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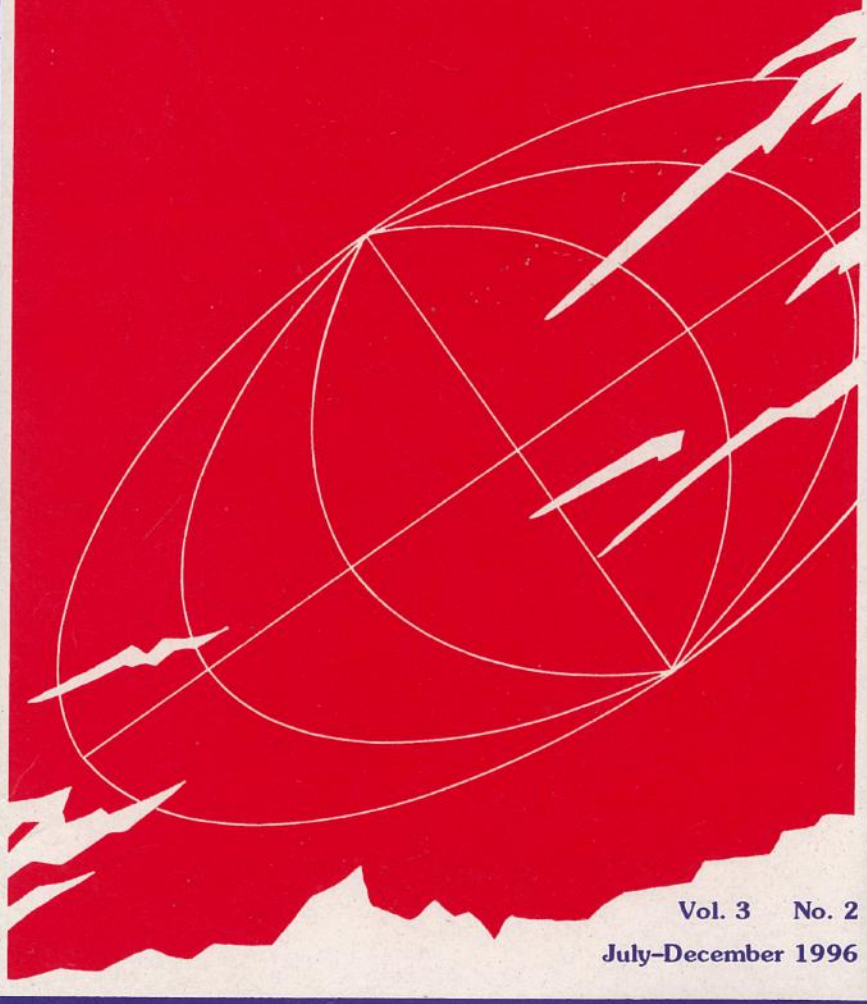

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Agricultural Development and Agro-industries in the Process of Industrialisation: A Case Study of Punjab (India)

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This paper attempts to bring out the instrumental role of agriculture in the process of industrialisation of a predominantly agrarian, constrained open economy of Punjab. A set of agro-industries has been identified on the basis of growth performance, dominance of the industry within the state and comparative advantage vis-à-vis other states of India which can become nucleus of Punjab's future industrialisation strategy. For these industries to be successful the question of ownership, organisation, scale and technology needs a careful consideration. The paper examines the suitability of various alternatives available to the state from the point of view of economic efficiency, technological upgradation, marketability of the product and harmonising relations between the producer and the processor and suggests a strategy which can lead Punjab's predominantly agrarian economy on the road to industrialisation.

This paper deals with the development of agro-industries in the context of a fast-growing predominantly agrarian, constrained open economy of Punjab. It begins with a review of the proposition that accelerated agricultural growth accelerates the growth of non-agricultural sectors even more. The relationship between agricultural growth and size structure of manufacturing industry is also discussed. In the light of this discussion the expected pattern of growth of the economy of Punjab is spelled out. This is followed by a discussion of the development of Punjab economy, particularly, the pattern of growth in the post-green revolution period. The composition of the manufacturing sector and the pattern of growth of various industries at the disaggregated 2-digit level is also attempted here. On this basis 10 industries have been identified which can become the core of Punjab's future industrialisation strategy.

Since five of the ten industries so identified belong to the agro-processing

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group, a detailed exercise at the 3-digit level of disaggregation is carried out to find out those agro-processing industries in which Punjab has comparative advantage vis-à-vis other states of India. This is necessary because in the context of the large Indian market Punjab has to compete with other states and push its way through.

For these industries to be successful the question of ownership, organisation, scale and technology has to be given a serious thought. A review of these issues raises the question of viability of different alternatives available to the state from the point of view of economic efficiency, scale of operation, technological upgradation, marketability of the product and harmonising relations between the producer and the processor. In the end a summary of the main findings and policy implications emerging from an study are spelled out.

AGRICULTURE TO INDUSTRY: THEORY AND EVIDENCE

'The faster agriculture grows, the faster its relative size declines' wrote John W. Mellor way back in 1966.[1] Nearly three decades later this statement still seems to capture the essence of agricultural growth and its causal relationship to the structural transformation and aggregate growth of an economy. The principle underlying this statement, of course, is that accelerated growth in agriculture accelerates the growth rate in the non-agricultural sector even more.

A great deal of literature has recently come up on the role of agriculture in economic development and structural change in the economy. This approach commonly referred to as 'agriculture on the road to industrialisation' strategy focuses attention on the domestic aspects of development. At the theoretical level several arguments are advanced to build up a case for agriculture-led employment-oriented strategy of development. It is argued that a major binding constraint on shifting of labour force from agriculture to non-agricultural activities is the availability of foodgrains. Therefore, acceleration in the growth rate of foodgrains production from a range of 2 to 3 per cent to a range of 4 to 5 per cent is bound to facilitate the growth of employment in both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The increased income in the crop husbandry sector of agriculture will increase the demand for superior foods like milk and milk products which in turn, is likely to provide necessary incentives for the growth of livestock and dairy industries. A formal model of this type was developed and tested by Mellor and Madahar.[2]

Agricultural growth is supposed to contribute to the growth of non-farm sector in many other ways. First, increased availability of marketed surplus will help in releasing labour for non-agricultural activities. Second, it will provide enough raw material for the development of agro-processing industries. Third, widespread income generation in agriculture will create a demand for agro-inputs as well as consumer goods industries. Some scholars have also given special emphasis on the crucial contribution of agriculture to industrialisation in terms of resource flows from agriculture to industrialisation in terms of resource flows from agriculture to industry. Their argument is that unless agricultural surpluses are siphoned off and simultaneously transferred along with labour force for capital formation in the industrial sector, the shift of labour force from low productivity agriculture to relatively high productivity industrial sector cannot take place. More specifically this has been the position of both classical and Marxist writers. The historical development of industrial capitalism has also been explained in these terms by scholars like Simon Kuznets and Colin Clark.

The whole thesis emphasising the importance of agriculture in initiating and accelerating the process of structural transformation presumes an initial large size of agriculture vis-à-vis other sectors of the economy but not necessarily its pre-eminent growth rate. In fact agriculture is innately a relatively slow-growing sector. At the lower end it tends to grow at 2 to 3 per cent per year. Driven largely by the rate of population and hence labour force growth combined with individual human ingenuity even with a relatively fixed land area, it normally grows at a rate comparable to or perhaps slightly slower than the rate of growth of population. At the other end of the spectrum a combination of efficient organisation of human ingenuity along with application of the scientific knowledge can accelerate the pace of growth of agricultural sector. But on a sustainable basis that rarely exceeds 4 to 6 per cent, which means barring exceptional circumstances for a short period of time, acceleration of agricultural growth implies more or less the doubling of that rate say from 2 to 3 per cent to 4 to 6 per cent.

In traditional societies non-agricultural sector's growth is also constrained by lack of systematic technological innovations and by small size of the local markets. It usually ranges between 2 and 3 per cent rate of growth which is similar to that of agriculture. But once the process of modernisation gets underway and the size of the market enlarges because of increased income of the agricultural sector, the non-agricultural sector has the capacity to grow for sustained periods at a rate in the region of 8 to 10 per cent per annum and sometimes even faster. Thus while the

application of scientific knowledge combined with human ingenuity and institutional reforms at best doubles agriculture's growth, the growth rate in the non-agricultural sector nearly triples. This phenomenon of differential growth rates in the agricultural and the non-agricultural sectors over a period of time increases the weight of the fast-growing non-agricultural sector in the sectorial composition of total output. Consequently, the overall growth rate accelerates towards the fast rate of the non-agricultural sector even though the respective sectoral rates remain unchanged. Thus this school of thought argues that it is the size of agriculture which gives it such importance in early stages of growth and overbalances its tendency for at best modest growth rates.

The foregoing discussion provides justification for initial emphasis on the agricultural sector and the justification lies with the large size of agriculture overbalancing its relatively lower growth rate potential. However agriculture will only play its designated role effectively in the process of transformation if development of agriculture itself is broad based. For example, if technological effort in agriculture remains confined to a particular crop and that crop accounts for only a small portion of the gross area sown, agriculture is unlikely to have a major impact on overall growth. Similarly, if small and marginal farmers or tenants operate a large proportion of the total cultivated area and, if for some reason, they are left out of the modernisation process, agriculture will not be able to play its designated role. Thus we find that agriculture's capacity to contribute to structural transformation of the economy into an industrial one will depend largely upon how fast and broad based its own transformation is.

Scale of Production

There is also the question of the scale of non-farm activities. In the process of transition from an agrarian to industrial economy should the emphasis be laid on establishing cottage and small-scale industries or setting up of large modern firms? Is there any relationship between the level of economic development and size structure of industries?

Parker[3] and Anderson[4] have developed general growth phase typologies based on the experience of the industrialised nations to explain changes in the size structure of industry by region and over time in Less Developing Countries (LDCs). According to their studies during the course of economic development, the composition of manufacturing activities when classified according to scale, appears to pass through three phases. In the first stage of industrial development when developing economies are predominantly agrarian, non-factory of craft-based

enterprises, usually called cottage and household industries (CHIs) are predominant in terms of their share in total manufacturing employment. At this stage CHIs coexist with a few large-scale, usually foreign or state-owned firms. Most of the people working in these CHIs are from low-income households in rural areas. These CHIs are closely related to agricultural production as providers of rudimentary input, some kind of processing of agricultural output or providers of customary services to the rural population. These include garment makers, smiths, shoemakers, handicraftsmen, masons, carpenters, builders, weavers and potters. Entry into these CHIs is free, skills required are low and more often than not, no separate workshops are really needed to carry out these activities. Most of these activities are undertaken as a part-time job during lean season to supplement the meagre income of their families. Many of these are one-person firms in which the owner undertakes all productive activity.

In the second phase, in economies characterised by higher per capita income, more modern small-scale industries (SSIs) or medium-scale industries (MSIs) have been found to emerge and increase at a comparatively rapid rate. In many sectors these SSIs and MSIs replace CHIs. These industries generally develop in response to growth of agriculture or rural incomes and expanding cash markets.[5] Introduction of diesel engine and the electrification of rural areas have also been found to facilitate greatly the growth of SSIs and MSIs.[6]

In the 'later' stage of development large-scale industries (LSIs) become predominant displacing the remaining CHIs and also SSIs in some activities. The LSIs sector is partly the result of growth over time of earlier MSIs and partly expansion of already existing LSIs including foreign concerns and some enterprises. In this final phase factors such as greater scale economies with respect to plant, management, marketing and distribution, superior technical and managerial efficiency, better productive coordination and access to supporting infrastructure, external finance, investment incentives, tariff structure and government subsidies are powerful causes and incentives for firms with sufficient entrepreneurial motivation to grow larger. Anderson[7] notes that these factors in practice favour large modern industries and explain the eventual predominance of LSIs in the advanced stage of industrialisation. Only those SSIs which can take advantage of some or all of these factors can grow or at least survive in the face of heavy competition from medium- and large-scale industries.

Tambunan[8] compiled data from various empirical studies and official statistical publications for 32 countries representing almost all the geographical regions of the world to verify the empirical status of this stage theory. His study shows that in countries with GDP or GNP per

capita higher than $1000, CHIs contributed between 5.6 per cent (in Brazil) and 35.0 per cent (in Jamaica) to the total manufacturing employment. In the $600 to $1000 income group it varied between 4 per cent in Korea and 47.5 per cent in Columbia. In the lower income group of countries with income below $600 per capita category it varied between 33.3 per cent in Turkey and 90 per cent in Sierra Leone. Thus, although there are some exceptions in certain regions and countries, the general trend indicates that as per capita increases the importance of SSIs (especially CHIs) decreases and those of MSIs and LSIs increases.

However, the rate and pattern of transition from CHIs to SSIs and from SSIs to MSIs and LSIs is found to vary greatly not only within sub-sectors of manufacturing in a particular region or between countries in the same sub-sector, but also between regions within a particular country and in the same sub-sector. In the Philippines, for instance, Anderson[9] found that between the late 1960s and 1970s while in food processing industries CHIs declined rapidly, absolutely as well as relatively as a consequence of the mechanisation of processing operations, in light engineering industries their share increased enormously in response to demand. In clothing and footwear industries employment in CHIs was sustained at high levels mainly because of sub-contracting. In some advanced nations, in certain sub-sectors such as electronics SSIs and MSIs have not only been found to be competing successfully with LSIs they have even improved their relative position.[10] The puzzle is how these SSIs and MSIs are able to survive in the face of competition from LSIs which have far superior position in terms of resources of almost every kind. This phenomenon is explained in terms of 'flexible specialisation'. In fact 'flexible specialisation' has become a new discussion point in the ongoing debate of the role of SSIs in LDCs. The underlying argument of the flexible specialisation thesis can be summed up as follows. Over time for some sectors the large-scale methods of production become out of date. The machines used for that scale become obsolete. The computer-controlled tools have transferred the ability to meet changes in demand promptly, cheaply and efficiently from large to small-scale firms. These new technologies have increased the relative viability of small firms, reduced scale economies and have made smaller plants and firms more efficient.

Agricultural growth and rising rural incomes also effect the structure of manufacturing industries. Agricultural growth effects the pattern of industrial development both from demand as well as from the supply side. From the demand side as agricultural output and rural incomes rise it creates demand in rural areas for consumer as well as capital goods such as machines, tools and equipment for agriculture. This demand is spatially

highly dispersed. So long as rural infrastructure and transport services are poor increase in local incomes and demand creates spatially fragmented markets which in a way provide protection to rural SSIs from the competition of urban-based MLSIs (Modern large and small-scale Industries). Sooner or later, however, improved infrastructure and transport facilities are bound to reach these newly emerging rural markets thereby reducing the transport and marketing costs of goods. Consequently marketing and transport costs of goods produced by urban-based MLSIs to the rural market may decline to a point where local SSIs producing similar goods no longer have any cost advantage. This is likely to shift demand in favour of better quality goods produced by urban-based MLSIs. Thus one would expect that in the initial stages the fast-growing agriculture will support the development of small-scale industries and after a certain level of development is reached the balance may shift in favour of urban-based MLSIs.

From the supply side, agriculture not only supplies labour and raw material but also has investment linkages with rural non-farm activities. So long as agriculture is backward and slow growing and productivity or income per worker is low, agricultural labourers and small farmers are pushed to do non-farm activities to earn additional income. This kind of labour from rural areas is usually absorbed in rural CHIs. In the second situation when agriculture becomes prosperous and agricultural labourers and farmers have a reserve price below which they will not go to work outside agriculture, the labour supply from farm to non-farm sector is determined by the pull factor. In this case they will be attracted out of agriculture into non-agricultural sectors because income in the latter is higher than in agriculture. Alternatively, rich farm households undertake non-farm activities as an effort to diversify their investment outside their own farm. In this case supply of labour from the farm sector is expected to flow to SSIs (high-income activities) rather than to CHIs (low-income or marginal activities). Therefore, one would expect the fast development of modern SSIs or MSIs rather than rural CHIs.

This theoretical discussion and review of empirical evidence suggests that fast-growing agriculture is likely to play an important role in the process of transformation of an agrarian economy into an industrialised one if certain conditions are fulfilled. Agriculture should have a pre-eminent position in terms of its relative size and it must be growing at a rate of 4 to 5 per cent per annum. Both these conditions are fulfilled by the post-green revolution Punjab. In 1960–61 about three-fifths of the net state domestic product in Punjab was originating in the primary sector. Even now agriculture's share in NSDP (Net State Domestic Product) is

nearly 50 per cent. As we shall see in the latter part of our study, agriculture in Punjab has been growing at a rate of around 5 per cent per annum. If Punjab's economy is not altogether dysfunctional, one would expect this fast growth of agricultural sector to be translated into a still higher, perhaps in the region of 7 to 10 per cent, rate of growth in the manufacturing sector. With so much of agricultural surpluses around, the manufacturing sector is likely to be dominated by agro-industries in general and agro-processing industries in particular.

With the rising per capita income of the rural sector along with the general upgradation of infrastructural facilities, logically one would expect a shift in the manufacturing sector of the Punjab away from low productivity, low wage, cottage and small-scale industries to high productivity, high wage, modern medium- and large-scale industries. Contemporary Punjab seems to fit into the second scenario discussed above where labour supply from the farm to the non-farm sector is determined by the pull factor rather than the push factor. Of course, some deviations from this expected growth path can take place as, after all, the economy of Punjab is not a closed but a constrained open economy. Being a part of the large Indian 'relatively free' market, its pattern of growth is also likely to be influenced by the developments taking place in the country elsewhere. But before we comment on the kind of industries which can become the nucleus of future industrialisation strategy of Punjab, it is imperative to know what has been the actual pattern of growth of Punjab's economy and industry ever since the beginning of the green revolution.

DEVELOPMENT OF PUNJAB ECONOMY AND THE GROWTH OF ITS MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Punjab was the last province of India to be annexed by the British in 1849. The British recognised its irrigation potential and in order to avert famines which had periodically haunted the lands, they started investing on a large scale in canal irrigation in the state. In fact 40 per cent of the total investments made by the British Government in irrigation canals in India up to 1919-20 was made in the Punjab. This had a noticeable impact on agricultural production which had otherwise remained stagnant for a long time. The completion of railway network gave further fillip to the commercialisation of agriculture in this area. These two factors together initiated the process of agricultural development in the Punjab in the mid-1920s.

Some industrial activity in Punjab started around 1930 in response to agricultural growth. It mainly consisted of agro-processing and agro-input machinery industries. The Second World War also gave some fillip to

industries in Punjab. Towns like Lahore, Amritsar, Dhariwal, Sailkot, Wazirabad and Batala emerged as industrial centres in the state. With the partition of India in 1947 the state of Punjab was also partitioned. The eastern part of the state became part of India and the western part, that of Pakistan. The Indian Punjab was again sub-divided in 1966 and the state of Haryana was carved out of it. Some of its areas were merged with Himachal Pradesh. Thus the present Indian Punjab in one of the smallest states of India and accounts for just 1.57 per cent of India's territory and 2.39 per cent of its population.

The partition of India in 1947 disrupted the entire economy of Punjab; in particular its industrial production came to a near halt. According to the Census of India in 1951 only 7 per cent of total work force in Punjab was engaged in industries, construction and public utilities compared to 65 per cent in agriculture and allied occupations, 10 per cent in commerce and transport and 18 per cent in services. The state accounted for only 1.8 per cent of total value of output generated in registered manufacturing sector in India compared with 33.8 per cent for Bombay, 27.0 per cent for Bengal and 12.2 per cent for Madras.[11]

Manufacturing industries made some progress in the state during the mid-1950s mainly as a result of efforts of the state which provided multiple incentives to entrepreneurs as a part of the rehabilitation programme. With the initiation of planning in early 1950s the state government provided the highest priority to investment in power and infrastructure. Consequently agricultural output started rising and this created demand for agro-inputs and machine goods industry. Apart from units producing agro-inputs some units producing hosiery goods, textile products and sports goods also came up during this period. All these factors combined to encourage industrial development in the small-scale sector. Some towns situated along the Delhi–Amritsar Grand Trunk road started emerging as industrial towns. For example Ludhiana emerged as the premier industrial town manufacturing hosiery goods, various types of engineering goods and consumer durables like bicycles and sewing machines. Gobindgarh became an important centre with numerous steel rerolling mills. Jalandhar developed as a centre of sports goods industry and leather goods. But the general level of industrial development remained rather limited.

The scenario started changing in the early 1960s and underwent a sea change with the coming of the green revolution. Sudden acceleration in the growth of agriculture around mid-1960s, through its forward and backward linkages and widespread income effects, catapulted the secondary and tertiary sectors to a higher growth trajectory.

Now Punjab is one of the fastest growing states of India and has the

highest per capita income in the country. The mainstay of Punjab's prosperity continues to be its buoyant agriculture which is getting reflected in a still faster rate of growth of the non-agricultural sector. Thus, as expected the Punjab economy is undergoing structural changes although the pace of change is rather slow. Some of the salient features of the pattern of growth in Punjab during 1960–61 and 1992–93 are brought out in Tables 1 and 2.[12]

Table 1

Net Domestic Product at Factor Cost by Industry of Origin in Punjab

(Rs millions at 1980-81 prices)

	1960-61	*1966-67*	*1970-71*	*1975-76*	*1980-81*	*1985-86*	*1990-91*	*1992-93*
Agriculture	7883.7	9501.0	10827.7	12324.7	14335.0	20359.8	23030.2	25526.8
Livestock	1803.7	1821.2	5173.1	6357.2	7220.7	9448.2	12713.2	14036.5
Agriculture and Livestock	9687.4	11332.2	1600.8	18681.9	21561.7	29808.0	35743.4	39563.3
Forestry & Logging	124.9	196.2	226.1	223.8	439.1	461.3	446.1	315.9
Fishery	7.8	8.5	9.7	11.8	15.1	21.0	62.3	90.8
Mining & Quarrying	1.8	1.5	16.4	2.5	9.1	6.0	16.2	24.1
Primary	9821.9	11528.4	16253.0	18920.0	22307.1	30618.4	36268.0	39994.1
	(57.91)	(54.98)	(57.87)	(55.09)	(49.84)	(51.36)	(48.39)	(48.86)
Manufacturing	1190.3	1697.7	2152.6	3289.1	4897.0	8326.4	12431.7	14197.8
Registered	592.4	941.3	1171.9	1756.1	2630.9	4797.1	7265.6	8346.4
Unregistered	597.9	756.4	980.7	1533.0	2266.2	3529.3	5166.1	5851.4
Construction	1468.9	1939.8	2265.2	2351.9	2737.9	2659.9	2610.2	2137.1
Electricity, Gas and Water	82.7	151.1	219.3	349.0	555.8	901.8	1734.3	1895.4
Secondary	2741.9	3788.6	4637.1	5990.0	8190.7	11888.1	16776.2	18230.3
	(16.17)	(18.04)	(16.51)	(17.44)	(18.30)	(19.94)	(22.38)	(22.27)
Transport, Storage, Communication and Trade	2044.8	2643.3	3562.9	5087.1	740.95	8688.0	10357.2	10819.4
Finance and Real Estate	1186.3	1371.5	1606.6	1820.4	3029.4	4048.6	5819.8	6763.7
Community Personal and Other Services	1165.6	1634.7	2023.7	2524.2	3819.4	4370.6	5727.8	6048.6
Tertiary	4396.7	5649.5	7193.2	9431.7	14258.3	17107.2	21904.8	23631.7
	(25.92)	(26.96)	(25.61)	(27.46)	(31.86)	(28.70)	(29.23)	(28.87)
Total NSDP	16960.5	20966.5	28083.3	34341.7	44756.1	59613.7	74949.0	81856.1
Per Capita SDP (In Rs)	1559.0	1777.0	2082.0	2320.0	2674.0	3249	3751	3950

Source: Statistical abstract of Punjab for various years.

Table 2
Growth Rates of NSDP in Punjab and India

	Punjab							
	1960-61 to 1966-67	*60-61 to 70-71*	*70-71 to 80-81*	*80-81 to 90-91*	*90-91 to 92-93*	*66-67 to 92-93*	*60-61 to 92-93*	*1967-68 to 1989-90*
Agriculture	3.18	3.22	2.84	4.85	5.28	3.87	3.73	–
Livestock	0.16	11.11	3.39	5.81	5.07	8.17	6.62	–
Agriculture and Livestock	2.65	5.14	3.02	5.18	5.20	4.92	4.49	2.80
Forestry & Logging	7.81	6.11	6.86	0.15	–15.84	1.84	2.94	1.09
Fishery	1.44	2.20	4.52	15.22	20.72	9.53	7.97	3.62
Mining & Quarrying	–2.99	24.72	–5.71	5.93	21.96	11.27	8.44	4.79
Primary	2.70	5.16	3.21	4.98	5.01	4.90	4.48	2.77
Manufacturing	6.09	6.10	8.56	9.76	6.87	8.51	8.05	5.16
Registered	8.02	7.06	8.42	10.69	7.18	8.09	8.61	5.98
Unregistered	3.99	5.07	8.73	8.58	6.42	8.18	7.38	3.86
Construction	4.74	4.42	1.91	–0.47	–9.51	0.37	1.17	2.65
Electricity, Gas and Water	10.56	6.21	9.74	12.05	4.54	10.21	10.28	8.46
Secondary	5.53	5.39	5.85	7.43	4.24	6.22	6.09	4.63
Transport, Storage, Communication and Trade	4.37	5.70	7.59	3.62	2.20	5.57	5.34	5.38
Finance and Real Estate	2.44	3.08	6.54	7.54	7.80	6.32	5.59	8.01
Community Personal and Other Services	5.79	5.67	6.55	4.31	2.76	5.16	5.28	6.36
Tertiary	4.26	5.04	7.08	4.75	3.86	5.65	5.39	6.13
Total NSDP	3.59	5.17	4.77	5.79	4.50	5.37	5.04	4.29
Per Capita SDP (In Rs.)	2.13	2.93	2.53	3.44	2.61	3.11	2.94	1.87

Source: 1. Punjab Figures are derived from Table 1.
2. Bhalla (1990) Table 1.

First, during this period the net state domestic product (NSDP) of Punjab grew at an annual rate of 5.04 per cent compared to 4.29 per cent

for the country as a whole. During the 32 years after 1960–61 the per capita income in real terms went up from Rs 1,559 in 1960–61 to Rs 3,950 in 1992–93 at constant 1980–81 prices, giving a growth rate of nearly 3 per cent per annum. During roughly the same period per capita income at the all-India level recorded a growth rate of 1.87 per cent per annum only.

Second, the growth is not confined to any single sector. If the primary sector has done very well, the secondary and tertiary sectors have done even better. During 1960–61 and 1992–93 the state economy recorded a rate of growth of 4.48 per cent in the primary sector, 6.09 per cent in the secondary sector and 5.39 per cent in the tertiary sector. In fact if we take 1966–67 as the cut-off year—the year in which new hybrid varieties of seeds were introduced in Punjab for the first time—the growth rates in all the three sectors are only marginally higher than for the period as a whole. In the post-1966-67 period primary sector grew at a rate of nearly 5 per cent per annum while secondary and tertiary sectors recorded a growth rate of 6.22 and 5.65 per cent per annum respectively. The growth rates of the primary and secondary sectors in Punjab are significantly higher than the all-India growth rate of 2.77 per cent and 4.68 per cent for primary and secondary sectors respectively.

Third within both the primary and secondary sectors, some sub-sectors have done remarkably well while some have not. As expected, the star performer within the primary sector is the livestock sub-sector which grew at a rate of 6.62 per cent per annum in this 32-year period under consideration. In the post-1966–67 period it recorded a phenomenal growth rate of 8.17 per cent per annum while forestry has done rather badly. Similarly, in the secondary sector while manufacturing, both registered and unregistered, as well as electricity have done exceedingly well, construction has been performing badly ever since 1970–71. In fact during 1980s and early 1990s it recorded a negative rate of growth. Partly at least this can be attributed to the disturbed conditions in the state during the period. Although all the three sub-sectors of the tertiary sector have been performing steadily, the influence of disturbed conditions is visibly reflected in the performance of 'transport, storage, communication and trade' sub-sector and to a lesser extent in the 'community personal and other services' sub-sector during the 1980s and early 1990s. Incidentally, the tertiary sector as a whole and all the three sub-sectors of the tertiary sector in Punjab have grown at a slower pace than their counterparts at the all-India level during the period under consideration. Thus Punjab's success is largely attributable to the performance of commodity producing sectors or growth of tradeables rather than non-tradeables.

Fourth, because of differential growth rates of the various sectors the

structure of Punjab economy has undergone a noticeable change over time. For example, at constant 1980–81 prices, the share of primary sector declined from nearly 58 per cent in 1960–61 to less than 49 per cent in 1992–93. On the other hand the share of the secondary sector went up from 16.17 per cent in NSDP in 1960–61 to 22.27 per cent in 1992–93, a gain of 6 percentage points. During the same period the share of the tertiary sector has gone up from nearly 26 per cent to 29 per cent. Thus we find that out of the 9 percentage point loss in the share of primary sector about two-thirds is accounted for by the gain of the secondary sector and the rest of the one-third by the tertiary sector. Despite this diversification in income generation, the Punjab economy continues to be predominantly agrarian with the share of primary sector being much larger (49 per cent) than at the all-India level.

Punjab has also started experiencing diversification in employment patterns. For example, according to the 43rd round of the National Sample Survey (NSS), the percentage share of labour force in agriculture has come down from nearly 60 per cent in 1977–78 to 50 per cent in 1987–88. This experience is remarkable in the sense that unlike other states of India the average per worker income in agriculture is roughly the same as in the non-agricultural sectors of the economy. Nearly half the total work force engaged in agriculture generates nearly half the total income. For India as a whole the average per worker productivity in the primary sector was only 35 per cent of the average income in the other sectors of the economy during 1986– 87.[13] This has some important implications because further shift in the structure of Punjab economy will take place only if per person productivity in the secondary sector records a quantum jump. Since small-scale industry existing in Punjab is predominantly low productivity industry the whole question of scale of output and technology in the manufacturing sector will have to be reviewed. But before we turn to that it would be interesting to have a close look at the structure and growth of the manufacturing sector in Punjab.

Data Base for Manufacturing

In India all the manufacturing units employing 10 or more workers and using power or those employing 20 or more workers but not using power have to get registered under the Factories Act 1948. Out of these factories those employing 50 or more workers and using power or employing 100 or more workers but not using power are surveyed by the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) on census basis and the rest are surveyed on the sample basis. Together these two components are known as the factory sector.

Table 3

Capital, Employment, Output and Value Added in Unregistered Sector in Punjab and India: 1984-85

I. Code	Industry Name	Punjab				India			
		Fixed Assets (Rs Lakhs)	*Employees (Numbers)*	*Output (Rs Lakhs)*	*Value Added (Rs Lakhs)*	*Fixed Assets (Rs Lakhs)*	*Employees (Numbers)*	*Output (Rs Lakhs)*	*Value Added (Rs Lakhs)*
20-21	Food Products	43395 (80)	78312 (61)	18777 (14)	6534 (32)	624206 (75)	6560714 (86)	793810 (36)	220541 (54)
22	Beverages, Tobacco and Products	266 (18)	4854 (53)	1768 (198)	488 (20)	51488 (70)	2448857 (87)	85485 (30)	46414 (48)
23	Cotton Textiles	14231 (79)	32121 (68)	1548 (7)	714 (20)	309151 (60)	6279415 (87)	259848 (27)	120468 (43)
24	Wool, Silk and Synthetic Fibre Textiles	665 (5)	11192 (22)	3045 (7)	820 (8)	28756 (19)	843644 (75)	91712 (20)	33778 (28)
25	Jute, Hemp & Mesta Textiles					1181 (6)	139103 (32)	12445 (8)	2892 (7)
26	Textile Products	32805 (96)	121367 (95)	6308 (30)	3703 (64)	846776 (98)	5567223 (98)	277831 (68)	168724 (85)
27	Wood and Wood Products, Furniture	2241 (97)	49856 (98)	6410 (94)	4209 (98)	423032 (98)	4944295 (98)	260507 (85)	149184 (93)
28	Paper and Paper Products	375 (6)	6393 (49)	966 (15)	425 (27)	45880 (19)	390458 (597)	75673 (20)	29668 (25)
29	Leather and Fur Products	22232 (97)	15781 (90)	2816 (57)	958 (73)	98985 (89)	759383 (92)	102080 (54)	41845 (73)
30	Rubber, Plastic, Petroleum and Coal Products	143 (99)	1973 (19)	4198 (24)	3778 (63)	22130 (10)	189849 (50)	64452 (5)	17630 (13)
31	Chemicals and Chemical Products	225 (1)	2573 (21)	1824 (5)	274 (3)	29045 (5)	359396 (41)	85900 (6)	18991 (6)
32	Non-metallic Mineral Products	468 (35)	16741 (93)	2196 (72)	946 (87)	151722 (46)	2598148 (86)	107196 (22)	61943 (33)
33	Basic Metal and Alloys Industries	569 (8)	5007 (17)	3537 (6)	417 (7)	10211 (1)	140920 (17)	54840 (4)	13799 (5)
34	Metal Products and Parts	915 (35)	15571 (57)	10275 (52)	6858 (2)	199226 (82)	1036019 (84)	164688 (43)	81550 (60)
35	Machinery, Machine Tools and Parts	11016 (73)	20985 (50)	7476 (28)	2268 (37)	47856 (25)	284904 (39)	76371 (11)	28552 (13)
36	Electrical Machinery, Apparatus, Appliances	139 (2)	976 (14)	272 (3)	166 (11)	18431 (12)	104615 (23)	49812 (8)	13923 (7)
37	Transport Equipment and Parts	300 (5)	5514 (15)	7118 (16)	4962 (41)	12631 (5)	110639 (17)	72163 (11)	51225 (22)
38	Other Manufacturing Industries	897 (65)	16562 (88)	2043 (51)	907 (69)	100901 (83)	1363427 (95)	97026 (56)	51230 (65)
39	Repair Services	11471 (97)	141415 (98)	8672 (84)	6633 (91)	287437 (95)	2538660 (93)	170356 (71)	112378 (79)
	Total	142369 (61)	552831 (69)	89280 (19)	45236 (42)	3268026 (53)	36785414 (84)	2902179 (23)	1283029 (37)

Source: 1. India, Ministry of Planning, CSO. *Directory Manufacturing Establishments Survey 1984-85* (New Delhi, 1989).

2. India, Ministry of Planning, NSSO. *Tables with notes on Survey of Unregistered Manufacturing: Non-director, Establishment and Own Account Enterprises*, 40th Round Number 363/1 and 363/2. (Part-II) (New Delhi, 1989).

Note:. Figures in parentheses are the percentage share of unregistered sector of total in that industry.

Except for capital invested, the data on other variables such as value o output, material consumed, value added and workers employed, etc., ar fairly reliable. These data are regularly published by the Central Statistica Organisation (CSO) and we have made use of this data for the registere sector.

Those manufacturing units which are not covered under the Factorie Act constitute the unregistered sector. For this sector industry-wise time series data is not available. Recently the Central Statistical Organisatio (CSO) conducted a census of these units for all-India as well as for all the states and the information relates to the year 1984–85.[14] Finally, some information is also available on small-scale industries which are defined on the basis of fixed investment.[15] But these units may or may not be registered under the Factories Act. Since small-scale industries is not an exclusive set, therefore data on small-scale industries cannot be correlated with other available information. Keeping these limitations in mind, detailed and disaggregated analysis of growth of manufacturing sector (and agro-industries in the third section) is confined only to the registered sector as it has not been possible to calculate the growth performance of the unregistered sector. However, the available data for 1984–85 have been used to briefly examine the main characteristics of the unregistered sector in Punjab and India during that year.

Structure of Manufacturing Sectors in Punjab: The Importance of the Unregistered Sector

The manufacturing sector in Punjab, as elsewhere in India, has registered as well as unregistered segments. In 1960–61 both the segments accounted for nearly 50 per cent each of the value of output in the manufacturing sector of the state (Table 1). Over time the share of the unregistered sector in total manufacturing sector has been declining. During 1992–93 its share was nearly 41 per cent. On the other hand in India as a whole, the share of unregistered sector in total manufacturing had come down from 41.4 per cent during 1967–68 to 39.0 per cent during 1987–88. Thus the dominance of unregistered enterprises in the manufacturing sector of Punjab is somewhat more than for the country as a whole.

As already mentioned we have reliable data for all the four categories of the manufacturing sector, i.e., registered factories (ASI factory sector), directory enterprises, non-directory enterprises and own account enterprises both for Punjab and for India as a whole for one year only, i.e., 1984–85. We have used this information for bringing out the main features of the structure of manufacturing sector in Punjab. In Punjab there were

5,380 registered manufacturing units (excluding electricity). These units had total fixed capital assets worth Rs 8,912.2 million and produced Rs 39,015 million worth of output. A total of 245,211 persons were employed in these factories. On the other hand, there were 292,843 unregistered enterprises consisting of 236,080 'own-account', 47,814 'non-directory' and 8,949 'directory' establishments. Together these three components of the unregistered manufacturing sector had total fixed assets of Rs 14,236.9 million, employed 552,831 workers and produced Rs 8,928 million worth of output (Table 3). Thus compared to the registered manufacturing sector the unregistered sector in Punjab had 60 per cent more capital assets, employed 125 per cent more workers but produced less than 23 per cent of the output of registered manufacturing sector.

Within the unregistered sector the most important sub-sector in terms of output is 'food products' followed by 'metal products and parts', 'wood and wood products', 'textile products', 'rubber plastic, petroleum and coal products', 'wool silk and synthetic fibre textiles', and 'leather and fur products', in that order (Table 3). In terms of employment, however, 'repair services' provided employment to the largest number of workers in the unregistered sector in Punjab followed by 'textile products' and then 'food products'. In 1984–85, the unregistered sector in Punjab accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the total industrial work force in the state. However, because of lower productivity its share in total manufacturing output in the state was less than 19 per cent and in value added about 42 per cent. In at least six sub-sectors, i.e., 'textile products', 'wood and wood products', 'leather and fur products', 'non-metallic mineral products', 'other manufacturing industries' and 'repair services' more than 88 per cent of the total industrial employment was in the unregistered sector. Altogether in 11 of the 18 sub-sectors more than 50 per cent of the total employment in the manufacturing sector was in the unregistered sector. In at least six sectors, namely 'wood and wood products', 'leather and leather products', non-metallic mineral products, metal products and parts, other manufacturing industries, and repair services, more than 50 per cent of the total manufacturing output originated in the unregistered sector.

However labour productivity both in terms of output as well as value added per worker is significantly lower in the unregistered sector compared with the registered sector in Punjab as also in India as a whole. This is true both at the aggregate level as well as for most of the industry groups. The exceptions were 'rubber, plastic, petroleum and coal products; and transport equipment where the reverse seems to be true (Table 4 and Table 5). Although the output and value added per worker in the unregistered sector in Punjab was at least twice as much as at the all-India level yet it

Table 4

Structural Ratios in Unregistered Sector in Punjab and India, 1984-85

		Punjab				*India*			
I. Code	*Industry Name*	*Fixed Capital per Worker*	*Emoluments per Worker*	*Output per Worker*	*Value Added per Worker*	*Fixed Capital per Worker*	*Emoluments per Worker*	*Output per Worker*	*Value Added per Worker*
20-21	Food Products	55413	3431	23978	8343	9514	1406	12099	3362
22	Beverages, Tobacco and Products	5475	1658	36423	10061	2103	1381	3491	1895
23	Cotton Textiles	38336	6441	4171	1922	4923	2343	4138	1918
24	Wool, Silk and Synthetic Fibre Textiles	5944	5885	27203	7323	3408	2994	10871	4004
25	Jute, Hemp & Mesta Textiles					849	2054	8947	2079
26	Textile Products	27029	4644	5198	3051	15210	3099	4990	3031
27	Wood and Wood Products, Furniture	4494	2935	12857	8442	8556	5665	5269	3017
28	Paper and Paper Products	5863	4235	15112	6645	11750	4144	19380	7593
29	Leather and Fur Products	140880	4825	17843	6068	13035	3669	13443	5510
30	Rubber, Plastic, Petroleum and Coal Products	7245	3658	212839	191551	11657	3661	33949	9286
31	Chemicals and Chemical Products	8739	3422	70896	10639	8082	3930	23901	5284
32	Non-metallic Mineral Products	2797	3890	13120	5651	5840	1595	4126	2346
33	Basic Metal and Alloys Industries	11371	4658	70651	8332	7246	6663	38916	9792
34	Metal Products and Parts	5875	4344	65986	44039	19230	3442	15896	7872
35	Machinery, Machine Tools and Parts	52496	5306	35625	10810	16797	4722	26886	10021
36	Electrical Machinery, Apparatus, Appliances	14256	2958	27885	17030	17618	4556	47614	13309
37	Transport Equipment and Parts	5433	3533	129092	89984	11416	4156	65224	46842
38	Other Manufacturing Industries	5414	4555	12335	5474	7401	3821	7116	3757
39	Repair Services	8112	4843	6132	4690	11322	3152	6710	4572
	Total	25753	4412	16150	8183	8883	2907	7889	3447

Source: Derived from the previous table.

Note: Emoluments relates to only Directory Establishment (i.e., units with at least 6 workers).

Table 5

ASI Factory Sector Structural Ratios by Major Industry Groups in Punjab and India in 1990-91

(Figures are in Rs)

I. Code	*Industry Name*	*Fixed Capital per Employee*		*Value of Output per Employee*		*Value Added per Employee*	
		PUNJAB	*INDIA*	*PUNJAB*	*INDIA*	*PUNJAB*	*INDIA*
20-21	Food Products	58826	50645	433608	327337	41617	35375
22	Beverages, Tobacco and Products	76794	16969	465625	101128	112542	26431
23	Cotton Textiles	48222	41567	297482	159203	41374	35979
24	Wool, Silk and Synthetic Fibre Textiles	75979	112849	283952	350429	51425	65017
25	Jute, Hemp & Mesta Textiles	11904	23945	97619	86225	30952	23581
26	Textile Products	41794	32132	357782	249935	70546	51463
27	Wood and Wood Products, Furniture	49726	32053	152823	136876	28051	29217
28	Paper and Paper Products	109799	111560	302453	259351	54044	56198
29	Leather and Fur Products	30067	39373	192567	278329	42947	42165
30	Rubber, Plastic, Petroleum and Coal Products	327626	292141	851500	605983	122076	111277
31	Chemicals and Chemical Products	46179	237170	316621	1185776	38906	146570
32	Non-metallic Mineral Products	40462	128289	137764	213897	23506	52230
33	Basic Metal and Alloys Industries	59344	348437	729850	544643	60882	90132
34	Metal Products and Parts	38318	61955	2813456	333159	49106	47799
35	Machinery, Machine Tools and Parts	43669	76583	251561	333159	36804	73575
36	Electrical Machinery, Apparatus, Appliances	209596	318272	411482	1350518	61242	304436
37	Transport Equipment and Parts	41394	282381	312380	1085132	50372	246719
38	Other Manufacturing Industries	92311	227946	248992	816130	48804	166538
39	Repair of Capital Goods	10855	14222	103067	71172	39410	33819
40	Electricity	348310	600554	90011	269541	27520	83706
41	Gas & Steam	841830	558739	599152	318208	149152	38176
42	Water Workers and Supply	195161	333928	64516	163659	16129	28680
74	Storage and Warehousing	98989	101783	91919	102196	30303	24437
97	Repair Services	15355	17067	102835	81604	36276	35310
	Total	141344	163733	311277	331471	46320	63111

Source: *Annual Survey of Industries* 1990-91; Supplementary Results for Factory Sector (CSO) (New Delhi: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation, G.O.I.).

was only one-eighth and one-third respectively of what it was in tl registered manufacturing sector in Punjab. The higher per worker produ tivity in the unregistered sector in Punjab compared to all-India, is attributable to larger amount of capital employed per worker in Punjab.

Growth of Registered Manufacturing Industries in Punjab

As mentioned earlier, in 1960–61 the share of registered and unregistered manufacturing sectors in the total value of output in the manufacturing sector in Punjab was roughly the same. Over time, however, registered manufacturing has been growing at a relatively fast pace. During 1960–61 and 1992–93 while registered manufacturing recorded a rate of growth of 8.61 per cent per annum, unregistered sector grew at a rate of 7.38 per cent per annum. However, both the sub-sectors of the manufacturing sector in Punjab have been growing at a much faster pace than their counterparts at the all-India level which had a growth rate of 5.98 per cent and 3.86 per cent per annum respectively. Because of differential growth rates over time the share of the registered manufacturing in the total manufacturing has been going up in Punjab. In 1992–93 the share of registered manufacturing was around 59 per cent of total manufacturing and that of unregistered manufacturing came down to slightly above 41 per cent. Thus, we find that there has been a definite shift in the composition of manufacturing output in Punjab from the cottage and small-scale sector to medium- and large-scale sector. The Punjab experience confirms the Parker–Anderson theory that there is a positive relationship between the level of economic development and the size of manufacturing industry.

Within the registered manufacturing 10 sub-sectors—namely, food products; beverages, tobacco and tobacco products; wool, silk and man-made fibre textile products; paper and paper products; rubber, plastic, petroleum and coal; non-metallic mineral products; electric machinery, apparatus and appliances; transport equipment and parts; gas, water, storage and warehousing; and cotton textiles—have been the relatively fast-growing sub-sectors (Table 6). Another interesting feature of industrial development in Punjab has been its employment generation potential. During the period 1976–77 and 1990–91, while employment in the registered manufacturing sector at the all India level grew at an annual rate of only 1.20 per cent, in Punjab it has grown at above 4 per cent per annum. Thus the post-green revolution Punjab appears to be a classic example of the rural-led employment-oriented strategy of growth which scholars like Mellor have been advocating for quite some time.

A look at Table 5 shows that the values of output and value added per

Table 6

Growth Rate of Employment, Output and Value added in Registered Industries in Punjab and India, 1976-77 to 1990-91

		Punjab			*India*		
I. Code	*Industry Name*	*Employment*	*Output*	*Value Added*	*Employment*	*Output*	*Value Addec*
20-21	Food Products	4.35	8.70	7.92	–9.65	7.50	8.55
22	Beverages, Tobacco and Products	5.05	11.77	16.17	1.72	7.44	9.12
23	Cotton Textiles	1.03	7.51	5.21	–2.83	2.03	3.67
24	Wool, Silk and Synthetic Fibre Textiles	3.70	10.03	11.21	2.58	9.53	8.90
26	Textile Products	10.20	9.99	14.42	4.51	10.01	13.05
27	Wood and Wood Products, Furniture Fixtures	–6.98	2.64	1.92	–2.40	3.67	3.03
28	Paper and Paper Products	9.88	25.14	25.55	0.33	8.15	5.71
29	Leather and Fur Products	7.75	5.98	13.26	4.99	7.20	9.91
30	Rubber, Plastic, Petroleum and Coal Products	9.41	25.37	29.11	10.54	11.53	17.70
31	Chemicals and Chemical Products	5.44	2.56	4.48	–5.98	6.44	1.83
32	Non-metallic Mineral Products	1.76	10.86	7.93	2.21	10.53	10.58
33	Basic Metal and Alloys Industries	–0.35	7.68	7.03	1.02	9.24	8.76
34	Metal Products and Parts	0.01	8.03	7.07	0.97	6.80	4.17

Table 6 contd.

I. Code	*Industry Name*	*Punjab*			*India*		
		Employment	*Output*	*Value Added*	*Employment*	*Output*	*Value Added*
35	Machinery, Machine Tools and Parts	0.34	7.53	5.06	0.43	7.83	6.44
36	Electrical Machinery, Apparatus, Appliances	6.72	15.12	12.73	–8.15	9.02	8.67
37	Transport Equipment and Parts	5.54	12.47	11.36	–10.26	9.25	7.81
38	Other Manufacturing Industries	–3.01	4.17	5.14	–8.49	8.86	6.21
40	Electricity	6.40	8.74	2.74	1.02	11.57	9.34
41+42+74	Gas, Water, Storage and Warehousing	6.33	12.24		15.84	7.20	4.89
39	Repair Services	–5.50	–6.88	0.07	–7.25	–6.93	–3.53
	Total	4.06	9.56	8.36	1.20	8.7	7.40

Source: Government of India (CSO), *Annual Survey of Industries, Supplement Summary Result* (New Delhi). The Figures have been arrived at by adding up three-digit industries into two-digit industry groups.

orker are significantly higher in Punjab than at the all-India level in food oducts; beverages; cotton textiles; wool, silk and synthetic textiles; xtile products; paper and paper products; rubber, plastic, petroleum and al products; electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances; and nsport equipment and parts. These are also the sectors in which fixed pital per employee is also higher in Punjab than at the all-India level. us there seems to be a definite positive relationship between capital ensity, output and value added per worker and rate of growth in Punjab dustry. This is an extremely important finding in the context of our rlier comment that further shift in the employment structure of Punjab ll take place only if per person productivity in the secondary sector cords a quantum jump. If predominance of agriculture in the employent pattern of Punjab is to be broken then these are the manufacturing ctors in which Punjab can go far. Our study suggests that Punjab should in for modern medium- and large-scale industry in these areas rather an proliferation of small scale units with backward technology if transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy is to be made a reality in the near future. Incidentally, five of these ten industry groups fall in the category of agro-processing industry and the other five are footloose in nature. The policy prescription is clear. Modern medium- and large-scale units in agro-processing and footloose industries hold the promise for industrialisation of Punjab.

PATTERN, PERFORMANCE AND SCOPE OF AGRO-INDUSTRIES IN PUNJAB

We have noted in the preceeding pages that at least five of the ten high-productivity fast-growing industries in Punjab are agro-based industries. This pattern is perfectly logical because after all one of the basic requirement for the development, survival and success of any industry anywhere would be assured supply of raw material at competitive prices. Given that Punjab is an agriculturally surplus state, it is only natural that agro-processing industries should dominate the industrial pattern of Punjab, at least in the initial stage of its industrialisation. In fact the general feeling in Punjab is that agro-industry in the state has not developed to the desired level and most of the surplus agricultural produce of the state is being exported to other parts of India in an unprocessed form.[16] In what follows we shall assess the pattern and growth of agro-processing industries in the state and then try to identify those agro-industries in which Punjab has a comparative advantage vis-à-vis other industries within the state as well as compared to other states of India because in the context of

the large Indian market Punjab has to successfully compete with other Indian states.

Pattern of Agro-processing Industries in Punjab

As is the case of other industries, in agro-processing too, Punjab has firms both in the medium- and large-scale (registered factory) sector as well as in the small-scale (unregistered) sector. The yearly information on different aspects of industrial units, however, is published only for the registered manufacturing sector by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO). Besides summary results at 2-digit level of National Industrial Classification (NIC), CSO also started publishing detailed supplementary information for factory sector industries at a more disaggregated 3-digit level since 1976–77. We have used this information for the analysis of pattern and growth over time of agro-processing industries in Punjab. Unfortunately such detailed and reliable time series information is not available for unregistered or SSI sector units. The only source of information for the SSI sector are two All India Census Surveys of SSI units conducted by the Development Commissioner of SSI in the years 1972 and 1987–88. Out of these two the first census was incomplete in its coverage for it covered urban SSIs only and also it was never published at three digit-level of disaggregation. So the only information available on the SSI sector is the 1987–88 census and we have used this information to study some aspects of the small-scale agro-processing units in Punjab.

Table 7 gives detailed information on output, employment and value added in 38 3-digit agro-processing industries for the year 1990–91, the latest year for which data are available. These industries are arranged in descending order in terms of their contribution to output. The table shows that the highest contribution to output in agro-processing industries in Punjab is made by grain milling (14.86 per cent); followed by vegetable oils and fats (11.39 per cent); spinning, weaving and processing of man-made fibre textiles (10.75 per cent); cotton spinning, weaving and processing in mills (8.53 per cent); hydrogenated oils and *vanaspati ghee* (7.78 per cent); manufacture of knitted or crocheted textile products (7.42 per cent); dairy products (7.00 per cent); wool spinning and weaving in mills (6.53 per cent); and pulp, paper and paper board (3.31 per cent); in that order. The top ten together account for nearly 86 per cent of the total output of agro-processing industries in Punjab. On the other hand the bottom ten account for only 0.36 per cent of the total agro-processing output of the state. Thus we find that out of 38 agro-processing industries existing at present in the state the top 10 or 12 industries dominate the factory sector

Table 7

Share of Different Industries in Agro-Processing Group in Factory Sector of Punjab (1990-91)

(Value figures are in Rs millions

Sr. No.	*I. Code*	*Description*	*Value of Output*	*Value Added*	*Employees*	*Percentage Share in*		
						Output	*Value Added*	*Employees*
1	204	Grain Milling	8413	479	35711	14.86	5.31	22.77
2	211	Vegetable Oils & Fats	6449	373	6251	11.39	4.13	3.98
3	247	Spinning, Weaving and Prod. Man-made Textiles	5750	1464	18183	10.75	16.24	11.59
4	235	Cotton, Spinning, Weaving Prod. in Mills	4832	1167	22296	8.53	12.94	14.22
5	230	Cotton Ginning, Cleaning, Baling	4564	139	9080	8.06	1.54	5.79
6	210	Hydrogenated Oil and Van. Ghee.	4406	189	2334	7.78	2.09	1.49
7	260	Knt. or Crocheted Tex. Prod.	4200	832	11545	7.42	9.23	7.36
8	201	Dairy Products	3963	479	16275	7.00	5.31	10.38
9	242	Wool Sp. and Weaving in Mills	3698	968	4944	6.53	10.74	3.15
10	280	Pulp Paper & P. Board	1877	337	5441	3.31	3.73	3.47
11	222	Malt, Liquor & Malt	1738	498	2950	3.07	5.52	1.88
12	206	Sugar Refining	1277	110	5615	2.25	1.22	3.58
13	248	Bleaching, Dyeing Tex. Fabrics	1235	115	2845	2.18	1.27	1.81
14	219	Food Product (n.e.c)	720	270	1356	1.27	2.99	0.86
15	205	Bakery Products	719	683	1523	1.22	7.57	0.97
16	217	Animal & Bird Feed	470	65	782	0.83	0.72	0.49
17	263	Blanket, Shawls Carpets, Rugs	416	85	863	0.73	0.94	0.55
18	290	Tanning, Finishing Leather	279	75	1514	0.49	0.89	0.96

Table 7 contd.

Sr. No.	*I. Code*	*Description*	*Value of Output*	*Value Added*	*Employees*	*Percentage Share in*		
						Output	*Value Added*	*Employees*
19	241	Wool Spinning, Weaving (other than in Mills)	264	3	941	0.46	0.03	0.60
20	281	Container, of Paper Board.	258	18	609	0.45	0.20	0.39
21	243	Bleaching, Dyeing Woollen Tex.	184	32	980	0.32	0.35	0.62
22	218	Mfg. of Starch	158	238	686	0.28	2.64	0.43
23	224	Soft Drinks & Syrups	148	6	715	0.26	0.06	0.43
24	291	Mfg of Footwear	136	23	664	0.24	0.25	0.42
25	220	Alcohol	112	13	459	0.19	0.14	0.29
26	279	Mfg of Wood, Bamboo (n.e.c)	96	1	88	0.17	0.01	0.05
27	261	Threads, Ropes, Nets etc.	67	4	226	0.12	0.04	0.14
28	236	Bleaching, Dyeing Cotton Text.	42	5	173	0.07	0.05	0.11
29	216	Mfg. of Ice	39	8	259	0.06	0.09	0.16
30	265	Textile Garments	32	8	388	0.05	0.08	0.24
31	202	Canning Fruits & Veg.	30	2	211	0.05	0.02	0.02
32	271	Plywood & Products	22	3	138	0.04	0.03	0.08
33	272	Wooden Structurals	21	4	105	0.04	0.04	0.06
34	292	Wearing Apparel of Leather	20	2	99	0.03	0.02	0.06
35	274	Wooden Ind. Goods (n.e.c)	17	3	112	0.03	0.03	0.07
36	228	Snuff, Zarda, Tobacco Prod.	15	3	83	0.03	0.03	0.05
37	213	Tea Blending	12	1	16	0.02	0.01	0.01
38	234	Weaving, Finishing Cotton Text.	6	1	55	0.01	0.01	0.03

Source: *Annual Survey of Industries, 1990-91.* Summary Results Factory Sector (Supplement) New Delhi: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation, G.O.I., Table 17, pp. 170-75.

ro-processing in the state. Together these 38 agro-processing industries count for 30.94 per cent of the total output, 39.10 per cent of the total nployment and 48.52 per cent of total value added in manufacturing ithin the factory sector of the state.

Table 8
Share of Different Industries in Agro-processing Group in Small-Scale Sector in Punjab 1987-88

No.	*Industry*	*Percentage Share in*		
		Output	*Net Value Added*	*Eployment*
	Rice Processing	39.00	14.06	26.57
	Manf. of Leather Shoes	21.46	62.90	20.66
	Flour Milling	13.22	11.32	13.95
	Manf. of Other Edible Oils and Fats	5.29	1.71	2.64
	Knitted Woollen Wears	3.21	1.35	4.48
6.	Manf. of Veg. & Essential Oils and Fats	2.66	1.08	1.34
7.	Spinning & Weaving of Cotton Textiles	2.61	0.69	2.13
8.	Knitted Cotton Wears	1.78	0.70	2.07
9.	Manf. of Wooden Furniture, Cupboard etc.	1.47	1.44	9.93
10.	Cotton Ginning & Baling	1.28	0.87	0.56
11.	Cotton Cleaning	0.99	0.24	0.47
12.	Manf. of Poultry Feed	0.81	0.15	0.34
13.	Spinning & Weaving of Other Tex.	0.80	0.33	0.62
14.	Manf. of Wood Structural Posts	0.67	0.54	3.19
15.	Slaughter, Preservation & Preparation of Meat	0.63	0.25	1.69
16.	Manf. of Cardboard Boxes	0.60	0.41	1.88
17.	Manf. of Wooden Boxes and Barrels	0.60	0.31	1.69
18.	Manf. of Cattle Feed	0.55	0.25	0.31
19.	Manf. Wood, Bamboo & Cane Products	0.53	0.42	1.79
20.	Thread & Thread Ball Making	0.48	0.13	0.38
21.	Spinning, Weaving and Finishing of Wool	0.47	0.21	0.85
22.	Manf. of Paper & Paper Straw Board	0.46	0.36	1.27
23.	Manf. of Ready Made Garments	0.43	0.34	1.19

Source: *Report on the Second All India Census of Small Scale Industrial Units (1987-88).* (New Delhi: Development Commissioner Small Scale Industries, G.O.I., 1992).

A similar picture emerges when we look at the data for small-scale industries in Punjab. In the case of the SSI sector, data at the three digit level of classification are not available but it is available at the 4-digit level and one can arrive at 3-digit level from that information. Table 8 shows the position of different industries in agro-processing group in the SSI sector in Punjab for the year 1987–88. A look at the table shows that rice processing activity alone accounts for 39 per cent of the total agro-processing production in the small-scale sector. In fact, the top five agro-processing industries—including manufacture of leather shoes; flour milling; other edible oils; and knitted woollen wears—apart from paddy milling, account for as much as 82.18 per cent of total agro-processing output in the SSI sector. The top 10 agro-processing industries in the SSI sector in Punjab put together account for nearly 92 per cent of the total agro-processing output in SSI sector in the state. Within the small-scale sector the agro-processing industries as a group account for 37.93 per cent of total output, 33.32 per cent of total employment and 30.70 per cent of total value added in the SSI manufacturing sector of the state.

It is interesting to note that except for two industries, leather shoes, and wooden furniture and cupboards, all the other top 10 agro-processing industries of the SSI sector also figure among the top 10 agro-processing industries of the factory sector. If we combine the top 10 industries of both the factory sector and SSI sectors of agro-processing in Punjab we end up with the following list of 12 industries which dominate the agro- processing scene of the state. These are:

1. Grain mill products.
2. Manufacturing of vegetable oils and fats.
3. Spinning and weaving of cotton textiles.
4. Cotton, ginning, cleaning and baling.
5. Hydrogenated oils and *vanaspati ghee*.
6. Knitted or crocheted textile products.
7. Wool spinning and weaving.
8. Dairy products.
9. Manufacturing of pulp, paper and paper board.
10. Spinning, weaving and production of man-made textiles.
11. Manufacture of leather shoes.
12. Manufacturing of wooden furniture, cupboard, etc.

Together, these 12 agro-processing industries in Punjab contribute nearly 90 per cent of the total agro-processing output of the state.

Incidentally if we compare the position of top 10 agro-processing

industries of Punjab in the factory sector with the same industries in other states of India we find that in three industries—wool spinning and weaving in mills, cotton ginning, cleaning and baling and knitting in mills—Punjab tops in the all-India ranking in terms of value of output. In another two industries—grain mill products, and hydrogenated oil and *vanaspati ghee*—it ranks second, and in yet another two industries, namely, other edible oils and dairy products, it is third. Thus seven of the top ten agro-industries of Punjab are not only developed and dominant in the agro-processing scene of Punjab but are also leading industries at the all-India level in terms of their market share.

Performance of Agro-processing Industries in Punjab

Growth of any industry can be measured in terms of number of units, capital invested, labour employed, value added or output produced. Here we have used output produced as a measure of growth because this is the most direct and easily understood indicator of the level of development of any production activity. The analysis of the growth of agro-processing industries in Punjab is confined to the factory sector only because time series data for the unregistered or small-scale sector is not available. For the factory sector, as already mentioned, data at the three digit level of disaggregation are available since 1976–77. Because NIC classification was changed during 1987 therefore, not all agro-processing industries for which data are available are comparable between 1976–77 and 1990–91. For 22 industries, however, figures are comparable on two points of time. For these industries growth rate during this period after converting the figures into constant prices and their ranks in terms of growth rate are given in Table 9.

Table 9 shows that the fastest growing agro-processing industry in Punjab during 1976–77 and 1990–91 was manufacturing of pulp, paper and paper board which grew at a phenomenal rate of 51.40 per cent per annum. This was followed by manufacture of blanket, shawls, carpets, rugs etc. (32.43 per cent); cotton spinning and weaving in handlooms (22.97 per cent); malt liquor and malt (22.12 per cent); and grain mill products (15.02 per cent). The next five industries in order of growth rate were bakery products (14.44 per cent); manufacture of products of bamboo and cane (13.15 per cent); manufacture of footwear (12.04 per cent); cotton spinning and weaving in powerlooms (12.01 per cent); and other edible oils (10.59 per cent). The other established agro-processing industries of Punjab such as hydrogenated oil and *vanaspati ghee*; manufacture of dairy products; cotton ginning, cleaning and baling and knitting in

Table 9

Growth of Production of Different Agro-processing Industries in Factory Sector of Punjab 1976-77 to 1990-91

Sr. No.	*Industry*	*Growth Rate*	*Rank*
1.	Manufacture of Dairy Products	9.44	11
2.	Canning & Preservation of Fruits and Vegetables	3.63	18
3.	Grain Milling	15.02	5
4.	Bakery Products	14.44	6
5.	Manufacture and Refining of Sugar	5.88	17
6.	Hydrogenated Oil and Vanaspati Ghee	7.27	14
7.	Other Edible Oils	10.59	10
8.	Manufacture of Food Products (n.e.c.)	–3.27	22
9.	Malt Liquor and Malt	22.12	4
10.	Cotton Ginning, Cleaning and Baling	6.52	16
11.	Cotton Spinning and Weaving (Handlooms)	22.97	3
12.	Cotton Spinning and Weaving (Powerlooms)	12.01	9
13.	Wooden Canes and Boxes etc.	–1.97	21
14.	Wool Spinning and Weaving	2.06	19
15.	Knitting in Mills	7.22	15
16.	Embroidery and Making of Zari etc.	1.31	20
17.	Manf. of Blanket, Shawls, Carpets, Rugs etc.	32.43	2
18.	Manf. of Prod. of Bamboo, Cane etc.	13.15	7
19.	Manf. of Pulp, Paper and Paper Board	51.41	1
20.	Manf. of Container Boxes of Paper and Board	7.71	12
21.	Tanning, Curing, Finishing, Embossing and Japanning of Leather	7.48	13
22.	Manf. of Footwear	12.04	8

Source: *Report on the Second All-India Census of Small-Scale Industrial Units (1987-88).*

mills have also done well, but all these industries fall in the middle-range category of 6 to 10 per cent rate of growth. Surprisingly, activities such as refining and manufacturing of sugar, and canning and preservation of fruits and vegetables—the areas in which Punjab seems to have enough potential—have not done well at all. Thus we find that while most of the established agro-processing industries in the state have done fairly well

during the last 15 years or so, some new industries such as pulp, paper and paper board and malt liquor and malt have also come up in a big way.

Scope of Agro-processing Industries in Punjab

Punjab is a part of the large Indian entity and therefore its economic fortunes are inextricably linked with the fortunes of the national economy. While a section of the opinion feels that this has constrained the state from realising its full development potential, the dominant opinion, however, is that it has bestowed certain definite advantages on the state because it has access to a very large Indian market. The underlying assumption of course, is that, Punjab has comparative advantage in many areas vis-à-vis other states of India and in this context access to the national market gives unlimited potential to the state to grow and prosper. In this scenario an evaluation of Punjab's economy or industry in isolation from other states of India or just a comparison of various industries within the state does not complete the story. Therefore, we shall make an effort to compare the performance of the main agro-processing industries of Punjab with the agro-processing industries in other states of India to find out whether there is scope for further expansion in agro-processing industries and if so, which are the industries in which Punjab has a comparative advantage vis-à-vis other states of India and where it should concentrate its efforts in future.

A number of indicators can be used to study the comparative performance of an industry. The choice however, will largely depend upon the purpose of study. For example, from society's point of view the surplus generated per unit of capital invested, employment generated per unit of capital or impact of growth in other sectors through forward and backward linkages may be more desirable whereas from the private investor's point of view profit per unit of capital invested may be more important. If in some economic activities the larger interest of the society and of the individual investor can be harmonised that activity should be the ideal choice for future promotion and development.

In the context of agro-industries recently the Punjab Agro Industries Corporation commissioned research from a team of scholars.[17] It is interesting to note some of the results of that exercise. The authors of the report first identified five leading states on the basis of production in each agro-processing industry and then compared Punjab with these five leading states as well as with average industry performance at the all-India level. From these inter-state comparisons in terms of net value added per unit of invested capital and profit per unit of invested capital a list of 10

most competitive agro-processing industries in Punjab vis-à-vis other Indian states was drawn. The industries so identified along with the Punjab's rank among Indian states on the basis of net value added and profit is reproduced in Table 10.

Table 10
Top 10 Most Competitive Agro-processing Industries in Punjab vis-à-vis Other Indian States

Sr. No.	*Industry*	*Punjab's Rank among Indian States on the Basis of*	
		Net Value Added	*Profit*
1.	Malt, Liquor and Malt	1	1
2.	Prepared Animal Feed	1	1
3.	Tanning, Curing and Finishing of Leather	1	1
4.	Manf. of Wooden Furniture	1	1
5.	Weaving of Blankets, Carpets & Rugs	2	1
6.	Wool Cleaning, Baling & Pressing	1	2
7.	Sawing and Planning of Wood	2	1
8.	Container Boxes of Paper and Board	2	1
9.	Hydrogenated Oils and Vanaspati Ghee	2	3
10.	Dairy Products	3	3

Source: H.S. Shergill and Gurmail Singh, *Scope of Development of Agro-Industries* (Chandigarh: Rural Punjab Institute for Development and Communication, 1994).

A comparison of these top 10 most competitive agro-industries in Punjab with our earlier top 12 most dominating agro-processing industries and top 15 fastest growing industries shows that at least half of these industries are common in all the three lists. There seems to be a high degree of correlation between growth and performance of agro-industries in Punjab. On the combined basis of high rate of growth, dominance of the industry within the state and comparative advantage vis-à-vis other states of India the following agro-processing industries can be recommended for taking Punjab's predominantly agrarian economy to move on the road to industrialisation.

Following is the list of agro-processing industries along with footloose and hi-tech industries such as electronics, telecommunication, engineering goods machinery and machine tools, transport equipment, and drugs and

pharmaceutical industries that are likely to form the core of Punjab's future industrialisation strategy.

1. Malt, Liquor and Malt.
2. Dairy Products.
3. Manufacture of Prepared Animal Feed.
4. Tanning, Curing, Finishing, Embossing and Japanning of Leather.
5. Leather Footwear and other Products.
6. Weaving Blankets, Carpets and Rugs.
7. Weaving and Finishing of Cotton Textiles.
8. Manufacture of Textile Garments.
9. Knitting in Mills.
10. Cotton Ginning, Cleaning and Baling.
11. Paper and Paper Board and Products.
12. Wool, Cleaning, Baling and Pressing.

OWNERSHIP, ORGANISATION AND SCALE OF AGRO-INDUSTRIES IN PUNJAB: SOME OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The success or otherwise of agro-processing industries in any region depends not only on the right choice of industries but also on the right kind of ownership pattern, organisational structure, scale of production, choice of technology and marketing strategy. Traditionally, agro-processing industries in Punjab as those in the rest of India, were small proprietorship or partnership type firms mainly located in rural or semi-urban centres. These were basically small enterprises using local raw materials and catering mainly to local demand.

Over time, however, the entire orientation and context of agro-processing industries have undergone a sea change. Now, in spite of having low per capita income, India has an estimated population of around 80 to 100 million (some recent market surveys put the figure at around 200 million) constituting the upper middle class that supports a reasonably high consumption standard. In families where both husband and wife have formal sector jobs, there is a growing potential for convenience and semi-processed foods. This class offers a large market for modern durables and agro-based products. In addition to the large domestic market there exists a huge unexploited potential in the international market where India has a competitive edge over other supplier countries.[18] Thus there exists a large potential for the products of the industry at home and abroad. Hence the case for further developing agro-processing industries.

Obviously in the changed context ownership, organisation, scale, technology and marketing strategy of the agro-processing industries will also have to change. If the products of the industry are to cater to the demands of the Indian elite and foreign countries then the traditional sole proprietorship or partnership type firms just cannot meet the challenge. The poor hygiene in which traditional agro-processing is generally undertaken along with poor quality standards does not help sustain high confidence in the processed goods produced and packed by the traditional cottage and small-scale units. On the other hand processing at the large scale is amenable to standardisation and offers certain economies of scale. Thus it is clear that in the present context the production of agro-based goods, particularly food-processing, will have to be undertaken in large- and medium-sized modern plants and not by traditional cottage and small-scale sole proprietorship type firms.

The medium- and large-scale agro-processing units can be in the public sector, co-operative sector, private sector, owned and controlled by Indian large business groups or Transnational Corporations (TNCs) individually or in collaboration with the Indian public/private sector. Under India's new liberal economic policy regime the role of the state and public sector is being reduced and therefore any industrial growth reliant on the role of state in the present context may be an unrealistic proposition. Co-operative ownership on the other hand is feasible and has many advantages. Co-operatives represent a transitional type of institution between community activities and complex modern social organisations based on impersonal relationships. It can help in the smooth transition from a traditional society to a modern one.[19] Given the fact that in agricultural marketing there would be thousands of farmers who would be supplier of farm produce to one or a handful of buyers/processors, the market situation would invariably be monoposonist in nature, the stronger one seeking to exploit the situation to his maximum advantage. In this context co-operatives are likely to give a better deal to the large number of agricultural producers than either the private sector or TNCs. Co-operatives, by making farmers as its members, can help in incorporating rich farmers into the modern sector. These can also act as training grounds for prospective entrepreneurs. The sugar co-operatives of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka, edible oil co-operatives of Gujarat and Amul experiment of dairy development in Gujarat are some of the universally recognised success stories of co-operatives in agro-processing in India.

The experience of co-operatives in agro-processing in Punjab, however, is not all that happy. While MARKFED, an apex co-operative body at the state level involved in agro-processing as well as trading has been

running very successfully, the SPINFED which runs cotton spinning mills in the state has been in the red almost throughout its existence. A more or less similar situation prevails in the case of milk plants. While the Nestle India plant in Moga, a subsidiary of a foreign multinational, is doing extremely well, many of the milk plants being run by MILKFED, a union of milk producers co-operative, are not doing well at all.

There are 18 sugar mills in Punjab. Out of these, 15 are in the co-operative sector and three in the private sector. While private sugar mills are doing well, most of the co-operative sugar mills are incurring huge losses. So much so that Bhudhladha Co-operative Sugar Mill which was set up only a couple of years back has been put up for sale by the SUGARFED. It is being alleged that too much bureaucratic control, lack of professionalism and political interference in the running of co-operatives have taken away from the co-operatives their democratic character and this has affected their functioning and performance. Whatever the reasons for their poor performance, the point we are making is that while co-operatives can be tried successfully in some cases, they cannot be recommended as an organisational form in general for agro-processing of all kinds, particularly when the products is to be sold to the national elite or in foreign markets.

The other alternative would be to permit large industrial establishments owned and controlled by Indian large business groups or TNCs individually or in collaboration. Interestingly in the mid-1980s the official-level initiation of the interest in agro-processing, particularly food processing, and revision of the licensing policies to permit entry of large Indian companies and TNCs in the food-processing industry coincided with the efforts made by a few transnational corporations to seek entry into the Indian food and soft drink market. For instance, Pepsi entered into collaboration with Punjab Agro-Industries Corporation and Tatas to establish processing facilities for tomato juice and paste along with soft drink concentrates. Nestle India, known for their interest in coffee and dairy products, started producing 'Maggie' convenience foods, ketchup and chocolates. Hindustan Levers, a subsidiary of the Lever Brothers which was earlier operating in hydrogenated edible oils industry has also taken over 'Kissan', a company known nationwide for jams and squashes. Now ITC Britannia have also entered the edible oils industry. In this fight for market dominance Indian private capital seems to have thrown in the towel and accepted the leadership of foreign multinationals. For example, Parle, till recently the market leader in soft drinks segment which had fought tooth and nail the entry of Pepsi, decided to abandon its fight with TNCs and join hands with Coca-Cola.[20] In recent years with the withdrawal of

restrictions on the use of foreign brand names, TNCs are entering into some lucrative segments of the Indian food processing industry in a big way. Of course Punjab is likely to be their favourite destination.

Entry of Indian big business groups and TNCs into the agro-processing industry has certainly speeded up the process of modernisation in this industry. Whether this will lead to liquidation of the existing small-scale enterprises in this industry or whether they will also absorb modern technology and achieve higher productivity, however, still remains to be seen. Intuitively, however, one would expect that the survival instinct will force them to upgrade their technology and raise the average productivity level. The fear is that this pattern of industrialisation may not create many jobs but whatever jobs are created will be better paid ones which Punjab's educated unemployed youth will be prepared to take up.[21] This becomes all the more important in the context of our earlier finding that productivity per person in Punjab's agricultural and non-agricultural sectors have been more or less equalised. Unless the non-agricultural sector achieves a breakthrough and becomes more productive through upgradation of scale and technology, a further shift in the structure of the state's economy cannot take place.

Marketing is another area where Punjab has to give special attention. Punjab has potential in many more agro-processing areas only if the marketability of the product is assured. Large corporations, whether Indian or foreign, have an edge in marketing. Therefore, even from the marketing point of view Punjab should prefer large- and medium-scale units to proliferation of small-scale industry. In fact, brand names get associated with quality and standardised products. The consumer acceptability of the branded goods is high. Thus large established companies with brand names have advantages in the market and this may act as a barrier to entry of new smaller firms into the industry. In this context the existing smaller units, in order to get access to and acceptability in the market, may have to go in for marketing tie-up arrangements with the larger ones which in turn can ensure quality control of the product. This will help existing small-scale units and even co-operatives to overcome marketing disadvantage in the face of brand-name-dominated markets. This would be a specific kind of ancilliarisation strategy of industrial development. We believe Punjab should try this model.

Even at the cost of repetition we are again stressing this point that it is imperative for Punjab that whatever industry comes up in future, it is in the modern medium- and large-scale sector. Whether it should be in the hands of co-operatives, Indian large-scale business or TNCs would perhaps depend upon the nature of the product and its level of sophistication.

Wherever possible co-operatives should be encouraged because not only do they enable realisation of economies of scale but also offer the best means of harmonising the interests of the producer, the processor and the consumer. However, areas which are considered beyond the competence of co-operatives can be left open to Indian private capital and TNCs. In a predominantly agrarian economy like that of Punjab undergoing transition, ownership issues become a secondary question so long as agricultural producers and workers working in these factories get a fair deal. To protect the interests of Punjab farmers some kind of formal contract system between agro-producers and agro-processors can be introduced which is renewed every year before the sowing season. The farmers' organisations like Bhartiya Kissan Union and Kissan Sabhas can play an important role in this process. It appears in Punjab's present context that this kind of industrialisation strategy is necessary to break the stranglehold of the rigid occupational structure.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Fast-growing agriculture can play an instrumental role in the process of industrialisation of an agrarian economy provided it has a pre-eminent position in terms of its size in the economy and its own development is broad based. All these conditions are fulfilled in the post-green revolution Punjab. Thus objective conditions in Punjab are just right for taking a leap forward in the direction of industrialisation. Punjab's economy has reached a level of development where emphasis has to be on high productivity modern medium- and large-scale industries rather than traditional small-scale industries. This is also necessary in view of our finding that average labour productivity in Punjab agriculture is roughly the same as in the non-agricultural sectors of the economy and further shift in the structure of Punjab economy will take place only if productivity records a quantum jump in the manufacturing sector.

Out of 10 industries which have been growing relatively faster in Punjab compared to their counterparts at the all-India level, five fall in the category of agro-processing and the others are footloose in nature. Punjab is an agriculturally surplus state and it is only natural that agro-processing industries should dominate the industrial scene of Punjab at least in the present stage of its industrialisation. Within agro-industries we have identified a set of industries in which Punjab has a comparative advantage vis-à-vis other states of India because in the context of a relatively free large Indian market Punjab has to compete successfully with other states.

These agro-industries along with earlier identified footloose industries should form the core of Punjab's future industrialisation strategy.

For these agro-industries to be successful the question of ownership, organisation, scale and technology become important. In the present context of liberalised economic regime to expect public sector to play any significant role appears unrealistic. Co-operatives have many advantages. In the context of monoposonist agricultural markets co-operatives give a better deal to large number of agricultural producers. They can also act as a training ground for farmers and help in incorporating them into the modern sector. Thus wherever possible co-operatives should be tried. But all areas are not within the competence of co-operatives.

The areas which are beyond the competence of co-operatives should be left open to Indian private capital and TNCs individually or in collaboration with each other. They are also preferable from the point of view of economic efficiency and technological upgradations. These companies are much better equipped to market the commodity in the brand-name-dominated markets. In this context existing small-scale units and even co-operatives can have marketing tie-up arrangement with these large private companies which in turn can ensure quality control of the product. This will help existing small-scale units and co-operatives to upgrade their technologies and have access to brand-name-dominated markets. This would be a specific kind of ancilliarisation strategy of industrial development. We believe Punjab should try this strategy to break the stranglehold of rigid occupational structure and move confidently on the road to industrialisation.

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. Since Punjab was reorganised in 1966 time series data of state income are available from 1966–67 onwards. However, separate figures for the present Punjab for the year 1960–61 were estimated by Punjab's Economic and Statistical Organisation. Thus the earliest year for which data on state income are available is 1960–61. The data up to 1969–70 were at 1960–61 prices, from 1971 up to mid-1980s at 1970–71 prices and after that at 1980–81 prices. For the purpose of comparison we have converted all the figures into constant 1980–81 prices. Due care was taken while converting these data into constant prices yet the limitations of this exercise are worth noting. This should be borne in mind while interpreting the growth rates.

. G.S. Bhalla, 'Agricultural Growth and Industrial Development: A Case Study of Punjab', a paper presented at the conference on 'Agriculture on the Road to Industrialization at Taipei, Republic of China, 4-7 September, 1990.

14. Unregistered units are further divided into three categories. Those employing six or more workers with one hired worker on fairly regular basis are called Directory enterprises. The units which employ up to five workers with at least one hired worker on a more or less regular basis are called Non-Directory enterprises. Those enterprises which are run with the help of family labour and do not hire any worker on regular basis are called own-account enterprises.

15. The limit of fixed capital for defining small-scale industry in India has been changing over time. The latest definition puts the limit of Rs 6 million for ordinary units and Rs 7.5 million in the case of ancillary units.

16. To a large extent this situation is attributable to the effects of central planning and other regulatory mechanisms of the Government of India such as industrial licensing. Until recently even a sugar mill or a cotton mill could not be set up in the state even in the public sector without permission from the central government which was not forthcoming easily. No wonder then that even now most of the cotton produced in the state is being exported to other parts of India in the unprocessed form. In this situation Punjab continued to be a major producer and supplier of foodgrains to the rest of India. Even in the case of foodgrains there were restrictions on their inter-state movement. Punjabi farmers were not allowed to sell their surplus grains in other states. The trade in foodgrains was controlled by government agencies. Under the present liberalised policy regime the situation has changed drastically. Barring half a dozen industries, the requirement of industrial licensing in all other industries has been done away with. Free trade in agricultural commodities is being allowed. Market forces are being allowed to have a relatively free play. Now the atmosphere in Punjab is conducive for the development of agro-processing industries in the state.

17. H.S. Shergill and Gurmail Singh, *Scope of Development of Agro-industries in Rural Punjab* (Chandigarh: Institute for Development and Communication, 1994).

18. See, for instance, Ruth Rams, *Foreign Direct Investment in the Food and Food Packaging Industries in India* (Paris: OECD Development Centre, 1990).
19. A.S. Dhesi, 'Time to Change the Plan', *The Tribune* (Chandigarh), 8 September 1988.
20. For an interesting discussion on this and other issues relating to MNCs in India see S.K. Goyal, 'Policies towards Development of Agro-industries in India', paper presented at ISID-FAO workshop on Agricultural Policies in the New Economic Environment, 6-10 September 1993, New Delhi.
21. One of the reasons behind large-scale dissatisfaction and alienation of Punjabi youth in recent years is the mismatch between economics opportunities available and their level of aspirations. The kind of jobs which Punjab's small-scale low-productivity manufacturing sector is able to generate are not what the Punjabi youths are prepared to take up. And the kind of jobs they are prepared to take up are not being created by the low-productivity manufacturing activities.

The Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy and its Impact as a Catalyst of Indian National Consciousness

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This article examines the impact of the 1919 anti-Rowlatt agitation, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and Punjab martial law regime on the mindset, not only of the politically conscious elite, but the 'muted groups', specifically the poor illiterate masses and women. It focuses, not only on the latter's growing visibility in the nationalist struggle as a result of Gandhi's leadership, but also on the articulation of their feelings of anger and alienation as expressed in Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi prose and verse.

The iron-fisted Punjab administrators in 1919 unwittingly performed the bloody baptism of the 'muted groups' in the vocation of politics. Edwin Ardener, the first to propose the theory of 'muted groups', has argued that the dominant groups in society generate and control the dominant modes of expression and if the 'muted groups' wish to express themselves they are forced to do so through the dominant modes of expression whether colonial or indigenous.[1] As far as Ardener is concerned, the problem of muting is a problem of frustrated communication. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the majority of Indians, especially women and masses, remained 'muted' because their model of reality, their view of the world, could not be realised or expressed in the dominant structures and cultural idiom. Even the English-educated Indians, despite their valiant effort to participate in the colonial discourse, were eventually forced to restructure their self-image, world view and attitudes towards the colonial connection because the racist Western projections of India and Indians gradually stood exposed in their narrowness, bias and overblown sense of superiority. Their growing knowledge of the nature of British imperialism and the experiential reality of the colonial social world and politics transformed their consciousness which was predominantly anti-colonial but not strictly

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nationalist; the latter presupposes a change in perspective from opposition to colonialism to the problems of unity and integration within the country.[2]

In this paper, I will try to show how the colonial state's negative response to the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills, its veiled defence of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the subsequent British attempts to whitewash and gloss over the indiscretions of the dictatorial civil authorities and misuse of power by the Martial Law administrators in the Punjab, had altered the mindset of not only the politically conscious minority in this region as in the rest of India but also that of the 'muted groups', specifically the poor illiterate masses and women. In the latter case, the dichotomy between domestic and public space was to become increasingly fluid, less restrictive and stifling as the national movement graduated from elitist circles to the nationalist arena.

History-writing from this angle adumbrates an 'inner view' of historical processes. The source material for this article is found more in interviews, statements before non-official bodies and vernacular literature on the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and biographies and autobiographies than in government records and documents.

THE NATURE OF THE COLONIAL STATE IN PUNJAB

The Punjab was a Non-Regulation province and its administrative structure, dominated and controlled by the colonial state on account of the region's crucial importance for the solvency and military security of the British *raj*, was a curious mix of authoritarian, paternal and democratic elements. The unique character of the state and its policy had influenced the development of the people's attitudes and mental orientation towards the colonial connection as well as the form of political and social movements. The process of the construction of its governmental structure, legal institutions and codes, and revenue system which spread over more than six decades, was characterised by 'masterful attempts' to prolong the atmosphere of military conquest up to late 1850s.[3] John Lawrence mitigated the harshness of this autocratic phase by his respect for indigenous customs and intimate contact with the people, especially peasantry, which may be termed as 'paternal utilitarianism', fired by evangelical zeal and underpinned by a Platonic conception of being a wise guardian. The long-term authoritarian and domineering mentality was determined by the self-image of the early British conquerors-cum-administrators and functionaries in the Punjab who were faced with a threefold task: (*a*) to convert 'the sullen and bitter resignation of the

vanquished into honest, contented and hearty loyalty'; (*b*) infusion of the elements of civilised administration; and (*c*) to convert the Punjab into not only a secure but also profitable possession.[4] Such a perception of their role was reinforced by the cataclysm of 1857.

The self-image of the Punjab administrators as saviours of the raj was moulded by a number of assumptions about the potential threat from a high-spirited and martial local population and the border tribes. Imbued with imperial consciousness, they pursued their mission 'to subdue, administer, convert and improve without halting and without question'.[5] A sense of *angrezi dharma* provided justification and direction to the functionaries of the raj. Above all, these officers were keen to carve out their image as decisive, strong and efficient rulers who were also sensitive, fair and accessible to the people.

In other words, the legitimacy of their rule was the major concern of the British who secured it through various strategies such as the cultivation of goodwill and support of those institutions, social groups, religious elites, landed-aristocracy, *jagirdar*, prominent families and war-like tribes, whose help was regarded as vital for social and political control. This major compulsion was highlighted in a document on 'Social and political intercourse with Punjabis', distributed amongst young officers.[6]

In the next phase, dominated by Fitz James Stephen (the Law Member 1869–72), the paternal element was replaced by an authoritarian tendency in utilitarianism, but evangelical zeal still energised the imperial mission. Believing that the foremost function of government in India was 'to protect peaceable men and to beat down wrongdoers, to extort respect and to enforce obedience',[7] he highlighted the positive role of law, backed by power. Following this logic, law constituted the most significant basis of legitimacy to colonial officials. The phase of aggressive legislation during the 1860s and 1870s which was a direct outcome of this belief, had stripped the Punjab of its distinction of being a 'Non-Regulation' province and brought it close to the pattern of the other parts of British India. Unlike the Benthamite period, when the movement for modernisation had been regarded as a co-operative effort between the English and the Indian middle class, the Punjab school of administrators 'forced reform at the sword-point believing that a benighted people had to be compelled towards light'.[8] Now reform was to be carried in the spirit of racial conquest that characterised the post-mutiny period coupled with the strong-handedness of the Punjab school but none of its Lawrencian kindliness, and general harmony between the paternalist and modernising currents. Despite the increasing advocacy of 'rule of law' through its definition and codification for the modernisation of 'despotic and Oriental

societies', particularly Indian, the reactionary and high-handed military mentality remained operative through the regimes of Denzil Ibbetson and Michael O'Dwyer.

Such a perception of the colonial state has been projected by a few scholars who have argued that the colonial state based its power on coercive domination rather than consent or hegemony.[9]

Recent writings have shown that the colonial state cannot be described merely as a coercive institution.[10] Undoubtedly, the power of the colonial state rested on the monopoly over instruments of force and violence. However, after the conquest of the country, demonstration of coercive power and judicious intervention of repressive measures were regarded essential for creating an awareness of the power of the raj but not in managing the day-to-day affairs of the state. In the formulation and implementation of policies and laws, the element of forcible imposition was moderated by the desire to secure consent and conciliate opposition. In other words, legitimisation of colonial rule remained a major preoccupation of the colonial state. It is in this context that the concepts of consent of the colonial people for legislation or the use of force and collaboration with the potential supporters of the raj acquired significance.[11] While consent implied a certain degree of willingness on the part of the state to concede space to public opinion and flexibility of approach to the problems of administration in a foreign country, 'collaboration' offered 'a share in the government' in the form of important appointments in bureaucracy to landlord and princely classes at the price of unqualified support to the British rulers and endorsement of their policies. In the imperialist hegemony discourse, neither 'consent' nor 'collaboration' was entitled to the privileges available to the people in a representative government.

Obviously, the British-Indian-State was semi-hegemonic—an amalgamation of authoritarian and liberal elements. Despite the imperialist content of its policies and essentially exploitative functions and goals, it had replicated many characteristics of the modern state in Western Europe. The nature of democratic freedoms and civil liberties guaranteed in colonial societies certainly differed from those in Europe. While retaining its authoritarian core, the colonial state was obliged to concede 'a semblance of civil liberty in keeping with the democratic practice at home because it had made some constitutional commitments in India'.[12]

The nature of the colonial state was influenced by one major development: transfer of authority and power over the Indian empire from the hands of the East India Company to the British Parliament under the Government of India Act of 1858. The British approach to the empire,

projected as primarily utilitarian by Eric Stokes, is now regarded as a product of the collective application of four doctrines: the Burkean doctrine of imperial trusteeship, the Benthamite theory of state activity as propagated by Mills (James Mill and his son J.S.Mill), the Platonic concept of a ruling elite in the role of wise guardians, and the evangelical zeal to spread the Christian gospel, so as 'to save the souls of a perversely irresponsive people'. Despite the obvious mutual contradictions and affinities in the course of their interaction, the cumulative impact of these doctrines was transmuted in a continuing motive force of the British imperial policy.[13] Its long-term but strange impact on Indian polity was the evolution of colonial constitutionalism without dismantling the autocratic form of imperial government in India.

It may be pointed out that the role of the European ideas, especially these four doctrines, was important in the crystallisation of the hardcore of the colonial state and its hegemonic discourse but the response of the colonial society in a given situation and its specific needs were crucial to the entire process. Both the elite colonial administrators/policy-makers[14] and the nationalist leadership recognised the dependence of the colonial state for ruling India upon the consent of the subject people to accept its moral authority, its laws and policies for the regulation of their social and property relations. For example, Gandhi rejected the interpretation of consent as merely passive acquiescence, apathy, submissiveness and unquestioned obedience to state apparatus. While conceding the fact that the colonial state was militarily too powerful to be dislodged with violence, he proclaimed the active role and autonomy of an enlightened public opinion in his book, *Hind Swaraj*:

> You have great military resources. Your naval power is matchless. If we wanted to fight you on your own ground, we should be unable to do so, but if the above submissions be not acceptable to you, we cease to play the part of the ruled. You may if you like cut us to pieces. You may shatter us at the cannon's mouth. *If you act contrary to our will, we shall not help you and, without our help, we know that you cannot move one step forward.*[15] (Emphasis is mine.)

However, he acknowledged that the development of such a critical temper and consciousness of the people's strength among the thirty crores of human beings demanded a psychological transformation. It implied the removal of 'slavish and defeatist mentality' underpinned by fear, caused by use of brutal physical force and psychological onslaught.

Gandhi's first major countrywide experiment of cultivating critical temper among Indians and mobilising their moral resistance was

occasioned by the British imperialist government's decision to curb elementary civil liberties of the people through the legislation of the Rowlatt Act despite nationalist opposition. In this context, it is important to analyse the nature of Indian consciousness with special reference to the Punjab which became the centre of display of physical force, coercive power and repression by the new breed of authoritarian functionaries led by its Lieutenant Governor Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

MINDSET OF THE COLONISED

Despite the timelag in terms of the Punjab's encounter with the colonial rule and its legitimising discourse, its people covered various turns in colonial consciousness in the short span of seven decades, i.e. 1849–1919, when the Jallianwala massacre was perpetrated. Whether in Bengal, where the actual process of imperial expansion had been set in motion as early as 1765 with the battle of Plassey, or in the Punjab which became the last but the most valuable outpost of the British empire, the British were constantly haunted by the fear that military conquest had only won them a 'precarious hegemony'. The most enduring and the most profitable conquest was the one over mind. By the mid-nineteenth century, when not plagued by any rivals and threats, the rulers abandoned their majestic aloofness and compromising and beseeching tone but focused their energies upon forging tools and strategies for legitimising the presence of the colonial state, its hegemonies, authority and *raison d'etre* of its economic exploitation.[16]

The colonial state had used two strategies: the first one required the new rulers to adopt the political structure as well as the cultural discourse of the existing Mughal regime, which had a practical utility for the Company Government during the period 1765 to 1833, when it had not possessed real political authority and economic power to enforce social reforms to restructure social relations and manufacture identities. But more relevant for our purpose is the second strategy which stipulated that the structure and discourse of Indian polity and society be remodelled through a serious missionary effort for the spread of Western education. Its direct implication was that the British potentates became seriously engaged in increasing colonial consciousness and intensified their drive for the spread of Western education with a twofold purpose: utilitarian and ideological. For its utilitarian purpose, the colonial state was to train an army of English-knowing Indians who would fill in the lower rungs of various administrative departments and that too on meagre pay. Its second purpose but its main premise underlying the introduction of English

education in India was 'colonisation of consciousness'. It was through the dissemination of Western education that the so-called 'moral' mission or 'civilisation' mission in India was to be accomplished. It was given the utmost importance for moulding India into a replica of England—the best model of social, political and material progress—in order to enable her to serve the needs of industrial England and the British Empire.

The first generation of the Indian intelligentsia in nineteenth century Bengal had eagerly assimilated this ideological perspective. As this theme has been fairly well researched, I shall let it go and focus my attention on other related aspects of the transformation of colonial consciousness in the context of the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. However, I would like to make one general comment on its nature. The colonial consciousness, which may be called the essence of Indian response towards the early phase of colonial encounter, reflected an uneasy ambivalence—a knotted combination of an acute awareness of subjection, which was caused by worsening socio-cultural and political decrepitude coupled with a sense of grateful alty to the 'intrinsically good' British rule.[17]

Despite regional variations owing to the nature of political consciousness, exposure to English education, new political ideas and institutions, the evolution of colonial consciousness reflected certain common characteristics. One of its major features was the cultural co-optation, which had implied the 'internalisation of the colonial role definitions, the language of homology between sexual and political stratarchies', imperialist perceptions of Indian history with its 'golden age' in the past and positive projection of the colonial state and its policies by the British rulers and the urban-educated sections of Indians.

Crucial to this exercise was the identification with the aggressor in the terminology of psycho-analysis.[18] As an end product of the colonisation of consciousness, many Indians began to see themselves as crypto-barbarians who ought to civilise themselves and learn to be manly through the agency of the raj which possessed a vigorous rationalist tradition, superior scientific knowledge and modern political system and theory.[19] It was not surprising that they perceived salvation in becoming more like the British in friendship or enmity. Without fully sharing the British concept of martial races—the hyper-masculine, manifestly courageous, superbly loyal Indian castes—they did resurrect the ideology of the martial races imbedded in the traditional Indian concept of statecraft. This explained the new meaning attached to *kshatriya*hood as a symbol of authentic 'Indianness' in the nineteenth century socio-religious and political reform movements. New identity made them demand an honourable relationship between the rulers and the ruled.

At the point of time, the colonised while playing the game within the rules set by the coloniser, rejected bisexuality and perceived femininity-in-masculinity as the final negation of man's political identity. It is not surprising that almost all protest movements before 1919 sought to redeem the Indian masculinity by defeating the British in violent conflict. Thus, the vanquished and enslaved Indians legitimised the concepts of manliness in a dominant culture: aggression, achievement, competition and power.[20]

However, the nineteenth century response to the growing Western politico-cultural and economic domination, which had accepted the colonial state as a public authority responsive to popular sentiments and demands while making laws and policies, its self-advertised credentials of being a just and firm ruler as well as the image of India as a supine, sick, prostrate and 'effeminate' polity and civilisation, could not remain representative of colonial consciousness from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards. Gandhi's insightful and creative reading of Western and Indian tradition in the context of contemporary imperialist scenario produced a 'transcultural protest against the hyper-masculine world-view of colonialism'.[21]

With the induction of women in his experimental *satyagraha* in South Africa, Gandhi had begun to construct his theory that activism and courage were perfectly compatible with womanhood, particularly motherhood. By restating the concept of androgyny—i.e., manliness and womanliness were equal, but the ability to transcend the man–woman dichotomy is superior to both because it is a signifier of godly and saintly qualities—Gandhi had not only rejected the colonial culture's ordering of sexual identities: *purusatva* (the essence of masculinity), *naritava* (the essence of femininity) and *kalibtava* (the essence of hermaphroditism) but also its argument of racial superiority.[22] Even more important was the implication that the colonialism and its culture, which were rooted in violence and aggression, stood negated and discredited. Gandhi seemed clear in his mind that activism and courage could be liberated from aggressiveness and recognised their compatibility with Indian womanhood. Thus began his search for a coherent concept of femininity and empowerment of women for social and political change.

Gandhi's project of the redefinition of 'femininity' and its new role was interlinked with his serious concern (as of other national leaders and social reformers) for retrieving Indian 'masculinity' through the rebuttal of Katherine Mayo's mischievous charge of 'effeminacy' against his countrymen as it was an indirect endorsement of the British imperialist view about their (Indian) unfitness to rule.[23] Obviously, woman's status, which had become a political issue and a point of debate and controversy

nder the raj, became a crucial component in the process of the transformation of Indian consciousness, especially for liberating it from psychological and ethical complexes', also described as 'slavish or defeatist mentality' by the nationalist leadership.

WOMEN IN ROWLATT AGITATION TO MARTIAL LAW

Despite his first encounter with woman power as *satyagrahis* in the course of agitation against the Black Act of 1913 (which declared Hindu, Muslim and Parsee marriages invalid) in South Africa, Gandhi made the first explicit connection between women and their role in nation-building in his speeches, campaigning for recruitment of Indians in the army during the First World War.[24] It is only with his emergence as a political leader when he confronted the problem of mass mobilisation that he became increasingly aware of women, not only in terms of their problems, but also as a powerful potential force in society. Refusal of the British Government to concede his request to drop the Rowlatt Bills, which had been consistently opposed in the press and in Imperial Legislative Council by the non-official members as well as the elected members right from its introduction to its final disposal as an Act,[25] obliged Gandhi to mobilise all Indians for nationwide protest against the 'devilish legislation'.[26] Gandhi issued his famous *Hartal Manifesto* on 23 March 1919 and fixed 6 April 1919 to be observed as All India Hartal Day and a day of 'humiliation and prayer' entirely based on fasting, prayer and penance for the purification of the soul.[27]

Gandhi made a special appeal to the women of India to join the satyagraha movement in large numbers and co-operate with men in their constitutional struggle which they had launched against the Rowlatt legislation.[28] As he realised that no mass movement could be successful without the participation of the 'muted' sections of society, he thought it fit that the women of India should not be kept ignorant of the prevalent political situation and resentment against injustice in the country. Even if they were not educated, they could co-operate in national constructive work like *swadeshi*. Instead of reiterating the earlier reformers' equation between education and uplift of women, Gandhi had valued their attitudinal change and contribution as practical thinkers and actors in the nationalist politics. Indian women's consciousness, which had already been awakened by social reformers, particularly Arya Samajist, to contribute to the process of social reconstruction as enlightened daughters, sisters and mothers, was given a new direction by Gandhi. While urging women to shoulder their new responsibilities as nation builders, he said,

'They have to suffer more than men and so long as they do not take equ part with men in the affairs of the world and in religious and politic matters, we shall not see India's star rising'.[29] A large number of Indian women such as Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, Sushila Nayar, Bibi Amtus Salaam, Mani Behn Patel, Sucheta Kriplani and Rehana Tayyab acknowledged the powerful impact of Gandhi in moulding their personal lives, attitudes and aspirations.[30] However, it was their own direct participation or of their menfolk in the anti-Rowlatt agitation which had transformed their perceptions and attitudes. (For the purpose of analysing the role of women in the events from the anti-Rowlatt protest to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, I have relied on *The Tribune* reports, personal interviews and official records pertaining to Punjab.)

The process of psychological transformation, more specifically consciousness raising among women, was rooted in the experiences during the years of the First World War. Socialised to think in terms of family relationships, the Hindu and Muslim women came to realise that they had sacrificed their sons, grandsons, brothers and husbands for the sake of the empire and yet there was no end to repression.[31] In vain, women of the middle class families, especially those of limited means, had to cope with the scarcity of essential commodities and their exorbitant prices on account of famine and wartime constraints. Economic distress of the bread earners of the family, who had been obliged to pay the enhanced taxes and the war contributions,[32] caused privation and hardship to numerous women even in feeding the children and other kith and kin with shrinking incomes, apart from other family expenses. In such a mental state, Punjabi women were vulnerable and sensitive to the rising wave of discontent against the Rowlatt Bills.

The Rowlatt Act agitation, a spontaneous protest against a pernicious measure, had been conducted on constitutional lines.[32] In Punjab, particularly Amritsar, it was reinforced by other long-standing local grievances and discontents arising out of the Platform Ticket agitation, Rate Payers' Tax, high prices, severe income tax assessment, coupled with the hurt caused by the *khilafat* grievances and frustration with the piecemeal reforms. Numerous public meetings, held in Amritsar, Lahore, Jullunder and other towns from 31 January to 12 April 1919, reiterated the issues that had already been publicised through the press. After 18 March, when the Rowlatt Bills became an Act, all other issues paled into insignificance. The growing knowledge about the reactionary and insensitive attitude of the British rulers, as reflected in the course of debates over the Rowlatt Bills, had already made the people ready to be galvanised into action over an issue of national importance.

At this psychological moment, local leaders in Amritsar undertook the task of mobilising public opinion. In fact, the success of the Rowlatt satyagraha and its nature depended to a great extent on the influence and authority of local leaders among the social groups that took part in the movement. Furthermore, it depended upon the co-operation or provocation offered by the British.[33] It was in proportion to the degree of understanding of Gandhi's teachings by local lieutenants in various parts of India that the *satyagraha* emerged to be static in Madras, militant in the Punjab and Delhi, and dynamic in Bombay; as for as the local leaders in Bengal, Sind and the Punjab were concerned, they had plunged themselves in the Rowlatt *satyagraha* without having any close association with Gandhi. In fact, Drs Saif-ud- din Kitchlew and Satyapal had never met Gandhi[34] and their understanding of Gandhi's conception of *satyagraha* was partial.

In the course of the Rowlatt agitation in Amritsar, Drs Kitchlew and Satyapal emerged to be the primary local leaders.[35] Both of them played a vital role in mobilising public opinion for the redress of local grievances and the withdrawal of the Rowlatt Act by the Government of India. While Dr Kitchlew went out to address public meetings at Lahore, Multan and Jullundur, Dr Satyapal, as the President of the Railway Grievances Committee, concentrated his efforts on launching the Platform Ticket Agitation in Amritsar and concluding it successfully. However, it was their organised propaganda against the Rowlatt Act that added to their influence and authority among the citizens of Amritsar.

The ordinary housewives, too, had been infected by the general awakening and feeling of patriotic excitement that had percolated through their husbands and other male relatives who were either sympathetic witnesses or active participants in the political activities in the various towns of Punjab. Increasing public receptivity to political propaganda through the press and platform and to the strident criticism of the dictatorial functioning of the Punjab Government had created panic in official circles. It furnished the authorities with an excuse to restrict the participation of Drs Satyapal and Kitchlew in public activities and later to deport them to Dharamsala on 10 April 1919.

The Rowlatt Act agitation can be divided into four phases.[36] Its first phase lasted from 23 March to 30 March when the leaders could guide the course of the agitation. The second phase from 2 to 6 April reflected the reaction of the local leaders towards the incidents of violence at Delhi during the course of the hartal on 30 March. The third phase extended from 6 to 9 April when the movement had gained such astounding spontaneity and vitality that it took care of itself. Local leaders just watched the course

of the agitation—baffled about its overwhelming success. The fourth phase lasted from 10 to 14 April when the mobs acted according to their own whims or the dictates of their own prudence.

The meeting of 30 March at Amritsar, according to official estimates, is said to have been attended by 30,000 to 40,000 persons.[37] This gathering on the National Day consisted of all grades of society. Dr Kitchlew was the prime organiser,[38] while Dr Satyapal was one of its conveners.[39] Pandit Kotu Mal, Dina Nath and Swami Anubhava Nand made speeches while Lala Girdhari Lal presided over the meeting. Swami Anubhava Nand expressed his indignation and protest against the Rowlatt Act and underlined the importance of Home Rule for India. The hartal on 30 March was observed in a thorough manner by the shopkeepers and the trading classes. Participation of the professional classes was automatic since it happened to be Sunday. The hartal in the city on 6 April was complete. A large number of women, according to Dr Kitchlew, had also observed a fast on that day and showed great enthusiasm and interest.[40] They held separate protest meetings. One such meeting was held in the Arya Samaj Temple, Ludhiana, on 31 March 1919. Parbati Devi, daughter of Swami Shraddha Nand (earlier known as Mushi Ram), lashed out at the Rowlatt Act.[41] The hartal was again observed on 6 April 1919 with the rest of India according to Gandhi's programme. As a mark of protest and mourning, business was suspended and kitchen-hearths remained cold in thousands of households. In Lahore, politically minded men and women, irrespective of colour, caste and creed, took a holy bath in the River Ravi before sunrise and recited prayers for the repeal of the Rowlatt Act. While walking in processions, cries of 'Rowlatt Act *hai-hai*' were raised.[42]

At other places too, women and children joined the programme of fasting and prayers in a religious spirit within the four walls of their homes. An unprecedented enthusiasm, interest and earnestness for public activity was evident among the wives, daughters and sisters of Congressmen, who attended public meetings and processions. Prominent among them were Smt. Satyawati, wife of Lala Achit Ram (Lahore), Smt. Bhag Devi, wife of Lala Duni Chand (Ambala), Pushpa Gujral, wife of A. N. Gujral (Jhelum), Smt. Gauran Devi, wife of L.C. Dutt (Sialkot).[43] The village women, too, were infected with the religious spirit of protest. For example, in Sanghoi village, several women observed the fast along with the menfolk and praised Mahatma Gandhi.[44]

In fact, the hartal on both the days showed that the common people, the 'muted groups' including women, had been stirred so deeply that they lent their unstinted support. Their success owed to the ready support of the trading and shopkeeping classes.[45] The professional classes like teachers

and pleaders had mobilised public opinion to such an extent that a mere suggestion from Mahatma Gandhi to observe 6 April as the National Protest Day by observing the hartal, met with an overwhelming response.[46] There was no pressure of direct organisation on the part of local leaders and a complete closure of shops and suspension of traffic to an appreciable extent seemed to be spontaneous. Dr Kitchlew had not organised the hartal.[47]

Secondary leaders such as Badar-ul-Islam Ali Khan convened a meeting in the evening. The purpose was just to express their appreciation of the unprecedented unity, co-ordination and self-control exhibited by the people of Amritsar.[48] A resolution was passed requesting the King Emperor to rescind orders against Drs Kitchlew and Satyapal, Pandit Kotu Mal, Dina Nath and Swami Anubhava Nand. Public opinion, as *The Tribune* commented, emphatically condemned the action taken by the Punjab Government under the Defence of India Act against Drs Kitchlew, Satyapal, and others.[49] Obviously, official indifference to public opinion and its failure to appreciate the depth of their emotional attachment for the local leaders unleashed the social anger of the uneducated masses.

Celebration of *Ramnavmi* (a religious festival of Hindus) on 9 April provided a clear demonstration of Hindu–Mohammedan unity. In the larger towns it was the occasion for scenes of public fraternisation between Hindus and Mohammedans. Mohammedans joined in celebrating the festival and the cries of 'Hindu Mussalman ki jai' and 'Gandhi ki jai' were substituted for the names of Hindu deities. At Amritsar, Mohammedans and Hindus set up *chabbils* (stalls for serving water) and *jhankis* (pageants). Mahasha Rattan Chand also set up a *chabbil* and showed extraordinary enthusiasm in serving water to various communities. The Hindus drank out of the vessels of Mohammedans and vice versa.[50] This had been done on a smaller scale on 6 April.

The participants hailed from all walks of life. The *Ramnavmi* procession presented a cross-section of society, bound by bonds of emotional unity, which was not warped by the considerations of caste or creed or sex. Women, usually not visible in religious processions and other public functions as a matter of social norm, watched its progress from their housetops and balconies on account of its added significance as an occasion of communal harmony. Spontaneity and mass participation formed the chief features of the *Ramnavmi* celebrations in Amritsar, thus providing a sound basis for the psychological transformation in the Punjab. Michael O'Dwyer found that these spectacular demonstrations of unity, oneness and growing national consciousness were fraught with dangerous potentialities. Bereft of imagination and morose by temperament,

O'Dwyer could not but shudder at the possibilities of revolt, and its leaders were none other than Kitchlew and Satyapal.[51] On 10 April, Miles Irving, the Deputy Commissioner, whisked them away to Dharamsala unexpectedly. Their deportation on the pretext of violent speeches, as *The Tribune* wrote, was indefensible and it had exposed the Punjab Government to the severest criticism for its action against independence of thought and strength in expression.[52]

The news of the deportation spread like lightning. As the news travelled from one locality to another, the people closed their shops and joined the crowed, going to plead with the Deputy Commissioner to release Kitchlew and Satyapal.[53] Women, too, were emotionally disturbed by this news. Their resentment and strong disapproval of the sly removal of the beloved leader Dr Kitchlew was expressed through the recital of songs, composed on the spur of the moment. The refrain of one song ran:

> *Ratin charan wangar laigabe doctor Kitchlew nun.*[54] (The government officials acted like thieves while whisking away Dr Kitchlew under the cover of darkness.)

On 10 April 1919, the British Government had fuelled the public anger to a greater intensity by arresting Gandhi at Palwal railway station in order to prevent his entry into the Punjab.[55] Both these developments caused great excitement and ignited the political atmosphere, which was evident from spontaneous public gatherings and processions, organised with the intention of securing the release of their popular leaders. But unprovoked firing on mobs at Amritsar, Lahore and other towns in the Punjab led to violence, arson and killing of Europeans. Although Hindu and Mohammedan women had not participated in these demonstrations, they experienced the agony and torture of losing their male family members at the hands of a tactless, vindictive, unimaginative and racist regime. The victims hailed from all sections of society, including those simple-minded people who had gone for a *faryad* to the authorities and not with any rebellious intention.

The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre on 13 April 1919 was yet another act of official high-handedness, which radically changed the attitude of the politically conscious men and women towards the colonial rule. General Dyer, who had ordered the firing of 1,650 rounds of ammunition without warning at a peaceful crowd, regarded it as a great opportunity to show people the might of British Empire for he imagined that 'the Lord hath delivered them into my hands'.[56]

By leaving as many as 379 dead and 1,200 wounded,[57] Dyer brimmed with satisfaction over the discharge of his duty but actually he had created

a living hell for the surviving women. The imposition of a night curfew had obliged a number of women in Amritsar to suffer from mental torture as they could not get any help for locating their husbands, sons and other relatives who lay parched, weltering in their own blood and mangled limbs. The traumatic experience of Rattan Devi, who had ventured to the Bagh despite the curfew order and spent the whole night with her husband's cold head in the lap, was later to be drawn out from the security of her *zenana* (women's quarters) to public life. Attar Kaur, whose husband Bhagmal Bhatia was a committed local Congress worker, had been forced to spend a number of frightful hours amidst the dead and the wounded (despite the advanced stage of her pregnancy) until she could bring home the dead body of her husband with the help of her family servant and Udham Singh,[58] who had pledged to avenge the dastardly killing of the innocent people of Punjab.[59] The other women, though not courageous like them, were obliged to shoulder the responsibilities of looking after their children and families and fend for their livelihoods.

Believing that the inhabitants of the Punjab, whom he had earlier lauded for their loyalty, had conspired to wage war against the King Emperor, O'Dwyer had permitted the proclamation of the Seditious Meetings Act, followed by the imposition of Martial Law in the Punjab from mid-April to June 1919. In fact, the very purpose of Michael O'Dwyer's insistence on the promulgation of Martial Law No. IV showed that his sole intention was that of punishing not only the alleged rioters but the political agitators also. He had always associated political agitation with the educated urban middle classes. Hence, he wanted to spread the net as wide as possible and thus kill the political movement itself and the imagined rebellion. His paranoid mentality led to the institution of a number of cases of conspiracy and rebellion against prominent members of the professional classes and other citizens, including popular leaders under Martial Law.

In Lahore, the popular leaders, namely Lala Harkishan Lal, Lala Duni Chand, Pandit Rambhuj Dutt and others, were arrested on 14 April, tried in camera and sentenced to transportation for life (later released under King's Proclamation of Amnesty towards the close of 1919) by special Martial Law Tribunal.[60] Their properties were confiscated and thus exposed their young wives and children to moral and material damage. On the same grounds, Babu Kali Nath Roy, Editor of *The Tribune* and Radha Krishan, Editor of the *Pratap*, were also sentenced to various terms of imprisonment and fined.[61] Similar cases of rebellion and other seditious activities were instituted against Drs Kitchlew and Satyapal, Chaudhary Bugga Mal and Mahasha Rattan Chand, the primary and secondary leaders, respectively, of the Rowlatt agitation in Amritsar.[62]

Mahatma Gandhi, while severely criticising the harsh and disproportionate sentences awarded to the accused in the Lahore judgement,[63] also highlighted the hardships of the young wives of other Martial Law victims in the columns of *Young India*.[64] The cases of Mahasha Rattan Chand and Chaudhary Bugga Mal received special notice as the victims' original death sentences were merely changed into transportation for life despite the strong appeals made by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, C.R. Das and other leaders.[65]

Besides, the Punjab Government harassed and humiliated lawyers in various ways. By appointing them as Special Constables, they were put to a lot of physical discomfort as they had not only to patrol the city throughout the day but also to report to the authorities twice daily. For example, even a scholarly lawyer like Mr Manohar Lal, the Vice-President of the High Court Bar Association, was disgraced. His family was harassed and locked up on 18 April 1919. His wife and children took shelter in the servants' quarters and they had to borrow bedding from friends. The search took place on 19 April and thereafter the family could return to their house.[66]

In the other towns of the Punjab, respectable citizens had equally bad experiences. At Wazirabad, the house of Jamiat Singh Bugga was seized in his absence and the women and children of his family were turned out without any alternative arrangements being made for them.[67]

The inhabitants of the Punjab, especially the citizens of Amritsar had to undergo additional suffering and humiliation. For example, the *salaaming* order brought various kinds of punishments to the defaulters in the city of Amritsar, populated by 160,000. Women were kept waiting tensely while their husbands, sons and other male relatives were marched through the city by the whimsical police officials. While boys and men suffered the torture of being flogged publicly,[68] women watched helplessly. For example, Lachman Kaur articulated the mental agony of many a woman when she remarked, 'When the people were flogged their cries rent our hearts, we felt helpless. There seemed no remedy against the cruelty and oppression around us'.[69] Owing to panic, men stayed in shops and women stayed alone in homes cowering under fear and tension. They had to exist without food or water and the sick could not get medicine. They complained of misbehaviour of the soldiers.[70] Ganga Devi's four-year old daughter died of fright.[71]

During the Martial Law regime even the innocent women of the villages were not spared. They were assaulted by government officials, physically manhandled and even turned out of their houses. The cruelty

and barbaric behaviour of Bosworth Smith, Superintendent of Police, is illustrated by the following extract:

> In Manianwali village, on 19 April 1919, some soldiers entered the village and shot a few men without a warrant for shooting. Women fled from their houses on hearing the shoot-outs including those who were about to be mothers.... Two men, Munshi Nawab Din and Lehna Singh, were severely beaten by Mr Bosworth Smith who assaulted their women, unveiled them and used abusive language. He called them, "Flies, bitches, she-asses!" He said to them, "Your skirts will be examined by the constables. When you were sleeping with your husbands, why did you allow them to get up and go?" He also spat at them.[72]

Gurdevi, the aged widow of Mangal Jat, also repeated the similar experience before Mr Labh Singh, an ex-Professor and a Barrister, who was specially deputed by the Congress Committee to investigate the shocking incidents which had occurred in the Punjab.[73]

In a village, Chuharkhana, these women were summoned by the police in the absence of their husbands. They were threatened if they did not produce their husbands, their houses would be burnt and land confiscated. It was not an empty threat. A number of residents deposed that their wives had borrowed to pay fines for the release of their husbands.[74]

In Sheikhupura too, houses were locked and women along with their children were turned out.[75] Other forms of harassment were adopted. The male relatives of those women, who were unable to bribe the police, were arrested.[76] In Hafizabad, Hukma Devi's son was locked up in jail because she was unable to find money to bribe the police.[77]

The Government of the Punjab threw a veil of secrecy over the blood-curdling incidents in the province. As the Indian press was completely gagged from 15 April to 9 June 1919,[78] neither the people nor the political leaders in the Punjab and outside could get any news about the sufferings, emotional traumas, deprivation and economic ruin of the beleaguered inhabitants of the region.

NEW SIGNPOSTS IN THE INDIAN CONSCIOUSNESS: FROM AMBIVALENCE TO ALIENATION

The traumatic experience of the Punjab disturbances, from the anti-Rowlatt agitation to the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and then the Martial Law regime, brought an attitudinal change towards British rule among the politically conscious and the 'muted groups', especially women in the

Punjab, as well as in the rest of India. Henceforth, political awakening and disillusionment with the liberal claims of the British rulers grew at a rapid pace. Publication of the *Report of the Commissioners*, which had exposed the iniquities of the O'Dwyer regime, tended to erode faith in the British ideals of justice and fairness. It is evident from the statements and reaction of the citizens of Amritsar. For example, Mian Feroz Din, an Honorary Magistrate since 1989 and *rais*, remarked, 'I must say, however, that the pride which I myself, and my countrymen, felt in British justice, has received a rude shock .... So far as the people of Amritsar are concerned, I pray to God that we may not have to see those Martial Law days again'.[79] The people felt enraged owing to the discriminatory treatment towards Indian passengers including women, in spite of holding Martial Law passes.[80]

A comparison between the *Reports* of the Congress Committee and of the Disorders Inquiry Committee further confirmed the fears and suspicions of Indians regarding the latter's laborious attempts to whitewash and gloss over the indiscretions and misuse of power by the Martial Law Administrator in enforcing orders like crawling, flogging and saluting of Europeans in Amritsar, Gujranwala and other towns in Punjab.[80]

As the sufferings and humiliations of the people of the Punjab came to light, the voice of protest grew louder. The fact that General Dyer, the Commanding Officer at the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, was lionised on his return to England, had provoked anger and resentment, apart from undermining the Indian faith in the British sense of justice. Gandhi's denunciation of the British rule as 'Satanic' expressed his changed views about the raj.

Writing of C.F. Andrews from England, Rabindranath Tagore had also underlined his anguish and disillusionment with the British Government:

> The late events have conclusively proved that our true salvation lies in our own hands, that a nation's greatness can never find its foundation in half-hearted concessions of contemptuous niggardliness.[81]

Evidently, branding of the loyal inhabitants of Punjab as rebels had unwittingly promoted a spirit of defiance and strengthened the desire to kick off the national bondage. In other words, the suspicious and revengeful attitude of functionaries of the O'Dwyer regime had dispelled the illusions of Indians about retaining their self-respect and national pride as British subjects.

Michael O'Dwyer's determined effort to kill ideas and stifle political consciousness reinvigorated men as well as women. Thus, the virile and

action-oriented inhabitants of Punjab were mentally prepared for the resumption of armed struggle. The sacrifices of the Kuka women—Bibi Attri, Bhagwan Kaur (Sialkot), Jai Kaur (Ludhiana), Bholi and Dharmo (Ferozepur), Ratto and Desan (Sirsa)[82]—and of the Ghadrite women, particularly Gulab Kaur, were recalled in this context. It also provided an opportunity for a critical look at the heroes and heroic movements. As a result, a search began for tapping the revolutionary potentialities in local conditions and people; it resulted in a two-pronged experiment with terrorist methods and mass movements. Henceforth, the Punjab people set forth on a path of self-discovery, new self-images and world-view involving the etching of new psychological contours, articulation of alienation and protest.

How was this change in consciousness articulated by men and women? One concrete expression of alienation and protest against the colonial connection was found in the surrender of titles as a part of the non-cooperation movement, having the rectification of Punjabi wrongs as its major plank. Mahatma Gandhi returned the *Kaiser-i-Hind* Gold Medal, Zulu War Medal and Boer War Medal.[83]

The people of Punjab also followed suit and returned *Kaiser- i-Hind* decorations, certificates, *sanads*, titles of *Rai Sahib*, *Kursinashin*, etc.[84] The women of the Punjab were not in possession of such titles or honorary posts. The lone woman was Sarla Debi Chaudhrani, who returned her war badge granted for her recruiting services for the formation of the Bengali Regiment[85] during the First World War 1914-1918.

An unprecedented increase in the visibility of women in public life was a significant outcome of the Punjab experience. In that moment of personal and national tragedy, the old image of women such as:

> *Ander baithi lakh di*
> *Bahar gayi kakh di*[86]
> (The one who stays indoors in worth a lakh, but one steps out is worth a straw.)

was discarded. The 'new' woman, who had developed a heightened awareness of her vulnerability in the course of Dyer's spree of racist revenge from 13 April to mid-June (wreaked on the plea of protecting the inviolability of the womanhood of the superior Anglo-Saxon breed, personified by Miss Sherwood, from the dirty black hands),[87] felt emboldened to cross from domestic into public space.

Perceiving Gandhi as a saviour of the bleeding Punjab, especially the womenfolk of one thousand families who had lost their bread-earners, either as a result of police firing or incarceration in jails,[88] Sarla Debi

Chaudhrani invited Mahatma Gandhi to console them and to instil courage and hope into their hearts. The fact that she acted as a hostess to a male leader in the absence of her husband and accompanied him to various towns in the Punjab for organising public meetings, indicated that Sarla Debi was made of a different metal. Already at an advanced stage of political consciousness and intellectual development, she had mobilised Punjabi women to join her struggle against Dyerism. As a result, a fairly large number of women flocked to attend public meetings when Gandhi visited Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala, Kasur, Wazirabad, Akalgarh, Ramnagar, Hafizabad, Sangla Hills, Sheikhupura, Layallpur and Ludhiana,[89] in October 1919, as soon as the ban on his entry into Punjab was lifted.[90] In order to share the grief of the *purdah* women, Gandhi held special meetings for them at Gujranwala, Layallpur and Hafizabad.[91] The refrain of his message at all these meetings was that they should cast away fear, become autonomous individuals and promote *swadeshi*.

In the course of his visit, Gandhi came into close contact with the bereaved women of the Punjab. At Gujranwala, he comforted the wife of Diwan Mangal Sen (a Martial Law prisoner) and was impressed by her hospitality despite her sorrow.[92] In Amritsar, he met the wives of Drs Satyapal and Kitchlew, whose fortitude in the hour of their mental tension and sorrow elicited his admiration.[93] Wherever he went, his heartfelt sympathy helped Punjabi women to abandon their fear and anxiety and devote themselves to constructive work, particularly spinning, and propaganda for swadeshi.[94] Many Punjabi women adopted the use of *khadi*. Sarla Debi Chaudhrani became a trendsetter when she attended parties, marriages and purdah club meetings in a khadi sari. Increasing use of khadi by Punjabi women for making dresses for children and male members of their families indicated a change in their self-view. Imbued with a new confidence, these women took an interest in cultivating their minds rather than pandering to male whims as sexual objects. Gandhi had made them conscious of their potentialities as participants in the non-violent movement for freedom struggle. Henceforth, they were to assert their presence in domestic and national life.

As a result, a large number of Punjabi women were drawn into national politics. Prominent among them were Sarla Debi Chaudhrani Phul Kaur (wife of the Martial Law prisoner Chaudhry Bugga Mal), Rattan Devi and Attar Karu (the widows of the Jallianwala Bagh martyrs Chajju Ram and Bhag Mal Bhatia respectively), Parbati Devi (daughter of Swami Shraddha Nand), Radha Devi (wife of Lala Lajpat Rai) and a number of ordinary housewives having no political background. Chastened by personal suffering and tragedy, these women had learnt to look beyond domestic roles

and later extended their activities to the broad arena of national work which included anti-imperialist demonstrations, processions, picketing, boycott of foreign cloth, Swadeshi, *harijan* work and electoral politics.

A concrete evidence of their new perception of the relationship between individual, family and nation was their enthusiastic response to Gandhi's call for donations towards funds for the support of families of Martial law victims, the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund and Tilak Swaraj Fund. The Punjabi women showed a touching concern for the support of such families as had been left only with womenfolk and children as a result of Martial Law atrocities, killings and imprisonment. For example, women of Amritsar generously gave their jewellery as donation for this cause. Despite their own economic problems, Mrs Bugga Mal and Mrs Rattan Chand donated their gold bracelets. For the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund, too, donations came from the relatives of the martyrs primarily. For example, Rattan Devi gave 500 rupees; a domestic maid servant, who had lost her son in the Jallianwala Bagh holocaust, donated 50 rupees, which amounted to her total annual earnings.[95] Another unidentified woman presented her dead son's clothes and her ornaments towards the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund.[96] These examples showed growing awareness of Punjabi women about the link between their family fortunes and national life.

Even more remarkable was their initiative and involvement in the fund-raising drive. At Ferozepur, women themselves collected funds for the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial during the National Week (6-13 April 1920). Again, at Amritsar, women actively collected funds for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. At Bhiwani, too, Mrs Desai and other Gujarati women made house-to-house collections, and a separate women's section for the National Fund was opened.[97]

After taking the first step in public life in the course of the anti-Rowlatt agitation, Punjabi women had learnt to articulate their sufferings as a result of the British oppression, symbolised by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and Martial Law humiliations and deprivations. During his visit of the Punjab, Gandhi observed that the songs narrating the story of 'Dyerism', reflecting their new spiritedness and resolve to liberate their motherland from the foreign yoke, were on the lips of Punjabi women. Once such popular song sung in the course of the Rowlatt agitation ran:

Asi nahinaun haarnan,
Bhanve saadi jaan jave,
Taup te bandook kaulon,
Khande walli dhar kaulon,

Agg de sholeyan taun,
Asi nahinaun haarnan.[98]
(We shall not accept defeat even if we lose our lives, we are shot dead or cut into pieces by sword and other sharp-edged weapon or burnt alive. We resolve not to surrender.)

This song was composed by Sarla Debi Chaudhrani.

In fact, the Rowlatt agitation, which had aroused a spirit of defiance and brought forth women to the streets for the first time, had released their creative potentialities and occasioned the composition of numerous poems and songs in vernacular languages. Kasturi Bai, who was taught the working knowledge of Hindi and Urdu by her nationalist husband, Rampat Yadav, was not only active in the Gandhian movements in Rohtak but also a prolific poetess. Published under the title *Rashtiriya Geet aur Bhajan 1930–47*, her compositions in Haryani-mixed-Urdu reflected her perception of the British Government—ungrateful, oppressive, exploitative and cunning. It is evident from the following extract from her poem 'Angrezi Raj ka Abhishap' ('Curse of the British Raj'):

Pichle vaade saare bhooli Rowlatt bill anaam diya,
Bus tera yehi snamaan hai, tu nahin bhoolne paave,
Auisa hura masaan hai, bina jaan liye na jaave.
Rowlatt bill se piche bhai 'phauji' laa ke kari jaan,
Jiski rooh se misle saanp ke Hindi chale apit ke taan,
Gun ke badle avgun tartaa dekho kaisa baimaan, ji.
Duniya bhar mein aisa koi dekha nahin raaj bhai,
Khaali haath praja par goli jisne ho chalvai,
Amritsar mein Jallianwala Dyer ne laash bichai.
Khud taure yehi kanoon hai, praja par dosh lagaave.
Aisa bura masaan hai, bina jaan liye na jaave.[99]
(Addressing unsuspecting and innocent Hindi (Indians), Kasturi Bai asked them to remain beware of the British *raj*. It is not a government for the people but a fatal disease which gradually sucks away the life-giving blood. There is no other government like the British one which had ordered firing on the unarmed crowd. Dyer had covered the ground of Jallianwala Bagh with dead bodies. This is a strange *sarkar* which violates the law herself but punishes its subjects for law-breaking).

Kasturi Bai also wrote a number of poems glorifying charkha. Her poems contained a bold criticism of general passivity and lack of courage among Indian men.[100]

Bhag Devi (wife of Lala Duni Chand, a prominent Congress leader of Ambala), was also not formally educated but her anguish over the massacre of innocent men, women and children obliged her to overcome her handicap. Her poems appeared under the caption *Quami Bhajanon ka Guldasta*. She was also the author of other books, including *Jagriti* and *Gita Sandesh*.[101]

Highly educated women also expressed their reaction against the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and atrocities committed by the Martial Law administrators. Sarla Debi Chaudhrani wrote in Punjabi, Bengali and English. Her writings, *At the Point of Spindle* and *The Song of Charkha*, which had grown out of her personal experience of the British oppression and cruelty, reflected her strong faith in the efficacy of charkha symbolising *sudarshan chakra*. The national-minded men and women read her compositions with great fervour.[102]

Rameshwari Nehru, though not educated through the formal school and college system, emerged as one of the pioneering journalists who expressed her anguish over the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy in her articles and editorials in *Stree Darpan* (founded in 1909). Daughter of the orthodox Raja Narender Nath of Lahore, she became a full-time disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and plunged herself into campaigns for swadeshi and harijan uplift. She also represented the radical change in the self-view and world-view of Indian women. For example, she flouted purdah restrictions and participated in public activities against the wishes of her father. She had also chosen to differ with her mentor Mahatma Gandhi on the issue of economic empowerment, particularly employment of women. In fact, Gandhi and Indian women, in the course of their association from the Rowlatt agitation onwards, helped each other to grow and abandon their prejudices.[103]

The Jallianwala Bagh tragedy had also wounded the hearts of a number of sensitive women not living in Punjab and it found expression in their writings. Sarojini Naidu's poem, 'Punjab in 1919' expressed her fervent conviction that the blood of martyrs would lead to freedom.[104] Subhadra Kumari Chauhan's long poem 'Jallianwala Bagh Mein Basant' (1929) recaptured the horror of indiscriminate shooting at Jallianwala Bagh which would remain the seat of eternal sorrow, never to be enlivened by the bounties of the spring season.[105]

CONCLUSION

The discussion of the entire course of events from the anti-Rowlatt agitation, culminating in the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and followed by

the imposition of the Martial Law regime, has revealed its indelible and strong impact upon the nationalist psyche. This traumatic experience has proved to be a catalyst especially of the 'muted groups' whose projection and involvement was crucial for the success of the Indian freedom struggle. The colonial state as well as the nationalist leadership competed with each other for conquest over the hearts and minds of the Indian people with entirely different purposes, as is evident from the foregoing analysis.

In the present context, protest against the legislation of the Rowlatt Bills had shown that the colonial laws, which sought to give legitimacy to the British rule, were to become the frequent site of contest between the subjects and their rulers from 1920s to 1940s. It had also indicated the process of psychological leavening among the Indian people and to some extent in their victimisers—the Anglo-Saxon race.

The colonial state's decision to withdraw this 'devilish legislation' (as done earlier in the case of the Punjab Canal Colonisation Bills 1907) under the overwhelming pressure of public opinion and to issue Civil and Military Ordinance reflected the shrewd British perception that the perpetuation of the raj depended more upon the co-operation of the subject people rather than upon the frequent military interventions. Gandhi was no less conscious of this compulsion of the hegemonic British–Indian state.

However, it was Gandhi's growing awareness of the crucial role of the Indian people in the national struggle for freedom that had led to his total involvement in the long-term project of psychological and moral revolution among his compatriots in order to wean them away from the addiction to the *angrezi raj ki barketain* (blessings of the *raj*). Apart from its value as an argument for proving that the Indian freedom struggle was neither 'elitist' nor a camouflage for national leaders' scramble for power and authority, it conveyed a positive message to the semi-literate, poor masses and women who hoped that the transformation of their conditions was an integral part of the nationalist agenda.

It may be pointed out that the 'muted groups' did not form a single category. If that is conceded then the problem is how to reconcile and relate to the broad process of the redefinition of Indian self-hood with the transformation of the consciousness of the 'muted groups', especially women (whose deprivation and subordination varied with race, caste and class) in the course of the national struggle against colonialism and capitalism.

The 'muted groups', particularly women (without underrating the psychological leavening among ordinary peasants, workers and other such social groups), were perforce brought out of their splendid isolation.

Chastened by their personal, albeit shared, experience of the British repressive laws and brute force of the Martial Law regime, which had assaulted the honour, suppressed the civil rights of their menfolk and affected the well-being and economic security of their kith and kin, they were obliged to extend their nurturing hand from the home to the public arena.

This limited study has shown that the emotional scars left by the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, had led to a positive result in one sense. The general goodwill and ambivalence of Indians towards the 'fair, firm and just' *angrezi raj* had been replaced by social anger and alienation, thus facilitating Gandhi's almost impossible task of converting each home into a battleground. Once emboldened to articulate their anguish and anger against the public authority in songs and poems, the Punjabi women (who were purdah-clad and educationally backward), were not to be deterred from discovering and harnessing their creative potentialities for social engineering, nation-building and above all the constructing their own autonomous identities. Of course, all this was done within the framework of new patriarchy which accommodated mobility without demanding structural changes.

The Indian National Congress (and later the revolutionary groups and Left party) strengthened its claims as a representative of national aspirations with the induction of women as political workers and leaders. In fact, Gandhi's perceptive act of giving moral and cultural legitimacy to women's role in public life, especially social reconstruction and political struggle, had paved the way for the increasing visibility of women in the non-violent movements from the 1920s to the 1940s. Thus, with the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, the 'muted groups' recovered their voice, language and dignified presence, as well as their identity.

Notes

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4. Charles Gough and Arthur D. Innes, *The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars* (First published 1897; reprinted Delhi: National Book Shop, 1984), 222. Also Foreign Department, Despatch no. 20, 7 April 1849—Governor-General Lord Dalhousie to Secret Committee.
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8. Ibid., 269.
9. For an exposition of the point of view see Bipan Chandra, 'Colonialism: Stages of Colonialism and the Colonial State, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 10, 3 (1980). Also Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, 'Notes on the Role of Intelligentsia in Colonial Society: India from Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Studies in History*, 1 (1979).
10. Sudipta Kaviraj, *On the Construction of Colonial Power: Structure, Discourse, Hegemony*. Occasional papers on History and Society, Second series, XXXV (New Delhi: Centre for Contemporary Studies, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, 1991), 19. Also Shashi Joshi and Bhagwan Josh, *Struggle for Hegemony in India 1920–47*, in 2 vols. (New Delhi: Sage, 1992), Vol. 1, 10-42; Vol. 2, 25-44.
11. For an exposition of the concept of collaboration in terms of patron–client relationship see Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971).
12. Shashi Joshi and Bhagwan Josh, n. 10, vol. 1.
13. Raghavan Iyer, *Utilitarianism and All That: The Political Theory of British Imperialism* (London: Concord Grove Press, 1983), 115-23.
14. The policy of establishing hegemonic control was described in various ways such as possessing moral prestige and retaining 'legal authority' by the colonial state itself. For example, Lord Birkenhead characterised the British Government as 'government founded so completely as ours is upon prestige'. Cited in Simon Epstein, 'District Officers in Decline: The Erosion of British Authority in Bombay Countryside 1919–47', *Modern Asian Studies*, 16, 3, 1982, 483-518.
15. M.K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* (Ahmedabad: Navjivan Parkashan, 1962, 1982), 100.
16. Kaviraj, *On the Construction of Colonial Power*, 19.
17. K. N. Pannikar, 'The Intellectual History of Colonial India: Some Historiographic and Conceptual Questions', in S Bhattacharya and Romila Thapar (eds), *Situating Indian History* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), 421.
18. I have borrowed this argument from Ashish Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), 7.
19. Kamlesh Mohan, 'The Colonial Ethnography: Imperial Pursuit of Knowledge for Hegemony in the British India (Late 19th to Early 20th Century) in Roy McLeod and E. L. Ortiz (eds.), *New Perspectives on Empires and Science* (forthcoming), 14 (type script).
20. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 8-9.
21. Ibid., 48.
22. Ibid., 52.
23. Katherine Mayo, *Mother India* (London: Howard Baker, 1917), 16. Earlier, in his book *History of India* (1840), James Mill had constructed his entire argument for the justification of perpetuating the British rule in India around the issue of the degenerate Indian civilisation, abject position of Hindu women and 'effeminacy' of Hindu men who were unfit for self-government.
24. *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, hereafter referred to as *CWMG*, (Calcutta: The Annual Register Office, 1916)13, 443, 454, 496. In the course of his tours around India, he exhorted wives, mothers and sisters to involve their men in military service, because voluntary recruitment will lead to *swaraj*.

25. *The Tribune*, 8 February 1919.
26. *CWMG*, 15, 88.
27. *The Indian Annual Register*, (Calcutta: The Annual Register Office, 1920), 36.
28. *CWMG*, 15, 189.
29. Ibid., 290-91.
30. Rameshwari Nehru, *Gandhi is My Star* (Patna: Pustak Bhandar, 1950), 29. Rameshwari Nehru, daughter of the renowned Hindu Leader Raja Narendra Nath, was married to Brij Lal Nehru; G Broker (ed.), *Selected Speeches and Writings of Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur* (New Delhi, Archer Publications, 1961), 180. Raj Kumari, the trusted secretary and close confidante of Gandhi for the last thirteen years of his life, was the daughter of Raja Harnam Singh of Kapurthala; Oral Transcript of Interview with Sucheta Kriplani (New Delhi: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library). Sucheta belonged to a Brahmo-Samajist family having links with Keshub Chander Sen. Her father was a medical practitioner at Ambala. Gandhi gave his permission for Sucheta's marriage with J.B. Kriplani with great reluctance because he was afraid of losing Kriplani—a devoted constructive worker. Also Bibi Amtussalaam, 'Bapu ke Pas', in Shadi Ram Joshi (ed.), *Insaniyat ke Pehredar* (in Hindi) (New York: Gandhi Pustak Bhandar, 1972), 317. Bibi Amtussalaam belonged to an orthodox aristocratic family of Patiala. Daughter of Mohammed Abdul Majid Khan, she was not sent to school for formal education owing to the observance of *purdah* which she discarded in 1925.
31. *The Tribune*, 7 February 1919.
32. For a detailed discussion of anti-Rowlatt agitation in Punjab, especially Amritsar, see Kamlesh Mohan, *Militant Nationalism in Punjab* (Delhi: Manohar Book Service, 1985), 13-40. In the case of additional information, relevant sources have been mentioned.
33. H.F. Owen, 'Organising Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919', in R. Kumar (ed.), *Essays in Gandhian Politics* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1971), 82.
34. M.K. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (First published in 1927; reprinted Ahmedabad: Navjivan Parkashan, 1958), 340.
35. For biographical details of Drs Satyapal and Kitchlew see Fauja Singh, *Eminent Freedom Fighters of Punjab* (Patiala: Punjab University, 1972), 200-201, 205-6.
36. For the basis of this division see the chronological record of meetings and *hartals* from 31 January to 13 April 1919 in *Amritsar Conspiracy Case 1919* (hereafter referred to as *ACC*), NAI, New Delhi), No. 1, Roll No. 1, (in one roll).
37. *Disorders Inquiry Committee Report*, hereafter referred to as DICE, (Calcutta: Govt. Printing, 1919-20), VI, 80, 103—Evidence of Michael O'Dwyer.
38. *Amritsar Conspiracy Case*, hereafter *ACC*, 72—Statement of Dr Satyapal, Accused No. 2.
39. Ibid, 74, 105.
40. *Report of the Commissioners*, II, 711—Evidence of Dr Kitchlew.
41. *Disorders Inquiry Committee Report 1919–20*, hereafter *DICR*, (Calcutta: Govt. Printing), 238.
42. *The Tribune*, 8 April 1919.
43. This information is based on my personal interviews with Smt. Satyawati, Smt. Bhag Devi, Smt. Pushpa Gujral and Smt. Guaran Devi on 20 June 1989, 20 January 1984, 10 July 1988, 18 June 1984 respectively.
44. *The Tribune*, 12 April 1919.
45. *Report of the Commissioners*, I, 47.

46. *DICE*, VI, 100.
47. *ACC*, 721—Statement of Dr Kitchlew. For official version see *DICE*, III, 19. It was stated that Dr Kitchlew practically ordered the hartal. Also see Hans Raj's statement. According to him Dr Kitchlew, Chaudhri Bugga Mal, Mahasha Rattan Chand, Badar-ul-Islam Ali Khan, Gurdial Singh, Narain Das and Dr Mohammad Bashir planned on 5 April that a hartal on 6 April should be proclaimed by beat of drum and observed. He further added that the shopkeepers were made to close their shops since they knew that they would be looted. As his statement was uncorroborated, the theory about the hartal being pre-planned and organised, peters out.
48. *The Tribune*, 7 April 1919.
49. *The Tribune*, 8 April 1919. The lead article 'Action against Dr Kitchlew and Others' argued that the official action was unjust as none of them had acted in a manner prejudicial to public safety.
50. *DICE*, VI, 30, 165.
51. *Report of the Commissioners*, II, 712-20—Statement of Drs Satyapal and Kitchlew.
52. *The Tribune*, 11 April 1919. Editorial, 'Blazing Indiscretion'.
53. *Bombay Chronicle*, 12 April 1919.
54. Text of the song through Professor V.N. Dutta's courtesy, New Delhi.
55. *The Tribune*, 11 April 1919.
56. Cited in Arthur Swinson, *Six Minutes to Sunset* (London: Peter Davies, 1964), 54.
57. Home Department, Political (Deposit), Proceedings no. 23, September 1919 (New Delhi: National Archives of India).
58. Ibid., 64-65.
59. Sohan Lal Bharati, *Jallianwala Bagh Ki Khooni Dharti aur Mere Mata Pita* (Amritsar: Bharati Prakashan, n.d.), 16-17. Also *The Tribune*, 13 April 1961.
60. K.L. Gauba, *The Rebel Minister: The Story of the Rise and Fall of Lala Harkishan Lal* (Lahore: Premier Publishing House, 1938), 87.
61. For the judgement of various Martial Law Commissions, especially Lahore and Amritsar, see Pearay Mohan, *An Imaginary Rebellion: and How it was Suppressed* with a foreword by Lal Lajpat Rai (Lahore: Khosla Brothers, 1920), 82-121.
62. For a detailed account of the Amritsar Conspiracy Case see Mohan, *Militant Nationalism in Punjab*.
63. *CWMG*, XVIII, 473.
64. M.K. Gandhi, 'A Punjab Victim', in *Young India*, 15 October 1919. It also referred to the case of Behari Lal Sachdeva, sentenced to transportation for life.
65. M.K. Gandhi, 'A Hard Case', in *Young India*, 26 May 1920, Chaudhary Bugga Mal and Mahasha Rattan Chand were released in 1936.
66. *Report of the Commissioners*, I, 83-84. Also II, 198-206, Evidence of Mr Manohar Lal, Bar-at-law.
67. Ibid., 113-14. Also *DICR*, II, 210.
68. *DICR* 1919–20, 208-10.
69. *Report of the Commissioners*, 1919–20, I, 63-64. Also, II, Statement no. 125. Also Statement nos 127, 133.
70. Ibid., II, Statement nos 125 to 132—Lachman Kaur, Iswar Kaur (a widow with a sick child), Khem Kaur, Buddhi Devi, Devki and Ganga Devi.
71. Ibid., Statement no. 132.

72. *Report of the Commissioners*, I, 128.
73. Ibid., 128-29.
74. Ibid., 139.
75. *CWMG*, 17, 275.
76. Ibid., 27.
77. *Report of the Commissioners*, I, 120.
78. *CWMG*, 15, 334. All issues of *The Tribune*, from 25 April to 31 July 1919, had been confiscated by the Punjab Government in the case of Kali Nath Roy vs. The King Emperor. These are available in Home Department, Proceedings nos. 228-50, October 1919, pp. 77-92.
79. *Report of the Commissioners*, II, Statement no. 2.
80. Ibid., Statement no. 1—Girdhari Lal, Deputy Chairman, the Punjab Chambers of Commerce and Managing Director, the Amritsar Flour and General Mills Co. Ltd., Amritsar.
81. *Rabindranath Tagore Papers*, Tagore to Andrews, (unpublished Private Papers), 22 July 1920.
82. For a detailed account about these women see Home Department Judicial B, Proceedings nos. 192-93, April 1882 (New Delhi: NAI). Also Proceedings nos. 186-89, April 1881 and 188-95.
83. *All India Congress Committee Papers* (hereafter referred to as *AICC* papers (Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi), File no. 5, 1920.
84. Ibid., Also *The Tribune*, 28 October and 3, 6, 28 November 1920.
85. *AICC Papers*. File no. 5, 1920. *The Tribune*; 4 and 7 August, 1920.
86. *District Gazetteer Multan*, 1901-2, 28.
87. *Command Papers*, no. 771—Statement by General Dyer. Also Ian Colvin, *The Life of General Dyer* (London: Blackwood, 1929), 172.
88. Home Department, Political (Deposit), Proceedings no. 23, September 1919.
89. *CWMG*, 16, 286, 316, 324, 348.
90. Ibid., 261.
91. *CWMG*, 16, 316, 331, 348.
92. Ibid., 316.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid., 329-31.
95. The information given in this paragraph is based on *The Tribune*, 15 and 17 April 1920.
96. Home Department, Political A, Proceedings nos. 71-72, August 1920.
97. *The Tribune*, 1 May, 16 February, 2 July 1921.
98. For the text of this song see Ramesh Vidrohi, *Jab Roya Punjab* in Hindi (New Delhi: Bhavna Parkashan, 1977).
99. For the text of Kasturi Bai's songs and *bhajans*, see K. C. Yadav (ed.), *Haryana Swatantarta Andolan Mein Kaviyon, Shairon, Bhajan Updeshkon aur Loknayakon ka Yogdaan* in Hindi (Delhi: Sadbhavna Parkashan, 1988), 184-206. For the text of 'Angrezi Raj ka Abhishap' see 184-85.
100. Ibid., 203-6.
101. Personal interview with Smt. Bhag Devi on 20 January 1984.
102. The information about Sarla Debi Chaudhrani's role in anti-Rowlatt agitation, popularisation of swadeshi and organisation of women on political basis, is drawn from

CWMG, 18, 20, and her booklets namely *The Song of Charkha* (Madras, Ganesh & Co. n.d.) and *At the Point of Spindle* (Madras: Ganesh & Co., n.d.).

103. Kamlesh Mohan, 'Image of Women in *Stree Darpan* 1909–1928', in *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, 52nd session, New Delhi.
104. For the text of Sarojini Naidu's poem (Hindi version) see Vidrohi, *Jab Roya Punjab*.
105. For the text of Subhadra Kumari Chauhan's poem see Ramesh Upadhyay (ed.), *Jallianwala Bagh* (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Publication Division, 1969, 1985).

Acceptable Poetry: Muqbil's Mystical *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rāṇjhā*

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Muqbil Shāh Jahān's *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rāṇjhā* reinterprets the well-known legend of Hir and Ranjha in mystical terms, placing Ṣūfī conceptions of love and devotion at the centre of its narrative. The poem places in opposition to these conceptions the *sharī'ah* and social ideologies of honour and control, all of which are severely compromised by the end of the poem. The image of Hir as the disciple of Ranjha, which places Hir in a subordinate position to Ranjha, is central to the *qiṣṣah*. Equally important is the narrator's mystical poetic of identifying with his characters, a tactic which mirrors the characters' own subversions of individual and social identities.

Muqbil's style is simple and straightforward, popular and loved: His words are delicate but his meanings complex and worth remembering. (Miā Muḥammad Bakhsh Jihlamī, *Qiṣṣah Saif ul-mulūk*, verse 8983)

My poetry only became acceptable when I repeated the name of the Lord:
I prayed for the pure soul of the beloved Prophet again and again; I lowered my head before Abū Bakr, Umar Uṣmān and Alī.
Muqbil, I cried and sighed as I related the *qissah* of Hīr and Rāṇjhā. (Muqbil, *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rāṇjhā*, verse 4)[1]

As with most pre-modern Punjabi poets, we do not know enough about Muqbil to be able to contextualise his works with any degree of certainty. We know nothing of his background or social status, not even where he was born or where he spent most of his life: Muqbil is, in effect, an equivocal sign, a question mark, a trace preserved by writing, copying and (in the modern age) printing. There exist at present three texts attributed to Muqbil: *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rāṇjhā, Sīḥarfī madḥ-i Pīr-i dastgīr* (a poem in thirty acrostic verses praising Abdul Qādir Jīlānī, the founder of

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the Qādiriyah Sufi *silsilah*) and *Jangnāmah Imām Ḥasan Ḥusayn* (a lengthy tract on the martyrdom of Ali's sons).[2] It is from the third of these works that we get our only hint of biographical information about the poet: at the end of the poem he writes

> Muqbil Shāh Jahān wrote this tract (*risālah*)
> In the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Muḥammad Shāh
> On Thursday the seventh day of Z̲īqa d
> In the year 1208 *hijrī*.
> This *faqīr*'s pen-name is 'Muqbil', as is well-known;
> Brothers, this suffering one is deprived of his eyes.[3]

Even these hints, however, are shrouded in a textual uncertainty that must render any reliance on them risky to say the least: the verses containing the hijri date of composition do not appear in two of the three manuscripts used by the editor of the text they are a part of, and one of the two manuscripts that mentions the emperor Muhammad Shah does not give the regnal year in which the poem was supposedly written.[4] Even then, the two dates given in the verses are nearly fifty years apart: while the hijri year 1208 corresponds to 1793-94 CE, Muhammad Shah sat on the throne in 1719 CE[5]—making the twenty-ninth year of his reign 1748 CE. Leaving the thorny problem of dating aside, we have as biographical evidence only the poet's testimony that he is blind—and no certain assurance that the Muqbil who wrote the *Jangnāmah* is the same Muqbil who wrote *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rānjhā*. In the absence of any reason to suspect that both poems are not by the same Muqbil, though, we may dispense with a certain measure of uncertainty: in all probability, Muqbil was an eighteenth-century Muslim author with allegiance to the Qadiriyah Sufi *silsilah* who wrote at least three literary works, two of them overtly religious.

THE TEXT OF *QIṢṢAH HĪR RĀNJHĀ*

If Muqbil the poet is a mystery, the text of his most well-known work is equally subject to uncertainty, contest and play. The central conundrum of Muqbil's *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rānjhā* is the hermeneutic challenge of its two completely different endings: in one version Hir and Ranjha depart together on pilgrimage to Mecca and receive eternal life; in the other, both lovers die. Nor can we rely on textual criticism alone to adjudicate between these two endings and give us a firm answer to the question of which might have been Muqbil's 'original' ending to the poem: all of the manuscripts used by the Indian editors of the poem are undated, giving

no clue as to which version may have appeared first. Indeed, even to look for such a simplistic resolution of the two contradictory versions of the poem belies the myriad interpretative possibilities latent in a text that comes to us with two completely different endings and two completely opposed hermeneutics. It may seem tempting to suggest that the 'happy' ending of the poem in which the lovers travel together to Mecca is more in line with the text's decidedly mystical trajectory and that the tragic ending is a projection by later scribes and readers of the popularity of Varis Shah's solution (if not that of the Persian *maṣnavīs*) to the social conundrum of the text's forbidden passion.[6] Such a simple explanation, though, not only ignores the significant disjunction between Varis's ending the Muqbil's (in Varis, for example, the Siāls poison Hir) but also sidesteps the uncertainty and play inherent in the text as we now have it in favour of a constructed, monochrome certainty—one that incidentally fortifies the critical tendency to valorise Varis as the inventor of tragedy in the Punjabi *qiṣṣah*. Giving primacy to one or the other of the endings of Muqbil's poem completely effaces the interpretational possibilities inherent in the composition and reception of an eighteenth-century Punjabi poem (however mysticised) about romantic love: the different endings of Muqbil suggest the impossibility of trying either to harness the subversions of romantic love to the service of mysticism or to subordinate mystic love to the dictates of ideology. Unlike his predecessor Ahmad Gujjar, who simply has Hir and Ranjha die before they go on eternal pilgrimage, Muqbil seems to offer two stark alternatives as a form of critique of the opposition between the certainties of mysticism and secular ideology: instead of narrative resolution, his poem yields only questions and hermeneutic uncertainty. The poem's different endings set up a multi-layered poetic of self-reflexive questions and uncertainties more subversive than those posed by any one of the possible endings alone.

In fact, it would seem that there are at least three recensions of the text of *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rānjhā*, differing from each other more in their endings and treatment of the episode of Hir's marriage rather than in the readings of individual lines.[7] The three known recensions are: a short version of 360 verses that ends with the death of Hir and Ranjha; a longer version of 433 verses containing extended descriptions of the ceremonies surrounding Hir's marriage and arrival in Rangpur and ending with the apotheosised lovers going on eternal pilgrimage to Mecca; and a shorter version that retains the mystical ending but omits the extended descriptive passages. Only the first two recensions are represented by printed editions, the first edited by Jogindar Singh, the second by Shamsher Singh Ashok.[8] Both of these editions are loosely based on a common core of

eight manuscripts of the poem, five in Gurmukhi and three in Persian script; Jogindar Singh mentions but does not cite an additional two Gurmukhi manuscripts.[9] In the actual construction of the texts, though, Ashok has used only one Gurmukhi and two Persian-script manuscripts, while Jogindar Singh has utilised two Gurmukhi texts and one in Persian script.[10] Even this accounting masks the fact that both editions seem to be essentially diplomatic transcriptions of a different Gurmukhi manuscript, Ashok's being the longer of the two (there is, however, a significant measure of doubt with regard to Jogindar Singh's text, since he uses different sets of sigla in his introduction and in the notes to his text). In actual fact, then, the two editions are based on a total corpus of two Gurmukhi and two Persian-script texts (since one each of the Gurmukhi and Persian-script texts are used by both editors); eight manuscripts are totally unrepresented. Since neither editor mentions using a dated manuscript, we may assume that all the texts consulted are indeed undated. Because neither editor gives any description of the contents of any of the manuscripts used or the number of verses in each text, though it is impossible to say what individual manuscripts actually contain or what features they have in common.

At the same time, though the available evidence seems to support the conjecture that the manuscript Ashok has based his text on is the only one that contains the lengthier text he prints; while the shorter recension is available in at least three manuscripts in both Gurmukhi and Persian scripts, the small actual size of each editor's corpus and the total lack of reliable manuscript notes in both editions puts even this observation into some doubt. While the available evidence would seem to favour the conjecture that the shorter text is at least better represented in the manuscript tradition, the lack of reliable information about the total corpus of available manuscripts of the *qiṣṣah* renders impossible any judgement on which version of the text is earlier or more commonly represented among the available texts. Indeed, each of the two editors ultimately chooses to follow the ending of only one of the manuscripts he uses, ignoring the other two. For our purposes—and in the absence of further textual information—each of the poem's two endings possesses an equal degree of interpretational validity.

MUQBIL'S HIR AS A SUFI ALLEGORY

If two of Muqbil's literary works are overtly religious, his *Hīr* can at the very least be said to have marked religious tendencies. The love (*'ishq*) presented in the poem, both as a concept valorised by the poet and as a

force in the lives of Hir and Ranjha, is deeply mystical. Our first indications of the centrality of the concept of *ishq* and its mystical meanings in the text come in the brief prelude to the poem. The poet tells us that

> *Ishq* unites one to Truth: sacrifice yourself to this *ishq*.
> Those who are killed by *ishq* don't die: don't try to run from the blows of the sword of *ishq*.
> *Ishq* is the caste of *aulīyās* and *faqirs*; enjoy *ishq* by practising *faqar*. (2)

For the narrator, *ishq* is a passionate attachment to the divine which makes irrelevant to Ranjha the fact that the land given to him by his elder brothers is the worst portion of his late father's holdings (6), a force more powerful than the *sharī'ah* (171) or rationality (90, 104):

> Reason (*'aql*) doesn't operate where *ishq* has set up camp:
> Muqbil, I sacrificed my soul and all my property to the name of *ishq*. (18)

Again and again in the poem, the narrator makes the point that *ishq* elevates the faithful lover: God protects dispossessed, homeless lovers (27) and those who slander them go straight to Hell (45). And not only are lovers granted boons while alive, but their faithfulness and constancy result in mystical apotheosis after death (in both endings of the poem), the analogical status of a martyr (*shahīd*) (349):[11] in the ending in which Hir and Ranjha go off on pilgrimage to Mecca, they go as immortal *valīs* (footnote 221); in the version in which they die, they die possessed of mystical knowledge (*'irfān*) (359). The reason for this elevation, we are told, is lovers' constant willingness to sacrifice themselves for the sake of *ishq*:

> Praise Hir and Ranjha's love: they kept to their promise (*qaul*).
> They let themselves be killed like goats by the butcher *ishq*.
>
> Whoever hasn't tasted the pleasures of love will not have his prayers answered. (footnote 221)

The narrator's valorisation and mysticisation of *ishq* is perhaps most succinctly expressed in the first line of the final verse of the poem: 'Be a lover of God—all other beauty is empty' (360).

If the narrator's conception of *ishq* promises the reward of mystical knowledge and union with God, it also gives a boon whose desirability would have been somewhat more questionable in the society of

eighteenth-century western Punjab (known as the *bār*), dominated as it was by Jat and Rajput lineages concerned with notions of honour and prestige (*'izzat*). The path of *ishq*—its mystical *ṭarīqah*, as it were—is humility and humiliation, the loss rather than the retention of status. Ranjha, for example, becomes a cowherd for the sake of *ishq* (74) because 'to beg in the city of love is kingship for faithful lovers' (62). Indeed, the *qiṣṣah*'s entire narrative is a powerful illustration of *ishq*'s ability to humble the lover: Ranjha moves from the pampered life of the youngest son of a powerful landowner through wandering vagrancy to becoming a herder of another Jat's cows and finally to the very margins of society by becoming a wandering *jogi*. Transformation after transformation takes Ranjha further and further down the social scale, from a position in which identity is constituted by land and power to one in which identity is restricted to the outward *panthic* trappings of the *jogi*'s garb. The spiritual rewards for Ranjha, though, are considerable: as the narrator tells us when Ranjha first sleeps in the rough after leaving Takht Hazārā for Jhang, 'Muqbil, those who plant seed in this world will reap in the next' (26). Ranjha is another Mansūr, unafraid of the gibbet (165), a saint whose act of relinquishing status to become a *jogi* is analogous to Shaikh San'āī's becoming a pigherder for the sake of his lover (232). Muqbil's emphasis on the power of *ishq* to elevate the humble explains his reference in the first verse of the poem to Satan, perhaps the only mention of him in an invocation in the entire Punjabi *qiṣṣah* tradition:

> Friend, first praise God, the boundless Lord who is without worries:
> Ḥaẓrat [Muhammad], who repeated the Lord's name, became king of all heaven and earth.
> 'Azāzīl did not obey the command, so God made him into Satan:
> O Muqbil, I believe that if you are humble, God will accept you on the Day of Judgement. (1)

Ranjha's conduct is the opposite of that of Satan who did not submit to the newly created Adam and was punished for his pride by expulsion from heaven. If the lover is forced to humiliate himself for the sake of his love, his reward is diametrically opposite to the punishment accorded to Satan: he is elevated beyond his wildest imaginings.

Mystical conceptions also play a central role in the poem's construction of the relationship of Hir and Ranjha. The pair's love exists in a universe of magic in which the prayers of *jogis* burn cities, long-dead Pīrs appear on country roads to help hapless Jats, and voices from the heavens promise Hir to Ranjha after she has left for Rangpur with her new husband's family (footnote 231). In such a world, it is not surprising to

learn at the beginning of the poem that Hir and Ranjha's love had a decidedly mystical beginning:

Hir's eyes slaughtered Ranjha in a dream, but he tells no one the secret.
Like Muqbil, day and night he longs to see the beloved. (5)

Nor it is particularly incongruous that Ranjha's inability to cultivate the land given to him by his brothers leads him to take refuge in the twin paradigms of lover and *faqir*:

Crying, Ranjha says, 'Sisters-in-law, ploughing is very hard.
I've had an easy life, so working hard is impossible for me.
My heart tells me to become a *faqir*: life in this world is a dream.
Muqbil, leave the world behind and become a *faqir*: love's wealth is enough for happiness.'(13)
Ranjha unwillingly ate his food to please his sisters-in-law;
He sent his soul to Hir's city but came back to the village with his sisters-in-law.
When he was returning to the village, Ranjha felt the flame inside himself: he tore his clothes and rubbed ash on his body. (17)

That Hir enacts the same pattern by washing off the *vaṭṭṇā*,[12] breaking her bangles and rubbing ash on her body after the *shagan* ceremony[13] to mark the impending arrival of her future husband's wedding party (154) is an entailment of one of the poem's central metaphors: Ranjha has initiated Hir into the *ṭarīqah* of love, becoming her *pir* and she his *murīd*. Compare for example the strikingly parallel iconography of Ranjha's first meeting with the Pirs and that of his first conversation with Hir in the wastes outside Jhang:

Ranjha stopped playing his flute and the Pirs said, 'Eat *chūrī*.'[14]
Ranjha said, 'I'm not hungry. My divine soul (*rūḥ nūrī*) craves milk.'
The Panj Pir meditated on God and brought a brown water-buffalo from the sky:
'Drink the cow's milk, Ranjha, and God will fulfil your wishes.'
He got a bowl from the Panj Pirs and milked a brown water-buffalo.
He filled the bowl with milk and placed it before the Pirs as an offering:
The Pirs drank the milk and were happy; Ranjha drank their leavings (*ulash*) and his sorrow disappeared. (39-40)
Ranjha plaintively played *mājh* on his flute and took Hir's soul under hi s control.
He drew the sweet milk of the brown cow and drank it with Hir.

There was no more shyness between the two: *birhā* sewed their souls together.
After asking Muqbil to get it from God, Hir took the lesson (*sabaq*) of *ishq* from Ranjha. (80)

Clearly, the iconography of Hir's relationship to Ranjha mirrors that of Ranjha to the Panj Pirs. Hir's acceptance of Ranjha as preceptor adds another dimension to her own expression of the relationship between the two: where before her initiation she refers herself as 'your worthless slave; sell me if you wish' (77), upon meeting him again in Rangpur she comments that 'Ranjha's name is my support: I am a long-serving disciple [of his]' (327). Indeed, the narrator himself likens this meeting to that of *pir* and *murīd*. One is once again reminded of the poem's first verse, in which the narrator puts forth Satan as an example of the punishments awaiting those who refuse to submit: if Satan's example is a warning to the believer, Hir's conduct is an exemplum.

As a whole, the decidedly mystical trajectory of Muqbil's poem seems at first glance to point inexorably towards the ending of the poem in which the lovers eternally travel the route to Mecca and away from the tragedy of their untimely but socially convenient deaths. There would certainly appear to be no disjunction between the mystical gnosis that reveals Hir to Ranjha while he sleeps at Takht Hazara and the eventual elevation of the lovers to the status of *valis* who (like the shepherds in Middle English dramatic treatments of the birth of Christ) walk straight off the arid plains of the Punjab *bār* onto the pilgrim route to Mecca:

They both went off on pilgrimage to Mecca; I don't know what happened next.
People say they're still alive and God has saved them from death.
Even the Prophet accepted death: life without God is false.
Muqbil, the Prophet's *hadīṣ* is true: *valis* never die. (footnote ending)

But if this ending seems to encapsulate and valorise the mysticism inherent in the body of the poem, the *quissah*'s other ending is equally emphatic in its recognition of the primacy of mysticism in the lovers' story:

Hir went to Jhang Sial and was pleased to see her family.
When she was going home, she got a fever, and the girl was in a poor state.
No medicines worked, and finally she died on a Friday.
Her parents wept as they buried her: Muqbil, her love (*prīt*) was perfect.

Chūchak sent someone to Ranjha with a letter explaining her death:
'Hir died thinking of you, Ranjha. What fate decrees cannot be effaced.'
Ranjha read the letter and sighed so much that he died:
Muqbil, Ranjha's love (*ishq*) was purified and he obtained the status of one with mystical knowledge (*irfan*). (358-59)

Significantly, this more socially acceptable ending relegates Hir to a lower status than Ranjha: where his purified love leads him to mystical knowledge, she merely dies in the knowledge that she has loved perfectly. No longer do the pair travel the pilgrim routes to Mecca in the complete equality of *vali*-status: instead, the dictates of social ideology determine who is a mystic and who is not. If the 'happy' ending satisfies the hermeneutic expectation of mystical apotheosis, this ending satisfies the social demands of a narrative in which Hir has always been Ranjha's disciple on the path of love.

One of the fundamental opposition in the text is that between the orthodox Islam represented most forcefully by the *qāẓī* of Jhang Sial and the *pir*-centred Islam situated in the interstice between the narrative voice and the already-established folk legend of Hir and Ranjha. Even the most casual reading of Muqbil's text must recognise the centrality of the Panj Pirs in the narrative and in the patterns of faith displayed by the main characters.[15] After Ranjha leaves the village mosque on the second day of his journey from Takht Hazara to Jhang Sial, he runs into the five Pirs. Spreading his *lūngī* for them to sit on and bowing to them, he asks for a boon. The Pirs pre-empt and determine the course of the entire narrative by granting him Hir, whom he has up to this point seen only in a dream:

Ranjha tells the Pirs everything that has happened to him:
He tells them how of Hir's eyes slaughtered him in his sleep and of the remedy for his wounds.
The Pirs grant him Hir, and he cannot contain his happiness.
Oh Muqbil, my Ghauṣ Muḥīuddīn is kind: he fulfills the whole world's desires. (36)[16]

Not only does Ranjha's initial meeting with the Pirs cause his eventual union with Hir, but it also results in his being given the boon which will reunite him with Hir after Raja Adli gives her to the Kheras: the Pirs tell him that 'Whenever you are in difficulty, remember us and we will come to help you' (41). Ranjha uses the Pirs' gift three times in the poem: the first that very night when, frightened by the lions and serpents by the riverbank, he calls on the Pirs to help him and feed him (41-42); the second when he asks the Pirs to burn Adli's city after the Raja returns Hir

to the Kheras (349); the third—part of the alternate ending to the poem—when he gets the Pirs to fix his ears (pierced to receive the earrings of the Nath *jogi*) as he returns to Takht Hazara to await his wedding to Hir (357). Perhaps the most important—and certainly the most iconographic—of the Pirs' involvement in the poems is when they marry Hir and Ranjha in the wastes outside Jhang:

> Ranjha called on the Panj Pirs and they became manifest.
> They sat cross-legged on a bed and sat Hir next to themselves.
> Together with Khiẓr they were the witnesses and performed Hir and Ranjha's marriage.
> Oh Muqbil, they chewed the auspicious rice grains and put them in Hir's lap.
> The Panj Pirs instructed the pair, 'Worship God twenty-four hours a day.
> The world is a transitory abode: even if you live a hundred thousand years you still have to die.
> The low don't call themselves great when they are not.
> Muqbil, you've set your heart on the name of love (*ishq*)—you still have to cross the river of longing (*shauq*)'. (64-65)

Throughout the poem, Hir at least considers this marriage to be legally valid, with or without the sanction of her parents: the Pirs therefore become the guarantors of the pair's marriage as well as of their love. Indeed, in a lengthy passage (present in only some manuscripts) describing Hir's wedding night, she calls on the Pirs to protect her chastity—with they do by smashing her husband Saidā's ribs when he lies down on her bed (footnote 270).

This valorisation of the Panj Pirs occurs entirely at the expense of the *sharīah*-based Islam represented by the village *qāẓī* of Jhang Sial. Indeed, unlike in Varis, the *mullah* of the village mosque, whom Ranjha encounters while on the road to Jhang, is a decent and pious provider of hospitality—although he too is connected with the Pirs, if not himself regarded as a Pir by the villagers (31). This opposition between the Pirs and a more metropolitan 'orthodox' Islam appears to reflect the struggles between traditional Pirs and Chishti reformers on the one hand and reformist *ulamā* on the other that characterised the history of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Punjabi Islam.[17] It may also reflect one of the more important social trends in the *bār* from the sixteenth century onwards: the gradual settlement of the pastoral Jat tribes, who owed their religious allegiance to the lineages of the Pirs supposed to have converted them to Islam, and their transformation into settled cultivators, with the

increased linkages to and frictions with formalised religion that such a transformation might imply.[18] As some scholars have noted, the importance of Sufi *pir*s and their shrines to the predominantly rural populations of the *bār* lay largely in their role as mediators—between people and God and between rural Punjab and the metropolitan Mughal state—and in the ascription of *barkat* (miraculous powers) to the *pirs*.[19] The *pirs*, in other words, were associated with a magical universe inaccessible to the practitioners of more metropolitan Islam. In the poem, the instrument of the *ulama*'s humiliation is Hir, who decisively defeats the *qāẓī* in a debate over *sharīah*.

IMPLICATING IDEOLOGY: *KHAIR* AND AGENCY IN THE *QIṢṢAH*

In the world of the *qiṣṣah*, much of what constitutes everyday society is the target of direct or implied contempt: indeed, the image of society compromised lies at the very heart of the *qiṣṣah*'s narrative. Where Hir and Ranjha pursue a divinely inspired love, social ideology—supported by the *qāẓī*'s ratiocinations and Malkī's threats of violence—circumvents their aspirations and ultimately dictates that Hir be given away in marriage to salvage her family's honour. In the course of the *qiṣṣah*, all the societal institutions brought into play against Hir and Ranjha—family, religion, marriage and the *sharīah*—are compromised and brought into question: none is immune from the consequences of its opposition to the poem's mystical and romantic trajectories. What happens to the central conceptions of societal ideology during the course of the *qiṣṣah* is illustrated by the fate of the concept of *khair* (which normally covers a range of meanings from alms and charity to kindness and well-being), which is inverted and thereby subverted on every one of its appearances in the poem. A concept with a distinguished religious pedigree—charity is, after all, one of the five 'pillars' of orthodox Islam— becomes a debased expression of worldly interests, a tool to be manipulated by the malevolent and mocked by the mischievous. this devaluation of one of society's virtues mirrors the parallel fates of other religious and social conceptions in the poem, all of which begin to tarnish due to their opposition to the love of Hir and Ranjha.

The first explicit entry of the concept of *khair* in the poem coincides with the first appearance of the gruff and self- interested boatman Luddan. When the shrewd Meo refuses to allow Ranjha to sleep off the effects of his journey on Hir's bed, Ranjha decides to buy his kindness by offering him a ring as a bribe:

Ranjha gave Luddan the Meo a ring and said, 'Who's going to g
Hir?
I'm just going to rest for a minute; it's not like I'm going to bu
house here—
I promise you! God will grant you what you wish.
Understand that kindness (*khair*) keeps away a million misfortune
be kind (*khair kamāi*).'
Luddan the Meo took the ring from Ranjha with shame in his eyes
compassion in his heart. (52-53)

In the world of the poem, charity belongs to the highest bidder—no lon
a moral quality, it is a commodity to be purchased like any other. A m
explicit parody of the notion of disinterested alms-giving occurs wh
Kaido the putative *faqir* begs alms from Ranjha as he sits alone in t
wastes waiting for Hir to return with the herd (95): Kaido's supposed
humble request for a donation of food in the name of God conceals
malign attempt to obtain evidence of the lovers' clandestine meetin
outside the village and Ranjha's act of charity ceases to be a meritorio
act of charity, becoming instead a foolish (perhaps even naive) blund
that exposes his dalliances with Hir for all to see. The episode underlin
not only the compromised nature of virtue in the world of the poem-
faqirs are no longer holy men and acts of kindness damn the doer—b
also highlights Ranjha's naive inability to comprehend the deceptions a
inversions behind the world of appearances. By the second half of t
poem, though, Ranjha has learnt to exploit the gap between appearan
and reality, and the concept of *khair*, too, participates in the com
ambivalence of Ranjha's disingenuous transformation from Jat-cur
cowherd to womanising Nath *jogi*. When Sahti suspiciously questions t
legitimacy of a *faqir* who will not take alms when offered them—Ranj
wants a little more time to gaze upon his beloved—Ranjha begins
promise boons he knows he cannot give: he promises Sahti rich rewa
in the next world if she donates food to him (256-57). Ranjha parodi
the concept of *khair* and the conduct of individuals like Luddan a
Kaido, comically reflecting the world of the first half of the poem. T
irony of the dialogue (since we know who Ranjha really is) points up t
decidedly deceptive nature of the world and its virtues, creating an iron
tension which allows us to view through the lenses of comedy the ima
of the corrupt world of the poem.

A larger strategy for pointing out the compromised nature of world
values is the characters' and narrator's tendency to assign responsibili
for major changes in the narrative to abstract signifiers like God, fate

ve rather than to the social forces that actually compel or dictate the anges. These shifts of agency serve a dual purpose in the poem: at the ne time as they emphasise the role of social ideology by attempting to ide it, they corrupt the positive meanings of the signifiers they impose its place. Their silence about the role of social ideology pushes it to tre stage, simultaneously discrediting the concepts that support it. here are, of course, a few instances of misplaced agency which are mply convenient pieces of narrative shorthand, ways of introducing a dden event without elaborating its antecedents: for example, Mauju ies at the beginning of the poem because of the dictates of fate (6). A ore ironic use of shifted agency occurs in the incident of Hir's burning own Kaido's hut: the narrator's statement that God kept Kaido away om the hut that night (106) seems to mask questionable conduct on the art of a character who consciously and deliberately presents himself as a *faqir*—why exactly was he away from home that night? On a more ironic level, Hir disingenuously tries to mask her hatred for her uncle Kaido—at the same time as she tries to grant her love for Ranjha divine legitimacy—by telling him that the burning of his hut was not her doing but was instead God's revenge for mistreating the humble lovers (109). A similar argument resurfaces later in the poem when Sahti conceals her plan to reunite Hir and Ranjha by telling Hir's mother-in-law that fate has conspired to make her ill and hinting to Hir that fate will determine what happens next (300, 304).

More often than not, though, such shifts of agency attempt to mask the naked exercise of power in society. Driven from Takht Hazara by the uncompromising nature of the land he has been given and the taunts of his sisters-in-law, Ranjha tells Hir that his fate (*lekh*) compels him to wander (68); similarly, he tells Balnath that 'I have gotten what was written in my fate (*karam*)' (243)—even though it was the Sials who drove him from Jhang and deprived him of employment. The same complete elision of social forces accompanies the reunions of Hir and Ranjha and Sahti and Murad later in the poem: on each occasion (325, 332-33) the narrator tells us that God reunited the lovers. What is quite clear, though, is that the ascription of the lovers' reunion to divine agency masks the crucial issue of who separated them in the first place, effacing the role of social ideology in the construction of the circumstances and justifications of their separation and (on the surface, at least) encouraging a hermeneutic that ignores the injustices suffered by the lovers simply because everything turns out well in the end. The most compromising and subversive uses of the device of shifted agency, though, occur during the episode of Hir's betrothal to Saida and her family's attempt to reconstitute

mechanisms of ideological control to justify their actions. Attempting to reassert patriarchal control over his daughter and bend her to the disciplines of social ideology, Chuchak warns Hir that

> 'You don't do what your parents tell you: you fall in love with someone of your own choice.
> Muqbil, God gets tired of those who pain their parents'. (132)

His attempt to veil his desire to kill Hir in notions of divine justice seems, however, somewhat strained. When threats of violence and the dictates of the *sharīah* have failed to overpower Hir, Chuchak bribes the *qāẓī* with cash, clothing and a horse to conduct Hir's marriage (which even the *qāẓī* recognises is against *sharīah*): the narrator's moralistic attempt to claim that 'God separates lover from lover' (189) is belied as much by Chuchak's shameful actions as by the narrator's plaintive cry that the Sials 'sat Hir next to Saida the Khera: the shameful bastards did an evil thing (*ẓulm*)' (188). Clearly, the Sials and the corrupt *qāẓī* are to be blamed for separating Hir from Ranjha: if anything, God is absent from the scene. The final appearance of shifted agency in the poem—in the tragic ending—once again highlights the way in which characters display agency in order to mask the ideological mechanisms of society: begging Ranjha to marry her so that people will not call her a runaway (*udhāl*), Hir implies that if he does not, fate will condemn her to a bad reputation (356). The hermeneutic of shifted agency has, however, taught us that fate has nothing to do with the making of Hir's reputation.

THE POETICS OF NARRATION

Narration lies at the heart of the Punjabi *qiṣṣah*: by convention, the *qiṣṣah* is an extended story. The fact that the last line of every verse of the poem generally contains the poet's *takhalluṣ* foregrounds both the narrativity of the genre and the authority of the narrator, allowing the poet scope to insert into the poem moral or narrative comment on a number of levels (a device later conventionalised as extended verses known as *masqūlah-i-shā'ir*, 'the poet's words'). Such a set of conventions imply a complex self-aware poetic of narration, one susceptible to interpretation on a number of simultaneous levels. The poetics of narration in Muqbil's *qiṣṣah* are, as we would expect, intricate and multifaceted: not only does the persona of the narrator shift repeatedly at key moments in the narrative, but the characters repeatedly appropriate and reappropriate narrative authority as they tell their stories to themselves and each other. The narrator's own involvement in the story is, like that of many of the

characters' own narrations, primarily an affective and aesthetic one based on identification with the characters' own powerful emotions—an involvement as subversive of canonical notions of identity as Ranjha's own transformations throughout the tale.

In a poem at once as compact and as dialogic as Muqbil's *Hīr*, it comes as no surprise that much of what happens does so, as it were, 'off-stage'. The compulsions of the *qiṣṣah* as a semi-dramatic genre mean that for the poet to show everything that happens would involve an intimidating amount of dramatic dialogue between the characters. Instead, the narrator often resorts to the shorthand device of having characters narrate events to each other, devolving onto them the authority of presenting their own story. In all but a handful of cases, though, we do not actually hear what the characters say: we only know that they tell their story. Many of the instances of narration by characters are crucial to the progression of the action of the poem: Ranjha tells his sisters-in-law about his difficulties cultivating his land (11), Ranjha tells the Panj Pirs about his tribulations (36), Kaido tells Chuchak about the burning of his hut (100) and about Hir's meetings with Ranjha (110), Hir's friends tells her about her impending marriage (117), Sultan tells Malki and Chuchak about Hir's continued meetings with Ranjha (146), Malki tells Chuchak about Hir's insolence (167), and Saida tells his mother about his inability to convince the *jogi* to cure Hir (320). And many of the narrations that we actually witness are rather straightforward and plain. Sahti, for example, explains her complicated role in the plot to reunite Hir and Ranjha—by orchestrating the exchange of letters between the pair, pretending that Hir has been bitten by a snake and arranging for Ranjha to take her away and cure her—in a mere three lines of compressed narration (310).

Perhaps the most significant of these appropriations of narrative authority, at least in terms of our understanding of the character of Ranjha, comes during Balnath's initiation of the young Jat: at the same time as he unwittingly grants institutional form and sanction to Ranjha's *birha*, the Nath tries to subvert it by replacing the narrative of his love with 'the *qiṣṣah* of *Jog*' (247)—which includes, among other things, an injunction to refrain from looking at women. While Ranjha accepts certain of the *qiṣṣah*'s propositions (like the instruction to beg), he rejects its emphasis on restraint and chastity as unsuitable to his disingenuous purpose of using the disguise of a *jogi* to see Hir again. This selective reading of the *qiṣṣah*'s moral message points to the self-aware irony which characterises Ranjha's actions throughout the poem: we know, after all, that he never really intends to become a *jogi* anyway. A similar ironic detachment characterises Ranjha's attitude toward the *mullah* of the mosque he stops

at while on the way from Takht Hazara to Jhang Sial. When the *mullah* asks Ranjha who he is and where he is coming from, Ranjha disingenuously fabricates a false motive for his journey—once again hiding what we know to be his true purpose—and crafts a clever petition for food:

> [Ranjha] says, 'My name is Dhīdo and my caste Ranjha; I left Takht Hazara yesterday.
> I spent the night hungry in the wastes (*ujāṛ*): I bore what God ordained for me.
> I want to see the country, that's why I've become carefree and left home.
> Muqbil, God sent me to you so I could drink this village's water' (30).

The success of Ranjha's narrative is made clear by the fact that the *mullah* gets the boys learning at the village school to bring food from home for Ranjha to eat. As a narrator, then, Ranjha is both ironic and successfully self-interested: he knows how to use narrative to secure and conceal his aims.

If Ranjha's use of narration with the outside world is suavely deceptive, the lovers' narrations to each other are far more straightforward even if far more emotionally charged. Even at second hand—such as when Hir and Ranjha have Hir's niece take messages to each other—the lovers' communications are saturated with the discourse of pathos and betrayal on Ranjha's part and submission on Hir's:

> Leaving Ranjha, the girl slowly went and sat beside Hir.
> 'Chāchī,[20] hear what I have to say:
> Let me tell you what the cowherd from your village said.
> Broken by your love (*ishq*) he's become a *jogi*: go see Muqbil's state.
> He cries and blames you—the poor, injured, homeless Ranjha.
> You used to make him *churi* and he gave you the cows' milk for your whole life.
> Now that things are difficult, you don't acknowledge him, but he's the same Ranjha'. (283-84)
> The girl went and told Ranjha all about Hir.
> 'She will come to you by some trick or another.
> I told her the secrets (*bhet*) of your heart.'
> 'I've not stopped loving you: I feel more and more pain every day.
> Muqbil, I've done wrong: forgive my error. I didn't do anything treacherous on purpose'. (287)

In both cases, the young girl's narrations closely match what the lovers

themselves have said to her (280, 285): indeed, in each case, she directly quotes a half-line from what the lovers themselves told her to say. For her account of Hir's feelings in particular, we have the support of Hir's own narration of her feelings to Ranjha near the beginning of their relationship at Jhang:

'My life and death are with you, Ranjha: the world is empty, like dust to me.'
She cries and tells her state (*ḥāl*) to the beloved Muqbil.
'Don't pain this afflicted one: see my state, O one favoured with long life!
The butcher *birha* has chopped me up and won't leave me alone.
Whether you know it or not, I've sacrificed my life and property to you.' (142-43)

The lovers communicate without irony but participate in a discourse of love that puts Ranjha in a dominant role and Hir in a subordinate one—at the same time as its misogynist elements constantly implicate Hir in the supposed unfaithfulness of womankind. As such, their discourse participates in the tradition of 'courtly love' that in one form or another suffused North Indian writing in Persian, Urdū and other languages for centuries.

Perhaps the high point of this socially embedded romantic discourse is the exchange of letters between the recently married Hir and Ranjha, who has returned to Takht Hazara. Placed into roles which neither of them relishes, the lovers mimic the poet's act of writing and inscribe their individual discourses to each other, becoming (for the moment at least) authors. Hir, the narrator tells us, writes her letter to Ranjha with her finger as pen and her tears as ink, stressing the importance of the promises the pair made in front of the Panj Pirs and her own determined choice to abandon the values of family in favour of her attachment to Ranjha. She concludes her epistle by begging Ranjha to see her again, emphasising both her longing and her humility:

'Ranjha, my eyes want to see you and my arms long to embrace you.
Of what miraculous garden am I a radish (*mūlī*)[21] that I should claim to be equal to a king?
I've sacrificed happiness for pain: sometimes I feel happiness on top of my pain.
Muqbil, come show yourself to me again: I don't want any other pleasure.' (216)

The more prolix of the pair, Ranjha responds with a letter that is at once

less focused and more indicative of the sources of his discourse of love. He begins by praising her love, but quickly moves into the contradictory stance compelled by the misogyny he consistently adopts as a defence against the marriage which he knew from the beginning Hir's parents would contract for her: 'I didn't get anything by falling in love: I became a cowherd for nothing' (225). He accuses her of 'saying one thing and doing another' and says that loving her has caused him pain (226). He concludes by making a promise to come to see her, a promise whose tone is, however, tempered by both his attachment to the combat metaphors of courtly love and the contention that she has ruined him:

> 'The sharp daggers of your eyes have pierced my heart and body.
> You've gone to your in-laws' home, while I, robbed, wander from place to place.
> God must be pleased with me: you've remembered Muqbil again.
> Hir, you burnt my body: what did you get anyway?
> I will carry out my promise: no one knows what you will do'. (227-28)

The tone of Ranjha's letter as opposed to Hir's indicates the different worlds from which they speak and the different ideal images they act out in their drama as lovers. Both, however, are virtual scripts of the characters' roles in a stereotyped drama of love—the one dedicated and humbly insistent, the other accusatory and blusteringly insecure.

If narration in the poem is occasionally appropriated by the characters for their own purposes, it is equally fluid in the hands of the poetic narrator himself. Muqbil's *qiṣṣah* does not contain the kind of extended *muqalah-i-shair* which becomes almost *de rigueur* for the genre in the nineteenth century; instead, the narrator's explicit participation in the poem is largely limited to those lines in which his *takhallus appears as a part of the sense, grammatical or otherwise, of the last line of a verse.*[22] This means, for example, that the vast majority of lines bearing the *takhallus*—'Sighing he went along with Hir; Muqbil, he played his flute expressively' (193), to take a random example—are not instances of the narrator's participation in the text: they are merely expressions of the formal classical convention that the last line of every stanza *should* bear the poet's signature (often in order to make narrative glosses or express maxims).[23] Because of the dialogic form of the *qiṣṣah*, on the other hand, many of the instances in which the poet-narrator's name appears in the vocative or oblique cases are instances of a different kind of direct participation in the poem: the narrator effectively becomes one of the characters in the poem by appropriating one of the characters' voices. It is these instances

of the narrator becoming a character or identifying with one of the characters that concern us here.

In the *qiṣṣah*, the narrator's shifting identity is a poetic of identification and play that at once subverts notions of identity and authority and provides a metaphor for a particular way of reading the text. More often than not, the narrator's shifts of identity involve identification with characters in distress or in the throes of emotion. (Ironically, the name 'Muqbil' itself means 'prosperous' or 'fortunate.') The obvious analogy in the text—a character who effaces her own identity and participates emotionally in the events of the poem—is Hir, who so eagerly becomes Ranjha's disciple: it is almost as if the poet exhorts us to join him in becoming seekers on the same *ṭarīqah* as Hir, to subvert our own identities and subsume them in those that play forth in the text. The emotional, ecstatic basis of this poetic of loss is something that the poet himself recognises: he begins the *qiṣṣah* by exclaiming 'Muqbil, I cried and sighed as I told the whole story (*qiṣṣah*) of Hir and Ranjha' (4). The poet asks us to make a similar emotional connection with the poem, to read it as if in ecstasy: he puts forth a poetic of participation. Certainly, his characters manage to put forth the model of being ecstatic or grief-stricken through much of the poem: an account of the number of times characters in the poem are said to be crying (especially when narrating) or distressed (*hairān*)[24] in the course of of the poem would be too long for inclusion here. Muqbil's *Hīr* is a text filled with the sounds of crying and sighing—a form of proto-narration without words, as it were, at the same time as it is a text intended to make its readers cry and sigh.

In line with this poetic of sorrow and longing, the first of the narrator's adopted personae is a distressed and pained one: that of the forlorn lover Ranjha. After Ranjha first sees Hir in a dream, the narrator tells us that 'Like Muqbil, he longed day and night to see his beloved' (5). Similarly, the narrator identifies with Ranjha when he is persecuted by his sisters-in-law: 'May God give sorrow to those who enjoy luxury: they shattered Muqbil's heart' (8). Similar identifications of the narrator and the figure of Ranjha occur at a number of places in the poem: after Hir tells Ranjha about her marriage, he says to her, 'Muqbil will keep his promise, but no one knows about the girl Hir' (footnote 150). Not only does the narrator occasionally place himself in the position of Ranjha or have Ranjha refer to himself as Muqbil, but the other characters in the poem adopt this discourse and address Ranjha as Muqbil: his sisters-in-law (14, 15), Luddan (44), the *mullah* (29) and Balnath (234), among others. More often than not, references by the narrator or other characters to Ranjha as Muqbil occur at moments in the poem where Ranjha is in an

unfortunate state: abandoned by his brothers, under attack from his sisters-in-law, separated from Hir, homeless or wandering. One might argue that such usage begins as early as Ranjha's encounter with the village *mullah*, who addresses the hapless wanderer as Muqbil (29), or with Hir's introduction to her father of Muqbil the homeless Jat and potential cowherd (71-72); certainly, the occasion on which Malki calls Ranjha to receive the dues (*ḥaqq*) owed him for his years of service as a cowherd is an example of this usage: 'Chuchak says, "Go call him," and Malki brings Muqbil' (140). The clearest indication of the terms of Muqbil's identification with the hero of his poem, however, comes in the narrator's description of the festivities that surround the engagement of Hir to Saida Khera:

> What Hir's parents wanted happened. They called a Brāhmaṇ to fix the auspicious date (*sāhā*).
> They called their kin (*sake*) together and showed them what the Kheras had sent to Hir.
> The Mirāsiṇs[25] came when they heard the news and sang wedding songs (*sohile*) and beat drums.
> They broke Muqbil's heart and cut Hir's throat. (116)

The identification of the broken-hearted Ranjha with Muqbil the narrator is strengthened through the various episodes that precede Hir's arrival at her new home in Rangpur. Hir, for example, comes to see Ranjha one last time when he is grazing the cattle outside Jhang and 'Cries as she begs and tells the beloved Muqbil how she feels' (142). Ranjha himself takes leave of Hir with the words

> 'In the end, women are faithless: I've proven this, Hir.[26]
> Muqbil has spoken the truth: women know neither kindness or faithfulness, Hir. (162)

Ranjha maintains the epithet when he writes back of Hir in response to her letter, emphasising the pain of his wanderings and remarking in a tone both pathetical and satirical 'You've remembered Muqbil: God has granted me good fortune' (227). In the first part of the poem, then, both the narrator and the other characters in the poem identify Muqbil with Ranjha as the hard-up Jat or the wronged lover.

After Hir's marriage to Saida, most of the identifications of Ranjha with Muqbil centre around the tribulations of his new personage as a *jogi* and his status as a wounded and wandering lover. When he lingers in the Kheras' courtyard to pick up the grains of sugar that he has dropped on

the floor by flinging down his begging bowl, he admonishes the recalcitrant Sahti with the rebuke

> 'Don't be proud of beauty and don't make anyone feel jealous:
> Daughter, give alms to lovers like Muqbil with kindness'. (260)

The identification of Ranjha and Muqbil is one which remains constant throughout the encounter, with Ranjha referring to himself as Muqbil (254, 262), and Sahti (perhaps satirically?) doing the same when she accuses him of being a false *jogi* (253). The same transference of Ranjha's construction of himself as Muqbil occurs in the episode of his convincing Hir's niece to tell Hir about his presence in the Kala Bagh: after he refers to himself as Muqbil, she does the same when telling Hir about him (279, 283).

Not only does Muqbil the narrator identify himself with the afflicted Ranjha but he also identifies with other characters in similar situations. When Hir attempts to describe the strength of her love to her disapproving mother, for example, she does so in the persona of Muqbil (85); her father subsequently calls her Muqbil when condemning her physical attachment to Ranjha (103). The same sort of identification occurs between the narrator and Malki at the points in the argument between Hir and Malki when Malki emphasises most of her own inability to persuade Hir to leave off the cowherd Ranjha (124) and see the dishonour she is bringing upon her family:

> 'No one can argue with you: you know too many evil ways.
> You say to your mother whatever comes to mind and don't recognise the duties of deference (*adab*).
> You've cut off the noses of your elders and thrown dust on your mother's head.
> Unlike Muqbil, you don't care for your family: you cause new troubles every day.' (126)

In very different circumstances, Hir's mother-in-law refers to her stricken daughter-in-law as Muqbil (299), as does Saida when he explains the fact that he has never slept with Hir (318).

As the *qiṣṣah* arches towards its climax in the dramatic events at the court of Raja Adli, the narrator's participation in the drama begins to take on a new colouring: increasingly, he himself becomes one of the characters on the narrative state, not just a vicarious participant in the characters' emotional highs and lows. We first glimpse this increased participation when the narrator comments on his feelings for the young girls who participate in a *trinjhaṇ* (cotton-carding party) with Hir's niece and who

go out to play in the meadows around Rangpur one Friday: 'Some were young and some were old—but they all pleased Muqbil's heart' (271). Similarly, the narrator appears in the persona of an infatuated lover at the moment of the lovers' reunion at the hands of Sahti, a moment charged by the discourse of courtly love:

> Hir was happy when she saw Ranjha as she lowered her veil.
> Hir's eyelashes are arrows and her eyebrows the bow: she shot them at Ranjha's chest.
> Hir's eyes are sharp daggers with which she stealthily kills—
> Even though she saves lovers (*'āshiq*) like Muqbil with her kind glance. (324)

The growing poetic of participation in the *qiṣṣah* reaches a new height when Muqbil virtually claims to be one of the *mutaṣaddīs* who convinces Raja Adli to release Ranjha from prison:

> When the Kheras had gone, the *musaddīs*[27] said to Raja Adli,
> 'It isn't wise to imprison the *jogi*: he got himself in this mess!'
> Muqbil barely managed to release Ranjha from Raja Adli. (347)

With this the narrator's involvement in his poem has become complete: not only does he identify with characters in the throes of emotion, but he claims to be a prime cause of one of the major events in the poem. The situation is not unlike the episode of the Brahman's taking the lovers' letters from Rangpur to Takht Hazara and back again: both Sahti (217) and Ranjha (220) refer to the Brahman as Muqbil, setting him up as the substitute narrator that he appears to be. The Brahman's role in the poem is, in many ways, quite similar to that of the narrator Muqbil: we are supposed to see him as merely the conduit of the characters' dialogue with one another, effaced in their exchange of letters—but we are prevented from doing so by our knowledge that the Brahman is in actual fact crucial to the mediation of the lovers' message, even reading Hir's letter to the illiterate Ranjha. Even though we expect him to remain silent, he does not—and neither does the narrator of the poem.

At the same time, the figure of the Brahman-narrator highlights the centrality of identity in the poem: he is an unknown figure in Takht Hazara, and even Ranjha asks him to establish his identity before speaking to him (220). The problem of identity is, of course, central to the poetic of the narrator's continual shifting from character to character and stance to stance. Indeed, the issue of identity is so complex in the poem that the only supposedly fixed identities the poem calls on again and again are not individual or personal identities but those moderated by caste: early in

the poem, Ranjha answers the *mullah*'s questions about where he is going and where he has come from with his name and caste (30). When Luddan tells him about Hir, Ranjha is careful to ask about her caste and parentage (47), and she begins her infatuated eulogising of him by asking, 'What is your caste by ancestry and, lover, who is your mother?' (59). Ranjha asks Hir's niece her caste (275), and she promises to transmit his identity—meaning his name and his *zāt*—to Hir so that she may recognise who he is (281). This identity defined by parentage and status is what Balnath asks Ranjha to return to instead of taking up the perilous path of *jog* (238) and, more importantly, it is the identity which Chuchak asks Hir to uphold by acting like a daughter should (122). But such ideological constructions of identity are problematic in a text whose main character is favourably compared with Sufi saints for abjuring his identity as the son of a landowner and in which the dictates of love repeatedly force new constructions of identity on the protagonists. How can identities mediated by caste be stable if Ranjha ceases to be a Jat by becoming a cowherd? Hir subsumes her identity in the persona of her lover Ranjha, and Ranjha himself disingenuously 'transforms' from aesthete to Jat to cowherd to *jogi*—each time taking on enough of the new trappings to be a convincing image of what he should be, but remaining at the same time somehow out of reach or incomplete. Ranjha's flirtations with new identities, in particular, are nothing but play—a slide of the signifier that is Ranjha into a new realm of symbolic meaning, but a shift which allows the signifier to retain some of its claim on the previous territories of meaning that it has inhabited.

Indeed, the notion of play is central to the whole conception of the character of Ranjha, if not to the *qiṣṣah* as a whole. Although Ranjha the flute-playing cowherd is not as obviously linked to the Kṛṣṇa of the early years at Vṛndāvan as in Varis's continual evocations of the arch-trickster, Ranjha still manages to be the main signifier of play in the text. As Ranjha constantly shifts from identity to identity and from role to role, we begin to realise the fluidity of his own portrayals of himself and the conscious irony that informs each of his roles. The only characters in the poem who seem to cotton on to Ranjha's delicate subversions are Hir and Sahti, both of whom must sustain deceptions of their own to hide their forbidden loves: when the *jogi* appears in their courtyard, Sahti is quick to call him a *makrīā* (a trickster) and Hir equally eager to brand him an *aṭhkhelīā makrīā* (a playful trickster). Soon to be caught up in his web of tricks and be transported to fulfillment, both women recognise in the *jogi* who appears on their doorstep the shiftiness of Ranjha's identity and tactics: the shimmering images of what may be and what is portrayed to be.

HIR AND THE DIALOGIC CONSTRUCTION OF CHARACTER

Whereas Ranjha manages throughout most of the *qiṣṣah* to define himself as much by what he does as by what he says, Hir is so often the object of other peoples' actions and motives that what she says assumes an even greater importance than in the case of Ranjha. Where Ranjha's dialogues are mostly with Hir (before he becomes a *jogī*) or with Sahti—and are therefore conducted at the fringes of power and ideology—Hir directly interrogates the ideologies of family and religion in her dialogues with her mother and father with the *qāẓī*. For this reason, the construction of Hir's character through dialogue is central to poem's own ideological entailments.[28]

From Hir's very first appearance in the poem we become aware of her strength. Paradoxically, the first hints of Hir's fearlessness come from actions rather than from words: Hir arrives with three hundred and sixty *sahelī*s and proceeds to punch, kick and beat Luddan the Meo for allowing Ranjha to sleep on her red bed. In turn, this violent confrontation prefigures the summary way in which Hir deals with Kaido's attempts to stymie her love for Ranjha by burning down his hut. But this very strength and resistance to the dictates of ideology and the ties of family—most famously represented in her statement to the *qāẓī* that 'I'm not afraid of my own brothers and will go fight with the *qazi* and the *shariah*' (105)—seems at some level to contradict the Hir who refers to herself as 'Ranjha's property (*māl*)' (118) and accepts what is effectively the subordinate position in their relationship. At least one solution to the enigma of Hir's character is, as we shall see, visible in the tactics deployed by both the longer version of the poem and the alternate 'tragic' ending, both of which mitigate the effects of Hir's rebellious words by transforming her into a pious saint.

If Hir is generally powerless to act against those who define the terms of her existence, she is remarkably effective in combating and defeating them with words: where Hir's parents try to intimidate her into forgoing her love for Ranjha by appealing to status and honour, she resolutely maintains the primacy of her love. She effectively wins every debate with Malki and Chuchak, prompting them to appeal to another level of ideological control by sending her to the *qāẓī*. Hir's first confrontation with her mother comes early in the poem, soon after she is married to Ranjha by the Panj Pirs. Hearing accusations of her daughter's liaison with the cowherd, Malki accuses Hir of being without shame and warns her that "The cowherd will sing a different tune when Chuchak Sial cuts

him to pieces' (84). Hir cuts her mother off in mid-sentence and extols the virtues of love, since 'without love all people are like animals' (85). Malki can only resort to threats of violence again: she points out to Hir that as soon as their love is found out, both Hir and Ranjha will be murdered. Hir's response is to appropriate divine authority by claiming that 'God, who will save everyone, is my support' (87) and to reiterate that she will have no truck with anything but her love for Ranjha. Similarly, her response to Malki's admonition to remember that 'you are your mother and father's daughter' (88) is to deny the identity her mother imposes on her and state her complete identification with Ranjha, a response that sends Malki into fits of sighs and tears. Hir's words have silenced Malki, replacing the discourse of authority with wordless waves of tears (90).

Hir's second confrontation with Malki is both more extended and more involved. The scene begins with Hir cursing her impending marriage and ripping out her hair in frustration and mourning. Malki almost naively asks Hir what is wrong—since she has been promised to a very good family—and tells her to go out and while away her remaining time with her girlfriends (*sahelis*). Hir tearfully responds with a riposte that reveals the true situation to Malki for the first time and forcefully expresses Hir's intention to avoid marrying the Kheras:

> 'You're giving your daughter a second husband: what's gotten into you?
> Ranjha has been my lover since the Creation: I haven't started loving him just now.
> Muqbil, Hir won't go with the Kheras: why are you making all this noise for nothing?' (121)

Malki appeals to the ideology of family honour, asking Hir to 'do what a daughter would' and 'not take the veil of shame off your face' (122); Hir's response is to eulogise her love for Ranjha, claiming that 'I have one soul and that is Ranjha's; I throw dust on the head of the Kheras' (123). Malki once again reasserts the social and economic argument which is one of the pillars of her debate with Hir, warning her that her union with the cowherd will bring her nothing but regret and the analogical status of a *satī*; Hir, however, says that she does not want fine things and is prepared to endure pain and suffering for the sake of her lover Ranjha (125). Rebuffed by Hir's reassertion of her love for Ranjha and her unwillingness to go with the Kheras (128), Malki responds with a sketch of Hir so enticing (although assuredly not to Malki herself) and so strong as to deserve quotation in full here:

'No one can argue with you: you know too many evil ways.
You say whatever comes into your mind to your mother and don't recognise the duties of deference:
You've cut off the nose of your ancestors and thrown dust on your mother's head.
Unlike Muqbil, you don't care for the family: you create new troubles every day.'
Hir's mother said, 'Listen daughter, you know no shame.
You've fallen in love with a cowherd: you don't care for the world's opinion.
You've always eaten our food, but you have no regard for anyone.
You lustily enjoy Muqbil: you feel no fear or regret at all.' (126-67)

When even this plea fails, Malki calls in Chuchak, hoping that a reassertion of patriarchal authority will tame Hir.

Chuchak attempts to assert his control over Hir by appealing to notions of honour and status and by making blatant threats of physical violence—reinforcing the link between social ideology and violence that runs through the entire set of dialogues. After accusing Hir of shaming the Sials by being born, he thunders

'You won't stop going to the cowherd: God willing, I'll kill you.
The Sials' name is famed the world over: Muqbil, the girl Hir has thrown it in a well'. (130)

His response to her father's intention to make her a ritual sacrifice for the collective honour of the Sials is the strongest she has made yet: she curses him, saying, 'Father you've become an old man: you've got no brains' (131). She once again tries to appropriate to herself divine sanction, denying the patriarchal power to kill in the name of honour by stating that 'No one dies unless God kills them' (131). In effect, Hir has rejected entirely her father's power over her, insulting him in the process. Stunned, Chuchak begins to cry as he too reverts to curses: 'May God punish you, Hir!' (132). He makes one last attempt to buttress the ideology of family and honour by claiming for it divine sanction, saying that God punishes those who pain their parents (133). Hir, however, will have none of this: she once again accuses her father of having gone out of his mind, adding that to do what her parents ask would be to contravene the *shariah* (133). 'Hir,' the narrator tells us, 'satisfied Chuchak Sial' (134). After this, the only debate Hir has with her parents is a short one with her mother after her brother Sultān sees her in the meadows with Ranjha. In the brief interchange, Malki repeats her argument about the loss of status inherent

in a match with a cowherd, and curses Hir as 'the one who should be beaten by her brother' (148) and an 'evil daughter' (150). Unable to continue to spin its discourse of authority, the patriarchy and its agents once more revert to insults and curses: now the only route left to it is to bribe the *qāẓī*.

It is in her debate with the *qāẓī* that Hir carries off what is surely her most impressive performance. When Hir gets the *qāẓī*'s summons to appear at the village mosque, the narrator not only tells us that 'the girl was not afraid of being beaten' (172) but also rhetorically asks 'Muqbil, what can the *shariah* do where love (*ishq*) has set up camp?' (171), setting the context for the debate's eventual outcome. The *qāẓī* begins not with words but with physical violence: he grabs Hir by the arms and commands her, 'Tell me about religion: Your parents have married you off but you go with one of your own choosing: who gave you this idea?' (173). Hir's tearful response is both to reassert that she has loved Ranjha since the Creation and to compromise the *qāẓī*'s presumed right to interrogate her by rebuking him for taking bribes and 'putting the noose around his own neck' (174). Evading Hir's accusations, the *qāẓī* tries to invoke his authority on another level by asking Hir to 'listen to [her] teacher' and leave off the ways of infidelity (*kufr*), reminding her once again that Ranjha is an impoverished cowherd (175). Tearful, Hir expresses her willingness to follow the dictates of the *qāẓī* and the *sharīah* in any matter other than this and states that she fears no one—not even her brothers—and is ready to become a *mahā-satī* (176). In response, the *qāẓī* tries to buttress the claims of religion and *sharīah*, warning Hir of the dangers of following Satan and reminding her of the importance of the distinction between *ḥarām* (forbidden) and *ḥalāl* (allowed). Hir's response is to appropriate the *sharīah* to herself and condemn the *qāẓī*, a stance surely as shocking as her insults to her father:

> Hir says, 'I respect the *shariah* and I've followed the word of the Qur'ān.
> Lovers follow the way of love (*ishq*); *qazis* and sinners follow the way of Satan.' (178)

Stunned, the *qāẓī* asks Hir to prove that she is married, warning her that indulging in the forbidden (*ḥarām*) leads to an eternity in Hell (179): Hir plays her trump card, telling the *qāẓī* that the Panj Pirs married her to Ranjha and that God will support her on the Day of Judgement (180). Unable to counter what Hir has told him, the *qāẓī* once again makes an empty appeal to his own authority: he asks Hir to do what her teacher tells her, promising that he will recommend her on the Day of Judgement

(181): Hir's emphatic reassertion that she is married to Ranjha and cannot marry another seals the argument (182): the *qāẓī* turns to Chuchak and informs him that 'Hir knows all the tricks: I can't argue with her' (183). Hir has successfully defeated the representative of orthodox religion, demolishing the last bastion of ideological authority in the poem's world. Unfortunately, she can do nothing against the naked force and deception that Chuchak will use against her.

The dichotomy between the Hir whose stubborn adherence to her love for Ranjha allows her to flout all the representatives of traditional authority and the Hir who submits utterly to Ranjha—if there is a dichotomy in this portrait at all—seems to have exercised readers of the poem from the very beginning. In a certain sense, the extended version of the poem—including the tragic ending—is an attempt to tame and domesticate the rebellious Hir that the dialogues construct. The Hir of the tragic ending is concerned, as her mother was, to protect her reputation and please her parents, insisting that Ranjha marry her (356). At the same time, though, the lengthy descriptions of Hir's wedding and of her arrival in Rangpur in the middle of the extended version of the poem beatify Hir. Not only do we suffer the exquisite agony of watching every detail as Hir is married to Saida—including details of what the *qāẓī* took as his bride—but we see Hir fight with the *vakils* (intermediaries/witnesses to the marriage) whose job it is to see that she is married (footnote 205-9), Chuchak (footnote 212-13) and the *qāẓī* who is to marry her (footnote 218-22). In all three cases, Hir's interlocutors repeat familiar arguments about Hir's duty to her family and in all three cases Hir lays stress on the *sharīah* and on the fact that the Panj Pirs have married her to Ranjha. She says that she has forsaken her mother and father (footnote 209), asserts her more correct adherence to the *sharīah* (footnote 220) and warns the *qāẓī* that he will be punished by God if he marries her to the Kheras (footnote 219-20). Hir appropriates entirely the discourse of religion and authority, becoming at once more of a rebel (she is after all, a woman claiming precedence over a *qāẓī*) and a more manageable rebel (because her dissent in now couched entirely in the acceptable terms of the *sharīah*). When we learnt that Hir's prayers prevent Saida from consummating his marriage with Hir (footnote 252), the transformation is complete: Hir is well on her way to becoming the saint that she appears to be at the end of the tale. Instead of an impetuous young girl in love with a young Jat, we see a female mystic, a second Rābi'ā—a figure who is presented in Hir's argument against Ranjha's misogyny as being as orthodox as the mothers of the prophets (79). If Hir, too, is a Rabia, she must not be so threatening after all.

CONCLUSION

Despite the vexing textual conundrum associated with the poem, Muqbil's *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rānjhā* displays in all of its versions a strong tendency to attach mystical meaning to the story of Hir and Ranjha. The manifestations of this tendency are everywhere in the poem: its focus on the divine attributes of love (*ishq*), its beatification of Hir, its valorisation of Ranjha's loss of status. This mystic reinterpretation takes place against the background of a world exposed in all its corruption—a world in which alms are no longer alms and society attempts to buttress its values and ideologies through deception and naked force. If the *qiṣṣah* turns away from the worldly to the otherworldly, it is because the worldly seems so unappealing—even disgusting—in comparison.

In choosing the path of religion, though, the poem adopts a decidedly Sufi stance. One of the many pairings in the poem is the opposition of *pir*-centred Islam and the Islam of the *sharīah* and the *qāẓī*. During the course of the poem, the second of these versions of Islam becomes the target of contempt and scorn: the *sharīah* repeatedly sets itself up as an obstacle to love, compromising its own authority each time. Not only is Hir able to counter the arguments of *sharīah* in her dispute with the *qāẓī*, for example, the *qāẓī*'s resort to threats and violence and his willingness to be bribed call its moral authority into question. In contrast, the world of the *pirs* is one in which Hir and Ranjha are protected and their love validated through marriage.

The poem's attachment to the model of *pir*-based devotion is perhaps best symbolised in its representation of Hir as Ranjha's disciple on the path of love. To a certain extent, this metaphor is an attempt to recast the tension between Ranjha's role as a classical *'āshiq* who pursues a distant, unattainable *mashūq* (the married Hir) and the typically Punjabi transformations that see Hir adopt the self-abnegating discourse of the lover and Ranjha the haughty tone of the beloved: if Ranjha becomes a *pir*, it is only right that Hir adopt a certain attitude of formalised devotion to him. Hir's passionate and unceasing attachment to her *pir* presents a vivid exemplum, a paradigm of Sufi seeking on the path so striking as to be almost iconographic. Equally striking, if less immediately visible, is the narrator's hermeneutic for reading (or hearing) the poem as a mystical experience: he urges the audience to weep and to sigh, joining him in his complete identification with the suffering and the afflicted in the poem. In doing so, he mirrors the characters' own shifting identifications and their indictments of the idea of fixed social identities. By asking readers

to lose their own identities in the sufferings of the *qiṣṣah*'s characters, the poet transforms the very reading of the poem into a mystical act.

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Notes

1. Mīā Muḥammad Bakẖsh Jihlamī, *Kissā Saif ul-mulūk krit Muḥammad Bakẖsh Jihlamī*, Santokh Singh 'Rāzī (ed.). 2nd ed. (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 1971), 657; the edition of *Qiṣṣah Hīr Rāṇjhā* cited in the paper is Jogindar Singh (ed.), *Kiṣṣā Hīr Rāṇjhā Mukbal* (Patiala: Punjabi U, 1984). I shall cite by verse number rather than by page number. Alternate readings and verses additional to the main text have been cited by the number of the verse as reproduced in the footnotes to the main text ('footnote 270', for example, means 'verse 270 as available in the footnotes'), while the alternate ending to the poem (available as footnote 221 but without verse numberings) has been cited as 'footnote ending'.
2. The works are collected in Shamsher Singh Ashok (ed.), *Mukbal rachnāvalī*. 2nd. ed. Rev. Avtar Singh Dhodi (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 1974); another edition of the *Jangnamah*, based on two printed texts, is Shahbāz Malik (ed.), *Jangnāmah Muqbil te Panjābī marṣiyah* (Lahore: Tāj Book Depot, 1974). There are at least four manuscripts of the *Jangnamah* in India and three in Pakistan, see Shamsher Singh Ashok, *Panjābī hath-likhtā dī sūchī*, 2 vols. (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 1961-63) 2, 132; Ashok, *Mukbal rachnāvali*, 36; Sayyid 'Arif Naushāhī, 'Kutubkẖānah-i Ganj Bakẖsh (Rāvalpiṇḍī) vich Panjābī makẖṭūṭe', *Khoj*, 8-9 (1982) 41; Muḥammad Aslam Rāṇā, 'Kitābkẖānah Iqbāl Salāh ud-Dīn (Okāṛā) dā Panjābī qalmī sarmāyah', *Khoj* 8-9 (1982) 172; 'Hafiz Tāib, 'Kutub kẖānah 'Dāktar Vaḥīd Quraishī de Panjābī makẖṭūṭe', *Khoj* 8-9 (1982) 205. There exists at least one manuscript of the *Siharfī* in India and ten (with various titles) in Pakistan, see Ashok, *Mukbal rachnāvali*, 36; Sayyid Jamīl Aḥmad Rizvī, 'Panjāb Yūnivarsiṭī Lāibrerī vich Panjābī qalmī nuskẖe', *Khoj* 8-9 (1982) 18, 24; Naushahi, 'Kutubkhanah-i Ganj Bakhsh', 46; Aḥmad Ḥusain Quraishī, 'Kutub kẖānah ul-Qurashiyah Qil' adār (Gujrāt) de Panjābī qalmī nuskẖe', *Khoj* 8-9 (1982) 91, 98, 101; Rana, 'Kitab khanah Iqbal Salah ud-Din', 194; Anjum Raḥmānī, 'Ajāib Ghar (Lāhaur) de Panjābī makẖṭūṭe', *Khoj* 8-9 (1982) 217; Shahbāz Malik, 'Mutafarriq kutub kẖāni ā vich Panjābī de qalmī nuskẖe', *Khoj* 8-9 (1982) 254, 260. In addition, an anthology of Punjabi and Persian *risālahs* containing Muqbil's *Siharfī* came on the London art market in October 1995.
3. Ashok, *Mukbal rachnāvali*, 218.
4. Ashok, 218 note.
5. John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire (The New Cambridge History of India 1.5)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993) 272.
6. It is equally tempting to suggest that commercial considerations led to the adoption of one or the other of the two endings: perhaps readers disaffected with one of the text's two endings began to ask for versions of the poem with another ending. This conjecture,

however, once again raises the vexed and misleading problem of having to determine which of the endings is the 'original' one.

7. There also seems to be a general tendency for the Gurmukhi texts to replace overtly Islamic religious references (to Abdul Qadir Jilani, for example) with Sikh ones. This is a relatively common occurrence in nineteenth-century *qiṣṣah* manuscripts in general.
8. Unfortunately, I did not have access to Pakistani editions of the poem during the course of this study.
9. Neither editor seems to be aware of the Muqbil manuscripts at John Rylands University Library, Dublin and Cambridge University Library. Another nineteenth-century Gurmukhi manuscript (with 360 verses) came on the London art market in 1994. There are at least four manuscripts in Persian script in Pakistani institutional collections, see Rizvi, 'Panjab Yunivarsiti Laibreri', 32 and Shahbaz Malik, 'Mutafarriq kutub khanian vich', 265-66. For a listing of the eleven known manuscripts in India, see Jogindar Singh, *Kiṣṣa Hīr Rānjhā*, 22 and Shamsher Singh Ashok, *Panjabi hathh-likhtan*, 2, 323.
10. Ashok, *Mukbal rachnavali*, 36; and Jogindar Singh, *Kiṣṣa Hīr Rānjhā*, 23.
11. The idea of the lover as *shahīd* goes back to the Arabic tradition of secular love literature. See Lois Anita Giffen, *Theory of Profane Love among the Arabs: The Development of the Genre* (London: University of London Press, 1971).
12. A paste rubbed on the body of both bride and groom in the days before the wedding.
13. Auspicious ceremonies held to mark the engagement and the arrival of the wedding party in the bride's village.
14. Crumbled *roṭī* (unleavened bread) mixed with *ghī* (clarified butter) and sugar.
15. Unlike Varis, Muqbil does not name the Panj Pirs.
16. I have translated the footnote variation to the final line rather than the obviously incongruous reading *Mukbalā Satigur Purakh diāi merā* (Oh Muqbil, the True Guru is kind ...) adopted by the editor.
17. For some suggestive hints on this conflict, see Ian Talbot *Punjab and the Raj 1849-1947* (Riverdale, Maryland: Riverdale, 1988) 24-25; see also M. Zameeruddin Siddiqi, 'The Resurgence of the Chishti Silsilah in the Punjab During the Eighteenth Century', *Indian History Conference Proceedings*, 32, 1 (1970), 308-12.
18. For some account of the process of settlement, see Chetan Singh, *Region and Empire: Panjab in the Seventeenth Century* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1991) 110-14 and 263-70.
19. See for example Richard M. Eaton, 'The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Bābā Farīd' in Barbara Daly Metcalf (ed.), *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of* Adab *in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 333-56.
20. Father's younger brother's wife.
21. I exclude also those cases in which the vocative form of the name Muqbil (Muqbilā) is clearly being used as a way of addressing an unknown person: for example, the *mullah* and Luddan addressing Ranjha (29, 44), the village *qāzī* of Jhang referring to Hir's future husband (177), Ranjha asking Balnath for initiation (239), and Sahti speaking to the unknown *jogi* at the door (253). Chuchak also uses the epithet in this way to refer to the village *qāzī* (112-13). I exclude from both categories, for reasons explained below, the structurally similar episodes of Sahti and Ranjha addressing the Brahman who acts as their go-between as 'Muqbil' (217-18, 220).

22. The word 'radish' (*mūlī*) connotes anything that is considered worthless or insignificant.
23. There are of course *qiṣṣahs* in which this is not the case. Even in Muqbil, some verses—20, 329, 333 and 353 for example—do not bear the poet's *takhalluṣ*. For some examples of the narrator as a source of narrative gloss or maxim, see among numerous others verses 106, 158, 225, 359.
24. In eighteenth-century Punjabi usage, the word *ḥairān* often bears the meaning 'distressed, pained' rather than the modern Persianate meaning 'amazed, surprised.'
25. Female *Mirāsīs* (singers and genealogists who are paid ritual fees to sing at weddings).
26. Alternatively, 'I've fucked you and seen that it's true, Hir.'
27. This is the Punjabi form of the word.
28. The Punjabi literary tradition in general has always recognised the importance of Hir's dialogues, particularly with her mother, to the construction of her character in general. 'Alī Ḥaidar, a Multānī poet noted for his *siharfīs* who lived from approximately 1690 to 1785, wrote a brief *Qiṣṣah Hīr o Rānjhā* which consists entirely of twenty-seven stanzas of debate between Hir and her mother. See Ujāgar Singh (ed.), *Alī Haidar dī kāvi-rachnā* (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 1966), 152-61.

An Early Portrayal of the Sikhs: Two Eighteenth Century Etchings by Baltazard Solvyns

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This article examines the earliest published portrayal of Sikhs made by the eighteenth century Flemish artist Baltazard Solvyns. The etchings were produced in Calcutta and formed part of a larger collection which was first published in 1796; a folio edition was later issued in Paris between 1808 and 1812. A commentary is provided along with Solvyn's own descriptive text. The article also discusses Nineteenth Century artistic portrayals of Sikhs. It concludes by assessing Solvyn's contribution to the development of Company School Painting in Punjab.

When the Flemish artist Baltazard Solvyns[1] arrived in Calcutta in 1791 the city was already developing a cosmopolitan character. There were Europeans of various backgrounds, Armenians, Persians, Chinese, and from the reaches of 'Hindoostan' (the term by which India was then most widely known), Muslims and Hindus of numerous sects and castes. There were comparatively few Sikhs in Bengal at that time, but among them, earlier in the eighteenth century, was the great banker and urban landlord, Omichand.[2] Solvyns had no apparent knowledge of Omichand or, at least, that he was a Sikh, but in Solvyns time there were Sikhs in Calcutta, distinguished by their dress and customs. When Solvyns undertook his great project to prepare 'a collection of 250 coloured etchings descriptive of the manners, customs, character, dress, and religious ceremonies of the Hindoos,' he included Sikhs, and it is to this Flemish artist that we owe the first published portrayals of Sikhs.

Born in Antwerp in 1760, of a prominent merchant family, Solvyns had pursued a career principally as a marine painter until political unrest in Europe and his own insecure position led him to seek his fortune in India. India in the late eighteenth century had attracted a number of British artists who found a ready market for their works among the

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Europeans of Calcutta and Madras and in the courts of the Indian princes. Thomas Hodges, and later Thomas and William Daniell, sold landscapes, but the most handsome profits were to be made in portraiture, and here such painters as Tilly Kettle, Thomas Hickey and John Zoffany enjoyed the patronage of *nabobs* and *nawabs* alike.[3]

Solvyns was adept at neither landscape nor portraiture, and upon his arrival in Calcutta in 1791, he became something of a journeyman artist. He provided decoration for celebrations and balls, cleaned and restored paintings, and offered instruction in oils, watercolour and chalk. The decoration of coaches and palanquins apparently provided Solvyns his steadiest income, but hardly the success and sense of accomplishment he clearly sought. In 1794, inspired by Sir William Jones, Solvyns announced his plan to publish *A Collection of Two Hundred and Fifty Coloured Etchings: Descriptive of the Manners, Customs and Dresses of the Hindoos*.[4]

With a sufficient number of subscribers to begin, Solvyns set out to record the life of the native quarter of Calcutta, or 'Blacktown', as it was then called. He approached his task as an ethnographer, drawing his subjects from life and with more concern for accuracy than aesthetics. The collection was published in Calcutta in a few copies in 1796, and then in greater numbers in 1799. Divided into 12 parts, the first section, with 66 prints, depicts 'the Hindoo casts, with their professions'. Following sections portray servants, costumes, means of transportation (carts, palanquins and boats), modes of smoking, fakirs, musical instruments and festivals.

The project proved a financial failure. The etchings, by contemporary European standards, were rather crudely done; the forms and settings were monotonous; and the colors were of somber hue. They did not, in short, appeal to the vogue of the picturesque. But the subjects were themselves compelling, and the London publisher Edward Orme brought out a pirated edition of 60 prints 'after Solvyns', redrawn for appeal and coloured in warm pastels. The volume, *The Costumes of Indoostan*,[5] through various printings, was highly successful, but Solvyns derived no gain and suffered, as he later wrote, 'abuse ... made of his name and of his works'.[6]

In 1804, Solvyns left India for France, and soon after his return to Europe married Mary Ann Greenwood, daughter of an English family resident in Ghent. In Paris, drawing upon his wife's resources, Solvyns prepared new etchings and produced a folio edition of 288 plates, *Les Hindoûs*, published in Paris between 1808 and 1812 in four elephantine volumes.[7] In his introduction, Solvyns writes that while European

scholars have done much 'to dispel the darkness which enveloped the geography and history of India, ... its inhabitants alone have not yet been observed nor represented with the accuracy which is necessary to make them perfectly known....' To rectify this situation, he offered to the public *Les Hindoûs*, 'the result of a long and uninterrupted study of this celebrated nation.'[8]

> The drawings from which are engraved the numerous plates ... were taken by myself upon the spot. Instead of trusting to the words of others, or remaining satisfied with the knowledge contained in preceding authors, I have spared neither time, nor pains, nor expense, to see and examine with my own eyes, and to delineate every object with the most minute accuracy....
>
> I admitted nothing as certain but upon the proof of my own observation, or upon such testimony as I knew to be incontrovertible. I have wholly neglected the testimony of authors who have treated these subjects before me, and have given only what I have seen, or what I have myself heard from the mouth of the natives the best informed and most capable of giving me true instructions upon the subject of my inquiries.
>
> What I have said of the text, may also in some degree be applied to the prints themselves, in which I have purposely avoided all sort of ornament or embellishment; they are merely representations of the objects such as they appeared to my view....[9]

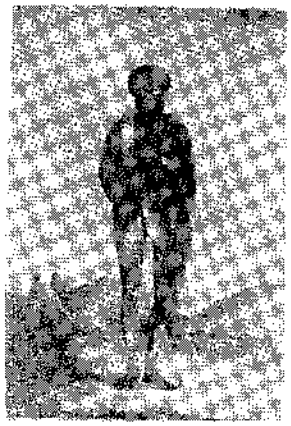
The Calcutta edition labelled each etching by name, but Solvyns published the descriptive text separately in a small *Catalogue* with brief entries.[10] For the Paris edition, however, Solvyns accompanied each etching by an expanded descriptive text, in both French and English.

In the Calcutta collection, Solvyns provides the earliest published depiction of the Sikhs. He presents them in two hand-coloured etchings, each measuring 14 1/2 x 10 inches. In the Calcutta edition, the first 'A Sic', is among the 66 prints of Section I, depicting 'Hindoo casts, with their professions'. In the Paris edition, the etching is entitled 'Sics, A Hindoo Tribe'. The identity of the Sikhs as a separate religious community was already a matter of some dispute, however, and Solvyns notes that 'There are persons who hesitate to rank them among the Hindoos'.

The second etching, labelled 'A Naunuck Punthy' ('Nanuk-Punthy', in the *Catalogue*), is among the ten prints of Section VII, 'Faquirs and Holy Mendicants'. The descriptive text of the 1799 *Catalogue* and that of the Paris edition reflect limited information and considerable confusion

on Solvyns's part, and his portrayal and description of the Nanak-panthi is as baffling as it is interesting.

Reproduced here are Solvyns's etchings for the Calcutta edition,[11] with the texts from the 1799 *Catalogue* and the texts accompanying the plates from the Paris edition. My commentary follows Solvyns's description.



A Sic
Etching, (or) 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 inches
Calcutta: 1796/1799

Calcutta: Section I, Number 9. A Sic in his family dress—the back ground represents them armed as Soldiers.

The History and origin of this curious Tribe, are to be met with in Hadgee Mustafah's Translate of Golaum Housain Khaun's Seir Mutaquirean;[12] and an account of them by Mr. Wilkins, is inserted in 1st Volume of the Transactions of the Asiatic Society.[13]

Paris: Vol. I, Section 8, Number 5: SICS, A HINDOO TRIBE.

These Hindoos form also a people with independent laws and customs. There are persons who hesitate to rank them among the Hindoos. But it is certain that their tribe was founded by Nanuck-Shah [Guru

Nānak], a descendant of Timur's, who through expiations and money was allowed to become a Hindoo. The first volume of the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta may be consulted upon this subject.[14]

The Sics never quit their families but for military service. They are brave, and acquit themselves well in battle; but all their force is in their first charge: if that is resisted, their defeat soon follows.

It is worthy of observation, that among them a family goes into mourning on the birth of a child, and rejoices and puts on white clothes when death carries off one of its members. This custom, which has been remarked among other nations, proceeds from an opinion perhaps too well founded, that this world is a vale of tears and misery, from which it is always a happiness to be delivered.

The Sic who forms the principal figure in this engraving, is in his ordinary costume, which is black, or oftener very dark blue. The back ground of the plate gives a view of the mountainous country which these Hindoos inhabit, with a group of their warriors near a tent, which is their ordinary abode.

Commentary: The Sikhs emerged as a distinct religious community from among Punjabi Hindus who followed the teachings of Guru Nānak (1469-1539). Nānak—often Nanuck Shah in early European writings—was of a Hindu family, and one can only wonder where Solvyns heard that he was a descendent of Timur and a convert to Hinduism. There are no such references in Ghulam Hussain or in Wilkins nor, indeed, in any published work on the Sikhs.[15]

Solvyns refers to the Sikhs as 'these Hindoos', as, indeed, most understood themselves, but Khālsā Sikhs increasingly sought to shape a consciousness of their distinctive character, and it is evident from Solvyns's comments that by the late eighteenth century some observers regarded them as a separate religious body.[16] The British, who fought the Sikhs in two wars (1845-46 and 1848-49), later recruited them for the Indian Army as one of the 'martial races'.

Solvyns portrays the Sikhs, though without specification in the text, with some of the visible attributes of membership in the Khālsā, the militant Sikh order established by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. Prominent among the distinguishing features are the 'Five Ks', (items each beginning with the letter 'k') that males must wear: uncut hair; sword or dagger; steel bangle on the right wrist; distinctive military-style shorts; and the comb worn in the topknot of the hair (concealed beneath the turban and unseen in the print).[17]

Khālsā Sikhs also wear dark blue garments and turban—not black, as

Solvyns describes. Guru Gobind Singh never required Sikhs to wear any particular colour, but Ganda Singh, in an annotation to Browne's early account of the Sikhs, writes that the zealous Nihang sect 'patronized the dark blue colour used by the Guru during his escape from Machhiwara. As the Nihangs exercised great influence in the community and occasionally led the expeditions of the Sikhs against their enemies, their dark blue dress acquired general popularity'.[18]

Europeans, like Solvyns, often took the distinctively dressed and militant Khālsā Sikhs as constituting the whole of the Sikh community, but the Panth, as the Sikh community is known, included a variety of other groups, such as the Nānak-panthī, who Solvyns depicts in his series of religious mendicants, although apparently without recognizing them as Sikhs.

Solvyns's comment on Sikh military tactics—that 'all their force is in their first charge; if that is resisted, their defeat soon follows'—is unsupported. Colonel Polier, in his 1787 presentation on the Sikhs before the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, held that 'their military capacity ... are far from being so formidable as they are generally represented, or as they might be', attributing this to 'disorderly manner' in which they fight'.[19] Such views may have been held by a few Europeans in Calcutta in Solvyns's time, but they contrast with the more general judgement of 'remarkably good' Sikh military skill.[20] W.H. McLeod suggests that Solvyns (and others) may have been confused by a frequently used Sikh tactic 'to feign flight and then pull up suddenly and strike their enemy who would be caught off balance'.[21]

Solvyns's discussion of Sikh birth and death practices is similarly at odds with their tradition. McLeod relates that 'The Sikhs (and Punjabis) in general) have been a world-affirming and life-affirming community, and such practices would seem to be in direct contradiction to their normal way of viewing such incidents'.[22]

The differences between Solvyns's Calcutta and Paris prints are considerable. In the Calcutta etching, the central figure, a Kes-dhārī Sikh,[23] stands against a clouded sky and wears a black cloak and blue turban, tied as many Sikhs then bound their turban. In the background are three small armed figures, two standing and one sitting. In the Paris print, against a clear sky, the central figure is depicted with a more natural face, with finer features, and the cloak and turban are coloured dark blue—despite the text reference in the Paris edition to the black costume. The small background figures have been replaced by two Sikhs, both armed, now standing in the foreground just behind the central figure. In both Calcutta and Paris editions, the shorts are shown as white, and in each, the principal

figure of the Sikh is depicted without a sword or dagger. The shoes are of Punjabi style, save for the instep Solvyns depicts, but are not typical of those generally worn by the Sikhs.

Both plates depict a hilly background and in the text he refers to 'the mountainous country which these Hindoos inhabit', but it was only during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries that Sikhs occupied the hills. By Solvyns's time, their land was principally the Punjabi plains.

A Naunuk Punthy
Etching, $14\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 inches
Calcutta: 1796/1799

Calcutta: Section VII, Number 8. A Nanuk-Punthy—a sectary formed by Nanuk, and are remarkable for wearing one shoe only and shaving one moustache—he is represented setting in Durnah, a religious fraud, an account of which is given in the 3rd volume of the Asiatic Researches, in Article 22, on some extraordinary Facts, Customs, and Practices of the Hindoos.

Paris: Volume II, Section 4, Number 6. NANUK-PUNTHY.
The Faquirs who go by the name of *Nanuk-Punthys* are very different, and much more peaceable than those of which have just been speaking. Their outward appearance offers something striking, not to be met with among any of the other Faquirs; which is caused by their wearing only

one whisker and one shoe. The origin of so strange a custom still remains unknown to me, notwithstanding all my endeavours to discover it. Every Faquir of this class has his turban covered with a sort of network of wire, of which also he wears a kind of cord as a collar round his neck. To the left side of the turban, above the ear, are fastened two little bells of silver. The *Nanuk-Punthy* carries besides in each hand a stick which he is continually striking together, reciting at the same time, with a most extraordinary volubility of tongue, a *Durnah* or text of the Hindoo legend. There is a pretty ample description of this *Durnah* or text in the third volume of the Memoirs of the Society of Calcutta. These Faquirs are persuaded that this pious trick gives them an incontestable claim upon the charity and beneficence of all those upon whom they intrude their endless declamations; to which, as often as they are disappointed, curses and reproaches succeed with equal volubility. They pretend to have a warrant for this in the precepts of their sect; and we must remember that the Hindoos feel more hurt by reviling language than by any other sort of ill treatment.

Some of the *Nanuk-Punthys* choose the markets and public places for the theatre of their perpetual harangues: others go from house to house, from shop to shop, striking their sticks together and pouring forth their declamations, untired and incessant, excess in the well filled intervals of scolding. This is their trade, the profession they have embraced for life. They are in other respects quiet in their demeanour, and are even treated with some degree of respect, especially among the Sics and the Mahrattas.

Commentary: In the broadest sense, Nānak Panthī refers to the followers of Guru Nanak—the Sikhs. But Solvyns here describes an order of mendicants, and although he notes the respect in which they are held by Sikhs, he does not identify them as Sikhs.

According to historian H.W. McLeod, the term Nānak-panthī was used principally for non-Khālsā Sikhs, and there were many of them in various sects in the late eighteenth century. McLeod suggests that the Nānak-panthī depicted by Solvyns may have been a member of one of the Udāsī orders. The name Udāsī is from the Sanskrit *udāsin*, detachment, and was taken by the followers of Sri Chānd (by tradition, 1494-1612), eldest son of Guru Nānak. These ascetics were distinguished from the militant Khālsā Sikhs (depicted by Solvyns in the earlier print) by their renunciation of the world, their celibacy and rejection of such practices as keeping their hair and beard uncut. Among the Udāsī orders, numbering more than a dozen, there was neither uniformity in doctrine nor organisation.[24] But

Solvyns's description does not correspond with any of the groups known to McLeod. The representation of the 'Nanuk-Punthy' as having only half a moustache and one shoe is baffling, as is the reference to the turban being covered with 'a sort of network of wire' and the two silver bells hanging from the turban above the left ear. McLeod concludes that Solvyns must have 'encountered a rather peculiar kind—and the practice of striking sticks together further supports this'.[25] It may also be that Solvyns simply describes an ascetic who took Nānak as his inspiration but, in other respects, was a member of some Hindu order.

Solvyns's reference to 'durnah' is most curious. He writes of the 'Nanuk-Punthy' reciting 'a *Durnah* or text of the Hindoo religion', but then refers to a description in the journal of the Asiatic Society. The reference is more specific in Solvyns's brief entry for the 1799 Catalogue accompanying the Calcutta edition of the etchings. There, he describes the figure as 'represented setting in Durnah, a religious fraud, an account of which is given in the 3rd volume of the *Asiatic Researches*, in Article 22, on some extraordinary Facts, Customs, and Practices of the Hindoos'. The article appeared, not in the third volume, but in the fourth, 1795, and describes Solvyns's 'fraud' as a form of extortion where the supplicant 'sets down in *Dherna*' before a person's house and there threatens suicide or engages in fast and 'completely arrests him ... until the institutor of the *Dherna* obtains satisfaction'.[26] The article makes no reference to 'Nanuk-Punthy'. The practice, *dharna*, is used today as a political weapon: demonstrators sit before the home or office of an offending party and may threaten 'fast unto death' to secure their demands.[27]

Solvyns's text description of the turban as covered by a 'network of wire' is not evident in the etching, and it is surely unlike the turban of the zealous Akali Nihangs, who wear a large, conical blue turban encircled by razor-edged steel quoits.[28]

Altogether, Solvyns's portrayal of the Nānak Panthī is very odd indeed—one whisker and one shoe, the peculiar turban, the striking of sticks, and the 'pious trick' of *dharna*. What sort of Nānak Panthī could Solvyns have been describing, or was this person a Sikh at all?

PORTRAYALS OF SIKHS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Solvyns's great project was a financial failure, but the Calcutta etchings influenced Indian artists, notably from Murshidabad, to the north of Calcutta in Bengal, and the development of what came to be called the 'Company School' of Indian painting.[29] Many of these painters, with a

blend of Indian and European styles, were employed by the British East India Company and its servants to portray Indian occupations, festivals, manners, and customs, very much as Solvyns had done in his collection of 250 etchings. Indeed, it is likely that Solvyns himself employed such artists as colourists in his own studio in Calcutta. That Solvyns influenced Company School painting is evident in the work of artists in Calcutta and Murshidabad—in the black-ruled borders, the positioning of the figures, and most significantly in the subjects portrayed.

It was not until well into the nineteenth century, influenced by Company artists from other parts of India, including Bengal, that the Company School of painting began to develop in the Punjab. Among the Sikhs, painting had been largely limited to murals on temple walls, as those in Amritsar. Miniature painting, as done for the Mughals, was found principally in the Punjab Hills among the Rajput courts, where artists pursued Hindu religious themes. It was only in the early nineteenth century, 1810-1830, that Sikhs called on these artists for Sikh subjects, primarily portraits of notables in the Sikh court.[30] With increasing European contact, from the 1830s, many of these artists turned from the conventions of the Punjab Hill miniatures to European perspective and increasingly to the genre of the Company School.

'British attitudes to painting slowly supplemented and superseded Indian', writes William Archer. 'Artists at Lahore and Amritsar ... had used gouache as their chief medium. The British preferred water-colour and as they settled down to live and rule, they induced Punjabi artists to adopt it. As early as 1838 or 1839, a British traveler in the Punjab had persuaded an Indian artist to portray the different peoples of Northern India, sketching them on British-supplied paper and binding them into an album. Amongst these drawings, some were strongly Sikh in theme—portraits of rulers and pictures of the military.'[31] French adventurers serving in the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) were patrons of local painters, who provided them with pictures of Sikh rulers, infantry and cavalry, and the people of the Punjab.[32]

Punjabi artists had seen Company paintings from other parts of India, but they were also influenced by British and European artists and their portrayal of India. Among British travellers to the Punjab,[33] fascinated by Sikh martial traditions and most particularly by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, were amateur artists of considerable talent—G.T. Vigne (1801-1863),[34] who was in the Punjab in 1837; William G. Osborne (1804-1888),[35] who visited the Sikh court in 1838; and, capturing the romance of the Sikhs in her famous prints, Emily Eden (1797-1869), Osborne's aunt and sister of Lord Auckland, Governor-General of India. Accompanying her brother

in 1838 in a visit to Lahore, capital of the Sikh state, Eden made drawings of Ranjit Singh, his ministers, and ordinary people. Based on these sketches, her *Portraits of the Princes and People of India*,[36] with its rich lithographic depiction of the Sikhs, was immensely popular, and as copies made their way to Punjab, her style influenced artists of the emerging Punjabi Company School.[37]

Another influence on Punjabi artists came through the realism of August Schoefft (1808-1888), a Hungarian painter who came to Lahore in 1841 to spend more than a year sketching and painting the life of the Sikh court.[38]

The Anglo-Sikh Wars (1845-46 and 1848-49) brought British army officers to the Punjab, some of whom, like Sir Henry Lawrence, made sketches of Sikh officers, infantrymen, and people in their various activities.[39] Some employed Indian artists in the tradition of the Company School to portray Punjabi life and customs. After the British annexed the Punjab in 1849, these Punjabi artists produced stock sets of paintings, intended primarily for Europeans and sold in the bazaars, depicting Sikh rulers and heroes, occupations, and costumes.[40]

Mildred Archer describes the Company School painting as it fully emerged in the Punjab after British annexation:

> The sets of costumes and occupations were of two types. One type was clearly made by Punjab Hill artists, probably from Guler who had migrated to Amritsar, Lahore and possibly other centres in the Punjab plains. In style they closely resemble Guler miniatures of the mid-nineteenth century and are executed in gouache, with coloured borders, showing the craftsman or subject of the picture in an appropriate setting of a shop or landscape. They are a continuation of the hill tradition and it is mainly in their subject matter that they reflect British taste. A second type was cheaper, simpler and more naive, the figures being shown against a plain background without any suggestion of a landscape. Some sets, however, such as those drawn by Kapur Singh of Amritsar, were more elaborate and placed the figure in an appropriate setting within a coloured border. These pictures were executed on European paper in water-colour. They were at times sold separately, but were usually bound up together into small volumes with tooled leather covers.[41]

> There is no evidence of the influence of Solvyns's etchings in the development of Company School painting in the Punjab, save for a possible indirect connection through Company paintings by Bengali artists. But in his systematic portrayal of the people of India in their

castes, occupations, customs, costumes and festivals, Solvyns provided a format that became the standard for the sets of Company paintings, such as those depicting the Sikhs by Punjabi artists for Europeans. The two Solvyns etchings depicting Sikhs—their earliest published portrayal—find their way into no discussions of the representation of Sikhs in art, and the Solvyns portraits, with their descriptive texts, are apparently unknown to historians of the Sikhs. Solvyns sought to provide an accurate account, both visually and in text, of what he observed. There are surely inaccuracies and anomalies, as in the curious portrayal of the 'Nanuk-Punthy', but in Solvyns we find rich sources for our understanding of India in the late eighteenth century and, through the two etchings, of the Sikhs.

Notes

1. Born Francois Baltazard Solvyns, he used his middle name, Baltazard, rather than Francois. On Solvyns, see Mildred Archer, 'Baltazard Solvyns and the Indian Picturesque', *The Connoisseur*, 170 (January, 1969), 12-18, and Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., 'A Portrait of Black Town: Baltazard Solvyns in Calcutta, 1791-1804', in Pratapaditya Pal (ed.), *Changing Visions, Lasting Images: Calcutta Through 300 Years* (Bombay: Marg, 1990), 31-46. The full collection of Solvyns's etchings, together with introductory chapters on his life and work, will appear in Hardgrave, *A Portrait of the Hindus: Baltazard Solvyns in Calcutta, 1791-1804* (forthcoming).
2. Described as a Punjabi and by faith a Nānak-panthī in C.E. Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian Biography* (New York: Haskell House, 1968 [1906]), 322-23.
3. See Mildred Archer, *India and British Portraiture, 1770-1825* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1979).
4. Baltazard Solvyns, *A Collection of Two Hundred and Fifty Coloured Etchings: Descriptive of the Manners, Customs, and Dresses of the Hindoos* (Calcutta; 1796, 1799).
5. *The Costumes of Indoostan* (London: Edward Orme, 1804, 1807).
6. F. Baltazard Solvyns, *Les Hindoûs*, 4 vols, vol. 1. (Paris: Chez L'Auteur, 1808), 1, 29.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., vol. 1, 20-21.
9. Ibid., vol. 1, 21.
10. Solvyns, *A Catalogue of 250 Coloured Etchings: Descriptive of the Manners, Customs, Character, Dress and Religious Ceremonies of the Hindoos* (Calcutta: Mirror Press, 1799).
11. The original etchings are in the author's collection.
12. Syed Gholam Hossein Khan [Ghulam Hussain Khan], *Sëir Mutaqherin: or View of Modern Times, Being a History of India*, 4 vols. (Calcutta: 1789; reprinted Lahore: Sheikh Muharak Ali, 1975). The discussion on 'Nanec-Shah' and the 'Sycs' appears in vol. 1, 82-84. The translation is by M. Raymond, a French Creole, who had assumed the Muslim name Hajee Mustapha, but the published translation from Persian appeared

under the pseudonym Nota Manus. A later translation, *Siyas-ul-Mutakherin*, was published in London in 1832.

13. Charles Wilkins, 'Observations on the Seeks and their College' [781], *Asiatick Researches*, 1 (1788), 288-94. Colonel A.I.H. Polier read a paper on the 'The Siques', at a meeting of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in 1787, but it was not published until its inclusion in *Indian Studies: Past & Present*, 3 (1962), 181-243, and in Ganda Singh (ed.), *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs* (Calcutta: Indian Studies: Past & Present, 1962), 53-69. For another early account in the transactions of the Asiatic Society, see Sir John Malcolm, 'Sketch of the Sikhs', *Asiatic Researches*, 11 (1810), 197-292.
14. The brief Wilkins article, cited above, is the only discussion of the Sikhs in Vol. I of *Asiatick Researches*, and it makes no reference to Guru Nānak as a descendant of Timur.
15. Letter from W.H. McLeod to the author, December 16, 1994. For a discussion of early European writing on the Sikhs, see J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in Western Scholarship* (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies; New Delhi: Manohar, 1992). On the Sikhs generally, see W.H. McLeod, *The Sikhs: History, Religion and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), and his *Historical Dictionary of Sikhism* (Lanham, Md: Scarescrow Press, 1995). For Sikh history, see Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), and J.S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, The New Cambridge History of India, II.3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
16. Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity, and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 24, emphasises the fluidity of Sikh identity well into the nineteenth century, but notes the dramatic change in the eighteenth century as the Khālsā Sikhs pushed for 'a distinct and separate religious culture'. On the problem of Sikh identity, also see McLeod, *The Sikhs*, 16-47. Although a matter of controversy, McLeod argues that it was only with the Singh Sabha movement in the late nineteenth century that Sikhs asserted their separateness from the Hindus.
17. Five 'Ks', *Panj-Kakkas*, in Ramesh Chander Dogra and Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Religion and Culture* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1995), 148-49, and McLeod, *The Sikhs*, 45, 71-72.
18. Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, 17, fn. 4. Solvyns is apparently unaware of Major James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks*, published as part of *India Tracts* (London: East India Company, 1788), the first treatise on the Sikhs by an Englishman. The essay is reprinted, with annotations, in *Indian Studies: Past & Present*, 2 (1961), 535-42 and 549-83, and is included in Ganda Singh's *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, 9-19.

    Horace A. Rose writes that 'Authorities differ as to the origin of the blue dress. It is said to have been adopted in imitation of Guru Govind Singh who escaped by donning the blue garb of a Muhammadan pilgrim to Mecca....' *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North Western Frontier Province* (Delhi: Languages Department, Punjab, 1970 [1919]), 1, 709. Khushwant Singh, in a note on the Nihangs, offers a variation on the origin of the blue colour. '*Nihangs* were suicide squads of the Mughal army and wore blue unforms. The Sikhs took the name and the uniform from the Mughals.' *A History of the Sikhs*, 1, 215, fn. 9. On the Nihangs, see Dogra and Mansukhani, *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Religion and Culture*, New Delhi, Vikas, 1995, 343-44.

19. Dogra and Mansukhani, Ibid., 60.
20. Major James Browne, Indira Tracts, London, East India Company, 1788, 17.
21. Letter from W.M. McLeod to the author, December 16, 1994.
22. Ibid.
23. An 'orthodox' Khālsā Sikh with uncut hair. See McLeod, *The Sikhs*, 78-80.
24. McLeod, *Historical Dictionary of Sikhism*, 214-15. Also see Oberoi, *The Construction*, 78-80, and John Clark Archer, *The Sikhs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), 227-28.
25. McLeod's Letter to the author, December 16 1994. Published descriptions of Sikh ascetics provide nothing to verify Solvyns's portrayal. Horace Rose's description of the Udāsī, for example, bears no resemblance to Solvyns's account. Moreover, Rose describes Udāsī ascetics as wearing red or going entirely naked, at odds with Solvyns's depiction in the etching, although there may well have been considerable variation in appearance among the various Udāsī orders. *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province* (Delhi: Languages Department, Punjab, 1970 [1919]), 3, 479-81. There is a faint resemblance in Solvyns's description to the Suthrā Shāhi order of Sikh devotees. Some among them carry a *dandā* (staff) with which they strike their iron bracelets. They claim to be Udāsī and live by begging, but, although possible, it would seem unlikely that Solvyns would have encountered someone from so small an order. See Dogra and Mansukhani, *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Religion*, 457.
26. Sir John Shore, 'On Some Extraordinary Facts, Customs, and Practices of the Hindus', Article 22, *Asiatic Researches*, 4 (1795), 330-31. The author again discusses the practice, with the spelling 'Dhurna', in a note at the end of the article, 346-48.
27. See Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr. and Stanley A. Kochanek, *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation*, 5th ed. (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993), 173.
28. The quoits, *chakkars*, are described by Dogra and Mansukhani, 344 and 378. The Akalis are vividly portrayed in two similar Company School paintings, c. 1860, in Stuart Cary Welch, *Room For Wonder: Indian Painting during the British Period 1760-1880* (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1978), pl. 57, pp. 128-29, and in Mildred Archer, *Company Paintings: Indian Paintings of the British Period* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum/Ahmedabad: Mapin, 1992), pl. 162, p. 173. The Akali Nihangs are also portrayed in Kanwarjit Singh Kang, *Punjab Art and Culture* (Delhi: Atma Ram, 1988), 118-34.
29. See Mildred Archer, *Company Paintings*, 11-19, 72-127.
30. William G. Archer, *Paintings of the Sikhs* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1966), 18-19. Archer includes an annotated bibliography on Sikh painting, 93-103. Also see B.N. Goswamy, *Painters at the Sikh Court* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag/University of Heidelberg, 1975; Kang, *Punjab Art and Culture*, 98-114; and 'Homage to Amritsar,' *Marg*, 30 (June 1977).
31. William Archer, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, 58; and Mildred Archer, *Company Drawings in the India Office Library* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1972), 211-16.
32. Mildred Archer, *Company Paintings*, 169.
33. William Archer lists volumes recording impressions of these early travellers in the Punjab, 1830-1870, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, 79-92.
34. G.T. Vigne, *A Personal Narrative of a Visit to Ghuzni, Kabul, and Afghanistan* (London: Whittaker, 1840). A lithograph of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, based on a Vigne drawing

done in Lahore and published in London in 1837, is reproduced in William Archer, plate 68.

35. W.G. Osborne, *The Court and Camp of Runjeet Sing* (London: H. Colburn, 1840), contained 16 lithographs from original sketches.
36. Emily Eden, *Portraits of the Princes and People of India.* (London: J. Dickinson & Son, 1844). Also see her journals in *Up the Country* (London: R. Bentley, 1866).
37. See William Archer, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, 42, 51.
38. Ibid, 47-48. Also see Kang, 86-88, and Man Mohan Singh, 'Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Court: Painters and the Painted', in *Maharaja Ranjit Singh as Patron of the Arts* (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1981), 109-20. Two Schoefft paintings, a posthumous portrait of Ranjit Singh and, from life, a portrait of Maharaja Sher Singh, were included in National Portrait Gallery's 'Raj' exhibition in 1991. The exhibition also included a magnificent portrait of Maharaja Dalip Singh, painted for Queen Victoria by Franz Xaver Winterhalter, in 1854. The painting, plate 208, p. 181, was used for the cover of the exhibition catalogue. C.A. Bayly, (ed.), *The Raj: India and the British 1600-1947* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1990), 180-82.
39. Mildred Archer, *British Drawings in the India Office Library*, Vol. I, *Amateur Artists* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1969), 49, 141, 208, 236-37, 361.
40. Mildred Archer, *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, 209-10. The listing of Punjab Company School drawings in the IOL appears on pp. 208-31. Also see William Archer, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, 58-59.
41. Mildred Archer, *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, 210.

REVIEW ARTICLE

What is Happening to the Political Science of Ethnic Conflict? (II)

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Ishtiaq Ahmed, *State, Nation and Ethnicity in Contemporary South Asia* (London: Pinter, 1996). ISBN 0-86187-747-0, x+326 pp., Price £45, hb.

S. Mahmud Ali, *The Fearful State: Power, People and Internal Wars in South Asia* (London: Zed Books, 1993). ISBN 1-85649-122-6, 266 pp., Price £13.95, pb.

Joyce J.M. Pettigrew, *The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerrilla Violence* (London: Zed Books, 1995). ISBN 1-85649-356-3, xii+252 pp., Price £15.96, pb.

The increasing pervasiveness of ethnic conflicts in South Asia has generated a growing body of publications that are of interest to regional and comparative specialists alike. In the last issue of the *International Journal of Punjab Studies*,[1] Professor Subrata Mitra provided an extended discussion of the subject with particular reference to Punjab. This review article will address the issues raised by Mitra and critically examine the relevance and value of rational choice theory (RCT) for understanding contemporary ethnic conflicts in South Asia.[2] The arguments made will be developed by drawing on publications listed above. It will be suggested that the application of RCT to ethnic conflicts in South Asia suffers from serious weaknesses—weaknesses which can be better overcome by adopting the theoretically 'messy centre approach'.

I

Mitra's starting point is the desire to locate the literature on ethnicity within comparative politics. For him, as for many others, the study of

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ethnicity appears to have 'departed from the familiar grounds of class, interests, citizenships and other reference points through which the social sciences interpret the world'.[3] This development, Mitra acknowledges, is increasingly the product of the academic legitimisation of hyper-subjectivism among ethnic (and non-ethnic) protagonists whose *raison d'etre* is essentially *I imagine therefore I am!* Indeed, it is difficult not to disagree with Mitra that the study of ethnicity in Indian politics has been little advanced by hyper-subjectivism and rampant relativism. Two examples will suffice to illustrate the point.

The formation of the short-lived Bharatiya Janata Party national government marks a decade of rising ethnic conflicts within the Indian political system. Some of these have been regional (Punjab, Kashmir, Assam), others non-territorial (over caste) and, others still, central to the ethnic character of the Indian state itself. Yet much of the academic debate about these conflicts has, with few notable exceptions,[4] taken flight from the hard categories of social sciences to find refuge in deconstruction, relativism and meta-narratives of irrelevance. Consider, for example, the argument advanced by Bikhu Parekh that Indian nationalism is of non-derivative and of non-nation type.[5] By posing the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan as ideologically derivative of Western nationalism, he argues that the project of M.K. Gandhi and the Indian National Congress was a self-conscious denial of nation-statehood, a pursuit of a 'relatively heterogenous traditional Indian civilisation [that] best united Indians'.[6] Such a reading not only sidesteps the argument that the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan was a defensive proposal—a proposal that could have been accommodated in a genuinely consociational India—but also overlooks the ethnic content of 'traditional Indian civilisation' that is now coming home to roost. Neo-Gandhism is a failed historical solution. For today's conflicts all it has to offer are vague platitudes in place of real policy alternatives.[7]

At the other extreme the hammer blows of deconstruction and relativism have been reined in on minority ethnic identities, disempowering them, exposing them as hallow sacred totem poles erected by manipulative elites or ethnic entrepreneurs. With reference to Punjab, Oberoi's *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*[8] has torn asunder the polite consensus of doubt about Sikh identity, occasionally expressed, but firmly held by historians of the old tradition. A combination of Foucault and deconstruction has now opened a 'vision' of identity that does not exist, is the product of elite manipulators, and is best consigned to the dustbin of meta-narratives. Not unexpectedly the 'vision' has been warmly

welcomed by academics and non-academics with an axe to grind against *any* conception of a core Sikh identity.

Yet what is often lacking in discourse analysis, whether applied to majorities or minorities, is an absence of the discussion of power, hegemony and inequality. It is difficult to situate ethnic identities outside the complex web of material, political and, indeed, symbolic power. But if the understanding of these central social science dimensions is locked in a 'world of meanings, and meanings exhaust the world,' as Gellner rightly asks, 'where is the room for coercion through the whip, gun or hunger?'.[9] Anyone looking at Punjab or Kashmir over the last decade will find little that addresses these concerns in the 'meta-twaddle' that is on offer.

It is precisely because these questions cannot be answered by meaning and meaning alone that Mitra espouses RCT. Extensively developed in Mitra's other writings,[10] RCT seeks to provide a 'bridge' between comparative politics and the growing literature on ethnicity. The appeal of ethnicity, contends Mitra, can be best analysed in terms of 'the rational actor who responds to different structures of opportunities at different times'.[11] He continues:

> The politics of ethnicity can be understood by disaggregating it in terms of the wishes and actions of the individual actors in the context of the larger political structures and processes within which they are located.[12]

These structures include six major dimensions: (*a*) the gap between the dominant cultural values and those of sub-nationalists; (*b*) the material conditions; (*c*) the level of integration of sub-national elites; (*d*) the strength and legitimacy of central rule; (*e*) support for separatism from other states; and (*f*) the level of social networks that support sub-nationalist leaders and punish defectors.[13] The cause of much of ethnic conflict in South Asia, believes Mitra, is the growing divergence between the dominant cultural values and those of sub-nationalists.

Mitra's RCT extends beyond individual actors to include political institutions and rule-making as part of the political bargaining process. There is, he observes, 'room to manoeuvre only if the actors involved agree that the eventual shape of (political) institutions is also part of the bargaining process rather than starting from the premise that the existing institutions provide a sacred, moral boundary to political argument'.[14] In fact as far as the sacred and moral are concerned, Mitra would prefer a strong distinction between those that can be transacted or need to be transcended. The latter are best left in museums of symbolism where they provide reverence for, but not the psychic wages of, ethnic warriors.

There is another modification that Mitra urges us to accept. Instea viewing the Indian state as the embodiment of modern nation statehood it should, he insists, be seen as being in transition fro segmentary state in which values, identities, roles and functions were n diffuse and 'co-existed within a relatively loose authority structure'.[15] today as democratisation has extended, the symbols of the modern s have 'become the focus of popular resistance'. At the one end is the s which appears to be determined to defend at all costs the integrity of Indian Union. At the other are regional and religious movements, a Kashmir and Punjab, seeking a form of political accommodation cannot be achieved within the legacy of the Nehruvian secular state move towards the reality of segmentation and away from the moder construct of Nehru would enable many of the regional ethnic conflict be bargained away with a more firmer foundations for legitimacy. A m in this direction would also enable the RCT to provide a greater planatory value—a value limited by boundaries of rule-making impo by the Indian state.

It is the modified RCT approach that Mitra has used in analysing lessons of comparative ethnic conflicts and their application to India Punjab in particular. After reviewing the failure of traditional method ethnic conflict management—co-optation, accommodation and qualif consociation—he is also doubtful of comparative novelties such as c tonisation. At the heart of the Punjab problem, and many other eth conflicts in India, is the failure to evolve guarantees that would safegu the political, religious and cultural institutions of the Sikhs (and ot minorities) and be compatible with India's political system. Althou Mitra sees signs for hope in the 'normalisation' of events in Punjab si 1994, only a genuine bargained outcome, he contends, in which all act participate and accept the realities of rule-making, is likely to provide enduring long- term solution. The lessons of Punjab can hardly be ignor in Kashmir or Assam.

In contrast to the various alternatives on offer Mitra's RCT perspecti is both elegant and parsimonious. It cuts through the confusion a profusion that pervades the subject to provide a perspective that methodologically rigorous and speaks a comparative language whi political scientists can understand, even though they may strongly disag with what is being said. Given the 'uniqueness' of India, this is no sm achievement.

Opponents of RCT will be quick to draw attention to its theoretical a empirical limitations—limitations that have been all too familiar economists but appear to have been overlooked by political scientists

welcomed by academics and non-academics with an axe to grind against *any* conception of a core Sikh identity.

Yet what is often lacking in discourse analysis, whether applied to majorities or minorities, is an absence of the discussion of power, hegemony and inequality. It is difficult to situate ethnic identities outside the complex web of material, political and, indeed, symbolic power. But if the understanding of these central social science dimensions is locked in a 'world of meanings, and meanings exhaust the world,' as Gellner rightly asks, 'where is the room for coercion through the whip, gun or hunger?'.[9] Anyone looking at Punjab or Kashmir over the last decade will find little that addresses these concerns in the 'meta-twaddle' that is on offer.

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> theory, so scholars who work in this tradition are likely to draw on a melange of theoretical traditions in hopes of gaining greater purchase on the cases they care about. At the same time, a compelling interpretation of a particular case is only interesting if it points to ways of understanding other cases as well, so scholars in this tradition are often chastised for 'trespassing' on historical cases of other specialists in their search for broader generalisations.[18]

The practitioners of the 'messy centre' employ general theoretical frameworks to describe and analyse 'mechanisms that make the behaviour of actors and institutions causally plausible'.[19] Because such practitioners often service patrons as varied as consumers, bureaucracies and the state, their output is very much influenced by the quality of predictability.

For scholars seeking a better understanding of ethnicity in South Asia the 'messy centre' provides many fruitful points of departure that have yet to be applied. From sociology there is the extended debate on ethnic boundaries and multi-culturalism; from politics there are the comparative examples of non-majoritarian modes of governance in plural societies; and from anthropology there is a better understanding of identity, real or imagined.[20] Working within this tradition it is also possible to be more discrete about ethnicity. The level of discrete analysis is most fruitful in South Asia's peripheral regions where ethnic resistance is not only reinforced by the existence of multiple cleavages but the regions are paradigm cases of nation- and state-building projects. These processes, moreover, have been locked into the logic of India's partition almost fifty years ago and unless the significance of this event is recognised, understood and contextualised, the study of South Asia's macro ethnic conflicts is unlikely to make much headway.

III

It is a virtue of two of the publications under review that they locate the issue of ethnicity within this framework. Ahmed's *State, Nation and Ethnicity in Contemporary South Asia* is really a compendium of the subject. Starting with a long introduction to the concepts of state, nation and ethnicity in contemporary South Asia (Chapter 3), Ahmed builds five hypotheses. First, he insists that multi-cultural post-colonial states are inclined to see ethnic separatism as a challenge to their survival. Second, where ethnic separatists have the resources to pursue a separatist strategy they will do so. Third, this is turn often invites heavy repression by the state which tends to make the conflict intractable. Fourth, within the

parameters of multi-culturalism and in situations of intense conflict, the state may experiment with forms of limited autonomy. Finally, the capacity of the post-colonial state to resolve many of these conflicts is constrained by the condition of economic dependency that severely limits their room for manoeuvre.

These hypotheses are then examined with reference to India (Punjab and Kashmir), Pakistan (Sindh and Mohajir Quami Movement), Bangladesh (the Chittagong Hill Tracts) and Sri Lanka (the Tamil Movement). Of particular interest to readers of this journal is Ahmed's analysis of the Punjab case study. Much of this is largely uncontroversial and repeats the publications in the public domain but the account is enlivened by an interview with Dr. Chauhan. By focusing on economic factors as the primary cause of the Punjab problem, Ahmed (surprisingly) avoided sustained discussion of the Sikh question as a residual legatee of partition. Even the restoration of 'peace' from 1994 onwards is not situated in the context of state repression but treated unproblematically.

The inconsistencies in Ahmed's 'messy eclecticism' are most apparent in the comparative assessment of the case studies. In seeking an appropriate exit the author reflects on

> what might have happened if British India had remained undivided. It would have meant a population ratio of seven to three between Hindus and Muslims. In addition there were Christians, Sikhs and Others. For such a state to survive and stabilise, a pluralist democracy, respecting regional interests and accommodating various groups in the state services, would have been necessary or else disintegration would have been a serious possibility. How such a state and society would have behaved in the face of modernisation, uneven development and external pressures is, of course, a highly conjectural question, but unity through pluralist democracy could have avoided the antagonisms which the divisions of India brought (p. 295).

This observation leads Ahmed to embrace Lijphart's model of power-sharing consociationalism as an alternative to majoritarian democracy. In so doing Ahmed has placed his argument back-to-front. Had he proceeded from the *failure* to establish a pluralist and consociational united India—a failure for which the Congress is largely responsible—the role of state policy in mismanaging the peripheral regions would have become apparent. There is a growing body of academic opinion that suggests we need to rediscover the failure of united India to come to terms with the failures of divided Pakistan and India.[21] The revenge of the regions and the establishment of

a BJP government in India's 12th Lok Sabha elections should be justification enough for such a sustained effort.

Ahmed's reluctance to go along this road can perhaps be explained by his preference for economic explanations. It was the inherent contradictions of mid-1960s peripheral capitalism, Ahmed asserts, that led states to 'employ force and violence on a massive scale in order to regain control over society' (p. 272). The value of such an explanation has to be weighed against evidence. In South Asia there has never been a time when there have not been 'contradictions within peripheral capitalism': the point, however, is that the regional ethnic conflicts have waxed and waned in spite, rather than because, of these 'contradictions'.

IV

Ali's *The Fearful State* is less ambitious in its theoretical claims. Seeking to analyse contemporary 'internal wars' in South Asian states, its starting point is the post-1947 'nation-state paradigm'. Whereas nation-building has 'emphasised national loyalties and identities' in opposition to 'sub-national regionalism', state-building, the project of evolving loyalty and attachment to institutions of governance, has been more problematic. In fact, according to Ali, state-building has been used by the ruling elite as 'the primary instrument of nation-building and modernisation' (p. 16). This insidious intertwining has resulted in the evolution of state-centric nationalisms that are neither capable of providing sound legitimacy nor syncretic enough to accommodate peripheral sub-regional nationalisms. Consequently, in the latter regions, especially because of the artificialness of state boundaries created by 1947, there have always been sufficient cause for 'internal wars'.

Ali illustrates his argument by case studies of India's north-eastern territories and Sikh separatism in Punjab, Baluch nationalism in Pakistan, the tribal in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and the Tamil movement in Sri Lanka. The omission of Kashmir is all the more surprising given the framework that the author adopts. Although most of the case studies, especially of north-eastern states in India, provide ample support for Ali's central thesis, its application to Punjab is clearly lacking. We are presented with a bland chronology of Sikh history and post-1947 politics without any discussion of how Sikh identity has been articulated and disarticulated in the nation- and state-building projects since 1947.

Despite the author's shortcomings on Punjab (he is clearly at his best discussing the north-eastern states and the Chittagong Hill Tracts) Ali's

conclusion draws valid lessons. South Asian societies and their leaders, he insists

> have to revise their view of national ideology and objectives by defining rationally the ends of statehood...[which] would open the way for radical restructuring of the region. It is not necessary to demolish existing borders, but their purpose and the nature of relationship across these, could be redefined. The regional must be given precedence over the national. In multicultural polities such as those in South Asia, the national is often defined by the prejudices of the dominant group...In India, the Hindi-speaking populace of the Gangetic plains has taken control. In Pakistan, power tends to lie in Punjab. The Bengali-Muslim majority in Bangladesh has virtually marginalised all minority communities. In Sri Lanka, the Sinhala reign supreme. It is the tensions generated by such regional and sectarian/communal concentration of power in highly competitive environment that threaten stability. The removal of sources of tension will demand political and psychological engineering of massive proportions. But it is not impossible and there is a recent [collapse of USSR and the formation of CIS] precedent (p. 253).

V

That Ali's optimism is perhaps misplaced is underscored by Joyce Pettigrew's *The Sikhs of Punjab*. This work comes almost two decades after Pettigrew's *Robber Noblemen* which established her as the leading scholar of modern *Jat* Sikh society. Twenty years later the same author has taken on the task of addressing a more complex, if not equally challenging, subject: the nature of 'Sikh resistance to the Indian state between 1984 and 1992'. Set in the aftermath of operation Blue Star and almost a decade of violence that has seen the deaths of nearly 30,000 people, *The Sikhs of Punjab* charts the rise and demise of Sikh armed resistance to Indian rule and the efforts to establish a separate Sikh state of Khalistan.

This is no ordinary publication. The author accepts that it lacks conventional academic rigour but pleads that the civil war condition (together with threats to her own safety) limited a more systematic analyses. Much of the raw data consists of extended interviews with guerrillas of the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), most of whom have now been eliminated by the security forces. If these actors speak an 'ideological language', this language, nonetheless, insists Pettigrew, gives us access to

the 'consciousness of insurgency', an access stubbornly denied by the ideological hegemony of counter-insurgency. Hence perhaps the subtitle: *Unheard Voices*.

The structure of this work is also unconventional. Chapter 1 opens with harrowing accounts of state terror in rural Sikh areas after operation Blue Star. Chapter 2 locates the rise of the resistance movement from political opposition to armed revolt. This is followed by an overview of the guerrilla movement (Chapter 3), a detailed history of the structure of the KCF (Chapter 4), and an extended discussion of the impact of strategies of the police and guerrillas on the local population (Chapter 5). In Chapters 6 and 7 we are provided with an introduction and text of the KCF interviews. The final chapter concludes with a wide-ranging discussion that raises issues of fundamental importance to Punjab and Sikh society alike.

Pettigrew's account has a number of merits. She is certainly on firm ground in identifying the role of state terror in giving rise to armed resistance. Excesses of state (and militant) terror have been widely reported by the Punjabi press and international human rights agencies. Yet these accounts have been lacking in reflecting the psychosis of fear, the civil war conditions and the brazen use of violence by the state as a calculated policy. In the name of counter-insurgency ('fighting the nation's war') such violence was unleashed that civil society was literally crushed under the dictatorial rule of the security forces, especially the Punjab Police. Although this strategy ultimately defeated the armed resistance, but not before unduly prolonging the Punjab problem. The security state, as Pettigrew and others have rightly noted, was a part and parcel of the Punjab problem.

A second value of the work is that it articulates for the first time the programme, ideas and structure of the guerrilla movement as seen by itself rather than as it has been represented by state-sponsored anti-terrorism and its agencies of ideological warfare. Although Pettigrew's emphasis is largely on the KCF, and is open to serious criticisms on grounds of group sectarianism, it does provide valuable insights into the incoherent impulses, ideas and structures of the organisations. What emerges is neither logical nor clear but a reactive movement staffed and controlled by 'village rustics' who have regularly failed to play the role in history that has been assigned to them by Punjabi Marxists. Those academics who have built careers by free-riding on the Ghadar movement—and the highly opinionated, but intellectually banal, Naxalites (and left-wing fellow commercial travellers)—would do well to understand the 'primitive rebels' in their own midst before ransacking the mantras of the 'three Ms' (Marx, Mao and Muzumdar) to explicate their own intellectual despair.

The final major achievement of this work is that it problematises, though perhaps not too clearly, the difficulties of realising a 'Sikh revolution'. Drawing on *Robber Noblemen* and the history of the post-1984 resistance movement, Pettigrew concludes that there is a basic contradiction between Sikh values and the values of *Jat* Sikh society among which they are embedded. The latter, which are based on force, ultra-competitiveness, and continuously shifting factional alignments for personal aggrandisement, are directly at odds with the Sikh principle of 'welfare of all'. It is the *Jat* Sikh values, insists Pettigrew, that undermined the guerrilla movement, allowed it to be prised open and then crushed by the security forces. Tragically, there is no evidence that the dangers of these values for 'Sikhs as a collectivity have been appreciated, except on the level of tactical error' (p. 191). A guerrilla movement cannot hope to be successful unless it 'frees itself of cultural and historical constraints' (p. 191). In Punjab it perished at their hands.

Against these achievements there are some major shortcomings that will be obvious to Punjab and non-specialists alike. Foremost amongst these is the absence of the context within which the resistance movement emerged. Pettigrew rightly highlights the role of state terror in producing the various guerilla groups, but state terror was a continuation, *by other means*, of the traditional policy of ethnic conflict management by the Indian state in Punjab. Elsewhere it has been suggested that the Sikh question is a legacy of the partition, a clear blot on India's nation-building project in Punjab.[22] Congealed within the application of Nehruvian secularism to Punjab since 1947 has been implicit ethnic domination which has set clear limits to the articulation of Sikh political identity. Unless these limits, and the continued resistance to them, are recognised, the tendency to regress into ad hoc explanations, especially economistic, will remain.

Pettigrew will also be criticised for her focus on the KCF. While the turn of events since 1992, which have seen most non-KCF guerrillas and leadership either eliminated or rehabilitated by the Indian authorities, may justify the line that the KCF was the only authentic guerrilla group, there was sufficient evidence available in Punjabi and English to have established a more comprehensive history of these groups. In the tradition of all ideological movements, the charge of sectarianism cannot easily be rebuked.

Finally, Pettigrew's theory of 'Sikh revolution' is also likely to be seriously challenged. Whether an ideological movement might have emerged that could have transcended the 'cultural and historical constraints' of *Jat* Sikh society remains a subject for counter-factual history. What is less in

doubt is that efforts to construct clear ideological movements in Punjab, for example, by the Communists over the last 60 years, have been dramatically unsuccessful. The Muslim League succeeded because of ideology and numbers. Similarly the secret of the failure of the 'Sikh revolution' was not an inability to forge a viable ideology of cohesion (the common lament of all revolutionaries) nor the iron laws of *Jat* Sikh values, but rather in the way the process of state-building in Punjab since 1947 has been directed at the partial incorporation of *Jats* as well as non-*Jat* Sikhs. Ironically, this incorporation has been most manifest in the repressive state apparatus and the production of 'official' intellectuals who have so successfully disarticulated and abused the 'village rustics'. Economic liberalisation and the resulting industrialisation of Punjab could atomise *Jat* Sikh values once and for all. It is also likely to produce greater opportunities for the integration of this historically recalcitrant social category that has proved so irksome to India's ethnic managers.

CONCLUSION

The impending fiftieth anniversary of the partition of India provides a sober moment for thoughtful reflection on the fortunes of the successor states. The symmetry of demands of the provinces before partition and today is too uncanny for us not to talk of 'back to the future?'.[23] Of course the ideologues who propelled modern India and Pakistan and their successors would be appalled at such prospects but their legacy has been so catastrophic that such intellectual deceit can no longer be avoided. Because the reversal of faith in the late twentieth century has been so dramatic, the ideological content of the opposition to united, pluralistic and consociational India ought to be re-examined. Ideological secularism, like ideological communism, evidently served the same function: as an instrument of ethnic oppression.

Whereas the nation- and state-building efforts of Pakistan have been tragically comical, in India the peripheral regions have proved resistant to both processes, forcing the state to indulge in creative state-building and (regional) 'nation destroying' within the fig leaf of formal democracy. When this facade has collapsed, violent control has been regularly imposed. Nevertheless there is a confident belief among the ideologues of India's nation-building that peripheral conflicts, and the politics of these regions, *can be permanently restructured.*[24] Kashmir is providing a stern test for this proposition while Punjab's 'normalcy' may yet harbour a gathering storm. If these conflicts remain unresolved while other regions proceed to decouple, the logic for reshaping the state—as events in the

former USSR and Yugoslavia have demonstrated—will become inevitable.

The books reviewed have shown the need to construct a better fit between ethnicity and the state in South Asia. This point is also recognised by Mitra who implicitly acknowledges that rule-making may eventually lead to state-breaking if the parties agree that 'letting go is hanging on'. The pan-state structures for such a reconstruction maybe only in their formative stage but the logic of development in this direction needs to be recognised. For academics the real challenge is to anticipate these developments with theories and approaches that provide useful guidance for enlightened policy makers and political elites. The books under review, and the critical input of Mitra, have certainly provided a breath of necessary fresh air in an atmosphere stifled by the fog of nationalist ideology so assiduously generated since 1947. If readers want to avoid narratives of nonsense and the cyberspace fantasy of withdrawal currently on offer on ethnicity in South Asia, they would do well to start with these three books and the writings of Mitra.

Notes

1. Subrata Mitra, 'What is Happening to the Political Science of Ethnic Conflict?,' *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, 3, 1 (1996), 75-92.
2. It is appropriate and necessary, as will be argued later, to draw a finer distinction between ethnicity and nationalism. However, the two concepts are so interchangeable in the context of South Asia's peripheral regions the point seems hardly valid.
3. Mitra, 'What is Happening', 75.
4. See Prakash C. Upadhyaya, 'The Politics of Indian Secularism', *Modern Asian Studies*, 26, 4 (1992), 815-53.
5. Bikhu Parekh, 'Ethnicity of the Nationalist Discourse', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1, 1 (1995), 25-52.
6. Ibid., 39.
7. For a critique of neo-Gandhism and its assessment of ethnic conflicts see Gurharpal Singh, 'Perspectives on Ethnic Conflict in Indian Politics', *Internationales Asienforum*, 26, 3&4 (1995), 233-48.
8. Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994).
9. Ernest Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1992), 63.
10. See in particular, Subrata Mitra, 'Rational Politics of Cultural Nationalism: Sub-National Movements in South Asia', *The British Journal of Political Science*, 25 (1995), 57-78.
11. Mitra, 'What is Happening', 89.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., 67.
14. Ibid., 87.

15. Ibid., 89.
16. Donald Green and Ian Shapiro in *Pathologies of Rational Choice: A Critique of Application in Political Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), have made a devastating assessment. 'A large proportion of the theoretical conjectures of rational choice theorists,' they note, 'have not been tested empirically. Those tests that have been undertaken have either failed on their own terms or garnered support for propositions that, on reflection, can only be characterised as banal', p. 25.
17. The term is used by Peter Evans in a symposium on comparative politics, see Atul Kholi et al., 'The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium,' *World Politics*, 48, 1, 1-49.
18. Evans in Kohli et al., *World Politics*, 4.
19. Evans in Kohli et al., *World Politics*, 5.
20. The relevance of some of this literature is discussed in Gurharpal Singh, 'The Punjab Crisis Since 1984: A Reassessment,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 18, 3 (1995), 476-93.
21. See Ian Talbot, 'Back to the Future? The Unionist Model of Consociational Democracy for Contemporary India and Pakistan', *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, 3, 1, 65-73.
22. See Gurharpal Singh, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*.
23. See Talbot, 'Back to the Future?'.
24. This view is discussed at length by Atul Kohli in 'The Bell Curve of Ethnic Politics: Rise and Decline of Self-Determination Movements in India', unpublished research paper , Dept. of Politics, Princeton University, 1994.

Book Reviews

Contents

struggle between Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Shaukat Hayat and the Nawab of Mamdot, the 'three musketeers' of the Punjab Muslim League who had temporarily laid aside their rivalries to unseat the Unionist Government of Khizr Hayat Tiwana in 1947. They may be more surprised to hear that (p. 93) Khizr had acquired a brother 'who forsook old loyalties' in 1946.

The work importantly takes note of the shift in Punjabi politicians' attitudes to the Centre. In British India they had been at the forefront of calls for provincial autonomy, these were increasingly jettisoned after 1947 as it became clear that Punjab could control the Centre in Pakistan. Samad links the 1958 coup with the fear by the bureaucrats and army officers that this 'Punjabisation' of Pakistan was imperilled by popular forces in Bengal and the minority provinces of West Pakistan.

The work's importance lies in its novel bridging of the gap between the interests of historians and political scientists. It rightly sees the tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces in Pakistan as a continuation of the political patterns of the colonial era in the Muslim majority regions. By casting the net more widely than the freedom struggle, the author could have pointed to further continuities such as the 'viceregal' tradition of bureaucratic authoritarianism which prevailed in the non-regulated provinces of the future Pakistan areas.

The attention to detail is another strength of the work although perhaps a little too much is asked of the non-specialist reader. S/he could be assisted by the inclusion of chronological charts and of a map. The organisational sub-division of chapters into sections clearly dealing with national and provincial developments would also help the general reader who may be bemused by the chronological shifts in the narrative as it moves from consideration of developments at the centre to the region and vice versa. This criticism notwithstanding, the book represents an important contribution to our understanding of Pakistan's early political development. It provides the empirical contextualisation which has been missing in many accounts of the emergence of Pakistani authoritarianism in the face of anti-centre opposition.

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G. Singh, *Communism in Punjab: A Study of the Movement up to 1967* (Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1994), viii and 355 pp. Rs 395 (hb). ISBN 81-202-0403-4.

The ongoing and largely unresolved contestation among multiple identities in South Asia has deeply influenced significant processes like nation-building and community-formation in addition to enriching an interdisciplinary historiographical debate. Embryonic forces of federal nationalism—Indian, Pakistani or Sri Lankan—are still unable to assume a superordinate and consociational role by co-opting communities rooted in the powerful forces of religion, region, language and caste/class differentiations. Undoubtedly, during the nationalist era, the elites did aggregate such primordial determinants to spearhead the case for independence by espousing idealised yet unspecified ideologies. The colonial state, through its manifest politico-administrative measures, and also by default, allowed such ideological constructions despite their ambiguous and infantile disposition. No wonder, soon after independence, their inherent contradictions came into the open with the national state insistent on maintaining a discretionary status quo. The official nationalism, advocated and implemented by modernist elites, when confronted with ethnic (regional/lingual) and religious pluralism, turned out to be controversial and sought refuge in sheer coercion. The reassertion of ethnic or religious components in spearheading the case for marginalised pluralism has been misperceived as secessionist *fitna* invariably by every regime in the regime.

But, as *Communism in Punjab* makes it amply clear, even the powerful ideologies like communism with all their mystique and conducive approbation, failed to transform regional identities themselves forcefully rooted in religious and linguistic commonalities, as has been the case with the Sikhs. In the same vein, regionalist sentiments did play a crucial role in the triangular interaction with the contrasting forces of communist internationalism and trans-regional Indian nationalism. However, as Gurharpal Singh brings out quite meticulously, such a vexatious relationship was not simply given and vacillated from one strategy to another. The study encompasses the period from the early decades of the present century to 1967 when, for the first time, the communists in the Punjab, despite their mutual party-based fissures, gained political power in a ruling coalition. After a precise overview of the existing interpretations on communist movements in India, the empirical study stipulates its own thesis, laid out in the historical and sociological context and probes the

hierarchical nature of the communist organisation(s). It accepts the structural and policy dependence of the regional units over the national unit within the perspective of often competitive bilateralism between the Punjab and Indian Union.

The author is definitely uneasy with some of the earlier studies on the subject done with a backdrop of global bipolarity, and is equally mindful of the parallel case studies of Kerala and Bengal, where the communist movements, unlike Punjab, triumphed over all other contending forces. The study seeks the roots of communist movement in the Ghadr-Kirti-Kissan axis within its own rural, agrarian and secular Punjabi ethos. The tangled issue of Punjabi sub-regional identities largely, due to the location of the province, its multi-religious character, rural–urban divide, further augmented by parallel forces of dissent and unrest as seen in the case of the Hijrat movement all made it difficult to obtain a consensual identity. As far as the contemporary Punjab was concerned, by virtue of its location as a border province so close to communist Russia and characterised by intense political activism, if not for its intra-communal contradictions, it definitely appeared ripe for any mass-based radicalisation. However, the language controversy (with Punjabi being the only language in the world with four simultaneous scripts), an ever-enhancing accent on religion-based identities in the Punjab and diverse regional political economies made it difficult for a cohesive movement to emerge and obtain an extra-territorial or supra-communal ethos. The Ghadr-Firti-Kissan activists in their reincarnation as Kirti Kissan Party (KKP) came largely from the eastern and central Punjab and represented Sikh peasants who, in certain cases, were able to develop links with revolutionaries in Russia and elsewhere. Parallel to them, along with national parties like the Indian National Congress (INC) and Muslim League (ML), there emerged a rather more urban, lower middle class Communist Party of India (CPI) which was unable to counterbalance powerful regional, autonomist rivals like the Akalis and Unionists. Their mutual dissension and competition for the same space did not allow the emergence of a non-communal, Punjab-wide communist party, which itself suffered from official wrath, religious antagonism, and most of all, from the very agrarian, rural and localist nature of Punjab's society where the masses still seemed unprepared for any revolutionary change.

Until 1942, when the ban on the CPI was lifted by the Raj following the Nazi attack of the Soviet Union, the communist activities in British India including Punjab remained subterranean. Following an intense ideological debate, the CPI decided to support Allied war efforts which, according to many critics, was contradictory to their erstwhile denunciation

of the imperialist powers. While the nationalists, especially during the Quit India Movement, demanded independence, the communists, on the contrary, advised co-operation and renunciation of nationalist defiance.

The merger of the regional and national bodies, however, did not remove the parallel courses taken by the KKP and CPI in the Punjab. While the CPI, after initially advising for INC–ML co-operation, accepted the demand for Pakistan, the communist movement in the Punjab turned factionist. A province already fragmented by commercial violence, with the Sikh minority demanding a separate state with Pakistan or union with India, did not feel at ease with such postulations. As in the case of contemporary Bengal, the CPI failed to provide any regional solution to the dilemmic pluralism with each religio-ethnic community going its own way and instead reverted to its national and structural prerogatives.

The Akalis were able to make headway by dilating on Hindustan, autonomous Punjab or Sikhistan within Pakistan, especially in intra-Sikh bickering when Master Tara Singh and Sardar Baldev Singh pursued two divergent strategies. The post-partition population transfer resulted in a bi-communal Punjab which, in the 1950s, saw new contestations between Indian nationalism and an assertive Sikh minority community, both applying religious and linguistic differentials in self-definition. Religion and language re-emerged as two major determinants, with Punjabi Hindus opting for Hindi-isation as opposed to Gurmukhi Punjabi providing the bed-rock to Punjabi/Sikh identity. It was not until several *maran barats* (fast unto death) by various Sikh leaders like Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh that eventually a much smaller Punjabi *subah* came into being. Such upheavals, one after the other since the first Curzonian partition of the province in 1901, did not lessen the volksgeist idealisation of the Ghadr and Kirti heroes, though the very bifurcation of the CPI into CPI and CPM did widen the existing chasm. As *Communism in Punjab* reveals, this great divide within the movement in 1964 had taken place due to ideological and global reasons and was duly reflected in the province. Following another major upheaval in the form of the green revolution, the province, quite contrary to general suppositions, did not turn red but simply became more communal, leading to the militant activism of the 1980s.

The study is unique not only in terms of its vast source material, never utilised before, but also in the context of its thematic continuity and broad sweep. A number of pamphlets in Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and English have been consulted in addition to numerous specialised reports and recently declassified documents. Its diverse and exhaustive references speak for the richness of its sources and the research provides an interesting interface between the disciplines of history, political science and sociology. The

biographical section on various communist leaders and thinkers, including many legendary babas, is quite useful whereas the pertinent tables provide first-hand statistical information. One would have liked to see more references to other contemporary parties like the Unionists, Ahrara, INC and the ML without really increasing the present volume. In addition, a smaller section on the communist movement in the post-1947 West Punjab and its debacle due to military plus bureaucratic oligarchy could have been quite appropriate. But such observations are not meant to underrate an otherwise timely, painstaking and exhaustive contribution.

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B.S. White, *Turbans and Traders: Hong Kong's Indian Communities* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994), ix and 257 pp. £11.95 (pb). ISBN 0-9-585287-7.

This is a fascinating and frustrating book. Fascinating because it provides glimpses into life experiences of nineteenth and twentieth century South Asian sojourners and settlers in Hong Kong who, other than in K.N. Vaid's now-dated *The Overseas Indian Community in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1972) and in Anita Weiss's 'South Asian Muslims in Hong Kong', in *Modern Asian Studies* 25, 3 (1991), 417-53, have not been the subject of much attention in the literature on the South Asian diaspora. Frustrating, especially for readers of this journal, because of its style (which oscillates between scholarly and journalistic) and its organisation (which disperses Punjabis across several chapters) rather than treating them anywhere as a single 'regional group'.

Barbara-Sue White, a visiting scholar at the Centre of Asian Studies of the University of Hong Kong, has spent several years living in Hong Kong. This book draws on her extensive contacts among members of the Hong Kong Indian communities of which she writes, as well as from the secondary literature on Hong Kong history. Its primary audience appears to be the general Hong Kong populace, both non-Indians, who presumably do not 'know much about the historical contributions of Indians or the diversity of the present-day groups' (p. 11), and Indians themselves, whose 'own knowledge of other Indians in Hong Kong is often minimal' (p. 11). For this Hong Kong audience and for other readers, she wants it known

that, relatively speaking, 'Hong Kong has been able to assimilate its South Asian population with few problems' (p. 226).

The book emphasises the diversity within the local racial category 'Indian' (used for all those of South Asian ancestry). The title itself refers to the local stereotypic belief 'that all Hong Kong Indians are either fabulously wealthy Sindhi businessmen or impoverished Sikh doormen' (p. 6). White sets out to problematise the stereotype by showing not only that 'some doormen are doing surprisingly well, and Sindhis are not invariably rich' (p. 6) but also that a majority of South Asians in Hong Kong (whose numbers she variously puts between 20,000 and 40,000 out of six million residents) are neither Sindhi nor Sikh but rather belong to many different communities defined by region, nationality and/or religion. This sociological fact, she notes, has often been obscured in Hong Kong by the fact that all except Sikhs and recent arrivals from Pakistan, Sri Lanka or Bangladesh self-identity to non-Indians 'as Indians first, then by their region' (p. 8).

The book's style is both a strength and a source of frustration. Mixing disciplinary approaches and genre conventions, White combines (*a*) general social history (sometimes from primary but often secondary sources), (*b*) personal recollection and anecdotes from her Hong Kong Indian informants (whose basis for selection is never explained), (*c*) her own ethnographic vignettes of a particular Hong Kong Indian event or setting (for which she provides wider religious or cultural background of uneven quality), (*d*) mini-biographies of selected individuals or families (often written as if for a newspaper's society page), and (*e*) a biographical index of people from the Indian sub-continent listed in *Who's Who in Hong Kong*. The cumulative result is an appreciation for White's broad interests and contracts (and of the diversity of Hong Kong Indians) but questions about her scholarship. Thus, for instance, a detailed description of the Sikh gurdwara in Happy Valley (pp. 95-98) is marred by such missteps as confusing the Khalsa Divan and Khalsa Panth and dating the formation of the Khalsa to 1799 rather than 1699. (And do Hong Kong Sikhs actually spell gurdwara as gurdhwara, as White does throughout the text?) It often appears that White gets her historical background on religious or regional groups from her local Hong Kong informants, but it would seem to behove a serious scholar to check what she has been told against the available literature.

The book is organised into twelve chapters—an overview, and two historical chapters that take the reader through the Second World War; separate chapters on the Muslim, Parsi and Sikh communities; a chapter on 'Hong Kong's Protectors', chapters on 'regional groups' and 'post-war

religious groups'; and three concluding chapters on 'business', 'women, families, and leisure' and 'community tensions and 1997'. Punjabis are not a 'regional group' in White's typology, even though White notes in passing Anita Weiss's claim that 'the Sikh category in official records should read "Punjabi", including both Sikhs and Muslims, because the British [military and police recruiters] tried to keep them numerically balanced' (p. 110). And, indeed, the chapters on 'World War II' and 'Hong Kong's Protectors' make it clear that Punjabi Muslims and Sikhs were key among the 'martial races' who served the British with distinction in Hong Kong.

However, among Punjabis in contemporary Hong Kong, Sikhs get by far the most attention. White puts the current number of Sikhs in Hong Kong at 5,000 with 30 per cent of these being Hong Kong born. White portrays a Sikh community strongly differentiated between its working class majority and a small business class elite: 'most Sikhs in Hong Kong continue to come from modest backgrounds with limited education, and speak little English but have picked up spoken Cantonese' (p. 91), while currently, there are only about fifteen established Sikh businesses (p. 92). In Hong Kong, there appears not to have been the sort of upward mobility that has generated an intervening, locally born professional class in such places as Malaysia and Singapore. At the same time, however, the Hong Kong Sikh community, with a single gurdwara in Happy Valley, appears not to have institutionalised caste and regional divisions to the same degree as elsewhere in Southeast Asia. But then White is not particularly forthcoming on internal factionalism, other than to allude to politics as an issue in the gurdwara.

White puts a personal face on the Sikh elite (the Ahluwalia family, Jyot and Pamela Kapoor, Tussar Amarsingh, Kaki Virendra, Rani Singh), but working class Sikhs are glimpsed only anonymously in a visit to a men's dormitory in Wai Chan (pp. 99-101) and in a discussion of Sikh students at Sir Ellis Kadoorie School whose families' 'most common occupational combination is for the father to work as a watchman, driver, or workman, while the wife works in a textile factory' (pp. 215-16).

Punjabi Muslims and Punjabi Hindus are even more anonymous. In the chapter on Muslims, it is clear that Punjabi Muslims were among the earliest Indian residents of Hong Kong, having been recruited to man opium clippers plying the waters between India and China, and that they were among those recruited by the British as military or police in the late nineteenth century. But soon Punjabi Muslims disappear into the category 'north Indian Muslim' or 'Pakistani Muslim'. Punjabi Hindus are even less evident, appearing only in a brief discussion of the Arya Samaj

(p. 161) and a discussion of the popularity among all Hong Kong Hindus of the *havan* ceremony (p. 151).

Yet if Punjabis do not constitute a separate community in White's typology, there is evidence in her text of ongoing connections and collaborations among Punjabis in Hong Kong. Muslims may form a community (with notable north India/south India; Sunni/Shia tensions), but working class 'Pakistani Muslims' and Sikhs often work for the same employers, go to Sir Ellis Kadoorie School together, and play field hockey together at the Indian Recreation Club. Similarly Hindus and Sikhs in Hong Kong worshipped together at the Sikh gurdwara from 1902 until the 1950s, when Sindhi businessmen founded the first Hindu temple; and even today, 'the Hong Kong [Arya Samaj] contingent includes people of both Hindu and Sikh background' (p. 161). Clearly, despite the twentieth century politicisation of religious identities in Punjab, there are still ways in which Punjabis in Hong Kong share intimate social space with one another.

Barbara-Sue White has done us a service by providing us this glimpse into the lives of South Asian migrants to Hong Kong, who have persevered and, in many cases, thrived despite the uncertainties most face after 1997. The particular strengths of her book are its breadth of scope and the ways it makes us think in diasporic settings both about diverse South Asian communities and about the very notion of 'community'.

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D.S. Tatla and I. Talbot (eds), *Punjab* (Oxford, England: Clio Press, 1995; World Bibliographical Series, v. 180), xlix and 323 pp. 2 maps. £56.75 (hb). ISBN 85109-232-3.

The Punjab region has contributed significantly to political, economic and social developments in South Asia. That record has been matched by an extraordinarily rich literature, especially over the last two decades. Prior to 1970, several specialists (most notably Ganda Singh and Ikram Malik) attempted to survey major articles and books dealing with the various dimensions of the Punjab experience. Since then bibliographic efforts have either been sporadic or focused on one part of the published record. Now Darshan Singh Tatla and Ian Talbot have undertaken the highly difficult task of not only listing but assessing the critical works in virtually

every aspect of Punjab life. Talbot brings to the project a key sense of politics and history, while Tatla has already become recognised as a major bibliographer whose volumes on the Sikhs in Britain and North America set high standards of breadth and accuracy. The resulting collaboration is very successful. There are gaps and problems, as one would expect in any such grand undertaking, but on the whole, this volume compares quite favourably with the national bibliographies in the Clio series and serves as a useful model for other regional and specialist surveys of the subcontinent's literature.

The series of which this book is a part has a common format that includes background on the region and its people, geography, travel guides, archaeology and ancient history, history, biographies, population, language, religion and a variety of social science categories. The arts and literature receive some attention, as do major journals and magazines. Each item is numbered, with annotation that ranges from a short sentence to sometimes half a page (often with extensive cross-references to related literature and issues). The author, title and subject indexes are exhaustive and at the same time invaluable. Pick a topic, an author or a specific book, and access is almost instantaneous. The historical introduction, chronology and glossary similarly bolster both the scholarly and general value of the Punjab bibliography.

The authors clearly demarcate the limitations and focus of the work, focusing primarily on the Indian and Pakistan Punjabs but also including very useful information on the diaspora. Most works are in English, although some translations from Punjabi have been included. A sampling of tracts and controversial literature is treated, but the authors wisely avoid the quagmire of polemic writings that often abound in the literally hundreds of small presses, institutes and groups that try to dominate the print culture both in Punjab and abroad. Similarly, few scholarly articles and theses receive attention, leaving a gap that must be filled in another study. In short, the bibliography meets the basic criteria for any reference work—it has an understandable focus, covers designated areas accurately and in most instances in an up-to-date fashion, and provides a combination of subject arrangement and excellent indexes that facilitate access.

Some bibliographies are boring and poorly written. This one is not. I spent hours reading through the citations, checking out references, and savouring the wealth of information packed into the lively annotations. In discussing Mulk Raj Anand's *The Village*, for example, the annotation gives background on Anand, the novel and supplementary literary works. Another, on the excellent set of documents collected by Gurmit Singh (*History of Sikh Struggles*), provides background to contents and a related

collection by Man Singh Deora. That citation suggests some of the pitfalls inherent in cross-referencing and annotation. The Gurmit Singh set in fact is four volumes, not three, and missing is any reference to Deora's possibly even more important reference work on the post-Blue Star period, *Aftermath of Operation Bluestar* (2 vols. 1992).

I checked my own library and noted about 25 books not mentioned, some peripheral or very specialised, others fairly major, such as K.L. Gauba's biography of Lala Harkishen Lal, or John Beames' autobiography which remains a classic on the Punjab school of administration. One suspects that the gaps are either due to sections being written at a specific point in time, or because some works just were not available in the databases or collections used for the survey. A search of the LC/OCLC data base in the US on Punjab for titles published between 1980 and 1990, for example, turns up over 600 works, which points to the magnitude of any systematic reference work. What is surprising about this major survey therefore is not really the gaps, but how few there are. Specialists will find missing citations, others will debate the judgement about references and content (for example, specific groups undoubtedly will challenge the assessment of some religious and historical works). However, Darshan Singh Tatla and Ian Talbot undoubtedly have set a new and very high standard of how to go about assembling and then discussing a vast range of literature on a region and its people. Specialists, scholarly collections, and major public libraries throughout the world will benefit from having this reference work on their shelves. The hundreds and even thousands of hours that went into this project have paid off admirably, and the authors are to be congratulated for a job well done.

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R. Ballard (ed.), *Desh Pardesh: The South Asian Presence in Britain* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1994), xiv and 290 pp., £9.99 (pb). ISBN 1-85065-092-6.

According to the editor of this collection of papers 'future historians may well conclude that the impact of the arrival of South Asian ... settlers on the British social and cultural order will eventually prove almost as great as that precipitated by the arrival of William [the Conqueror] of Normandy in 1066' (p. 2). Of course only time will prove whether such a bold claim

is justified, but something very significant has happened in Britain with the settlement of large populations of diverse groups from South Asia. This creation by Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis of a 'home from home' or *desh pardesh*, has altered the face of British life, as these *desh pardeshis* have not 'assimilated' but instead have maintained and developed their cultures, identities, traditions and religions.

This volume, which has been a number of years in the making, provides a variety of perspectives on how South Asian cultures and peoples are becoming indigenised to Britain. There are papers on Punjabi Muslims, Sikhs and Valmikis; Gujarati Hindus, Jains, Parsis, Bengali Muslims and Indo-Caribbean Hindus. This broad coverage by no means encompasses all of the great diversity of Britain's South Asian population, but it does give a fair indication of the major groupings and the chief interests of the academics who are trying to learn about these complex communities.

Roger Ballard's introduction to the volume provides an excellent starting point for those unfamiliar with the subject area. He gives a brief history of South Asian migration and settlement in Britain, along with a more detailed discussion of issues such as caste, religion, community and youth which have a direct bearing on British South Asians. For those familiar with Ballard's distinctive work on South Asian—and particularly Punjabi—groups in Britain it is disappointing to find that his only other contribution to the papers in the volume is a reprint of his paper on 'Differentiation and disjunction among the Sikhs', which appeared several years ago in the 1989 volume on the Sikh diaspora by Barrier and Dusenberry. However, this paper is well worth reissuing—it is a valuable contribution to the complexity of caste (and other sources of differentiation) among Sikhs in Britain. Those interested in examining this controversial area further would be well advised to read Sewa Singh Kalsi's published thesis *The Evolution of a Sikh Community*, which was reviewed by Ballard in a recent issue of this journal.

A volume such as *Desh Pardesh* inevitably covers a breadth of regional groups which extend beyond Punjabi South Asians in Britain. Therefore, there are a number of papers in the volume which may be of no direct relevance to many of the readers of this journal. But there are four papers (excluding the introduction) which do directly address Punjabi experiences in Britain. Alison Shaw's paper is a well-presented introduction to a 'typical' Pakistani population in Britain, that is the 2,000 or so who live in Oxford. This community is primarily from Faisalabad, Jhelum, Mirpur and Attock in the North West Province, with the majority from Jhelum. Unsurprisingly, her paper focuses on the role of the *biradari* and the contrasts between Islamic/Pakistani values and those of the surrounding

British culture. Her paper ends with the clear message that influences of Westernisation on British Pakistanis are not easily predictable: there may be pressures to assimilate and lose both the culture and religion of the original migrants, but in fact the reverse is the case. Loyalty to the *biradari* and to the wider family and social networks has encouraged a strong commitment by the younger generations to retain Pakistani values.

Philip Lewis provides a rather different perspective on the much larger Muslim population of Bradford. Lewis' wide-ranging account of Muslim sectarianism suggests that the intellectualism of the Deobandis and Jamaat-i-Islam is having problems establishing itself in Bradford's Muslim populations. Indeed according to Lewis the younger generations of Muslims in that city are growing up deficient in speaking Urdu and Punjabi, and thus are unable to partake fully in the Islamic traditions of their parents and *'ulema* (whether Deobandi or Barelwi). Lewis asks if new forms of British Islamic traditions will emerge with this age group, suggesting that cultural/musical forms such as *bhangra* indicate the innovation that is possible in such a situation.

Eleanor Nesbitt's paper deals with the difficult and controversial subject of Valmiki religion and identity among a community in Coventry. The Valmikis, like Ravidasis, are a 'low' status group who tend to be shunned or at least looked down on by their 'higher' caste neighbours. Although disappointing, it is perhaps not surprising that these ideas of caste and status have survived the migration to Britain, and Valmikis still find themselves excluded from other Punjabi communities. In response to this 'double discrimination' Valmikis have followed the example of their forebears in India—that is to worship and socialise separately from Jats and the other 'high' status groups. In Coventry (as in some other English cities) this has produced a Valmiki temple which is separate from both Hindu and Sikh places of worship. A most interesting element of Nesbitt's discussion is the way in which Valmiki tradition is so hard to classify—it is both Hindu and Sikh, and at the same time it is different from both. As she comments at the end, Valmiki tradition is in some senses what it claims to be—that is, it is 'a unique religion whose roots long predate' Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity (p. 141). In support of this contention she gives some excellent ethnography, and suggests many ideas which could merit much further consideration.

A common theme through all of the papers in this volume is not only the tension caused by the transplantation of South Asian traditions into British life, but also the exciting possibilities for innovation as well as continuity. The situations described by the diverse authors of the volume (mostly writing in the late 1980s) will constantly move on, so that the

British *Desh Pardesh* may be considerably different in 2005 from how it is today. One small example of this flux comes from a comment made by Dwyer in her paper on Gujarati Hindu sectarianism. She reports that the Swaminarayan Hindu mission is 'currently' planning to build an enormous temple of its own (p. 188). Indeed, that temple (which is a reproduction of a temple in Gandhinagar) is now completed and open, and is fast becoming a major centre for pilgrimage and interest not only for Hindus but for the indigenous population as well.

Equally important are the perceptions of the outsiders to these processes of development—on the main the indigenous British people who live alongside Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are often quite ignorant of the richness and complexity of their neighbours' lives. This volume provides an accessible and wide-ranging point of reference which should be of use to anyone who wishes to understand further some of the issues coming from the South Asian presence in Britain. It also provides very useful introductions to the writers of some of the very rich research that is currently being conducted in Britain on this area.

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A. Phizacklea and C. Wolkowitz, *Homeworking Women: Gender, Racism, and Class at Work* (London: Sage, 1995), 148 pp. £35 (hb). ISBN 08039 88737. £11.95 (pb). ISBN 08939 88745.

Discussions about homeworking are likely to be peppered with much talk about 'flexibility'. But, as an increasing body of research has demonstrated, homework frequently constitutes the casualisation of work. Its legitimation as offering women the 'flexibility' to combine paid work with caring responsibilities without leaving home belies the stress and trauma of the 'double shift' together with the high costs in terms of low wages, unpredictable earnings, the forgoing of employers' national contributions, loss of sickness or holiday pay and unsocial hours. Discourses which glamorise working at home tend to focus on professional homeworkers who are often assumed to be male consultants unfettered by domestic responsibilities. A major strength of the present volume is that it challenges a variety of accepted 'common sense' about homeworking.

Phizacklea and Wolkowitz bring together the evidence drawn from existing research about homeworking and augment it with new data

controlled by themselves. The methodology used to gather new information was guided by their commitment to ensure that ethnic minority women do not get left out. That is, they placed a questionnaire in *Prima*, one of Britain's best-selling women's monthly magazines. This method, however, was likely to exclude many 'ethnic minority' women. Hence, a smaller in-depth study was also undertaken in Coventry, in order to explore possible ethnic variations in patterns of home working. In the event, a total of 403 home-based workers, including two men, returned the questionnaires. Only nine indicated that they were not 'Europeans'. The in-depth study yielded 30 white and 19 Asian home-based workers.

One of their main aims was to examine the *wide range* of work undertaken by women at home. They identify five key groups of homeworkers with variable earnings, autonomy and security of employment: casualised employees, micro-entrepreneurs, self-employed professionals, very small businesses, and technical and executive level employees. The research highlights that the jobs are predominantly modest, suggesting a continuum rather than a marked polarity between manufacturing workers, and those using information (computer and communications) technology in the home. The authors argue that the 'technology does not in itself guarantee a more agreeable, autonomous or better rewarded way of working at home unless the skills and experience that a particular worker combines with that technology are in short supply' (p. 122).

Historically, occupational segregation by sex has been a key feature of the British labour markets, a factor which has persisted late into the twentieth century. Certain long-term trends suggesting a degree of improvements in occupations such as corporate managers and administrators are currently in evidence. Nevertheless ethnic minority women are not sharing in these gains as they remain over-represented in areas of decline and under-represented in growth areas. They work longer hours, in poorer working conditions, tend to receive lower wages, and are twice as likely to be unemployed as white women. Phizacklea and Wolkowitz detail how similar inequities are observable in homeworking. For instance, unlike white women, Asian women in the sample were singularly absent in the better paid, less onerous clerical homework available in Coventry. Homeworking, this research suggests, is closely tied to the local economy but it replicates racialised patterns observable at the national level: 'racialised segregation of homeworking in Coventry is a mirror image of ethnic differences in the national labour market for women' (p. 46).

This book is invaluable for anyone interested in understanding homeworking. It is exemplary in its attention to the interplay of gender,

racism, ethnicity and class within the labour markets. Written with clarity and a political commitment to improvement in the position of one of the most exploited groups of workers, it will interest both specialists and non-specialists in the field.

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W.O. Cole and P.S. Sambhi, *The Sikhs: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (Sussex Academic Press, 1995, 2nd ed.), xxi and 232 pp. £12.95 (pb). ISBN 1-898723-13-3.

This is a substantially revised edition of the book published under the same title in 1978. It includes consideration of the important developments in the Sikh Panth that have taken place since then, for example, the firm establishment of the Sikh diaspora in many countries, and the implications of the storming of the Golden Temple in 1984. Translations of the Guru Granth Sahib have been substantially revised and inclusive language used, consequently the beginning of the *Mul Mantra* is translated as 'This Being (God) is One; the Truth'. The revised translations have both a flow and clarity to them.

The book is divided into ten chapters, the first three of which consider the life of the ten human Gurus within the context of the Sikh faith, and the Guru Granth Sahib. The first chapter contextualises Guru Nanak within fifteenth century India, which is portrayed as a country with a variety of religious expressions.

Whilst acknowledging that there is no unanimity of agreement, Cole and Sambhi consider that Guru Nanak is most satisfactorily understood if he is placed within the North Indian sant tradition. With reference to passages from both the *Janam Sakhis* and the *Guru Granth Sahib*, Guru Nanak's life and teaching are summarised within the context of the Sikh faith. It is unfortunate, however, that among the many revisions made the description of Bhai Lalo as the 'poorest man of a village' (p. 12), which Ramgarhias regard as both inaccurate and offensive, was not changed. Consideration is then given to the lives of Guru Nanak's nine successors, followed by a summary of how Guru Nanak has been viewed by Western scholars. Rejecting the contention that Guru Nanak was a bridge builder between Hinduism and Islam, Cole and Sambhi consider that he regarded neither religion as fundamentally wrong but that both were potentially

distracting by becoming ends in themselves; ultimate truth only being realised by personal experience and devout living.

The third chapter initially examines the development of, and revelation contained in, the Sikh scriptures from its origin in the inspired words of Guru Nanak, through the period of the Gurus where a duality existed with both human Gurus and collections of sacred writings, until the Adi Granth was installed by Guru Gobind Singh as his successor. The subject matter and content are described, supplemented by the third appendix in the book which gives greater detail in tabulated form.

Chapters 4 to 7 consider Sikh belief and practice, both in their origins in the teachings of the Gurus and their expression today. The development of the gurdwara and Sikh worship is contained in Chapter 4, which is supplemented by a translation of the Ardas in Appendix two. In Chapter 6, Sikh daily life, ceremonies and festivals are both described and their spiritual dimension explained, supplemented by a translation of the *Rahit Maryada* in Appendix One.

Chapter 5 considers Sikh religious thought, both in respect of God and humanity. Primarily, the teachings of Guru Nanak are considered, especially the *Japji*. Humanity's failings are rooted in ignorance as a consequence of past behaviour, or *karma*, whilst present failures are due to *maya* and *haumai*. *Mukti*, or release from the circle of birth and rebirth, cannot be achieved without God's grace. When technical terms are used, clear explanations are given. The section on *nam*, described by the authors as 'one of the richest and most profound concepts of Sikhism', is distinctive in that they have chosen to quote extensively from the Guru Granth Sahib in order to allow the passages to speak for themselves. The text is mainly restricted to short explanations of the passages.

Guru Nanak taught his followers to live in the world but not to be attached to it, just as a lotus lives in a dirty pond. Chapter 7 considers the ethics by which an observant Sikh should live. The issues that dominated the Gurus' concerns were those of the context in which they lived. First, their condemnation of the Hindu caste system is explained. Second, the doctrine of *ahimsa* and the Guru's teaching on outward violence are discussed. Cole and Sambhi contend the latter was influenced by the political circumstances of the Guru's day, which resulted in a changing religious situation. Reflecting the implications of the aftermath of Operation Blue Star, a new section on the concept of the 'just war' is included. The concepts of vegetarianism, the status of women, and general and medical social care are also considered.

Chapter 8 considers the attitude of Sikhism to other religions, whilst in Chapters 9 and 10, Cole and Sambhi discuss the developments of Sikhism

from 1708 to the present day. After an account of the Nirankaris and Namdharis, Cole and Sambhi analyse the development of the Singh Sabha movement and the rise of Sant Bhindranwale, culminating in the events of the 1980s. Whilst prefacing their comments with the caution that 'historians that look into the future are usually the most unreliable of all', Cole and Sambhi reflect on the future of the Sikhs in their homeland, and on the changes that have occurred in the diaspora. Knowledge of the Punjabi language, or lack of it, and the nurture of young people are identified as key issues. As Cole and Sambhi state neglect of [Punjabi] language cuts Sikhs off from their spiritual heritage in the form of worship in the *sangat* and ability to understand the Guru Granth Sahib.

The first edition rightly held an important place in the study of the Sikh faith; this substantially revised second edition will undoubtedly occupy a similar position.

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P.H.L. Eggermont, *Alexander's Campaign in Southern Punjab* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 54, Peeters Leuven, 1993). 160 pp. 1600 Belgian Francs (hb). ISBN 90-6831-499-8.

The late Professor Eggermont's book is closely related in subject, content and approach to his *Alexander's campaign in Gandhāra and Ptolemy's list of Indo-Scythian towns* and his *Alexander's campaigns in Sind and Baluchistan and the siege of the Brahmin town of Harmatelia*, published in 1970 and 1975 respectively. As such, it belongs to that nineteenth-century genre of historical writing of which Vincent Smith was the most notable exponent: minute description of the course of Alexander the Great's invasion of India. Indian historians of the more nationalistic schools have resented the emphasis given to Alexander's invasion by some Western historians, and few would deny that Smith devoted a disproportionate amount of discussion to Alexander in his *History of India*. Nevertheless, the genre remains an important element in the reconstruction of the past of the Punjab, since the contemporary accounts of Alexander's invasion written by Western authors in many cases provide the earliest information we possess about the geography, ethnology and political background of the region.

The scope of Eggermont's work covers Alexander's journey through

the Punjab from the Beas as far as the banks of the Indus; the subsequent journey to the sea was the subject of Eggermont's book published in 1975. Eggermont's survey of the sources is painstaking; however the reader should be aware of a flaw in his methodology: his preference for Arrian as a historical source. The three major surviving sources for the history of Alexander are the accounts of Diodorus, Arrian and Curtius. In his preface Eggermont explains that, in cases of controversial testimony, he has preferred Arrian's version because Arrian 'was the fortunate owner of a genuine report written by Ptolemy I Soter, king of Egypt'. Ptolemy was one of Alexander's most trusted officers, and his eyewitness account was one of Arrian's main sources. The main source for the accounts of Diodorus and Curtius was Cleitarchus, who was writing in Alexandria shortly after 310 BC. Cleitarchus did not participate in the events he described, but he had read and consulted the accounts of those who had. Eggermont implies that Curtius did not have access to Ptolemy's account; that such is not the case is proved by Curtius' citation of Ptolemy as one of his sources (Curtius; 9.5.21). Waldemar Hackel in his introduction to the Penguin translation of Curtius (Quintus Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander* [Harmondsworth: Penguin 1984], 7) states that:

> Curtius' direct use of Ptolemy will no doubt account for the numerous instances when his history coincides closely with that of Arrian. And it may be that Curtius drew upon Ptolemy for official information: battle order, arrivals of reinforcements, appointments, arrests and executions.

The historical value of Curtius' account, with its unflattering portrayal of Alexander, has received a more favourable appraisal among scholars in recent years. It is clear that Eggermont's confidence in the accuracy of Arrian's testimony may well be misplaced.

Despite his bias in favour of Arrian, Eggermont is scrupulous in his presentation of variations in the accounts of the Alexander historians. Eggermont frequently presents these variations in tabular form; such tables are a feature of all Eggermont's works.

Eggermont's theme is narrow, but it is fleshed out with a great deal of geographical information taken from Western classical and from ancient Indian sources, and herein lies the chief value of the work. Although its consequences were to be momentous, the military history of Alexander's campaign in the Punjab is of no more intrinsic interest than any of the other innumerable campaigns which have been fought in the region. What Eggermont provides is a detailed geographical and ethnographical account of the southern Punjab at a time when it is was about to become the scene

of that remarkable interaction between Hellenistic and Indian culture which was to have such profound consequences for the history of religious thought and of artistic expression.

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Saros Cowasjee and K.S. Duggal (eds), *Orphans of the Storm: Stories on the Partition of India* (New Delhi: UBSPD, 1995), 354 pp. £5.95 (pb). No ISBN.

Historians have very tardily shifted their concern from the 'high' politics' of the transfer of power to the impact of the 1947 partition of the Indian subcontinent on the lives of ordinary men, women and children. The extraordinarily rich source material available in fictional representation is only just beginning to be explored. The work under review provides the best anthology of short stories of the partition which has yet been made available in English.

The editors have provided their readers with a comprehensive selection of stories translated from Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and Bengali. These include such classic masterpieces as: Manto's, *Toba Tek Singh* and *Xuda Ki Qasim* which uncover the brutality and alienation brought by the partition massacres and migrations; Rajinder Singh Bedi's compassionate account of the recovery and rehabilitation of abducted women in *Lajwanti*; and Krishan Chander's didactic, even-handed study of communal violence in *Peshawar Express*. Equally powerful, although perhaps less well-known is Qudrat Ullah Shahab's *Ya Khuda* which through the character Dilshad explores the exploitation of the *mohajirs* by their supposedly *ansar* helpers.

Inevitably an anthology, however comprehensive, has to omit works which could be justifiably included. Amongst these I would number, Bhisham Sahni's, 'We have arrived in Amritsar' (in the collection by the same name, London: Sangam, 1990, pp. 106-22) which addresses the brutality of communal hatred through the extended metaphor of a train journey through the Punjab to Delhi; Manto's chilling work, 'Thanda Gosht' ('Cold like Ice' available in translation in *Mafil* 1, 1 (1965), 14-19 and Intizar Husain's 'Ek Bin-Likhi Razmiyah' ('An Unwritten Epic' in the collection *Gali kuche* (Lahore: Maktaba-e-karwan 1952), 193-224.

The compilers in the introduction admit that the limitations of the short story genre reduce the scope for character development found in the novel

(p. xv). For a more extensive treatment of the psychological impact of the partition experience, the reader should turn to such works as Abdullah Husain's *Udas Naslen* ('Sad Generation'. Lahore: Naya Idara, 1963), Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* (New Delhi: Orient, 1979), Bhisham Sahni's, *Tamas* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1988) and naturally to Khushwant Singh's classic, *Train to Pakistan* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1956).

While the reader would thus be advised to search more widely to uncover the inner history of the partition event, Saros Cowasjee and Kartar Singh Duggal are nevertheless to be heartily congratulated for providing such an excellent selection of short stories. Its value is increased both by the perceptive introduction and the biographical notes on the authors. The stories should not of course merely be treated as valuable sources, but stand in many cases in their own right as great works of literature which transcend their immediate historical setting. The anthology is thus not just a useful historical tool, but provides a valuable point of entry for the general reader into the riches of modern South Asian literature.

Ian Talbot
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S. Binning, *No More Watno Dur* (Toronto: Tsar, 1994), 120 pp. (pb). ISBN 0-920661-45-9.

A. Chandan, *Being Here* (London: The Many Press, New Series, 1993), 16 pp. £1.95 (pb). No ISBN.

Here are two poetry books from the Punjabi diaspora; from Britain, Amarjit Chandan has translated just ten of his poems, Sadhu Binning from Canada has a more hefty volume with 29 poems. Each poem is printed in Punjabi and its English translation is on the facing page. Chandan's pamphlet appears in a new series of poetry in which the publisher has sought to introduce Britain's many poets writing in their mother tongue. These 'other poets of Britain' add to a colourful tapestry of voices.

Binning's poetry 'Not far from homeland' is dedicated to the Punjabi passengers of on the Komagata Maru ship, who were refused entry into Canada and forcibly returned in 1914. The ship's voyage and the tragic events attending it still echo memories among the Punjabi population of Canada. Binning stands at the site of the Komagata Maru at Victoria and remembers:

at the same shore of the ocean
where once stood Komagata Maru
and went back
without kissing the shore sand
shrieking like a hungry elephant
facing the guns

Canada's Punjabi population has grown rapidly since, especially during the 1970s due to relaxed immigration rules. The experience of settlement has rightly been a subject of much of the diaspora Punjabi literature. Arriving in a new society, with a different set of social values, language and culture, Punjabi migrants have cleared many hurdles, among these an indifferent or at times a hostile reception by neighbours and the local community. Binning hints at the subtle and obvious pains in making new homes. Indeed, in some poems he searches for the familiar sounds and pleasures of the old homeland, and tells how the racial divide can impinge upon a migrant's sensibility. Ambivalence becomes the hallmark of the migrant's life; he is prepared to abandon much of his old cultural baggage, though there are difficulties:

I don't think I can change
the colour of my skin
so as they say
the ball is in your court

Many poems articulate the unsettled migrant's mind, his sense of dislocation. Chandan has less to lament, in a statement accompanying the poems, he calls his predicament a matter of his own 'choice'. In some ways both poets are more reflective of their past. This quality also highlights a dominant tradition of Punjabi poetry; being overtly political. Binning writes about Mother Teresa as a symbol of imperial piety, while for Chandan the joy of cycle-riding signifies the unity of the proletariat. Their poetry falls somewhat in the old school of 'realism', and indeed in some poems there is leftist sermonising common to Punjabi writers. Binning writes about low wages, exploitation of women workers, dirty and heavy jobs within lumber industries. Taking sides rather explicitly, Binning warns:

what if we the toilers
haven't yet heard of our rights
what if we haven't yet
gathered strengths into one large fist
that will smash your head?

Both books suggest an auspicious beginning. Hopefully, other publishers will be encouraged to discover the 'small tradition' of the Punjabi diaspora. I am not sure how a Western reader will receive these poems; they are deeply rooted in a specific tradition of the Punjabi diaspora. Moreover, cultural references therein read somewhat awkwardly; where the poet suggests subtle irony in Punjabi this seems rather contrived in English—suggesting a difficult passage of culture across languages. However, as more translated works become available, English readers may discover an unfamiliar but rich and complex world of Punjabi creative writing. If literature can bring down the barriers across cultures and languages, and there is a sound case for such an argument, such translations from minority literatures should be welcomed and encouraged. Binning's book attracted some subsidy from Canada's Council for Arts; support for such multi-cultural ventures is well-established there. Perhaps British arts agencies could emulate this well-intentioned practice.

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S.S. Sekhon and K.S. Duggal, *A History of Punjabi Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1992), 428 pp. Rs. 125 (hb), ISBN 81-7201-292-6.

S.S. Sekhon, *A History of Punjabi Literature*, Volume 1 (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1993), 271 pp. Rs. 200 (hb).

A history of Punjabi literature doing justice to the variegated aspects of its production, reception and effect is not available even now, when in written form it is going to be eight hundred years old. There is an acute shortage even of perfunctory histories of Punjabi literature written in chronological order. In Punjabi itself there are only a dozen of them at the most, let alone in other languages. In English they do not exceed a quarter of this number. In Russian there is a sketchy one but it does little to change the above scenario.

The earliest history of Punjabi literature written in English, but later on adapted into the native language, was by Dr Mohan Singh Dewana. Entitled 'A History of Punjabi Literature' (1933), for all its historiographical and methodological oddities, it held out great promise for subsequent literary historians. These historians, namely Gopal Singh Dardi, Surinder Singh Kohli and Jeet Singh Seetal, were either his proteges or in great awe

of him, and so could only gloss over the periodisation, brought into vogue by their overbearing predecessor. So their volumes, subscribing to linear chronology and summarising methodology, could forward little of future value with what for Robert Weimann is of 'past significance and present meaning in literary history'.

The literary histories under review mark a distinct departure from those old-fashioned volumes. The claim is partly true of the first work and rests largely secure with the second one. The historiographical and methodological inadequacies embedding them are of a different order however. The appearance of the first one which, as per the flap, tells 'the story of the development of Punjabi writing from the earliest to the present day with a rare sense of involvement and commitment' is welcome after passing through chequered stages. From the late 1960s, its assignment had rested with one person after another until the present arrangement was forged to bring it to completion. Gratifying more for its presence than its presentation, it has now come out as jointly authored by Sant Singh Sekhon, the doyen of Punjabi letters and founder of literary criticism in the language, and Kartar Singh Duggal, a creative writer of prodigious literary output.

The book comprises 19 chapters, devised genre-wise. Divided author-wise in large measure, 8 of them deal with Punjabi literature up to the end of the nineteenth century. The remaining 11 are devoted to poets, novelists, playwrights, prose-writers and literary critics past and contemporary. In all fairness to their co-authorship, Sekhon and Duggal allocated an almost equal number of pages to each other. This is a parity in the quantitative rather than the qualitative sense. The gravity of topics which Sekhon has covered surpasses the topicality of those covered by Duggal. All the great writers from Sheikh Farid onwards are with Sekhon for evaluation. Duggal has preferred to comment either on minor writers or general topics relating to, for example, language, script, folklore and problems of writing. Lest they be insufficient to fill the pages allocated to him, he has also sought to duplicate what Sekhon wrote or chosen to supplement that with specimens of his own translations.

Writing about the *Adi Granth*, Duggal underlines its appeal as much for the erudite scholar as for the literate reader. The distinction between these two categories that he envisages without elaborating, marks a distinction between these co-authors as well. Sekhon's evaluation carries the imprint of an erudite scholar whereas Duggal's commentary gives the impression of a literate reader. To make idiosyncratic judgements, to refer at best to secondary sources, to rest content with anecdotes and reduce literary compositions to biographical events are methodological tactics

fondly employed by him. On the other hand, Sekhon, basing his evaluative strategies on well-defined norms, draws invariably upon the writer's cognitive and ideological concerns. He is adept in explicating the writer's knowledge and experience imbued with which the writing tends to become a cultural configuration. Factors emerging from the dark areas of ethnicity, gender-specificity and sexuality do not lend themselves as naturally to his forte. As a result, what he understands of a writing's reception and effect is hardly commensurate with what he explicates about its production.

No wonder this work co-authored by Sekhon and Duggal fails to fulfil the expectations with which new directions in literary history are equipping the reading public at this juncture. The widening gap between Duggal's pieces, which seem casually penned, and those of Sekhon, written as if with acumen, make a split text of it .

The second book is the first of the projected six volumes which Sekhon has embarked upon writing for Punjabi University, Patiala. While the first volume takes up Sheikh Farid and *Gurbani* from Guru Nanak's compositions to the *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas, the second, expected to be out shortly time, deals with Sufi poetry and *Kissa-sahit* in that order. Already in press, the third volume brings up to date the account of Punjabi poetry. The fourth, fifth and sixth volumes will cover prose, fiction and drama respectively. Of course, critique of literary criticism in Punjabi will also form a part of this last volume.

The book comprises two broad sections. The first one, spread over a hundred and sixty pages, is divided into 20 chapters devoted to the life, work and thought of Sheikh Farid, the first five Gurus and Bhai Gurdas in that order. The second section, of exactly a hundred pages, has English translation of their selected compositions. Of 20 chapters in the first section, six relate to Guru Nanak Dev and four each to Guru Arjan Dev and Bhai Gurdas respectively. This division is fair enough, though two chapters, one dealing with the corpus of oral literature in the pre-Nanak period and the other concerning the compilation of the *Adi Granth*, deserved more explication.

Well-equipped with socio-historical awareness of the times as Sekhon is, he is on solid ground in the first chapter, in contending that modern Punjabi has evolved from old Multani. In this regard, he seems to go against the grain of Dewana's wistful contention that its inception was several centuries earlier. For Sekhon it is this specificity of Punjabi that distinguishes it from Hindi. Attributing this specificity further to Punjabi culture, he brings under purview the history of the region, the culinary habits of the people, their physiognomy, ways of dressing and worshipping and proprietary and kinship relationships. Integral to his perspective

though all these factors are, it seems nonetheless that ideas derived from common sense rather than from excavations and archives form the basis of his analysis.

While delving into the lives and times of the authors under study, Sekhon mostly relies upon available material. This does not enable him to come up with new revelations. Nevertheless, he leaves behind conjectures and questions which, when unravelled and resolved, are likely to lead to better perceptions.

Reflecting, for example, on the paucity of Islamic religious lore in Sheikh Farid, he is at a loss to understand why, in a period when Muslim dominions had hardly extended beyond Delhi, a great Muslim divine located near Multan should have registered Bhakti influence to such a powerful degree. With regard to the Gurus, he comes up with relatively fewer conjectures and questions of this sort. Maybe this is the reason that the chapter on Sheikh Farid is the best in the book.

Sekhon has also devoted a chapter each to such texts as 'Japuji', 'Var Asa', 'Siddha Ghost', 'Sukhmani' and 'Baramaha'. They are largely illustrative though interspersed with heterodox observations as well. One such is about Guru Nanak Dev's intellectual mysticism, implying that he professed to be a mystic only when, in the last analysis, his intellect failed him in penetrating the mystery of life. Likewise, the comparison that he draws between two texts leaves much to ponder upon. For example, comparing Guru Arjan Dev's 'Baramaha' with that of Guru Nanak Dev, Sekhon contends that the former rests content with a feeling of gratifying happiness while the latter goes over the passionate description of the female separated from the male.

It may be objected that the translation section should not be an integral part of a volume of literary history. The fact that a part of it, particularly of Sheikh Farid's 'Slokas', is immaculately done, does not let this objection hold fast. It vanishes altogether when one comes to know that, with phenomenal vigour, Sekhon is working at this vast project even now that he is getting close to ninety.

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M.U. Memon (ed.), *Domains of Fear and Desire: Urdu Stories* (Toronto: Tsar Publications, 1992). $15.95. ISBN 0- 920661-21-1.

Urdu, like English, is a dual language; it is a blending of Hindi with a Persian heavily indebted to Arabic. Its history is a strange one, its destinies are still uncertain. It is the official language of Pakistan, but not the mother-tongue of any community there except some of the post-1947 immigrants from India; and Pakistan has not shown itself very welcoming to the arts or to any creative thinking. In northern India Urdu is the mother-tongue of many, among whom however the Muslim majority are apt, perhaps excessively, to feel that they and their language have been pushed into the background. There are also growing colonies of Urdu-speakers in the West, who seem to have more need than Hindi-speakers there to cling to their culture and its religion as badges of identity. The soil of exile has always been a thin one; but if Urdu literature is unlikely to bear much new fruit in the West, it can at least make itself known there, along with some part of its contribution to the collective life of our troubled world.

The present volume of translations is an attempt in this direction. Short stories, not surprisingly with so scattered a literature as that of Urdu, have as the editor remarks flourished better than full-length novels. He looks back on the era of the Progressive Writers' Association, born in 1936 and living on into the 1950s, as the richest (it also produced the finest of modern Urdu poetry); but he is dismissive of the 'Marxist ideology' of many of its writers, and their grapplings with social and political problems. His preference is for those who have been exploring instead 'the elusive and shimmering realms of the individual consciousness'. In Pakistan the spread of anything like 'Marxist ideology' was put to an end by a series of dictatorships based on the army and religious bigotry. Abandonment of social theme has been a frequent consequence; the writer has taken refuge in his or her inner being. 'Post-realist' innovations came in with the 1960s, ignoring space and time with—in the editor's words—sometimes 'quite dizzying consequences for the reader' (p. vii). His anthology bears many marks of this tendency. There is a retreat from collective life into the narrow cockpit of the family; a preoccupation with memories and difficulties of childhood or youth, sometimes a drift away from reality altogether. Humour of any sort is noticeably missing.

Tales of childhood dwell more on its gloomier rather than its lighter hours. In 'First Death', by Zamiruddin Ahmad, we see a healthy impulse stifled. A well-meaning boy attacks a young beggar outside the house who

Notes for Contributors

1. Articles submitted to the IJPS should be original contributions and should not be under consideration for any other publication at the same time; if an article is under such consideration, authors should indicate this on submission. Articles should be submitted in triplicate, typewritten on one side only and double-spaced throughout (including footnotes) with 1½" margins. Contributors are required to provide an abstract of approximately 100 words which should be indented and located at the top of the page 1 of the submission but below the title and name of the author of the article. Typewritten copies should preferably be accompanied by IBM-compatible wordprocessor discs on Word Perfect, Microsoft Word, Wordstar or equivalent. Discs should be labelled with the title of the article, the author's name and software (including version) used. All submissions should be sent to: Shinder Thandi, Coventry Business School, Coventry University, Priory Street, Coventry, CV15FB, United Kingdom.
2. Notes and references are not to be treated separately and should be consecutively numbered and presented at the end of the article, not at the foot of each page. The system of bracketed references embedded in the text or in the notes such as (Tinker 1967; 147) is to be completely avoided.
3. **Referencing Style**
   A. For Published Sources the following examples illustrate the style to be followed:
      On first reference
      (a) *Books:* Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, 1847–1947* (Delhi: Manohar, 1989), 130–45.
      (b) *Edited Volumes:* Richard Barret (ed.), *International Dimensions of the Environmentalist Crisis* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1982).
      (c) *Articles in Journals:* Stephen Oren, 'The Sikhs, Congress, and the Unionists in British Punjab, 1937–45', in *Modern Asian Studies* (hereafter *MAS*), 8, 3 (1974), 397–418.
      (*Note:* As illustrated in this example, the names of journals need to be cited in full only on first occurrence. In all subsequent references to articles from the same journal, only the initials or known short forms of the journals are to be used.)
      (d) *Articles in Edited Volumes:* N. Buchinani and D.M. Indra, 'Key Issues in Canadian-Sikh Ethnic Relations', in N. Gerald Barrier and V.A. Dusenbery (eds), *The Sikh Diaspora: Migration and Experience beyong Punjab* (New Delhi: Chanakya Publications, 1990).
      (e) *Dissertations:* Jeffrey Key, 'Nongovernmental Organisations as Strategic Organisations: The Politics of Voluntarism in Pakistan', unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of Texas at Austin, August 1990.
      On subsequent reference (unless immediately following the first reference in which case 'ibid'. will be used) the example at (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) will become:
      (a) Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj*, 131.
      (b) Barret, *International Dimensions*.
      (c) Oren, 'The Sikhs, Congress, and the Unionists', 413–14.
      (d) Buchinani and Indra, 'Key Issues'.
      (e) Key, 'Nongovernmental Organisations'.
      (f) References to newspapers: The Tribune (Chandigarh), 7 July 1992.
      (g) References to parliamentary debates: HC Debates, 13 July 1959, 42 (UK).
      (h) References to government documents or Parliamentary papers: Economic Advisor to Punjab Government, Statistical Abstract, Chandigarh: 1989.
   B. *Primary Source Citations.* These must include the archival location including the town and, if necessary, the country where an archive is located, at first use. In case materials are in a private collection, the name and location of the collection should be mentioned. In case recorded oral materials stored in audio archives are being used, the location of the recordings should be specified. In other cases, the name and location of the oral informant should be clearly stated if possible.
4. **Italics:** Italicise words in Punjabi and other Indian languages (not in common English usage) only on first occurrence, giving the English translation in parentheses. Proper names in a foreign language should always be set in roman.
5. **Book reviews:** Title (underlined), author(s), or editor(s), place of publication, publisher, no. of pages, price.

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about the world, and going quietly out of his mind. Jeelani Bano, an Indian Muslim author and one of the best-known Urdu writers, describes—again as 'I'—a man who has suffered a head injury and is kept shut by his relatives, who are living on a pension. He escapes, carrying off his small daughter, is pursued, and in search of a hiding-place throws himself into the river.

Private and collective life ought to unfold together, if either is to have its full meaning. Only two direct approaches to political or social issues find a place here. Parveen Sarwar is a Pakistani woman writer from India, and her story, lengthy and not well constructed, is a propagandist effort to put the blame for the Bangladeshi war, the breakaway of eastern Bengal from West Pakistan, on unstable Bengalis and malevolent Hindus. The final story, by an Indian Muslim—Salam bin Razzaq—is a telling parable about the caste system. A boy in ancient India, from the forest tribe of Bhils, seeks entrance to a college of archery, but is rejected on account of his lowly birth. Ages later, he is born into an Indian working-class family of today. He studies hard and applies for admission to a medical college. He is regretfully told that admission is being opened to some other humble social grades, but not yet, unfortunately to his.

Victor Kiernan
The reviewer has retired and lives in London

Forthcoming in 1996

Cloth and Commerce
Textiles in Colonial India

Edited by **Tirthankar Roy**

Textiles were a catalyst in Europe's trade with the Indian subcontinent in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, reflecting not only a new demand for cloth, but also the size and diversity of the handloom weaving industry in the regions that came in contact with Europe. Over the next 200 years the nature of the encounter between foreign trade, markets, and textile production changed dramatically. This volume presents a set of influential essays which contribute to understanding this transition.

Among the specific themes dealt with are the scale of export market expansion, its effects on artisans, especially on production and exchange institutions, the impact of competition between artisans and machinery, and de-industrialization—its extent, timing and limits. Overall this volume explores the relationship between commerce, industry and economic growth in the evolution of the regional economy.

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