumvirate by removing Lala Lajpat Rai from the ranks of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal. T.R. Sharma, B.M. Sagar, J.S. Dhanki, P.S. Verma, and Madan Mohan Puri all argue that Lajpat Rai was closer to the political Moderates of India rather than the Extremists and/or that he was not a serious communalist. For example, B.M. Sagar's paper claims Lajpat Rai as the quintessential Panjabi because of his upbringing: his father had an affinity for Islam, his mother was a Sikh, and Lajpat Rai himself joined the Arya Samaj. Thus, according to Sagar, he knew and respected all three traditions, a foundation that kept him from the pitfalls of communalism and instilled a 'practical utilitarian morality that succeeds in life. . .' (p. 24). Not all the papers are willing to accept this removal of Lajpat Rai from the triumvirate without reservation, as evidenced by Pradeep Kumar and Sudhir Kumar's reticence to accept this move fully, and call for further study. Sudhir Kumar's piece begins with a critique of Bipin Chandra's *Nationalism and Communalism in Modern India* and Sumit Sarkar's *Modern India*, both influential works. Chandra and

Sarkar have identified Lajpat Rai as a communalist, and while Kumar admits that evidence of Lajpat Rai's belief in Hindu-Muslim unity may be scarce at times, he believes it is significant enough to merit a re-evaluation of Lajpat Rai's role in the communal debate. In amongst the overwhelming majority of papers presented characterizing Lajpat Rai as a political Moderate and/or non-communalist, there is one voice of serious dissent, Amandeep's 'Communitarian Politics in the Punjab: Understanding Lala Lajpat Rai's Role.' Amandeep suggests that while Lajpat Rai may have believed in the viability of Hindu-Muslim unity earlier in his life, in his last ten years he clearly 'lost interest in Hindu-Muslim unity' (p. 82). Specifically, Amandeep identifies Lajpat Rai's years in jail - December 1921 to September 1923, a period where he studied ancient Indian history - as a turning point. After being released, Lajpat Rai was immersed in a very different India, an India that was rife with communal politics. Amandeep uses Lajpat Rai's political statements and actions to present a detailed analysis of Lajpat Rai's communal beliefs. In the end, Amandeep does not condemn Lajpat Rai, but claims his failures during this last phase of his life 'were the failures of Indian politics' (p. 90). In the final analysis, readers will have to weigh the competing arguments and come to their own conclusions, as the editors, Grewal and Banga, rightly do not interfere in the debate.

Overall, the volume is an informative treatment of Lala Lajpat Rai and the independence movement. Panjab, through the lens of Lajpat Rai's life and works, becomes a case study of the emergence of nationalism, which is a welcome geographical shift away from Bengal and Gujarat, where most of the work on nationalism is centered. This volume will be of use to both Panjab specialists as well as those interested in the study of nationalism in general.

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Pashaura Singh, *The Guru Granth Sahib. Canon, Meaning and Authority* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), xxiii +318 pp., Rs 895 (hb). ISBN 019 564 8943.

Let there be no doubt about the author: chapter 9 of this book, *The Guru Granth Sahib. The Place of Scripture in the Sikh Tradition*, confirms that he is very aware of the sacredness of the Adi Granth for the Sikhs and that he respects, as an insider, its unquestioned authority within the community of believers. With this in mind, I read a delightful and scholarly book that will no doubt be consulted even after 50 years. If you look for an analysis of revelation and of sacred scripture as a canon, applied to a particular world religion, then this book is what you want to read. It tries to understand the process of canon-formation in the Sikh tradition; because of its relevance to other scriptures as well, the interest of this study goes far beyond the Sikh scripture.

Especially in the 'Introduction' (pp. 3-27) students of other religions are given ample food for thought. If one studies a text as a scripture, one cannot be only concerned with textual problems or contextual meanings: one has to be aware also of the ongoing role of the text in the tradition of the religious community, especially if the text has become a normative source of authority. The reason is that scripture is a human activity in which people make a text into a scripture by treating it in a certain way. This view will, in any religious tradition, not be pleasing to believers who see their text as a result of a 'direct revelation', whatever that means. The main question asked in this book is: if as a text critic one is not able to define the nature of 'revelation' as basis for the authority of a text, what are the historical developments that eventually brought a community to define that authority in the way we see it functioning today. This approach does not lack respect for the feelings of the believer: it studies the human hands that were used by the Divine to bring about a text.

No one can argue with the observations made by the author when looking at the development of the Adi Granth, in its process of compilation and in the first stages of its scribal transmission. Very clearly the attentive student sees there elements that clarify the growing status of authority. But there is more: the study also singles out the elements that show how the Granth gradually adopted an authoritative and revealed status in its early development.

Already at the time of the second Guru, Angad, one sees how an 'authoritative' text, like the Veda for the Hindus, is required in order to stress the specific identity and 'difference' of the fledgling Sikh community. In contrast to the worldview of many Hindu texts, Guru Angad claims the exclusive status of *bani* which delivers *all* people (even Shudras and women) from the shackles of *karma*. 'Thus by stressing the inspired nature of bani Guru Angad laid down doctrinally the requirement for the compilation of the Sikh scripture parallel to the Vedas' (p. 9). The third Guru, Amardas, too made a substantial contribution to this development, when he called Guru Nanak's bani 'the pre-eminent example of the universal bani, which exists eternally through all ages' (p. 10). The fourth Guru, Ram Das, went one step further and 'in his compositions the identification of the bani with the Guru becomes quite explicit' (p. 11). Finally, by the fifth Guru, Arjan, making his compilation in 1604,

> the bani is portrayed as existing prior to the revelation, since the beginning of creation, as the instrument of creative power through which the Akal Purakh brought forth the universe. Thus the expression *dhur ki bani* refers to the primordial wisdom as a living force and the immediate source of creation (p. 12).

The author views the creation of the text as a historical process, with not a few variant readings in the Adi Granth and also in the collation of certain pre-canonical texts. These variants make it impossible to define the origin of the Adi Granth as a revelation of actual words to the Gurus, rather than of a content of words. The study of these variants is given in detail on pp. 28-82.

When discussing the actual reasons why Guru Arjan eventually compiled the Adi Granth, the author points out that the traditional view that he did so in response to the threat of the Minas, appears for the first time in several 18th century sources (p. 20). That threat is the 18th c. understanding of the reasons for the compilation of the Granth. Rather, the compilation had to do with the growing need to assert the unique identity of the Sikh community, creating a new scripture parallel to both the Vedas and the Qur'an (p. 22). Thus, 'a text is canonical not by virtue of being the final, correct and official version, but because it becomes binding on a religious community' (p. 25). This explains how a text received such a power. In this approach, Pashaura Singh seems to keep a balance-position between the 'sceptical approach' of Piara Singh (and others) on the one hand, and the rather traditional approach of Gurinder Singh Mann (and others) on the other; to me it would seem that the distance from Piara Singh is smaller than that from Gurinder Singh Mann.

When discussing the earliest manuscripts in Chapter 2, 'A Survey of Early Manuscripts' (pp. 28-82), the author points out that 'the later scribes who failed to understand that process, struggled with problematic texts and responded by tampering with the text of the Adi Granth' (p. 29). That struggle, more than the traditional 'unintentional changes', explains the great variety in the earliest versions of the Adi Granth. About the 'stolen' Har Sahai Pothi he 'suspends his judgment on the issue of its identity with Guru Nanak's Pothi' (p. 34). When describing in detail the GNDU 1245 manuscript (pp. 41-53), one wonders why the author gives the sample folio on p. 236. In connection with the Banno manuscript ('predominant in the 18th c.', p. 235), discussed at length on pp. 74ff. I should mention for the record that, with the gracious help of Prof. Pritam Singh, in the early eighties, I was able to make a complete film copy of the Kanpur manuscript, and I gave that film on loan to Gurinder Singh Mann, with the understanding that any serious scholar should be given access to it. The author concludes Chapter 2 with the challenging statement that:

> there was no unity of the Adi Granth text to be found among its different versions during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Each group within the Panth tried to legitimize its version of the Adi Granth by pasting an autograph of the Guru at the beginning of each copy. In many instances, the scribes (and their groups within the Panth) failed to understand the editorial insights of Guru Arjan and struggled with problematic texts. They were primarily responsible for the different versions of the text of the Adi Granth. (p. 82).

From my experience with Rajasthani manuscript I can fully endorse his conclusion of Chapter 3, 'Textual Analysis': 'Variations in the early manuscripts must not be regarded simply as scribal errors in the usual sense, but rather as examples of regional or dialectical forms used in the oral transmission of a singing tradition'. This obviously is incompatible with the view that the Akal

Purusa dictated actual word-units!

In Chapter 6, 'Scriptural Adaptation in the Adi Granth', the author deals with the tricky issue of the presence of Bhagat literature. He interestingly points out that 'It is partially true that the hymns of the bhagats are included in the Adi Granth because of a basic agreement with Sikh teachings' (p. 178), while to me his argument for the inclusion of the Bhagat hymns by Guru Arjan 'to enlarge the base of the early Sikh community *by stressing social equality*' is not clear. Would the old-fashioned view that *santa* ideology helped to give shape to the insights and teachings of the early Gurus be totally wrong?

Again, Chapter 7, 'The Adi Granth Traditions and Canon Formation', is very exciting because it describes the historical environment in which the need of a canon became urgent:

> Guru Arjan's martyrdom definitely changed the course of the Sikh movement. Although the Sikh sense of identity was heightened as an immediate result of the crisis, it soon created a situation which was conducive to sectarian tendencies within the Panth. (p. 206).

The argument of the 'heroic tunes' (pp. 208, 210), however, is not convincing to me. The author concludes with the powerful insight of this study:

> A careful survey of the early manuscript material reveals that there was no one version of the Adi Granth that was accepted by all the Sikhs in the eighteenth century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Sikhs were using more than four different versions of the Adi Granth. (pp. 224-5).

I only regret not seeing diacritical signs on the Punjabi words.

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Harnik Deol, *Religion and Nationalism in India: The Case of the Punjab*, (London: Routledge 2000) 200pp. £55.00 (hb), ISBN 0-415-20108-X.

Gurharpal Singh, *Ethnic Conflict in India: A Case Study of Punjab*, (London: Macmillan, 2000) xii and 231pp. £55.00 (hb), ISBN 0-333-72109-8.

In recent years, as Gurharpal Singh notes, a 'conventional wisdom' on ethnic and religious conflict in India has emerged. Manifested in 'official and academic consensus', this conventional reading of Indian politics is seen to share four key propositions. First, ethnic identities are seen as constructed, permeable and contingent. Second, ethnic groups are seen to selectively emphasize particular dimensions of their identity as appropriate. Third, ethnic groups lack cohesion and finally the Indian state is secular and seeks to foster political

integration alongside a multicultural society (Singh 2000, 36). Both books reviewed may be read as attempts to challenge this conventional wisdom through an analysis of the Sikh struggle for sovereignty in the Punjab. Whilst Harnik Deol is content to revise conventional theories of nationalism, Gurharpal Singh attempts to replace it with an alternative framework. Both accounts, however, focus on the key role played by the Indian state in attempting to crush Sikh militancy in the Punjab.

For Harnik Deol, the Punjab is used as a case study upon which to 'test' conventional theories of nationalism. By conventional theories, Deol refers specifically to modernist theories of nationalism, and in particular Benedict Anderson's conception of the nation as an 'imagined community'. Anderson's central argument focuses on the role played by print-capitalism and linguistic diversity in the rise of modern nationalism. For Anderson, ' the convergence of capitalism and print-technology on the fatal diversity of the human language created the possibility of a *new* form of imagined community' distinct from religious communities with their 'great sacral cultures' bound by a common, sacred, silent language (Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* London: Verso, 1991, 46). However, Deol concludes that far from eroding the sacred community through the dethronement of sacred languages, as Anderson has argued, print capitalism in fact reinforced the significance of language as the basis of *religious* identity' and these religio-linguistic nationalisms laid the bases for national consciousness (p.21). Whilst Urdu came to be identified in the colonial period with Islam and became the language through which Muslim League demands for a separate homeland were articulated, Hindi became a marker of Hindu identity and was the language through which the Indian National Congress articulated their secular, anti-colonial nationalism to the peasant masses. Thus post-colonial India was 'imagined' to have roots in the ancient Hindu past. (p.55). After independence, the *Punjabi Suba* movement consolidated the process of religion-based linguistic differentiation started by the Singh Sabha movements and the *gurumukhi* script and Punjabi language became the 'sacred language of the Sikhs'. Thus, for Deol, 'print capitalism energized the existing tendencies towards differentiation between the diverse religious communities rather than, as in Benedict Anderson's formulation, creating a radically different consciousness' (p.90).

The second major revision Deol makes to modernist theories of nationalism is to question the role of the bourgeois intelligentsia in the leadership of nationalist movements. Conventional approaches (Anderson 1991; Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism in Asia and Africa* New York: Meridian books, 1970) see nationalism in the colonial world as a derivative discourse and highlight the role played by a bilingual intelligentsia, drawn from the rising middle classes, in articulating an anti-colonial ideology. However, as Deol points out, India has not witnessed a bourgeois revolution, nor has there been an industrial or peasant revolution in India' (p.173). For Deol, it was not the intelligentsia, 'miniscule literate reefs amidst enormous illiterate oceans' (p.23), but the vast masses of the

Indian peasantry which provided the backbone to the anti-colonial nationalist struggle. Similarly, in the post Green Revolution Punjab it was neither the bourgeoisie nor the traditional Sikh elites who exercised leadership over the movement for Sikh sovereignty but young, semiliterate men drawn from the 'disaffected' peasantry. The Sikh ethno-nationalist struggle is seen as having its origins in the radicalisation of the Sikh peasantry in the wake of the Green Revolution. Dramatic shifts in the prevailing material conditions of existence generated mass discontent in the Punjab and unleashed political forces articulated through a religious discourse by young, semiliterate men, like Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, through the vernacular press and oral forms of communications, particularly cassettes (p.175).

Although Deol is right to conclude that 'an adequate theory about nationalism cannot be derived from the European experience', the belief that 'nationalism in India is radically different from its European counterparts because of the religious framework through which it operates' (p.19) needs to be further examined in the light of the persistence of ethno-religious conflict in Northern Ireland and other European countries. Indeed, Peter van der Veer has recently demonstrated that religion has been crucial in the emergence of nationalism in both India *and* Britain (Peter van der Veer *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001, 53). Anderson is quite clearly wrong to conclude that 'in Western Europe the eighteenth century marks not only the dawn of the age of nationalism but the dusk of the religious mode of thought' (Anderson 1991:12). Whilst convincingly critiquing modernist theories of nationalism as applied to the case study of the Punjab, Deol relies upon an 'ethno-symbolist' (see Umut Ozkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000, 167-190) approach to account for Sikh ethno-nationalism. For ethno-symbolists, nations have pre-modern ethnic origins and for Deol the origins of the Sikh national consciousness (1947-95) lie in the historical roots of Sikh communal consciousness (1469-1947) pre-dating colonial rule. Thus, Deol seems content to merely revise these existing theories rather than contributing a new approach, one which questions the application of terms such as 'religion' or 'nationalism', derived from the European experience, to the Punjab. How can religion 'continue to be the dominant world view in India' (p.175) when, in Harjot Oberoi's words, it is a 'relatively recent phenomenon in the history of the Indian peoples' (Harjot S. Oberoi, *The Construction of Sikh Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994, 17)? Can we speak of a clearly identifiable 'Sikh', as opposed to Punjabi, consciousness before the onset of the colonial period and is the achievement of Khalistan, a territorially defined Sikh state, the ultimate aim of the Sikh struggle for sovereignty? If not, then what is *nationalist*, in the conventional sense, about Sikh ethno-nationalism?

If Harnik Deol may be seen as broadly operating within the parameters of a 'conventional wisdom', that is the traditional, formal way of addressing theories

of nationalism, in Part 1 of *Ethnic Conflict in India* Gurharpal Singh not only seeks to challenge the 'conventional wisdom' on ethnicity, ethnic conflict and Indian politics but to replace it with the theory of India as an 'ethnic democracy'. Singh considers India to be 'unexceptional' in managing ethnic conflicts since 1947 with the process of nation - and state - building creating a sharp divide between the Hindu core and peripheral regions leading to the rise of ethnic conflict. India is seen as 'an ethnic democracy where hegemonic and violent control is exercised over minorities ...thereby creating the conditions for the resilience of ethno-nationalist separatist movements in the latter regions'(p.35). Where ethnic groups have contested violently the nature of hegemonic control, which exists where the main ethnic group can 'effectively dominate another through its political, economic and ideological resources and can extract what it requires from the subordinated' (p.47) the Indian state has readily resorted to violent control, as illustrated by Singh's account of the crushing of Sikh militancy in the Punjab between 1984 and 1992 in Part 3 (125-179). The solution to the problems posed by ethnic conflict in India, which in the past two decades has tied down over half of India's security forces and has resulted in the loss of 60,000 lives (p.195), is to 'resize' and 'reshape' the Indian state, to give peripheral states greater autonomy within the Indian Union and to accept the right of ethno-nationalist movements in the Punjab, Kashmir and the North-East to secede from it.

Whilst Singh's criticism of conventional wisdom and attempt to restructure the debate on ethnicity and nationalism in India is detailed and insightful, three main areas of contention can be identified. The first area of contention is the very application of the term conventional wisdom to a plethora of different perspectives on Indian politics. The inclusion of state apologists, neo-Gandhians, Marxists, instrumentalists and post-structuralists under this umbrella term masks important political and theoretical differences between them, particularly on the legitimacy of the post-partition settlement. Secondly, the use of the term 'ethnic democracy' in the Indian context, although an apt description of the post-Nehruvian period, may be seen as problematic for two reasons. Firstly, if the term 'ethnic democracy' is used to describe the post-partition Indian state, then what term can be used to describe the genocidal settler democracies of twentieth century South Africa, nineteenth century USA, Australia or even Serbia under Milosevic. Perhaps, the term 'ethnocracy' would have been more appropriate given that the political culture of Nehruvian India was hardly 'participatory'- a key characteristic of any 'democratic' political culture. Secondly, and related to the last point, although Singh is right to point out the ideological symmetry between Congress secularism and hegemonic Hinduism, significant differences do appear to exist between the Nehruvian and post-Nehruvian period. The post-Nehruvian period, marked by the popular rejection of the Nehruvian consensus, and the articulation of an exclusionist Hindu nationalism by Congress and BJP alike come closest to satisfying the criteria of being an 'ethnic democracy'.

However, perhaps the principal area of contention lies in Singh's treatment of political identity in South Asia in general and Sikh identity in particular. Singh is quick to criticize instrumentalist and post-structural approaches but posits no alternative theory of nationalism and ethnicity, concluding the first chapter on 'Perspectives on Ethnic Conflict in India' with a lukewarm acceptance of instrumentalism (p.16). Like Deol, Singh believes modern Sikh identity to be 'remarkably cohesive' (p.87) and bound by 'a sacred text and religious tradition dating from Guru Nanak' (p.78). By emphasizing stability, continuity and cohesiveness in his reading of Sikh history, Singh overlooks the 'ruptures' or 'departures' which are part of the history of any ethno-national community.

Despite these limitations, Singh succeeds in providing a systematic, powerful and convincing explanation of the causes and consequences of ethnic conflict not only in the Punjab but throughout India, an explanation which may well succeed in becoming part of a new 'conventional wisdom' on ethno-religious conflict in India.

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Patwant Singh, *The Sikhs*, (London: John Murray, 1999) xvi+312 pp, £25.00 (hb). ISBN 01719557143.

The volume is an excellent addition to Sikh historical accounts such as Khushwant Singh's *History of the Sikhs*, Harbans Singh's *Heritage of the Sikhs,* and J.S. Grewal's, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Sikhs of the Punjab.* Its six chapters lucidly narrate the story of the Sikhs from the moment of inception to their present day status and vitality. The author seeks to depict the very blood and breath of Sikh men and women as dynamic participants in their specific cultures over the last five and half centuries. He powerfully demonstrates Wilfred Cantwell Smith's formulation that religion is not a static or reified system, but rather a continuous and ever-accumulating tradition embodied in the men and women of faith.

The ideal of equality espoused by the Sikh Gurus, and the commitment of generations of Sikhs to make that ideal into a reality, is the theme of the book. Patwant Singh accomplishes what he proposes to do in his prologue, for the reader is instantly carried by the forceful narrative of the Sikhs battling against structures of political and social hegemony. In his own words:

> The Sikhs have no illusions about this whole edifice of domination, and the despotic hold of the upper castes. But having opposed repression, and the tyranny of caste, a number of times in their history, they know how to stand their ground. And that is what the book is about. (p.15)

The book starts out with Guru Nanak's message of unity and pattern of inclusivity, and the first chapter traces how they are developed and crystallized by his nine successor Gurus as the quintessence of Sikh philosophy, aesthetics, and politics. Grounded on the words and ideology of Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the Sikh sacred book compiled by the Fifth (Guru Arjan) and apotheosized by the Tenth (Guru Gobind Singh), harmoniously contains the voices of the Sikh Gurus, Hindu *bhatka*s, and Muslim saints.

The first and most venerated shrine of the Sikhs (the Harmandir), designed by the Fifth Guru with four doors, architecturally embraces the four castes of traditional Indian society. The institution of the Khalsa created by the Tenth shatters all social divisions and democratically sustains the principles of liberty and justice enunciated by Guru Nanak.

The ensuing chapters give us a vivid sense of the way in which Sikhs lived out the ideals and values of their Gurus. Soon after Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708, Banda Singh Bahadur and his Sikhs fight an oppressive government and its brutal governors. As he vividly narrates Banda Singh's whirlwind campaigns, Patwant Singh underscores his abolition of the *zamindari* system. The roots of the contemporary entrepreneurship and prosperity of Sikh farmers are linked far back to Banda Bahadur who made the cultivator the owner of the land. In his third chapter, Patwant Singh focuses on yet another invincible hero, the young Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) of the Sukerchakia *misl* who established the first Sikh Empire in 1801. As he extended the frontiers of the Punjab and broke the stranglehold of the Afghans, the Sikh Maharaja created a pluralistic empire. Maintaining his Sikh heritage, the Maharaja did not discriminate against any faith, and his army included Hindus and Muslims, as well as Italians, French, English, Americans, and Spaniards.

Throughout his text, Patwant Singh chronologically depicts the Sikhs retaliating against the hegemony of the Mughals, the British, and the Indian nationalists. He graphically describes the holocausts in which thousands of Sikhs were brutally murdered. But his aim is not to incite the reader against people of any religion, rather to remind us all of the atrocious behavior of men - greedy for power - be they Muslims, Christians, Hindus, or Sikhs. In a way he recapitulates Guru Nanak's principle that it is not religion but greed which divides the human family. Commenting on the atrocities of Babur's invasion of India and his attack on the Muslim Lodis, the first Sikh Guru said, '*jaru vandi devai bhai*' - it is wealth which splits brother from brother' (Guru Granth: p. 417). In fact, even as he reports the worse Mughal-Sikh conflicts, Patwant Singh highlights the generous gestures of Muslims like Rai Kalha who warmly greeted Guru Gobind Singh as he fled from Mughal enemies (p. 62), and the Nawab of Malerkotla who tried to prevent the execution of Guru Gobind Singh's young sons (p.63). He also mentions the brothers Nur-ud-din and Aziz-ud-din who served as home minister and foreign minister to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and their father who was Ranjit Singh's trusted physician. The memory

of such Sikh-Muslim relationships serves as an antidote to the 1947 massacres.

The story of the Sikhs is told from a balanced perspective, for Patwant Singh can admire and censure the same person. As he splendidly narrates the glory of the Napoleon-like Maharaja Ranjit Singh, he also blames him for the downfall of the Sikh kingdom:

The ultimate blame for what happened to the Sikh State rests neither with the Dogras, nor with the Brahmins who subverted from within, nor with the British who triumphed with the help of traitors. In the end the Sikhs themselves are responsible for failing to protect the magnificent legacy of an exceptional man. And to an extent Ranjit Singh himself also contributed to the tragedy by ignoring the republican temper of the Khalsa and leaving its fate to monarchical whims (p. 173).

And at the same time Patwant Singh is a Sikh, and events in Indian history have seldom been seen from a Sikh lens. In his final two chapters, he reveals the role of Sikhs in their fight for India's independence. It is well known that Sikhs did not support the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, but what Patwant Singh brings out is the not too well known fact that the Sepoys helped the British against the Sikhs as they fought the imperial masters in the battle of Chillianwalla just eight years before the Mutiny. We also learn about Sikh reformers like Ram Singh who had served in Ranjit Singh's army and fought the British at Mudki in the first Anglo-Sikh war (1845-46).

Ram Singh championed the non-cooperation movement: the unsung hero emphasized homespun cloth as a symbolic rejection of British exploitation decades prior to Mahatma Gandhi. Patwant Singh points out that although Sikhs were only 2 percent of the Indian population, they constituted 75 percent of those who were martyred for freedom, and 60 percent of those who joined Subhas Bose's Indian National Army. 'And yet not a single general has been made army chief of staff in the half-century since India has been independent,' he laments (p. 254).

Inspired by the Sikh Gurus' vision of social equality and liberty, the author remains critical of Indian casteism and classism. From the beginning to the end of his book, he is hostile to Brahmin elitism. He points out that Brahmins have dominated post-colonial India as prime ministers, administrative officers, and journalists. His final chapter, 'Violence and Venality', unravels the recent Hindu-Sikh conflict as an outcome of government manipulation and biased newsmedia. Communalism, he remarks, was fuelled by national reporters who 'made no distinction between a regional political party, a handful of militants, and the entire Sikh community' (p.253). Patwant Singh is equally disgruntled with contemporary Sikhs for making social distinctions and for curbing the right of scholars to free speech, both of which are antithetical to their open and egalitarian religious tradition.

I wish *The Sikhs* contained more information about female protagonists. The references to the Gurus' mothers, sisters, wives, and devotees are few and far between. And though he tries to give some attention, Patwant Singh glosses

over the role of many Sikh women. For example, he greatly praises Sada Kaur (Ranjit Singh's mother-in-law) for her intelligence and valor but he scarcely mentions Maharani Jindan (mother of Dalip Singh) who was a remarkable figure in Sikh history. There are some other blanks as well. The author recounts the respect showered by the British on Brigadier-General Harry Dyer after the tragic Jallianwallah massacre in 1919, but he remains silent about the honor that Dyer received within the precincts of the Golden Temple itself. I was also surprised that Patwant Singh did not discuss Ranjit Singh's embellishment of the Golden Temple, especially since he has produced such a gorgeous volume on its art and architecture. Furthermore, his system of citing sources is very confusing. There are in fact no footnotes throughout the entire book, and instead the reader has to track down quotations, which are listed only by page at the end of the book.

In spite of these reservations, *The Sikhs* is a rich text, textured with many colorful and penetrating facts and insights. It is simple and accessible, leaving the reader with many vivid and memorable imprints. The Kohinoor diamond was seized by Alaud-din Khilji from Rai Mahlak Deo, the ruler of Malwa, and shuffled in the hands of Mughals, Afghans, and Sikhs till it was handed by the young Sikh Maharaja Dalip Singh to Queen Victoria as an emblem of his submission (p. 120). The game of chess called *chatur-angam* was invented by a Brahmin named Sissa in the fifth century but unlike the queen in the West, 'the second most important piece in Indian chess is mantri, or minister of state (most often a Brahmin)...' (p. 9). General Dyer who ordered the massacre of hundreds of innocent men, women, and children in the Jallianwallah compound 'had left Dublin's Royal College of Surgeons because he was unable to stand the sight of blood!' (p.193). Maharaja Ranjit Singh with an eye lost to smallpox in childhood remarked, 'God intended that I look upon all religions with one eye; that is why I was deprived of the other' (p. 105). Historical facts, critical assessments, ironic twists, and collective memories weave together beautifully to bring out the fascinating but forgotten story of the Sikhs.

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Shauna Singh Baldwin, *What the Body Remembers* (New York: Doubleday, 1999) 471pp, US$ 25.95 (hb), ISBN 0-385-49604-4.

What the Body Remembers is a poignant recollection of the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. Roop, the young and fertile second wife of a Sikh Sardar, crosses over the boundary mapped by the British as they give up their sovereignity over the Indian subcontinent. The Radcliffe Line divided Indian soil with its millions of innocent Sikh, Hindu and Muslim inhabitants - brutally dismembering their bodies, their psyches, their families, homes, farms, and shrines. Literary works on this traumatic period of Indian history are few and far

between, and Baldwin's rich novel joins Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, and Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India*.

The novel begins in Rawalpindi with Satya, the older wife of the Sardarji, examining the body of Roop, her young rival. Her own ornaments now bedeck the neck, arm, earrings, and ankles of her junior, so ripe and robust. In spite of her myriad offerings and labours, forty-two year old Satya has not been able to produce an heir for 'Sardarji', her Oxford-educated husband. The narrative flashes back to Pari Darwaza where Roop grows up in a financially dwindling Sikh household amidst Muslim and Hindu neighbours and friends. When she is a mere teenager, Roop is taken by her father to the historic Sikh shrine Punja Sahib, and is married off, without a dowry, to the wealthy and considerably older Sardarji to produce the sons Satya could not. Roop is a useful 'vessel': after an unwelcome birth - that of a daughter - she brings forth two sons. But each time she gives birth, the child is taken away from Roop and handed over to Satya, leaving the mother's lap empty. Before Roop has to give away her first-born on the fortieth day, she bids her baby goodbye:

> 'This is my smell,' she tells the baby. 'Remember it. This is the taste of my body. Remember it. This is the touch of my hands, feel it. This is my tongue, suck from it all the words it should have spoken, the words it wants to say.' (p. 180)

The painful split between the mother and daughter forecasts the separation of India; it simultaneously demarcates woman's dharma - the moral imperative to remain generous and silent - instilled in Roop when she was but a baby herself.

From his young wife Sardarji learns 'the pleasure of giving pleasure', and gradually withdraws from Satya who neither succumbs to the charms of the British nor ever lowers her eyes to him. Satya, the immutable truth as her name implies, is bold and proud. Unable to withstand Sardarji's indifference towards her, she opts for death like Lord Rama's wife Sita, the paradigm of devotion and virtue. Satya makes a pilgrimmage to Punja Sahib, the place where Guru Nanak left his handprint in stone, the very place where Sardarji betrayed her by marrying Roop. In this sacred precinct, she kisses the diseased Mumta, her childhood companion; by kissing her in the European way Sardarji had taught her, Satya sucks in her friend's tuberculosis.

Satya dies. But she continues to live through Roop. The book ends with Roop's horrendous journey into India through massacres, lootings, charrings, and screams. From the newly created Pakistan she arrives in New Delhi, once the British capital. Roop now has Satya's identity: she has her strength, her voice, her gait, her manner; she even tastes the bitter-almond that Satya tasted. Like the Ten Sikh Gurus merging into one another, Satya and Roop become one.

Baldwin's novel is a wonderful contribution to the world of Sikhism. With the exception of Kirpal Singh in Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, there are very few authentic Sikh protagonists in Postcolonial literature. In this genre of the 'empire writing back', Baldwin opens up Sikh philosophical and ethical

values, she leads us into Sikh shrines both in Pakistan and India, she introduces Sikh greetings, customs, and the physical format of the Khalsa, with the five-ks (*kesha*: long hair, *kangha*: comb, *kara*: bracelet, *kirpan*: sword, and *kaccha*: drawers). She even illustrates the differences between Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh practices.

But most of all, her text urges us to remember the message of gender equity championed by the Sikh Gurus. Baldwin recapitulates the Sikh scriptural verse, 'Why should we talk ill of her, who gives birth to kings?.... there is none without her' (p. 330). She underscores the discrepancy between the Sikh Gurus' vision of unity and equality, and the harsh reality of divisions and hierarchies in everyday Sikh society. Even though Sikh women may not wear the veil like their Muslim sisters, they absorb the fears instilled by the fathers as did Roop (p. 259), and so their experience is no different from that of women in purdah. A Sikh girl is not born into the same family as her brother: Roop did not get to eat meat like her brother, and the disparity continues on into the next generation for Roop's daughter did not get a pram like *her* brother. In fact, 'Sardarji does not ask or worry about his daughter; the girl is nothing' (p. 270). In the name of *izzat*, Roop's much loved sister-in-law is killed by Roop's own father! Baldwin repeats, 'men only see women from the corners of their eyes.' While unveiling the subordination and victimization of women, Baldwin ardently envisions the moment 'when a woman will not be owned, when love will be enough payment for marriage, children or no children, just because her shakti takes shape and walks the world again' (p. 310).

What the Body Remembers is also a splendid recreation of the Punjabi landscape in which Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims lived together harmoniously prior to the Partition. Amidst blooming gulmohars, marigolds, jamun trees, sugar cane fields, and mustard flowers, kids play *kikli* and *geete* together. We vividly hear the koel sing and we see the peacock dance. The typical Punjabi scenes of glass bangle sellers and women carrying water pitchers on their heads evoke nostalgic memories. Where is that Punjab with its vibrant and playful colours and sounds? Is it our own childhood Baldwin makes us long for?

The book integrates different dimensions of emotional and social reality, and even provides an interesting angle on the political scenario, especially on the figure of Gandhi. Rather than the revered Mahatma, there emerges a 'shilly-shallying politician'- 'a man who says he is all religions, Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Christian, is a man of no conviction' (p. 335). Mr. Farquharson remarks, 'If you ask me, Mr. Gandhi should stick to religion and stay out of politics' (p. 178). The hurt and betrayal felt by the Sikhs comes out strikingly throughout the volume: 'The Mahatma raised the national flag of a free India and it did not have a strip of deep Sikh blue as he promised...' (p. 83).

Baldwin's stress on statements and external circumstances often obstructs her entry into the inner world of her characters. The writing is a bit too didactic, and the dates and places and chapter-breaks deter the natural flow of her text. Like Sardarji forcing and channeling the waters of the Punjab, the author often

engineers her way into her narrative. The voice of Cunningham for example is a trite device to render the pain and complexity of false consciousness that Sardarji suffers from. The 'hoary phantom', a remnant of his years in England, speaks out Sardarji's thoughts once too often. Explanations, clarifications, and recountings leave little room for our imagination. But then again, Shauna Singh Baldwin seems to be following her own maxim, 'Stories are not told for the telling, but for the teaching.'

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W. Menski (ed.), *South Asians and the Dowry Problem*, (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books, 1998). 273pp. £14.95 (pb). ISBN 1 – 85856 – 141 – 8.

Academics, researchers, activists and practitioners from the fields of law, economics, sociology and Indology have contributed to this excellent collection of papers. This anthology is drawn from papers given at three International Dowry Conferences held at SOAS and Harvard between 1995 and 1997. The conferences were convened primarily to draw attention to the disturbing problem of dowry-related violence amongst South Asians in the subcontinent and beyond. From this point of view the collection is distinctive as it is designed to reach beyond the corridors of South Asian studies and strike at the root of a very pressing problem. The result is not a 'detached academic discourse' (p.2) or an 'end in itself' for the authors but rather conceived it as a step towards the ultimate goal of ending dowry-related violence and the social practices which sustain it. This clear focus undoubtedly drives the book's refreshing and direct approach, as scholars from a range of disciplines expound different facets of the dowry problem. Given the gravity of the subject matter this is not a book of grand claims, nor does it allude to a single grand narrative underpinning the use and abuse of dowry. Thus conflicting ideas are presented in parallel chapters, yet this is by design rather than editorial oversight. The substantive contributions of the editor, Werner Menski, serve to weave together divergent accounts into a comprehensive and informative whole.

Dowry in South Asia is associated with violence against wives of the most severe kind, and culminates in the deaths of thousands of women every year in the Indian subcontinent and elsewhere. The *dowry problem* can be defined as violence perpetrated by husbands or in-laws allegedly with the purpose of obtaining more dowry. This phenomenon is not evenly spread across the subcontinent, the highest incidence of so-called 'dowry-deaths' is found in Delhi, closely followed by Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh (see tables, pp. xx-xi). On the face of it this may appear to be a peculiarly Indian situation and the title of the book something of a misnomer. However the need for further

research to substantiate existing anecdotal evidence from Pakistan and Bangladesh is acknowledged (p.226).

Amongst South Asians generally the pressure to secure the 'successful' (enduring) marriage of a daughter is far more compelling than that of a son. This gives rise to a situation in marriage negotiations whereby the weight of bargaining power effectively rests with a prospective groom's parents. Furthermore, the household goods, jewellery, clothes and cash gifts which accompany a bride to her marital home are not always seen as a one-off transfer of property, but rather signify the beginning of an ongoing process of gift exchange between two affinal families. The imbalance of power between two families, plus the potential for continuing demands after marriage, underpins the capacity for extortion within the system.

It is worth noting here, distinctions have been made in the literature and in Indian anti-dowry legislation (see chapter 6) between *voluntary* gifts given to the couple at the time of marriage and dowry *demanded* as a 'condition of marriage' (p.42). The book commences with discursive explorations of how the former gift of dowry has been distorted into its present exploitative form (chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5). Julia Leslie (chapter 2) and Werner Menski (chapter 3) look to the assumed origins of the dowry system in the Hindu scriptures: while producing lucid and personal accounts of their own explorations of these issues they skilfully guide the reader through a wide range of literature and debates. Chapters 6 and 7 present detailed analyses of how legislation is applied (or not as the case may be) in South Asia, whilst in chapter 10 Usha Sood, a prominent British lawyer who has pioneered the retrieval of dowry in English courts, outlines the socio-legal context in England. Preceding this, Rohit Barot's and Jagbir Jhutti's rich descriptions of the practice of dowry-giving amongst two South Asian communities in Britain (chapters 8 and 9) address how the process of migration has effected change. The contributions of Himendra Thakur are somewhat set apart from the rest of the book: as the inspiring voice behind the conferences he specifies practical steps towards eradicating the problem (chapter 11).

In each chapter popular debates originating in the subcontinent are recounted and new tangents explored. As each author wrestles with similar questions, repetition of dowry definitions, why it exists and its implications at times seem superfluous. However given the complexity of the dowry system, these accounts serve to illustrate subtle differences of perspective and contribute to a rounded discussion of key points. No consensus of opinion is expressed in the book except the fundamental desire to put a stop to violence. In chapter 3 Menski squarely dismisses what he calls the wider feminist agenda of gender equality as a possible route to tackling the problem (p.43). He believes gendered power relations are so deeply entrenched in South Asian societies that demands for societal change at this level only serve to obscure the more pressing issue of how to stop dowry murders. How it is possible to prevent gendered violence without disrupting gendered hierarchies remains unclear however. Menski goes

on to argue the case for a revival of morality and internal self-control as a solution to the problem, drawing on ancient Hindu principles for inspiration (pp. 38-40). In contrast Leslie and Sen (chapters 2 and 5) place shifts in male-female power relations as central to any attempts to instigate change. Leslie cites the 'vulnerability of women in South Asian societies, indeed the institutionalisation of that vulnerability' as the sustaining force behind the violence (p.32). This disjuncture highlights one of the many strengths of the book: as contributors draw on a range of literatures, research and ideological standpoints to inform their analyses they do not always agree. This is wholly appropriate, as the complexity of the issue does not lend itself to simplistic, one-dimensional analyses.

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Robert Nichols, *Settling the Frontier. Land, Law and Society in the Peshawar Valley, 1500-1900* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001), xxxvii + 321pp, £10.00 (hb), ISBN 0 19 579380 3.

Two new books dealing with the Northwest Frontier have appeared recently. The first, which I reviewed in the preceding volume of the IJPS, was Charles Allan's *Soldier Sahibs*, subtitled *The Men Who Made the Northwest Frontier*. It is a rousing adventure story in the tradition of informed popular writing about the Raj, focussed selectively, as its subtitle suggests, on the exploits of intrepid soldier-administrators serving under the Lawrences. By way of contrast, the Nichols book, *Settling the Frontier*, is aimed at a scholarly audience. Its subtitle, *Land, Law and Society in the Peshawar Valley, 1500-1900*, lives up to its promise of a wide-ranging and comprehensive survey of the political, social and economic fabric of a specific region of the frontier, and even questions the very use of the term 'frontier'. If we take music as a metaphor for the spectrum of orchestrations of the subject that have appeared over the years, Allan's book may be thought of as a romantic narrative in the manner of Richard Strauss's dramatic tone poem *Ein Heldenleben* (*A Hero's Life*), while Nichols proceeds in the contrapuntal mode of Baroque *concertato* style, complete with the ground bass of historical survey.

Nichols casts a wider and more complex narrative net than Allan. His historical framework embraces a history of the Pakhtun tribes from 1500 to 1900, and relates that story to their relations with Afghan, Moghul, Sikh and British imperial establishments. As he describes it, Nichols' own method of storytelling is to 'incorporate the "facts" of a historical narrative into discussions of tribal identity and ideology, agricultural practice, imperial and Islamic texts and activism, and the impact of evolving, especially British, land policies and state institutions of social control.'(xxi) Nichols draws from this variety of

sources to characterise both the impact of imperial intrusion upon the tribes themselves, and the complexities of imperial-tribal relationships. What emerges from this wide-ranging ethnographically oriented history is a well documented and engrossing account of how Pakhtuns were able to maintain the central values, customs and agricultural practices of their lineage society by forcing imperial intruders into compromise on key issues.

More than half of the book concerns itself with British policies in the Peshawar valley, from which further variations on this theme appear. Making good use of the Peshawar Archives, Nichols reveals the difficulties that George Lawrence and his successors in the Peshawar Division faced in attempting to impose on the Pakhtuns the land and social policies of the Government of the Punjab. Following Gilmartin, Nichols describes and further documents the British strategy of working through existing lineage groups as a means to achieve stability and continuity, a strategy that did not always provide the panacea intended. Efforts were also undermined by a flawed revenue system requiring continual remission of income, a disposition to lump all defiance on the frontier under the rubric of religious fanaticism, and persistent difficulty in balancing customary law with western jurisprudence.

Nichols uses the Pakhtun revolt of 1897 as a concluding case study to demonstrate the dilemmas facing both sides. In the aftermath, the British had to temper their punishment of the Pakhtuns to fit the practical limits of their power, while Pakhtun village and tribal chiefs manoeuvred to protect their own lineage groups from retribution. In the latter case, Nichols offers persuasive evidence for his view that the 'subaltern' view of peasant solidarity in the face of imperial threat can be seriously questioned. Nichols also devotes a chapter to the emergence and consequences of an Anglo-Pakhtun culture of elite leaders, a theme Ian Talbot has pursued with respect to other parts of the Punjab.

Having presented his picture of the 'settling' of the Peshawar Valley, Nichols reveals that he has intended an irony in the title of his work. He argues that 'the imagery of a "frontier" needing civilizing, a "shatter zone" of relative insignificance between imperial domains, was an imperial creation derived from power dynamics and political competition' (253). The concept of settlement is thus 'a convenient metaphor justifying imperial dominion' (253). In the context of the Pakhtun society and its interaction with successive imperial powers so thoroughly sketched out by Nichols, these statements contain much truth. However, it seems to me that there are also dynamics of 'frontier' present in the geographical area of this study, even if they simply involve an imperial decision about how far domination can practicably be extended.

Such minor reservations aside, this study makes an important contribution not only to our knowledge of the Pakhtuns and the Peshawar Valley, but also to the larger dimension of nineteenth century British policy in the Punjab.

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A. Nandy (ed.) *The Secret Politics of Our Desires: Innocence, Culpability and Indian Popular Cinema* (London: Zed Books, 1997) ix + 259 pp £14.95 ISBN 1 85649 5167.

K.M. Gokulsing and W. Dissanayake *Indian Popular Cinema: A Narrative of Cultural Change* (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books, 1998). xiv + 151 pp. £13.95 (pb). ISBN 1 85856 096 9. In India this book is published by Orient Longman.

All fantasies and visions have their politics, not least the dream machines of national cinemas. Indian popular cinema, one of the largest national film industries in the world, has long been the subject of fierce and extremely polarised debate among cultural critics. There are those who denigrate it as a vulgar, inferior form peddling fantasies for the poor to keep them in their place. Others celebrate it as a vibrant, essential feature of life in south Asia and its diasporas - a kind of foundational metatext in which not only a way of life but the Indian way of life is inscribed and reproduced. Indian popular cinema has the capacity to transcend myriad differences, to travel and be appreciated by audiences across the globe - from Russia to Africa to the Middle East, to move and - arguably - to inspire a sense of common humanity. Yet despite the recent rise in scholarly and critical interest in transformations in Indian popular cinema there has been little sustained or nuanced reflection on its paradoxical consequences for changing constructions of Indian selfhood and political culture. Nor indeed has there been an even more basic introductory guide to the rich history and themes of Indian cinema for those interested but uninitiated into its pleasures. That is why these two volumes, though very different in nature and purpose, are most welcome.

Ashish Nandy, a social psychologist cum political theorist well known for his work on nationalism and the politics of selfhood, has brought together six essays on the cultural politics of Indian popular cinema. The essays are introduced by a provocative piece by Nandy himself in which he argues that popular Indian cinema represents 'a slum's eye view of politics'. The best metaphor for Indian popular cinema, according to Nandy, is the urban slum: 'both cinema and slum in India showed the same impassioned negotiation with everyday survival, combined with the same intense effort to forget that negotiation, the same mix of comic and tragic, spiced with elements borrowed indiscriminately from the classical and the folk, the East and the West.'

Nandy, not always averse to making rather sweeping if elegantly phrased claims, is intent on tracing connections between national and class psyche, political and popular culture.

Indian popular cinema, he tells us, offers a slum's eye vision not only of Indian politics and society but of the entire world. Popular Indian cinema may aspire to universality but the world to which he refers is the 'developing world'

where the slum is the 'first visible marker of modernization'. Slum dwellers (who number some 225 million people or 25% of the metropolitan population and who by the end of this decade will constitute 80% of the population of cities like Bombay and Calcutta), and the characters that populate Indian cinema, share the same class positioning and consciousness. They share the same vision of society, the same ability to provoke outrage, disdain and fear in the ranks of the bourgeoisie - fear, that is, of returning to the slum. This is a palpable fear among India's middle classes, says Nandy, because every day they are confronted with the 'dark, ominous, ill-understood, unmanageable presence' of slum dwellers. The slum, then like popular cinema, is a camouflage that hides (yet ultimately reveals) the 'repressed', 'disowned self' of a modernising society. Slums and their dwellers are as much a constant embarrassment to the Indian middle class elite as are the aesthetics and audiences of popular Indian cinema. But both are increasingly powerful political agents, and here lies the nub of the argument.

The volume is centrally concerned with the changing political culture of India, human agency, and the prospects of achieving a more egalitarian society. Indian cinema, as several of the other contributors also argue, has moved from a golden age of pastoral innocence in which morally incorruptible heroes and heroines prevailed, (epitomised by the social realist films of the 1940s and 50s, by cinematic heroes such as Raj Kapoor who occupies a central and almost sacred symbolic space in this volume, and by directors like Guru Dutt), to a transformed cinema of hyper-realist, hyper-masculinist violence (best represented by the films of Amitabh Bachchan). In its latest cinematic incarnation, the 'disowned self' of modern India returns in monstrous form to haunt its culpable elites. In today's era of lost innocence, says Nandy, cinema like the slum, threatens and mocks India's elites. It implicates them as guilty parties in the project of inhumane modernity. It confronts them with the dark underbelly of their consumerist desires, with the havoc wreaked by urbanisation, modernisation, the break up of communities and the desperate dispossession of an ever growing poverty stricken underclass.

This growing underclass, however, has ever greater voting power in India, the largest 'democracy' in the world. The power of popular cinema is, in Nandy's eyes, synonymous with the growing political power of the lower middle classes which now 'constitutes the ideological locus of Indian politics'. Cinema not only shapes, and is shaped by, politics but it actually constitutes a new language of politics. Formal social sciences have not yet established a set of concepts and critical tools to deal with this new form of politics, argues Nandy. But Indian popular cinema has. It 'serves as a poor man's political scientist working in tandem with the astrologer on the one hand, and the political activist on the other'.

This is a seductive and compelling argument to read, bolstered by the persuasiveness of his data on demographic shifts, and his reflections on the plight of slum dwellers, the anxieties of the middle classes, and the growing

electoral power of India's urban poor. However, the shakiness of this analysis, and perhaps any analysis of collective psyches, and the absence of more sustained discussion of specific films or their reception, leaves one feeling sceptical, especially about the extent to which popular cinema plays on feelings of repressed guilt among the upwardly mobile middle classes (if that were so then why is change so slow?). Assumptions about the ideological and psychological effects of cinema pervade the argument. Moreover the significant rise of the Hindu right, so relevant in this context, is disappointingly relegated to a footnote.

By the end of the book one feels that Nandy has stolen the thunder from his contributors because he has synthesised their arguments into his own so effectively. On the other hand the repetition of themes lends a certain coherence to the volume, the result of a four year collaborative study that set out to raise awareness of popular films as an 'alternative, non-formal frame of political and social analysis'.

One of the great strengths of the volume lies in the way several of the authors explore the politics of popular cinema via the inter-weaving of personal biography and memory, film narrative and astute sociological and political analysis. The first two essays explore the decline and decay of Indian political life as refracted through aesthetic shifts in narrative, iconography and characterisation. Ziauddin Sardar's piece 'Dilip Kumar Made Me Do It', though long (70 pages) is rich in insights on the personal and political dimensions of Indian cinema. It examines the changing social and subjective dimensions of cinematic experience from a British Asian perspective with a focus on the films of Dilip Kumar. Asian Britain, he argues, was 'incorporated by the social institution of Indian cinema' and empowered by it. The films in which Dilip Kumar starred were much more than entertainment they were a 'source of contemplation', as well as a 'reservoir of cultural and aesthetic values'. Dilip Kumar's films politicised the young Sardar as they made him constantly question and critique the status quo. They also set the literary agenda in his home. At all night *mushaira* (poetry recitals), held on the last Saturday of every month, his father would insist that all those present recite a *ghazal* in *tarannum* or in other words to sing the *ghazal* as though it were a film song. He presents an image of the crisis of Indian political life, (paying due attention to the rise of the Hindu Right and 'the failure to achieve our own multicultural point of mutual balance and communication'), with some poignancy, and sees this decline reflected in the kind of anomic and violent films produced since the 1970s. Echoing the now standarised critique of Indian popular cinema, he argues that it is culpable for its 'denigration of cultural excellence', for its 'failure of imagination, indeed for its determination to have no visible brain at all'. Ironically perhaps, he looks to Pakistani television dramas (now hugely popular across South Asia), to provide the kind of deep narratives, quality script writing and social critique that once characterised popular Indian cinema.

Rajni Bakshis's essay 'Raj Kapoor' continues the theme of political decline and decay in India through reflections on the personal cum political trajectory of Kapoor's screen life and public life: 'His age also lived through the images he wove and the rhythms he set'. What was the nature of the young man's journey from the pride and confidence of *Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai* to the despair of *Ram Teri Ganga Maili*? Did the journey have anything to do with Kapoor's own life story? She argues that it did. Kapoor 'never separated reel life from real life'. His response to the failure of the Nehruvian vision was to acknowledge the decay but to continue to court the ruling elite - for which he paid a heavy price, descending into alcoholism and depression in his later years. Like Sardar, she draws on mimetic theories to intimate that his self-destructive decline mirrors that of Indian political life.

Raj Kapoor was superceded by Amitabh Bachchan, and he too, though in an entirely different way, has come to personify for many the disintegration of Indian political life. He is the focus of Fareeduddin Kkazmi's essay 'How Angry is the Angry Young Man?: Rebellion in Conventional Hindi Films'. Khazmi locates the meteoric rise to fame of Bhachchan in the 1970s, an era when the euphoria of Independence had disappeared - a time when the contradictions of capitalism sharpened, poverty deepened and the underclass grew, and the Congress Party could no longer manage or contain them:

> Bachchan in all his films is one of the oppressed ...In all these films the hero [...] rises to equal his exploiters.[...] His system of justice and his role as an underworld don are projected as a means of redistributing power between the legally recognized city and the marginalized city [slum]. It is the articulation of the anguish of this marginalised sector that explains the phenomenon of Amitabh Bachchan. (p.139-140)

But the problem, as Khazmi points out, adopting an Adornoesque stance, is that the hero's anger, and by implication that of the spectator, is not directed at the state and its institutions but at the characters' foibles and failures - thus neutralising any potentially subversive or oppositional messages. The films thus present the problems of the oppressed but propose individualistic, apolitical and anti-social solutions. He concludes that the political and cinematic discourses on law and order, public morality and vigilantism parallelled each other. His argument, though well supported by close textual analysis, again makes large assumptions about how audiences interpret the films.

Anjali Monteiro's piece, 'Official Television and Unofficial Fabrications of the Self' explores, in more fine grained detail, the reception of state TV. She examines the new forms of negotiation of meanings and subjectivities thrown up in the space of encounter between state TV discourses of selfhood and modernity, and the varied interpretive strategies by different audience groupings. Using a more subtle Foucauldian framework combined with detailed textual and ethnographic analysis she takes us on a journey, weaving a complex and subtle

set of arguments to explicate how Indian state TV redefined familial space and life; the meanings of TV as an object and social experience for middle class families, for men and women, and among other audience groupings, for Goan Catholics; their changing perceptions of parenthood and childhood; and the consumption of selfhood. She gets close to the heart of the processual nature of identity construction and transformation, and the way TV consumption is implicated in these proceses.

Moving back to the world of film, K. Ravi Srinivas and S. Kaali's piece 'On Castes and Comedians: The Language of Power in Recent Tamil Cinema', is a most welcome acknowledgement and recognition of India's many cinemas - not just that of Bombay. They explore the caste connotations of comic sub-plots or 'authorized transgressions' of Tamil film. They explore films which break with narrative conventions, especially the resolution of all contradictions of caste in narrative closure, and which openly discuss the Dalit question. This is done through a transformation of the role of the comic who becomes a key protagonist rather than a minor character used for comic relief, and effects a 'radical re-ordering of the dominant discourses about caste', and in doing so destabilises spectator positioning. In this sense Tamil cinema represents and provokes debate about collective anxieties around caste as well as collective dreams and aspirations for a better future.

In the final essay, 'The Impossibility of the Outsider in the Modern Hindi Film', Vinay Lal argues that Indian cinema is embedded in the mythic structures and narratives that have defined Indian civilization. As a result 'Hindi film almost altogether denies, and certainly until very recently did wholly deny, the possibility of any significant other, and in this respect remains uniquely true to the genius of Indian civilization, of which the most characteristic specimens are undoubtedly the Puranas' (p.232). He sees the Hindi film itself as a battlefield in which the Indian nation and Indian modernity, and its ever-shrinking boundaries of inclusivity, threaten the universality of Indian civilisation. Unlike Sardar and Khazmi, who perceive a rupture in Indian popular cinema dating from the 1970s, Lal argues that the absence of any durable other (either as villain or anomic hero), is a continuous thread in Indian cinema, and accounts for much of its social and political appeal. Outsiders get re-incorporated, even if only as a 'camouflaged insiders' at the margins of society.

This book invites readers to reflect upon the politics of intimacy and the intimate nature of the dialectic between popular and political culture, for like it or hate it, few can escape this fantastic fantasy factory or entirely avoid it. Its narratives and imagery, music, songs and dance continue to provide the psychic furnishings of national and transnational imagination.

The centrality of cinema to the politics of the imagination and of subjectivity is made evident in K.M. Gokulsing and W. Dissanayake's *Indian Popular Cinema: A Narrative of Cultural Change*. It performs an entirely different function from Nandy's volume, and may at first sight appear more prosaic but it is a very valuable introduction to Indian popular cinema which, as

they say, 'constitutes the main element of entertainment for at least a sixth of the world's population'. Though simple and straightforward to read, it summarises and crystallises a wealth and depth of knowledge about the history and development of Indian popular cinema, and provides useful suggestions for further reading. It is not strictly academic, eschewing detailed discussion of some of the key concepts of film studies, but it is theoretically and politically well informed and would serve lecturers and students well on A level and undergraduate media studies courses, as well as being of great interest to the general reader.

It is a clearly structured text moving from an account of the early evolution of Indian cinema, to an exploration of its distinctive generic and aesthetic features, and an examination of issues such as the role of cinema in Indian society, representations of religion, ethnicity, caste and women, the significance of regional cinemas, and recent developments in the film industry.

Though the prognosis for the development of a progressive politics in popular cinema looks generally bleak, given recent trends, the future remains unpredictable. The liberalisation of the Indian economy, the globalisation of cultural markets, the growth of regional cinemas, the increasing attempts of popular cinema to appeal to diaspora audiences, as well as transnational exchanges between film producers, are likely to fundamentally alter and fragment the film industry. But these trends are unlikely, certainly in the near future, to diminish the popularity of one the greatest cinemas in the world.

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A.Shastri and A.Jeyaratnam Wilson (eds), *The Post-Colonial States of South Asia: Democracy, Identity, Development and Security*, (Surrey, Curzon, 2001) xviii +358 pp. £55 (hb). ISBN 0-7007-1292-5.

This book is dedicated to the editors' teachers and, as such, can be viewed as a valuable teaching tool for South-Asianists. Fifteen essays covering the significant issues of democracy, identity, development and security within the region are combined to 'highlight the complex processes of political change and development that are underway in the South Asian states' (blurb). Refreshingly, India does not entirely dominate the content of the book and, in that chapters focus on the intriguing nature of Nepali polity and Bangladeshi identity, new vistas of comparative research are introduced to the academic world. However, glaring limitations of analysis and theoretical discussion lead to the impression that the book offers far more in terms of potential than substance. If approached as more than an introductory primer on the most pressing points of concern within South Asia, the value of such a work is seriously impeded.

The first section, 'Democracy,' consists of descriptive essays of the political

characteristics of each state under scrutiny. Stanley Kochaneck delivers the standard account of Indian politics that posit the Nehru years as a 'Golden Age' of strong institutions and democratic legitimacy followed by chaos and disorder. Samina Ahmed emphasises the role of the military as the fulcrum around which each event in the political career of Pakistan has turned. The diplomat, D. Hugh Evans describes Bangladesh as a nation still coming to terms with the advent of democracy, while Sri Lankan politics is depicted as a reflection of the personal whims and fancies of each successive prime minister. The latter essay gives the greatest explanatory power to the role of the individual. Conversely, Nepal is depicted as a land of ritual and patronage where the elite, who comprise the entire political domain from the palace to the communist parties, show no sign of relinquishing their authority over the polity.

Already the value of the book in putting together these accounts is poignant. The reader has an opportunity to draw out similarities and create comparative hypotheses about the region. What does democracy mean in South Asia? Could the notion of 'democratic authoritarianism' suggested by Ayesha Jalal (Jalal, 1995) stretch to the states other than India, Pakistan and Bangladesh? How is democracy translated in the region? Is there a pure form of democracy that the South Asian states aspire to, or should the forms of governance within the region be perceived as alternative and legitimate within themselves? While these questions cannot it be answered within the framework of the book, it successfully whets the appetite for deeper research and analysis on the subject.

The subsequent sections on 'Identity,' 'Development' and 'Security' are inevitably more focused. Still following the format of descriptive narrative, they plot the various flash points of interest in South Asia. Jaffrelot charts the rise of Hindu nationalism, seeing it as a deep-rooted phenomenon within the Indian subcontinent rather than a short-term response to the collapse of Nehruvianism. Such an approach indicates the limited capacity of the state to institutionalise and promote secularism. However, both de Silva and Mursheed argue that only a more autonomous state within Sri Lanka and Bangladesh can enable the conciliation of the political demands of rival identities within their respective states. The essay by Raju G. C. Thomas on the 'nationalities' question in South Asia is perhaps the most relevant to scholars of Punjab as he draws upon the changing self-identity of moderate Sikhs and Hindu perceptions of them during the mid-1980s as an example of 'the transforming nature of ethnicity and conflict in South Asia' (p205).

'Development' is the most innovative, albeit the most India-centric section of the book. A relative dearth of accessible literature on the political economy of liberalisation (see the edifying Sachs et al, 2000) is somewhat alleviated by the two essays by Herring and Chandra Mohan and Vanita Shastri. Both contain critical analyses of the discourses, causes and consequences of liberalisation. Herring and Chandra Mohan argue that economic reform did not emerge from any redistribution of political power, nor did it result in a redistribution of wealth amongst different sectors of the Indian economy. The winners of economic

reform concur with the dominant-proprietary class of Pranab Bardhan's by now classic thesis, (Bardhan, rep 1992) while 'The relative losers of liberalisation in class terms were the same as the losers under the license-permit-quota *raj*' (p234). Shastri, on the other hand, has a far more positive approach to the necessity of reforms. Her analysis explores the constraints and impediments to the reform process that should be removed in order to ensure the efficacy of next steps of the reform process. Her prescriptive approach tackles the nature of language that sells liberalisation stating 'the next spate of reforms could come when the economic reform proposals are conveyed in a language that can demonstrate that reforms will benefit the common man and can help provide opportunities for the poor' (p259). Thus, both essays contribute to the vital and yet wanting debate on liberalisation in India in particular, and the compulsions that influence democracy and development in the postcolonial state in general.

Due to the nature of the increasingly volatile and unsettling relations between India and Pakistan, perhaps the most compelling essay of the book is Vernon Hewitt's 'Creating a Common Home'. He methodically sets out the history of mistrust and hostility between the two neighbouring states, examining the legacy of Partition, the Kashmir crisis, as well as military and interestingly, economic competition. While it makes for a fairly depressing read, Hewitt does at least attempt to suggest remedies to break the post Kargil impasse between Lahore and Delhi. However it is difficult to ascertain how many concessions either nuclear-holding country will make following the on-going 'War on Terrorism' in Afghanistan.

In delineating the trajectory of democracy and the issues that hinder or further its progress in South Asia, this book is a useful and up-to-date aid to students of the area. However, it is disappointing that the editors present an analytically weak introduction to the corpus of essays. This space could have been used to locate each essay within its historiographical context and to inform the reader of the debates that predicate and contradict each article. For example, Kochanek's assumptions on Nehru's period in office have been questioned by an increasingly influential critique (Corbridge and Harriss, 2000). Conversely, the claims that are asserted about the different states of the region such as 'each state in South Asia has in common a serious attempt to succeed as a state in perpetuating itself as an established entity' (p2), are so general as to be applicable to any postcolonial state. Thus the very specificity of South Asia, (unless the specificity is confined to geographical proximity), and consequently the entire premise of the book is left vague and ill defined. This should not detract from the very many positive qualities of the book that excels as an accessible introduction to the post-colonial states in South Asia.

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Patwant Singh and Harinder Kaur Sekhon, *Garland Around My Neck, The story of Puran Singh of Pingalwara* (Delhi: UBSPD, 2001), 173pp., Rs. 495 (hb). ISBN 81 7476 337 6.

My earliest memory of Bhagat Puran Singh and his 'pingalwara' goes back to little scraps of paper, receipts of remuneration sent to him by my parents on certain occasions. This typifies the quiet manner in which he implemented his mammoth missionary project. Yes of course in the gurdwara, one sees the modest 'golak' for donations for Pingalwara. So when I saw this slick biography, 'at long last' was my cliched reflex reaction for several reasons: ultimately, there is focus turned (sadly posthumously) on a life meaningfully spent in obscurity and by widely renowned biographers. Although similarly devoted to the upliftment of the downtrodden, Bhagat Puran Singh's life remains almost obscure when juxtaposed with other public figures like Mother Teresa, whose life and death were publicised with tremendous razzmatazz.

The tribute has come late but better late than never at all. So far the only write-ups on Bhagat Puran Singh were in local tracts or certain shoddy books which never inspired that elite readership which is a requisite for opinion building. So, readers take the bait - you will not be disappointed. Plunge into a Punjab, which does not only spurt terrorist activity or generate green revolutions, but flows with a humanitarian spirit as well. Punjab is the backdrop for this riveting saga of a rare human being, who personified sacrifice to bring dignity and hope to thousands of suffering fellow beings. This biography evokes Puran Singh's compassion, and the beautifully expressive title - 'Garland Around My Neck' is an allegory for Piara Singh the abandoned, mute mentally disadvantaged child, crippled for life by a spinal deformity, whom he carried on his back for 14 years. By always carrying him around, he elevated him to the 'garland around his neck'. Piara became the symbol of Puran Singh's caring disposition and his life's mission to care for those rejected by society.

The book comprises of photographs, and a tirelessly culled text. Photographs are essential for resurrecting the intensity and devotion in his persona. The core of such biographies must come straight from the heart, which is in keeping with the theme of the individual's life - spontaneity. Yet the

hagiography is missing, mercifully.

Using anecdotes, and hearsay, the book recreates the life of Bhagat Puran Singh. This is because archival material and well-documented records are scarce (as mentioned in the Preface) if one is not born into the upper echelons of Indian's hierarchical caste structure. As the authors state, resurrecting the early years was more difficult but sources in the post partition period at Amritsar were relatively accessible. The conceptualization and the eventual outcome of the book can be attributed to the fact that Harinder Sekhon went and lived in Pingalwara for some time to attain first hand knowledge.

The authors have highlighted Sikhs' largely forgotten ideal of *seva*. It was this ideal which shaped Puran Singh's entire outlook, as he intuitively understood that although the word means 'to serve' it has a deeper import.

After Partition, Puran Singh's prime concern became the sick and handicapped, who were unable to fend for themselves and whose problem was further aggravated by a poorly functioning kitchen, where a near-stampede occurred at meal times with the disabled unable to get near the food. Puran Singh took to fetching it for them twice a day, despite the problem of where to leave Piara in that crowded camp. An incontinent and mentally disadvantaged person was not always viewed kindly by people. Piara, though seventeen, could not sit up by himself due to a spinal deformity, so Puran Singh carried him on his back on most of his errands; he also had to give him an enema every day.

That Puran Singh's sensibility was vastly different from others became evident when, at the height of the gastro-enteritis and cholera epidemics, he would collect the soiled clothes of patients and wash them every day.

The entire book makes interesting reading as it gives, for example, the origins of the Grand Trunk Road as well as spiritual and cultural mores. By the time the book draws to a close, with Bhagat Puran Singh's endeavours now a fully fledged institution, there is a sense of achievement, but there is regret that the Nobel Prize eluded him: if anyone deserved it, he did.

The book is a timely interlude in a world bedazzled by consumerism and the narration of this exemplary life will disseminate this paradigm for posterity. People in the rest of India are quite oblivious that there was such a man with such missionary zeal. The book is an odyssey into the world of those we abandon and the authors have recreated the ambience by realistic photographs and an emotionally stirring text.

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Stephen Alter, *Amritsar to Lahore - Crossing the Border between India and Pakistan*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), US$24.95 (pb) ISBN 081 2217 438 (NB The page references in this review are to the New Delhi: Penguin, 240pp, Rs 250 edition.)

The author, an American, professes that he bears a grudge against borders: so do most people, particularly, the inhabitants on either side of the border in question. Crossing the border either way has been the most painful chapter of their lives - when they became refugees. Today, for either side to retrace or go back even on a casual visit to their former homes is a mammoth task, almost an impossibility, buried under reams of paper and red tape. Yet, despite their divisive history, most people in South Asia share an enormous curiosity and fascination for what lies across the border, whether it be the problems of poverty and political freedom, or the latest film or ghazal recording.

Whereas in the West borders seem to be collapsing, in the subcontinent, this border remains a formidable barrier, 'an artificial fault line' (in the author's terminology) that lies between the two countries, which were formerly components of one nation. In spite of the vivisection, their destinies remain inextricably linked, be it in war or peace. The author, who has lived in India for most of his life, starts and finishes his travels in New Delhi, visiting the cities of Amritsar, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Peshawar, as well as the hill stations of Mussoorie in India and Murree in Pakistan. Crossing the border by train, he traces the legendary route of the Frontier Mail and, after reaching the Khyber Pass, he returns by bus along the Grand Trunk Road, that was once the lifeline of the undivided subcontinent.

The book is much more than a conventional travelogue: each chapter raises questions about national and individual identity, the territorial imposition of history and the abhorrence he has for borders, particularly in societies with so many commonalties. Even though in Pakistan, he ate a 'Pakistani omelette' it was no different from the Indian one - the ingredients were the same, and 'the harassment and delays on this side of the border were no different from what we had experienced in Attari' (p6). In the course of his travel he senses paradoxical emotions, an intense nostalgia, an unquenchable curiosity about the people on the other side, yet an uneasy suspicion and unease, particularly on such issues as Kashmir and the nuclear tests. These paradoxical emotions are apparent in every Indo-Pak interaction. If either cross the border, they do so most enthusiastically and return overwhelmed by the hospitality they receive on an individual basis, yet they resent the suspicions cast on them by the immigration and collectively they resent the nation which lies across the border.

> Add to this the ceremonial rituals of frontier guards, the imposing sentries in their uniforms, the raising and lowering of flags, the percussive march of hobnailed boots, and it all becomes a play, a drama, a tableau which attempts to convince us that borders are something to be honoured and defended. For the next three hours,

> I watched the lines move slowly forward, as the officials put each traveller through an inquisition. There was something vindictive in the way they treated the passengers, as if these were traitors or enemies of the state simply because they were crossing the border. (p.81)

The nostalgia on both sides of the border is evident in the case of Randhir Mehra, who shifted from Sialkot at partition and retains his ration card fifty years hence. The pain of shifting is so wrenching, that he cannot speak of it, his home sickness persists and he clutches onto the only tangible momento he has of the past.

> The yellowed paper seemed ready to fall apart in my hands. A column of cryptic numerals tallied up the monthly quotas of flour, rice, and cooking oil - the basic staples of life - which had been bought more than fifty years before. (p.45)

Yet for Randhir Mehra the ration card had a much greater significance; it was a record of the past, a faded symbol of identity, proof of his name, his family, his origins.The author has captured the pathos of partition and the remorse that endures on both sides of the border. His observations are interesting, minute and meaningful:

> The blue hundred-rupee notes which I gave him had a picture of Mahatama Gandhi on one side. What I received in exchange were green notes of the same denomination with a picture of Mohammed Ali Jinnah wearing his caracul hat. In this way I traded the founding father of one nation for the other. Even the simple procedures of currency exchange carried historic overtones. (p. 73)

The author quotes various instances, the futility of borders and the impact of drastic imposition of boundary lines on human emotions and lives. For instance, Syed Ibrahim in Lahore, was born in Jhansi and now fifty years later he has to go back to try and trace his birth certificate - a stupendous task. Apprehensively, he cross examines the author and laments as he reminisces that he had arrived on that very station fifty years ago before.

The book could evoke the interest of the diaspora from both sides of the border - those who crossed over in 1947 and never recrossed, those who were born after the imposition of the border yet are curious to know of the lands their parents abandoned, never to return. I conclude with a paragraph, which would make both Indians and Pakistanis nostalgic since this reflects the ambience of both their countries:

> It had grown dark. Outside the train, I could see village lights and smell the smoke of cooking fires. A chorus of frogs was singing in the flooded ditch at the foot of the embankment while fireflies began to flicker in the darkness, pulsating brightly. The air was

> still and hot and the carriage was poorly ventilated. Several of the fireflies came through the windows and blinked in our faces as we waited, too exhausted to move. By nine o'clock most of the voices had fallen silent. (p. 84)

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