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Roma Ties with Ancient Panjab

DR S. N. CHOPRA*

The Gypsies alias Roma as they prefer to call themselves, offer an intelligible field of study not so much for their vast geographical dispersal as for maintaining their entity through adherence to common cultural tradition, the one exciting thing that has happened to them. Unlike the Jews¹ they could not create a civilisation but nevertheless, in their struggle for survival, they kept together the loosening threads to retain their distinctiveness by partly merging in the alien societies and accepting their religion. In search of a permanent home for themselves they dispersed all over the world and gave their best to the societies they interacted with in return they received only reproach, scolding and dressing down everywhere.

The Gypsies are known by different names in various countries. They are known as Assyrians, Ethiopians, and Egyptians in England; Ismaelites in Hungary and Romania; Tatern (Tartars) in Germany; Taltera in Sweden; Pagans in Bavaria; Wanderers in Arab countries; Philistines in Poland; Luri in Iraq; Karaki and Zangi in Persia; Carague and Romanichel in France; Cingames or Tchinganes in Turkey and Syria; Katsiveloi, Tsiganos Arsincanoi or Athinganoi in Greece. In Europe they call themselves Rom; Romano, Cxavo, Roma, Romane Cxave; Italian and German Gypsies, Manush, Sinti and Sinthi; in Lithuania, Ciganos; in Spain, Zincali; in Portugal, Ciganas; and in North America Kalderash or Machwaya.²

The historians all over the world have tried to dilate on the complex problem of the original home of the Gypsies and have given a serious thought to solve the knotty question. The Gypsies have been associated with many countries of Asia and Egypt including the Indian sub-continent. A re-appraisal in this context is once again attempted in the following pages to ascertain the veracity of their motherland by analysing their geo-anthropological antecedents.

* Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Punjab University, Chandigarh.
The sociology of the evolution of a primitive society envisages that in the absence of a regular mode of supply of food through the year, the people had to wander from place to place in search of food and hence came to be known as 'food-gatherers' or wanderers. Because of the long span of time, this instinct of wandering became ingrained in the psyche of the people of the age which gradually developed into nomadism. With the change in environments and ecological conditions some of the people took to farming and hence became known as food-producers and thus started leading sedentary way of life with farming and domestication of animals as their mainstay. However, this environmental change was not simultaneous nor universal in character. Each society acquired the stage at different given time of history. But due to non-availability and evasive geographical conditions, people continue to live under pre-farming conditions but with the addition of advancement in the field of domestication of animals, a modified nomadism vis-a-vis sedentary society came into shape by acquiring knowledge in metallurgy and other sciences through their ephemeral peripheral association with them while commuting from one place to another and gradually took to trading in specialised commodities like the domesticated animals, out of which horse was the most popular, and items of metallurgy, but above all took to entertainment of people through music and musical instruments. They bypassed farming or the farming bypassed them. These are again very complex and ticklish questions, but the later history testified their love for freedom more than anything else and hence the preference to live in the proximity of nature along with the eternal gift of music.

Going by the nomadic habits of Gypsies, the following regions are regarded as the most potential nomadic zones; Indian Thar and Western sub-Himalayan regions; Crescent of Arabia; and the innermost heart of Asia.

The original home of the Gypsies is generally sought in the above mentioned regions.3 There is no detailed account of any exodus of the Gypsies from India except sporadic evidence found in Indian literature. Moreover, the geographical zones of the sub-continent of India, barring a few pockets of the desert and sub-Himalayan regions, do not

3. According to Jan Kochanowski, the blood group and other anthropological characteristics of the Gypsies of Europe and the Rajputs of Rajasthan and Panjab are similar, in Gypsies and the Problem of their Acculturation, Indo-Asian Culture 14:1, January 1965, p. 24.
encourage nomadism in gigantic proportions. The Crescent of Arabia and Central Asia are then the most formidable potential nomadic zones from where the exodus might have taken place. In this context the theory of Toynbee regarding 600-year cycle of drought in Central Asia leading to nomadic movement may not be entirely applicable, but we find that between the fall of the Mauryan empire in 187 B.C. and the establishment of Mughal Empire in India, the Indian politics is closely knitted to the nomadic movements from Central Asia. The events following the defeat of the Yue-Chis at the hands of the Huing-nus in 165 B.C. started a chain reaction with consequential affects on India. Thus, since the fall of the Indo-Greeks from the soil of India, the nomadic elements continued to play a significant role in the history of India till the Mughals came on the scene. The Scythic intrusion was the earliest. They were followed by the Yue-Chis. Despite being conquerors these elements were gradually Indianised and absorbed in Indian population and were also admitted in the Varna system. Assimilation of foreign as well as non-Aryan element was consummated in the Gupta period which is hailed as the classical age of Indian history. After the decline of the Gupta empire in the first half of the sixth century, new nomadic elements from Central Asia once again forced their entry into India in the form of the Hunas who ruled over the Punjab and adjoining regions of Northern India, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh for a short time. In the wake of Huna invasion of India, a number of other nomadic hordes also entered India. After their reverses in the Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, they took shelter in Rajasthan and sub-mountainous regions of the lower Himalayas and adopted the Indian life-pattern and religion. The other nomadic elements which had entered India along with them followed suit in adopting the Indian way of life. The Hunas and these elements, however, could not find a birth in the Varna system for a long time. This state continued upto the time of the Muslim invasion. Infact the Muslim invasion was an appendage to these hordes followed by the Mughals who were descendants of the Turco-Mangol union but having adopted Islam while in Central Asia, entered India as crusaders of Islam.

Citing an oral source belonging to the third generation of his old grand-father, Ali Chaushev⁴ points to Sind as the original home of the Roma who left the country as a result of the Muslim invasion in three

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large groups called the Rom, Sinti and Kale dispersing Arabia, Byzantium and Armenia. The king of the Roma at the movement was Mar Amengo Dep. It is further substantiated by the Persian and Arab sources, Firdausi (1000 A.D.) of Persia and Hamza (940 A.D.) of Isafahan respectively. The former calls the Gypsies Luri and Hamza, Zott, which may be equivalent to Jat. The Shah Namah, a Persian source, records that Indian king Shankhala accepted the request of the Sassanian king of Persia, Bahram Gur, in 420 A.D. to send Indian musicians to Persia to entertain his public. The Persian monarch arranged cultivable land for distribution among the 12,000 Indian musicians, which, of course, was forfeited for neglect of cultivation because of their preoccupation with music and turned them out of his country under the curse that they will be wandering around places and earning their livelihood by singing.

The Arab sources⁵ refer to the invincible Zotts living at the mouth of the Indus. It was during the time of Walid (705-715 A.D.) that the wandering Zotts were taken into prison and in 710 A.D. transported them to the banks of Tigris in Kurdistan from where these were taken to Antioch six years later under Yazid II. In another sweep in 834 A.D. Al Motasin imprisoned 27,000 Zotts and sent them to Baghdad and Ainzarba in Syria. With the capture of Ainzarba by the Byzantians from the Arabs in 856 A.D., the Zotts now called Rums and Roms by the Byzantians, enter in Byzantine territory.

The historical evidence overwhelmingly support the view that the exodus of the Gypsies from the Panjab and the adjoining regions including that of the Indianised Central Asian nomadic hordes coincided with the Arab and the Turkish invasions of India. As for the existence of Indo-Central Asian ties it may not be surprising to note that even in the times of Mohmud of Ghazni a considerable part of the population in Central Asia was Indian and in the armies of Ghaznavides there were numerous soldiers and officers of the Hindu faith who fought in his wars in India. At this juncture the Indian-influenced nomads living in Central Asia, wanting to enter India, took a U-turn and proceeded alongwith the Indian nomads into the west on a Bon voyage never to return to their motherland, leaving behind a metaphysical relationship like that of Puruṣa and Prakṛti or Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the eternal love of the lover and beloved nostalgically appearing time and again in the human form of Laila-Majnu, Heer-Ranjha, Šassi-Punnu,

⁵ D. P. Singhal, op. cit., p. 33.
ROMA TIES WITH ANCIENT PANJAB

Shiri-Farhad, and Soni-Mahiwal, which having become ingrained in their sad melodies and songs, give vent to their hardships in search of their re-union with the motherland while sitting far away whether on a cool and showy banks of the Danube on the Thames or in the rumbling of their slowly moving caravans. For them it proved to be never-ending journey which knew no destination. Their crossing over to the other lands was neither for any political ambition nor for mere adventure in the modern sense of the word, as opposed to the influx of the nomadic hordes who in their wild excursions ran over their country and committed all sorts of atrocities causing exodus of the type befalling them. In that they had to bear the brunt of persecution once in their motherland and many times over in the other lands to which they happen to move all these times all for the desire to live in peace and without any hostility. The Indian thought current has been assimilating all thoughts, hostile or friendly, which have been coming from abroad. This process continued till before the Muslim invasions. During this period, there has been exodus of the type as witnessed the Roma. Such emigrations took place at more than one point of time between the 8th and 12th centuries A.D., the biggest having taken place as an aftermath of the defeat of Prithvi Raj Chauhan at the hands of Mohammad Ghori. It is of great significance to note that this war (1192 A.D.) which changed the very course of the Indian history, was fought at Tarain or Taraoni in the plains of the fabled Kurukshetra and the main brunt of this major onslaught coming unawares in the disturbed conditions of the earlier war (1191 A.D.) in which Mohammad Ghori was defeated, had to be borne by the people of the Panjab and the adjoining areas. No wonder then the biggest exodus of the Roma from India having taken place on the land of the Panjab before effecting other areas on unprecedented scale, both in intent and extent, in the 12th century in the upheaval that followed the crucial defeat.

On the linguistic plane, there is consensus among scholars on India being the original home of Gypsies but they differ in the timing of their exodus and the identification of the particular region of India to which they belonged. John Sampson⁶ holds that the Gypsies were in Persia before 900 A.D. but the other philologists, such as Miklosich, was of the view that the Gypsies could not have left India before 1000 A.D. because the development of Indian dialects from which Romany is

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originated, was still in a melting stage until that time. He connected Romany with the Dard and Kafir dialects. A.C. Woolner identified their language with western Indian Pahari; Pott, Bataillard, Trump and Burton with the dialects of the Jats; John Beames, with Hindi; Sir Ralph Turner,7 with a Central Asian Indian group of dialects which migrated to the north-western group. In this connection a scrutiny of the vocabulary of the Gypsies retrieved from oral evidence would point out its similarities with the dialects8 spoken in ancient geographical horizons.

8. See L. R. Rishi, Indo-Romani Dictionary. Some of the Romany words are as follows:

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<th>Romany</th>
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<td>Yek</td>
<td>ek</td>
<td>one</td>
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<td>dui</td>
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<td>trin</td>
<td>tin</td>
<td>three</td>
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<td>star or chtar</td>
<td>char</td>
<td>four</td>
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<td>pansh</td>
<td>panc</td>
<td>five</td>
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<td>okhto-octo</td>
<td>ath</td>
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<td>nau</td>
<td>nine</td>
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<tr>
<td>dash</td>
<td>das</td>
<td>ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amaro</td>
<td>hamara</td>
<td>ours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yakh</td>
<td>ankh</td>
<td>eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yag</td>
<td>ag</td>
<td>fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalo</td>
<td>kala</td>
<td>black</td>
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<tr>
<td>ker</td>
<td>kar</td>
<td>to do, make</td>
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<td>kak</td>
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<td>salt</td>
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<td>tu, tum</td>
<td>you</td>
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<td>chib</td>
<td>jibh</td>
<td>tongue</td>
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<td>manush</td>
<td>manush</td>
<td>man</td>
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<td>slao</td>
<td>sala</td>
<td>brother-in-law</td>
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<tr>
<td>sasro</td>
<td>susur</td>
<td>father-in-law</td>
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<tr>
<td>sasuy</td>
<td>sas</td>
<td>mother-in-law</td>
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of Sapta-Sindhu comprising a part of western Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Sind and Panjab (in ancient concepts) up to the river Indus. If language and linguistics be the only criteria to determine the geographical identification of their native land, one would believe that once they lived in the above mentioned north west regions of India with Panjab as its nucleus.

The Banjaras, Roma's counterpart in India, who trace their origin to ancient Panjab encompassing parts of the present day Panjab, Rajasthan and Sind, have traces of old Jodhpuri, Punjabi and Sindhi. To bring home the point that both the Roma and the Banjaras were culturally knitted together, expressing the same manners of feeling, speaking the same language and sharing the same customs, an eye witness account is being reproduced. "I witnessed a graphic example of the closeness of the Roma and the Banjaras despite over 800 years of separation—the Roma believe they left India sometime in the 12th century—when I went with a Belgian Roma woman, Agni Vranchx, General Secretary of the Western European Romani Council, to Chikuwada.

Vranchx and the Banjara Naik, Rathod, sat across from each other in an open space in Chikuwada. Young and old Banjaras crowded around. They listened with rapt attention, as, in turn, Vranchx would narrate a Roma custom and a Naik would explain the Banjara equivalent. There were exact parallels for almost all the customs.

For instance, both Banjara and Roma regard the singers and performers as the lowest caste. Vranchx, who says she belongs to the highest caste, would never marry her daughter to an itinerant musician. The Naik said that the Banjara performers were often Banjara Muslims. They were regarded as shudras. The Banjaras also have a Barhmin caste amongst them.

Amongst both Banjaras and Roma, an older woman in a camp is given a special position of respect and called Dao Bai or Puri Dai. The Roma only have a woman dispense medication; the Banjara have several women who perform the functions of midwives.

Both groups have the custom of giving some of the water they are about to drink to the earth before drinking it.

Then Vranchx began speaking in Romani. Pointing to her eyes,

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ears, nose, mouth, she called out the words in Romani. With their eyes transfixed on the woman, the Banjara responded in unison, shouting out the Gorboli equivalent of the words. The volume of their shouting rose with their excitement as they realised that their languages were almost identical; in some words it was only a difference in intonation.

Said a Banjara at the end of this session, “Now I understand what is meant by the phrase we often use, ‘Hamara ek bhai bichad gaya’ (we have lost one brother).”

Vranchx, who has lived in France and Belgium and now plans to live in Spain, was beside herself with excitement. “I feel more at home here than among the gajo (non-Roma) in Europe,” she said.

The Roma themselves claim India to be their ancestral home ‘Barothan.’ The oral evidence coming forth in the wake of International Roma Festivals held in Chandigarh in 1976 and 1983 which has in fact inspired this study, has come handy to articulate clearly the nexus between the Gypsies and India. The Romas represented at these meets hailed from various parts of the world having different nationalities and belonged to the elite groups. Among this representative group were parliamentarians and politicians, T.V., radio and theatre artists, writers and engineers, administrators, businessmen, etc.

It has shed a welcome light on the linkages of Gypsies with this land. Some of the chief characteristics which aroused one’s curiosity and interest are their gregarious and vibrant nature, spontaneity and love for music and singing particularly sad but romantic songs impressing nostalgic passions for their motherland articulated through their musical tones and dancing. Their folk based orchestra and music is replete with oriental overtones.

Apart from the geographical identity and linguistic evidence, the Romas have identical social, outlook, taboos, and beliefs and superstitions, and general practices with those prevalent in this region. They still hold on to traditional ways and custom of the land despite their leaving the country some 1000 years ago. For instance Roma chiefs are called Thākur and the elders, Kāko, i.e., Kākā, meaning uncle in some parts of India and a child in the region of Panjab; Rashey or Rśi occupies a respectful place in Gypsy society; respect for joint family and panchayat systems, the sceptre of the Roma chief is the Tristula (trident) the insignia of Siva, white is the colour of mourning; practice of arranged marriages; marriage regarded as sanctity and not contract; elaborate feasting and ritual in marriages; concept of Lagj, i.e., laj meaning modesty, shyness or shame; theory of
Karma and rebirth and salvation (mukti); Indian folklore; worship of Kāli.

The Gypsies have made a tremendous contribution to the European cultural life. They were the carriers of ideas, ideologies and knowledge from India to different regions of the world. They were the pioneers in the field of mass communication. Despite their immense contribution to the world thought, they were not treated well. They have suffered the most at the hands of persecutors anywhere in the world, the worst being the Nazis.\(^\text{11}\) In spite of the malevolent and apathetic attitude meted out to them, the Gypsies have managed to survive all over the world, a fine example of the resilient character whose troubles knew no bounds, strong enough to get them down.

The Gypsies have retained many traits, beliefs and rites and social order of their ancient past which may be traced in their contemporary culture of this region where lay their lost cultural identity and unmistakably the original home. As similar nuances of the past echo in the present of both the Roma and the Panjab, the bonds between Roma and the Panjab in the modern idiom may be epitomised as co-existence between the past and present in the lands apart.

The Panjab as such contributed in form and contents to the western world through the perennial waves of enigmatic gypsies who have been the most exotic and exciting element in their ephemeral neighbourhood.

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The Sixth Invasion of Ahmad Shah Durrani and the Wadda Ghalughara or The Great Holocaust

HARPREET KAUR*

The Afghan king could hardly pocket the harassment to which the Sikhs subjected him on his way back to his country after winning a grand victory over the Marathas in the battle of Panipat. He was also shocked to hear how the Sikhs upset the administrative arrangement evolved by him on the eve of his return from Lahore to Afghanistan in April 1761. Over and above all these developments the bold and defiant assertion of the Sikhs to establish their independent rule was considerably irritating to the Shah, especially when he was keenly planning to convert Punjab, Kashmir and Sind into provinces of his empire. He, therefore, decided to make an all-out effort to totally incapacitate and crush the Sikhs so that, in future, there could be no threat to his objective.

Just when Ahmad Shah Durrani was planning to act, the Sikhs passed a resolution, called the Gurmata, at the occasion of their seasonal festival of Diwali at Amritsar on October 27, 1761, to seize the strongholds of the Punjabi allies and supporters of Ahmad Shah who were a hindrance to the liberation of the country from the foreign invaders. The nearest at hand was Aqil Das, the Guru of the dissentient Niranjani sect of the Sikhs at Jandiala, about 19 kms to the east of Amritsar. 1 Aqil Das had been helping the Durrani invader and the Punjab governors against the Sikhs. He had lent a large sum of money to the Shah at the time of his Delhi expedition. The decision of the Sikhs was conveyed to Aqil Das by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Jassa Singh Ramgarhia with a view to demanding his submission to the Sikhs. Aqil Das at once wrote to the Shah and sent off a camel-sawar post-haste to seek his help. 2

In the meantime, Ahmad Shah heard of the activities of the Sikhs and left for the Punjab to chastise them and to provide relief to his

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* 8128/5, Preet Nagar, Lower Mall, Patiala.
officers. At Rohtas he received Aqil Das’s messenger and his second letter, requesting him for immediate help. With only a few selected horsemen, the Shah hurried from Rohtas and arrived in the neighbourhood of Jandiala. His force followed him soon after. On receiving intelligence of the Shah’s march the Sikhs raised the siege and went away. The Shah was received by Aqil Das with customary presents and was told that Jandiala had been besieged by ninety thousand Sikh horsemen and that they had left the place on hearing of the Afghan king’s arrival. The Durrani chief sent out spies for intelligence and returned to Lahore.  

According to Ganda Singh the Sikhs had raised the siege of Jandiala and gone to the trans-Satluj side for several reasons. Hearing of the arrival of the Shah, they wanted to send away their families to places of safety with their friends and relatives, either to the southwestern areas of the Brar Sikhs in the direction of the Lakhi Jungle or to the south in the neighbourhood of Raipur and Gujjarwal. They had known the devastation caused by Ahmad Shah at Mathura, Brindaban and Panipat and how large number of women and children had been made captives and carried away in slavery. They wanted to avoid that situation in the case of a reverse. Secondly, unencumbered they could fight, harass the enemy and run away beyond his reach when needed and return to attack him whenever possible. Thirdly, they had to avenge the death of Dyal Singh Brar whom Zain Khan, governor of Sirhind, had put to death.  

Hearing of the assemblage of the Sikhs in the villages to the south of Raipur and Gujjarwal, within six to ten miles of Malerkotla, Bhikhan Kan, the Afghan chief of the place, called in the help of Zain Khan and informed the Durrani Chief of their presence in his territory where they could be easily surrounded and annihilated.  

On receiving intelligence Ahmad Shah left Lahore on February 3, 1762 and hurried through Jandiala and Talwan. On February 4, the Shah sent swift couriers to tell Zain Khan to fall upon the flank

3. Ali-ud-Din Musti, I, p. 230; Sohan Lai Suri, Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, I, pp. 156-57; Khuswaqt Rai, p. 60; Gian Singh, Tawarikh Guru Khalsa, pp. 204-05. The number of the Sikh besiegers given by Aqil Das as ninety thousand is highly inflated.
of the Sikhs, next day. Receiving these orders, Zain Khan, Bhikhan Khan of Malerkotla, Murtaza Khan Baraich, Qasim Khan Marhal, Diwan Lachhmi Narayan and other officers prepared themselves for the next day’s onslaught.6

The Day of the Holocaust—February 5, 1762

In the morning of February 5, 1762 Zain Khan came out with his troops and the contingent of Qasim Khan to lead the attack against the Sikhs who were taken by surprise. The total number of the Sikhs including a large number of women, children and non-combatants was about thirty thousand. They were encumbered with camp equipage (bar-bardori). The battle started with Qasim Khan’s attack on the bahir, the camp followers and non-combatants of the Sikhs near the village of Kup, about ten kms to the north of Malerkotla. The Sikhs came to grips with the invaders. Soon after the sun-rise Ahmad Shah appeared on the scene. He ordered his Uzbek contingents to kill every one found in Indian dress and that Zain Khan, should, therefore, instruct his men to wear green leaves of trees on their heads to be distinguished from the Sikhs.7

When the Sikh Sardars came to know of the attack they rushed to the rescue of their bahir. In the words of Tahmas Khan, who was present in the battle-field, “Qasim Khan could not withstand the Sikh assault. He started retreating. I prohibited him from doing so. But he did not listen to me. He fled towards the camp of Malerkotla.”8 Tahmas Khan, then, joined Murtaza Khan Baraich who was standing on an eminence with five hundred men. At this time Ahmad Shah’s army came and surrounded them. Tahmas Khan writes, “They thought we belonged to the Sikh army.” I alone was wearing the kulah (Muslim head-gear). I came out and explained the situation to the men of the Afghan army. Ahmad Shah was satisfied with my explanation. His spies too gave him the same intelligence. Ahmad Khan knew Murtaza Khan. He awarded him a robe, and said, “The Wazir Shah Wali Khan and Zain Khan have gone in pursuit of the Sikhs. You too hasten and join them.”9 Shah Wali Khan and Zain Khan were proceeding against the Sikhs.

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8. Tahmas Nama, pp. 105-06.
9. Ibid.
The Sikhs then held a council and decided to send away their bahir with the vakils of the Malwa Sardars. Sangu Singh, the agent of the Bhais of Kaithal, Sekhu Singh Hambalwala, the agent of Ala Singh of Patiala, and the agent of Bhai Buddha Singh were asked to lead the bahir away to some safer place. But they had hardly covered 5 kms when they were overtaken and attacked by Shah Wali Khan, Zain Khan and Bhikhan Khan of Malerkotla. But they could not succeed to disperse the Sikhs who threw a cordon round the bahir and moved on fighting and fought on moving occasionally turning upon their assailants and inflicting losses on them. Unable to break through the Sikh cordon the Shah employed more troops against them under the command of Sardar Jahan Khan. He also failed to do any thing effective. Seasoned leaders and soldiers as Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Charhat Singh Sukarchakia and Sham Singh directed the movements of the bahir and of the main army, trying to protect them. The Shah felt that a hard blow could be dealt to them only in a pitched battle. Through his messengers the Abdali chief upbraided Zain Khan and Lachhmi Narayan for their inability to hold the Sikhs in the front. "If you hold them in the front and stop their onward progress, I shall annihilate them in no time," said the Shah. "But it is impossible to hold them back in the front," replied Zain Khan.

Thus proceeding ahead the Sikhs arrived at the village of Gahal. Fearing of the Shah’s vengeance the villagers could not provide shelter to the Sikhs. Therefore, the Sikhs had to move on. In the afternoon they entered the villages of Qutba and Bahmani for shelter. But these villages belonged to the hostile Afghans of Malerkotla. The Ranghar villagers surrounded the Sikhs and began to subject them to massacre. Charhat Singh rushed to their rescue and beat back the Ranghars. But the Sikh cordon had been broken at many places and the Afghans and their Indian allies had succeeded in inflicting upon them heavy loss of life, particularly on the non-combatant followers and women and children who had almost all perished. In spite of this, the Sikhs manfully stood the repeated attacks of their pursuers and refused to be put to flight or dispersed. With invincible fortitude and tenacity they held themselves in the field of action and continued fighting a running

11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., p.350.
Towards the evening the Shah had to call a halt in the neighbourhood of Barnala, because his men were exhausted due to having covered about two hundred and forty kms in about thirty six hours and incessantly fighting for over ten hours against a very tough enemy. Moreover, he had gone deep into the waterless sandy desert where the Sikhs with fresh reinforcements, might turn upon their pursuers.

At the modest estimate, the loss of ten thousand lives, mostly of women, children and old men, in one day, for a small community of the Sikhs, was so great that this battle, which was more of a bloody carnage, has been called the Wadda Ghalughara, the second Great Holocaust to distinguish it from the first which took place on June 2, 1746 when the Sikhs suffered a similar loss at the hands of Governor Zakariya Khan's Diwan, Lakhpat Rai of Lahore.

Barnala town, at that time, was in the territory of Ala Singh of Patiala. Zain Khan of Sirhind and his Diwan Lachhmi Narayan and Bhikhan Khan of Malerkotla were his worst enemies. They instigated the Shah to storm and sack the town of Barnala. Ala Singh was then in the fort of Bhawanigarh. Diwan Lachhmi Narayan assured the Shah that if Ala Singh were captured, a ransom of fifty lakh rupees could be secured. Through the mediation of Najib-ud-Daulah Ala Singh appeared before the Shah at Sirhind and paid the sum of six lakh twenty-five thousand rupees—rupees 1,25,000 for permission to appear before him with his hair (the symbol of his religious faith) intact and rupees 5,00,000 as tribute—and promised to remit a certain amount of revenue.

16. The Sikh losses in this battle have been variously estimated : Tahmas Nama, p. 106 (25,000); Khazana-i-Amira, p. 114 (20,000); Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin, III, p. 74 (20,000); Tarikh-i-Husain Shahi, p. 83 (30,000); Tarikh-i-Ahmad, p. 17 (30,000); Khushwaqat Rai, p. 61 and Ganesh Das Badehra, Char Bagh-i-Punjab, p. 125 (30,000); Ali-ud-Din Mufid, I, p. 230 (30,000); Forster, Travels, Vol. I, p. 319 (25,000); Malcolm, Sketch of the Sikhs, p. 98 (upwards of 20,000); Prinsep, Origin of the Sikh Power, p. 24 (25 to 30,000); M' Gregor, The History of the Sikhs, Vol. I, p. 132 (17000); Cunningham, The History of the Sikhs, p. 92 (12 to 25000); Baron Hugel, Travels in Kashmir and Punjab p. 271 (20 to 30,000; Rattan Singh Bhangu, p. 348, as told by the people out of one lakh Sikhs 50,000 Sikhs died and as he heard from his father and uncle present in the battle out of the total Sikhs, 20,000 came back to the camp in the evening and thus 10,000 killed; Gian Singh, Tavariik Guru Khalsa, p. 206 (13,000); Karam Singh, Ala Singh, p. 221 (15 to 20,000); Jadunath Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, p. 486 (10,000).
for the future.17 The Shah accepted the amount gladly and spared his territory. Ala Singh was released on the recommendation of Shah Wali Khan, after a brief detention. Ahmad Shah left Sirhind on February 15, 1762 and arrived at Lahore on March 3. Zain Khan was, once again, left in charge of Sirhind and Sa’adat Khan was posted to the Jullundur Doab.18 Najib-ud-Daulah remained with Ahmad Shah upto the first week of April. The Shah who was highly pleased with the loyalty of Najib, had publically remarked, “This is the only man worth the name among the Indian Afghans. I have shown many favours to that race, but not one of them, not even Shuja-ud-Daulah, has come to my side.” Najib-ud-Daulah, returned to Delhi on April 15.19

Harimandir at Amritsar Blown with Gun-powder

Ahmad Shah carried with him fifty cart-loads of the heads of the Sikhs slain in the battle and a large number of captives.20 He thought he could thus frighten the Sikhs into submission. A day before the Baisakhi festival, April 10, 1762, he appeared at Amritsar with a large force and ordered the Sikh temple called Harimandir to be blown up with boxes full of ammunition to be placed under the foundations of the holy shrine, the allied bungahs to be razed to the ground and the sacred tank to be desecrated with the blood and bones of men and cows and filled up with rubbish and debris of the demolished edifices. While the Harimandir was being blown up, a flying brick-and-lime piece hit him on the nose and wounded him.21

Zain Khan of Sirhind was Defeated by the Sikhs

The greatest carnage of the 5th February could not disspirit the Sikhs though deeply bruised and numerically reduced by thousands. Within the next three months, while the Shah was still in Lahore, the Sikhs were once again up in arms against Zain Khan of Sirhind and

17. All-ud-Din Mufti, I, p. 230; Cf. Tahmas Nama, pp. 106-07; Tazkira-I-Khandan-I-Rajahai Phulkian, pp. 16-17 (Ms. Dr Ganda Singh’s personal collection, Patiala); Kananaiya Lal, Tarikh-I-Punjab, p. 83.
18. Delhi Chronicle, entry under February 21, 1762 (Ms. Dr Ganda Singh’s personal Collection, Patiala, p. 91); Jadu Nath Sarkar, op.cit., II, p. 487.
20. Khushwaqat Rai, p. 61; Radha Kishan, Gosha-I-Punjab, p. 44 (1861).
inflicted a defeat on him in May 1762. In June, Zain Khan made peace by paying them rupees 50,000 and the raiders set out on their return. But when they had marched away about 10 kos, Zain Khan’s troops treacherously looted their rear-guard. The main Sikh army then turned back, attacked him, plundered him as well as his Diwan Lachhmi Narayan, and drove them to fight a pitched battle at Harnulgarh, 15 kos from Sirhind and plundered their equipage and other property.22

Ahmad Shah Abdali’s Summer Camp at Kalanaur July-August 1762

During the months of summer the Abdali chief removed the camp from the burning heat of Lahore to milder climate of Kalanaur, where Akbar was enthroned in A.D. 1556, about 70 kms north of Amritsar. Emboldened by their success against Zain Khan and by the inactivity of Ahmad Shah, the Sikhs rose on all sides. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Tara Singh Gaiba ransacked the Jullundur Doab and Charhat Singh Sukarchakia and the Bhangi Sardars carried their arms to the north and north-west of Lahore. But as the Diwali festival was fast approaching, they marched back homewards and arrived at Amritsar towards the end of the second week of October 1762. About sixty thousand horse and foot, they were determined to measure swords with the Shah to avenge the loss they had suffered in the ghalughara.23

Indecisive Battle of Amritsar

By this time the Shah had returned to Lahore. James Browne writes, “Ahmad Shah Durrani receiving advice of this, sent a person to the Sikh leaders in quality of Ambassador, to negotiate a peace with them and prevent that effusion of blood, which their desperate determination threatened to produce, but on arrival of this person in the camp of the Sikhs, instead of listening to his proposals, they plundered him and his followers and drove them away.” Finding that the Sikhs were not prepared to respond positively to any efforts at peace the Shah marched from Lahore and arrived at Amritsar on the evening of October 16, 1762, the day before the Diwali. Next morning, that is, on October 17, the Sikhs got ready to attack the Durrani.

fighting raged furiously from morning till evening and the fierce courage of the Sikhs compelled the Shah to retire to Lahore during the night.\textsuperscript{24} Forster describes this battle in these words, "This event is said to have happened in October 1762 when the collected body of the Sicques nation amounting to sixty thousand cavalry had formed a junction at the ruins of Amritsar for the purpose of performing some appointed ceremony, and where they resolved, expecting attack, to pledge their national existence, on the event of a battle. Ahmad Shah, at that time encamped at Lahore, marched with a strong force to Amristar, and immediately engaged the Sicques; who roused by the fury of a desperate revenge, in sight also of the ground sacred to the founders of their religion, whose monuments had been destroyed by the enemy they were then to combat, displayed, during a bloody contest, which lasted from the morning until night an enthusiastic and fierce courage, which ultimately forced Ahmad Shah to draw off his army and retire with precipitation to Lahore.\textsuperscript{26}

Forster slightly doubts the reality of this event when he further writes: "Any probability of this event can only be reconciled by a supposition, that the army of Ahmad Shah had suffered some extraordinary reductions, previously to the period in which this occurrence is said to have happened."\textsuperscript{26}

John Malcolm\textsuperscript{27} and Jadunath Sarkar\textsuperscript{28} hesitate to believe that the Shah was routed by the Sikhs in his attack on Amristar in October 1762. But according to Hari Ram Gupta the main trend of Sikh history during our period in general and events following ghallughara in particular, coupled with the weak position of the Abdali on this occasion will convince the reader that the achievement of such a feat by the Sikhs was not outside the range of possibility.\textsuperscript{29} There was a total solar eclipse at 18 ghari of the day on the Katik Amavasva of 1819 Bikrami, October 17, 1762 and it became so dark during the day that the stars became visible in the sky.\textsuperscript{30}

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{24} James Browne, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 25-26; Forster, \textit{op.cit.}, I, pp. 279-80; Malcolm, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 100-01.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Forster, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 321-22.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Malcolm, pp. 100-01.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Jadunath Sarkar, \textit{op.cit.}, Vol. II, p. 491 footnote.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Hari Ram Gupta, \textit{History of the Sikhs}, II, p. 193 (footnote).
\item \textsuperscript{30} Sohan Lal Suri, I, p. 160; \textit{Delhi Chronicle} (MS., G.S.), p. 92.
\end{enumerate}
Before the Shah could march upon the Sikhs again they had left Amritsar, crossed the Satluj and slipped into the Lakhi Jungle. According to Ahmad Yadgar, the Shah one day marched towards Lakhi Jungle on a hunting expedition. A small body of Sikh horsemen appeared on the hunting ground and the Shah ordered them to be captured. Suddenly another body of the Sikh appeared on the scene and grappled with the Shah’s men. On approaching nearer, one Sikh horseman galloped his horse on the Shah but before he could deal a blow the Shah hit him by an arrow through the chest. Some of them fell under the swords of the Afghans, while the others giving them a slip, disappeared in the jungle.31

During these very days the Shah called Najib-ud-Daulah and Munir-ud-Daulah from the court of the Emperor to Lahore and made them undertake to pay a tribute of forty lacs of rupees a year to him.32

The Shah then made arrangements for the governments of Punjab, Kashmir and Sirhind. Kabul Mal was appointed governor of the Punjab, with headquarters at Lahore. Zain Khan was allowed to continue in Sirhind and Raja Ghumand Chand Katoch was to look after Kangra. Sa’adat Khan was allowed to continue in Jullundur Doab and Khwaja Ubaid Khan and Murad Khan were posted to Kalanaur and Bari Doab respectively. Rechna and Sind Sagar (in addition to the province of Peshawar) were placed under Jahan Khan and Nur-ud-Din Bamezei deputed to Kashmir.33

Ahmad Shah left Lahore for Afghanistan on December 12, 1762.34 During his return the Sikhs attacked him from such close quarters that, “he wondered at their boldness and looked at them in a surprised manner.” It is said that Abdali had not gone far when the Sikhs frightened Kabul Mal and replanted their military post at Lahore.35

According to Jadunath Sarkar Ahmad Shah Abdali’s wanton outrage on the holiest shrine of the Sikhs, more than anything else defeated his purpose of cowing the Sikhs for ever. Hitherto that sect

32. Delhi Chronicle, p. 92 (Ms., GS.); Jadunath Sarkar, II, p. 489.
had greatly multiplied its converts and drawn them closely together by the need of mutual protection against the oppression and exaction of the local governors of the decadent Mughal empire. And now Afghan sacrilege roused the Sikhs to their highest exertion and united them in the closest bond by the unquenchable thirst of a vengeance that was a sacred duty. The noblest and the basest passions of the human breast were united in a national resistance to the alien from beyond the Indus and his local associates. Durrani rule in the Punjab became impossible in future.  

Rise and Fall of Karorsinghia Misal

DR BHAGAT SINGH*

It is said that during the rule of Muhammad Shah I Sham Singh—a Sandhu jat of village Narli, dissatisfied with the treatment of his parents left his place and joined the derah of Kapur Singh Singhpuria, who was, at that time, up in arms against the Mughal Government of the Punjab. For a few days Sham Singh remained without arms and other equipment necessary for such a career. He called on Kapur Singh and took pahul (baptism) at his hands. He was also able to procure an old sword and also received a small horse from Sardar Kapur Singh. He started actively participating in the activities of the Dal Khalsa. All the Sikhs sallying out from Majha joined his derah.

In due course of time Sham Singh became one of the most prominent men of Kapur Singh’s derah. He formed a group of ten or fifteen men and managed five or six horses and independently started his activities. Shortly, he was able to gather around him about three hundred horsemen. He came to Doaba and carried out the programmes chalked out by the Dal Khalsa. He took certain places under his protection and later occupied the same.

Sham Singh was issueless. After his death in 1739 during Nadir Shah’s invasion his nephew (brother’s son) Karam Singh, who was a member of his derah, became his successor. Before joining the derah he took pahul at the hands of Diwan Darbara Singh. Under Karam Singh

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*Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Bute Shah, Tarikh-i-Punjab, IV, p. 216 (MS. Dr Ganda Singh’s personal collection, Patiala). According to Rattan Singh Bhangu, Sham Singh joined the derah of Mastan Singh from whom he took pahul. In due course of time he became the jathedar of that derah. Later on he affiliated his jatha to that of Kapur Singh. Mastan Singh was a close companion of Banda Singh who had made him a faujdar. He died fighting against the Muslims (Prachin Panth Parkash, p. 421, ed. 1939).

2. Rattan Singh Bhangu, Prachin Panth Parkash, p. 422.


the Misal progressed considerably. Besides making additions he was able to keep the possessions of Sham Singh intact. In due course of time Karam Singh also died without a son.5

Karora Singh

Karam Singh was succeeded by Karora Singh who was a Virk jat zamindar of Majha. He was also called Barqa after the name of his village Barki in Lahore district. He was a member of the Panjgarhia derah. He had taken baptism at the hands of Sham Singh. Karam Singh’s derah unanimously decided to appoint him as his successor.6

Karora Singh added more ilagas to his possessions as Hariana and Sham Churasi (now in Hoshiarpur district of Punjab). He collected an army of seven or eight thousand horsemen including that of his Misaldars.7

In those days the Raja of Dek Kahmer came to the Sikhs and asked for their assistance. He promised to give ten rupees per swar per day. With a view to providing military assistance to the Raja, Sardar Karora Singh led five thousand horsemen to his place. On the way, when the Sikh army encamped at Azimabad which is popularly known as Tarawari, the tehalias (menial servants) went out to bring grass or fodder for the horses. They began to cut the crops of the zamindars of Tarawari for their horses. The zamindars resisted the reaping of their crops. Karora Singh, with a few of his companions went to confront the zamindars. He died there as a result of a bullet shot fired at him by a zamindar.8 According to another version he was killed in 1761 in the battle of Tarori fighting against the Nawab of Kunjpura. He was issueless.

Sardar Baghel Singh

After the death of Karora Singh in A.D. 1761 (B.K. 1818) Baghel Singh was unanimously elected to head the Misal. Baghel Singh, a Dhaliwal jat,9 was the resident of Dhariwal which is situated adjacent to Jhabal near Amritsar. Some writers believe that he belonged to Malwa and his sister Sukhan was married at Jhabal where he lived.

8. Ibid., 217-18; Gian Singh, op. cit., p. 255.
On this account he began to be called Jhabalia.\textsuperscript{10} He was displeased with his brothers over cultivation and the payment of revenue to the government officials. Baghel Singh left his place and joined the \textit{derah} of Karora Singh.\textsuperscript{11} He took \textit{pahul} and became an active member of the Dal Khalsa. For sometime he served Karora Singh as his \textit{gadwai}.

In pursuance of Karora Singh's death-bed announcement that Baghel Singh would succeed to the Sardari of the Misal the latter assumed charge of the same. After having gone through the formalities of taking over the reins of the Misal Baghel Singh ordered their \textit{derah} at Tarawari to proceed further as scheduled. When the Sikh forces reached near Dek Kahmer, its Raja got frightened on the sight of the huge army. He feared that the presence of such a big army in his territory might cause tumults and disturbances there.\textsuperscript{12}

The Raja planned to fight against the Sikhs and obstruct their entry into his territory. The Sikhs demanded the stipulated amount, otherwise, they threatened to resort to plundering. Hearing this the Raja sent his vakils to Baghel Singh who requested him to send back his forces. Sardar Baghel Singh expressed his inability to do so. The Raja invited the Sardar in the fort and entertained him honourably and lavishly. He was given ten thousand rupees in cash and some valuable presents also. It is said that there was a skirmish also between the Sikhs and the forces of the Raja. In the fight Jassa Ahluwalia is said to have received two wounds by swords inflicted by the Raja's men Baghel Singh stayed in that area for a few days and then returned to Jullundur Doab, which earlier belonged to Karora Singh.\textsuperscript{13} More territory was brought under his occupation and he administered his areas very well.

Mian Mahmud Khan Rajput was the chief of Talwan. Formerly this place had been largely populated, and had very big and beautiful buildings. Rich \textit{shahukars} or money-lenders lived there.\textsuperscript{14}

Mahmud Khan maintained a force of three hundred horsemen. When Karora Singh visited the Mian every year or so he was each


\textsuperscript{11} Bute Shah, IV, p. 241.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 218.

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 219.

\textsuperscript{14} Ali-ud-Din Mufti, I, p. 94.
time presented with a horse by the latter. Karora Singh always supported Mahmud Khan in governing his territory. He also provided the Mian with protection from the attack of the Sikhs. After Karora Singh’s death, his successor Baghel Singh also extended protection to Mahmud Khan and received nazrana from him.

When Ahmad Shah Abdali visited the Punjab on his last invasion, the Sikhs, being numerically very small, left their places and sought asylum in their usual hiding places, Mian Mahmud Khan took possession of the Sarai of Nur Mahal. After Abdali’s return the Sikhs besieged the Sarai. The Mian sought help from Baghel Singh who sent his nephew Hamir Singh at the head of two or three thousand men to help the Mian. The joint action of the various Sikh leaders prevented the army of Hamir Singh to reach the Sarai. Hamir Singh was wounded at the hands of the Sikhs and the Sarai was occupied by them. Mian Mahmud returned to Taiwan. During this time Baghel stayed at Taiwan for six months.

Jassa Singh Ahluwalia wrote a confidential letter to Baghel Singh that Karora Singh had been always on the look out of occupying Taiwan but he could not do it due to the strong contingent of Mian Mahmud. Now as he (Baghel Singh) was in a better position he was advised to capture the place before it was occupied by some one else.

The proposal of the Ahluwalia Sardar encouraged Baghel Singh to devise a plan to take possession of Taiwan. He asked the Mian to give him a place where he could construct a fortress where an army could be kept to guard against the invaders. The Mian accepted the proposal and Baghel Singh built the fort in the course of a month. He set up his thana in the fort, but he did not occupy Taiwan till the life time of Mian Mahmud. As settled, Baghel Singh continued realising one fourth of the revenue of Taiwan.

In the district of Karnal, now in Haryana State, Baghel Singh made the town of Chhalondi his headquarter. He retained the possessions of Bist Jullundur and Hoshiarpur district. According to Kanaihya Lal, Baghel Singh had a strong and brave army of 12,000 horsemen.

16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., pp. 219-20.
18. Ibid., p. 220; Cf, Gian Singh, op.cit, p. 256.
Muhammad Hasan Khan of Jalalabad, who had forcibly admitted to his harem the daughter of a Brahman, was killed by Baghel Singh. On different occasions the Sardar attacked Aligarh, Khurja, Chandausi, Etawa, Farukhabad, Muradabad, Anup Shahr, Buland Shahar, Bajnaur, etc.  

Raja Amar Singh of Patiala was encroaching upon the territories of the other Sikhs. Baghel Singh was also deprived of some of his villages such as Lalru, Bhuni and Mullanpur. In collaboration with some of the other Sardars, who had suffered at the hands of the ruler of Patiala, Baghel Singh planned to attack the territories of Patiala house. Amar Singh was also joined by some other chiefs including the ruler of Nahan. The rival forces confronted each other at Ghuram, 23 kms south of Patiala, in 1769. Some of Baghel Singh's men secretly appeared outside Patiala and attacked the town but were driven back. Baghel Singh stepped up his activities against the territory of Amar Singh. This compelled the ruler of Patiala to yield. He sued for peace through his vakil Chain Singh. Amar Singh met Baghel Singh at Lahal village. Amar Singh got his son baptised by Baghel Singh and thus cemented his friendly relations with the latter. Amar Singh granted khilats to Baghel Singh's companions. Since then Baghel Singh continued rendering help to the Patiala house whenever need arose.  

Baghel Singh launched his first attack on Delhi on January 18, 1774 and "devastated Shahdara till mid-night, and departed with fifty children (boys) when there still remained an hour and a half of night." The Emperor tried to buy them off. He invited the Sikhs to join his service with a force of 10,000 horse and offered to allot to them the district of Shahbazpur for their maintenance. He also sent khilats (robes of honour) for the Sikh chiefs. 

In 1775, Baghel Singh attacked Delhi for the second time and went as far as Paharganj and Jaisinghpura. A battle was fought between the Mughals and the Sikh forces in the areas which now comprise New Delhi. 

In October 1779 the Delhi minister, Nawab Abdul Ahad, accompanied by Prince Farkhunda Bakht, attacked Patiala. There was severe
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fighting between the combined troops of Amar Singh and Tara Singh Gaiba on one side and the imperial forces on the other. The imperial forces emerged victorious. They laid siege to Patiala town on the 8th October 1779 but despite severe fighting the imperialists failed to take the fort of Patiala.

A little earlier the ruler of Patiala had invited the Majha Sikhs under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, promising to give one rupee per day per horseman. They immediately responded. "At that time Jassa Singh was at Batala. He immediately wrote to the Sikh Sardars not to delay any longer as Abdul Ahad had marched from Delhi into their country. Jai Singh, Hakikat Singh, Trilok Singh, Amar Singh Bagha, Amar Singh Kingra and the other Kanaihya Sardars were asked to came to Achal. ...They crossed the Satluj at "Talwan ka patan" where they were joined by Sada Singh, Tara Singh Kakar, Mohar Singh Nishanwala and his brother Anup Singh. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, Tara Singh Gaiba, Jodh Singh of Wazirabad, Phulkian chiefs of Jind, Nabha, Bhadaur and Malod also joined Raja Amar Singh.

When the news of the approach of the Sikh army rumoured to be two lakhs in number reached the Nawab, who was a timid and weak-willed man, he was terribly frightened. He consulted Baghel Singh who posed to be neutral in the whole affair and told him of the formidable force under Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, then encamped at Malerkotla. The Nawab, then, told Baghel Singh that he had been asked by the Emperor to return to Delhi immediately. Baghel Singh approved of this action. Baghel Singh suggested to the Nawab to bribe the Majha Sikh chiefs before his flight to Delhi. Abdul Ahad being awfully terrified, at once gave three lakh rupees, which he had realised from Desu Singh of Kaithal to Baghel Singh to be distributed among the Sikh chiefs. Baghel Singh paid 10,000 rupees to Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, 5,000 rupees to Tara Singh Gaiba, 7,000 rupees to Jai Singh Kanaihya and the rest of the money was appropriated to himself.

In February 1783, at the head of 60,000 troops the Sikhs marched towards Delhi under the leadership of Baghel Singh and Jassa Singh

26. Lepel Griffin, Rajas of the Punjab, p. 49.
Ahlulwalia. Ghaziabad, Bulandshahar and Khurja were attacked and plundered. According to Gian Singh, "When the Sikhs entered Khurja, the people ran away. The rich men of the town were tied to the pillars and compelled to disclose their hidden treasures. After the plunder Baghel Singh and Jassa Singh spread a cloth on the ground and asked the chiefs to give away one tenth of their booty in cash for the service of the Guru. An amount of one lakh rupees was collected and the money was sent to Harimandir at Amritsar."

Aligarh, Tundla, Hathras, Shikohabad and Farrukhabad were also sacked and huge quantities of spoils were acquired. A good deal of diamonds, pearls, gold, ornaments and many precious articles including a stick studded with diamonds worth Rs. 33,000, fell into the hands of Baghel Singh. The immense booty laden on camels, carts, horses and ponies escorted by 20,000 Sikhs was sent to the Punjab. All these articles came into the hands of the British at the time of escheat of Baghel Singh's estate, later on.

**Baghel Singh Enters Delhi**

At the head of 40,000 troops, Baghel Singh advanced towards Delhi in the beginning of March 1783. He lay encamped at Barari Ghat on the Jamuna, 16 kms north of Delhi, on March 8, 1783. With this place as his base Baghel Singh attacked Malka Ganj and Sabzi Mandi. Many people were killed at Mughalpura. Prince Mirza Shikoh tried to resist them near Qila Mahtabpur but he suffered a defeat. On March 9, Fazal Ali Khan's attempt to check them proved of no avail. The Sikhs passing through Ajmeri Gate sacked the area of Hauz Qazi. The government thought of recruiting more men for the army but the people who were much alarmed did not come forward to replenish the ranks of the army. Mirza Shafi and his brother Zain-ul-Abidin were expressly called to relieve the capital of the Sikh invaders. But the situation did not improve.

The Emperor, Shah Alam II, invited Begum Samru to Delhi for negotiations with Baghel Singh.

Begum Samru was the ruler of Sardhana, about 90 kms east of Delhi. Her original name was Zeb-un-nisa. She was the daughter of Asad Khan, a Muslim of Arab descent, settled at Kutana. She was born in

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1763. She was married to Reinhard, better known as Samru, a German adventurer who had received the jagir of Sardhana from Najaf Khan. After his death in 1778, she took over as the head of Sardhana. She maintained a force consisting of five battalions of infantry, a body of irregular horse and about 300 European officers and gunners with forty guns. Gifted with a masculine gallantry and a precise and accurate judgement she managed the affairs of her territory. “Contrary to the practice of women in this country, Begum Sumroo always wears a turban, generally of damson colour, which becomes her very much, and is put on with great taste.”

She was a very faithful and loyal subject of the Mughal Emperor and was at his beck and call. The Sikh Sardars seldom unheeded her request.

The Sikhs deposited their booty from Delhi at Majnu-ka-Tila under a strong guard. Just at this stage Jassa Singh Ramgarhia arrived at Delhi from Hisar hoping to get share in the spoils from the capital. On March 11, 1783 the Sikhs entered the Red Fort. The Emperor and his courtiers hid themselves in their private appartments. The Sikhs made Jassa Singh Ahluwalia sit on the throne and waved peacock feathers tied in a knot over his head and made him king. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia and other chiefs condemned this action and the Ahluwalia chief appreciated the feelings of the Sikhs chiefs regarding his assumption of the distinction of royalty. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia captured four guns and a large variegated slab of stone 6'x4'x0.75' in dimension. It is still preserved in the Ramgarhia Bunga at Amritsar.

Begum Samru reached the capital on March 12, 1783 and she was informed about the activities of the Sikhs by the Emperor and asked for her help in persuading the Sikhs to retire from Delhi and also spare Rohtak and Karnal from plunder. She immediately opened negotiations with Baghel Singh whose camp she visited. The Sardar readily agreed to make peace with the Emperor. The following terms were settled under the signatures of the Emperor and the royal seal.

Firstly, the bulk of the Sikh army would immediately return to the Punjab. Secondly, Baghel Singh would stay on in the capital with 4,000 troops. Thirdly, he was allowed to build seven Gurdwaras at the places connected with the Sikh Gurus in the city of Delhi. Fourthly,

his headquarters would be located in the Sabzi Mandi. Fifthly, to meet the expenses on the construction of the Sikh shrines and the maintenance of his troops Baghel Singh was permitted to charge six annas in the rupee (i.e., 37.5%) of all the income from octroi duties in the capital. Sixthly, the Sikhs would not misbehave in any way during their stay in the capital. Seventhly, the Gurdwaras were to be constructed as soon as possible but not beyond the current year under any circumstances. 34

Baghel Singh took over the charge of all the octroi posts as well as that of the Kotwali in Chandni Chowk. Five-eighth of the daily collection was punctually deposited in the government treasury every day. The Sikh horsemen patrolled the streets and the suburbs day and night and perfect peace and order was established in the city.

The main body of the Sikh forces retired from Delhi on March 12, 1783. The Sikhs were given a cash present of three lakh rupees for the kara prasad. With his contingent of 4,000 troops Baghel Singh remained at Delhi to build Gurdwaras. First he built a Gurdwara at Teliwara, a place where Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan, the wives of Guru Gobind Singh, had stayed during their visit to Delhi. 35 The second Gurdwara was constructed in Jaisinghpura where Guru Har Krishan had stayed in the house of Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur. 36 It is now called Gurdwara Bangla Sahib. Memorials were erected on the bank of the Jumuna where Guru Har Krishan, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan were cremated. 37 A Gurdwara was also built there.

Two places were connected with Guru Tegh Bahadur. One was at Kotwali where the Guru was martyred and the other was at Rikabganj where his headless body was secretly cremated by Lakh Singh Banjara. According to Rattan Singh Bhangu, mosques had been erected at both these places. Baghel Singh first planned to build a Gurdwara at Rikabganj and it could not be constructed without demolishing the mosque. This created a sensation among Muslims who, in a huge body, waited upon the Emperor. They represented that under no circumstances the mosque could be allowed to be demolished. The Emperor who had approved, in writing, the Sikh proposal of building a Gurdwara there referred the matter to Baghel Singh who agreed to meet the mulas and other prominent men. He convinced them of

34. Ibid., p. 258.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
the Sikh claim to the site and according to some he threatened them of dire consequences if they did not accept the genuine claim of the Sikhs. He secured written approval from them for dismantling the mosque and informed the Emperor accordingly. The wazir, then, gave orders for the demolition of the mosque. It is said that the Sikhs demolished the mosque in half a day. The Gurdwara was built there.

Baghel Singh took the help of an old lady Sakhan Mai (Mashkan)-a Muslim water-carrier woman, to trace the site of Guru Tegh Bahadur’s martyrdom. The place had been shown to her by her father who had washed the place after the Guru’s execution. The Muslims made preparations to offer resistance to Baghel Singh as a mosque had also been erected close to the site. Baghel Singh assured the Muslims that no harm would be done to the mosque. A portion of the wall was pulled down and, in the compound, the Gurdwara was allowed to be built.

A Gurdwara was also built at Majnu ka tila where Guru Nanak and Mardana and Guru Hargobind had stayed. The seventh Gurdwara was built in Moti Bagh where Guru Gobind Singh had stayed for some time. These Gurdwaras were endowed liberally by grants of a number of villages to every one of them.

The construction of all the Gurdwaras in Delhi was completed by Baghel Singh by the end of November 1783. Pul Mithai in Delhi was named after Baghel Singh who was very fond of sweets. An exhibition of sweets was held there. He gave prizes to the best sweet-makers. This place came to be named as Pul Mithai. He decided to retire from Delhi in the beginning of December. Baghel Singh could not plan to stay on in Delhi for various reasons. He had only a small force of 4,000 men with him at Delhi with which he could not control the civil population. Secondly, though the Sikhs were seasoned people in the technique of fighting they did not have any administrative experience. The Sikh jathas also lacked coordination among themselves. Thirdly, in the event of his continuing indefinitely in Delhi, there was every likelihood of losing his territories in the Punjab at the hands of the other Sardars who were keen to expand their possessions.

38. Ibid., pp. 436-37.
39. Ibid., pp. 437-38.
He thanked the Emperor for his government's cooperation in the building of the Gurdwaras and his permission to stay on in the capital for all these months. Till then, there was no meeting between the Emperor Shah Alam II and Baghel Singh. All the courtiers were happy with the behaviour of the Sardar and his men during their stay in Delhi. The Emperor was keen to have a meeting with Baghel Singh. According to Rattan Singh Bhangu, a royal messenger conveyed to the Sardar the Emperor's desire to see him. The Sardar told him that the meeting with the Emperor was not an easy matter. The Sikhs had pledged not to bow before any Mughal. Secondly, he would not go to the Emperor all alone. He would be accompanied by an armed contingent. Thirdly, while passing through the streets any unbecoming remark or action by the people in respect of the Sikhs would enrage them who could, then, go out of control. The Emperor accepted all his conditions and a meeting was arranged between Baghel Singh and Shah Alam II.\textsuperscript{41} Along the route, the inhabitants were asked to keep indoors and the butchers' shops were to remain closed for the day. A minister, a number of mace-bearers and announcers accompanied the Sikh procession\textsuperscript{42} which started from Sabzi Mandi. A body of Sikhs in arms riding on fine and decorated horses comprised a part of the procession. Baghel Singh fully armed followed his contingent sitting in a howdaw on an elephant. Having approached the Emperor's Durbar Baghel Singh and five to seven Sardars including Dulcha Singh and Sada Singh dismounted while the troops remained on horseback. They were led to the Diwan-i-Aam. Their guide performed obeisance on their behalf. The Sikhs shouted loudly their greetings of Sat Siri Akal. The Prime Minister offered a chair to Baghel Singh. Usual courtesies were exchanged between the Emperor and the Sardar.

In reply to a question Baghel Singh told the Emperor that although the Sikhs were divided into various jathas and Misals they got together in the face of a national danger forgetting their separate identities.\textsuperscript{43}

'It is said that the Emperor expressed a desire to see the Sikhs in the act of plundering. Baghel Singh gave a demonstration in a sugar cane field near the Red Fort on the bank of river Jamuna. Some of the Sikhs pulled up sugar canes, while the others forcibly snatched them leading to mutual scuffles.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{41} Rattan Singh Bhangu, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 438.
\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 439.
\textsuperscript{43} Gian Singh, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 259.
\textsuperscript{44} Rattan Singh Bhangu, pp. 440-41.
RISE AND FALL OF KARORSINGHIA MISAL

Before his departure from the Emperor’s court Baghel Singh was given a khilat, fully caprisoned elephant and a horse and a necklace of pearls. The other Sardars accompanying Baghel Singh were also given khilats Baghel Singh was granted 12.5 per cent. of the octroi duties of Delhi to be remitted to him at his headquarters at Chhalondi annually on the condition that he would prevent the Sikhs from attacking Delhi.45 He continued receiving that money till his death.46

In May 1783 Baghel Singh and Bhag Singh, at the head of their forces, crossed the Jamuna at the Buriya Ghat and realised their rakhi from many places in Si haranpur and Muzaffarnagar districts. There was some disagreement between them as regards the proper division of their shares which they settled later.

In the beginning of 1785 a large force of Sikhs, numbering about 30,000, under the leadership of Baghel Singh, Gurudit Singh and Jassa Singh Ramgarhia crossed the Jamuna and swept over the upper Doab with irresistible fury and ferocity. The Barha Sayyid town which lay right on their line of march suffered much. Zabita Khan to whom this territory belonged was unable to stem the tide and lay trembling within the ramparts of Ghausgarh. Miranpur, 32 kms south east of Muzaffarnagar, was particularly signalized for a victim of their wrath. They soon crossed over the Ganga into the country of Oudh.47

On January 13, 1785 Baghel Singh and his companions razed to the ground the villages of Barsi and Mahmudpur, inhabited by the Sayyids. They decided to attack Moradabad but they were advised to attack Chandausi, instead, as it lay uprooted. Banne Khan, the chief of the place, had retired, for fear of the Sikhs, to a distance of two days’ journey. His deputies Chhattu Lal and Sobharam had also left the town and bankers and merchants were removing their property to places of safety. Baghel Singh was told that Chandausi would bring them greater riches as it was a famous market place where 2,000 bankers and merchants had their business firms and where transaction of crores of rupees were carried on.48

Chandausi was attacked on 14th January 1783. After a feeble resistance the guards were killed and the Sikhs “rushed in and set fire to all the houses and markets and plundered all the property worth lakhs

48. Ibid., p. 199.
of rupees." After devastating the town for two days they retired on the 15th January.

Towards the end of January, Harji Ambaji, an agent of Sindhia, arrived in the Sikh camp to negotiate with Baghel Singh and his companions for peace on behalf of his master. But the negotiations lingered on for some time. On the 30th March 1785 a provisional treaty was concluded between the Sikhs and the Marathas, according to which the friends and enemies, and the prosperity and adversity of each were to be mutual. No jealousy or difference was to subsist between them and God was witness that there would be no deviation. The contracting parties were to unite their forces to repress any disturbances that might be excited by their enemies, etc.

Ghulam Qadir Khan Rohilla son of Zabita Khan was growing hostile to the Emperor of Delhi. On 30th August 1787 the Emperor wrote a letter to Baghel Singh asking him "to seize all the territories of Ghulam Qadir Khan, as we have appointed him our agent of that country." Ghulam Qadir entered Delhi on the 5th September. The Emperor found it impossible to resist him. He conferred upon the Rohilla chief the office of Mir Bakhshi with the title of Amir-ul-Umara. The Emperor desired of Baghel Singh to fight against Ghulam Qadir but the Sardar joined the latter. Through his letter Baghel Singh informed the Emperor that he had done so because Sindhia had not cared for them. Later the Sikhs turned against Ghulam Qadir also and ravaged his territory.

When George Thomas directed his campaign against Jind (November 1798-May 1799). Bibi Sahib Kaur of Patiala was joined by Baghel Singh on her march with forces, to the aid of Jind.

Baghel Singh had a very brilliant career of military activities to his credit and undoubtedly, he was one of the most prominent and outstanding Sikh chiefs of his age.

Baghel Singh remained in the districts of Panipat and Delhi for twelve years and gave a neat and clean administration to the areas under him.49 The territories of Jullundur Doab and areas adjoining the Shivalik hills were governed by Hamir Singh, son of Baghel Singh’s sister. After Hamir Singh’s death Baghel Singh came to the Jullundur Doab. He brought more territories under his control. He placed the zamindar of Alawalpur, Rai Alias Kot of Jagraon and the zamindars

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in the areas on the foot of the Shivalik hills under fixed annual tribute and made Hariana (presently in Hoshiarpur district) his headquarter.50

Baghel Singh had, throughout, maintained good relations with most of the Sardars of the Misals. He had great regards for Jai Singh Kanaihya whom he always gave unstinted support whenever need arose. Even after Jai Singh’s death Baghel Singh continued supporting the Kanaihyas. A few examples of his support to the Kanaihyas may not be out of place here.

When Saif Ali Khan, the Mughal Thanedar of Kangra, died the fort of Kangra was placed in the hands of Sehaj Ram, a hazari, and Jamadar Zorawar Singh. Sansar Chand Katoch, finding himself incapable of snatching the fort from them, solicited Jai Singh Kanaihya’s help. Jai Singh called Baghel Singh and asked him to lead a campaign to Kangra accompanied by his son Gurbakhsh Singh to help Sansar Chand. Diplomatic as Baghel Singh was, he asked the new custodians of the fort to get subsistence allowance from Sansar Chand and vacate the fort for him. They agreed on written assurance to that effect from the Katoch chief and left the fort which was occupied by Baghel Singh and Gurbakhsh Singh and not handed over to Sansar Chand. The Kangra fort passed under the control of the Kanaihyas54 and Baghel Singh did not claim any share from it.

When Jaimal Singh, son of Haqiqat Singh Kanaihya, was imprisoned by Fateh Singh, son of Mehtab Singh, supported by Gulab Singh Bhangi, Baghel Singh raised a serious objection to it and demanded his immediate release52 which was later done.

In the expulsion of Jassa Singh Ramgarhia from his territories Jai Singh Kanaihya was substantially helped by Baghel Singh. The Karorsinghia chief was given a share from the territory from which the Ramgarhia chief was dispossessed.53

When Jai Singh Kanaihya visited Amritsar in A.D. 1784 on the occasion of Diwali, Baghel Singh also reached there on the invitation of the Kanaihya chief.54

In B.K. 1851 (A.D. 1796) when Rani Sada Kaur Kanaihya besieged Jassa Singh Ramgarhia in the fort of Miani, situated on the banks of river Beas, Baghel Singh was on the side of the Rani.55

50. Ibid., pp. 220-21.
52. Ibid., pp. 280-81.
54. Ibid., p. 277.
55. Ibid., p. 281.
After shifting to Hariana (Hoshiarpur) Baghel Singh lived only for two years and died in B.K. 1859 (A.D. 1802).\(^{56}\) He ruled his territories nearly for sixty years.\(^{57}\) Since he had no son to succeed him a vacuum was created in his state. The law and order situation in his principalcy suffered a setback. Baghel Singh’s two widows, Ram Kaur and Rattan Kaur, looked after their territories for some time.\(^{58}\) Ram Kaur, the elder Sardarni, maintained her control over the district of Hoshiarpur from which a revenue of two lakh rupees accrued annually and Sardarni Rattan Kaur, the younger one, continued to be in possession of Chhalondi, fetching an annual revenue of three lakh rupees. When the British proceeded towards Satluj Rattan Kaur saved the *parganas* of Behlolpur and Chhalondi by paying a *nazrana* of five thousand rupees.\(^{59}\)

Sometime later Ranjit Singh usurped Rattan Kaur’s territory of Khurdin which yielded an annual revenue of one lakh rupees and handed it over to Jodh Singh of Kalsia and gave the *pargana* of Behlolpur to his servant Vir Bhan.\(^{60}\)

Jodh Singh, born in 1751, was the son of Baghel Singh’s friend and associate, Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh (1710-1775), the founder of the Kalsia family. After Baghel Singh’s death in 1802 Jodh Singh declared himself to be the head of Karorsinghia house. Jodh Singh helped Baghel Singh in the battles of Jalalabad, Bharatpur, Talwan and Ghuram.\(^{61}\) Jodh Singh was a man of great ability. He conquered Chichroli and took possession of Dera Bassi from Khazan Singh. Lotal and Acharak had encroached upon Patiala and Nabha territory; but Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala married his daughter Karam Kaur to Hari Singh, son of Jodh Singh, in 1803 and thus saved himself from a strong neighbour. In 1807 Hari Singh fought under Ranjit Singh at the siege of Naraingarh and was rewarded with estates at Budala, Kaneri and Chubbal. He died during the siege of Multan in 1817 and Karorsinghia territories were absorbed into the Kalsia family. His elder son, Sobha

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57. Khushwaqat Rai, p. 70.
Singh, held the estate till his death in February 1858. Sobha Singh and his son Lehna Singh (1858-69) remained loyal to the British and Lehna Singh's son Bishan Singh (1869-1883) inherited an estate worth Rs. 1,30,000 per annum, with a population of 62,000. Bishan Singh was succeeded by Jagjit Singh (1883-86), Ranjit Singh (1886-1908), Ravisher Singh (1908-January 1947) and Karam Sher Singh (Jan. 1947-May 1948) when Kalsia territories joined Patiala and East-Punjab States Union. By 1948 the population of the Kalsia State rose to 75 thousand and income to Rs. 10 lakhs.

There was one Sukhu Singh Pohli resident of village Rai. Fed up with the ill-treatment of his brothers Sukhu Singh left his village Rai which was situated near the Afghan town of Kasur. He met Baghel Singh and received baptism at his hands and became the Sardar's attendant (garwai). He, soon became a Ghurcharra and was one of the prominent followers of the Sardar.

When Baghel Singh moved over to Panipat he made Sukhu Singh the chief of the territories of Rohtak, Jind and Gohana. He was provided with the necessary force. Sukhu Singh ameliorated considerably the administration of that territory. He carried fancy in his head to become independent of Baghel Singh. The Sardar called him into his presence. Sukhu Singh refused to come and became a rebel. Baghel Singh acted diplomatically and pleased him with his practical wisdom. He again called him for interview. After a couple of days Sukhu Singh was reprimanded and imprisoned. He was kept in captivity for five or six days and his possessions were declared as confiscated. Then, he showed his pardon and conferred a doshala (shawl) and a horse on him and his ilaqa was restored to him. After Baghel Singh's death Sukhu Singh went to Hariana to mourn the death of the Sardar. Finding things in disorder in the Karorsinghia House Sukhu Singh declared himself to be Baghel Singh's successor. All the misaldars and tabedars of Baghel Singh accepted Sukhu Singh as their chief. The Sardarnis disagreed over this issue. Later Shkhu Singh joined the elder Sardarni and all misaldars sided with the younger one. This

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62. Lepel Griffin, Rajas of the Punjab, p. 71, Fn. 1 (1873); Muhammad Latif, History of the Punjab, p. 324 (1891).
64. Bute Shah, IV, p. 221.
65. Ibid.
resulted in great harm to the Misal. Some of the misaldars revolted and declared themselves independent of the Sardar of the Misal. Sukhu Singh entered the fort of Talwan. The territory that was under Mehmud Khan also went out of the control of the Karorsinghias, and fell in the hands of Tara Singh Gaiba. Later this area passed under the control of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The elder widow of Baghel Singh died at her husband's headquarter—Hariana. After her death the town of Hariana and the adjoining areas were taken over by Ranjit Singh. He also took possession of her movable property as elephants, horses, domestic articles, etc.

When Rattan Kaur died in B.K. 1905 (A.D. 1848) the British occupied her possessions of Chhalondi, etc. Huge amount of her wealth in the form of cash, ornaments, invaluable diamonds and many costly articles were confiscated by the English. Thus came to an end the Misal of Sardar Baghel Singh who had built and raised it to a high level of glory.

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66. Ibid., pp. 221-22.
67. Ibid., p. 222.
68. Ahmad Shah Batalia, Appendix, p. 34; Khushwaqt Rai, pp. 70-71.
The Battle for Attock 1813

Lt. Col. Gulcharan Singh (Retd.)*

The Chhachh plain, centring about Hazro, is the most fertile and the richest portion of the present district of Attock (now in Pakistan). This area, in the north, is marked by Gandgarh hills, and in the south is shut in by a "bank of pure sand;" in the west lies the Indus and in the east are the Taxila hills. Till the arrival of Muslims, this area was Buddhist. It has seen many an invader pass through, e.g., such personalities as Alexander the Great, Mahmud of Ghazni, Tamurlane, Babur, Nadar Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali.

The first known battle that took place on these plains was the one fought between Mahmud Ghaznavi, the eldest son of Sabuktgin, and Raja Jaipal. Mahmud Ghaznavi, who had heard of the wealth and splendour of India and was confident of the bravery of his troops, marched at the head of 10,000 horse to invade India. On the maira between Nowshehra and the Indus, the invader was met by Raja Jaipal of Lahore with a force comprised 12,000 horse, 30,000 foot and 300 elephants. A fierce battle took place on 27th November, 1001 A.D.1 Raja Jaipal was defeated and he with fifteen of his principal chiefs was taken prisoner. Mahmud occupied Attock and acquired considerable wealth and great fame. The Pathan who had sided with Jaipal were punished; they were converted to Islam and henceforward supported Mahmud in all his subsequent battles.

The following year, Mahmud released the aged Jaipal, who, unable to bear the humiliation, resorted to self-immolation.

Jaipal was succeeded by his son Anandpal. In 1008, Mahmud Ghaznavi launched another attack on the Panjab for which he had made extensive preparations. Anandpal also advanced towards the Indus; enroute he was joined by the Ghakhars—the bravest and the strongest tribe. The two armies met on plains of Chhachh. Mahmud was surprised to see such a large enemy army, so he entrenched himself and awaited

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*196, Model Town, Jalandhar City.
1. Peshawar District Gazetteer, 1897-98, p. 50. Tarikh Yamini, reproduced in The History of India as told by its own historians, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II, p. 26. According to Latif, the battle took place during August 1001 (History of the Panjab, p. 80); Sita Ram Kohli puts it in 1000 A.D. (Ranjit Singh, p. 125); V. A. Smith is for 1001 (Oxford History of India, p. 206).
an attack. For forty days both the armies lay in wait, each expecting the other to take the initiative.

At last, Mahmud sent forward a column of archers to draw the enemy out of their entrenchments. The Ghakhars closed with the archers, threw them into confusion, chased them to their entrenchments and killed many of the enemy. The action then became general and the Mahmud's army found it difficult to stand. At this critical moment the Raja's elephant got frightened: the animal turned about and fled. The Panjabis thinking their leader was retiring, lost heart and started falling back. The adversary gained courage and pushed back the Panjabis and then defeated them. It is said that 20,000 of the Panjabis were massacred. Thence onwards, for nearly eight centuries the Afghan hordes kept on invading India unchecked. And it was left to another and a great Panjabi—Maharaja Ranjit Singh—to recover the territory lost about eight centuries earlier, and not only did he check these invasions but turned the tide in the opposite direction.

In 1812, Kashmir was jointly captured by the Sikhs and Afghans; but Wazir Fateh Khan of Kabul did not honour the terms settled before launching the campaign and had refused to share the Kashmir booty with Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This act of faithlessness on the part of the Wazir had annoyed Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was now bent upon avenging it; he, therefore, decided to hit the Afghans at their most sensitive, and, like a great strategist went for the vulnerable spot of the Afghans, i.e., Attock. With this aim in view, Ranjit Singh opened negotiations with Jahandad Khan, the Governor of Attock, a brother of Ata Muhammad Khan, recently ousted Governor of Kashmir. Jahandad, fearing his own fate at the hands of Wazir Fateh Khan who had recently won a victory in Kashmir, agreed to surrender the fort of Attock to Lahore and also promised to pay one lakh of rupees as the arrears of pay of the Afghans employed in the fort. The fort was thus occupied by Daya Singh during early March 1813. And Jahandad Khan

2. "Victory seemed to be within grasp of the Hindus when it was snatched from their hands by one of those unlucky accidents which have so often determined the fate of Indian battles." (V.A. Smith, The Oxford History of India, p. 206)

3. It is said that a "deep intrigue" was in progress, which came to light after the Kashmir expedition jointly launched by Wazir Fateh Khan and Ranjit Singh. That Jahandad Khan, fearing his inability to resist the Wazir's highhandedness, had started correspondence with Ranjit Singh. Consequently the latter had, before leaving Rohtas after his meeting with the Wazir, left a force under Daya Singh in the vicinity of the Indus, in order to occupy the fort when an occasion so offered itself. (Prinsep, Ranjit Singh, pp. 95-6.)
was granted a jagir in the Wazirabad area. The fort was further reinforced from Lahore. Faqir Aziz-ud-Din and Diwan Devi Das were also despatched with this force, to arrange settlement of the country around Attock. Besides, the following stores lying in the fort came into the possession of the Lahore Darbar:

(a) Grains — 3,510 maunds
(b) Ammunition, etc. — 439 "
(c) Rock Salt — 235 "
(d) 70 pieces of cannon, mortars, Swivles, etc.

From the strategic and political point of view it was very important to occupy the Attock fort; and the punishment of the Wazir for his treachery in Kashmir was a valid excuse for this action. Moreover, in order to check the Afghan invasions into the Panjab, it was necessary to hold this "gate-way" this "sentinel of India." The Wazir protested and asked Ranjit Singh to vacate the fort. But the Maharaja, in a letter (written in 1813) to Fateh Khan, reminded him of the terms of the Rohtas agreement settled prior to the launching of the Kashmir campaign, and asked him to honour these before the handing over to him of the Attock fort could be considered. He wrote:

"Get the fort of Multan evacuated and surrender it to the Noble Sarkar, establish and reorganise the government of the Noble Sarkar over one-third of the country of Kashmir and also yield one-third of whatever treasure, property and other things have been seized from Kashmir in accordance with the terms of the agreement."

On this, the Wazir decided to take the fort by force. As he was elated by his easy conquest of Kashmir, the Wazir left his brother Azim Khan in charge of Kashmir, and himself accompanied by Dost Muhammad Khan, Duni Beg Khan and Samad Khan marched towards Attock. He thought this task too to be an easy one. He halted his force in the area of Gandghar, about 30 kilometres from Attock. Here, he collected more Afghans to participate in the coming jihad. Simultaneously, Mahmud Shah's troops under Shahzada Ayub and Abbas had also advanced from Peshawar and halted on the western bank of Indus. As all the boats on the Indus river, in the vicinity of Attock, were in the hands of the Lahore troops, this force could not cross the river and join the Wazir.

The Afghan army was not strong enough to lay siege to the fort; and, during the negotiations, reinforcements continued coming in from Lahore. At last, in May, Dost Muhammad with 4,000 horsemen tried to cut off the fort’s lines of communication with Lahore. A vanguard was despatched from Lahore to restore these communications. This detachment under the command of Ram Singh was, however, defeated at Hasan Abdal, a town lying between Rawalpindi and Attock on the main Imperial route from Lahore to Kabul.

The main body under Diwan Mohkam Chand, despatched from Lahore reached Rawalpindi in the first week of June. Thence, the Diwan marching via Shahderi (Texila) advanced towards Hasan Abdal reaching there by the middle of June. Leaving a detachment here, for the security of his rear, the Diwan resumed his advance and halted at a distance of about nine to ten kilometres from the Wazir’s force. The two opposing forces met on the plains of Chhachh, a few kilometres from Attock, and lay there opposite each other for a few weeks.®

During this period frequent skirmishes took place between the small parties of the contestants. One day, Sikh party during their reconnaissance sighted the enemy camp; they attacked it and a fierce battle took place which lasted the whole day without producing any tangible results. The clever Mohkam Chand had avoided a general battle and waited till the Afghans were exhausted of their supplies. Meanwhile, he had manoeuvered his force in such a way that he placed himself between the Afghans and Indus; thus he cut off the Afghans’ only water supply available there, and also threatened their rear.

The Diwan with his personality, initiative, energy and resourcefulness had changed the situation in his own favour. He was now determined to give fight; so he deployed his force for the battle, about seven kilometres from the fort of Attock. He deployed his forces in the form of a bow; he placed his infantry and artillery in the centre and slightly ahead of both the wings formed by cavalry. He placed himself behind the centre of the line, and his reserves (to act as arrow) composed of cavalry and artillery were located behind his own position. The artillery was commanded by Mian Ghaus Khan.

The Afghan vanguard was composed of the Mulkia Musalmans; behind it was the Afghan cavalry under Dost Muhammad Khan, the

®. According to S. R. Kohli it was for three months. (Ranjit Singh, p. 124.)
Wazir's brother, who later became famous as the Amir of Kabul. The Wazir himself commanded their infantry and the artillery element.

By his clever moves, the Diwan compelled the Wazir to launch the attack, which took place on 13 July, 1813. The Mulkias left their position and opened the attack followed by a brilliant cavalry charge led by Dost Muhammad Khan. Both sides were supported by their respective artillery. The Sikhs put up a bold resistance and the assault was checked; the Afghans had to beat a retreat after a great loss. The Afghans again rallied and put in a second assault; this time the Sikh line was broken. The Sikhs lost some guns and their infantry was beginning to give way, when the Sikh cavalry dismounted (utara) and fought with swords. The Sikh artillery also took heavy toll of the Afghans. Considering it as an opportune moment, the Diwan, who was watching the battle, left his elephant mounted a horse, personally led his reserves and fell upon the disorganised Afghans. Hand-to-hand fighting took place with heavy losses on both sides. (During this period the artillery remained silent.) Noon heat and the arms of the Sikhs gave tough time to the Afghans; the latter were without water to slake their thirst, whereas the Sikhs had water and had also occupied a position of advantage. The Afghans were compelled to retire; Wazir Fateh Khan fled the field followed by his men. The Afghans were pursued and killed by the Sikhs and driven away across the Indus. Dost Muhammad was seriously wounded. Many Afghans were drowned in the Indus, and a large number were made prisoners. According to the Diwan, the Afghans had lost about 3,000 killed. The victory for the Sikhs was complete, the credit for which goes to the superb generalship of Diwan Mohkam Chand.

A banker's agent had described this battle in these words:

6. Prinsep (Ranjit Singh, p. 99) and Cunningham (History of the Sikhs, p. 138) agree with this date; according to Baba Prem Singh the battle took place on two days, i.e., 12th and 13th July, 1813 (Sikh Raj de Usraie, p. 141); N. K. Sinha puts it on 26th, 1813, and supporters it with extracts from some Poona letters. (Ranjit Singh, p. 50).
7. It is believed that some “evil-disposed persons” reported to the Wazir that Dost Muhammad along with his division had been made prisoners.” On the other hand, the Wazir was told by somebody that his brother Dost had fallen, on which the Wazir retired. (Burnes, Journey into Bokhara, Vol. III, pp. 238-39.)
8. According to Amar Nath, 2,000 Afghans were killed. (Zafar Nama-i-Ranjit Singh, p. 73.)
“Early in the morning of the 11th of this month (Ashar) Diwan Mohkam Chand and other chiefs of the army gather together and marched towards the fort of Attock with the intention of supplying rations of grain. From the other side Dost Mohammad Khan, a brother of Sardar Fateh Khan Wazir, and other Sardars, who had arrived near the Bawli (well) at about a distance of one and a half kos, showed their readiness to plunge into battle. It was also mentioned that the Duranis made a sudden attack and the artillery and swivels were fired from this side and that after a great deal of fighting and killing the enemy felt that they could not withstand the shock and took to flight, that most of the enemy was drowned in the river Attock.”

The Afghans left behind numerous tents, many horses and camels, considerable quantity of weapons including seven light guns out of which two were in good condition, and a large stock of wheat. This all came into the Sikh hands.

“Possession is nine-tenth of law,” and especially once a strategic point, as was the case with the fort at Attock, has been secured, it is always a difficult problem to eject the enemy by force. Although tactically a defensive battle, but strategically it was an offensive operation. The yellow Sikh Standard remained fluttering on the Attock fort.

This was the first pitched battle between the Sikhs and the Afghans; it was fought to decide the issue of possession of the fort of Attock. The battle was significant in that it was the first real Panjabi victory over the Afghans “who from this time began to entertain a dread of their (Sikhs) prowess.” The superiority of the Sikh arms was established which led to considerable consequences favourable to the Sikhs. Secondly, and the most important, that the formidable fort of Attock which had been taken away from Raja Jaipal in 1001 A.D. by Mahmud Ghazni, was restored to its rightful owners—the Panjabis. Thirdly, the Sikh sway was extended right upto the Indus; the whole territory of the fertile Chhachh plain came under the Lahore Darbar. The Afghan power on the eastern side of the Indus crumbled, which enabled Ranjit Singh to consolidate his power in this area, and it ever remained

9. Quoted in Ranjit Singh by N.K. Sinha, pp. 50-1; Hugel, also, has described the battle in a similar manner. (Travels.)
with the Maharaja. Fourthly, it liberated northern India from the Pathan and Afghan menace and also ended their political power in India. It not only checked the continuous invasions from the northwest, but diverted these into the opposite direction Hugel writes:

“Sad is it to think that this same plain has been for the last 800 years the territory where fanatical and furious barbarians, whose faith is a cloak for every crime, have held uncontrolled sway. But these days are now almost at an end, and we may look hopefully forward to the time when expeditions from the east to the west will finally subdue the remains of so baneful a power. To the Sikhs now stretching to the Indus, will succeed the hosts of England, who will unite this country to their enormous empire.”

Fifthly, the Attock fort enabled Ranjit Singh to closely watch the Afghan activities west of the Indus and also provided him with a base for further operations into the Peshawar Valley. But, the moral effect of this victory over the Afghans was worth even more than the fort of Attock.

On the other hand, defeat of the Sikhs would have been disastrous to the Maharaja. It would have injured his sway over the Panjab as his hold over it had not till then been firmly established. The Afghan victory would have meant the fall of Attock into Afghan hands; the Muhammadan Chiefs of Jhang and Sindsagar Doab would have again acknowledged the supremacy of Kabul. The victorious Wazir with the Kashmir resources at his disposal and with Peshawar and Attock in his possession would have marched towards the east to win more victories and to occupy more territory. The Sikh defeat here would have meant what the Marathas’ defeat in the Third Battle of Panipat had meant to the latter. Consequently, the Panjab would not have seen the peace and prosperity that it enjoyed during Ranjit Singh’s reign.

The Afghan defeat caused a slur on the Wazir’s reputation; he was even reproached by the Durrani Sardars. In order, therefore, to make up for this set back the Wazir, during the last months of the year 1813, once again advanced towards the Indus with the intention of going for Multan. The Multan Chief approached Ranjit Singh who

12. Travels, p. 223.
promised all support against the Wazir. The latter, fearing another showdown with the Sikhs wisely declined to pursue the venture.

The moral affect of this victory over the Afghans was worth even more than the fort of Attock. ¹⁴

APPENDIX

The Attock Fort

The fort of Attock was built by Akbar the Great in 1581 A.D. to dominate the passage over the Indus river, and to secure his kingdom from the restless frontiemen. It is situated on a height on the left (i.e., the eastern) bank of the Indus and was built under the supervision of Khawaja Shams-ud-Din Khwafi.¹⁵ The fort is constructed in the form of parallelogram with its shorter sides about 400 yards each and the other sides about the double of these. The walls are of polished stone. Hugel who visited the Attock fort in December 1355, describes it as follows:

"The fortress is built on the declivity of a mountain, and is very spacious, forming a parallelogram, or rather a polygon, on most uneven ground, in some placed reduced to a rectilinear shape, one side of it stretching along the river from north to south. The principal gate is on the north; the walls are high and strong, and surmounted with battlements, but there are no advanced works. In the interior, a third part is rendered habitable for four thousand people, and contains a bazar."¹⁶

On the Lahori gate of the fort, there is fixed a marble slab with the following inscription dating 1583 A.D. (991 Hijri):

"Akbar is King of the Kings of the earth.

Great is God and magnificent is his glory."

The fort had no well inside; water was supplied from the river by means of a passage called Abduzd, "which communicates with the river through a bastion about fifty feet high from the surface of the water."¹⁷ The water supply in the fort has been described by Hugel in the these words:

"The reservoir belonging to this fort is well worthy of remark. Its depth is from forty to fifty feet, its circumference

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¹⁵ According to Olaf Caroe, the supervision of the construction was entrusted to Raja Birbal (*The Pathans*, p. 207).
about twenty-five feet, and the river fills it as it flows. On the side of the river, the walls are only eight feet above high water; at present they are as much as fifty-eight above the dry bed.”

Its location, the credit for the selection of which goes to Alexander the Great, is of great importance from the military as well as commercial point of view. It dominates the crossing place on this route which has been followed almost by all the invaders to India from the northwest. Hence it has been called the “key to the frontier” or the “Gateway of India.” The armies of Alexander, Taimur and Nadir Shah had crossed the Indus at this point in different ages. During his time, Ranjit Singh carried out many improvements in the fort. This is the only place where the river is so calm and where in 1883 the road and rail bridges were constructed and the main trunk road and railway to Peshawar and Afghanistan cross the river at this point.

Opposite the Attock fort, on the right (western) bank of the Indus is another fort of Khairabad, “the abode of safety.” This, also was built by Akbar.

Claude Auguste Court—An Officer in Lahore Durbar

Devinder Kumar Verma*

Claude Auguste Court, a Frenchman,1 was the lesser known but "the most respectable of all the French officers in Ranjit Singh's service."2 He was born on 26 September 1793 at Grasse, France. In 1812, at the age of 19 years, he entered the Ecole Military Politechnic of Paris and in 1813 he joined the 68th Infantry Regiment of Napoleon's army, as a commissioned officer.3 He was a courageous, brave and able officer. During his service with the French Army, he took part in the campaigns of 1813, 1814 and finally of Waterloo in 1815. In one of the skirmishes at Halle in 1813, he was wounded also. In 1818, he resigned from his job as he understood that there were no future prospects for officers appointed by Napoleon.

Soon after his resignation, he entered the service of Mohammad Ali Mirza, the Shah of Persia. It was here that he came into contact with Avitabile, who was already there. They had heard about Ventura and Allard, who were leading a prosperous life in the service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab. On hearing from Ventura they also made up their mind to seek fortune in the Punjab. Thence, both of them left Persia together and passing through Kabul reached Lahore on 26 February 1827.5

In the third decade of the 19th century, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was

* Lecturer, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.
1. According to G. Grey and H. L. C. Garrett, he was a Spaniard but actually he was from Southern France.
at the zenith of his power. He was in the process of reforming his army. Although his infantry and cavalry were well reformed but the artillery was not up to the mark. Court, who had considerable talent and scientific attainments, came to him just at the time when the Maharaja was thinking of reforming his artillery. He was employed by the Maharaja after thorough investigation and was given the charge of Sikh artillery. He proved himself to be an efficient artillery commander and ordnance officer. The considerable improvement in the Maharaja's artillery has been attributed to Court's efforts, who was entirely devoted to his professional duties. He was the most conspicuous figure in the artillery. Grey and Garrett point out that "Court was also given an infantry battalion, but, in addition, became the ordnance officer of the Khalsa Army, a position for which his scientific acquirements admirably suited him." According to Payne, "General Court commanded the Gorkha regiment,"

Court, like many other Europeans in the service of the Maharaja, also agreed to comply with the usual restrictions, such as to eschew eating beef, abstain from smoking, to keep beard, etc., etc.

His pay was fixed at rupees 2500 a month but in the beginning he was given only rupees 500 per month.

In the year 1829, Court married a Muslim girl. He loved her from the core of his heart. For her personal use he got constructed a beautiful mosque in a corner of his palace. But he could not enjoy the married life for a long period. She died in 1837. Court got constructed a tomb in her memory. Then he married a Kashmiri girl, who became Christian later on.

There were already four big gun foundaries in Lahore for casting guns and manufacturing the shells. These foundaries were under the state control. One of these was under the supervision of Mian Qadir Bakhsh and Sardar Anup Singh. Mian Qadir Bakhsh was an eminent engineer

of the period and the Maharaja had great regard for him. He was sent by the Maharaja to Ludhiana at State expense to receive training in gunnery. After getting this training he wrote a book on the subject.\(^\text{14}\) The second foundary was under the control of Sardar Sarup Singh and Jawahar Mal at Shahdara. The third was under the charge of Sardar Sobha Singh at Mazung and the fourth was under the control of Sardar Nahar Singh. Another important person connected with the manufacture of guns was Sardar Lehna Singh, who was an original inventor and who cast many beautiful guns.\(^\text{15}\)

From the very beginning Maharaja Ranjit Singh was fond of guns and had been collecting the same. Although he fully knew the importance of artillery but till 1827 he had no powerful artillery on account of his limitations and moreover there was none in his Durbar to improve it. After 1827, Court transformed the regular artillery into a strong weapon of war on the same lines as the infantry.\(^\text{16}\)

In 1831, Court was given the charge of reforming the gun factories. He worked very hard in this respect and his efforts yielded much success. The Maharaja being fully satisfied with his work promoted him to the rank of General in 1836.

Court worked in collaboration with Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia. Lehna Singh was also an eminent engineer and skilful designer of ordnance. He improved the ordnance considerably. He manufactured some very beautiful and effective guns. The result was that "the guns were well cast and cartridges were in good repair."\(^\text{17}\)

Sir Henry Fane, who came to Lahore in 1838 to attend the marriage of Nau Nihal Singh, grandson of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, reviewed the Lahore artillery, and said, "Monsieur Court has brought his artillery and musketry to great perfection, the latter being quite as good as those of the Company, with the advantage of being lighter."\(^\text{18}\)

General Court undertook the work of reorganisation of the entire top-khana on the modern lines. The old system of attaching guns with infantry battalions was discontinued, and this arm was re-


\(^{15}\) Ibid.


organised into the following branches:

(a) **Top-Khana Jinsi** or mixed batteries of *Gavi* (driven by bullock) *aspi* (driven by horses and mules), *filli* (driven by elephants) and hobob (howitzers).

(b) **Top-Khana Aspi** comprising of purely horse batteries.

(c) **Zamuraks** and **Ghubaras** (camel swivels and mortars). These, later, were organised into *dera* (camp) called *Dera-i-Zambur-Khana*.

The basic artillery unit was the battery. The number of guns in a battery varied as under:

(a) Jinsi battery—10 to 25 guns, sometimes more.

(b) Aspi—8 guns.

(c) Dera Zambur-Khana—about 60 swivels.\(^{19}\)

Art of cannon founding under the supervision of Court was revived at Lahore. Guns of superior cast and brass shells\(^{20}\) were manufactured. It reached excellence quite equal, if not superior, to that of the English guns which formed their main models. Even the officers of the East India Company wondered at the perfection to which Court had brought the Sikh artillery with the help of his own knowledge. The guns of all sizes were manufactured.

Court had cast shells in pewter and brass. In the year 1832, he received a reward of rupees 5,000 in cash, jewels and other gifts from Maharaja Ranjit Singh for the first shell he presented.\(^{21}\)

Maharaja Ranjit Singh ordered his European officers to provide the shells for his artillery. The first shell which exploded was worth rupees 30,000 to Colonel Court.\(^{22}\)

The training to the artillerymen was given at Lahore. Court raised the corps to a high pitch of efficiency. The Europeans who witnessed the parades and manoeuvres of this branch praised them.

Osborne throws light on the work done by Court as an ordnance

19 For further details see Fauja Singh's *Military System of the Sikhs* and Sita Ram Kohli's, 'Army Organisation of Maharaja Ranjit Singh,' *Maharaja Ranjit Singh First Death Centenary Volume*, 1939.


officer and his colleagues, when he visited the parade ground in June 1838. He says:

I accompanied the Maharaja to his practice ground. Here I found twelve horse artillery guns of different calibres, all tolerably well horsed and equipped. These guns are the refuge of his artillery and used to accompany him only when he marched. His great depot is at Lahore, is said to be very superior and decidedly his best arm, and the one he takes most interest in. He was trying his own shells. At 500 yards the practice was different but at 800 and 1200 yards, it was excellent. Many of the shells exploded just over the curtain.23

He further writes that the Maharaja was very proud of the efficiency and admirable condition of his artillery, and justly so, for no native power had yet possessed so well-organised, large and well-disciplined force.24 According to Guishan Lal Chopra, "the achievements of Court were in the training of artillery-men, the organisation of batteries and the establishment of arsenals and magazines to ensure the plentiful supply of all the materials which the armies of Europe were using but of which the people of the Panjab knew nothing."25

Lieutenant Barr, who witnessed Court's artillery at Peshawar in April 1839, wrote:

The General then directed the native commandant, a fine soldier-like-looking man, handsomely accoutred, to put them through drill. This they performed with great credit; their movement being executed with a clarity and precision that would have done honour to any army. The orders were given in French, and the system of gunnery used by that nation has also been adopted. At the conclusion of the exercise, he walked down the line and inspected the ordnance. The two guns on the right of the battery were six pounders, and were the same Lord William Bentinck had presented to Ranjit Singh at Roopur. The rest were cast by himself from their model, and appear almost equally good. The precise number of pieces we saw I forget, but I think nine, including two small mortars for hill service. We then tried some of his fuzzes, which are very good, and burn true; and his port-

24. Ibid., p. 160.
fires are also tolerable, but when compared with those in use with every other part of the Sikh army, admirable; as with the latter, they are nothing but cases filled with pounded brimstone indifferently rammed down. All the shot was formed of beaten iron, and cost a rupee each; and the majority of the shells were composed pewter, which he told us answered uncommonly well. When it is considered that all we saw was the work of the general's own knowledge, and we reflect on the difficulties he has had to surmount, it is a matter almost of wonder to behold the perfection to which he has brought his artillery.  

Thornburn writes, "The cannon taken during the Sikh wars were beautifully made, exquisitely finished, and being of much heavier metal considerably outraged the lighter guns used by the British."  

This very artillery later fought excellently against the British during the Anglo-Sikh Wars.

Court was a good and well-informed officer, commanding two battalions of Gorkhas in the service of the Maharaja.

We have not much information regarding the war service of Court as he remained at Lahore most of the time and was busy with the improvement of artillery of the Maharaja. However, he took part in some of the campaigns. In 1833, he was directed to establish control over Naunær near Dera Baba Nanak, which he did without much difficulty. Dost Mohammad Khan of Kabul raised a jahad against the Sikhs in 1835 with a view to occupying Peshawar. At the same time Maharaja Ranjit Singh had also advanced with a large force. The French Division of the Sikh army, about 20,000 to 22,000 strong formed part of this force which was commanded by Ventura, Allard, Avitabile and Court. This force marched towards Hashtnagar in order to take the enemy from its left flank; Court along with Misar Sukh Raj was stationed at a place two Kös from the Dera of Dost Mohammad and instructed by Ranjit Singh to maintain a firm hold there. The Maharaja with the main portion of his force threatened the enemy's centre and right flanks. By these clever tactics, the Maharaja made Dost Mohammad's position untenable and the latter had to flee without giving a fight. After this bloodless victory, Prince Sher Singh accompanied by Court and Ventura along

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with their contingents was sent to Peshawar. In 1837, many of ill-fated Afghans debouched from Ali Masjid to create disturbance in the Khyber Pass. They, along with others, were adequately dealt with by Court and pushed back to farther than Ali Masjid.  

He gave help to the British in 1838, when they launched expedition in order to reinstate Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul. It is said that Court displayed considerable bravery in the successful operation of Garhi Dilsa Khan in May 1840. On the recommendation of Bhai Ram Singh, a dress of honour was conferred on him.

Court was not only an excellent organiser, but a great builder also. It is said that under his supervision the fort of Fatehgarh had become too strong and impregnable that no other fort could be pointed out in the whole of the country as equal to it.

Court was not popular with the Sikh soldiery particularly after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Thus after 1839, his own brigade quickly became the most ruffianly and turbulent amongst a force. Even his house was attacked by the soldiers during the reign of Maharaja Kharak Singh and he had a narrow escape.

The news letter from Lahore of 26 January 1841 states:

Court is obliged to keep away from the capital, or to protect his life with artillery. Mutineers of the Regular Army usually discriminate between these who have been abusive, fraudulent, or tyrannical. Europeans and Indians suffer alike. M. Court seems especially to have incurred rancour of the troops.

Court zealously served Nau Nihal Singh. There were two rival groups in Lahore Durbar after the death of Nau Nihal Singh. One headed by Chand Kaur, had the support of Bhais Ram Singh and Gobind Ram, Attar Singh, Lehna Singh, Ajit Singh Sandhanwalia, Fateh Singh Mann, Raja Gulab Singh, Tej Singh and Hira Singh. The other group led by Sher Singh had the backing of Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, Dhanna Singh Malwai, Sham Singh Attariwala, Raja Dhian Singh, Bhai Gurmukh Singh, Faqir Aziz-ud-Din and Generals Ventura and Court.

Sher Singh was very friendly to the Europeans and particularly with the French officers in his father’s service.\(^{34}\)

In the beginning of 1841 Prince Sher Singh marched towards Lahore to assert his claim to the throne. Court and Ventura helped Sher Singh in the siege of Lahore fort which proved successful. Court found himself in a prominent position during Maharaja Sher Singh’s reign. But Maharaja Sher Singh could not govern the Sikh kingdom for a long time. The catastrophe took place when the Maharaja along with his son Partap Singh and Prime Minister Dhian Singh were murdered by Sandhanwalias on 15 September 1843.

Court contained in the service of Lahore Durbar till Maharaja Sher Singh’s murder. But the assassination warned Court that his own position was precarious and he was obliged to keep away from Lahore Durbar to save his life. So without either resigning or asking for leave he took refuge with the Britishers at Ferozepur.\(^{35}\)

It is said that on reaching Ferozepur he wished a formal discharge before retiring to his native country. The Maharaja very much desired to retain him but he could not be reconciled. Court obtained his release through Clerk’s intercession.\(^{36}\) He, however, visited Lahore about April 10 to take final leave of the Maharaja, but he returned as fast as he could, apprehending to Clerk, violence from the soldiery.\(^{37}\) At Ferozepur he stayed for a year with Henry Lawrence. On the other hand, the Lahore Durbar took advantage of his absence and declared him a deserter and his jagirs were forfeited.\(^{38}\) But after a long manœuvring he got only few thousands rupees from Lahore Durbar. Later on he returned to France with his second Kashmiri wife (and children) where she became Christian in 1845.\(^{39}\) He died at Grasse in 1861.\(^{40}\)

Court was greatly interested in historical research and his researches in antiquities and old coins are well-known. He was an acute

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and a well-informed person, and antiquarian and a geographer. The whole country between the Indus and Jhelum appeared to him to be the most striking and indeed remarkable for the number of antiquities it presented. In this area Court found a number of old cities. During the excavations of Manikyala (near Peshawar), Jallalabad, Pegur, Toppi Hound, Muhammadpur, Gulgula, etc., he found the most curious things such as Mausola, Cuplas, Topas, large statues of plaster, marble and stone, most of which have been mutilated by the bigotry of the Muhammadans. He also found the remains of the forts and also coins and medals from various places.

Court was a person of high literary attainments, cautious and of retiring disposition. He was a shrewd, educated and observant man. He was an antiquarian scholar and contributed several articles to the Journal of Royal Asiatic Society. He possessed many coins and other historical things which he had collected during his Asiatic wanderings. He wrote Memoirs of Journey from Persia to Kabul, which is a valuable account in French and especially important from geographical point of view on account of its importance, it was purchased by the East India Company in 1833. He also wrote A Brief Narrative of the Anarchy in the Punjab, 1839-45.

In his physical appearance General Court was a short thickset man, having marks of small-pox on his face.

He was a highly educated person well-versed in vernacular literature. He spoke Persian fluently. He was also well-acquainted with Persian literature. He had prepared a valuable and detailed memorandum on the languages and dialects of the countries to the west of Indus. These includes Kaffir and Pushye dialects. Brahoree, Belochee, Panjabi and Pashto, together with the Burkee, Lughmanee, Kashgharee, etc.

He was a man of simple habits. He was accustomed to live in a small house, though he built a very beautiful palace for his first Muslim wife, and the larger portion of the building was occupied by his family members.

42. Ibid.
43. Grey and Garrett, op. cit., p. 150.
44. Prem Singh Hoti, op. cit., p 110.
45. Lieutenant William Barr, op. cit., p. 132.
47. Ibid., p. 136.
Court was a great jurist in the eyes of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Sohan Lal Suri bears testimony to this fact. He has recorded an incident in this regard.

There was a dispute between the zamindars of Munj Khera and the zamindars of Sardar Tej Singh who had occupied the land of the former zamindars. In this respect a deputation met the Maharaja who ordered Court for the settlement of their dispute. But this was not acceptable to the Zamindars of Munj Khera as they had the feeling that Court would side with the zamindars of Tej Singh and that he would not do justice. The Maharaja on 15 June, said that the glorious sahib was impartial and would not discriminate between his own men and the strangers at the time of administering justice.49

Above all, Court was an excellent soldier with a professional skill of a high degree. To quote Lawrence, he "has always been employed as a soldier, commanding brigade or a division, he is a scientific man, modest and honourable and had feathered his nest less than any of his brethren."50

50. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 43.
Communal Harmony in the Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh

SUKHWANT SINGH*

The study of the census reports of the Punjab in the second half of the nineteenth century show that the territory ruled by Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) was inhabited by Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities. These groups were more inter-mixed under the Maharaja than in the present state of the Indian Punjab. This research paper highlights the farsightendness with which Maharaja Ranjit Singh after conquering a large number of Sikh, Muslim and Hindu principalities, maintained law and order in a multi-religious society and integrated the Punjabis under one banner.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh followed the policy of assimilation towards his non-Sikh subjects. It consisted of various steps towards bringing the Hindu and Muslim communities to enjoy equal status with the Sikhs. It was a political necessity of the Maharaja who recognised the realities of the situation. His policy can be studied in terms of integration, amalgamation and cultural pluralism.

Integration is a modern ideal. It refers to the physical and cultural integration of the country. There are two forms of integration. The first consists of conformity with the life of the ruling community. In this kind of integration the ruled communities are supposed to alter their actions, values and attitudes so that they conform to the ruling culture. The second type of integrations involves cultural freedom extended by the dominant culture to all the different cultures of the ruled. The second form was more important in Ranjit Singh's reign. It may be regarded as cultural pluralism in which the ruling community allowed the other communities to achieve full participation in society without any discrimination. At the same time they were allowed to maintain

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* Lecturer in History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.
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their cultural and social identities. The Maharaja allowed all religious communities to build their own religious places and maintained their own religious affiliations. The Maharaja continued his policy of religious tolerance in spite of the opposition of the orthodox school to the presence of Hindus and Muslims at his court. W.G. Osborne observed that Ranjit Singh was by profession a Sikh, but in reality he respected all the religions.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh often visited the Hindu places of worship. He used to go to Hardwar and had a sacred bath in the Ganges. He distributed huge amount of money to Hindu priests. Occasionally he also took bath at Parmandal situated in the Jammu hills. In his last days the Maharaja gave twenty-two lacs of rupees in cash and valuables worth twenty-five lacs of rupees to Hindu and Muslim religious places. He also sent two hundred and fifty maunds of ghee to the Jawalamukhi Temple. About two hours before his death the Maharaja willed away the Koh-i-Noor diamond as gift to the famous shrine of Jagannath. After the death of the Maharaja, Raja Dhian Singh and Prince Kharak Singh were administered oath of fidelity to each other by placing the Gita on the dead body of the Maharaja.

No religious prejudice or discrimination carried any weight in the public appointments. The merit of the persons concerned mattered the most. The pay rolls of the infantry, cavalry artillery given in the Khalsa Darbar Records support this point. For example, out of the thirteen infantry paltans mentioned in the pay rolls between January 1819 and April 1820, six were under the names of Muslims. The names of these paltans were Aziz Khan, Ibadullah, Bakhtwar Khan, Shaikh Basawan, Ghulam Hussain Khan and Najib Khan. The cavalry remained

5. Ibid., p.341.
6. Ibid., p.349.
mostly in the hands of the Sikhs whom the Maharaja considered better horsemen and courageous in the battle field. At branches of artillery remained centralised in the hands of the Muslims and the Europeans. The names of Itahi Bakhsh, Mazbar Ali Beg, Ibadullah Khan, Ghulam Muhammad Khan, Fattu Khan, Abdul Rahim Khan and Khair Ali Khan were well known in the artillery of the Maharaja.

The control of the toshakhana and the prestigious revenue department was monopolised by Hindus. The toshakhana of Maharaja Ranjit Singh contained all the valuables, jewellery, precious stones, gold and silver ornaments, Khil'at pieces and other valuable articles of dress. The important states papers such as treaties and documents relating to foreign relations of the Lahore government were also consigned to the custody of the toshakhana. The first incumbent to this post was Misar Basti Ram. He continued to hold this appointment under Maharaja Ranjit Singh for about twenty years. Basti Ram, on his death, was succeeded by his nephew Beli Ram. Misar Beli Ram by his ability and fidelity to the interests of the state became the chief manager and controller of the treasury. Like other courtiers of the day, Beli Ram also made full use of his influence in the Darbar to advance the interest of his family.

The revenue department remained under the control of Diwan Bhawani Das and Diwan Dina Nath. The maliyat records of the Khalsa Darbar are available from 1811 to 1849. For the period up to 1815 Diwan Bhawani Das was in charge of the daftar-i-mal. From 1816 to 1849, this department was in the charge of Diwan Dina Nath. Similarly, the foreign department was dominated by the Faqir brothers. Faqir Aziz-ud-Din was the ablest and most confidential foreign minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The European like Monsieur Ventura and

10. Ibid., pp. 9, 11and13.
11. Ibid.
12. Misar Beli Ram got his four brothers appointed on high posts. Rup Lal was appointed the governor of Jalandhar Doab, Megh Raj became custodian of the treasury at Gobindgarh, Ram Kishan became the Chamberlain to the Maharaja and Sukh Raj became general in the army; Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 304-08.
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Monsieur Allard were also employed by the Maharaja. They rendered very valuable service to the Lahore Darbar. In this process of assimilation there was, on the one hand, maximum utilisation was greatly enriched by the talent of other communities.

Under Maharaja Ranjit Singh no religious taxes like Jaziya and Zakat were collected. In Medieval times, this was an indicator of great religious toleration. It also vindicates the view that the Maharaja respected all the religions followed by his subjects. There is no instance of any forcible conversion of non-Sikhs to Sikhism. There are no instances of any mundane either, which was not very common in the earlier centuries.

Cultural pluralism was not easy to maintain. For the society to function as a unit, there was need for cultural unification. This was introduced or maintained in certain spheres. One language, Persian, was made the state language. Unlike Gurmukhi, Sanskrit and Arabic, which were learnt by particular communities, Persian attracted scholars from all the communities. However, the Muslims, Hindus and the Sikhs spoke the language they liked and participated in every walk of life as equal citizens. At the same time all the communities achieved a high level of integration in terms of basic values and commitments. Thus, the people lived together in relative harmony, without any one dominating the others. Such a policy of cultural pluralism was very helpful in the process of integration. With the passage of time the people thought of themselves as Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs only on important religious functions of their respective communities. The feeling of communal harmony and that of belonging to one nation in common devotion towards Maharaja Ranjit Singh is well expressed by a contemporary, Shah Muhammad.

The persons and institutions of distinction were patronised by the Maharaja without any differences of caste and creed. A large

17. Persian, Arabic, Gurmukhi, Hindi and Sanskrit were taught in the Punjab : G.W. Leitner, History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab, Punjab Languages Department, Patiala, 1971 (reprint-first published 1883), pp. 156-57.
number of such cases were recorded by the British settlement officers. For instance, Mirza Faqir Ulla Beg was a very famous hakim of Kalanaur. This family had a medical school maintained by its members, and it enjoyed a jagir of rupees 2,000 per annum. The Pathans of Muradpur in Amritsar district were celebrated hakims and they too enjoyed jagirs. The Maharaja patronised Muslim artists as well. Ilahi Bakhsh was a famous Punjabi architect of the day. Saidu and Hayat were famous as the gun makers of Ranjit Singh. Muhammad Bakhsh of Jastarwal was very skilled in steel manufacturing and was a good sword-maker. Allayar and his son were among the craftsmen employed in the Golden Temple.19 Two hereditary families of court physicians of the Maharaja were these of Hukam Rai and Wali Shah.20

In Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time there were many Gurmukhi schools in Amritsar which imparted instruction of a high order and enjoyed jagirs and stipends from the Maharaja. More important schools were those of Bhai Juna Singh, Bhai Lakhan Singh, Bhai Ram Singh, Bhai Kharak Singh Dhupia, Bawa Amir Das Udasi and Budh Singh, Arabic and Persian schools of note existed in many places. The students from far and wide attended these schools. Books and food were given free to them. Besides enjoying jagirs from the government, the teachers were highly respected by their students. Subsistence allowance was given to teachers at elementary level. More important among such schools were those of Mian Sahib Qadiri of Batala, Maulvi Shaikh Ahmad at Sialkot, Bara Mian and Khalifa Shahib at Lahore, Mian Faiz and Nur Muhammad of Gujranwala, Maulvi Sultan Ahmad of Gujrat and of Khwaja Sulaiman in Dera Ghazi Khan district.21

As an administrator, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a great man of action and a good ruler who controlled the diverse and turbulent elements in the Punjab. Under his able statesmanship such order and security prevailed in the region as had never been known in the eighteenth century.22 Except in actual open warfare Ranjit Singh never took life. His reign was more free from acts of cruelty and oppression

20. Ibid., p. 152.
than that of many a more civilised monarch.\textsuperscript{23} He had quick talent at reading the mind of human beings. Ranjit Singh succeeded in inspiring his followers with a strong and devoted attachment to his person.\textsuperscript{24} By combining diplomacy with force, Maharaja Ranjit Singh proved himself to be a great ruler of the Punjab.

To conclude, Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not discriminate against his non-Sikh subjects. The present day negative aspects of the inter-community relationships like riots, conflicts, strife and bloodshed, which are often in the news, were hardly known in the Punjab of the Maharaja. The Muslims and Hindus in turn responded favourably to this special treatment. Thus a pattern of relatively cordial relationships and communal harmony came into being in the Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

\textsuperscript{23} W.G. Osborne. \textit{op.cit.}, p. 36.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 35.
Famines in the Pre-Colonial Punjab:
An Historic Backdrop

NAVTEJ SINGH*

Since the dawn of civilisation people had to face different natural calamities such as droughts, epidemics or occasional pestilance. Famine is one such phenomenon which history has recorded during different intervals. There are references to some gruesome famines that occurred in different countries of the world. Among these most severe were the Irish Famine of 1840, the Brazil Famine of 1877, the Morroco Famine of 1877, the Egypt Famine of 1897, the Chinese Famines of 1877, 1919 and 1929 and the Ethiopian Famine of 1972-74. This last named country is still in the grip of a terrible famine. In India famines occurred in the past and some of the most disastrous ones that had been recorded were those of the years 1783, 1860-61, 1877-78, 1896-97, 1899-1900, the Bengal Famine of 1943 and the Indian Famine of 1967.1

I

In Punjab, famines have also been a recurrent phenomenon. The earliest reference to famines are available in the hymns of the Rig-Veda,2

* Research Fellow, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh.
1. A recent survey reveals that 13 States and two Union Territories are in the grip of drought and famine. Some are facing it for the third successive year. For detail see, The Times of India, New Delhi, May 28, 1987.
2. The Rig-Veda contains famine cry of the people which follows:

"From this misery and famine set us free,
From this dire curse deliver us.
Succor us with thine help and with thy
Wonderous thought;
Most mighty, finder of the way.
Now let your Soma juice be poured;
be not afraid, O' Kali's sons,
This darkening sorrow goes away;
Yea of itself it vanishes." (Rig-Veda, 8,55.14).
the Athrava-Veda and the Jatakas. But the detailed information available is to a famine which lasted for twelve years during the reign of Chandra Gupta Mauriya. The King tried to relieve the distressed people according to the existing Famine Codes. The Codes suggested the ‘Creation of reservoirs, provision of work for the poor, public assistance, calling on allies for help, extension of irrigation facilities, provision of seed and food to the agriculturists and the destitutes from the King’s treasury, migration to sea-shores or banks of rivers or lakes, encouragement of subjects to grow vegetables, roots and fruits, where water was available and the hunting of wild beasts, bird or fish for food.’ The Mauriyas also took some extra-ordinary measures such as the manufacture of the images of deities and selling them as a source of income. However, these images were given different names to those which were being worshipped by them, for example, Sivaka instead of Siva, etc.

The Rajatrangini informed about a terrible famine which occurred in Kashmir during the years 917-18 A.D., when ‘one could scarcely see the water of Vitasta (Jhelum) entirely covered as the river was with corpses, soaked and swollen by the water in which they had been lying. The land became densely covered with bones.’

II

More references are available regarding famines in the writings of the medieval chroniclers either because of the abundance of literature or the increasing frequency of droughts, scarcities of famines. In 1291 A.D. a famine occurred during the reign of Jalaluddin Khalji severely affecting parts of the Delhi and Sivalak Hills. Zia-ud-din Barani, the author or Tarikh-i-Ferozeshahi, wrote about the famine that ‘the people came to Delhi with their families, twenty or thirty of them together, in extremity of hunger, and drowned themselves in the Jamna.’

Details of relief measures are not given but the chronicler only added that the ‘Sultan and nobles did all they could.’

Alauddin Khaliqi introduced a new economic policy according to which the Government established grain-stores in every *Mohalla* of the Capital (Delhi) and a limited quantity of grain was supplied to the people in times of famine. ‘The rush of purchasers at these shops was so great that many were crushed to death.’

Barani asserted that on account of various regulations of the Sultan no scarcity of grain was felt in Delhi even in times of drought.

In A.D. 1326-27 rains failed and affected severely parts of the Doab and the Punjab where the suffering was further intensified by the enhanced revenue introduced by the monarch Muhammed-Bin-Tughlaq.11 Another famine occurred in 1335-36 A.D. because of the decline in cultivation, the ruin of the ryots and the failure of the convoys of corn from distant provinces to Delhi and its surroundings. Rains did not fall at the same time and the famine continued for several years. Thousands of people perished for want of food, while communities were scattered and households were broken up.12 The Sultan had to leave his capital and stayed at Saragadwari, a place in the Farukhabad district. Ibn-Batuta wrote his experiences about this famine that ‘the price of one maund of rice rose to 60 dirhams, and a little later it rose still higher......He saw three women cutting into pieces and eating the skin of a horse which had died several months before...Even hide was sold in the market, when oxen were slaughtered people used to take and consume their blood...Some students of Khorasan told Batuta that they had gone to a city called Akroha; they entered into one of the houses on a particular night and there found a man who had kindled fire and was holding in his hand a leg of a human being; he was roasting it in the fire and eating it.’

The measures adopted by the state to fight the calamity such as

9. K.S. Lal, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-77. Barani did not mention if the grain was sold at cheap rates or given free.
advancing of loans, sinking of wells, encouragement of migration, establishment of a department of Amir-i-Kohi, with an agricultural farm near Delhi to bring uncultivated land under the plough, distribution of six months’ provisions to the people of Delhi at the rate of one and half Jitals (or 12 Chittack in terms of food) per day, and establishment of charity houses for the distribution of cooked food, were said to have gone a great way in relieving the famine-stricken people.\textsuperscript{14}

No famine occurred during the rule of Ferozeshah Tughlaq except the one in Thatta (Sindh) in 1362-66 A.D., when price of foodgrains rose to one or two tankas a seer.\textsuperscript{15}

The invasion of Amir Taimur brought havoc to Delhi and its neighbourhood. The famine was the natural consequence of the wholesale destruction of stores of grains and standing crops by the invading army, and the pestilence probably had its origin in the pollution of air and water-supply of the city by the putrefying corpses of the thousands of victims of the invader’s wrath. ‘So complete was the desolation that the city was utterly ruined, and those of the inhabitants who were left died, while for two months not a bird moved wing in Delhi.’\textsuperscript{16} Since there was no stable of government at that time, therefore, nothing appears to have been done by way of relief.

During the reign of Lodis, the crops were abundant, and the prices of all articles of ordinary use were incredibly low. No scarcity was felt. It was reported that for one Bahlool 10 maunds of corn and 5 seers of ghee and 10 yards of cloth could be purchased.\textsuperscript{17}

III

Parts of the Punjab, particularly the neighbourhood of Delhi were affected by a severe scarcity in 1555-56 A.D. The historian Abdul Qadir Badauni witnessed the fact that, “men ate their own kind and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could

\textsuperscript{14} Tarikh-i-Ferozeshahi; pp. 619-20; Prasad, op. cit., pp. 279-84; R.P. Tripathi, Some Aspects of Muslim Administration in India, Allahabad, 1936, pp. 279-90; Wolseley Haig, The Cambridge History of India, Allahabad, 1945.

\textsuperscript{15} Ishwari Prasad, Medieval India, Allahabad, 1945, p. 311.


\textsuperscript{17} Abdul Halim, History of the Lodi Sultans of Delhi and Agra, Delhi, 1974, p. 253.
scarcely look upon them.'

In 1573-74 A.D., the Punjab suffered from famine for six months, and 'the inhabitants rich or poor, fled the country and were scattered abroad. The Emperor Akbar laid down the foundations of an embankment, opened alms-houses and free-kitchens in cities, and in order to provide employment he recruited more soldiers in the army.

In the Annual Report of the Jesuit Missions of 1597 there is a reference that Punjab was again in the grip of a terrible famine which lasted from A.D. 1595 to A.D. 1599 and the fathers had baptized many children abandoned by their parents.

The Emperor Jahangir had recorded a pestilence in 1614-15 A.D. which was attributed to the effects of drought; the country having suffered for want of rain for two years in succession. The area affected was the Punjab as well as Delhi, though the severity was localized in the Punjab.

In 1641 A.D. heavy rainfall in Kashmir resulted in the loss of the Kharif crops and consequent scarcity that caused about 50,000 people to migrate to Lahore. They were given shelter under the walls of the palace. Among the relief provided to the distressed people were one lakh of rupees distributed for general expenses, and 200 rupees worth of victuals distributed daily as long as they remained in Lahore. In addition, a sum of Rs. 30,000 was sent to Tarbiyat Khan for distribution in Kashmir amongst those who could not come to Lahore, with instructions to open five kitchens for the distribution of soup and bread, for which food worth Rs. 100 was provided daily. On the failure of Tarbiyat Khan, Zafar Khan with a further grant of Rs. 20,000 was sent to replace him.

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18. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, p. 490. According to Badauni, Jowar rose to 2½ tankas a seer and was not available even at that price; Akbarnama, tr. by H. Beveridge, Vol. III, p. 57; A. L. Srivastva, The Mughal Empire, Agra, 1959, p. 231.
In A.D. 1658 scarcity occurred in Sindh. Grain was distributed among the weavers so as to keep them alive. One year later, Sindh was again affected because of the 'unfavourable seasons and want of rain combined with war movement of armies.'24 As a result many districts laid entirely waste. Cooked food as well as raw-grains were distributed by the Emperor; taxes on the transport of grain like Rahdari(toll collected on every highway frontier and ferry) and Pandari (a ground or house cess which was paid throughout the imperial dominions by every tradesman and dealer from the butcher and the potter to banker, etc.) were remitted. The government also purchased grain and sold it at cheap rates.25

No serious scarcity occurred in the Punjab during the reign of Aurangzeb. However, in the beginning of his reign the effects of the war of succession coupled with the failure of rainfall and consequently of harvest culminated into a scarcity. Aurangzeb abolished both Rahdari and Pandari in his demesne lands and requested the Jagirdars to do the same in their estates. This was done and there was a free flow of corn to every place affected by scarcity. As a result the price of grain fell appreciably.26

IV

The period that followed the death of Aurangzeb and the rise of the Misls in Punjab was one of turmoil, anarchy and disorder. In such circumstances the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739 A.D. brought devastation and famine to Delhi and its environs.27 But there is no such mention of any natural calamity.

The most terrible famine of the century, popularly known as the Chalisa,28 occurred in 1783 A.D. owing to the want of rain. The distress in this famine was very severely felt as grain was sold at 4 seers per rupee. There were no means of transportation of grain from one part of the province to another. Consequently those men who could well afford to pay any amount for grains to save their lives, fell victim to the disaster. While the Sikh authorities at that time took

no effective measures to relieve the famished masses.29

During the first half of the 19th century six famines of various severity occurred in 1802, 1812, 1817, 1824, 1833 and 1837. These were apparently confined to the east of the province.30 The famine of 1832-33 was severely felt at Hissar, Rohtak and Delhi territory. The famine was as disastrous as that of 1783 A.D., as many people sold their children who were to be found in the houses of prostitutes thirty or forty years later.31 This famine also affected the Suba of Kashmir which was under the control of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Maharaja suspended and remitted the land revenue and no taxes were charged on the provisions imported into the valley.32 The Maharaja also invited a number of Kashmiri artisans well-versed in the manufacture of shawls to come to Amritsar to settle down there.33 But the relief measures could not prove to be a success of the lack of co-operation of the officials who were corrupt. The Nazims and the Kardars in the distant areas concealed the occurrence of drought or famine from reaching the ears of the Maharaja, made ineffective efforts of relief, but on failure to collect the revenue were constrained to report the matter to Lahore.34

The famine of 1837-38 was the sevarest of the century35 and was mainly confined to the districts of Hissar, Rohtak and Gurgaon. The cause of the famine was the total failure of the rains of 1836 followed by the exceptionally bad years of harvest. The prices of foodgrains rose to three times their ordinary rates. Violent agrarian disturbances and robberies of grain-stores were so rife that the troops had in several cases to be called out. The extremity of suffering endured by the population was such as to leave behind a widespread and lasting recollection of the horrors of the famine.36 The measures of relief

31. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p. 237.
taken by the British Government were the provision of work at a very low rate of wages and remissions and suspensions of land revenue demands. While *tagavi* advances were discouraged and gratuitous relief to those who were unable to work was fully rejected and left to the private charity.\(^37\)

There is controversy regarding the measures of relief taken by the ancient and medieval rulers. It has been suggested by some English writers that before the British period Indian rulers made no serious attempts to cope with famines. And, indeed, Vincent Smith went as far to say that "the ancient governments, Hindu or Muslim, did nothing as a rule in the way of famine relief."\(^38\) However, this generalisation is by no means just. If it were true, it would not only argue inhumanity but also show an astonishing lack of self-interest on the part of the rulers whose income was mainly derived from the land revenue. The truth is that famine relief and preventive measures were regarded both in Hindu and Muslim times as important elements in the policy of every competent ruler.\(^39\)

Kautliya, whose treatise have been discussed, devoted an important chapter in the *Arathshastra* to *Remedies Against Natural Calamities*, and one section of this deals with famine. Although these measures are of suggestive nature but throw a wide light on the then existing Famine Codes and also indicate that the ancient rulers were not indifferent to their responsibility of giving relief to the affected people during the time of famines.

In Muslim times too, much attention was given to this aspect of administration. Sultan Jalaluddin Khalji tried to alleviate the distress by gifts to poor and indigent persons. While Alauddin Khalji asked his people to buy corn from the market according to their needs. Farishta wrote that in times of drought every purchaser was required to buy just the quantity he needed, otherwise he would be severely punished. Alauddin also introduced rationing. Barani informed that the notables who had no village or fields at their


\(^{39}\) Griffiths, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-83.
command were given grain for their requirements.\textsuperscript{40} A modern historian wrote that 'as far as Delhi was concerned, it never suffered from famine and drought which might have occurred in distant provinces under Alauddin Khalji, a factor that must added considerably to the stability of his rule.'\textsuperscript{41}

Muhammed-Bin-Tughlaq was a rare example in medieval history who for the first time introduced a scientific famine policy. His famine policy was basically of two types; long-term and short-term policy was consisted of giving immediate relief. He gave gifts to the people from the treasury. Ibn Batuta informed that when 'famine became unbearable the Sultan ordered six months provisions to be distributed to all the people of Delhi. The Jurists and Judges set out registering the names of the inhabitants in different streets, sending for the people and giving each of them victuals amounting to six months provisions. He also abolished duties on foreign goods coming to India. He issued orders for the sinking of wells, provided the people with seeds as well as the requisite sum of money. The long-term measures were an endeavour to reorganise production by bringing the uncultivated land under the direct supervision of the state and financial support. A large tract of land was chosen and an attempt was made to produce different crops in rotation and officials were appointed to look after it.'\textsuperscript{42}

Sikander Lodi in order to mitigate the hardships of famine-sticken people of his time, remitted the payment of Zakat in corn. Henceforth, the system of paying corn as Zakat was abolished.\textsuperscript{43}

The famine policy of Sher Shah Suri consisted of storing grains. The author of Tarikh-i-Afghan wrote that "Sher Shah ordered that 10 istar per Bigha should be taken from all parts of the kingdom and kept in storage. The grain, thus, stored should be sent to the place where there was a scarcity of famine. By this measure so much grain was collected that things became very cheap as had not been seen before and so long as Sher Shah lived there was no famine.'\textsuperscript{44}

Akbar adopted permanent measures famine of insurance and poor

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 183; A Rashid, Famine in Turko-Afghan Period, vide, Proceedings of Indian History Congress, Pt. II, 1954, Aligarh, 1967, pp. 84-89.
\textsuperscript{41} Meera Singh, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 83.
\textsuperscript{42} Rashid, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{43} Barani, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 309.
\textsuperscript{44} Abdullah, \textit{Tarikh-i-Daudi}, p. 56, quoted in Rashid, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 87.
relief by establishing grain godowns at every place. These stores were maintained by the *dahsari*, and served several purposes. They supplied the government live-stock with grains which were never purchased from the bazaars. Seedgrains were made available to poor cultivators and lastly poor people could buy cheap grain from these stores during famines. Akbar also established charity houses where the indigent could get their food. In 1583, Akbar opened three kitchens outside the capital known as Dharmpura, Kharipura and Jogipura. Officers were also appointed in every district to render relief to the poor.45

Shah Jahan exerted himself to the utmost to provide relief. Free grain was distributed, gratuitous relief was given out and public kitchens were opened. The emperor also tried to improve agriculture by the construction of canals.46

The endless wars of Aurangzeb in the second half of the seventeenth century upset the economic balance of the country and aggravated the sufferings. But he, too, took some measures such as the abolition of *Rahdari* and *Pandari* and tried to make the free flow of corn to famine-affected districts.47

Political anarchy that ensued after the death of Aurangzeb in Punjab led to the rise of the Misals. But the lack of any central authority and the sense of duty among the chiefs of the misals in regard to famine relief must have resulted into the sufferings of the people during the *chalisā* famine of 1783 A.D.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s famine policy was consisted of remissions and suspensions of land revenue and provision of seedgrains during the periods of drought, scarcity or famine. But the corrupt bureaucracy sometimes tried to make such measures a little success because of its non-co-operative attitude with the Maharaja.

Thus the above discussion clearly brings out that the early rulers: Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs were not indifferent to their sense of responsibility while it became all the more important when their only source of income was derived from land or agriculture.

VI

The foregoing discussion on famine before 1858 reveals some interesting facts. It brings out that famines in ancient and medieval

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times were the consequence of drought, inundation and the ravages of wars causing devastation in rural and urban areas. Breakdown of the system of administration during the times of political upheaval may also affect a region. The best example of this kind was the invasion of Amir Taimur (1399 A.D.) which brought devastation to Delhi and its surroundings.

The basic features of the famines in pre-colonial Punjab were: firstly, these were local in nature and not widespread because of less developed means of transportation and communications. Secondly, these were the problem of food and not work because food in those localities could not be transported due to lack of means of communications. Thirdly, all types of people, rich or poor, suffered alike in equal degree in the absence or shortage of grains. Lastly, the intensity of famines was less severe owing to a number of factors that included regional in character, scarcity of population and abundance of land, availability of non-agricultural occupation giving good resource of income during droughts or famines, less dependency on land and consequently on rainfall and self-contained economy and self-dependent village society.

For the relief of famished masses these administrators distributed free grains, opened kitchens and public grainstores to the people. They remitted and suspended land revenue while payments were made for seed and cattle. Remitted other taxes, constructed canals, embankments and wells, encouraged migration and increased the salary of soldiers. They also did not hesitate to purchase grain from surplus areas for sale at cheaper rates in famine zones and even maintained transport at government expenses. But relief through individual charity was not so common on such occasions.

In sum, the pre-British rulers, though, did not innovate policy of famine relief in the sense of the Famine Code under the British, but they did their best with limited resources, less developed scientific methods, technology and means of communications at their disposal. However, some of the rulers like Alauddin Khalji, Muhammed-Bin-Tughlaq and Sher Shah Suri are the rare examples in the economic history of India who for the first time not only introduced scientific methods but also did a lot in improving the condition of agriculture as well promoting general prosperity of their subjects.
Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia—A Valiant Fighter of the Highest Order

Dr Gurbachan Singh Nayyar*

Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia who succeeded his uncle Bagh Singh had his parental village Ahlu near Lahore. Jassa Singh’s mother, a lady of deep religious convictions, took him to Delhi in 1723 for seeking the blessings of Guru Gobind Singh’s wife, Mata Sundari ji, who was putting up at Delhi in those days. He stayed in Delhi for about seven years and happened to come in touch with the significant Panthic personalities. Nawab Kapur Singh administered Pahul to him and made him Singh. He grew up as a daring youth. His personal appearance has been described in history in glowing terms. He was tall, muscular man and like the great Arjuna had long arms reaching his knees. He fought with determination in the encounters of the Khalsa against the Mughals and the Afghans and won reputation. In due course of time, he distinguished himself as a great warrior. In 1739, he harassed Nadir Shah and deprived his rear of the booty they were carrying. He was one of the important leaders of the Khalsa in the battle of Kahnuwan fought against Lakhpat Rai, brother of Jaspat Rai. Rattan Singh Bhangu writes that during the encounters of Wadha Ghalu Ghara, Jassa Singh guided the destiny of the Panth by giving defensive guidelines. Thus Jassa Singh’s career of warfare won great name and fame in the first phase of the evolution of the misls. Nawab Kapur Singh’s misl witnessed decline after his demise. The misldars of the Faizullapuria Misl started making conquests separately. Jassa Singh who was active in the field of warfare, captured Sarhali and Alloke in Majha tract and then brought under sway Fatehbad, Jalalpur, Goinwal, Batala, Tarn Taran and the area upto Khadur Sahib. He conquered Sultanpur,

* Head, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.
2. Ibid., p. 57.

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Talwandi and the neighbouring tract of the land after crossing the Beas.\(^4\) He was then inclined to bring under his sway the illaqa of Ibrahim of Kapurthala for the achievement of which goal he fought a number of battles. In the long run, Ibrahim had to vacate Kapurthala\(^5\) which from henceforth became the centre of the activities of Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. The zamindars of Phagwara and the Afghans of Urmur, Yahiyapur and Tanda submitted to him, paid tribute to him and the annual rate of nazrana was fixed. He captured the district of Kot Isa Khan after crossing the Satluj and the Rai of Jagraon was also subjugated. Doaba Bist Jullundur could boast of no other chief than Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia who was claimed as most powerful and influential chief of the times\(^6\).

In order to properly evaluate the role of the Dal Khalsa under the leadership of Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia we have to take into consideration the political scenario of those times. While Baba Jassa was facing the Mughals in the shape of Subedars of Sirhind, Lahore and Multan on the one hand and Ahmad Shah Abdali on the other, the British envisaged no danger from the Mughals in as much as they thought the Sikhs were strong enough to keep Ahmad Shah within the Punjab. Hence, they consolidated their hold in the rest of Indian territory. Similarly, we find reference\(^7\) of the battles fought by the Dal Khalsa under the stewardship of Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia against Rajput chiefs owing allegiance to Jaipur and Bikaner states.\(^8\) While tracing back the relationship between the Sikhs and the Jaipur rulers, we come to know from the weekly reports known as Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mualla that the rulers of Jaipur and Jodhpur has shown reluctance in supplying reinforcement to the Mughals for their operations against Bande Singh Bahadur. As a matter of fact, it was the strategy of the Rajput states to assist the resistance movements of Sikhs against the Mughal authorities. Clash of interests between the Sikhs and Jaipur Rajas is also well known.\(^9\) As for their relations with the Sikh Chiefs of the times of Baba Jassa Singh, Jaipur rulers were the first to send a Kharita and a

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4. Batalia, op. cit., p. 27.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
8. Bikaner Raj extended up to the other boundaries of Ferozpur and Bhatinda.
Khilat to Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia on the eve of his declaring his mastery of Lahore. Under the well-planned strategy of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Sikh operations in the gangetic Doab were also a success. The operations of the Dal Khalsa under Sardar Jassa Singh into the Haryana and gangetic Doab were very timely as when the danger from Ahmad Shah had almost receded, a serious contest for power in the Hindustan was launched by the British, the Marathas and the Rohillas for the capture of Delhi and the gangetic Doab. Sardar Jassa Singh declared that he was equally concerned about the fate of Hindustan or the Hindi speaking belt of the gangetic Doab. We all know that the moment of the highest fulfilment of Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia's career and that of his devoted comrades-in-arms was the triumphant entry into the Red Fort at Delhi. About the glorious career of warfare of the Sikhs in the territory around the southern hills, George Forster writes in 1783 with special reference to a place named Kheynsapur: "I saw two Sicque horsemen who had been sent from their country to receive the Sirinaghur tribute, which is collected from the revenue of certain custom houses. From the manner in which these men were treated or rather treated themselves, I frequently wished for the power of migrating into the body of a Sicque for a few weeks so well did these cavaliers fair. Thus on account of his achievements against heavy odds, Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was rightly called 'Sultan-ul-Qaum.'

Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was not only a great warrior but also possessed saintly qualities. He was a great spiritual leader of the Sikhs who apart from other things was responsible for preserving and consolidating the Sikh religious tradition during the crucial days of their struggle for existence. Sardar Jassa Singh is particularly stated to be in the habit of asking the fresh recruits to take the baptism of the sword to ensure that he would lead a chaste and honest life in the camp as ordained by the tenth Guru. Also, there are instances to prove that the non keshadharis, Hindus and men of other communities formed a part and parcel of the misl armies.

Several chiefs of repute including Baba Ala Singh, the founder of Patiala House, Rajas Amar Singh and Sahib Singh received Khande-de-

11. There are frequent references to this effect in the intelligence report published in the Calendar of Persian Correspondence.
Pahul from his hands. Keeping in view the principal of veneration of the cow, he issued instructions to Sikh volunteers to punish the butchers in order to stop the sinful practice of killing cows without alarming the Mughals. He himself led two expeditions to Lahore to chastise the butchers at Lahore. Being a dynamic personality he under his leadership, maintained the Indian tradition of respecting the moral values. He was always ready to safe guard the weak and feeble. He personally liberated the unfortunate victims including women and children numbering about 2200 from the clutches of Ahmad Abdali around Delhi in 1761. It was on account of Baba Jassa Singh’s devotion to the Sikh religious order and his prowess in arms that the Golden Temple, Amritsar which had been raised to the ground by the forces of Ahmad Shah Abdali was restored to its former dignity. Even during the worst days of their persecution at the hand of the Mughal Governors, the Sikh soldiers under the leadership of Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia maintained the highest traditions of brotherhood and affection with other communities. James Rannell writes in 1887 that the Sikhs differed from other in showing toleration towards other faiths. They were perfectly tolerant in matters of faith. Baba Jassa Singh who had inherited this quality from the Sikh brotherhood fully kept the old tradition. We see that forces of Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1748 visited the holy shrine of Jawala Mukhi along with his comrades-in-arms and offered presents there. Similarly Baba Jassa Singh after his victorious campaigns towards the Derajats during 1758-59 visited the holy places of the Muslim Sufi Saints at Pak Pattan. He granted the town in muafi jagir on the disciples of Baba Farid Sahib Gianj Shakhar.

The daily personal routine of Baba Jassa Singh also testifies that he was a God fearing man respecting certain human values in life who started his day with prayers to Almighty and ended it with Kirtan or hymns in praise of God, Rehras and prayer in the company of other chiefs.

We may safely say that the struggle and fight of the Sikhs under Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia during the 18th century waged for the

SARDAR JASSA SINGH AHLUWALIA— A VALIANT FIGHTER

defence of India and its culture wrecked the tyrannical rule of the Mughals and proved a permanent hurdle against the frequent Afghan invasions. He guided the destiny of the country at the crucial stage of its history. He did more than any contemporary to consolidate and his successful fight waged against frequent foreign invasions and the tyrannical rule of the Mughals contributed a lot towards laying the firm foundations of a hegemony in the Punjab on which Maharaja Ranjit Singh by his sagacity and genius established a vast empire. He proved himself to be a valiant fighter and crusader of the highest order.
The Army Records of the Lahore Durbar

DR JAGJIWAN MOHAN WALIA*

The Army Records of the Lahore Durbar constitute a part of the Khalsa Durbar Records. These records pertain to the reigns of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors. The language is Persian and the style of writing is shikasta which is very difficult to read without great practice.

There are 66 bundles of the Khalsa Durbar Records which pertain to daftar fauj or the Military Department. These papers are divided into three sections, viz.: (1) Barawurd taqsim talab or the pay rolls. (2) Jama Kharch or the papers pertaining to the credit and debit accounts of the Army Department. (3) Chihra or the descriptive-rolls.

One of the above sections deals with fauj-ain or the regular army organised on the European model and the other with fauj sowari or the irregular cavalry. The pay rolls of the regular army commence from 1876 B.E. (1819 A.D.), those of the irregular cavalry from 1901 B.E. (1844 A.D.) and the Jama Kharch accounts of the two branches are of the corresponding dates.

The Fauj-ain or the regular army of Ranjit Singh was primarily composed of infantry and artillery, trained in European methods of drill. The whole cavalry, except a few regiments of dragoons and lancers, who were imparted training by General Allard, mainly consisted of the ghorcharahs or irregular horse.

The use of artillery and the employment of disciplined infantry were the recent adaptations in the Indian mode of warfare. The Mughals, the Marathas and the Sikhs fought on horseback only. They held the foot soldiers in contempt and never attained proficiency in artillery. It was only in the middle of the eighteenth century, when

* Punjab State Archives, Patiala.
the French and the English had manifested their superiority of disciplined infantry, that the Indian rulers realised the value of this arm and began to maintain battalions with the help of European adventurers. Haider Ali, Mahdoji Sindhia and Jaswant Rao Holkar remoulded their armies on the European pattern. In the Punjab which was more or less under the ruler of the Sikh confederacies whose every member was a horse man, the old system prevailed. The military force of each chief comprised essentially untrained cavalry and badly managed artillery. The foot soldiers were held in contempt and usually garrisoned the forts and performed the meaner duties of the service. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ranjit Singh raised a few battalions of disciplined infantry and brought home to the Sikhs the importance of this arm. He fully realised that after the advent of European nations, the existing mode of warfare had become ineffective and irregular cavalry could not withstand the onslaught of the disciplined infantry. He engaged himself in remoulding of his force with determination and eventually succeeded in making his people give up their traditional mode of warfare. Due to his efforts, the infantry service was held in esteem and he lived to see it as the proper warlike array of Punjab.

Sohan Lal Suri writes that on the suggestion of Jaswant Rao Holkar in 1806, Maharaja Ranjit Singh began to maintain the regular army. From the pay-rolls it is clear that the Maharaja had three battalions in 1807. In 1808, Metcalfe, an envoy of the British Government to the Maharaja observed five battalions in his service. From 1807 to 1813, the number of the Punjabi soldiers was meagre and there was predominance of the Hindustanis, Gurkhas and Afghans in his service who were mainly attracted by the good pay and the prospect of adventure. The untrained horsemen held the foot soldiers in contempt and chivalrous old chiefs were against the introduction of this system. Due to the efforts of the sovereign, the service in the regular infantry was popularised and after 1818, we find the predominance of the Punjabi element in the army.

Fauja Singh Bajwa writes, “Command was far from perfect even in the time of the great Maharaja. The inferior quality of commander posed more or less a permanent challenge which the Maharaja endeavoured to meet by appointing foreigners and giving special training to the sons and relatives of his Sardars.”


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employed Ventura and Allard to organise his infantry and cavalry respectively. With the assistance of Court and Gardner, the Maharaja established a number of foundries at Lahore to cast fine types of heavy guns and reorganised artillery. The Sikhs under these officers completely mastered the manoeuvres of a European warfare. During the First Anglo-Sikh War in 1846, when their efficiency was put to as severe test, they proved their worth. Cunningham writes about the battle of Ferozshah, "The guns of the Sikhs were served with rapidity and precision, and the foot-soldiers stood between and behind the batteries, firm in their order and active with their muskets. The resistance met was wholly unexpected, and all started with astonishment." He further mentions that at Ferozshah, the Indian and British soldiers of the English armies "had for the first time met an equal antagonist with their own weapons even ranks and the file of artillery."

Thus the discipline and the European mode of warfare introduced among his army by the sagacious Ranjit Singh had the desired effect and the defeat of the Sikh forces at Ferozshah was due to the treachery of their commanders.

In the beginning of the Maharaja's reign, there was simple organisation of the army. Each battalion of infantry with the horse guns was commanded by the Kumadan or Commandant. But after the employment of Ventura, Allard, Court, Avitabile and others a great change was effected in the organisation of the army. After 1833, a battalion constituted a part of unit. The army was organised into brigades, in which there were four battalions of infantry, one battery of eight to ten horse, a small force varying from a risalah to a regiment of cavalry and a company of Sappers and Miners.

A battalion was the administrative as well as the manoeuvring unit. There were about 900 soldiers in a battalion which was commanded by Kumadan (commandant) who was assisted by an Adjutant and a Major. In each battalion, there was munshi or clerk, a mutasaddi or accountant and a granthi or reader of the holy Granth. In each battalion there were eight companies of about one hundred each. The companies were commanded by subadars who were assisted by two jamadars. Each company was divided into four sections of about twenty five soldiers each. Each section was commanded by hawaldar who had one naik to assist him in the performance of his duties. The phuriya (probably

French fourier) and the sergeant pershaps assisted the company commander in administrative duties.

The cavalry was not efficient as the infantry. Steinbach writes that the cavalry was inferior to the infantry in every respect. There were big guns drawn by camels, elephants, horses and bullocks. The organisation of each battery closely resembled that of an infantry battalion. In a ten guns battery, there were 250 men including non-combatants under a Commandant who was assisted by an Adjutant and a Major. Each battery was divided into sections. In each section, there was a gun to which usually eleven gunners were attached. A section was commanded by jamadar who was assisted by a hawaldar and a naik. In 1831, Captain Burnes noticed a great improvement in the artillery. "The guns," he writes, "were well cast and carriages in good repair, they had been made in Lahore and had cost him (Ranjit Singh) Rs. 1,000 each."

Besides the regular army, there were irregular troops, the Ghorcharas, the Jagirdari cavalry and the Akalis. The Ghorcharas were divided into Ghorchara Khas and Misaldar Sawars. The Ghorchara Khas recruited from the families of the old Sikh chiefs. They were not given any training. Their pay was very decent. The Misaldar Sawars joined the extinction of the misls. Their position was definitely inferior to the Ghorchara Khas. The number of Ghorcharas was 10,795 in 1838. They provided for themselves and their horses. They were divided into derahs and each derah was divided into misls, in which the number of horsemen joined from 15 to 70. These horsemen reminded Hugel of days when the fate of empires depended on the point of a lance. They were frequently inspected according to descriptive rolls. Pay and allowances were paid to the trooper as long as his horse was alive. If the horse died, the trooper was paid the salary of a foot soldier till he provided himself with another horse. This rule was strictly enforced and no lenient treatment was meted out to the guilty.

Besides the above troops, the jagirdars supplied contingents to the Maharaja. They were not efficient as the troops maintained by the Maharaja. They were paid by the jagirdars. The Akalis also formed apart of the irregular army. Steinbach writes that their number was between two and three thousand, "They move about constantly armed to the teeth," he writes, "insulting every body they meet, particulary the


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Europeans and it is not an uncommon thing to see them moving about with a drawn sword in each hand, two more in their belt, a matchlock at their back and three or four quoits fastened round their turbans. The quoit (steel ring) is an arm peculiar to this race of people." They did not hold any one superior and were the religious representatives of the Sikhs. They were the armed guardians of Amritsar, looked into the regular performance of religious ceremonies and observance of moral laws. They hated the foreigners. Due to their indiscretion, the Maharaja was embroiled in serious problems with the British. They attached the escort of Metcalfe under their leader Akali Phoola Singh, but were repulsed. Burnes writes that the Maharaja stationed detachments of the troops on the ferries to prevent the Akalis from crossing over to the British territories. They often took the law into their hands and inflicted cruel punishment on the guilty. He further writes about a village which was burnt by them. They made attempts on the life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. But the Maharaja did not attempt to crush them, he moderated their fanaticism. They were employed on dangerous expeditions. For example in the battle of Nowshera, the fanaticism of the Akalis was pitted against the fanaticism of the Ghazis. The desperate attack of band of Akalis under their leader Phoola Singh was one of the factors which decided the battle in the Maharaja's favour. The intrepid Phoola Singh lost his life in the battle.

The Maharaja fixed the monthly salary of his soldiers and officers. Before him, the Sikh soldiers sustained themselves on plunder after victory and were not paid by the Sikh chiefs. The Maharaja paid the regular army in cash. There are some instances of payment by an assignment of revenue-free lands in lieu of monthly salaries to some of the high officers. There was not a fixed scale according to which men in various grades were paid. There were not hard and fast rules according to which a subordinate was promoted to higher rank. A careful examination of the pay rolls for a period of more than twenty years manifests and average approximating the salaries given in the below noted statement.

Kumedan (Commandant), Rs. 60 to Rs. 150 a month, adjutant Rs.

6. Steinbach, op. cit, p. 68
30 to Rs. 60, mahzur Rs. 21 to Rs. 25, subadat, Rs. 20 to Rs. 30, Jamadar, Rs. 15 to Rs. 22, hawaldar, Rs. 13 to Rs. 15, naik Rs. 10, to Rs. 12, sarian (sergeant), Rs. 8 to Rs. 12, phuriya, Rs. 7-8-9 to Rs. 10, sepy Rs. 7 to Rs. 8-8-0.

Establishment
Khalasi, Rs. 4 per month; saqqa, Rs. 4; gharyali, Rs. 4; sarham Rs. 4-5; Jhamda-bardar, Rs. 4-5; beldar, Rs. 5-6; and mistri, Rs. 6-7-8.

In the artillery, the rate of pay was the same as in the infantry. In the cavalry it was higher. A sawar was paid twenty-five rupees per month. The sawar had to keep a horse and equip himself. A risaldar was paid between rupees 40 to 48. In the Khalsa Durbar Records, there are pay-rolls of the troops of the Maharaja and his successors. Steinbach writes that the pay of the Lahore troops was superior to that of the soldiers in British army.9

The scales given above are of the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. After his death, the army assumed the control of the state and forced the nominal rulers to increase their pay.

Wise and good administrator as he was, Maharaja Ranjit Singh kept the size and expenditure of the army within limits. After his death, the size of the army and the expenditure on it considerably increased.

Sita Ram Kohli10 gives the following table from which it becomes abundantly clear that the size of the army was almost doubled and the expenditure on it increased enormously.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Total expenditure on pay</th>
<th>Average per head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Infantry 29, 617</td>
<td>38,240, 101-0-0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1838 A.D.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cavalry 4,090</td>
<td>38,240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artillery 4, 533</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Infantry 53, 962</td>
<td>70,721, 707-0-0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1845 A.D.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cavalry 6,235</td>
<td>70,721</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artillery 10,524</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is to be acknowledged that the troops were not paid regularly every month. Usually, they were in arrears for five or six months. They

10. Sita Ram Kohli, op. cit., p.5.
were normally paid five times a year. This is certainly the greatest defect of the military organisation of the Maharaja. Burnes wrote, "For some years last the army has been irregularly paid—due to the growing friendship with the British Government or the increasing avarice of age."\(^{11}\) The monthly payment system was introduced by the Maharaja in imitation of the British. This could not be reinforced due to the lack of efficiency in the revenue system of the Sikh Kingdom. Wade remarked in 1835, "The merit of our (British) regulations consist in their general application to the system of government for which they are intended and they are not calculated for partial adoption, that where the elements of rule are so different as between the British Government and his, the details of the one can never be suitably engrafted in part on the other." This is the best explanation of the partial failure of the monthly payment system. After the perusal of forty years of pay-rolls of the troops it becomes clear that the payments to fauj-ain were made five times in the year. The Ghorcharas liked to be paid either by the grant of jagir or share in revenue of a particular territory. When the system of cash payment was introduced, they were disbursed salaries twice or thrice a year. Ghorchara was paid between Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 a year. As they belonged to high families, they never clamoured for pay. The attitude of the sovereign towards them was lenient.

The soldiers could serve in the army so long as they were fit. There was no regular pension. "No pensions" writes Steinbach, "were or are, assigned to the soldiery for long service, nor is there any provision for the widows and the families of those who die or are killed in the service of the state. Promotion, instead of being the right of the good soldier in order of seniority or the reward of merit in the various grade, is frequently effected by bribery. In higher ranks, advancement is obtained by the judicious applications of the douceut to the palm of the favourites at court, or the military chieftains about the person of the sovereign."\(^{12}\) There was no regular system of promotion. But despite the prevalence of bribery, there is no gainsaying the fact that the merit was the criterion for appointment and promotion against the high posts. There are numerous instances when a person of humble origin rose to power only by dint of merit. Moreover, one-third of the appointments were made from the members of the family of the retiring soldiers. In

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the pay-rolls of the Khalsa Durbar Records, there is a section entitled “Dharmarth” in which are recorded the payments made to the families of dead and wounded soldiers.

In 1839, W. Barr met at Rajpura a Sikh officer who had remained in the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He was an officer with 67 horsemen under him. He was paid rupees two per day for and subsistence. In the battle at Jamrud while fighting under the command of Hari Singh Nalwa’ he received a sabre cut for which he received a large present. He said, “The Maharaja is extremely liberal to those who are wounded in his service and if he hears of a Sardar falting to reward such he immediately disgraces him.”

Some of the Englishmen who came to the Punjab in the thirties of the nineteenth century criticised the army administration of the Maharaja. There were others who commended it. Lawrence said, “The building completed, the Maharaja does not think the same care necessary for its preservation as for its construction. There is no undisputed punctual pay.” The efficiency of Ranjit Singh army is acknowledged by Osborne. He wrote, “The Sikh army can be easily moved, No wheel carriages are allowed on a march. Their own bazaars carry all they require and 30,000 of their troops could be moved with more facility and less expense and loss of time then three company’s regiments on this side of the Sutlej.” No army in India could move with such alacrity as the Sikh army.

From the Khalsa Durbar Records of 1836, we find many trained Sikh generals of the regular army. These generals, were Ram Singh, son of Jamadar Khushal Singh, Gujar Singh, Tej Singh, nephew of Khushal Singh, Ajit Singh, Misr Sukh Raj and Mian Udham Singh and the European generals were Ventura and Court. The Maharaja was not inclined to employ more Europeans during the closing years of his reign. In the appendix of Carmicheal Smith’s “History of the Reigning Family of Lahore”, he mentions the names of 39 foreign officers in the service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of whom twelve were French, seven Anglo-Indians four Italians, four Germans, three Americans, two Spaniards, one Russian, one Scotch and only three Englishmen. Wise as he was, the Maharaja relied mostly on the French as he was aware of

the traditional hostility between the French and the English. The British Government encouraged the Englishmen to join the service of the Marathas in order to safeguard the interests of the British, they looked upon with distrust the Maharaja's appointment of foreign officers because of nationality. As most of the foreign officers left the service of the Lahore Durbar before the First Anglo-Sikh War, it cannot be said with certainly low faithfully they would have proved. From one or two cases of desertion we cannot generalise. Allard, Ventura and Court were not men of such dubious character as most of the European officers of the Marathas. Jcquemont asserts that the Maharaja was exceptionally shrewd to get ride of adventurers of dubious character. We can not maintain with certainty whether the European officers would have proved faithful to the Maharaja in the event of an Anglo-Sikh War breaking out during his life-time.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh greatly improved the organisation of the army and the quality of the weapons. It was the best organised department of the state and the Maharaja always strove for its betterment. The fact that the army of the Lahore Durbar fought bravely against the British forces during the First Anglo-Sikh War, was due to the great organising capacity of the Maharaja. “Never did a native army,” write Gough and Innes, “having so relatively slight an advantage on numbers fight a battle with the British in which the issue was so doubtful as at Ferozeshah, and of the victory was decisive, opinion remains divided to what the result might have been if the Sikh troops had found commanders with sufficient capacity to give their qualities full oppriunity.16 “The commanders were treacherous and inefficient to command such well-trained army. Cunningham has rightly observed, “Hearts to dare and hands to execute were numerous, but there was no mind to guide and animate the whole.”17

17. Cunningham, op. cit, p. 280.
The Tide of Turbans
North American Images of Punjabi Immigrants in the Early Twentieth Century

JAMES R. LEWIS*

In Bellingham, Washington on the night of September 5, 1907 a mob of the some five to six hundred lumberjacks raided the living quarters of Sikh mill workers. The Indians' possessions were tossed into the street, and in many cases their valuables were stolen. A few of the workers leaped out of windows in attempt to escape the crowd. Many others were dragged from their beds half-naked, whipped, and driven into the street. While some Sikhs immediately fled across the Canadian border, about four hundred were jailed ("brought under the protection of authorities," in the euphemistic words of one account). There were no fatalities, but at least six Indians were hospitalized.1

The laborers in Bellingham had moved across the border from Canada, partially because of mounting anti-Indian sentiments in Canada, and partially because of the higher wage scale in the United States.2 In a pattern that characterized many periods of American History, native-born laborers had been displaced by immigrants who were willing to accept somewhat lower wages. As more and more South Asians had moved into Bellingham, resentment had mounted until native-born lumberjacks resorted to mob violence to counter the threat to their economic well-being.

The press and, we can infer, the general public, were for the most part unsympathetic to the plight of the Sikhs. One of the more extended reporters implicitly defended the rioters by noting that, "At no time was there danger of unrestrained violence," and further asserted that, "The spirit

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1. In terms of primary documents, the most complete account of this incident is Werter D. Dodd, "The Hindu in the Northwest," World Today 13 (November 1907), pp. 1157-1160. Supplementary information can be found in "Anti-Oriental Riots," Independent 63 (September 12, 1907), pp. 592-593 and "War with Great Britain?" Outlook 87 (September 14, 1907), pp. 51-52.

of the mob was one of hilarity and good humor." The same account described such "good-humored" incidents as the mass hardening of several hundred Sikh laborers along the streets "like cattle." Predictably, the official organ of the Asiatic Exclusion League (which had changed its name from the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League largely because of the "new problems" of South Asian immigrants) defended the loggers at "justly incensed." With respect to this incident as well as a half-dozen other instances of nativist violence mentioned in the same publication, the AEL asserted that, "In all these cases we may say with truth, the oriental is at fault." The Bellingham police, who jailed Sikhs rather than rioters, obviously concurred with these sentiments. Similar incidents occurred at Everett, Washington on November Second of the same year, at Live Oak, California on January 25, 1908, and at St. John, Oregon on March 21, 1910.

The Bellingham riot and its journalistic representations usefully illustrate several facets of the American response to the pressures of increased immigration in the early Twentieth Century. The care concern those individuals most directly affected, in the case of the lumbercamp incident as well as many similar incidents, was more or less genuine fear of the economic threat posed by immigrants. However, in the press accounts and especially in the AEL account, we are able to perceive a kind of distortion of events that was designed to legitimate the repression and eventual exclusion of immigrants. In order to reinforce this misrepresentation, journalists often recounted negative

3. Dodd, op. cit., p. 1157.
4. Ibid.
7. To nativists it was self-evident that Asian immigrants had no civil rights, e.g., "As a part of the innumerable spawn which the hellmuck of India has produced imagine a smoke-colored Oriental having any rights in this part of the world." The Aryan (June 1912), p. 6.
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caracteristics of the victims, as if the possession of flaws (more often imagined than real) legitimated mob violence. For example, in one of the reports cited above, the author went on to say toward the end of the article that "the Hindu" (Indian immigrants were almost always referred to as Hindus, despite the fact that about eighty-five percent of them were Sikhs and another ten percent Muslims) "is not a desirable citizen. He is not adoptable; he does not fit in ... He is poor workman, and he lives in dirt and filth." The imagery utilized by the Asiatic Exclusion League was more colorful:

We, the people of the United States, are cousins, far removed of the Hindus of the northwest provinces, but our forefathers pressed to the west, in the everlasting march of conquest, progress and civilization. The forefather of the Hindus went east and became enslaved, effeminate, castridden and degraded, until today we have a spectacle of the Western Aryans, the "Lore of Creation," if we may use a simile, while on other hand the Eastern Aryans have become the "Slaves of Creation" to carry the comparison to its logical conclusion. And now we, the people of the United States, are asked to receive these members of a degraded race on terms of equality.11

These remarks embody a certain aspect of the racist "mythology" that was employed against South Asian immigrants. In this view, Indians and Euroamericans, although originally related, had so changed over the centuries that they had, for all practical purposes, become different races. Furthermore, according to this line of thinking, the overall quality of the racial stock of Euroamericans had improved while of South Asians had "degenerated." Although not mentioned in the above citation, the primary explanation usually given for this degeneration was that the "Eastern Aryans" had intermarried with the dark, supposedly "inferior" aborigines of the subcontinent. From the perspective of the late twentieth century, these notions may appear slightly ridiculous, but at the time they were taken all to seriously and constituted one of the cornerstones of the racit image of Indian immigrants.

The present paper sets for itself the task sorting out this image in terms of the various influences that shaped it. The overriding factor was obviously the desire to legitimate repressive actions (such as


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Bellingham riot) as well as immigration restriction, but many other factors entered into its construction. There was also a certain amount of variability within this negative stereotype, depending on the particular orientations of different perceivers. The primary materials for the discussion will be articles that appeared in the popular magazines of the time, the texts of relevant congressional hearings, and the published proceedings of the Asiatic League. The analysis will be preceded by an historical section that will outline the overall historical situation out of which these documents emerged.

**Historical Backdrop**

One of the themes in the national “mythology” that I was taught as a child was the ideal of “America as the refuge of the oppressed.” While there is a certain amount of truth in this theme, the nativist opposition to immigration, which was an equally prominent aspect of the same history, seems to have dropped out of the national memory. The United States experienced two periods of marked nativist agitation, corresponding to two waves of immigration, one in the thirty or forty years leading up to the Civil War and the other during the thirty or forty years period that concluded in the passing of immigration acts in the early Nineteen-twenties.

In the first period, the principal nativist targets were Irish immigrants. At the time, the antagonism was conceived primarily in religious terms, as Protestant versus Catholic, although much of the underlying tension was due to economic conflict. Nativist propaganda played a major role in provoking such mob violence as the burning of Catholic churches and convents. This conflict might have eventually resulted in immigration restriction and certain abridgements of civil rights for the non-native-born had not the Civil War diverted American passions away from the anti Catholic crusade.\(^\text{12}\)

In the second period, the perceived threat was from Southern and Eastern Europeans, although Asians did not trail far behind. Despite the fact that religious tensions played a prominent role, the antagonism was conceived primarily in racial terms. Even the Eastern and Southern were portrayed as belonging to different “subraces” that were suppos-

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edly inferior to Northern Europeans. Rather than face up to structural problems in American society, immigrants could conveniently be blamed for certain social ills such as increased crime. These problems were, in turn, perceived as racial traits, as, for example, in 1911 when the U.S. Immigration Commission asserted that “Certain kinds of criminality are inherent in the Italian race.” 13 Parallel to the first period of nativist agitation, much of the underlying conflict was economic. 14

A revitalized Ku Klux Klan emerged toward the end of this period, directed more toward immigrants than toward Blacks. 15 Although the Klan claimed credit for the passing of immigration restriction acts, its major activities were “expressive”—demonstrations, meetings, and occasional acts of ritualistic violence, such as the public flogging of immigrants—rather than more effective tactics like political lobbying. 16 The powerful, socially well situated individuals who were most responsible for raising immigration barriers, such as the members of Immigration Restriction League, preferred to cloak their racism in the white sheets of eugenics, the “science of race improvement.”

Francis Galton, the Englishman who founded eugenics, had not originally been concerned with immigration. Instead, Galton’s biases was principally directed against the lower classes. Although Galton himself was more interested, at least initially, in encouraging more prolific breeding among the upper classes (“positive eugenics”), eugenic science eventually included an equally prominent stress on discouraging reproduction among the socially disadvantaged (negative eugenics”). 17

17. My discussion of the eugenics movement is distilled from Mark H. Haller, Eugenics: Hereditary Attitudes in American Thought (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Pr., 1963); Daniel J. Kevles, In The Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Pr., 1985), and the relevant sections of Higham, op. cit.
Part of eugenics' underlying rationale was taken from social Darwinism; the people at the top were the fittest and hence the cream of the race. The major amendment that eugenical science made to social Darwinism was to portray the forces of fertility and survival at work in modern society as "unnatural." In other words, under normal circumstances the fittest would produce the most offspring whereas the least fit would tend to die off before they could successfully reproduce, but in contemporary society it was the least desirable (in the eyes of eugenicists) classes that were the most fertile and vice versa. Given the fact that the racial stock was becoming genetically poorer with each passing generation, eugenicists lobbied for governmental control over fertility.

When the eugenics movement began to take hold in the United States around the turn of the century, it was similarly directed against "unfit" citizens. Many state sterilization laws, for example, resulted from eugenics lobbying. Almost from the start, however, the American movement took on strong racist overtones. By the end of Nineteenth Century, the institutional emphasis of the original Anglo-Saxon myth—the idea that America was great because of its democratic, Anglo-Saxon institutions—had been thoroughly supplanted by racial Anglo-Saxonism. The Americans had come to feel that their cultural, political, et cetera greatness was in their very blood, a by-product of their racial greatness. As a corollary to this, the inferior traits that native-born Americans thought they perceived in immigrants were given a racial basis; immigrants would never really assimilate to American culture because biologically they could not. With little modification, eugenics notions could be adapted so as to give the Anglo-Saxon myth, as well as anti-immigrants prejudice, scientific respectability.

To turn now to an overview of Sikh immigration, one should initially be aware that Indians made up a comparatively small part of a larger movement of Asians to the west coast of North America. The largest number of Asian immigrants were East Asians. Significant Chinese migration began in the mid-Nineteenth Century, and Japanese migration in the late Eighteen-eighties. Significant South Asian immigration began comparatively late, about 1905 in Canada and 1907

in the United States. By the time they arrived, the Sikhs encountered a ready-made bias against all Asians. A drive for oriental exclusion was already in motion that in 1917 would close the door to Indian immigration into the United States completely. The door would be cracked in 1946, but would not fully reopened until 1965. Although hysterical nativists claimed that there were 30,000 South Asians in the western states, a more responsible estimate is about 3,000 during the period of total exclusion—a drop in the bucket when compared with the East Asian presence.

The first North American immigration point for Sikhs was Canada. The origin of this migration has been traced to 1877 when a number of Sikhs travelled through Canada during their return from Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in England. Several decided to remain and settle in Vancouver. Other Punjabis (the great majority of Indian immigrants, even among the non-Sikhs, were Punjabis), many of whom were retired soldiers, were immigrating in noticeable numbers by 1901, but it was not until 1905 that a real influx began. Most of the immigrants who came in 1905 and after had originally planned to earn some money and then return to India, but many of them remained.

Anti-Asiatic feeling ran high in British Columbia during this period, but, because both India and Canada belonged to the British Empire, Canada could not overtly exclude Indian immigrants. The Canada government was able to get around the problem of Imperial citizenship by passing an immigration law that excluded all immigrants who had not traveled directly from their homeland with no stop-overs en route. This provision was supposed to have put an end to South Asian immigration because at the time no ship sailed non-stop from India to Canada. In 1914, however, Gurdit Singh, a wealthy landowner, chartered a Japanese ship, the Komagata Maru, and travelled directly to Vancouver with a cargo of 375 Sikhs. The authorities were able to prevent the ship from landing because the passengers did not have $200 per person (the mandatory amount of money that immigrants were supposed to have on their person) had recently been raised $25 to

19. The following discussion is derived primarily from the two Hess articles cited previously and the relevant section of H. Brett Melendy, Asians in America: Filipinos, Koreans and East Indians (Boston, Twayne, 1977).
$200), and the ship was forced to return to India.\textsuperscript{20}

The majority of Sikhs in the United States eventually settled in agricultural areas in California, such as the Imperial Valley and the San Joaquin Valley. Originally laborers, they eventually bought or leased farmland and settled. (After the Third decision deprived them of citizenship, their property had to be registered in the names of native-born friends and leases worked-out informally because of California's Alien Land Law.\textsuperscript{21}) This quick overview necessarily leaves out a great deal. Beyond the incidents already touched on, the one other aspect of Sikh history in the United States that should be mentioned are some of the events surrounding the Ghadar Party.\textsuperscript{22}

Headquartered in San Francisco, the Ghadarites were a group of Indian Americans who expoused the violent overthrow of British rule in India. In 1914, with German aid, they sent a force of four hundred men for United States to India in an unsuccessful attempt to initiate a revolution. In the aftermath of this operation, a number of German agents and diplomats as well as Indians were taken into custody and charged with violating U.S. neutrality laws. The resulting five month trial in 1917 was a kind of public spectacle that was followed closely in the press.

The trial... was one of the most picturesque ever conducted in an American court. The turbaned Hindus lent an oriental atmosphere... Witness after witness recited his amazing story of adventure.\textsuperscript{23}

As if following out the plot of a paperback novel, the trial ended in a dramatic court-room assassination of the leader of the Ghadar Party

\textsuperscript{20} This event has been the subject of several book-length studies, e.g., Ted Ferguson, A White Man's Country: An Exercise in Canadian Prejudice (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975); Hugh Johnston, The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar (Delhi, Oxford Univ., Pr., 1975), and Sohan Singh Josh, Tragedy of the Komagata Maru (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1975).

\textsuperscript{21} On the Third decision; refer to Hess, op. cit. The necessary informality of these arrangements meant that Indians were sometimes cheated out of their lands and profits; e.g., refer to Karan Leonard “The Pakhar Singh Murders: A Panj bi Response to California's Alien Land Law,” Amerasia 11 (1984), pp. 75-87.

\textsuperscript{22} The Ghadar Party has attracted more scholarship than any other aspect of Sikh history in North America. To mention only one of the earlier studies: Khushwant Singh and Satindra Singh, Ghadar 1915: India's First Armed Revolution (New Delhi: R & K Publishing House, 1966).

by one of the other defendants, who was in turn shot and killed by a U.S. Marshal. Fourteen South Asians were eventually sentenced.

The Indo-German conspiracy, as it came to be known, provided the material for chapters in a number of popular accounts of German espionage activities against the United States, and further served to fuel anti-Indian prejudice. Despite the fact that Indian political activity was directed against Great Britain rather than the United States, the story of the Ghadar Party was seized upon by nativists eager to demonstrate that anti-American conspiracies were widespread among immigrants. Thus the trial, which was the focus of so much media attention, took on the feel of a nativist exorcism ritual—a prototype of the Red Scare arrests that would occur two years later.

The extent to which the Ghadarites captured the American imagination is evident in a sensationalistic article, "The Stranglers," published in 1932. In the wake of a number of unexplained murders in the Sacramento Valley in the late Twenties and early Thirties, the writer of the piece constructed a journalistic fantasy in which the Ghadar party became a sect of Thuggees which carried out murders as a religious ritual. (The basis for the association may have been a confusion of the name of a Sikh movement, the Akalis, with the name of the Thuggee’s patron goddess, Kali.) The Ghadarites were also portrayed as a kind of Indian mafia on the payroll of the Soviet Union. These “Hindu-Communist ‘racketeers,’” as the article referred to them, supposedly extorted protection money from other Indians...

Although one is unable to determine the extent to which the author believed his own accusations, the fact that he was able to pass off this bizarre fabrication as a report of actual events indicates something about the credulity of many Americans with respect to foreigners in their midst. To the nativist mind-set, most immigrants were actually or potentially subversive of the social order, either as criminals or as Political radicals. Given the rampant xenophobia of the period, many Americans readily bought into such accusations.

Images of the other

The image of another group of people is built up from a number

of different influences. Some of these factors emerge out of the concrete relations one has with a group, while other appear to emerge more out of the psyche of the perceiver, largely independent of any genuine empirical contact. The influence that causes one to portray certain groups of people as being completely the reverse of one's own community is an example of the latter. Such a simple opposition is the easiest structure for classifying communities other than one's own, the same structure reinforces one's natural, initial response to an alien people, which is to notice their differences more than their similarities. This pattern also dovetails with the tendency for individuals and collectivities to build up a sense self and cultural identity in terms of contrasts with others. Finally, it should be relatively easy to see how this pattern forms the basis for invidious comparisons.

In the case of Sikh immigrants in North America, whose image at the beginning of the century was almost entirely negative, this particular factor played a major role. When another people become the targets of such extreme negativity, they begin to be viewed as the precise opposite of the perceiver in every way:

Hindoos...are wholly different...in their political and moral ideals, their age-long training, and their form of government, social, religious and political...from white people.

Such a perception seems to be the basis for the oft repeated accusation that South Asian immigrants will never assimilate, and hence constitute a cornerstone for legitimating exclusion.

In addition to the assertion that others are "wholly other" than oneself, the distinguishing feature of this particular factor is that the boundaries between different groups of people become blurred. In other words, if the dominant trait of other peoples is their difference from the group with which the perceiver identifies, then everyone else can be lumped together as more or less the same. This tendency was clearly at work in the peculiar article that was referred to earlier in our discussion of the Ghadar Party.

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As a somewhat different example of the same boundary blurring phenomenon, the Asiatic Exclusion League had no problem grouping together the diverse peoples of Asia in opposition to Euroamericans:

The Asiatic race and the Caucasian race never could and never can exist in the same territory. Their morals, their philosophy, their religion, their education, their standard of living are reversed and so far apart as the two poles.  

The AEL had a marked tendency to indulge in colorful rhetoric, the transparent purpose of which was to legitimize the exclusion of all orientals.

To support the contention that Asians could never assimilate to American culture, cultural differences were, as was noted earlier, portrayed as being a function of racial type. Hence racial intermarriage between Asians and Euroamericans (the “inevitable” result of Asian immigration, according to nativists) would eventually undermine American civilization. In the words of a sample AEL statement, “an eternal law of nature had decreed that the white cannot assimilate the blood of another color without corrupting the very springs of civilization.”

Such an assertion is completely illogical apart from the assumptions of racist ideology.

The facets of the opposition that the Asiatic Exclusion League perceived were manifold, but one of the most important was religion:

If the surplus millions of the teeming hordes of India, China and Japan were permitted to immigrate to the United States, they would soon outnumber and dominate our present population, subvert our form of government, degrade our standard of living and substitute the semi-barbarous heathen civilization of Shintoism and Brahma, Buddha and Confucious, for our Christian civilization.

Predictably, religious differences were taken to be an indication of irreconcilable racial differences. The identification of the United States as a Christian civilization meant that any “race” which did not readily convert to Christianity was probably unassimilable. Consequently, the issue of the non-conversion of large number of South Asians was regularly brought up to immigration and naturalization hearings. This was still an issue in such hearings as late as 1939:

Mr. Kramer. But the American missionaries have done a

great deal to preach Christianity in these foreign countries, have they not? 

Father Cooper. They have done a great deal; yes, in practically all parts of the world.

Mr. Allen. I am just wondering how much progress American missionaries have made among the Indians.

Father Cooper. Minor, I should say....

Somewhat later in the same hearing, the AEL representative brought up the same point:

The question was asked when Father Cooper was on the stand as to what effect missionary work had had over there. I am not familiar with the figures of India, but I do know something about China. As you know, our Sunday schools have been collecting pennies ever since we were born for the purpose of sending missionaries to China. Well if we take the figures...as to the number of converts they have made, we discover that exactly one-half of 1 percent of the people of China have become Christians...

Here we find not only the non-conversion equals non-assimilation logic, but we also see the blurring-of-boundaries phenomenon. The American Federation of Labor representative did not know anything about India (although the hearing dealt specifically with Indian naturalization), but, because to his mind all Orientals were more or less the same, he could bring up something he knew about China, and that would do just as well.

The image of Asians as fallen, decadent people caused various other negative qualities to be attributed to them. In order to give concrete dimensions to irrational fears about the menace of alien “blood,” for instance, racists tended to impute contagious diseases to all Asians. “Other” are often perceived as somehow sick, but the accusations leveled against Eastern peoples were rather extreme:


35. The response by one of the Indians present is worth citing: “I am not sure that conversion to Christianity of the Orient is a good test of whether or not the particular person of India would make a good citizen of the United States. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
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It is a matter of general knowledge among medical men that nearly all these orientals carry with them the bacilli of various Asiatic diseases, such as cholera, bubonic plague, hook-worm, etc. 36

Since Asians were the natural “breeding places of pratically all the dangerous contagious diseases,” 37 their mere presence posed a physical threat to the population: “Every group of Indian coolies now in California is a center from which the infection is spreading in that State.” 39 While at least a few immigrants probably brought diseases with them, such exaggerated statements are clearly absurd.

In the eugenics literature, criminality was portrayed as an inheritable trait, endemic to degenerate racial stock. As a consequence, not only were Asians viewed as natural homes for disease, but they also perceived as naturally predisposed to crime (a social “disease,” so to speak). Given this kind of mind-set, criminality was imputed to Indians involved in any kind of disturbance, whether they were the guilty party or not. In one case, for instance.

Six of the Sikhs were arrested on a charge of assault and battery, the complaining witness being a white man. During the trial it developed that the white man, while drunk, had entered one of their houses and, going into a room where six of them were quartered, and seeing their headdresses he had decided that they must belong to members of the fairer sex, whereupon he immediately had embraced one of them and so vigorous was his lovemaking and so fervent were his kisses that the disgusted Oriental had thrown him out and when he tried to force his way in again, he had been roughly repulsed. 39

The list of negative qualities that were at one time or another attributed to Sikh immigrants could be extended to include almost every undesirable trait imaginable, from anarchism 40 to socomy. 41

36. Pael (October 1910), p. 64.
38. Ibid., p. 66.
40. Cin, p. 82.
41. Cin, p. 75.
From these few examples, however it should be clear that once a group of people has been categorized as "wholly other," it is possible to associate them with any characteristic that seems to be the inverse of one's own self-image.

Most of the aspects of the Sikh image enumerated above had very little connection with empirical reality. There were, however, other aspects of the image which, although still shaped by extreme bias, had at least some contact with the real world. For example, new immigrants have almost always appeared "dirty" to native-born Euro-Americans. This impression was partially the result of the many inconveniences of travel which cause people to be less than tidy in appearance upon arrival. The Sikhs, for instance, were perceived as "the dirtiest and filthiest of people. How could a people with long hair, and long beard and '10 foot long dirty turban' be otherwise?" 42 This is clearly an evaluation made from afar, reinforced by the fact that South Asians were engaged in types of labor that required them to "get dirty." The few individuals who actually took the time to get acquainted with them judged the Sikhs "scrupulously clean." 43

One of the strangest aspects of the image of Sikhs found in period literature is the characterization of South Asian laborers as "unfit for manual labor." This particular trait seems especially surprising when one takes note of the photographs that often accompanied the same articles that deemed the laborers "unfit" one easily infers from the pictures that these men were sturdy Punjabis, lacking neither strength nor endurance. The only real basis that I have been able to find for this kind of characterization was the immigrants' unfamiliarity with and hence inefficiency in, particular kinds of work (e.g., the lumber industry) and the initial impression that the laborers, fresh off the boat and many times still weak from seasickness, made on their employers. 45

However, because the authors of these articles were focused on the economic threat supposedly represented by Sikh immigration they were able to re-perceive them as members of a weak, degenerate race, physically unequal to "white" laborers. Imputations of a narrow economic interest, such as the assertion that Indians "will find no place in

43. Lockley, op. cit., p. 593.
44. J. Barclay Williams and Saint N. Sing, "Canada is Newest Immigrant," The Canadian Magazine 28 (February 1907), p. 385.
45. Lockely, op. cit., p. 592.
American life save in the exploitation of our resources,"46 appear to result from the same orientation, although missionaries sometimes made similar accusations when they found Sikhs unresponsive to their efforts to Christianize them:

They are shrouded in superstition, dead to American thought dead to everything save the glitter and clink of two-dollars a-day.47

The unwillingness of Sikhs to abandon their religion as well as other aspects of their cultural background such as dietary habits were sufficient evidence that they were to assimilate:

[T]hey are bound down by a strange religion, a strange religious fanaticism, a fanaticism which prevents them from eating what American people prepare.48

Along these same lines, we should finally note that one more factor shaping anti-Indian prejudice was simple ethnocentrism, as when one writer referred to "their strange appearance and peculiar habits and customs."49

Journalists were not, of course, the only people to have such reactions. A reading of almost any relevant hearing of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization from the early Twentieth Century produces the unalterable impression that the United States Congress was a stronghold of the most simplistic variety of ethnocentrism; for example,

I do not know where they come from any more than I know where the fishworms come that we see after a rain. We see them. I have wondered ever since I was a boy where the fishworms come from. We see them on the sidewalks after a heavy rain; that is all I know about it. Where the Hindu comes from, I do not know. You can see him every day and every hour of the day and night. You can see them working in the fields. You can see them bidding for jobs. You can see them camping on the ditch banks. They are there and they are an eyesore to every man with

48. Cin, p. 77.
49. H.A. Millis, "East India Immigration to the Pacific Coast," Survey 28 (June 1, 1912), p. 329.
high ideals... They have what is called a turban, which is made of calico or some similar material which they wrap around their heads, 10 or 12 feet in length... They have no earthly excuse in dressing as they do, other than to show they are Hindus and that they do not want to be contaminated by the people with whom they come into contact.\textsuperscript{50}

Concluding Remarks

The characteristics of the image analyzed in the preceding pages are united by their greater or lesser disjunction from the actual, empirical Sikhs that the image purported to described. This seems to have been the result of the negative predispositions which journalists \textit{et al}, held, as well as the failure to become more than superficially acquainted with the immigrants. A certain amount of unfamiliarity or "distance" is required in order to be able to maintain stereotypes.

In an area of investigation like the present one, where there is an obvious gap between report and reality in many of the primary materials, one of the initial tasks of historical scholarship is to attempt to separate out "real" events from the obscuring rhetoric of partisan documents. A secondary but nevertheless important task is to analyze partisan rhetoric in terms of the factors that shaped it. The understanding of a partisan position—or, as in the case examined by the present paper, a prejudiced stereotype—is also essential because such stereotypes are, regrettfully often the driving forces behind historical events. Hopefully, the present paper has shed some light on a few of the factors that go into the construction of these kinds of negative images.

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Cin}, pp. 78-79.
Sikhs and the First General Elections (1936-37) to the Punjab Legislative Assembly: An Analysis

Dr Y. P. Bajaj*

Since the Constitution of 1935 promised a greater degree of responsible government in the provinces, popularly known as provincial autonomy, general elections to the reformed and radically expanded Punjab Legislature, as also to the Legislative Assemblies of other provinces, were announced to be held during November 1936—January 1937. Important changes introduced with respect to the Punjab Assembly were: its strength was increased from 94 to 175 members; official and nominated members were eliminated; women and labour were given representation for the first time; there were to be no Executive Councillors; henceforth all the Departments of the Government were to be headed by the ministers responsible to the Assembly; and last though not the least, number of voters were enhanced from about 3.4% of population¹ to around 11.1% or 25.75 lakhs.² Accordingly Sikhs seats also rose from 13 to 33 and franchise to 483675.³ An important point, deserving special attention in the present context is that Sikhs' enfranchisement was highest both in the Urban and rural constituencies. Table I, (See at p. 104) prepared for the paper in hand, clearly brings out the point.⁴

Even though the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab had condemned the Communal Award in very strong terms,⁵ yet all the political parties, representing the different shades of public opinion, decided to contest the forthcoming elections. Like the two other communities of the province, the Sikhs also started preparing for the elections since

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¹Reader, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

2. Sixth schedule issued by the Reform Commissioner, Punjab, 5.9.1935 (Sunder Singh Majithia Papers, File No. 97, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi. Hereafter quoted as a S.S.M. Papers, N.M.M.L.).
3. Reform Office, Franchise, F. No. 20/III/F-36 (National Archives of India New Delhi/ hereafter cited as N.A.I.)
4. Prepared from the statistics given in ibid.
### TABLE I

Showing Voting Strength of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims in the Punjab.

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<th>Population</th>
<th>Voting Strength</th>
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<th>Rural voters as % of Rural population</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>1005299</td>
<td>5763988</td>
<td>161180</td>
<td>634650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hindus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1424931</td>
<td>11878060</td>
<td>153761</td>
<td>1139081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At this time the main political parties among them were the Akali Party, Chief Khalsa Dewan, Central Akali Dal (of Giani Sher Singh), and the Congress and Socialist factions. In order to win the elections, leaders of these parties held negotiations. Sikh loyalists—landlords and other rich people—organized the Khalsa National Party on 14 June 1936 under the leadership of Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, Sir Joginder Singh and Bhai Jodh Singh. In the first week of August, Giani Sher Singh was in communication with Sir Sunder Singh Majithia for adopting a common electoral strategy. The former wrote to the latter:

> आप का नूबथ मै त्वा मिलने वाली पर आपने अब मिलने वाली पर आपके पास गई ज्ञाती कहीं गईं…पैदा किस्मत अभीहृद वह नहीं उठे वह न हुए अपनी आपकी धरणी दो माह पहली रात रसे जान वह आपके अपने देश देशें से हैमस्क बढ़ी 

It is a fact that the Central Akali Dal was being wooed by Master Tara Singh. But it is also true that Master Tara Singh was opposed to any electoral alliance with the loyalist Khalsa National Party. However, Giani Sher Singh was not prepared to make an alliance with the Akalis without the Khalsa National Party being a partner in it. Consequently, when Master Tara Singh met Giani Sher Singh in the last week of August, the former bluntly told the latter:

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Master Tara Singh's party being nationalist and committed to complete independence, naturally, rejected the condition and made up its mind to conclude an alliance with the Indian National Congress provided the latter changed its neutral stance on the Communal Award. The obstruction was soon removed by a statement of the Congress opposing the Award. It declared that "the communal decision which forms a part of the new constitution has been rightly condemned as anti-national and anti-democratic. It will lapse with the constitution of which it is a part. The Congress in the meantime endeavours to substitute for that a decision or solution acceptable to all." Jawaharlal Nehru also appreciated the Sikh stand on the Award in a letter to Master Tara Singh. Misunderstanding having thus been removed, an electoral alliance was concluded between the Akalis and the Congress whereunder the latter was to fight on 12 seats and in the Punjab Legislature Akali Party would be a part of the Congress regarding all political matters. It would be appropriate to underline here that in the Punjab the Congress had already organized the Congress Sikh Party under the Presidentship of Sarmukh Singh Jhabbal and it was on the tickets of this Party that the Sikh candidates of the Congress contested. But on the other hand Giani Sher Singh's Central Akali Dal extended full support to the Khalsa National Party. Thus the Sikhs fought the 1936-37 general elections through the political platforms of the Congress, the Akalis, the Khalsa National

10. All-India Congress Committee, File No. G-31, 1936 (N.M.M.L.).
### TABLE II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of seats</th>
<th>Total No. of seats</th>
<th>Akalis</th>
<th>Congress</th>
<th>Khalsa National Party</th>
<th>Socialists</th>
<th>Unionists</th>
<th>Independents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Con-</td>
<td>Con-</td>
<td>Con-</td>
<td>Con-</td>
<td>Con-</td>
<td>Con-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserved for women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11**</td>
<td>1@</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landholders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1@@</td>
<td>1++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* There were two independent candidates for this seat.

** Two of these seats the Khalsa National Party won unopposed.

@ This seat was won by S. Sohan Singh Josh who joined the Congress soon after.

@@ He was S. Sardul Singh who contested from Lahore West and polled 5867 votes; the winning candidate of the Congress got 7456 votes.

+ There were 30 independents for these 19 seats.

++ The Unionist candidate S. Sohan Singh 'Pindi' lost by a very narrow margin of 34 votes.
SIKHS AND THE FIRST GENERAL ELECTIONS

Party, the Socialists and the Unionists. It may be underlined here that Khalsa National Party was also an ally of the Unionists who were all loyalists. Besides, 34 independents, including two women, also contested for 22 Sikh seats.15

The number of the Sikh seats contested and won by the above political parties and the independent candidates are shown in the following Table II.16 (See page 106.)

The above Table clearly shows that the maximum number of seats (14) were won by the Khalsa National Party, followed respectively by the Akalis (10), Congress (5), Independents (3) and the Socialists(1). Unionist Party drew a blank. Another notable point is that the Akalis did not exercise much influence among the Urban Sikh voters because neither they nor their ally, the Congress, could win either of the two urban seats; both these were won by the Khalsa National Party. Of course among the women they (former) had appreciable influence. In the rural upper, middle and lower middle classes also their influence was almost equally matched by the Khalsa National Party which captured 12 seats (including one of the Landholders’) as against 15 in all by the Akalis, the Congress and the Socialists. Another important fact to note is that the nationalist combine of the Congress, Akalis and the Socialists did not contest even all the 33 Sikh seats; they fielded candidates in 28 constituencies in all. Lest there be a misimpression that perhaps the remaining five landholders’ seats it may be underlined that there was only one such Sikh seat.

The above analysis would become quite lucid on perusing the voting pattern of the Sikh electorate in all types of Sikh constituencies which is shown below in Table III. (See page 108.)

The above table leads to some important conclusions regarding Sikh politics in 1936-37. First, contrary to the generally held opinion that the Akalis enjoyed support both with the rural and urban classes, the table shows that the Khalsa National Party secured far more votes (53.39%), almost 230% of the votes polled by the Akalis in the urban constituencies. Even in the rural areas the former polled more votes

16. This Table has been prepared for this paper from the data given in Reforms Office, Franchise, F. No. 20/III/F-36 (N.A.I.) and K.C. Yadav, Elections in Punjab, 1920-1947 (Tokyo, 1981), pp. 94-97.
TABLE III

Showing the votes secured by the candidates of various political parties and Independents out of the votes cast in various classes of Sikh constituencies and of the total Sikh votes cast.

(Figures show %ages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of Constituency</th>
<th>Akalis</th>
<th>Congress</th>
<th>Khalsa National Party</th>
<th>Socialists</th>
<th>Unionists</th>
<th>Independents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reserved for women</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>54.41</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>23.42</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>53.39</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>22.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>26.59</td>
<td>17.16</td>
<td>28.21</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>21.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landholders</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>53.07</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>46.93</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%age of votes secured out of the total Sikh votes cast</td>
<td>26.38</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>29.90</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>21.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(28.21%) than the latter (26.59%). Secondly, in terms of total votes polled, Khalsa National Party led all other (29.90%), followed respectively by the Akalis (26.38%), Congress (16%), Socialists (2.46%) and the Unionists (2.02%). Thirdly, complete polarisation, on the lines of nationalist Vs. loyalist forces, had yet not taken place among the Sikh electorate, otherwise the independent candidates could not have secured 21.85% of the votes polled. Fourthly, when viewed from the angle of the electoral combinations (Akalis, Congress and Socialists Vs. the Khalsa National Party and the Unionists) the inference is the most significant: the voting pattern weighed quite heavily in favour of the progressive (nationalist) alliance. While the progressive combine polled 44.84 votes, the loyalist alliance secured only 31.92%. As a consequence thereof, the Sikhs elected 16 progressive members, belonging to the Akali-Congress-Socialist alliance out of 33 Sikhs.18 This voting pattern becomes very significant when studied in the light of the fact that out of the remaining 142 seats of the Punjab Assembly, Congress-Socialist Alliance could win only 14.

17. These percentages for this table have been calculated from the information given in the Reforms Office, Franchise, F. No. 20/III/F-96 (N.A.I.).
18. Supra, Table II.
Genesis of the Communist Movement in the Punjab

Dr Jasmail Singh Brar*

Socio-economic movements arise in particular historical situation and on the crest of certain new ideas. These formative influences considerably influence their subsequent development. Changes in the contextual dimension oblige such movements to adjust themselves to their new situations. But the main tendencies generated by the formative years considerably influence their capacity for such adjustment. As such, socio-political movements can be better analysed by understanding the socio-economic forces and the ideas which initially gave birth to them. The present paper is intended to delineate the historical context in which the communist movement originated in the state with a view to providing a broad frame of reference for understanding its subsequent growth.

Like many other parts of the country, the Punjab came under the influence of communist ideas immediately after the Great October Revolution in 1917. The triumph of socialism in Russia became a source of inspiration to the militant nationalists of Punjab who were struggling for the overthrow of the alien rule. Infact, the peasantry in Punjab was considerably alienated because of the oppressive policies of the British administration. The growing peasant discontent found expression in the eruption of various anti-imperialist movements in the state. A large number of radical elements who were mobilised in these movements became the focal points of the communist movement in the Punjab. Militant nationalism of the peasantry thus provided the base for the spread of revolutionary ideas in the state. The guidance and help provided by the Russian revolutionaries also played an important role in organising various anti-imperialist forces.

*Reader in Political Science, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Satwant Singh, "Welcome Address" to the delegates of the Tenth Congress of the CPI (M) held at Jalandhar in April 1968, People's Democracy, April 16, 1978, p.4.

2. The leaders of the October Revolution in Russia realised that it would not be possible to preserve the gains of the Socialist revolution without defeating imperialism in the Colonies. Consequently, they were prepared to render all types of help to the toilers in India against British imperialism.

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GENESIS OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN THE PUNJAB

The foundations of the communist movement in Punjab were laid by a group of young Muslims called Muhajirs (emigrants) who had left India for Turkey under the influence of the Khilafat movement. Their main concern was to express solidarity with the Islamic world by waging a holy war against British imperialism. Having failed in their attempt to go to Turkey via Afghanistan, they decided to go to the Soviet Union. By this time M.N. Roy had founded the Communist Party of India at Tashkent (1920). On their arrival in the Soviet Union, the emigrants decided to join Roy's party. They were imparted extensive training in revolutionary warfare first in Tashkent and later in Moscow. After completing their training, they decided to come back to India, with the avowed purpose of bringing a revolution in their own country.

Many of them were apprehended by the police on their way back and put on trial in the famous communist conspiracy case in Peshawar (1921-24). However, those who escaped the police, organised the first communist group at Lahore towards the end of 1922. The members of this group established contact with other communist groups which had come into existence in various Indian cities like Madras, Bombay, Calcutta and Kanpur. The activities of the Lahore group mainly centred around a newspaper Inquilab (revolution) which was being published by Ghulam Hussain from Lahore. This newspaper became the medium for spreading the message of socialism in Punjab. But its influence was confined to Lahore and the adjoining areas. Ghulam Hussain and other members of the Lahore group were arrested in 1923. After their release from jail some of the Muhajirs like Abdul Majid, Ferozuddin Mansur, Mohammad Ali, Fazil Iahi Qurban, Shamsuddin Hassan and Ghulam Hussain joined the CPI and played an important role in organising the communist movement in the state.

The communist movement in Punjab was further strengthened due

5. Ibid., p.52.
7. For further information on the formation of these groups, see Adhikari (ed.), n.4, pp. 2-3.
to the activities of the Ghadar Party. It will be recalled that a large number of Punjabis, mainly Sikh peasants, had migrated to foreign countries in search of livelihood in the opening years of the twentieth century. Most of them got settled in Canada and the United States of America. As the number of these emigrants increased, the Canadian government imposed restrictions on their entry. The humiliating treatment meted out to the Indians by the Canadian and British authorities and the racial discrimination to which they were subjected brought political awakening among them. The immigrants realised that the real cause of their humiliation and suffering was their slavery. In this way, the protest movement of the Indians against racial discrimination gradually took the form of “a struggle against the colonial rule in India.” The Ghadar party was formed by Indian emigrants in America in 1913 with the avowed purpose of overthrowing the British rule in India. The political perspective of the Ghadarities was thus in sharp contrast to the moderate stand of Indian political parties. The Ghadar party brought out a weekly newspaper called Ghadar, which helped it in spreading its message in all parts of the world. As a large number of Sikh emigrants were ex-soldiers and policemen, they liked the revolutionary objectives of the Ghadar party and joined it in big numbers. The Kamagata Maru incident and the Budge Budge massacre also helped in swelling the ranks of the Ghadar party.

The outbreak of the First World War provided an opportunity to

13. Kamagata Maru was a merchant ship charted by Baba Gurdit Singh to take a batch of Indian emigrants to Canada. But the Canadian authorities did not allow the passengers to land and the ship was turned back. After the passengers landed at Budge Budge, a clash took place between them and the police. Nineteen Sikh passengers were killed on the spot and another twenty-five were wounded. The massacre and trial of Kamagata Maru men aroused the sympathy of the entire Indian nation.
the Ghadarites to execute their plans. A call was given to the Indians abroad to give up their jobs and return to India to liberate their motherland. A large number of Indians, mostly Sikhs, responded to this call and left for India to take part in the proposed mutiny. As the British government had prior information of their plans, many of them were arrested on their arrival in India. Those who escaped the police dragnet organised an underground movement. They established contacts with other Indian revolutionaries and tried to enlist the sympathies of the Indian soldiers. However, their plan for a general rising on February 21, 1915 failed to materialise because of premature leakage to the police. A large number of Ghadarites and their sympathisers were arrested and given severe punishments. By August 1915, the whole movement was put to an end. However, the Ghadarites continued their anti-imperialist struggle till independence. After their release from jail, many of them joined the left oriented groups and parties like the Babbar Akali, Bharat Naujawan Sabha, Kirti-Kisan party and later the Communist party. Those who were left behind in the America tried to reorganise the party on new lines. The victory of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia impelled them to make self retrospection and understand the causes of the success of the Russian revolutionaries in comparison with their failure. This brought them under the influence of Marxist literature. Some of the Ghadarites like Santokh Singh and Rattan Singh were deeply influenced by the ideas of scientific socialism and realised the need for organising the workers and the peasants as the decisive revolutionary force in the struggle for independence."

Both of them visited USSR in 1922 and attended the Fourth Congress of the communist International. Santokh Singh returned to India in 1923 and played an important role in organising the Kirti-Kisan party. Many other members of the Ghadar party subsequently returned to India after studying at the Moscow University of the Toilers of the East and became the vanguard of the communist movement in Punjab. Because of their "undying devotion to the cause of revolution, it was but natural that they should join the communist party." It was mainly because of their efforts that a large number of members of the Akali and the Congress parties also came under the influence of

15. Randhir Singh, op. cit., p. 9, p. 32.
progressive ideas. The heroic deeds of the Ghadarites had a profound impact on the youth and the peasantry in their region and they came into the forefront of the freedom struggle. The Ghadar movement thus gave a radical image to the freedom struggle and broadened its sweep by extending it to the rural areas.

The Akali and the Babbar Akali movements also gave strength to the Communist movement in Punjab. The Akali Movement (1920-25) was launched to liberate the Sikh holy shrines from the control of the corrupt Hindu mahants (priests). It aimed at bringing the gurdwaras under the control of the Sikh community so that they could be converted into centres for propagating the basic tenets of the Sikh faith. For this purpose, the Akalis launched a peaceful agitation. But the mahants were not prepared to give in and unleashed organised violence against the Akali jathas. The government also sided with the mahants who were its stooges. The Akali movement thus acquired an anti-imperialist character. The sacrifices made by the Sikhs for their faith and their defiance of the British administration aroused the sympathies of national leaders for their cause. Ultimately, the government had to bow under popular pressure and allow the Sikhs to take over the management of their shrines. The Gurdwara Act of 1925 made SGPC a representative body of the Sikhs, the custodian of all important Sikh places of worship.

In the course of the Akali movement, a section of the Sikhs who had little faith in non-violence formed a separate group, Master Mota Singh and Kishen Singh Gargaj were the moving spirits behind this group. It Christened itself as Babbar Akali Jatha and brought out a paper called Babbar Akali Doaba. The main purpose of Babbar Akali was to liquidate British stooges and police informers. In a short span of time, the Babbars killed several British officers and their Indian informers. Meanwhile the government swung into action and took all possi-

ble measures to deal with the situation. Consequently, a large number of Babbar Akalis were arrested and given severe punishments. Some of the activists who participated in the Akali and the Babbar Akali movements later joined the communist party. But they brought their religious ideology with them. Their dual loyalty to Sikh theology and marxism-Leninism created many problems for the communist movement in later years and prevented a clear cut demarcation between religious and progressive trends in Punjab politics.8

The militant struggle launched by the Ghadar party and the Babbar Akalis created a new awakening among the youth in Punjab. A large number of educated young men here disillusioned with the Gandhian technique of non-violent struggle and leaned towards the revolutionary terrorist movement. Bhagat Singh and his comrades organised the Naujawan Bharat Sabha in 1926 to mobilise the youth on revolutionary lines.20 The young revolutionaries of the Punjab established contacts with their counterparts in other provinces through the Hindostan Socialist Republican Association (1928). In order to overthrow the British rule in India, the revolutionaries resorted to acts of individual violence. However, their failure to revolutionise the Indian situation and the influence of the leaders of the Kirti-Kisan party gradually brought them under the influence of Marxism. Some of these revolutionaries like Ajoy Ghosh (who eventually became the General Secretary of the CPI) and Pandit Kishori Lal, later took an active part in organising the communist movement.

The formation of the Kirti-Kisan party in 1927 provided further impetus to the growth of the revolutionary movement in Punjab. The organisation was launched by Bhai Santokh Singh and some other ex-Ghadarites who had been released from jails by now. They had realised that it would not be possible to ensure the advance of the revolutionary movement without grassroots level work among the workers and the peasants. The Kirti-Kisan party was formed to facilitate open work among these sections of the society. Its leader-

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8. Because of this dual loyalty Communist leaders continued to take keen interest in the politics of the SGPC till the fifties. See V.D. Chopra et al, Agony of Punjab (New Delhi: Patriot Publishers), 1984, p. 53.

ship was drawn from the Lahore and Amritsar groups of revolutionaries. The Kirtis had direct contact with the Communist International and received its support. In the initial stage, the work of the Kirti-Kisan party was propagandist in nature. Through its organ the Kirti, it tried to bring a new awakening among the workers, peasants and the intelligentsia by disseminating Marxist ideas. It tried to unite them on the basis of an economic programme and on the lines of class struggle. In the later phase, the Kirti-Kisan party concentrated on political work and launched agitations on some of the progressive demands of the peasantry such as abolition of Nazrana, reduction in land revenue, water tax and the like. It organised a strong peasant movement in the state on the basis of these demands. In this process, it extended the freedom movement to villages and helped the Congress to penetrate in the rural areas. The Kirti-Kisan party was, however, declared illegal by the government in 1934. Most of its members later joined the CPI and played an important role in organising the peasant movement in rural areas.

The spread of revolutionary ideas in the state alarmed the British Government. In order to check the growth of the revolutionary movement and virtually decapitate it, the British administration adopted a repressive policy towards it right from the beginning. A large number of revolutionaries were put on trial in the Peshawar and Lahore conspiracy cases and given severe punishments. A new case was instituted against the communists in 1929 which later became famous as Meerut conspiracy case. Three of the accused (Sohan Singh Josh, Addul Majid and Kedar Nath Sehgal) in this case belonged to Punjab. The Government tried to drive a wedge between the communists and the wider national movement by describing the former as an anti-national force. But the government could not succeed in its mission. The trial of the revolutionaries aroused the sympathy of the whole nation for them. Even Congress leaders like Nehru and Gandhi expressed concern for the prisoners. The government had

21. Prominent leaders who participated in the inaugural conference of the Kirti-Kisan party were Santokh Singh, Bhag Singh Canadian, Sohan Singh Josh, M.A. Majid and Lala Kidar Nath.


GENESIS OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN THE PUNJAB

to yield under popular pressure and order the release of some of the revolutionaries. Sohan Singh Josh, after his release from Jail, organised an anti-imperialist league in the Punjab in 1934. However, the government immediately imposed a ban on all revolutionary organisations in the state.24

The preventive measures undertaken by the government could not stop the growth of the communist movement in the state. Instead it registered further advance during the thirties. The Great Economic depression during this period brought peasant discontent in the Punjab to the surface. The steep fall in the prices of agricultural produce reduced the income of the peasants and it became difficult for them to make both ends meet.25 Peasant struggle broke out throughout the province and in the adjoining princely states. It was in the course of these militant struggle that the Punjab Kisan Sabha was established in 1936. Growth of peasant militancy brought a radical change in the Praja Mandal movement also.26 A prominent section of its leadership came under the influence of Marxist-ideology and joined the Communist Party. It helped the Communist movement to penetrate in the areas falling within the jurisdiction of the princely states. The Communists formed an alliance with the Congress Socialist Party in 1936.27 The alliance helped the communists in bringing radicalisation in the ranks of the Congress Party. It is interesting to note that nearly 90% of the members of the Congress Socialist party later joined the Communist party.28

In the meanwhile, the Second World War broke out in September 1939. The Viceroy's proclamation made India a party to the war. The communists branded it as an anti-imperialist war and decided to oppose it tooth and nail. They launched an anti-recruitment and anti-war campaign in the Punjab along with congressmen and socialists. In order to sabotage the war effort of the government, they asked the people not to pay taxes and land revenue to the administration. Because of their anti-

24. For a list of banned Organisations, see Bhagwan Josh, n. 14, p. 111.
26. Praja Mandal movements was launched in 1928 to secure the democratic rights of the people in the princely states of the Punjab.
27. The Communist-CSP alliance reflected the new line of the Communist International which advocated a broad anti-imperialist people's front.
war propaganda the government arrested a large number of Communist and Kirti workers under the defence of India Rules. All the arrested men were sent to a military camp at Deolali (Rajasthan). The camp became a centre of discussion for communist detenues who were brought there from various parts of the country. Discussions in the camp helped the members of the Kirti and Communist groups in removing their political differences. Consequently they decided to form a single communist party in 1942.

However, the CPI changed its attitude towards the war after the German attack on Russia in June 1941. In the new situation, the party characterised the war as a “people’s war.” Consequently, the communists not only stopped anti-war propaganda but openly began to enlist support for the British war effort. In order to use them for pro-war propaganda, the government released some prominent communist leaders of Punjab in May 1942. A pro-war and pro-recruitment campaign was launched by the communists after their release. But it had little impact on the masses. The pro-government policy of the communists isolated them from the national mainstream. But the legality conferred upon them by the government helped the communists in strengthening their mass organisations. On the eve of partition, the communist movement in Punjab was fairly well entrenched.

It is evident from the foregoing account that the communist movement in Punjab was an amalgam of radical elements drawn from various anti-imperialist movements in the state. It represented the rich legacy of the Ghadar movement, Akali and Babbar Akali movements, Revolutionary Terrorist movement, Kirti-Kisan party and the Congress Socialist party. Imbued with the humanitarian ideals of socialism enshrined by the Russian revolution and Sikh theology, it was basically an expression of the militant nationalism of the Punjab peasantry.

30. For the justification of the CPI’s “People’s War” line, see Dalip Bose, 1942 August Struggle and the Communist Party of India (New Delhi: Communist Party Publication, June 1984).
Congress Movement in the Punjab from 1885-1906:
A Case Study

SUNIL JAIN*

The growth of political associations representing the aspirations of the educated classes, depends primarily on the tenacity of modernising agencies in developing societies. In the Punjab, these agencies of modernisation came up towards the later part of nineteenth century. This province, located in the extreme north-western part of the sub-continent, was the last prominent territory to be annexed to the British Empire in 1849. As a result it lagged behind many other provinces in absorbing the western liberal ideas. It was due to this reason that the Indian National Congress, as a political force, emerged much later in the Punjab than in other provinces, and during the early period, the interest of the Punjabis in the congress movement was neither zealous nor consistent.

It was in January 1865 that G.W. Leitner instituted Anjuman-i-Ishat-i-Alum-I-Mufida Punjab, popularly known as Anjuman-i-Punjab which took keen interest in the educational and social activities of the province. But the organization instead of fostering national sentiments, spread communal viral which was in accord with the personal ideas and interests of Leitner.

Inspired by national sentiments, some English educated Bengalis settled in the Punjab decided to counter act baneful activities of Leitner. They were supported by a number of Punjabis and under the leadership of Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia they set up a branch of the Indian Association at Lahore in 1877 during S.N. Banerjea’s visit. It was managed by J.C. Bose, later a veteran congress activist, and Kali Prosan Roy. It provided a common platform for all sections of the provincial

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*Lecturer, D.A.V. College, Malout.


2. Ibid.

society. It also showed some activity—an agitation—to prevent the then Punjab university college from being incorporated as a purely oriental university. Its main activity under the leadership of J.C. Bose continued in the shape of submitting memorials to the arch bureaucracy and bidding welcome and farewell to coming and outgoing Lieutenant-Governors. In 1881 they started The Tribune from Lahore.

Indian National Congress was founded in 1885. Out of 72 delegates who attended the first annual congress session held at Bombay, two (Murlidhar and Aghihotri) belonged to the Punjab. However, after 1886, the participation of the Punjabis in the Congress faded due to the domination of the Bengal and Bombay politicians. Thereafter the number of Punjab delegates became considerably less in comparison to other provinces. Out of total of 7132 participants who participated in the annual congress sessions from 1885-1892, the figure of congress stalwarts from the Punjab was only 674. With a view to making the Congress popular and active in the Punjab, the Allahabad Congress (1892) resolved that the ninth session of the Congress (1893) should be held at Amritsar. Accordingly the Lahore Indian Association appointed a provincial Sub-Committee to make necessary arrangements for the success of the congress session. Dyal Singh Majithia was elected the President of the Reception Committee. Raja Ramphal Singh and Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya toured Punjab from 6 to 14 October propagating the Congress cause and addressed many meetings.

Similarly, at a congress meeting held at Ludhiana on the 13th August 1893, Lala Murlidhar, grand old man of Punjab, delivered a lecture explaining the aims and objects of the movement. The lecturer in the course of his remarks observed that being childless, he had no worldly motives in view, and that he was endeavouring to promote the

4. The Panjabee, 10/10/1906.
5. Ibid.
6. The Tribune, 10/10/1881.
7. 1885 Congress Report, p. 5.
10. Ibid., p. 161.
11. The Tribune, 18/1/1893.
12. Ibid., 19/7/1893.
13. Ibid., 14/10/1893.
cause of the Congress merely because he believed it would conduce to the good of the country. The audience numbered more than 500.14

Swami Shardhanand, the militant monk of India, also delivered ten to twelve lectures on the aims and objects of the congress at different places of the Punjab. The first lecture of the series was arranged at Amritsar where he advised the people to follow the path of the congress.15 Swami Shardhanand was a firm Satyagrahi of the Indian National Congress. He joined the congress in 1888 and was appointed the secretary of the Jullundur Congress, a local unit. In a meeting of the executive committee of the local Congress he placed a programme of intensive propaganda work for the towns and villages of the district before the members and asked volunteers to go round educating the masses and finding out their grievances. When the congress session was held at Lahore in 1893, Swami Shardhanand helped Bakshi Jaish Ram, the acting secretary of the local congress, for smooth running of the session.16

As Chairman of the reception committee of the Congress session held at Lahore in 1893, Dyal Singh delivered a fairly long speech saturated with liberal principles. He strongly repudiated the suggestion that congress was a Babu organisation, inert and futile. Dyal Singh described Indian National Congress as the glory of the British Raj. To him congress was the direct outcome of the national sentiments and aspirations which the enlightened administration of Lord Ripon fostered. Ripon’s style of administration kindled in him the deepest reverence; and he paid Ripon a glowing tribute for his humanity and sagacity. According to him, congress was neither a seditious nor a disloyal organisation, but a creative force founded with a view to consolidating the gains acquired under British system of administration.17 At the congress session he said:

What the congress contends is not that the country should be transferred from English to Indian hands, no, not change of hands

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...for it would be entirely suicidal but that the people should be governed on the broad principles which have been held by the eminent statesmen and administrator themselves to be most conductive to the interests of the both rulers and the subjects.\footnote{18}

Dyal Singh Majithia also refuted the charge of the Punjab's aloofness from the congress movement. He said:

To suppose that the Punjab has been aloof from the congress is absurd. It is possible that those credited with possessing most fire in their blood should be the least susceptible to this influence.\footnote{19}

Inspite of the fact that 481 delegates participated from the province in the above session,\footnote{20} their interest in the activities of the congress movement could not be sustained. Even Lala Lajpat Rai in his speech in the Lahore session of 1893 admitted that the time had not come when the people of Punjab could make contribution to the political affairs of the country.\footnote{21}

There were various reasons for it. First, the Aryas did not take keen interest in the congress as they were engrossed in the intra-organizational tussles, and their economic enterprises.\footnote{22} Secondly, the Muslims led by Syed Ahmed Khan also changed their attitude to the congress movement. Since 1888, they considered the activities of the congress detrimental to their communal interests. The Muslims were too much worried about their educational and economic backwardness and insignificant share in government services. Being in minority at the all India level, the Muslims began to oppose all such political reforms which in their opinion would result in the domination of Hindu majority over them.\footnote{23} From 1885 to 1894 out of 876 Muslims who attended the annual congress session only 80 participated from Punjab.\footnote{24} The Imperial Paper (Lahore) dated 16th December 1883,

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{18}{1893 Congress Report, p. 8; Dyal Singh Majithia's Address was read by Lala Harkishan Lal.}
\footnotetext{19}{Ibid., p. 9.}
\footnotetext{20}{Annie Besant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 162.}
\footnotetext{21}{The Punjabee, 10/10/1906.}
\footnotetext{22}{K.W. Jones, \textit{Arya Dharam} (Delhi, 1976), pp. 280-312.}
\footnotetext{24}{See Reports of the Indian National Congress from 1885-1894; A. M. and S. G. Zaidi, \textit{The Encyclopaedia of the Indian National Congress}, Vols. I,II (Delhi, 1977).}
\end{footnotes}
pointed out that the general public of Hazara considered that the Muhammadans have nothing to do with the congress. The Khans of Haripur and Manshehra have condemned the congress at a large meeting and called upon the Mujlis-i-Islamia of Hazara to convene a public meeting in order to pass a vote of censure against the movement.  

Similarly the Rahbar-i-Hind (Lahore) reported that an anticongress meeting was held at Peshawar under the presidency of Wazirzada Sardar Muhammad Akbar Khan Kazi. Abdul Kadir acted as vice president of the meeting. The Singh Sahai (Amritsar), of the 5th March 1894, too remarks that some Muhammadans refused to join the movement on the ground that they will not benefit by doing so to the same extent as the Hindus. The Nirun-Ala-Nur (Ludhiana), also published the text of a speech made by Khwaja Taj-ud-din at an anticongress meeting held at Ludhiana. The Khwaja endeavoured to impress on the minds of the audience that the congressionists were a set of clever and selfish people who, in order to serve their own purposes, were inducing the Muhammadans to join the movement and resorted to various tactics to gain that end. In reality, the Khwaja remarked, the congress people were not the friends of the Muhammadans seeing that their papers opposed the appointment of the Honorable Badar-ud-din Tyabji to the Bombay High Court that he was a barrister and that the appointment should be conferred on a pleader. Their opposition was, however, due to the fact of Mr. Badar-ud-din being a Muhammadan.

The Rahbar-i-Hind (Lahore), dated 28th December 1893, publishes a communication in which the writer states that a large anti-Congress Meeting was held at Jhang-Maghiana in the house of Sardar Ali Husain, Kazilbash. Nawab Muhammad Mir Khan, Bala, of Jhang, presided, and Sardar Ali Husain acted as Secretary. The meeting was attended by a large number of Raises and respectable zamindars. The Secretary in his speech stated that the Bengalis who had founded the Congress wished that all appointments in the Civil and Military Departments should be conferred on the natives as the present system of Government was unjust and opposed to the interests of the people. The Hindus having received an English education have entirely forgotten the condition

25. The Imperial Paper (Lahore), 16/12/1893.
27. Ibid., 1894, p. 10.
28. Ibid.
in which they were placed before the advent of the British. As they have made greater progress in education than the Muhammadans, they consider that if government appointments are conferred according to literary attainments none but Pakori Malls and Dhoti Parshads (as Hindus of the lower classes are contemptuously called) will occupy Government offices and courts. It was strange that the Hindus, on whom high appointments were conferred by Government, should not be thankful to the latter, but on the contrary wish that the English should leave the country, making over the government to them. They also urge the introduction of the elective principle into the Supreme Legislative Council so that they may be able to outvote all measures which might be submitted for the benefit of the Muhammadans, who form only one fifth of the population of this country. In short, he continued, the Hindus were actuated by selfish motives in starting the Congress movement. Considering the blessings conferred by the British Government on the Hindus, they should worship it and sing its praises, but on the contrary they have stood up against the government. The Muhammadans, though backward in education and comparatively poor, were nevertheless grateful and loyal to the Government and would if an opportunity offered itself sacrifice their lives for the sake of government. The following resolution was then passed:

That this meeting unanimously condemns the proceedings of a meeting held by certain Hindus to elect delegates for the Congress; that this meeting has no concern with the meeting held for the election of delegates, and that the Muhammadan who was elected as a delegate is not the representative of the Muhammadans of this place. He is neither a zamindar himself nor the son of a zamindar. In another issue, it further states, that an anti-Congress meeting was held at Peshawar on the 26th December 1893. The meeting was composed of the representatives of all grades of the Muhammadan community. Mirza Faqir Muhammad Sistani made a speech in the course of which he dwelt on the aims and objects of the congress, and pointed out the evils which would result from the agitation, and declared that participation in the movement was equivalent to taking part in the Mutiny of 1857. The congress meeting which were held at Peshawar were the work of Babu Sita Ram, Hospital Assistant, and Pandit Pirthi Nath, Pleader.

29. Ibid., 1893, pp. 9-10.
30. Ibid., 1894, p. 10.
However, it should be wrong to conclude that the whole of the Muhammadan population was opposed to the congress movement in Punjab. The *Taj-ul-Akhbar* (Rawalpindi) of the 12th August 1893 says that the Muhammadans of the Punjab will offer no opposition to the congress, as they no longer entertain any doubt about the loyalty of the movement.\(^\text{31}\) Similarly, *The Akbar-i-Am* (Lahore), of the 29th November 1893, remarks that the two congress meetings which were held last week in the premises of the ‘Tribune Press’ have fully proved that there was no truth in the allegation that all the Muhammadans are opposed to the movement. One of the meetings referred to was presided over by Maulvi Muharram Ali Chishti, who made a powerful speech which was loudly applauded by the audience, the excellent way in which Chishti explained that aims and object of the Congress convinced the audience that those men who hold aloof from the movement are either selfish or foolish. He said that his co-religionists were generally in a backward state as regards education and most of those who were educated were public servants and, therefore, unable to take part in the Congress meetings: the remainder who were conversant with the peaceful aims of the congress heartily sympathised with the movement. Another meeting was held under the presidency of Mr. Browne, Pleader, Chief Court. On this occasion Chishti again delivered an effective speech to a large audience, the number of Muhammadans present being considerable. The Chishti proved that the statement that the Muhammadans were opposed to the Congress movement was nothing short of a libel. This speech was much applauded and listened to with great attention.\(^\text{32}\) At another meeting Chishti argued that the chief reason of the bulk of the Muhammadan population not taking part in deliberations of the congress was their backwardness in the matter of education, which was the greatest qualification of congresswalla. He stated that the Mussalmans of the Aligarh school did not represent the Indian Muhammadans seeing that they were looked upon as heretics by the latter, and a *fatwa* to that effect had also been received from Mecca. He added that it was idle to expect that after reading Macaulay, Milton, etc., native would not desire the redress of their grievances and would continue to bear this cross in silence. The speaker then went on to say that the prophet had forbidden, his followers to resort

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to flattery and conceal anything from their kings and that it was, therefore, impossible for a true Muhammadan to be inimical to the objects of the congress.33

By and large nationalist minded educated Muslims seemed to have worked mainly as individuals such as Maulvi Muharram Ali, Nazir Hussain, Nazim Sheikh Umar Bux and Maulana Mahbub Alam, etc.

However the Indian Association, Lahore, the field organization of the Punjab Congress took the initiative and passed the resolution to hold a Punjab provincial conference,34 in 1895. The Punjab Samachar (Lahore), after taking the anti-congressionists to task for opposing the congress movement from selfish motives stated that the Punjab provincial conference will be held at Lahore.35 Consequently, the first provincial conference was held on 15-16 December 1895 at Town Hall.36 Sheikh Umar Bux, pleader, was the Chairman of the reception committee. Some of the congress activists who participated were Lala Murlidhar, Lala Todar Mai, K. P. Roy, K. P. Chatterjee, Gopi Nath, Lala Shambhu Nath, Lala Jaishi Ram, J.C. Bose, Lala Harkishan Lal, Lala Sheo Sahey, Maulana Mahbub Alam and Rambhaj Dutt.37 Lala Lal Chand presided.38

The purpose of the meeting was explained as pointing out to the bureaucracy the things which deserved its attention with a view to reforming the prevailing system of the administration. Lala Lal Chand focused his attention on the theme ‘what is our duty under the circumstances and what shall be our method.’39 He called the achievements of ‘political regeneration’ as its basic function.40 The President warned the participants that they were yet ‘children in politics’ and all isolated attempts would be futile.41

The conference adopted 10 resolutions on various local and provincial matters. Some of the significant issues were, i.e., to raise the status of chief court for a High Court, the creation of the Legislative council in the Punjab, permanence in the period of land setting and moderation

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33. Ibid., 1899, p. 724.
34. Ibid., 1895, p. 428.
35. Ibid.
36. The Tribune, 18/12/1895.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
in enhancement of assessment, necessity of reconsidering the Frontier Laws and Regulations, reform in the code of civil procedure, the employment of better qualified and trained men in the department of police, educational reform and encouragement to the industrial schools, to start the provincial subordinate service upon or limited competition.\(^{42}\)

As regard the success of the conference, The Tribune, observed, the first conference was all that could be desired.\(^{43}\) Again it wrote "it would be no exaggeration to say that since the Punjab passed under British rule no day had come that deserved to be remembered so much in history as the day.\(^{44}\)

Infact, the first conference boosted the morale of the people and congress stalwarts. It was a watershed in the direction of striking roots at the local level and opening, as it were of a perennial fountain to feed the stream of tendency that made for the wide waters of national life.\(^{45}\) Though the number of the participants were very small, however, it was a better representative of the men of influence of the province, since the start of the congress. Its proceedings were more bold and impressive and proved more effective in generating the political consciousness. Though the ideology and programmes of the conference were more or less similar as that of congress, yet it had gained more confidence and had far reaching impact on the people.

During 1896, the arena of congress politics shifted from Lahore to Amritsar as the second Punjab provincial conference was held at Amritsar on 4th Nov., 1896.\(^{46}\) Kanhiya Lal was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. It was presided over by Lala Murlidhar of Ambala. It was attended by the eminent personalities like Lala Lal Chand, Isher Dass, Jaishi Ram and Moharram Ali Chishti.\(^{47}\)

This conference was more clear about its aims. It was to secure something definite.\(^{48}\) The Akhbar-i-Am remarked that the most significant issue to be discussed would be the prevailing distress and police reforms,\(^{49}\) with regard to the later the editor observed that

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 18.12.1895 and 25.12.1895.
\(^{43}\) Ibid.
\(^{44}\) Ibid.
\(^{45}\) Ibid., 21.12.1895.
\(^{46}\) Ibid., 4/11/1896 and 7/11/1896.
\(^{47}\) Ibid., 21/11/1896.
\(^{48}\) Ibid.
\(^{49}\) Report on Native Newspapers of Punjab, 1896, p. 249.
the people distressed the police and consequently so far from assisting them actually thwart them in their work. This is due to the fact that in filing of the ranks of the force undue importance is attached to physical fitness, the intellectual and moral qualities of candidate being disregarded. Moreover, higher appointments are conferred on those Europeans who fail to pass any examination, but are supported by their influential relations. Lala Murlidhar strongly condemned the state administration especially the police and bureaucracy. He called the police as the trained soldiers in the schools of duplicity, deceit, cunning and gugile. He bitterly assailed the official tours and called them a source of immense trouble, great inconvenience and serious harm to the people. Lala Murlidhar made a poetical analysis of the British subject, one of the specimen of his verses runs as follows:

“Whole world’s empire though they may win
and give fat posts to kith and kin
but peace of mind they can not win
by committing wrong and grievous sin
The hearts empire is only one
of all empires that can be won
by swords of steel or maxim gun
by cup of tea or pint of rum
by means of rays of Rentgen
though see they can beyond therken
yet can’t secure that purest gem
to crown victoria’s diadem”

Lala Murlidhar appealed to the audience to treat orthodoxy and heterodoxy with perfect catholicity to banish bigotry, prejudice and race hatred. He challenged the complex of racial superiority among the English.

The second provincial conference passed various resolutions. They belonged to the establishment of a legislative council, the improvement to the status of the chief court and raising it to a High Court, the educational and examination reforms and suggested giving up of tours by

50. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., 21/11/1896.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
judicial and executive official, the establishment of law of appeal in the Punjab. It criticised the delay in giving full effect to the provincial service scheme, revival of indigenous industry, police reform, the forest laws, etc.\textsuperscript{58}

Similarly, the third Punjab provincial conference was held at Ambala on 7th March 1898.\textsuperscript{57} It was presided over by J.C. Bose.\textsuperscript{58} Lala Murlidhar was the Chairman of the reception committee. The conference passed some resolutions, more or less similar to the previous conferences. One of the spot-lights of the meeting was the verses read by Muharram Ali Chishti, in which he advised the authorities to win the confidence and attachment of the people, condemned the new law of sedition and exhorted the Hindus and Muslims to become one and forget their differences.\textsuperscript{59}

In 1900 was passed the Punjab Alienation of Land Act. It forbade the transfer of land from agriculturists to non-agriculturists through sale or mortgage. Under this Act the question as to who was or was not an agriculturist was not decided by the actual occupation of the individual but by the caste to which he belonged.\textsuperscript{60} Thus all Jats, Rajputs and members of Scheduled castes were declared agriculturists while all Khatris, Aroras and Banias were declared non-agriculturists.\textsuperscript{61} It adversely affected, for obvious reasons, quite a large section of the society, particularly the Hindus and the Sikhs. This Act was an off-shoot of the policy of the government pursued ever since the annexation of the Punjab to keep this province under strict control. The reasons for pursuing such a policy were mainly political. The Punjab was an agricultural province; its population comprised mostly of peasant-proprietors who were attached to their land. Moreover it was peasantry which provided most of the recruits for the army. The government, therefore, wanted to win over the peasantry by passing this Act in order to consolidate their hold over the Punjab. Besides, the objective of the act was to prevent the deve-

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 7/11/1896.
\textsuperscript{57} Report on Native Newspapers of Punjab, 1898, p. 180.
\textsuperscript{58} The Hindustan Review, Vol. XIV, No. 88, 1906, p. 449.
\textsuperscript{59} Reports on Native Newspapers of Punjab, 1898, p. 180.
loment of commercial and industrial class which was spreading national consciousness against the British imperialists. The Government, however, claimed that its purpose was to rescue the poor peasants from the clutches of ever-greedy money-lender.  

The Indian National Congress which was dominated by the urban class criticised the bill before it became Act. At its annual session of 1899, Lala Murlidhar introduced Resolution No. II on the proposed bill and urged that to forbid the proprietor to sell his land was to worsen his position, as he would not be able to borrow in order to cultivate. His resolution was passed. It reads as follows:

That this Congress regrets introduction into the Supreme Legislative Council of a Bill to amend the law relating to agricultural land in the Punjab, with a view to restricting alienation of land as proposed in the bill by sale or mortgage, which is calculated to decrease the credit of the agriculturists and land-holders; to make them more resourceless on account of their inability to meet the ever-increasing state demand upon their land and this Congress is of opinion that the provision to give retrospective effect to the Bill is inequitable and unfair.

That this Congress recommends that real relief be afforded to the cultivating classes in the following way: That where the Government is the rent-receiver, the rule proposed in 1882, prohibiting any advancement except on the ground of rise in prices, be enforced and that where private landlords are rent-receivers, some provision to prohibit undue enhancement of rent be made.

Despite the 1899 resolution the Congress was unable to maintain a firm stand against the Alienation Bill because of the communal issue involved. The bureaucracy had repeatedly stated that its purpose was to rescue the poor peasants from the clutches of ever-greedy money-lender. In the west Punjab this meant that proposed Bill would provide protection to Mahommedan peasantry against Hindu money-lending classes. If the congress pressed its 1899 stand, the nationalist party stood in great danger of being charged a Hindu organization. Thus, in its next session at Lahore the Congress bowed to pressure

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64. *1899 Congress Report*, pp. 46-47.
from Muslim representatives on the Subject Committee and dropped the Land Alienation Bill from the agenda.65

By passing the Land Alienation Act, the Imperial Government had succeeded in estranging the relations between the agriculturists and non-agriculturists of each community in the Punjab. On the one hand, the debted peasantry felt, albeit wrongly, that the government had taken a big leap in the direction of ameliorating their economic condition, on the other they held that the Congress, to begin with, had opposed the Punjab Land Alienation Bill (1899). The moneylenders were also dissatisfied with the Congress because in its Lahore session (1900) it had not opposed the Bill. However, it would be illogical to presume that imperialist Curzon had passed the Act because he favoured the peasantry as against the old native allies of the empire, the feudal and commercial classes. In fact, beneficiaries of this act were the landlords as the working of the Act proved afterwards. Earlier the British were sharing the profit of the exploitation of the peasantry by the moneylenders through their monopoly managing agencies which controlled the financial institutions like banks; henceforth they exploited the peasantry, of course in a subtle manner, through both the reactionary landed aristocracy and the commercial classes. Nevertheless government's gimmick served although for a shortwhile, its twin purpose of winning the sympathy of the rural classes whence it drew the largest number of military recruits in India and of weakening the Congress in this province.

After the passage of the Act, as the peasants felt distressed due to the non-availability of credit, or on much harsher terms than before the government won the appreciation of the rural masses by legislating the Co-operative Credit Societies Act (1904) with much fanfare aimed at giving loan facilities to the agriculturists.66 In passing this act the

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65. *1900 Congress Report*, p. 70. However, a new orientation was given to the Congress in the Punjab when at the Lahore Session (1900) on the persistent demand of the Punjab delegates it passed resolution No. XII (moved by Lala Lajpat Rai and seconded by Duni Chand) to set apart half a day at each Congress session for discussing educational and industrial problems. Since this resolution was not implemented, the interest of the Punjabis in the Congress became lukewarm.

66. *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, Government of India; October 1904*, Nos. 1-3 (A) (National Archives of India, New Delhi); *Punjab Administration Report, 1905-06*, p. 28.
government was motivated by the desire to prevent the Punjab peasantry from passing under the influence of the Congress, which had been opposing since 1903 Curzon’s anti-nationalist scheme of partitioning Bengal.

But the oppressing and nefarious measures of the arch imperialist Lord Curzon soon disillusioned the Punjabis, who rightly grasped the tenor of his anti-Indian policies. His Indian Universities Act (1904) officializing the Universities, and his contemptuous and overbearing attitude towards the Indians as evidenced by his convocation address to the graduates of the Calcutta University in January 1905, evoked at once angry and sharp reaction in the Punjab, 1500 inhabitants of Lahore gathered outside the town-hall strongly protesting against Lord Curzon’s aspersions on Indian character.67 The agitation that followed the partition of Bengal also stirred the extremist movement in the Punjab. Protesting against this iniquitous step of the Viceroy, Lala Lajpat Rai appealed to the people of the Punjab to sympathise with their Bengali brothers.68 As a result, Punjabis began to take more and more interest in the Congress affairs. The number of the Punjab delegates to the annual session of the Congress—which since had gone down to 30 in 1901, none in 1902, and only 5 in 1903, began to increase. In 1904, 28 delegates and in 1905, 185 delegates attended the Congress session from this province,69 to demonstrate their readiness to suffer with the people of Bengal in their struggle against the vivisection of this province. At 1905 session, Lala Lajpat Rai congratulated Bengalis on heralding a new political era in the country. He warned the authorities that the Indians were no longer beggars, they were the subjects of an empire where people were struggling to achieve that position which was their right. He also opposed the resolution, extending welcome to the Prince of Wales during his proposed visit to India. Lalaji argued that the purpose of the visit was to "stage a gala show" which aimed at diverting public attention from political unrest.70 But Gokhale and Surendranath Banerjea pressed for the acceptance of the resolution.71 When the resolution was carried by majority in the Subjects Committee,
Lalaji warned that he would oppose its passage in the open session. But due to Gokhale's personal appeal and as a result of the compromise that the moderates would support the passage of a mild boycott resolution, claiming the partition of Bengal, Lalaji along with other extremists agreed to abstain from the ‘pandal’ during the passage of the resolution. But nonetheless one thing is clear that the policy of petitioning and passing resolutions at the annual sessions of the Congress never appealed to the martial Punjabis who preferred self-help and self-reliance in their fight against British imperialism.

However, the Punjabi delegates returned sufficiently enthused to keep the Congress banner flying high in the province, they recognised Lalaji as their sole leader. To make the Congress progressive and active in the Punjab, extremists held that organised passive resistance was the only effective means by which Indians could wrest the control of national life from the grip of alien bureaucracy. They also decided to liberate the Punjab Congress from the domination of the conservative and moderate elements. They strongly felt that only powerful economic lever such as boycott would force changes in the British policy towards India. Claiming that boycott was the legitimate political weapon, Lalaji called on the Congress activists of the Punjab to arouse the masses with a deluge of literature and lectures. He also advocated closer identification of the Punjab Congress with Bengali extremists and Tilak who were then challenging the goals and methods of the moderates.

In their sweep towards extremism, Punjab people were also greatly influenced by the arrest of Surendranath Banerjea who had approved the raising of Bande Matram slogans on the occasion of Bengal Provincial Conference. In a mass meeting organized by the Congress at Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore, the audience declared their solidarity with Bengal; they particularly condemned government’s repression and arrest of Banerjea.

Congressmen in the Punjab were also fighting against the foreign rule through press and platform. The nationalist newspaper The Punjabee.

73. Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, 8 August 1905, Gokhale Collections (National Archives of India).
74. The Punjabee, Lahore, 13 January 1906.
retorted strongly to the incriminating articles published in the pro-British Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, which caused great provocation to all self-respecting elites. The Panjabee (3-11-1906) summed tersely the general contempt of the Civil and Military Gazette for the educated Indians as “Show me an educated native and I will show you a rebel.” Incensed by this attitude of the paper the Secretary of the Indian Association, Lahore, Lala Duni Chand drew provincial Government’s attention to a number of inflammatory and objectionable articles that appeared in this daily under the ‘Change of Times’ where Indians had been slandered. He asked for necessary sanction to prosecute the proprietor and publishers of the paper, but it was refused. On the contrary prosecution proceedings were launched in October 1906, against the publisher and editor of (Jaswant Rai and K.K. Athwalve). The Panjabee, for publishing two articles “How misunderstandings occur” and “A Deliberate Murder of a Muslim orderly.” The first article highlighted how mercilessly the British Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi had subjected there emaciated Punjabis to begar which resulted in the death due to exhaustion. The second brought to public notice the shooting of a Muslim orderly by an English Sahib because the former had refused to carry the dead corpse of a pig on his saddle. Both the events were only indicators of how scant regard the imperial rulers had for the life of natives. But, instead learning anything worth while from the exposures, the mighty government charged publisher and editor of The Panjabee, of spreading racial hatred between the British on the one hand and Muslims and Hindus on the other. But the boldness of The Panjabee, an organ of the Punjab extremists, roused the nationalist feelings of the Punjabis in a big way.

During September-October 1906, the centre of Congress activities shifted from Lahore to Ambala as the Provincial Conference was held there on 29 September 1906 due to the initiative and efforts of Lala Murlidhar. Lala Hans Raj stated in his Presidential address that the Congress was not sectarian, the community of interests that united its members together was entirely and essentially of a political nature.

77. Ibid., 11.4.1906.
78. Ibid., 3.10.1906.
Fearing that the vehement opposition of the moderates to the extremists and the prolonged controversy between them would imperil the implementation and the development of the constructive political programme of the Congress, Lala Lajpat Rai made successful efforts to heal the schism at the above Provincial Conference. By minimizing doctrinal differences between both the groups and appealing for unity, he won the moderate wings’ support for the establishment of the district Congress Committee in the Punjab with a view to carrying an organized agitation against the oppressive and exploitative policies of the Imperial Government. He also made strenuous efforts to regain Muslim confidence and political support by assuring them that the Punjab Congress would remain non-Sectarian and press for such issues as concerned all the communities.79 The strategy bore rich fruits in that year, prominent Muslims led by Fazal-i-Hussain established a pro-Congress Muslim League in the Punjab which cooperated with the Congress.80

The Conference also discussed at length the perennial problem of preparing a constitution for the Congress so that the Punjab could have effective representation on the subjects committee.81 The Punjab delegation, 139 strong, travelled to Calcutta, determine to press for a Congress Constitution in its forthcoming annual session.

At the Calcutta Congress (1906), Dadabhai Naroji declared Swaraj within the Empire as the goal of the Congress. But it did not impress the Punjab extremist Ajit Singh who openly declared that Indian difficulties would not be lessened until they had a government of their own.82 Lalaji, supported the Swadeshi resolution, held the foreign government responsible for the penury of India. Speaking on the resolution of national education, another Punjab delegate, Raghubar Dayal, said that the Primary education should be introduced on mass scale and made compulsory. Still another Punjab delegate Mehta Bahadur Chand protested against the high incidence of land tax.83

One of the primary purposes for which the Punjab contingent under the leadership of Lalaji worked wholeheartedly at the session was to sort out the moderate-extremist differences over the Swadeshi and boy-

80. The Tribune, Lahore, 19.10.1906.
81. The Panjabee, Lahore, 10.10.1906.
82. Home Dept. Poll., 8 July 1907 (NAI).
cott resolutions. Their anxiety was not of only seeing these resolutions through at the session, but also to ensure that the Congress was not weakened at that critical juncture—the dawn of a new era of passive resistance in the national movement led by the Congress. Their efforts having been in the right earnest, did not go waste; Lalaji's role was acclaimed as that of a peace-maker. As a result of his unremitting efforts, the groups in the Congress were persuaded to patch up their differences in the national interest; the split was averted at least for the time being.

From the foregoing account it may be concluded that during 1905-06, Congress regained its influence among the Punjab people which it had lost in the wake of the legislation of the Punjab Land Alienation Act. The support of the Punjabis to the boycott, Swadeshi and national education programme of the extremists in the Congress in order to get the partition of Bengal annulled was in tune with their martial psyche, especially of the peasantry. In this recapture of the province by the nationalists Lala Lajpat Rai played a historic role by removing the differences between the extremists and the Moderates both at the provincial and national levels.

Nationalists also succeeded in convincing a vast majority of the Punjab Muslims about the non-sectarian and national character of the Congress which resulted in the formation of a pro-Congress Muslim Leagues in the Punjab. During these years the party was strengthened in the province organizationally as well, with the result that by February 1907, 20 District Congress committees came to be set up. It was a notable step in the growth of the Congress movement in the Punjab, and an index of the high esteem and support it was progressively gaining from various sections of otherwise differential Punjab society. The national tempo thus built by the Congress both in the urban and rural Punjab, provided the necessary atmosphere, leadership and infrastructure for the launching of the mass agitation in 1907.
Public Health in Punjab under the British

NARJEET KAUR*

One of the most important functions of Government is the maintenance of the public health, the foundation of all public and private wealth and happiness.¹ The medical system in Punjab, prior to establishment of British rule, was of indigenous type.² The western system of treatment was unknown to the people. Drugs were prepared from herbs. The health administration concerned itself generally with the relief of suffering. Prevention of sickness was a concept that came later with the knowledge and acceptance of modern theories of communicability of diseases.³

The Board of Administration, established in 1849, planned to set-up dispensaries so that people might be benefitted.⁴ Accordingly, enquiries regarding the prospects of a dispensary at every station were made, and all the authorities were unanimous in their advocacy of such institutions, and sanguine of success. In most cases, native buildings within the cities were adapted for this purpose. These institutions were generally located at or near large cities for the convenience of the people. These institutions constituted a state charity on a large scale.⁵

In 1860, it was arranged that the Inspector-General would receive the reports annually made by the district officers, and having collated them with the results of his personal observation, would submit to the Government a general report on the subject for the whole province. The Lieutenant-Governor, by this means, obtained a detailed account drawn up by a competent officer, of every dispensary, and was enabled to judge of the progress.

*H. No. 272, Ajit Nagar, Patiala.
2. For details see Narjeet Kaur; Development of Public Works in the Punjab 1849-1901, M. Phil. thesis (unpublished), Punjabi University, Patiala, 1986, pp. 132-34.
5. PAR, 1854-56 (Calcutta, 1856), para 208.

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With effect from 1 April 1867, a code of rules was brought into operation under which Government assistance was made conditional upon a certain proportion of the cost. At the same time local committees, composed of European and native gentlemen, were appointed to supervise their management.

Between 1867 and 1900 there was a steady progress in the establishment of dispensaries and they were set up at almost all the important stations in Punjab. Their number rose from only 69 in 1866 to 267 in 1900. The number of persons attending them also steadily increased every year. The number of patients treated in 1860 was 181,005 (indoor 25,681, out-door 165,324) which rose in 1890 to 2,580,496 (indoor 48,147; out-door 2,532,349). These figures show a growing appreciation of the dispensaries.

In regard to the organisation of the medical department it may be noted that up to 1880, all the hospitals of Punjab were under the Inspector-General of Prisons, but since that year the Civil Medical Department was controlled by an Inspector-General of Civil Hospital. The separation of the Medical from the Jail Department tended to improve the administration of both.

As a rule, the Chief hospital of each district was at its headquarters and was in charge of a Civil Assistant Surgeon, who after a five years' course at the Lahore Medical College had qualified for the diploma of Licentiate of Medicine and Surgery of the Punjab University. The minor hospitals and dispensaries in the outlying towns of the district were in charge of Hospital Assistants who had qualified by a four years' course at the College. Their work was supervised by the Civil Surgeon, who was required to inspect each dispensary four times a year.

A brief account of some prominent medical institution may be given here —

6. PAR, 1860-61 (Lahore, MDCCCLXI), para 252.
7. PAR, 1869-69 (Lahore, 1869), para 407.
8. Ibid.
9. PAR, 1889-1900 (Lahore, MCMI), para 19.
10. PAR, 1861-62 (Lahore, MDCCCLXII), para 217.
11. PAR, 1890-91 (Lahore, MDCCXC), para 36.
13. Ibid., p. 145.
The Mayo Hospital

The only institution maintained exclusively by Government was the Mayo Hospital, an integral part of the Medical College, to which it afforded Medical instruction. The Mayo Hospital was a handsome and commodious building constructed on the most approve sanitary principles. It was commenced in May 1867 and was completed in March 1872. The hospital was named after the late Viceroy, Earl Mayo, when he visited the hospital in October 1871.

In 1870, two institutions, the Medical School Hospital and a Charitable Dispensary of Anarkali were amalgamated in the new Mayo Hospital.

Attached to the Mayo Hospital was the Albert Victor Memorial Hospital, built in commemoration of the visit of late Prince Albert Victor to the Punjab in 1890.

The Egerton Hospital at Peshawar was begun in 1881, and was opened by Marquis of Ripon, in 1882, and named the Egerton Hospital.

In October 1882, H.E. the Viceroy laid the foundation stone of the Ripon Hospital at Shimla.

The Lady Aitchison Hospital for Women

Opposite the Mayo Hospital was the Lady Aitchison Hospital for Women. The foundation stone was laid on 15 February 1887 and was formally opened by Lady Dufferin in 1888. Amritsar Female Hospital was established in 1866. These hospitals were established...
to give mid-wives and *dais* practical medical training and to provide them with good board and lodging.

**Leper Asylums**

There were leper asylums at Ambala, Rawalpindi, Sabathu (Simla Hills), Tarn Taran (Amritsar) and Palampur (Kangra District). The most important of all these was that of Tarn Taran. It was built and instituted in the year 1858 by Mr. Frederick Cooper, Deputy Commissioner. It was a colony of 200 lepers, who received their clothing and a daily allowance for food from Municipal Funds.

Lepers were here received from all parts of the province.

**Lunatic Asylums**

Insanity, in law, is a condition of mind that causes a person to be incapable of attending to his own affairs or not responsible for his conduct. There were two lunatic asylums in Punjab for the care and treatment of the insane; the principal one was at Lahore, and there was a smaller one at Delhi. These institutions were maintained wholly at the charge of the State. The Lahore Asylum apart from its structural defects, both as regards sanitation and security, did not contain sufficient accommodation for the lunatics of the whole Province, and the Asylum at Delhi was still smaller.

Therefore, in 1900, a new Central Asylum for lunatics was constructed at Lahore at a cost of Rs. 2 lakhs. The building provided accommodation for 468 lunatics.

**Vaccination**

There was no organised system of vaccination in force for the whole province until 1864. For the hill states, where the mortality from smallpox used to be very great, a permanent staff of vaccinators, under a medical officer, was entertained, but elsewhere in each district, a few vaccinators were entertained annually at the beginning of the year.

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27. *PAR, 1921-22* (Lahore, 1923), para 199.
28. *PAR, 1869-70* (Lahore, 1870), para 446.
30. *PAR, 1869-70* (Lahore, 1870), para 446.
31. For details see Narjeet Kaur, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-44.
33. *PAR, 1869-70* (Lahore, 1870), para 440.
34. *PAR, 1898-99* (Lahore, MCM), para 530.
35. *IGIP*, p. 146.
of the old season and carried on their operations in the district under the superintendence of Civil Surgeon.³⁷

With a view of more effectually checking the ravages of the disease an organised system of vaccination, consisting of a permanent staff of 150 vaccinators with 33 native superintendents, under the direction of a medical officer, was sanctioned; the object being to vaccinate carefully the people within a limited area; and then proceeding from district to district gradually to effect a thorough vaccination of the inhabitants of the province.³⁸

Prior to 1868 there was in existence a separate Vaccination Department under a Superintendent-General of Vaccination for the preparation and supply of vaccine lymph as a preventive against small-pox. But in 1868 this department was brought under the direct control of the Sanitary Commissioner. The appointment of a Superintendent-General of Vaccination was abolished.³⁹ Vaccination was compulsory in 23 municipal towns.⁴⁰

Sanitation

The Sanitary Department came into existence in 1868 in the Punjab.⁴¹ In 1890 an important step was taken with a view to assisting local bodies in Punjab in the furtherance of their sanitary schemes. This was the creation of a Board (known as the Punjab Sanitary Board) whose duties consisted in examining the sanitary schemes submitted to them by local bodies and giving grants-in-aid on certain conditions from an allotment which was annually placed at its disposal by.⁴²

From the account of medical and sanitary administration in the Punjab under the British, given in this article, may be observed that the means of obtaining medical relief were everywhere not adequate to the wants of the people. The number of hospitals and dispensaries was less and this was particularly the case in the rural

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³⁷. PAR, 1864-65 (Lahore, n. d.), para. 397.
³⁸. Ibid.
⁴². PAR, 1873-74 (Lahore, 1874), para 25.
⁴³. PAR, 1894-95 (Lahore, MDCCCXCVI), para 18.
tracts. The reason for their small number can be found in the imperialist motives of the British. They did not feel concerned with the sufferings of the people, and did not spend lavishly for their relief, because that in turn, would give them nothing but thanks.

Furthermore, popular as the hospitals and dispensaries were, and useful as the work performed in them undoubtedly was, it was discouraging that the amount of subscriptions given by the native or local community remained year after year at a very insignificant figure (on an average less than 1/3 of sums) subscribed by the Europeans. If greater liberality were shown by the people of Punjab in maintaining the hospitals and dispensaries, local bodies could have more funds available for establishing new institutions which must be provided in many localities before proper medical relief could be within easy reach of the people as a whole. Therefore, the number and condition of these institutions was not good.

It can be pointed out here that the medical effort of the Province was mainly limited to the provision of countless hospitals varying in size from that of a small house to a large barrack, and staffing them with men, whose pay and position bore no relation whatever to their work or endeavour. In one district, for example, a huge headquarters hospital, well supplied with every modern convenience, remained constantly empty, while a few miles away a one-roomed shanty was always full, even the garden being crowded with patients who could not find accommodation inside. In the latter case the surgeon in charge was capable and popular, while in the former he was reputed very unkind to such patients as would not pay him liberally. Every where the surgeon was at odds with the local police officer refusing as he often did to give evidence in accordance with the case or the prosecution, the police alleging that 'he had been bribed by the accused, while he asserted his honest refusal to support a false case.'

Up to 1880 each district was under the Civil Surgeon, who in addition to being responsible for the local Jail, was in general charge of all medical work in the district, and particular of all hospitals and their surgeons. So he could not discharge his duties efficiently.

While we spend large sums in trying to cure diseases, wrote

45. _PAR_, 1890-91 (Lahore, MDCCCXCII), para 36.
47. _Ibid._
48. _IGIP_, p. 145
Lord Riddell, we are sadly behind hand in taking steps to prevent them. At that times prevention was not thought better than cure. Though great improvement was effected in the sanitary conditions of the towns, but still there remained much to be done. The progress of rural sanitation which involved the health of the great bulk of the population was slow.

Another significant observation which may be made regarding arrangements and facilities in the hospitals, dispensaries and asylums was the invidious distinction made between the Indian and European patients which tends to suggest that European patients and inmates were given better treatment than Indians. There were separate houses for European inmates outside the walls of the asylum.
The Singh Sabha Movement and Transformation of Sikh Society

DR S. C. SHARMA*

The earlier Sikh movements, Nirankaris and Namdhari, which were organised in the Punjab had failed to respond to the challenge of the time. On the other hand the efforts of Christian and Hindu missionaries to win over the Sikhs to their respective folds had alarmed the orthodox Sikhs. However, the Sikh community itself was divided into two groups, those who considered Sikhism as a new faith with an independent entity and those who considered Sikhism as a branch of the Hindu protestants still owing allegiance to the Hindu deities and conventions.1

In such circumstances, the need of a society which could save the Sikhs from the absorption in other religion was felt by some of them, and in 1873 an association called the Sri Guru Singh Sabha came into existence. Its aim and objectives were:

a) To restore Sikhism to its pristine purity,
b) Edit and publish historical and religious literature,
c) To propagate current knowledge, using Punjabi as the medium, and to start newspapers and magazines in Punjabi,
d) Reform and bring back into Sikh fold those who had left Sikhism, and
e) To ensure the cooperation of highly placed Englishmen in the educational programme of the Sikhs.

The Singh Sabha became very popular. In 1879, the Lahore Singh Sabha was established and numerous Singh Sabha sprang up in different parts of the Province and a vigorous campaign was set a foot.2

However to organise the various units of the Singh Sabha that had sprang up all over the Province to concentrate their energies, and to guide and control their activities, the need of a central organisation

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*Govt. College, Bhadarwah, J & K State.

was felt. Efforts towards this direction was made by Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia, a big dewan was held in Malvai Bunga, Amritsar on the 30th October 1902. After an ardas of inception by Bhai Teja Singh of Bahadur, bye-laws of the Dewan were formally adopted. Thus, the Chief Khalsa Dewan came into being on this memorable day. On 9 July 1904, the Chief Khalsa Dewan was registered under the Act XXI of 1860. The number of the Singh Sabha, Khalsa Dewan and other Sikh societies, which were affiliated to the Chief Khalsa Dewan at its founding was 20. By 1920 their number had risen to 105.

The Dewan consisted of a General Committee and an Executive Committee. Membership of the General Committee was open too:

a) Gurdwaras and Takhats (Thrones) such as those at Patna Sahib, Nander (Hyderabad), Anandpur Sahib, the Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), the Akal Bunga Sahib at Amritsar and other places.

b) The various Singh Sabhas, Khalsa Dewans and Sikh associations, which were affiliated to the Chief Khalsa Dewan.

c) The Sikh Sirdars, Raises, Sikh Military Officials, gentlemen of the Sikh States and well-wishers of the Khalsa Panth. The Sikh graduates and the educated portion of the community.

The term of membership was for five years. As a rule it had to meet twice a year on the occasions of Baisakhi and Dewali and attendance to these meeting was confined to members only. The Executive Committee consisted of 21 members of whom at least 18 were elected from among the members of the General Committee. The election was to be held every third year. The actual transaction of work of the Chief Khalsa Dewan was entrusted to this body, subject to the control of the general committee.

However the main objective of the Chief Khalsa Dewan were:

1. The spiritual, intellectual, moral and material betterment of the Sikhs.

6. Ibid.
2. Propagate and disseminate the teachings in consonance with Gurbani.
3. Represent the claims of the Kalsa Panth to the Government through constitutional means.
4. Remove illiteracy and spread of education amongst all, irrespective of caste and creed.

Thus the Chief Khalsa Dewan felt the need of the hour and made it a point to educate the Sikh masses and, with this end in view, the educational Committee of the Chief Khalsa Dewan was brought to Majithia House, Amritsar. The first session of the Sikh Educational Conference was held at Gujranwala with Sardar Baghel Singh, Rais of Kula (Lahore), in the Chair. In the Conference stress on the spread of education was laid by the speakers. The annual sessions were occasions of wide spread public enthusiasm, jubilation and detailed discussion of educational problems. Most of the people, both religious leaders and educationists in the community considered their visits to the Conference like customary pilgrimages to well known temples by their ancestors.

However, the special features of the Conference was the establishment of a School or a College at places where it was held.

In the first instance, the Sikh Community did a lot for the spread of primary education. It rightly realised that primary education was the foundation on which the whole edifice of their future progress was to be built. As a result, a large number of primary schools were opened. In 1914-15 there were 49 primary schools maintained by the Sikh community with about 2000 students on their rolls—of them around 1600 were Sikhs. By 1918 the number of primary schools rose to 200. The Sikh community aimed at establishing at least one primary school in every Sikh village.

The Sikhs were also alive of the necessity of improving Secondary Education. On this the Director of Education Department wrote "the activity shown by the Sikh community in starting new Secondary Schools has been practically noticeable in recent years and several schools are qualifying for recognition." By the year 1919 the number of recognised Sikh schools has risen to 48 as against 7 in 1906.

O’Dwyer, the Lt. Governor of the Punjab, commending the contribution of the Sikh community said, "I have been much struck on my return to the Province after an absence of some years to see how generously the Sikh community supports the cause of education. Where I go, I see Khalsa Schools almost all quite well built and well founded, which have been provided by the liberality of the members of the Panth."

On 1914, the Chief Khalsa Dewan published a treatise on Sikh rituals and ceremonies commencing right from birth to the last march and also the manner of their performance strictly in accordance with the tenants of their scriptures. However, the views of all Sikh men of learning and of all the Sikh organisations were called for, properly weighed assimilated, and incorporated into the same in order to enable it to serve as a guide for the future.

The next achievement of the Chief Khalsa Dewan was the movement for the emancipation of Kirpan. The movement was started in 1912-13. Kirpan, which is one of the five sacred symbols of the Khalsa, was banned by the Government under the Arms Act of 1879. This gave rise to an agitation resulting in a few arrests. However, as a result of the efforts of the Chief Khalsa Dewan and the influence exerted by Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia, one of its founder member, the Kirpan was exempted from the Arms Act in the Punjab on 25th June 1914 and subsequently in other parts of the country.

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16. Ibid.
The uplift of untouchables had been all along an important concern of the Dewan.\(^{20}\) Therefore the Dewan through its missionaries and religious conferences worked incessantly for the uplift of untouchables.\(^{21}\) Consequently, in 1907, a society known as the "Khalsa Biradari" was founded in Amritsar. Its aim was to encourage members of untouchables into the Sikh fold.

The Chief Khalsa Dewan also paid attention towards certain humanitarian work to alleviate the physical sufferings of mankind without any distinction of caste and creed. It started a hospital at Tarn Taran on 18 December 1915.\(^{22}\) It was accommodated in part of the local Khalsa Pracharak Vidyalaya building. Besides its basic performances, it had to (a) train Vidyalaya pupils in methods of first aid to the injured, to educate the general public in hygienic principles of health preservation.\(^{23}\)

However, five methods of treatment were given in Hospital\(^{24}\) and it gave treatment to large number of patients both outdoor and indoor,\(^{25}\) since its inception.\(^{26}\)

For the eradication of the economic backwardness of the Sikhs, a step in the right direction was taken by the Chief Khalsa Dewan in 1908, with the starting of the Punjab and Sind Bank Ltd. at Amritsar.\(^{27}\) The Chief Khalsa Dewan did not confine its attention to economic, social and religious problems of the community, but it tried to solve the political problems of the community as well.

\(^{20}\) Chief Khalsa Dewan, *Fifty Years of Service*, p. 12.
\(^{21}\) Ibid.
\(^{22}\) *The Quinquennial Report of the Central Khalsa Hospital, Tarn Taran*, 1922, p. 1.
\(^{23}\) Ibid.
\(^{24}\) Ailopathy, Surgery, Hydropathy, Electropathy and Ayurvedic.
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\(^{26}\) *The Quinquennial Report of the Central Khalsa Hospital, Tarn Taran, Punjab, Lahore*, p. 3.
Evolution of Press in the Punjab (1855-1910)

ANEETA RANI*

With the annexation of the Punjab there came revolutionary changes. The advent of the British rule effected the social and cultural life of the people in Punjab. One of the significant effects was the growth of the Anglo-Indian Press which was found by bonds of interests and sentiments to the British Indian government. This relationship enabled the Anglo-Indian Press to develop rapidly in the Punjab.

The most powerful Anglo-Indian paper in Punjab was the Civil and Military Gazette (weekly paper launched from Simla in 1872). In 1876 it became daily paper and its headquarter was shifted to Lahore.

The Anglo Indian valued it because it allowed them to publish all kinds of news. This paper was regarded authentic because the government supplied current news to it; secondly it was controlled by well to do persons; it also enjoyed the patronage of the British administration as well as the government in the Punjab.

The rapid spread of English education official policy of caution, association of Punjabis with the government apparatus and Punjab administration and the policy which was ushered in by the Indian Council Act of 1861 helped in the growth of local press. However, with the passing of Punjab Land Alienation Act (1901), the press became quite vocal and started taking keen interest in the political events in the Punjab. The Agrarian Unrest in 1907, then the split in the Indian National Congress in 1907 and the events which occurred abroad like the Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War (1905) and soon after this revolution created a suitable political climate for the press to make a critical evaluation of the events and educate the masses.

During the second half of the 19th century the vernacular press

*85, Upkar Nagar, Patiala.

rapidly developed. There were many factors which facilitated its growth and development. Several societies, leagues, debating clubs and associations were formed and renewed socio-religious, political and intellectual activities began. All of them, irrespective of their character, aims and objectives, understood the merit and utility of the press. Almost all of them published their own journals and newspapers.

The spread of education and business activities, development of the means of communication and transporation, the role of private agencies, the growing politicalization of the public in the wake of the freedom struggle and other problems like racism, rural indebtedness, economic drain and the Russian danger were some of the factors which provided impetus to the growing of press in the Punjab. Encouraged by all these factors the indigenous press began to appear in the Punjab.

Let it be noticed that the Urdu press was the most popular and played an effective role during the period of our study, though a number of Urdu and Persian newspapers were seized as a result of the repressive policy of the government. However, these papers were replaced by others, which were edited mostly by the Hindus from Lahore and Delhi.

In the following years the Punjabi press also came up which was inspired into being by Christian missionaries. The Akhbar Shri Darbar Sahib (Amritsar, 1867) espoused the cause of Hinduism and sought to win the goodwill of the British. Many more Punjabi presses were set up in Lahore and Amritsar. Gurmukh Singh, a professor of Oriental College, Lahore, was the architect of Punjabi journalism who founded the Gurmukhi Akhbar in December 1880. Soon the press came to life with renewed vigour. Also, the press

3. The growth of press in the Punjab was connected with class community. However, the language used by these organisations was Urdu. Later on, Punjabi was followed by the Sikh organisation while English and Hindi by the Hindu organisation.
6. Ibid., p. 105.
had a causal relationship with the rising public opinion the two not only interacted but also became interdependent to a large extent.\(^8\)

Despite all the above mentioned favourable factors, the Punjab native newspapers witnessed a slow and halting pace of progress, as their sale and circulation were limited\(^9\) on account of mismanagement of post office the newspapers would not reach the subscribers in time. As a result they stopped their subscription. The papers were further handicapped by the government refusal to extend any financial help. The year 1870 proved to be very difficult for the Punjab press because Lytton took pretty unkindly to the tone of the Indian Press. To please him, the Punjab administration left no stone unturned to suppress the vernacular press. At this time some of the Anglo-Indian newspapers were also writing in damagingly critical terms about its Indian counterparts. Not that he was very happy with Anglo-Indian Papers which tended to be very critical of the government, but it was found politically inexpedient to control the later especially after the irritation he had caused among resident Europeans as a result of his minute on Fuller's case.

The factors of its backwardness as analysed by the Punjab press:

1. the rulers being unacquainted with Indian languages could not follow vernacular papers;
2. the government did not patronised the vernacular newspapers;
3. that the vernacular press was not in the hands of well to do persons; and
4. its editors were not familiar with the techniques of journalism and native readers failing to appreciate the advantages did not patronise it.\(^10\) The Punjab press was also considerably handicapped by the absence of the supply of official news.\(^11\) However, considering the late exposure of the province of the forces released by the British rule its growth in Punjab was not discouraging either. By 1876, a substantial number of vernacular papers had been started.\(^12\)

It was a measure of growing confidence and courage of the Punjab press that despite its apprehensions of impending censorship, it conti-
nued to write fearlessly about the politics, government policies and officers and the social evils in order to awake the people and to prepare them to resist the indifferent attitudes of the imperialists towards their genuine problems and demands. As a result, only 30 papers were published in Punjab in 1877 but their number rose to 37 in 1878.

Though the vernacular press had made great progress, it was still in a backward state as compared to the Anglo-Indian press. In 1879, as also in 1880-81 there were 29 vernacular papers in Punjab; during 1881-82 the number of the papers increased from 26 to 35. Soon after, there was a notable growth of the press in Punjab as the government began to supply official news to the newspapers. Between 1882-84 the number of the newspapers rose to 36 in Punjab. But in 1884 the numerical strength of newspapers reached 43.

Lahore was the most important centre for the publication of newspapers, journals, weeklies, fortnightlies and the monthlies. The indigenous press began to reflect the ferment within the society in Punjab. The government appointed a translator with a view to exercising a moderate influence on the press. No doubt, the Punjab government was systematically marking the activities of the press which made the tone a little cautious. Thereafter the number of newspapers touches to 56. Influential papers devoted increasing space to political questions of the day; they also devoted a good deal of attention to the question of social importance. Another important thing regarding press is that it was governed by the social structure community wise, region wise and language wise. The vernacular press was moderate in its tone; it concentrated on social and religious matters. It did not hesitate to comment on social discrimination and manifestation of anti-Indian bias in the Punjab administration.

The foundation of the Indian National Congress provided the crowning piece in these series of momentous development. The

14. RNN: NWP & Punjab, 1877 and 1881.
17. Ibid., 1884.
congress proved a boon to the press in more ways than one. The congress left imprint on the people in Punjab who more actively began to take keen interest in the progress and spread of journalism. In this political ferment it was natural that the press should be regrouped into pro and anti-congress camps.20

During the year 1886, the government became somewhat liberal and started supplying news to vernacular papers. In 1887, the Punjab Native Press Association was set up with a view to improving native newspapers in the province and also to encouraging and enabling to act in concert in matters affecting their common interest.

During 1887-88 the press witnessed a down trend. Its numbers decreased from 57 to 46. In 1888-89 despite further deterioration of press position in Punjab, there was a slight improvement in other parts of the country.21 In 1889-1900 and then in 1901, the growth of the press made a rapid advance.22 During 1895-96, alongwith the increase of newspapers, the number of readers also increased because of the efforts made by the socio-religious organisations of different communities.

Indeed the popularity of vernacular newspapers alarmed the Punjab administration and the British government. As a result the subsidies of some papers were withdrawn. But the overall strength of the vernacular press was not much affected by this move of the administration. No doubt the year 1897 was important in the History of the Punjab press because it demonstrated the determination and firmness of the editors to face and resist the government repressive policy as well as the repressive measures of the local administration. In short, between 1897-98 the vernacular press was affected badly, as the editors and proprietors of several vernacular papers figured in criminal courts. However, the vernacular press went on struggling hard. The number of vernacular papers in Punjab gradually increased. These papers maintained their usual tone and constantly criticised the government, its policies and also the administration which was hostile to press.23

During 1899-1900 the press again began to advance rapidly in Punjab. However, the circulation of the vernacular papers was not large. At the dawn of the 20th century some national and international events created an unprecedented stir throughout the province. On the basis of its tone, temper and ideology, the Punjab press can be conveniently categorised into the Anglo-Indian press, the nationalist moderate press, the Home rule press and the extremist press. Though larger national issues were taken up by all categories of press, but the press kept a strict watch on their political identity. Hence, the opening decade of the present century is characterised by further growth and maturity of Indian journalism which got rapidly modernised.

Growing unrest in Punjab provided a fertile ground for the politically oriented press, more especially for its revolutionary wing.²⁴ Now the press ventilated the political and social grievances of the people.²⁵ However, the Anglo-Indian press and the government officers demanded curbs on the vernacular press. Now several newspapers, with the passing of the Press Act of 1908 ceased publication because they had invited upon themselves the wrath of the government as a result of their sympathy for the terrorists and extremists.²⁶ However, the repressive measures could not crush the press in Punjab, instead the number of newspapers rose to 64. Even the circulation of newspapers did not decline despite the Act of 1908. Thus, the first decade of the 20th century was an important epoch for the growth of press in Punjab. During this decade, Punjabi language prose improved sufficiently and some newspapers and journals made their appearance. Moreover, the papers remained in circulation in almost all parts of the province. Though Punjab press had inspiration from Bengal, Bombay and N.W.P. press. But the Punjab press remained relatively moderate in expression in the beginning.

Hence the accelerated pace of the evolution of the press in the Punjab was largely due to the efforts of some individuals and public associations. The attitude of the Anglo-Indian press, barring very few exceptions, was hostile towards the press in Punjab. Moreover

as the latter showed signs of maturing with progressive boldness, the press in Punjab could still grow was the result of a new awakening—of which political consciousness was but one manifestation—that was characterizing. Indian Historical evolution, during the period of our study, when organised political and social activities were in their infancy, the press compensated in a large measure for the lack of effective organisation in the province that could meet the needs of the Punjabis. Finally, it was the Punjab press which was responsible for the rise and growth of militant nationalism soon after the Punjabi newspapers were launched.
The Punjab Alienation of Land Act 1900: Circumstances Leading to its Passage and its Impact on Congress politics in the Punjab

KABAL SINGH BHATTI*

Punjab, being an agricultural region, is the land of villages from the ancient times. Majority of the population depends upon agriculture for its livelihood. Uptil the early nineteenth century, Punjab was a land of self-sufficient villages. The agriculturists produced sufficient grains and vegetables to meet the requirements of their respective village; each village had also a carpenter, a blacksmith, a goldsmith and a bania's shop which fulfilled all the necessities of the villagers. The self-sufficient village as the basic economic unit had existed for centuries in India and, except for some minor modifications, had survived till the advent of the British rule, in spite of all political convulsions, religious upheavals and devastating wars. It was the establishment of railways and roads by the British which affected the self-sufficient character of the villages.

The villages had both cultivated and waste lands, commonly owned by the village community. All the landowning tribes and families had a strong feeling of proprietorship. "The chief tribal families have retained a large number of village, as the caparcenary owners of single village or even part of village and have retained their ancestral or some other recognised mode of sharing—a fact always indicative of the strength of union or else of superior origin and in either case of a strong landlord feeling. The common rule is not to divide up completely, but to leave a portion of the estate in joint ownership." In 1849 when the Punjab was annexed to the British territory, the system of joint ownership was prevalent in the province. But under the British rule, the land had become private property also. "The great mass of the landed property in the Punjab is held by small proprietors, who cultivate their own land in whole or in part. The chief characteristic of tenure generally is that these proprietors are associated together

*Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

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in village communities. If any of the proprietors wishes to sell his right or is obliged to part with them in order to satisfy demands upon him, the other members of the same community have preferential right to purchase at the same price as could be obtained from outsider."

So, it is clear that property rights were communal and individual holdings were generally held on behalf of the village community. Land transfers which were on large scale during the British period were not completely unknown in the pre-British period. But the land alienation was a rare phenomenon due to the following two reasons: Firstly, due to the community ownership the transfer could not be easily effected; Secondly the lack of estate to transfer. The first dent in the ownership of land by the village community was made by the settlement of 1849-50 and 51-52 which not only demarcated the village boundaries but also recognised the individual property rights. The right to alienate the land was recognised which was discouraged in the early years. Transfer of Property Act passed in 1882 was applicable to whole of India except Punjab and Burma. "This Act presupposes absolutely free trade in land and lays down no arbitrary restrictions." But the judicial decisions paved the way to own landed property and to dispose it off, in the Punjab. So the land became free for alienation, mortgaged or disposed off by the owners. It was due to this reason that by the end of 19th century the vast peasantry of Punjab was alienated from land by the village money-lenders. The main factor-leading to this was the indebtedness of Punjab peasantry to the money-lenders due to the following reasons.

The industrial revolution of England had given a death blow to the village industries and driven people to agriculture, the only avenue of employment and livelihood. This led to the division of land into smaller fragments, and agriculture became uneconomic and backward. Thus the pressure on agriculture grew resulting in smaller income for the cultivators. They were in no position to make both ends meet with their meagre income, which led to their indebtedness.

The methods of revenue assessment and collection were harsh and were responsible for the economic burdens and consequent indebtedness of the peasantry. During the Sikh regime a fixed share

3. Ibid., p. 627.
5. G. Kaushal, Economic History of India (Delhi, 1979), p. 189,
of the crop was taken as the revenue, generally, the amount was half of the total production but it varied also depending upon the conditions of agriculture. But the British Government changed the system into cash payment. As the people saved little they were unable to pay this cash in the bad years. The government assessment was high and the farmers had to pay twice a year without fail. This drove many peasants to the money-lenders to get money at the higher rate of interest in order to pay the revenue. The government's expectation was that the good years would enable the peasants to pay for bad ones. But the actual condition of the peasants belied this expectation.

In the Punjab agriculture was largely dependent on nature for irrigation. The failure of monsoons would prove disastrous for the province. The famines, which occurred at different times in different parts of the Punjab, very seriously hit the village economy, after the rising of 1857. The worst affected in every case were the animals because cattle-fodder became scarce at an early date every time. In 1869, 3,00,000 cattle perished in the single district of Hissar. In the course of such natural calamities the peasants were forced to borrow money at any rate of interest to save their family members. The diseases affecting men-folk from time to time added to the misery of the peasants and led them to borrow.

There were some social causes which also ruined the peasantry. One of the most important of these was the expenditure on marriages. When any marriage took place in their family, the peasants, in order to keep their prestige among their relations, squandered their wealth, accumulated in years by the sweat of their brow, and moreover they borrowed large sums from the Sahukars to meet their expenses. In 1880 Punjab Finance Commission regarded expenditure on marriage and other ceremonies as one of the most prominent cause of debt. The consumption of alcohol, opium and other intoxicants was an extravagant yet an unnecessary expenditure. These intoxicants were expensive and required hard cash which could only be had from the

7. The famines occurred during 1860-61, 1876-78, 1896-97 and 1899-1901.
moneylenders. In 1889, the Financial Commissioner of the Punjab found that out of 6500 cases of alienation one-sixth were due to extravagant expenditure thoughtlessly incurred.\footnote{Ibid., p. 74.} The legal system introduced by the British which involved litigation, coupled with the increased production and land value, also contributed to the indebtedness of the peasantry.

To get rid of their debt the peasants could mortgage, or alienate their land. Due to this reason the private transfer of land was increasing. The rate of alienation reached its climax in 1888. Sir James Lyall, the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, said, "The statements of sales and mortgages from 1865-66 to 1885-86 show a large gradual increase in the area sold and mortgaged in the Punjab."\footnote{Notes on Land Transfer and Agricultural Indebtedness in India, p. 44.}

His successor, Macworth Young also commented in 1889\footnote{Ibid.}:

The only safe conclusion is that there is year by year a gradually increasing amount of land sold and mortgaged. It would appear that about 3% of the total area and 8% of the cultivated area of the province was under mortgage.

The rapid and accelerating transfer of land from peasant proprietors to a largely non-agricultural urban class undermined the very foundation of Punjab Society and the British Raj.\footnote{K.W. Jones, Arya Dharm (New Delhi, 1976), p. 182.} After 1857, they were aware that the continuance of the British rule depended to some extent on the support of the war-like people of the province. The object could be attained only if the rural people, the landed class and the peasantry, which formed more than 90% of the entire population of the province, could be made to remain loyal to the raj.\footnote{Satya M. Rai, Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab (New Delhi, 1984), p. 1.}

So the Government wished to introduce remedies for the welfare of peasantry. The Government of India hoped that restrictions on land transfer would improve the peasant’s plight, but its primary purpose was political.\footnote{N.G. Barrier, The Punjab Alienation of Land, Bill, 1900 (Duke University, 1966), p 34.} The political support of the large body of the people was considered essential for the stability of the British Empire in India. The British Government exerted its influence upon the rural masses through the peasant proprietors. But these proprietors
were losing land to the money-lenders on a high rate. As the Hindu money-lenders were in minority and represented no political force in the country, they could not fill this gap, so the government realised the political force of the land owing peasantry. They (the British) were of the opinion that the protected cultivators would support the government, and the Punjab would once again as in days of old be a bulwark of loyalty and an example of peaceful administration. The authorities felt that the situation caused by alienation was grave.

The Governor General said:

We consider the danger of the present state of things so serious that we cannot run the risk of legislation which we, in agreement with the weight of the opinion in the province, think necessary, being allowed to remain a dead letter. The only effective remedy, we are convinced is to place direct restrictions on the power of land holders to alienate his land.

The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Macworth Young was not in favour of restrictions on general land transfer but in the changed circumstances he set up a committee under his own chairmanship. The committee recommended that alienation be permitted only with the permission of the collector for twenty years, after which the land would return back to the mortgager. Sales among all agricultural tribes be permitted. The law should apply to the entire province but the local government be given the right to exempt certain areas and persons from its operation. The Indian Government in consultation with the Punjab Government drafted the Bill which was circulated for ascertaining public opinion before it could be passed.

The agricultural classes generally favoured the Bill and became much jubilant as they felt more secured under the new Act. They became mischievous and assaulted the moneylenders, e.g., the Jagirdar of Gujranwala, who was a retired first class extra Assistant Commissioner, was assaulted by the villagers...resulting in the breakage of one of his ribs, and similar events took place in other parts of the Punjab.

17. Ibid., p. 51.
19. Ibid., p. 176.
province.21 But the urban and money-lending classes opposed it, and "views it as a serious disability and is inclined to convert it into a political grievance."21 The educated Punjabi Hindus reacted to the proposed Bill with anger and fear. They said, "It is specially necessary that the Punjab should be strongly represented in the National Assembly this year. Considering that legislative measures brought with most momentous and far-reaching consequences were in contemplation, those who were entitled to speak on behalf of the people of the province should not miss this opportunity.23 On December 3rd in a public meeting at Lahore, twenty six delegates were elected who were supposed to win the Congress support against the reactionary policy of the Government.24

The Punjab urbanites decided to appeal to the Indian National Congress for opposing this Bill. They prepared a draft of the resolution for the Congress, to the following effect25:

(a) That this Congress, while congratulating the Government of Lord Curzon on applying themselves to the task of finding a remedy for agricultural indebtedness throughout India in general and in the Punjab in particular, regrets the introduction into the Supreme Legislative Council of a Bill to amend the law relating to agricultural land...to decrease the credit of the ryat...to make him more and more resourceless on account of his inability to meet the ever-increasing state demands upon his land.

(b) That this Congress, in the light of experience of similar measures in Deccan, known as the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Acts, begs to submit that such an artificial measure is hardly expected to afford the peasant the necessary relief from his chronic indebtedness.

(c) That this Congress, therefore, is strongly of opinion that nothing short of a revision of the land tenure systems of the Government operating in provinces other than Bengal and of the institutions of the Agricultural Banks is ever expected to be of any practical good to the ryat.

23. The Tribune, 5 December 1899.
24. Ibid., 14 December 1899.
25. Ibid., 19 December 1899.
Accordingly, in its forthcoming session (fifteenth session) held at Lucknow, the Congress took up the matter. Taking part in the discussion on Land Alienation Bill in this session Lala Kanahya Lal, a delegate from the Punjab said, “It is rather a suicidal policy to pass the Bill.” The Congress after some discussion on the Bill and giving due consideration to the draft sent by the Punjabi elites, passed the following resolution:

(a) That this Congress regrets the introduction into the Supreme Legislative Council of a Bill to amend the law relating to agricultural land in the Punjab, with a view to restrict alienation of land, as proposed in the Bill, by sale or mortgage, which is calculated (i) to decrease the credit of the agriculturists and land-holders, and (ii) to make them more resourceless on account of their inability to meet the ever increasing state demands upon their lands and the Congress is of the opinion that the provision to give retrospective affect to Bill is inequitable and unfair.

(b) That this Congress recommends that real relief be afforded to the cultivating classes in the following way: that where the government is the rent receiver, the rule laid down in 1882, prohibiting any enhancement except on the ground of rise in prices, be enforced, and that where private landlords are the rent receivers, some provisions to prohibit undue enhancement of rent be made.

(c) This Congress further resolves that a committee consisting of the President, Jaishi Ram, N. Gupta, Wacha, Munshi Madho Lal, Iqbal and Mudholkar be appointed to submit a representation to the Government pointing out the unsuitable nature of many of the provisions of the Bill.

Accordingly, the Committee prepared and submitted to the Government the representation on behalf of the Congress and asked the Government to institute an enquiry through a special independent commission. It was reported that in some districts in the Punjab, committees had been appointed with the object of making representation to the proper authorities and the idea was to form a provincial committee at Lahore.

27. Ibid., p. 49.
28. The Tribune, 4 January 1900.
The threat of this legislation stimulated political activities in the province. Aryas and Brahmos joined hands in reviving Indian Association for the purpose of utilizing it to organise a campaign of petitions, protest meetings, and propaganda aimed at deflecting this threat to the economic interests of the urban Hindus. A circular calling on Hindu politicians to hold protest meetings in every town was issued. The Indian Association realised that the British would not pay any attention to the urban demonstrations. So it was decided to mobilise the rural public opinion and conceive the Government that the Zamindars feared the new restrictions. The Indian Association, therefore, appointed a sub-committee to consider the terms (vires) of the Bill, and to inform the association of its opinion and remarks. The sub-committee, before submitting its report of deliberations decided to have the opinion of the Sahukars, their Panchayats, brotherhood, etc., and therefore, a translated copy of the Bill was sent to the Sahukars for gathering their opinion. The sub-committee was of the opinion that entire investment in the land would not render the country prosperous and the Bill would not be able to achieve the desired object. It further observed that the attachment of agricultural classes and their descendents to the land exclusively would not be beneficial for the country. The committee also refuted to accept the fact that it would lead the zamindars to prosperity and it expected some bad effects of the Bill. The Punjabis turned to the Congress as well as far aid. No fewer than twenty-six Punjabis had journeyed to Lucknow for the 1899 Congress Session. The British officials working in Punjab also denounced the proposed Bill. Mr. Justice Clerk, Chief Judge of the Punjab Chief Court, criticised the Bill in these words;

32. Ibid.
The Bill is admittedly of exceptional nature based on political consideration—granting that the disease exists and that a remedy (if there is one) should be applied, still it is better that no remedy than a wrong one should be applied and it seems to me that proposed remedy would tend rather to aggravate than cure the disease.

A memorandum signed by 4008 persons of Lahore District was also submitted to the Punjab Government on 17 May 1900 disapproving the Bill. In spite of the criticism of the Bill from the people and the Government officials, it was introduced in the Legislative Council on 22 June 1900.

Before the introduction of the Bill, the Lieutenant-Governor was requested to nominate two persons from the province for inclusion in the Council for considering the measures. He nominated his financial commissioner, Mr. Fanshan and Kanwar Harnam Singh opposed the Bill and commented:

The present legislation is admittedly of revolutionary character and is not suited to social conditions. It will violate the existing social, political and economic institutions, will put back the hands of the dial, retard the progress of the country, steep the people in misery and discontent, and promote the every evil which is the ostensible object of the measure to eradicate. I would also enquire here how it is expected that his condition would be improved if his holding be transferred to one of his own tribe and not to a middle man.

Lord Curzon, who had refused to consider the Bill at Calcutta Session of the Council decided to have more Indians in the Council for its Simla Session. Nawab Muhammad Hayat Khan, a retired government official and a big landlord was taken in the Council and the day (20 July 1900) he assumed his seat, he was added to the Select Committee. Being a government official he was introduced to the Select Committee to support the Bill and to show that the Muslims were in favour of the Bill because majority of the population of agricul-

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27. S.R. Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
tural community belonged to the Muslim community.

The Select Committee submitted its first report to the Council on 8 August 1900, but it did not satisfy the Council and more comments were invited. Before the Report could be laid for consideration, Kanwar Harnam Singh in his memorable 'minute of dissent' said:

The majority of the peasant proprietors in the province will be reduced to the state of worst character... They will be entirely under the power and mercy of their rich brethren... From my own experience of agricultural conditions of the Province, and from the knowledge I have of the habits and ideas of landowners, I feel no hesitation in stating that the proposed measure will not be able to obtain the object...

On 5 October 1900, both the reports were presented and the revenue member moved on 19 October for the consideration of these reports. Harnam Singh again opposed the Bill but Mohammad Hayat Khan lent his support to the government. Lord Curzon, however, dismissed Harnam Singh's note of dissent and his speech as having been written by 'some interested party at Lahore.'

The Bill was passed as Act XIII of 1900, known as 'The Punjab Alienation of Land Act.' The main purpose of the Act was to win over the loyalty of peasants to British Empire. Its salient features were:

1. Non-agricultural classes were not allowed to buy land from a member of an agricultural tribe, nor to take it in mortgage for more than twenty years. After the lapse of this period, the mortgage must be cancelled.

2. The Act forbade, except by special sanction, the sale of land by agriculturists.

3. It also declared all Jats, Rajputs and members of scheduled castes as agriculturists, while others, e.g., Khatris, Aroras, etc. as non-agriculturists.

No doubt, the Punjab Land Alienation Act protected cultivators

40. The Tribune, 24 Sept. 1900.
41. S.R. Sharma, op. cit., p. 28.
from eviction from their land for debt but it divided the population of the Punjab into two groups—agriculturists and the non-agriculturists. In this situation, it was very difficult for the Congress to win over both sides. The Congress had opposed the Bill in its fifteenth session at Lucknow by adopting a resolution but it also suggested some measures to the Government to check indebtedness of the Punjab peasantry. The Punjabi-non-agriculturist revived the activities of the Lahore Indian Association, a sister organisation of the Congress in Punjab to oppose this Act. Even they sent a petition signed by 4008 persons to the Government opposing the Act. The Arya Smajists invited the Indian National Congress for 1900 Session to the Punjab for the purpose, infer alia, to oppose the Bill which was not favourable to the commercial classes, dominating the Samaj politics. Despite the 1899 resolution, the Congress could not maintain a firm stand against the alienation Bill because of the communal issue involved in it. The Anti Bill protest meetings organised by the trading Hindus of Punjab provoked the Punjabi Muslim peasantry, thinking that the Government had passed the Bill to safeguard their interests, held public meetings in support of the Bill. They held a meeting in the Panipat Tehsil of the Karnal District to thank the Government for its “thankful” legislation. It was due to the opposition of the Muslim delegates led by Muharam Ali Chisti in the Lahore Congress Session, the subject committee considered it prudent to postpone the discussion on the matter for one year. “As the Mohammedan members of the subjects committee took a different view of that Act, it was finally resolved by the Hindu members of the committee belonging to Punjab, that out of defence to the sentiment of the Mohammedan members, the question should be dropped for the present, that we shall wait and watch the working of the Act for another year.” But the Punjabi commercial class was not happy with this decision. Commenting upon the Muslim re-

49. *1900 Congress Report*, p. 70.
action to the Bill, Kali Prasana Rao, Chairman of the Reception Committee said, "The Punjab Land Alienation Act has stirred them upto an extent that they do not know whether they are standing upon their heels or upon their heads."\(^{50}\) No doubt, the Congress postponed the discussion for one year, but they were not in favour of this Act as it originally was. They wanted to amend the Act. On the other side, the uneducated agriculturists of the Punjab, both Muslim and Sikh, were supporting the Bill. So, in the tussle that ensued, the agriculturists clung to protect the spirit of the Act against any encroachment, while the non-agriculturists put in their best seeking its repeal and, failing in that, some relaxation in the clauses.\(^{61}\)

Both the Muslims and the Sikhs drifted away from the Congress over the controversy regarding the Land Alienation Bill. They denounced the Congress as the organisation of only the commercial classes. The Sikhs remained loyal to the Chief Khalsa Diwan and the Muslims founded the ‘Muslim League’ in 1906. Both these organisations were known to be loyal to the British Government. It was a great set back to the Congress in the Punjab—the agriculturists dominated province. Even the Arya Samajists also drifted away from the Congress after 1900 due to the Act and certain other reasons. So, the participation of the Punjabis in the Annual Sessions of the Indian National Congress became thinner, i.e., 30 in 1901, zero in 1902, 5 in 1903 and 28 in 1904.\(^{52}\) Thus the controversy regarding the Land Alienation Bill posed a great threat to the popularity of the Congress in the Punjab.

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52. Annie Besant, *op. cit.*, pp. 332, 352, 374, 393.
The Role of Patiala Rulers in the Chamber of Princes (1921-47)

S. M. Verma*

The Chamber of Princes was instituted as a result of the desire of the rulers of Indian States for an organisation which would enable the Viceroy and the Princes to come together to deliberate on matters relating to the empire, India and the states as a whole.

The winds of change in the attitude of British policy towards Princes were evident in the period of the Viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge. In 1911, at Delhi Durbar, the Princes felt sore over some parts of the homage ceremony which were not in accord with their ideas of dignity. They realised the weakness of their position which, however, could be remedied by unity among themselves. A feeling of unity for a common cause started taking root in their minds. The need to think together on matters of common concern began to be more and more keenly felt. The urge to have a permanent organisation in which they could all meet and express their views was voiced by many of the Princes.

Fortunately for the Princes, Hardinge was not averse to the idea of the conferences of the Native Rulers, which, he considered, would help in promoting the interests of the Paramount Power. As a matter of fact, he took the initiative in calling conferences of the Princes on matters of imperial interest and those affecting the states as a whole. The first of these conferences was called in March 1913, to discuss the question of the higher education of Princes but it dispersed without arriving at any conclusion. The convening of such conferences annually, however, got bogged down due to the commencement of the first world war in 1914. The war gave the Princes an opportunity to reaffirm their loyalty and offer unstinted help to the Paramount Power.

*Lecturer in History, Govt. Mahendra College, Patiala.

Some even showed their readiness to render personal service at the front and some of them actually did so to boost the morale of the Indian Forces in the different theatres of war.\(^6\)

In 1916, at the investiture of the Maharaja of Jodhpur, the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, remarked in his speech that the Government aimed to cultivate close and friendly relations with the ruling Princes by trusting them and looking upon them as helpers and colleagues in the Imperial rule.\(^6\)

In pursuance of the new policy, Chelmsford (1916-21) called another Conference of the Princes in 1916 to discuss some of the issues which had long irritated the Princes.\(^7\) It laid down the principles which were to be observed by the British Government during the minority administrations in the Indian States.\(^8\)

Another Conference of the Princes was called in 1917 and the Viceroy showed his eagerness by presiding over all its sittings. It drew up rules for the conduct of business of such conferences.\(^9\)

Before convening this conference, the British Government had associated the Maharaja of Bikaner to represent the Princes in the Imperial War Cabinet and the Imperial War Conference. Later on he was made a member of the British delegation at the Peace Conference of Paris in 1919.\(^10\)

About this time a new star was in the process of preparation to emerge on the scene of Indian Princedom, later to shine on its firmament for nearly two decades. He was Bhupinder Singh, the ruler of Patiala, the biggest of the Phulkian group of the Cis-Sutlej States in the Punjab. During the decade, 1916-26, he was closely associated with the meetings of the Princes, Annual Conferences and later with the Chamber of Princes. He was a confident of the Maharaja of Bikaner who put him on almost all the important committees

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7. Bastas No. 1 (hereinafter B/I), file No. II (A) 3, 1916, p. 13 (All these Bastas are available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala).
and formulation of proposals for negotiations with the sub-committees dealing with the organisation of the Chamber with the British Government.\footnote{Panikkar, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 2.}

When Samuel Edwin Montague, the Secretary of State for India, visited the country in 1918, Patiala, who had already achieved outstanding position among the Princes, along with Bikaner and Scindia, was prominently associated with all the important discussions. In fact, it was at Patiala's initiative that the momentous meeting of Princes and Ministers of the States took place in 1918.\footnote{B/2, file No. Ch II (C) 3, 1918, pp. 3-27; also see Panikkar, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 3.} In this meeting prominent ministers like Sir M. Visvesvarayya of Mysore, Col. Kailas Nath Hakassar of Gwalior, Manubhai Mehta of Baroda and leaders of public opinion from British India like Lord Sinha, Tej Bhadur Sapru, Srinivasa Shastry, Madan Mohan Malviya also participated. The questions relating to the relationship of States with the Government of India were discussed at length. In the end a properly drawn scheme was handed over to the Government of India during discussions on the constitutional reforms.

When the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published, a sub-committee to discuss the proposals relating to the Indian States was constituted in January 1919 in which the Maharaja of Patiala was a prominent member. His work was applauded by the brother Princes. The Maharaja of Patiala remained a member of the Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes from the time of its inception in February 1921. Besides, he served on its various committees set up from time to time to discuss various problems with the British Government.

In 1924, the Maharaja of Patiala officiated as Chancellor of the Chamber as the Maharaja of Bikaner had gone to Geneva to attend the session of the Assembly of the League of Nations as a member of the Indian Delegation.\footnote{Panikkar, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 5.}

The working of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms aroused apprehensions. Even in the political sphere, the Paramount Power became apparently less able to give protection to the States against movements directed against them from British India. The Princes always desired to safeguard their interests but the constitution of the Chamber lacked any provision permitting discussion of such issues.

12. B/2, file No. Ch II (C) 3, 1918, pp. 3-27; also see Panikkar, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 3.
As it was specifically laid down in the constitution that agenda of the Chamber was to be approved by the Viceroy who was also its President, there was little chance for the inclusion of any such item in it. In 1924, the Maharaja of Bikaner made an attempt to persuade Lord Reading, the Viceroy, to take up this issue, but it did not yield any result. It was under these circumstances that Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala was elected Chancellor of the Chamber and held office till 1931, when he was defeated due to annoyance with him of the smaller states who accused him of betraying their interests. He was re-elected as the Chancellor in 1933 as he was able to rally these very smaller states to support his candidature. In the intervening period (1931-33), the office of the Chancellor was occupied by the Jam Sahib of Nawanagar and the Nawab of Bhopal.

The fortunes of the Chamber of Princes were at a low ebb during 1933-36. This was largely due to the fact that there was no love lost between Patiala and Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy. There was no session of the Chamber in 1936 as sufficient number of Princes did not turn up. Patiala frankly acknowledged the fact that the Chamber had lost prestige, authority and weight not only with the Government of India but also with the Princes themselves. He wrote to Viceroy in his resignation letter:

I have come to the following conclusion with frankness that the Princes on the Standing Committee do not consider the work of the Chamber important enough to merit their attention. I desire to place my resignation of the office of the Chancellor in the hands of the Viceroy without delay.

The resignation was accepted and the Pro-chancellor, Maharana of Dholpur, became the acting Chancellor.

Despite all the odds against him, the Maharaja of Patiala, again contested the election for Chancellorship in February 1937. He was elected to the office by gaining 30 votes to 13 votes polled by Maharana of Dholpur who was reported to have the backing of Lord Willingdon and the Foreign and Political Secretary, Sir Bertrand Glancy. Thus

15. B/2 II (A) 21, 1924, p. 13.
17. Proceedings of the Chamber of Princes (Delhi, 1937), p. 16.
Bhupinder Singh held the office of the Chancellor till he died in harness in February 1938.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh’s contribution to the work of the Chamber during his regime as Chancellor was weighty and valuable. During the very first year in office, he was confronted with a situation which had caused perturbation among the Princes.

Lord Reading’s letter to Nizam in 1926, in which he repudiated the Princes’ right to negotiate directly with the British Government on an equal footing and his contention that the right to intervene the internal affairs of the States was inherent in the Paramountcy of the British Crown and could be exercised solely at its discretion, had seriously alarmed the Princes.18

The Maharaja of Patiala as the spokesman of the Princes lobbied zealously and intelligently with the result that to mollify and allay their fears the new Viceroy, Lord Irwin, in the course of his address to the Chamber of Princes on 22 November 1926, observed:19

As regards our official relations, I need hardly assure your Highnesses that I realize to the full the sanctity and binding nature of the treaties and sanads ... the general policy of the Government remains, as it has been in the past, a policy of non-interference in affairs that are internal to the States.

The anguished spirits of the Princes were soothed as he assured them that through informal discussions and talks between the Standing Committee of the Chamber and the Viceroy, any of the grievances of the rulers could be redressed.20

Accordingly, with this assurance of the Viceroy, the Chamber passed a resolution moved by the Maharaja of Patiala, the Chancellor, that “the Chamber do authorise its Standing Committee, with the addition of such Princes and expert advisors as may seem desirable, to confer with His Excellency the Viceroy and his advisors, whenever circumstances require it.”21 As a result of this resolution, the Chancellor and the Standing Committee came to be recognised as the representatives of the Princely order. By achieving the position of an inter-

18. Indian States Committee 1928-29 (Delhi, 1929), p. 56, letter of Reading to Nizam, dt. 27 March 1926.
20. B/2, Case No. 11 (a) 5, 1927, p. 3.
21. Ibid., p. 5.

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mediary between the Viceroy and the Chamber, as the only recognized and accredited body competent to carry on negotiations with the Viceroy on behalf of the Chamber of Princes, the legitimate functions and responsibilities of the Chancellor and the Standing Committee were for the first time defined and established. This was a great achievement of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala as the Chancellor of the Chamber.

Immediately, after the conclusion of the session of the Chamber, the Maharaja of Patiala set about the work of collecting the necessary material for the conference with the Viceroy. A conference of Rulers and Ministers was convened at Patiala in February 1927, to which some leading British Indian statesmen like Lord Sinha and T.B. Sapru were invited. This conference recommended that the Standing Committee should request the Viceroy to appoint an independent committee for the purpose of investigating many points which touch the position and the interests of the Princes in general. An 'aide-memoire' was prepared, giving in brief the views of the Princes on vital constitutional questions and this document became the base for the future negotiations with the British Government. It was in this meeting that the Maharaja of Patiala proposed to send Col. K.N. Haksar and Prof. L.F. Rushbrook Williams to England to obtain legal opinion on matters of vital concern to the Princes. The Patiala State bore the expenditure on their visit and stay in England. The lawyers of eminence in England were consulted. After obtaining their point of view, a meeting with the Viceroy was convened at Simla. The Viceroy agreed to the suggestions of the Chancellor and recommended to the British Government the appointment of a Committee to go into the details of the problems of the Indian States.

The British Government in December 1927 appointed an Indian States Committee with Sir Harcourt Butler, the former Governor of U. P., as Chairman. The appointment of this committee put great responsibility on the shoulders of the Maharaja of Patiala as the Chancellor. He faced the situation calmly and rose to the occasion. With the support of the Standing Committee it was decided to undertake immediately the task of the preparation of the case for the States. An eminent Lawyer, Sir Leslie Scott, was engaged to

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22. B/36, Case No. IV (C), 16A, 1930, p. 25.
23. B/26, Case No. IV (A) 13, 1927, pp. 100-103.
prepare and present the case before the British Government. A special organisation was created for the preparation of case and a special fund set apart to finance this important work. The Chancellor gave Rupees Five laks as donation for the fund. His example was followed by other Princes.24

The smaller States were loud in their complaint that the special organisation was unlikely to attach proper importance to their cases. Hence, the Chancellor held a conference of the Rulers and representatives of such States and every attempt was made to dispel their misgivings and enlist their support.25

The Maharaja of Patiala deemed it desirable to be on the spot in London at great personal inconvenience and expense, in order to direct the presentation of the States case. During his stay in England, he gave speeches, talks and explained the State's point of view. Simultaneously with the Butler Committee, Simon Commission was also visiting various places in British India for granting more constitutional concessions. The Butler Committee report also helped John Simon in facilitating his work. John Simon later on recommended to the British Government that a tripartite conference, comprising the representatives of States, British India and His Majesty's Government, should be convened before finalising the constitutional reforms. This suggestion was accepted. The Viceroy on 31 October 1929, made the historic announcement of convening a Round Table Conference. The Princes welcomed the suggestion.26

Immediately after the Viceroy's announcement, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh in a banquet at Patiala announced :27

I am sure we all realize that we have reached a point in our lives where our responsibilities are exceptionally heavy. The situation demands a careful and earnest thought. The destiny of India, as a whole, and therefore, of the states of India, is trembling in the balance. The moment is pregnant with arresting potentialities.

At the behest of the Maharaja of Patiala, as the Chancellor, it was

24. With the help of these liberal donations, the total amount collected was Rs. 15,38,074 and foreign exchange worth £ 5000.
25. B/19, Case No. III (C) 16, 1928, p. 19.
27. Panikkar, op. cit., p. 89.
decided that all the members of the Standing Committee should form the part of the Indian States Delegation to the First Round Table Conference. It was again on his recommendation that the decision was taken to include the Rajas of Korea and Sarila to represent the interest non-salute States and the Maharaja of Sangli to represent smaller states.28

During the period 1926-31, many subjects of interest to the States came under discussion. Issues like Radio Broadcasting, Air Navigation in Indian States, Construction of Tramways, Employment of Europeans in Indian States, Provision of a School at Satara for Junior Officers of the Indian States Forces, Road Development, leadership of the Indian Delegation to the League of Nations, Mints and Coinage, etc.,29 were finally disposed of.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh was one of the pioneers of the idea of federation for Indian polity and worked for its promotion, though after ceasing to be Chancellor in 1931. But prior to the First Round Table Conference the prospect of a Federation of India, including both British India and the Indian States, was speculated upon merely as a distant objective and a remote possibility. To some politicians in British India a union of Provinces under a democratic system of Government with a congeries of Indian States, possessing various degrees of autonomy and governed under different shades of autocracy, was regarded as a 'mixture of oil with water.'30

To the Princes, the idea of federation was not a new one. It was mooted as early as 1917 by the Maharaja of Bikaner in a Conference held at Bikaner. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, as the Chancellor, declared his conviction in February 1929 on the floor of the Chamber that federation would be the best arrangement which could be visualized for the future of India.31 Though conscious of them, yet disregarding numerous difficulties in forging a federal union, the Indian Princes increasingly favoured it. Any type of Federation which would not affect their internal sovereignty seemed to them 'a welcome refuge from the dictation of the Political Department.'32 The Maharaja

29. _Proceedings of the Standing Committees from 1926-31_, available at PSA.
30. B.S. Puttaswamy, _Should the Indian States enter the Federation?_ (Mysore, 1935), p. 94.
31. B/2 II (A) 12, 1929, p. 23.
in a banquet speech at Patiala also lent strength to these views by quoting R. Kipling:33

   Daughter am I in my Mother's house
   But mistress in my own.

After the First Round Table Conference, there was dissatisfaction among the Princes with the style of functioning the Maharaja of Patiala. The smaller States particularly were critical that the Chancellor was lukewarm working for safeguarding their interests opinion grew among them that their interests be endangered if the Maharaja remained the Chancellor.34 They, therefore, deserted him and elected the Nawab of Bhopal as the Chancellor. The latter was considered to be a supporter of the cause of the smaller States.35

The Election of the Maharaja of Bhopal as Chancellor virtually divided the Princes into two groups—that of Bikaner and Bhopal on one side and Patiala and Dholpur on the other side.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala in June 1931 released a note on 'Federation and the Indian States.'36 He said in it that no federation could ever come into existence without the rights of the federating units being first precisely known. The rights of the Princes were founded on Treaties, Rights and Sanads and their relationship with the Crown was an ascertainable one. He observed that federation would also endanger the separate existence and independence of the smaller States, as it could not consist of such a vast number of States as it sun-

its.37 Finally he said that he was of firm conviction that "this new found faith in a fangled federation was at best an empty dream and a delusion pregnant with the greatest dangers to the very existence of the States."

The Maharaja gave his own scheme, in which he advocated a constitution which would make possible a union of the Indian States alone in direct relationship with the Crown. The nucleus of such a union already existed in the Chamber of Princes.38

This new scheme caused a sensation. The Maharaja of Bikaner

33. Panikkar, op. cit., p. 84.
34. B/2 IV (A) 11, 1931, p. 7.
37. Ibid., p. 18.
38. Ibid., p. 19.
described it as ‘Patiala’s Electioneering gesture.’ British Press also was critical of it. The New Statesman remarked, “The outburst of Patiala must be taken seriously but his manifesto is an absurd document and the real reasons are different from those that he avows.” On 9th and 10th August 1931 the Rulers of Patiala and Dholpur met other Princes in Bombay and gave a new scheme known as ‘Patiala-Dholpur Scheme.’ It said that the States would first form a separate confederation of their own having as its Central Organisation the Chamber of Princes, later on, it would federate with British India.

This new scheme brought the two warring groups to the forefront—the Pro-Federationists led by rulers of Bhopal and Bikaner who favoured federation directly and the Confederationalists led by the Rulers of Patiala and Dholpur, who favoured federation with British India through a confederation of Indian States.

The breach in the ranks of the Princes was, however, short-lived. With the services of Jam Sahib of Nawanagar as peace-maker, the two actions met on 11 March 1932 in Delhi. A representative committee of the ministers was constituted to advice the Princes on the constitutional problems facing them. Thus the unity among the leading Princes on the question of federation was finally achieved. The Maharaja of Patiala in the informal meeting of the Princes held on 25 March 1932 remarked:

“Luckily the foundations of the much needed understanding and unity have been substantially laid, and we meet today not as partisans, but as a band of united workers and brothers to the well being of our order and of the States.”

The Maharaja of Patiala got re-elected as Chancellor of the Chamber in 1933. The problems that the Chancellor faced were not easy ones. During this period, the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee required a close scrutiny. A special Committee of Rulers and Ministers was constituted to examine the report thoroughly.

Before the legal and administrative scrutiny of the report has

40. B/30, IV (B) 17, 1931, p. 148.
41. Ibid., p. 149.
42. B/31, IV (B) 21, 1931, p. 23.
43. B/29, IV (B) 7, 1932, p. 7.
44. Panikkar, op. cit., p. 112.
been completed, the Chamber held its annual session from 21 to 24 January 1935. To reaffirm its reservations regarding federation, several resolutions were adopted by the Chamber.

After the passage of the Government of India Act, 1935, the activities of the Chamber of Princes went into doldrums. The smaller States were gaining strength in the Standing Committee. They accused the Rulers of Bhopal, Bikaner and Patiala for not having given due weightage to their interests during the Round Table Conferences. Many of the members of the Standing Committee submitted, their resignations. Infact, it can be said that the process of the liquidation of the Chamber had started. This precipitated Maharaja Bhipinder Singh’s resignation out of disgust and despair, in 1936. But he kept himself engaged in canvassing support for getting suitable amendments of the Government of India Bill of 1935 in favour of the Princes. His sincerity to the Prince’s cause, once more earned him another chance of becoming Chancellor of the Chamber in the session of January 1937, for the 10th time. Although the new Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, was very eager to inaugurate the federation during his time, yet the scheme of federation remained a distant goal. The great exponent of the rights of the Princes, the Maharaja of Patiala, died early in February 1938. His death, in a way, closed the chapter of federation as far as the Princes were concerned. Later on, the Second World War gave a final blow to the idea of federation for the time being.

The Princes mourned the death of the Chancellor by paying him rich tributes. Undoubtedly, he was a far-sighted leader of the Principly India. His tennture of Chancellorship would stand out as periods of great achievements for the Chamber.

The next session of the Chamber of Princes took place in 1939 in Delhi. It was mostly devoted to the reorganisation of the Chamber. The new Maharaja of Patiala, Yadavindra Singh, was elected as the member of the Standing Committee. Thus the association of the Patiala State continued with the Chamber till its dissolution.

Yadavindra Singh was chosen to second the resolution on the

45. For the first time in the history of the Chamber of Princes, the session had to be adjourned for lack of quorum. The hectic efforts, of Maharaja of Patiala brought the requisite strength of quorum. B/3, IV (C) 1935, p. 3.
47. FPD, 1937, file No. 143-P.
Second World War in the Chamber’s session of 1940 which condemned the Nazi rulers of Germany. 49

Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in India on 22 March 1942, to break the constitutional stalemate which had come into existence due to the attitude of the political parties in India, particularly in the Indian National Congress. He gave an outline of his proposals to the press on 29 March. While releasing the proposals, he made it clear that they were mere proposals. 50 On 2 April 1942, he met the Indian States delegation of the Princes of which the Maharaja of Patiala was a prominent member. The Rulers raised several points for elucidation. 51 Cripps suggested to them that the first step for the States should be to get into federal relations amongst themselves. 52 But unfortunately for the Princes neither the Cripps Mission achieved any substantial success nor could the promises made to the Princes be fulfilled.

A delegation of the Princes by the Chancellor met the Viceroy on 18 September 1944. Matters of vital importance like treaty rights post-war development, industrial policy, attachment scheme, etc., were discussed. 53 Yadavindra Singh, who was one of the members, laid stress on the question of ‘Joint Services for the State Forces.’ The friends showed intention of passing a resolution of political nature in the coming session of the Chamber. A copy of the proposed resolution was given to the Secretary of the Viceroy. The Viceroy did not give approval to the resolution being moved in the Chamber. This led to the members of the Standing Committee submitting their resignations. On 4 December 1944, the Rulers before submitting resignations formed a Special Committee in which the Maharaja of Patiala figured prominent. 54 The Committee held various meetings to discuss the constitutional crisis through which the Chamber was passing. The crisis passed away peacefully with the good offices of the Nawab of Bhopal as mediator. The members of the Standing Committee withdrew their resignations and the Chamber started fun-

49. B/24, III (B) 3, 1942, p. 17.
52. FPD, political, Secret, 1942, file No. 192.
53. B/4, Chamber 78 (1945), p. 75.
54. B/81, V (d) 462, 1944, p. 132.
tioning normally.  

On 19 February 1946, Atlee announced the decision of the British Cabinet to send three Cabinet ministers to India for determining the procedure of framing a new constitution for India. The mission was also to meet some of the Princes. A delegation of the Princes with Yadavindra Singh, met the Cabinet Mission on 2 April 1946. It explained to them that the States wished to retain the maximum degree of sovereignty. After the Cabinet Mission Award, the Princes and the British India formed Negotiating Committees, which held their meeting on 8 February 1947 in Delhi. Each side adhered to its own view-point. This resulted in a deadlock. At this juncture, Yadavindra Singh who was now the Pro-chancellor of the Chamber played a vital role. His intervention to seek certain clarifications from Jawahar Lal Nehru eased the situation and the stalemate ended.

On 20 February 1947, Atlee announced in the British Parliament that Britain would transfer power to India by 20 June 1948. The appointment of Lord Mountbatten as Viceroy replacing Lord Wavell was also simultaneously announced and he joined on 22 March 1947. There arose a difference of opinion between the States Negotiating Committee and its counterpart, the British India Committee on the allocation of seats to the States. The Chancellor, Nawab of Bhopal, took the stand that before arriving at a decision, it would be necessary to call a conference of the Rulers. But his approach in the memorandum drawn up for the conference and sent to the Rulers was unacceptable to the Maharajas of Bikaner and Patiala. They disapproved of the dilatory tactics. Patiala deprecated Bhopal’s policy of ‘sitting on the fences.’ The Maharaja of Patiala and Bikaner favoured the idea of the States entering the Constituent Assembly and its committees. A face-saving compromise, however, was arrived at in the meeting of Rulers and Ministers of the states on 2 April 1947. A redrafted resolution by the Maharaja of Gwalior was adopted. It permitted freedom to the members of the Chamber to enter the Constituent Assembly at any stage they might deem fit. In the meantime the Maharaja of Patiala got elected two representatives for the Constituent Assembly from the

55. Ibid., p. 149.
57. Menon, op. cit., p. 72.
58. B/85 VII (a) 2, 1946, pp. 63-69. This group was called as ‘Progressive group.’
Electoral College of his State. Baroda had already taken the lead. With the exception of only a few, all fell in line.

Mountbatten, the new Viceroy, announced on 3 June 1947, the decision of His Majesty's Government as to the method by which the power would be transferred from the British to the Indian hands. He declared that the British would relinquish power to the two Governments, India and Pakistan, on the basis of 'Dominion Status.' Regarding the States, he said that the Cabinet Mission's Memorandum would remain unchanged.

With the announcement of this plan, the Nawab of Bhopal submitted his resignation. The Maharaja of Patiala, took over the Chancellorship. It was decided in a meeting of the Standing Committee that since the dissolution of the Chamber would take time, the approval of its winding up by its members might be taken. Quite a number of Rulers were in favour of making another effective organisation in case the Chamber was dissolved legally. The Rulers of Bikaner and Patiala were of the firm view that it was necessary to keep the Chamber alive till the transfer of power had taken place.

A special session of the Chamber of Princes was convened on 25 July 1947. It was addressed for the last time by the Viceroy. He advised the Rulers to accede to the respective dominion before 15 August 1947.

The Viceroy gave a luncheon party to the Rulers and their Ministers on 1 August 1947. He used the occasion to make it clear to them that the Government of India had decided that the Standstill agreements would be entered into only with those Rulers who executed the Instruments of Accession. Exception was made in the case of Hyderabad alone due to its special circumstances and a Standstill Agreement was signed with it without its signing the Instrument of Accession. All the States signed the Instruments of Accession; Kashmir which wavered and delayed decision had to bear the brunt of invasion by the tribesmen abetted by Pakistan to be persuaded to sign accession to India.

Yadavindra Singh of Patiala played a vital role when the destiny

61. B/82, V (D) 498, 1948.
of the country was being decided at that juncture. He held meeting, with Jawahar Lal and Sardar Patel. The rustic sincerity of the latter won him over for the Indian nationalist cause. He rendered a yeoman's service at resisting and check-mating the designs and machination of the alliance between Bhopal and Corfield, Political Adviser to the Government of India, for the third force, the 'Stateistan'. Realising that his game was over, the Nawab of Bhopal quietly signed the Instrument of Accession with India with request that it be announced after 25 August 1947.

With the Princes acceding to one or the other dominion, the raison d'être of the Chamber ceased to exist. Its dissolution coincided with the independence of the country on 15 August 1947. The MahaharaJay of Patiala, as its last Chancellor, had to preside over the winding up of its affairs which took sometime.
Murder of Sir Michael Francis O’Dwyer and Trial of Udham Singh

Sikander Singh*

Our freedom struggle is a saga of innumerable sacrifices, trials, tribulations and heroic deeds of revolutionaries. Udham Singh belongs to that galaxy of young men whose patriotism is stamped on the pages of the history of our freedom movement. His indomitable spirit avenged the brutal act of Sir Michael O’Dwyer by shooting him down in London and then smilingly kissing the gallows. His sacrifice inspired thousands of freedom lovers to sacrifice their lives for their motherland. His name will always be remembered with a sense of great pride and gratitude.

Born on 26 December 1903 at Sunam (Sangrur District of Punjab), Udham Singh lost his parents when he was hardly four years of age and was admitted in the Khalsa Central Orphanage, Amritsar.

The massacre at Jallianwala Bagh was a turning point in Udham Singh’s life. A blooming youth of sixteen years at that time, he had personally witnessed all the blood-shed of Jallianwala Bagh because on the day of tragedy he had gone there to serve water to the people gathered there. Next day he carried the dead bodies of the victims of Jallianwala Bagh in the cart of orphanage house to the burial ground. He was deeply touched to see the sufferings of his innocent countrymen under the Martial Law. A true patriot and worthy son of Mother

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*Lecturer in History, Govt. Kirti College, Nail-Patran (Patiala).

1. 26 December 1899 is the date of birth given by Fauja Singh, Gurmukh Singh Musafir and Suba Singh. However, according to the report of the prosecution, Udham Singh was 37 years old in April 1940.

2. ‘Trial of Udham Singh,’ Accession 292, p. 26 (National Archives of India, New Delhi).

3. Register of Admission (Khalsa Central Orphanage, Amritsar), Sr. Nos. 121-22, p. 113.

4. Interview by the writer with Dr Bhajan Singh Kamboj at Sunam on 11 December 1984.


India, Udham Singh decided to avenge\(^7\) this great national insult at any cost.

After passing his Matriculation Examination Udham Singh left the orphanage\(^8\) and visited various places in the Punjab to meet revolutionaries. In 1923 he set up a painting shop at Ghanta Ghar Chowk in Amritsar which had a sign board reading as ‘Ram Mohammed Singh Azad.’\(^9\) During this time, he came into contact with Bhagat Singh, Mota Singh, Lala Lajpat Rai, Ajit Singh and many other freedom fighters.\(^10\) He developed intimate contact with these great leaders and drew considerable inspiration from them.

At the behest of some revolutionaries Udham Singh went to America in 1924 to collect money and weapons for the cause of the motherland.\(^11\) There he came in contact with a German lady who helped him smuggle guns and ammunition to India. Udham Singh visited Amritsar again in 1927. He was arrested under the Arms Act.\(^12\) For the possession of illicit firearms he was hauled up to face trial before a local Magistrate. The A.D.M.\(^13\) awarded Udham Singh sentence of five years rigorous imprisonment.

Udham Singh was released from jail in 1933. He wanted to leave India to fulfil his vow. He managed to dodge the police and slipped out of India. He visited Russia, Egypt, France, Ethiopia, Germany and ultimately reached London and joined an engineering course.\(^14\) But his real object was different.

The one place in London where he could meet a large number of his countrymen was the Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha, 79 Sinclair Road, in Shepherds Bush. He was seen frequently visiting that place. He wore smart European suits. He was able to pick up acquaintances
with the Indian immigrants who normally addressed him as Bawa. Udham Singh out of courtesy and regards as a token of his vast erudition and nationalism.

One person who was impressed by him was Shiv Singh Johal, Secretary of the Khalsa Jatha and an official at the Gurdwara. In Udham Singh he discovered a person totally different from all others he had known. Sometimes Udham Singh came and had a meal with Shiv Singh Johal. One evening, they were talking of India's plight and Johal quoted a couplet from Bismil. Johal missed a line. Udham Singh promptly supplied it. From that moment Johal took him to his heart and told him, "Bawa, whatever you may be upto, this house is always yours." In fact he was consumed with a certain passion and confided to Shiv Singh that he was planning 'to do something.' When nothing happened for several months, Shiv Singh remarked during one of their meetings that Udham Singh was a 'mere talker.' Udham Singh replied that he wanted to get Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Lord Zetland together. Soon afterwards he ceased going to the Gurdwara and his visits to Shiv Singh's place first became less frequent and then rare. In the beginning of 1940 he had stopped seeing his friend.

On Tuesday, 12 March 1940, he surprisingly involved his friends to join him for a traditional Punjab meal. He seemed high-spirited and happy, almost jubilant, and towards the end he ordered ladoos, which in the Punjab is regarded as a happy augury of success for a proposed venture. Udham Singh said he wanted to fill himself up with them. When the time came for him to leave he turned to his friends and announced that the next day London would witness a marval: 'The British Empire will be shaken to its foundations.'

Just before unexpected farwell party he had been to the Indian Office where he had seen a poster advertising a joint meeting of the East India Association and the Royal Central Asian Society at Caxton Hall. Listed among the speakers were Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, Sir Louis Dane, former Under Secretary to the Governor of the Punjab, and Lord Lamington, former

15. Udham Singh nick named as Bawa Sahib out of reverence and regard because he was so indifferent to the ambitions and successes of this world.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
Governor of Bombay (1903-07). Revenge on a scale never envisaged in his wildest dreams was within his grasp.

Udham Singh decided to go to this meeting. It started at 3.00 p.m. In the Tudor Room on March 13, 1940. The meeting was well attended, probably 150 to 170 people were present, many of whom had to stand, thoroughly enjoyed a lecture on Afghanistan given by Brigadier General Sir Percy Sykes. No one had paid any attention to the well-dressed Indian in a blue pin-stripe suit, red tie, who had pushed his way to the front at the start of the meeting and leaned nonchalantly against the wall near the first row of seats. Seated alongside each other were Sir Michael O'Dwyer (75) who had made a witty introductory speech, which was warmly received ("The substantial unanimity of the Moslem world in support of the allied cause in the war was emphasized"). Sir Louis Dane (84) and Lord Lamington. Sir Percy was still on the platform with Lord Zetland (63). It was 4.30 in the afternoon when the meeting was over.21

The audience had risen and were pushing their seats back. Sir Michael was standing shaking hands with the distinguished guests when the Indian moved away from the wall and walked slowly towards the press table at the foot of the platform. Suddenly he drew a pistol from his jacket pocket and fired six shots in rapid succession. The first two fired from a distance of nine inches, hit Sir Michael and he dropped on the floor. Lord Zetland toppled from his chair, wounded in the ribs. Another bullet shattered the right hand of Lord Lamington; Sir Louis Dane was hit in the arm. Bullets narrowly missed Sir Percy Sykes and Sir Frank Brown, Secretary of the East India Association. Sir Percy, who thought it was a bomb outrage, dropped from the platform and lay on the floor.22 His revolver was emptied of all its six bullets. A person named Claud Whyndham Harry Riches and Captain Binstead caught hold of him and his revolver was handed over to the police.23

20. 'Trial of Udham Singh,' Accession 292, p. 39 (NAI). According to the statement made by Udham Singh, he had gone to see Sir Hasan Suhrawardy at the India Office in connection with his passport but did not see him. Instead, he saw a notice about the meeting in the Caxton Hall and decided to protest with revolver shots.
22. Ibid.
The officer on duty at the Caxton Hall on March 13 was Robert William Stevens, an Inspector of the Metropolitan Special Constabulary. He took charge of Udham Singh and handed him over to a sergeant surnamed McWilliam. Udham Singh was found to possess 17 rounds of ammunition in the right pocket of his jacket, 8 similar rounds in the right pocket of his trousers and a cobbler’s knife in the pocket of his overcoat.  

Surprisingly, there was no panic in the room. Someone shouted, ‘Bring the doctor.’ But there was no need to summon the former as there were several doctors in the audience. Doctor Grace Mackinnon, a retired missionary, who had spent many years in India, knelt beside Sir Michael and realized he had died instantaneously. Colonel D H. Reinhold, who had retired from the Indian Medical Service, applied a tourniquet to Lord Lamington’s injured wrist. Doctor M.R. Lawrence, brother of ‘Lawrence of Arabia,’ also helped the wounded. Within minutes a large force of policemen arrived and cordoned the building. Close being was a team of Murder Squad Detectives.  

The Tudor Room was sealed off, all exists locked and no one was allowed to leave or use the telephone. Even office staff and people employed in the kitchen and catering departments were ordered to remain behind.  

The Indian killer meanwhile was sitting quietly in a seat of few feet away from the corpse of Sir Michael O’Dwyer. Next to him sat Inspector William Steven. As order was restored, the member of the audience were taken to various rooms where teams of plain clothes officers took down their statements, a task that took more than three hours.  

A friend of Sir Michael telephoned at his flat in Prince of Wales Terrace, Kensington, but his wife was out and the news was relayed to the maid. In the nine-roomed flat decorated with Indian weapons and mementoes the table was laid for tea. Sir Michael’s last words to his wife were, “I will back for tea at 5 O’clock.” When Lady O’Dwyer returned home the maid burst into tears and said that there had been a bad accident. Lady O’Dwyer telephoned her daughter

24. Ibid., p. 19.  
25. Ibid., p. 20.  
27. Ibid.  
28. Ibid.
and then called for a taxi and drove straight to Caxton Hall. When Detective Inspector Richard Deighton arrived he immediately took charge of the investigation and cautioned him slowly and clearly: “You will be detained pending further enquiries.” The gunman replied, “It is no use, it is all over.” Then, nodding in the direction of O'Dwyer's body about twelve feet away, he said: “It is there.”

Udham Singh who gave his name as Mohommed Singh Azad, was then taken into a small room adjoining the hall where the latter was searched and Sergeant Jones took possession of 1940 diary on the page headed ‘Cash Account, Dec. 1940, there was written “Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Sunny Bank, Thurlestone, S. Devon.” At this stage, Inspector Deighton put four empty cartridge cases on the table. The prisoner said, “No, no, all the lot six,” and he held up six of his fingers. A few minutes later the prisoner said, “I do not care, I do not mind dying. What is the use of waiting till you get old? That is no good. You want to die when you are young. That is good, that is what I am doing. I am dying for my country.”

The precautions taken by the British India Government did not give the sort of publicity he deserved. On April 2, the Director of Intelligence Bureau of India had indicated that Udham Singh had the intention to pose as a martyr and play to the gallery by making himself out to be a hero in the cause of Indian freedom,” special precautions had been taken in London to ensure that the press did not give ‘undue prominence’ to Udham Singh’s heroics; and it was suggested that the Director General of Information in India should warn the press to be on their guard and “to deny Udham Singh the publicity which he is seeking.” By April 18, the Secretary of State for India was in a position to write to the Governor General

30. Ibid. The same evening Richard Deighton went with Inspector Whitehead to 8, Mornington Terrace, Regents Park, the prisoner's address. There they found 1939 diary. There, under each account of 1939, they found the same name and address Sir M. O' Dwyer Sunny Bank, Thurlestone, Devon. This name and address also appears under the date, June 13, 1939.  

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regarding Udham Singh’s trial: “Arrangements have been made with Reuter’s and we will do what may be possible in conjunction with censorship Bureau here in regard to message through other channels. As, however, we can give no guarantee it is presumed that careful censorship will be exercised at your end in relation to messages from correspondents of Indian newspapers.” Furthermore, it was ensured that the court was not used ‘as a political platform’ by Udham Singh. So it was arranged that there would be a minimum of press coverage. The prosecuting counsel, Mr. G.B. McClure, took only half an hour to open his case. Several people gave evidence of what they had seen at the meeting and various police officers repeated the statements that Udham Singh had made immediately after the shooting and later at Cannon Row Police Station.

He went on a hunger strike that lasted forty-two days since his arrest, and he had to be forcibly fed. He was so ill due to hunger strike. The hunger strike delayed his trial and it was not until 4 June that he stood in the dock at the Old Bailey’s Number one court. He looked a pathetic, almost tragic figure; the once smartly fitting blue pin-stripe suit hung shapelessly from his shrunken frame; he had lost five stone in weight and was almost bald. Before justice Atkinson, he said nothing more than: “I plead not guilty and I reserve my defence.” He was defended by John Hutchinson and R.E. Seaton as well as by Krishna Menon.

When Mr. Justice Atkinson at the Central Criminal Court asked him if he had anything to say before sentence was passed, Udham Singh held a whispered conversation with one of the wardens, then produced a sheaf of papers, put on his spectacles and began to read. The judge warned him to confine his remarks as to why he should not be sentenced to death:

I don’t care about the sentence of death, he shouted from the dock. It is not worrying me. I am dying for a purpose.

33. Telegram from Secretary of State for India (London) to Governor General (Home Department), New Delhi, No. 1827, 18 April 1940. *Ibid.*
34. Telegram from Secretary of State for India (London) to Governor General (Home Department), New Delhi, No. 1846. *Ibid.*
Despite the Judge’s warning he continued to read aloud in a highly excited voice for some twenty minutes or more: “I did it, he shouted, because I had a grudge against him. He deserved it. He was the culprit, he wanted to crush the spirit of my people, so I have crushed him. For full 21 years I have been trying to wreak vengeance. I am happy that I have done the job. I am not scared of death. I am dying for my country. I have seen my people starving in India under the British rule. I have protested against this. It was my duty. What greater honour could be bestowed on me than death for the sake of my motherland.”

Mr. Justice Atkinson sentenced him to death. An appeal was lodged on his behalf and the same was dismissed. Ultimately Udham Singh went to the gallows on 31 July 1940 at Pentonville Prison in London.
Emergence of Master Tara Singh as the Supreme Leader of the Sikhs

RANBIR SINGH*

Master Tara Singh had emerged as the supreme leader of the Sikh community in 1930's. This leads us to the question: what were the factors and forces that enabled him to acquire that position?

In this context, the following explanations may be advanced by way of tentative hypothesis: Firstly, this may be attributed to the emergence of a new middle class of educated Sikhs in the Punjab from the Sikh aristocracy and merchant castes of the Khatris and Aroras in the last quarter of 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century. As the Sikh aristocracy and urban-based merchant castes amongst the Sikhs had the requisite financial resources, they were the first to avail of the educational opportunities provided by the creation of a modern system of education in the Punjab after its annexation by the British. This class was able to acquire an important position in the province as it not only provided recruits for petty administrative posts in the government but had also entered the modern professions of legal practice and teaching. The middle class also became the articulators of the interests of all the religious communities (Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs) in the Punjab and assured the role of leadership in their respective communities. Since Master Tara Singh belonged to this class, he was able to emerge as a leader of the Sikh community. Secondly, the rise of Master Tara Singh could be traced to the rise of economic power of moneylenders in

*Reader, Department of Political Science, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.
2. For the emergence of this middle class, refer to K.L. Tuteja, Sikh Politics, Kurukshetra, 1984, p. 5. Also refer to Sukhdev Singh Sohal, "The Middle Classes and Early Roots of Communalism in the Punjab (1849-1909); Punjab Journal of Politics, Vol. 9, No. 2, July-December 1985, pp. 73-86.
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Punjab as a result of increasing rural indebtedness. Despite the myth of prosperity of the Punjab peasantry after the dawn of the British raj as a result of extension of facilities for irrigation and establishment of canal colonies, recruitment of a large number of Sikh peasants in the army and in their immigration in sizeable strength to foreign countries in view of better avenues of employment, rural indebtedness went on mounting. They enabled the moneylenders to acquire considerable wealth. This class of moneylenders had, besides its dominance in towns, a great hold over the peasants who were dependent on this class as debtors. It was the backing of this class among the Sikhs which enabled Master Tara Singh to achieve a powerful position in Sikh politics.

Thirdly, the ascendance of Master Tara Singh in Sikh politics may also be ascribed to the rise of a powerful class of traders and grain merchants in the urban areas of the Punjab. The construction of railways, the growth of road transport, the building of grain markets and the process of urbanisation contributed to the emergence of this class. The increase in agricultural production as a result of extension of irrigation facilities by repairing the existing canals and the construction of new perennial canals, and the creation of canal colonies also

7. For the details on the recruitment of Sikhs in Army, see, K.L. Tuteja, op. cit., p. 15.
10. In 1881 there were about 73,000 Sikh traders in the province. Refer to Satya M. Rai, op. cit., p. 24.
helped the growth of a new class of businessmen, traders and grain merchants. This class not only had an important position in urban areas but also exercised influence over rural society because of their dealings with them in trade and business. As Master Tara Singh was the representative of interests of this class, the latter proved very useful in helping him to acquire the position of supremacy in Sikh politics.

Fourthly, the rise of Master Tara Singh's dominance in Sikh politics may also be explained in relation to rise of Khatris in Punjab. They were a well-educated and a highly intelligent caste. They not only dominated government services but also occupied prominent position in modern professions. Besides they controlled business, trade and commerce. Moreover, many of them were money lenders. Furthermore, some of them had also entered the field of industry. In fact in the urban areas of western and central Punjab, Khatris had not only a higher social status than other merchant castes like Aroras and Aggarwals but also had a higher social status than Brahmins. Sikh Khatris had a special position as the Sikh Gurus belonged to this caste. Since Master Tara Singh hailed from this socially and economically powerful caste, he could utilise this factor for gaining influence on the Sikh community.

Fifthly, relatively homogeneous character of Sikh community

13. Master Tara Singh belonged to Khatri caste which was one of the merchant castes. See Paul Wallace, "Religious and Ethnic Mobilization, and Dominance Pattern in Punjab, a paper presented at the workshop on 'Status, Class, Ethnicity and Dominance Patterns of Political Economic Change in Modern India,' held from August 19-26, 1983 at India International Centre, New Delhi, p. 10.
15. Ibid., p. 7.
18. The Sikh Gurus were from Bedi and Sodhi subcastes of Khatris. See Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p. 136.
19. As already pointed out, Master Tara Singh belonged to Malhotra subcaste of Khatris.
owing to its minority character also proved helpful to Master Tara Singh. Although Sikh community was stratified in different castes on social and ritual basis and had become differentiated into various classes on economic basis as well, the fear psychosis and identity crisis that had gripped the community had created a sense of solidarity in the community. Besides, the emphasis in the Sikh community on equality of all the castes institutionalised itself in the concepts of 'Panth', 'Sangat', 'Langer', and 'Kar Seva'. This factor enabled Master Tara Singh to mobilise support from all castes and classes within Sikh community.

Sixthly, Master Tara Singh was able to attain supremacy in Sikh politics by using religious idiom of politics which had a greater appeal for Sikhs than for other religious communities in view of the fact that the Sikh religion did not separate secular authority Miri and religious authority Piri. Master Tara Singh utilized the belief of Sikhs in 'Raj Karega Khalsa,' 'Raj Bina Na Dharam Bachat Hai' and that they were destined to rule over the Punjab. The historical memories of the rule of Ranjit Singh in Punjab and their belief that Sikhs are the natural rulers of Punjab also enabled Master Tara Singh to successfully use the religious idiom for mobilising political support of Sikh community. The religion based political mobilisation of Sikhs by

21. The Sikhs were a small community with 13% population in the province. They feared Muslim domination as the Muslims had been given majority under the scheme of communal representation. The historical memories of persecution during Mughal period had also contributed to these fears.
23. For the role of Singh Sabha and Social reform in creating solidarity, see Khushwant Singh, op. cit., pp. 136-49.
27. Ibid.
Guru Singh Sabha Movement\textsuperscript{28} and Chief Khalsa Diwan\textsuperscript{29} in the late 19th century and with early phase of 20th century and large scale involvement of Sikh masses by Akalis in Gurdwara Movement also proved useful to Master Tara Singh who was adopt in the use of religious idiom. The communally surcharged atmosphere of Punjab as a result of the activities of Christian Missionaries, Arya Samaj and various Anjumans of Muslims\textsuperscript{30} and religion based mobilisation of political support by the leaders of the Unionist Party, Muslim League, Hindu Maha Sabha, Sikh Central League, Akali Dal and Congress had created a situation in which leaders like Master Tara Singh could achieve greater success than the leaders using the secular idiom.\textsuperscript{31}

Seventhly, the emergence of Master Tara Singh's leadership could also be ascribed to the need for a new leadership for leading Sikh during the Gurdwara Movement.\textsuperscript{28} Before this movement, the Sikh community needed moderate leadership capable of using constitutional methods for getting concessions from the British. It was this type of leadership consisting of persons like Sunder Singh Majithia,\textsuperscript{32} who could assure the government of the loyalty of Sikhs and could get favours in the form of rewards. Guru Singh Sabha Movement and Chief Khalsa Diwan were dominated by such leaders.\textsuperscript{33} The Gurdwara Movement needed leaders like Master Tara Singh\textsuperscript{34} and Baba Kharak Singh\textsuperscript{35} who had the courage of leading agitations against the British and who had faith in passive resistance and relied upon the strength the support of masses instead of patronage of the British. Conse-


\textsuperscript{29} For details, see Satya M. Rai, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 20-46.


\textsuperscript{32} For the background of Sunder Singh Majithia, refer to Khushwant Singh, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 145.

\textsuperscript{33} For leadership of Guru Singh Sabha Movement and Chief Khalsa Diwan, refer to Khushwant Singh, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 136-38 and K.L. Tuteja, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 4-13.

\textsuperscript{34} For the role of Master Tara Singh in Gurdwara Movement refer to K.L. Tuteja, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 36, 47, 65, 72, 91-92, 111, and 123. Also see Khushwant Singh, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 203, 209 and 212.
quently, the old leadership from the landed gentry and the Sikh aristocracy lost relevance at the juncture and a new leadership from the middle class emerged to lead the Sikh community in its struggle for the liberation of Gurdwaras from the control of corrupt 'Mahants' backed by the British.

Eighthly, the success of Master Tara Singh in emerging as a powerful leader of the Sikh community could also be made possible by his strategy of combining the movement of Sikhs for the liberation of Gurdwaras and his goal of protecting and promoting the interests of the Sikh community with the struggle against British imperialism. This enabled him to mobilise the support of Sikh peasantry which had started getting alienated from the British due to the impact of the peasant movement in the colonies. Gadar Movement, economic difficulties created during the war, the repercussions of the war including the great depression, the problem of rehabilitation of the demobilised soldiers after the war and the new political awakening brought about by these soldiers who had been exposed to modernisation during the war due to their deployment in different parts of the world.

37. For the style and idiom of old leadership, see Surjit Singh Narang, op. cit., pp. 67-81; K.L. Tuteja, op. cit., pp. 7-19 end 35-36.
38. It has also been alleged that the Mahants had backing of Hindus. Refer to Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p. 193.
39. According to a study of Sikh politics although the distinct identity of the Gurdwara Movement was maintained and it did not become a part of Non-Cooperation Movement launched by the Congress, and services rendered by the Sikhs under the leadership of Baba Kharak Singh and Master Tara Singh to the Non-Cooperation Movement were recognised by Congress leaders. Akalis also joined the boycott of Simon Commission. Moreover, under the guidance of Master Tara Singh, the Shiromani Akali Dal resolved to support the Civil Disobedience Movement and placed at the disposal of Gandhi services of 5000 Akalis Master Tara Singh was taken as a member of 'War Council' formed by the Punjab Province Congress Committee to coordinate the Civil Disobedience Movement in Punjab. On Dr Kitchlew’s arrest, Master Tara Singh was appointed dictator of this body. While leading an Akali Jatha to help the Pathan Satyagrahis at Peshawar, he was also arrested. Out of 7000 satyagrahis who convicted in Punjab, there were 3000 Sikhs.” See K.L. Tuteja, op. cit., pp. 48, 149-150.

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This also enabled Master Tara Singh to enlist the support of Indian National Congress for the struggle of Sikhs and his ascendency in the Sikh politics.

Ninethly, the emergence of Master Tara Singh as the dominant leader of the Sikh community could be attributed to the fact that despite combining the struggle of the Sikh community with the struggle for national liberation, he gave primacy and priority to the cause of ‘Panth.’ He did not hesitate to reject the Nehru Report as to had failed to meet the demand of Sikhs for 30 percent representation in Punjab Legislative Council in the case of retention of communal representation.41

Tenthly, the supremacy of Master Tara Singh in Sikh politics was also largely made possible by his success in acquiring control over Shiromani Akali Dal.42 This enabled him to extend his support base amongst Sikh masses who regarded it as the liberator of Gurdwaras. The control over Shiromani Akali Dal provided Master Tara Singh with the organisational structure for institutionalising his support base.

Eleventhly, the emergence of Master Tara Singh as the supreme leader in Sikh politics may be attributed to his success in acquiring control over the S.G.P.C.43 This provided him enormous financial resources and patronage for consolidating his position.44 It also put at his command an effective media for political communication which

41. Master Tara Singh and other Akali leaders rejected this report. They were of the view that if communal representation was to be given to any minority in any other province, the same concession should be given to Sikh community in Punjab. They apprehended that recommendations of Nehru Report would lead to dominance of Muslims and subordination of Sikhs and Hindus in view of Muslim majority in the province. See, K.L. Tuteja, op. cit., p. 145.


43. Master Tara Singh was elected as President of the S.G.P.C. in 1930. In fact the S.G.P.C remained under the control of the group led by Master Tara Singh for more than 3 decades since its inception in 1925 Refer to Fauja Singh, op. cit., p. 232 and Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p. 215.

44. According to a leading scholar, the income of the S. G. P. C. from Gurudwaras was over ten lacs of rupees per year in 1925, see Khushwant Singh, op. cit. p. 214.
EMERGENCE OF MASTER TARA SINGH AS THE SUPREME LEADER OF SIKHS

he could use for maintaining and extending his support structure. Since the S.G.P.C. was considered as the religious parliament of the Sikh community, the dominance over it gave legitimacy to his authority as the chief representative of the Sikh community.

Last but not the least, Master Tara Singh was able to acquire supremacy in Sikh politics with the help of charisma of his personality. He had succeeded in acquiring the image of a hero in the eyes of Sikh masses by his gallant struggle during Gurdwara Movement and the struggle for national liberation. He had been able to project himself as a selfless, honest and an incorruptible leader who has not interested in usurping power but was dedicated to the cause of his community.

45. 'The S.G.P.C.' patronage included appointment of hundred of 'grunthis,' sevadars, teachers and professors for schools and Colleges which were controlled by the S.G.P.C. Ibid, p. 215.
46. Ibid., p. 214.
47. According to an important scholar on Punjab politics, the S'G.P.C. provides a structure for the legitimization of leadership among the Sikh community. Refer to Paul Wallace, op. cit., p. 13.
48. "Master Tara Singh was arrested thrice during the Gurdwara Movement. On the third occasion he was charged with sedition along with other Akalis and tried for three long years. After the passage of the, Sikh Gurdwaras Act 1925, he was offered release on condition but he outrightly rejected the offer. After some time the Government had to release him unconditionally." See Fauja Singh, Op. cit., p. 231.
49. He took active part in the boycott of Simon Commission and participated in Civil Disobedience Movement, refer to Ibid., p. 231.
50. Ibid., p. 223.
Punjabi Women’s Role in the Civil Disobedience Movement

Meena Sharma*

The appointment of the Statutory Commission in 1927 proved to be a challenge for the nationalist Indians on account of its all-white composition. The Indian National Congress challenged its racial bias. Some important consequences followed. Ultimately, at its session held at Lahore on 31 December 1929 under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian National Congress declared complete Independence as the national goal; in its persuasion 26 January was to be observed as the Independence day every year. The declaration of Independence as adopted at the session emphasized: “We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We also believe that if any government deprive people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever British connection and attain Puran Swaraj or complete Independence...We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country.”

Gandhi was empowered to start Civil Disobedience Movement in any manner he considered the best. He decided to launch the Satyagraha on the issue of salt-laws because of its most iniquitous nature, from the poor man’s point of view. But he could not ascape it. Due to the tropical heat of India, the hard-working and perspiring peasant must take essential quantity of salt; even cattle also required

salt to live,\(^2\) Gandhiji was even now prepared to meet the Government half-way. In the issue of 30 January of *Young India*, he published eleven demands of the Congress. But of these only two were important: the abolition of salt-laws, and second amnesty for all political prisoners.\(^3\) He pleaded, "Let the Viceroy satisfy those very simple but vital needs of India.\(^4\) He will then hear no talk of Civil Disobedience."

Receiving no satisfactory response, he wrote his famous letter, often quoted as 'ultimatum' to the Viceroy that if the demands were not conceded, he will begin Civil Disobedience Movement by breaking the salt-laws with his co-workers. But Viceroy's reply was curt and even humiliating. He said, Gandhi had decided on a course of action that would lead to the violation of law and dangerous politics. Now Gandhiji also retorted strongly: "On bended knees, I asked for bread and I have received stone instead."\(^5\) He declared that the Civil Disobedience Movement had now become 'inevitable.' He started his march to Dandi on 12 March with only 78 volunteers. At villages after villages, peasants ran forth to great Gandhi's group; thousands on thousands joined the line. When the sea at Dandi was finally reached, seventy five thousands became part of the 'March to Sea.'\(^6\)

On 6 April, after a purification in the sea, Gandhiji started Civil Disobedience by appropriating pieces of salt, lying on the beach. Almost simultaneously, illegal salt manufacture was begun all over the country. Where natural conditions precluded any such campaign, disobedience of other laws was attempted. Boycott of foreign clothes was begun on an extensive scale and alongwith that another campaign grew up for the boycott of British goods of all types all over the country. There was also an intensive campaign for the boycott of liquor and of intoxicating drugs. To enforce the boycott, picketing by congress volunteers was organised through out the country.

The Indian women also did not lag behind. Whenever a leader was arrested, they would organise a 'day of mourning.' In twos, in threes, they sat down on the chairs placed before shops selling drugs

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liquor or tobacco; they pleaded with men who came to buy at these shops to give money instead to Mahatma Gandhi. When pleading did not avail, they flung themselves across the thresholds, daring the men to walk over their bodies.

Undoubtedly, the women had turned the struggle into a beautiful epic. "On 6 April, thousands of women strode down to the sea at Dandi like proud warriors. But instead of weapons, they bore the pitchers of clay, brass copper, and instead of uniform, the simple sari of village India."8

The women of Punjab inaugurated the Civil Disobedience movement by taking out a procession of 5000 ladies at Lahore in 1930. Processions, meetings, picketing and prabhat pheries in defiance of section 144 became their daily routine. Even the police and their lathi charges ceased to scares them.9 The life and soul of the movement were Mrs. Lado Rani Zutshi, Manmohini Zutshi, Luxmi Devi Parvati Devi and Janak Kumari Zutshi.

Lado Rani Zutshi was the leading woman of the time. Her interest in politics first began in the martial law days in the Punjab in 1919. During the Civil Disobedience Movement, she gained importance for her singular activity and the way she steered the movement successfully in the Punjab.10 She had arranged a uniform of red pants, green shirts and white Gandhi caps typifying the National Emblem for volunteers."11

Addressing a meeting outside Mori Gate, Lahore, Lado Rani Zutshi appealed to women to follow the example of their counterparts of Bombay. Boosting up their morale, she remarked that their activities had become so forceful as compelled the government to arrest them so that they could not carry on the congress movement for freedom.12 In another speech, she encouraged the people “to bear the tyranny of machine-guns and lathi blows. How much the government can tyrannise us?”13 she asked. She also distributed seditious

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7. Ibid., p. 156.
11. Ibid., 16 July 1930.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., 2 September 1930.
literature, the publication of which was punishable under section 144/153A of the Indian Penal Code.\(^{14}\) Referring to the highhandedness of the government, she said those people were wild beasts and devoid of humanity, their civilization was temporary. They had come into power only temporarily and had forgotten what humanity was. They were now to learn as to what extent this tyranny could go.\(^{15}\)

Lado Rani Zutshi instilled patriotic zeal in her daughters as well and they shared her responsibilities in the struggle.\(^{16}\) She and her daughter, Manmohini Zutshi, were arrested on 6 April while organizing a procession in connection with the inaugural day of the ‘National Week’ and were sentenced under section 21 of Emergency Powers Ordinance to rigorous imprisonment for 19 months and one year respectively. Both were further tried along with five other ladies, namely Mrs and Miss Pindi Dass, Smt. Taradevi and Mrs. Jagat Narayan under the picketing ordinance. All the seven women were sentenced to four months imprisonment.\(^{17}\)

As many as 17 women were arrested on 9 October 1931. They included Janak Kumari Zutshi and Shiami Zutshi for picketing educational institutions at Lahore. The magistrate C. H. Disney found them guilty under section 21 of the Emergency Powers Ordinance and sentenced them to one year’s rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 50 each or in default one month’s further imprisonment.\(^{18}\)

Manmohini Zutshi (now Mrs. Manmohini Sehgal) also joined hands with the freedom fighters in 1930. Prior to this, she had been elected as the President of the Lahore Students’ Union in December 1929. She was the first woman to hold this key position.\(^{19}\) Due to her nationalist activities, she was first woman who was denied her university degree. For picketing educational institutions, she was arrested on 8 October and followed her mother in jail. She was released from jail only to be re-arrested in January 1931 for picketing shops. This time, she was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment.

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14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
19. Autobiographical note sent by Mrs. Manmohini Sehgal to the authoress of the present paper.
In all, during the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-32), she was arrested thrice; last time with hard labour for one year.20

Luxmi Devi also took leading part in organising public meetings demanding independence for the country. She was convicted for her seditious meetings and was asked to pay two thousands rupees or undergo imprisonment for one year. She preferred to go to the jail. She contributed to the uplift of the low classes and the promotion of Swadeshi also. In the women meeting at Jhang on 25 September, she made an eloquent speech advocating the cause of the uplift of the untouchables and exhorted the audience to use Swadeshi clothes. She also sang the popular flag songs.21

Another important woman of this period was Parvati Devi, the daughter of Lala Lajpat Rai. She took part in almost all the programmes of Satyagraha Committee. For her patriotic activities, she was arrested under section 124-A Criminal Procedure Code (Sedition) at the Lajpat Bhawan, Lahore.22 She was sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment and also was fined twenty thousand rupees.23

Sushila Devi of Sialkot was another prominent freedom fighter sprung up by the freedom movement in the late 1920s. In a series of lectures, she attacked the government and exhorted the women to rise the occasion. She played a remarkable role during the Civil Disobedience Movement.24

Bai Kaur, an outstanding congress lady, also deserves notice. She was an active participant in Civil Disobedience Movement. She organised processions and was arrested for hoisting the national flag in 1930 but was let off after a few hours. She was lathi charged at Haveli Nikain.25

Daropdi Devi was another courageous lady of Punjab who played significant role in the Civil Disobedience Movement. She demonstrated against the British Government in 1931 and underwent five months

20. Ibid., and Private Interview with Mrs. Mamohini Sehgal at her residence in Delhi.
24. T. P. Saxena, Women in the Indian History (Delhi, 1979), p. 92.
imprisonment in Lahore Jail.

Gian Devi of Lahore also took part in the Salt Satyagraha and was imprisoned in December 1931 for four months and was imposed a fine of Rs. 35 in the picketing movement. Even though let off earlier, but soon after her release, she, along with other ladies, resumed nationalist activities and was rearrested. On 16 March 1932, Mohd. Rashid, Magistrate I Class, charged Smt. Gian Devi, Daropdi Devi and others under Section 145 of the I.P.C. for being members of an unlawful procession and refusing to disperse on 25 February near the shop of Brij Lal Suri, Anarkali Bazar, Lahore. The magistrate sentenced Gian Devi and other ladies to 6 months rigorous imprisonment. Gian Devi was sentenced to pay a fine of Rs. 100 also or undergo an additional imprisonment of 4 months.26

Without exaggeration, it may well be asserted that the policy of high-handedness and repression of the Government did not worry the women of Punjab. They consistently remained unyielding on the stand they had taken. The Punjabi women clearly showed that the winning of freedom of the country was not the responsibility of men alone and that when entrusted with a responsibility, they could undertake it as successfully as men. By doing so they added strength to the movement not only proportionate to the number of women participants rather many times of that because their examples and preachings created national atmosphere in their families and put the coward men to shame. Their example spurred many men to nationalist action.
Arya Megh Uddhar Sabha Sialkot

DR R.K. Ghai*

Arya Megh Uddhar Sabha (Aryan Mission for the uplift of the Megh untouchables) was established on 21st April 1912 by the Arya Samaj, Sialkot, with the aim of raising the social status of the Meghs living in Sialkot and the adjoining districts of Gujrat and Gurdaspur and in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. They are described as belonging to the untouchable caste by the Census Report of 1901. They claim to be the descendants of the Aryans. In fact many of the social features of this caste resemble those of the Hindus. Besides keeping a tiff of hair on their head (Leodi), cremating the dead and taking ashes for immersion in the Ganges, protecting cow and visiting Hindu places of pilgrimage indicate their close infinity with the caste Hindus. Many of their gots like ‘Bhardwaj,’ ‘Kshyah,’ ‘Uttar,’ ‘Uttam,’ ‘Mithal,’ ‘Sandal,’ etc., are after the name of the sages and are borrowed from the high caste Hindus. Their complexion also seems to indicate that once they belonged to the caste Hindu society. The above mentioned similarities may be due to other reasons like assimilation of high caste practices by the Meghs and it may also be due to racial inter-mixing. But these facts provided sufficient ground to the Meghs to trace their ancestor to the Aryan stock as well as to suggest that they once belonged to the Hindu society ipso-facto a fit case for (purification).

The genesis of the Arya Megh Uddhar Sabha may be traced to the proselytizing activities of the Punjabi Arya Samajists. No doubt the shuddhi movement started with the conversion of those Hindus who had lost their religion for one reason or the other. With the passage of time the Arya Samaj began to convert the lower caste en masse

*Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.
which became a powerful movement by the return of the nineteenth
century. Meghs attracted the attention of the Arya Samajists in 1902
who were suffering considerable handicaps due to their inferior status
in society. For example they could not reside in the same quarters
where the high caste Hindus lived; they could not walk freely on
public pathways; they were not permitted to participate in the social
and religious festivities of the high caste Hindus; their touch was
considered a pollution and even their shadow falling on the high
caste Hindu was resented by the latter; they could not draw water
from the wells used by high caste people and had to wait at a
respectable distance keeping their waterpots so that some high caste
persons may be pleased to pour water into pots they could not enter
Hindu temples but had to stand outside as far away from it as from a
higher caste person, etc.

On 14th March 1903 the Sialkot Arya Samaj: resolved unanimo-
usly to lend its support to uplift these poor Meghs and placing
them on the highroad to progress. However, the work of purification
was not without its trials and sufferings on account of internal social
antipathies and opposition from non-Hindus and orthodox Hindus.
This is clear from the fact that about 3,000 Meghs offered themselves
to be purified at the Anniversary meeting of the Arya Samaj which
was to be held on 28th-29th March 1903, but due to the still oppo-
sition of Muhammadan headmen of some villages, whose menial
servants the Meghs were, only 200 Meghs turned to be purified by
Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Even the Aryas who participated and
took food and water from the hands of these purified Meghs were
excommunicated. Persecution of these purified Meghs was so ruthless
that Mr J.F. Connally, the then Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot,
had to intervene himself to save the lives of the Meghs. And due to
his timely help the Arya Samaj was able to purify about 36,000 Meghs
in Sialkot, Gujrat and Gurdaspur districts from 1903 to 1914. To
remove the stigma attached to the word ‘Megh,’ they were given a
new name ‘Arya Bhagat’ thus raising their status in the eyes of the

5. Ibid., p. 110.
7. Ibid., p. 9.
8. Baharat Partap, 1903 in Selections from Vernacular Newspaper Published in Punjab,
1903, p. 182.
Hindus so much so that the latter ceased their touch a pollution.

To effect transformation in their social, cultural and economic standard the Arya Samaj opened many schools to educate them, in many professions and associations to cultivate and imbibe Arya values. In view of magnitude of the task ahead and the number of the Meghs the Sialkot Arya Samaj felt necessary to set up a separate organization for their uplift. With this view, on 21st April 1912 a separate organization known as the Arya Megh Uddar Sabha was established.\(^9\) It was entrusted with the task of opening and managing seven technical and non-technical schools in their region for the children of the purified Meghs. For diversification of their ancestral profession of weaving they were given training in tailoring and carpentry. Thus under the aspices of the Arya Samaj a movement for the uplift of the Meghs started by the beginning of the present century which continues to perform valuable task even today.

\(^{10}\) Ibid., p. 22.
Southern Punjab (Haryana) Under the Sultans
(A.D. 1192-1526)
INDERJIT KAKRA*

The Turkish rule in Southern Punjab (Haryana) came to be established with the victory of Mu'izz-ud-din Muhammad-bin-Sam, popularly known as Muhammad Ghori, at Taraori in 1192. His abortive attempt to capture Gujrat in 1178 had not shattered his hope. He occupied Sialkot in 1181 and ousted Khusrau

*Research Scholar, Department of History, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

1. Cf. Minhaj, *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*, Vol. I, translated from original Persian Manuscripts by Major H.G. Raverty, New Delhi, 1970, f.n. 7, p. 457. He had mentioned 'Tarin', *Ibid.*; Isami had also described 'Tarain,' *Futuhi's Salatin*, Vol. I, edited by Agha Mahadi Husain, Bombay, 1967, p. 141. Ferishta gives the name as 'Narain' *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, translated from the original Persian into English by John Briggs, Calcutta, 1966, p. 96; Please also Cf. H.C. Ray, *Dynastic History of Northern India*, Delhi, Vol. II, p. 1087, f.n. 2; Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhan Dynasties*, Delhi, 1975, p. 90; R. B. Singh, *History of Chauhans*, p. 190; A.B.M. Habibullah has mentioned the name as Torwana, 27 miles from Sirsa; *Foundation of Muslim Rule In India*, Allahabad, 1961. Ram Vallab Somani expressed his inability when he says that 'exact location of the place is not precisely known,' *Prithviraj Chauhah And His Times*, Jaipur, 1981, p. 43; Mahammad Habib and Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. V; *The Delhi Sultanat*, Bombay, 1970, p. 160. From the contemporary and later sources, it is clear 'Naraina.' The latter is "seven miles from Karnal and three from Taraori," Cf. *Karnal Settlement Report*, 1872-80, pp. 21-35; K.K. Aggarwal, *Karnal District*, Karnal, 1975, p. 9. Obviously, both revival forces were stationed in the battle ground of 'Tarin-Narana' as the strength of both the armies was so great as it required a vast ground for their encampment. The chroniclers and historians differ only in mentioning the name of a particular place, as the actual action was occurred on these both places. Hence, it can easily be construed that the battle was fought on the plains of 'Tarin-Naraina.'

2. Minhaj, *op. cit.*, pp. 457; For the reasons of Muhammad Ghor's defeat in Gujrat, please Cf. f.n. 7, *Ibid.*, p. 452; Jai Chand of Kanauj alongside the forces of Gujrat also fought and gave a crushing defeat to Ghori, Isami, *op. cit.*, p. 239, and also of f.n. 4; Ferishta, *op. cit.*, p. 95; Raja Bhim Deo II "inflicted such a defeat upon that he had much difficulty in getting back to Ghaznai, *The History of India As Told By Its Own Historians, The Local Muhammadan Dynasties-Gujrat* by the late Sir Edward Clive Bayley, edited by Nagendra Singh, Delhi, 1970, p. 35. A B.M. Habibullah has mentioned the name of the ruler of Gujrat in 1178 as Mulraja II, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 53.

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Malik, the last Ghaznavi ruler of Lahore in 1186. Having established himself firmly in Lahore, he began his raids and razzias in Haryana but could not succeed. In 1191 he again moved from his base and took possession of Sirhind and placed it under the charge of Malik Ziyad-din, the Qazi Muhammad-i-Abd-us-Sallam Nisawi Tulaki and a cousin of Minhaj-us-Siraj with a garrison of 1200 men. Having secured his position in Sirhind, he attacked Thanesar, a place of pilgrimage, and desecrated many temples. He moved further but Prithviraj Chauhan, the ruler of Ajmer and Govindaraja the feudatory Chief of Delhi including Haryana, confronted him with a formidable army, and routed him in a pitched battle at Taraori, in 1191. The

3. After the first battle of Tarain, when the Sultan returned to Ghazni, he got executed Khusrau Malik and his son Bahram Shah, Isami, op. cit., p. 144.
7. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 458; Isami had omitted this fact altogether. He has further informed that Muhammad Ghori marched from Lahore to Hansi, a famous town of Haryana, his way was blocked by the Chauhans at Tarain, op. cit., p. 141; Ferishta has indicated Bhatinda, op. cit., p. 96. He has also mentioned that Muhammad Ghori, on his way to Ajmer kept a garrison of the one thousand horse and some foot at Bhatinda and on his return journey from Ajmer, he fought battle with the Rajputs at 'Narain,' op. cit., p. 96. Ferishta's version is seemed to be incorrect as he wrote his book 'Tarakh-i-Ferishta very far from Haryana. Actually a battle was fought at Taraori (Tara in Naraina) and his further movement was checked.
8. Sthanesvara, a place of Inshwara (God). Sthanasvara (Sthantisvara or Taneshvar) is said to have derived either from Sthana, i.e., the abode of Isvara or Mahadeva or from the junction of the name of Sthana and Isvara Al-Biruni's Knowledge of Indian Geography by B.C. Law, Calcutta, 1955, p. 6; It was also sacked by Mahmud Ghazni in 1014, earlier and he carried away the diety of 'Cakrasvamin' i.e., the owner of the Cakra, a weapon, Cf. Alberuni's India edited by Dr Edward C. Sachau, Vol. I, Delhi, 1964, p. 117; India Al Biruni edited by Qiyamuddin Ahmad, New Delhi, 1983, p. 54; For Alberuni's life sketch, C.f. Al-Biruni-A Life Sketch by V. Courtois s.j., Calcutta, 1952; Please also Cf. Muhammad Nazim, The Life And Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, New Delhi, 1971. My article, Madhkalim Kurukshetra, Journal of Haryana Studies, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Vol. VI, Nos. 1-2, 1974, pp. 27-32.
9. Aurangzeb's son Prince Azam was born at Taraori and thus the place was renamed at Azamabad. Aurangzeb constructed a wall around the town, a mosque and a tank. Cf. K.K. Aggarwal, op. cit., p. 46.
Sultan retired badly wounded, but vowed to return again to avenge the humiliating defeat. The Chauhans remained the master of Haryana up to this time, and a number of their descendants settled down here, which, in a course of time, swelled the population of this region.

Next year, having enrolled 12,000 Turk, Tazik and Afghan horsemen, well equipped with arms and armour, he marched from Ghazni towards Punjab. He also received help from Vijayaraja of Jammu against the Chauhans. Prithviraja, who had already given a disastrous defeat to Sultan, marched along with an army of 3,00,000 cavalry, 3000 elephants and a body of infantry towards Taraori, where he had to meet the invader. One hundred and fifty of the Chiefs who had accompanied with him on the battle-field, swore by the water of the Ganga to conquer or die as the Sultan had pillaged and sacked the towns, defied the Hindu women. Prithviraja Chauhan in his ego wrote a letter to the Sultan, offering to do no harm if he chose wisely to return to his country. He also threatened him with complete destruction if he determined to fight Muhammad Ghori who had already seen the bravery of the Rajputs and Haryanavis resolved to

10. When Govindaraja wounded the Sultan severely and he nearly falling, "a lion (hearted) warrior, a Khalji stripling, recognised the Sultan, and sprang up behind him, and supporting him in his arms, urged the horse with his voice, and brought him out of the field of battle, Minhaj op. cit., pp. 460 and 464. He was rescued by a Khalji; Isami, op. cit., p. 143; Ferishta, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
12. Minhaj, op. cit., pp. 465-66; Isami has mentioned the strength at Tarain "One lakh and thirty thousand cavalrymen" op. cit., p. 151. Probably, the increase in the cavalrymen due to occupation of various places on his way from Ghazni to Taraori.
14. Ferishta, op. cit., pp. 97-98; Dastharatha Sharma, op. cit., p. 94.
15. It seems that Ferishta wanted only to stress the resolution of the Hindus to fight with Ghoris as neither Minhaj nor Isami has mentioned such words. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 98.
16. It would be impossible to think that the Rajputs had fought with the invader, without the jawans from Haryana as it is well known fact that the Chief of Haryana, Govindaraja, though being a feudatory, supported the cause of the Rajputs whole-heartedly and even laid down his life in the battle-field, C. F. Infra, f. n. 21, p. 210.
follow a different strategy, avoiding a pitched battle. He replied: "I have marched into India at the command of my brother, whose general only I am. Both honour and duty bind me to exert myself to the utmost in his service. I cannot retreat, therefore without orders, but I shall be glad to obtain a truce till he is informed of the situation of affairs and I have received his answer." His communications mingled with deceit and fraudulent pretexts produced the intended effect upon him. And the army consisted of the Rajputs and Haryanavis also took him at his word. They passed the night in revelry.

The invader's troops made a severe attack upon the Indian camp, early in the morning, when they were still under dormition. Some of the soldiers were just moving out for their daily ablutions and other morning duties. The Indian army were taken aback and hastily drew themselves into fighting order. The battle was fought but the Indian were completely routed losing about 100,000 men. Govindaraja, the Chief of Haryana, was killed.

Prithviraja alighted from his elephant, mounted a horse and galloped off. But the Muslim troops were tagging after and later he was captured near Sarsuti and was put to death. With his death, the Indian confederacy of the Rajas was shattered into pieces. Although the victory at Taraori was attained by fraud and deception, but the achievements, which was the prime objective of Shahab-ud-din, were not minimized. The Rajputs and Haryanavis fought conspicuously and laid down their lives in the battle-field, but their defeat manifested Prithviraja's incapability in diplomacy. And his ministers and generals failed to suggest proper action, were too responsible for nation's disaster. As a result of this victory, the entire Haryana prostrated before the conqueror and the course of its history took a

18. Ibid.
22. The river Saraswati, north of Thanesar city as battle ground was not far off.
new direction.24

Though Muhammad Ghori had occupied Haryana and virtually
became the master of it,25 but the affairs of the Province were far
from satisfactory and still tumultuousness was prevailing in this region.
The militants and freedom loving people of Haryana were waiting for
a suitable opportunity to overthrow the Turks dominion, was apparent
from the fact that in the same year, i.e., 1192, a local Chief of Haryana,
named Jatwan, rose in rebellion against the Turkish authority. In the
words of Hasan Nizami: "...Jatwan, having admitted the pride of
Satan into and placed his hand in fight against Nusrut-ud-din, the
Commander under the fort of Hansi...the accursed Jatwan, when he
heard news of the arrival of the victorious armies, fell himself compelled
to depart under the fort and fled. The soldiers of Islam came up to
the army of Hind on the borders of Bagar ..The Hindus were comple-
tely defeated and their leader slain."26 Later Muhammad Ghori moved
towards Hansi27 and stayed there for some period where he carried on
repairs of the fort,28 which was vital for consolidation of his victory in
Haryana. In recognition of meritorious services of Qutubuddin Aibak,
one of the illustrious Commanders, Ghori placed under him the charge
of Iqta of Kuhram with a considerable army to keep the rebellious
people of Haryana and other parts under his subjection, he started for
Ghazni.29 After the departure of Muhammad Ghori, Aibak30 took
possession of Meerut, Delhi and adjoining territory of Haryana in his
hands.31

24. "...the whole of Siwalik (territory), such as Hansi, Sursuti and other tracts
were subjected. "Cf. Minhaj, op. cit., pp. 468-69.; Isami, op. cit., p 155,
Ferishta, op. cit., p. 100; Buddha Prakash, The Muslim Conquest of Northern
112 ; Dasharatha Sharma, op. cit., p. 96.
26. Hasan Nizami, op. cit., p. 40; Cf. The Struggle For Empire, Vol. V, Bombay,
27. 29.6 N and 76.19 E is situated about 25 K.M. East of Hissar on Delhi-Sirsra
Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.
29. Ibid.; Moomza Ali Khan, Some Important Persian Prose Writings of the
106-15.
After the assassination of Muhammad Gholi on 15 March 1206 at Damik by the Ghakhars, Aibak ascended the throne at Lahore on 14 June 1206 and remained engrossed in battles with other parts of the country in order to subdue them. In brief reign of four years, he kept control and maintained law and order in this region with arms but the local inhabitants did not reconcile with him and took the Turks as foreigners as they were. He met an accidental death at Lahore in 1210.

The Amirs of Lahore set up his son Aram Shah as his successor but the Amirs of Delhi did not accept him as their ruler because there was a great confusion and chaos not only in Haryana but in other parts also. So Amir Ali Ismail, the Governor of Delhi and Harayna and other nobles, who might have known the incapacity of the Prince, invited Shams-ud-din Iltutmish, the Governor of Badaun and a son-in-law of Sultan Qutb-ud-din Aibak to assume the Crown. Although Aram Shah was an inefficient in civil and military administration, yet he had got the support of Lahore faction and marched towards Delhi but Iltutmish found it easy to defeat and slay him at Jud, near Delhi.

Iltutmish after quelling the rebellion of Turks nobles of Lahore ascended the throne in 1210 at Delhi. Haryana now came under his direct sway and he reorganised the administration by dividing it into various Iqtas like Hansi, Kaithal, Rohtak, etc., and placed them under strict surveillance of the military commanders.

37. A district of Bareilly division in Uttar Pradesh.
38. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 115.
40. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 530.
so that he could have had an effective grip over it. Virtually, it would serve as a bulwark between Rajasthan and Delhi for which the Sultan had constantly apprehension about the attack from the Rajputs upon Delhi. Besides, the reason in parcelling this small province into small *Iqtas* was obvious, Haryana being in the vicinity of the newly established capital of Delhi; the Haryanavis were not seeing eye to eye with them. The *Iqta* of Hansi was held by the eldest son of the Sultan, Malik Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah. Iltutmish, who were busy in consolidating and expanding the territory of his dominion, had to fight another battle on the famous battle-field of Taraori with Sultan Taj-ud-din Yalduz, who was ousted from Ghazni by the Khwarazmi army and fled to Lahore in 1216 and had taken the possession of the territory upto Thanesar, in which he came out victorious. Among the notable events of the reign of Sultan Iltutmish, were the conquests of Jhajjar and Sirsa, but the details have not been mentioned by the Chroniclers. It seemed that the inhabitants of these towns were revolted against the Central authority and shook off their allegiance to the Sultan. The people of this region tried their best to oust the newly established rule of the Turks. This fact is proved when on a Friday Prayer, they went to Delhi where a large number of Hindus had already been gathered. They proceeded to Jami Masjid, where created a disturbances and also wanted to kill the Sultan and even to capture the Capital. But they were captured suddenly and put to sword ruthlessly.

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43. Minhaj, *op. cit.*, p. 608; Isami says that the battle field lay in the region of Hansi, *op. cit.*, p. 223. But from the verses 2079-2085 of *Futuh-us-Salatin*, it is clear that battle field was Taraori (Modern Taraori in Karnal district) as Isami has clearly mentioned that “when they (Iltutmish’s troops) reached the skirts of Taraori, they heard that the enemy was at a distance of three *parasangs* from there. They halted at Taraori and he (Iltutmish) immediately arranged his army for battle,” *Ibid.*, p. 219. Probably Isami means that of Taraori was under the region of Hansi (now known as Haryana). According to Hasan Nizami, Samana was the battle field, *Taj-ul-Maasir*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II, p. 215.
Iltutmish died on 29 April 1236 after having ruled for about twenty six years. He was a weak ruler as he gave himself up to pleasure and sexual enjoyment and paid little attention to the administrative matters. So the real power passed into the hands of his mother, Shah Turkan. Having seen the incapability of the Sultan and tyrannical attitude of her mother, Saif-ud-din-Kuji, a Governor of Hansi, along with other nobles of the court withdrew their allegiance and rebelled. In order to subdue the revolt, Sultan Rukn-ud-din Firoz Shah marched towards Haryana and a battle took place in the vicinity of Mansurpur and Taraori and a number of officials and nobles died. Some of the nobles deserted him and went to Delhi where they imprisoned Shah Turkan. On hearing this Sultan returned Delhi but he was imprisoned in the fort of Hansi where he died. They now crowned Raziya a sagacious lady and the daughter of the late Sultan Iltutmish. After some time, there was a great upheaval in Haryana and other parts of the country. However, she subdued the rebellion. But she had to face the serious challenge of Turkish nobles particularly Ikhhtar-ud-din Altigin, the Amir-i-Hazib, Malik Ikhtiyar-ud-din Altuniya, the Muqti of Bhatinda and Kabir Khan-i-Ayez, the Governor of Lahore. They conspired to overthrow her. At first, she tried her best to foil their design but at last she fell into the hands of Malik Altuniya and married him.

Meanwhile, the nobles raised to the throne Muizz-ud-din Bahram

47. Fauja Singh, op. cit., p. 130.
49. Ibid., p. 632; Also cf. Isami, op. cit., pp. 248-49; Ferishta, op. cit., p. 120.
50. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 632; Isami has completely ignored this fact. Cf, op cit., pp. 248-49; Ferishta, op. cit., p. 120; Asit Kumar Sen, People and Politics in Early Mediaeval India, Calcutta, 1963, p. 32.
51. Minhaj, op. cit., pp. 633-634; Cf. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 120.
52. Ibid., p. 635; Isami has not mentioned the account of this battle, cf. op. cit., pp. 248-249.
53. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 121.
55. Ibid.; She was nominated as an ‘heir-apparent,’ Isami, op. cit., f.n. I, p. 251. Her title was ‘Rajiya-ud-din,’ Ibid.; Ferishta : op. cit., p. 121.
56. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 641; Saif-ud-din Kuji was put to death by her. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 122.
57. Ibid., p. 647.
SOUTHERN PUNJAB (HARYANA) UNDER THE SULTANS

Shah. Raziya and her husband Malik Altuniya alongwith their army advanced towards Delhi to recapture the throne. Bahram Shah also led his army to check the progress of his opponents. The forces of brother and her sister fought near Kaithal in which Raziya was defeated. The discontentment of the people of Haryana is clearly manifested from the fact that Raziya was killed by the local people on 13 October 1240. Indeed, the people of Haryana were not submitted to the alien rule. Little is known about the history of Haryana during the short-reign of the two feeble successors of Raziya, Muizz-ud-din Bahram Shah and Sultan Ala-ud-din Masud Shah.

The several towns and cities viz., Sudhara, Panipat, Hansi and Kaithal of Haryana were prominently mentioned during the long reign of twenty years of Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud (1246-1266). Ulugh Khan (later Sultan Balban), the leader of the Turkish party, who had emerged victorious during the struggle for power among the nobles of Ilutmish became the Amir-i-Hazib and was assigned the rich territory of Hansi. Later, upon the pernicious advice of Imad-ud-din Raihan, Ulugh Khan, was removed from the fief of Hansi. He went to Nagor. The fief of Hansi was bestowed upon the Prince Rukn-ud-din. Although Ulugh Khan-i-Azam was ousted from Hansi, but he had the support from other Turks nobles. The latter were waiting for an opportunity to remove Raihan. The Maliks from Haryana, Bhatinda, Sunam, Samana and from other territories alongwith their troops marched towards Delhi. To meet their forces, the royal army moved from Delhi. Both armies met in the vicinity of Sunam. A confusion arose in the royal troops. However action was not done. The royal

60. Ibid.; Isami, op. cit., p. 344; Ferishta, op. cit., p. 124.
61. He, too, was deposed and killed in the prison. Isami, op. cit., p. 264.
62. Minhaj, op. cit., pp. 649-669; He was also imprisoned and remained there for entire life; Ferishta, op. cit., p. 128; Isami, op. cit., pp. 266 & 268.
63. In Ambala district of Haryana.
65. Ibid., p. and p. 693; For a detailed account of Mansi, during the Sultanate period, Please see M.S. Ahluwalia, ‘Medieval Hansi’ Proceedings of Punjab History Conference, Patiala, 1971, pp. 95-103.
68. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 113.
army returned towards Hansi. Sult an's brother Malik Jalal-ud-din, Masud Shah and Ulugh Khan-i-Azam along with other nobles reached Kaithal. With intervention of some nobles a problem was solved and consequently Imad-ud-din Raihan, who had been representing the Indian faction was removed from his office of Wakil-i-Dar, while the Sultan was on his way from Hansi to Jind, he was sent to Budaun. Balban again elevated to the highest position. Imad-ud-din-Raihan, who failed to receive the support of Haryanavis, died soon after his removal.

In 1256 the Sultan moved from Delhi towards Awadh in order to subdue the insurrection of Malik Kutlugh Khan whose authority had declined with the death of Raihan, had again revolted. A camp was pitched at Tilpat as the troops from Haryana were not reached there, who were to join the main army in this expedition. Consequently Ulugh-Khan-i-Azam had to go to Hansi. Minhaj wrote, "On reaching the Hansi territory, he with the utmost celerity, issued his mandate so that, in the space of fourteen days the troops of the Siwalikh, Hansi, Sursuti (Sirsa), Jind (Jhind) and Barwalah, and confines of that territory assembled so fully organised and equipped, numerous, and well provided with warlike apparatus, that you would say they were a mountain of iron when still and a tempestuous sea when in motion. He reached the capital, Delhi (with this force) and halted at the capital seventeen days for the purpose of further completing his preparations, and for the purpose of directing the assembling of the (contingent) troops of the Koh-payah of Mewat (Southern Haryana)." Apparently, Ulugh Khan-i-Azam (Balban) recruited the jawans from Haryana in quelling Awadh's revolt. Haryana had been considered a best-place for the recruitment of army personnel as they had been famous for their integrity and faithfulness.

70. Ibid.
71. A district of Haryana.
72. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 133.
73. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 836.
74. A birth place of Lord Rama. Situated near the west-bank of the river Sirau on the road from Lucknow to Gorakhpur.
75. After the death of Iltutmish Malika Jehan, mother of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, married to him, Cf. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 133.
76. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 836.
77. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 837.
Though Ulugh Khan-i-Azam was appointed at Hansi, in order to keep the strict surveillance upon the activities of the Haryanavis, nevertheless the people of southern Haryana, which was then known by the name of Mewat and included Gurgaon used to come in the proximity of Hansi, which was fief of the great Khan and a strong hold of his troops, and carried away the “heards of camels, the property of the vassals and loyal followers of Ulugh Khan-i-Azam’s household…”\(^78\) They distributed these camels, which were used “carrying the equipage of the troops,”\(^79\) among the coreligionists of this region and also in Rajasthan.\(^80\) In 1260 Ulugh-Khan-i-Azam made a march in order to suppress the insurgents of Southern Haryana.\(^81\) He plundered and ransacked the entire region and made a large number of captives besides slaughtering a few of them.\(^82\) He too captured their leader Malika\(^83\) and collected a large booty there.\(^84\)

The punishment inflicted upon the people of Haryana at the plain of Rani’s Reservoir, Minhaj wrote, “After two days, the royal cavalcade (again) proceeded out of the city to the plain at the Rani’s Reservoir, with the intention of making an example of infidels, and command was given for the elephants, of mountain like form and reaching to the sky of demon-like aspect and wind like speed so that you might say they were the delegate of destiny and the soldiers of the angel of death to be brought for the purpose of inflicting condign punishment upon the infidels. The relentless Turks, of the profession of Mars, drew their well-tempered fire-flashing, swords from the scabbards of power, and then the sublimer order was issued so that they commenced to execute (the rebels). After that, some of those rebels they cast at the feet of the elephants, and made the heads of Hindus, under the heavy hands and feet of those mountain-like figures, the grains in the artifice of the grinding mill of death; and, by the keen swords of the ruthless Turks, and the life-ravishing executioners, every two of these Hindus were made four, and by scavengers, with knives, such that at the quashes of them, a demon would be horror-stricken, a hundred and old rebels

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78. Ibid., p. 850.
79. Minhaj, op. cit., p. 850.
80. Ibid.
81. Asit Kumar Sen, op. cit., p. 137.
83. Asit Kumar Sen, op. cit., p. 137.
were flayed from head to foot, and at the hand of their skinners, they quaffed, in the goblet of their own hands, the *sharbat* of death. Command was given so that they stuffed the whole of their skins with straw, and suspended them over every gateway of the city.\(^{86}\) In the second regal year the Sultan marched to Panipat and encamped there to haunt and stayed there from October to December 1. 57.\(^{86}\)

By the time of Balban's accession the Southern Haryana was in flames. The people of Haryana organised themselves to bands to wage on guerrila war against the Turks, as their severity was increasing day by day. Barani has written that at night they often swept on the Capital and destroyed houses and property.\(^{87}\) The people of Delhi could not sleep at night.\(^{88}\) The traders and carvans could not enter the Capital as they used to snatch their articles.\(^{89}\) The western gates were shut down at the evening and even the people of Delhi could not go for recreation purpose to the Shamsi Hauz.\(^{90}\) The people of Haryana and the Meos always challenged the Turks rulers of Delhi. Balban employed 3000 brave Afghans in subduing the Haryanavis.\(^{91}\) In order to guard Delhi, he established a number of new police posts in the vicinity of Delhi and entrusted those posts to the Afghans so that they could save the capital from the nectural attacks of the Haryanavis and Meos.\(^{92}\) He also founded the fortress of Gopalgar\(^{93}\) so that he could guard the capital city against the depredation of the Haryanavis effectively. Balban also got cleared the *jungles* in Haryana in order to flush out insurrgents.\(^{94}\) He was shrewed and well versed in administration. He used to go to Rewari and even beyond it for hunting.\(^{95}\) However, his real purpose was to awe the people of Haryana, so that they could be desisted in their activities against the Turks.

\(^{85}\) Minhaj, *op. cit.*, p. 855.
\(^{88}\) Ibid.
\(^{89}\) Ibid.
\(^{90}\) Barni, *op. cit.* (Rizvi), p. 163.
\(^{91}\) Minhaj, *op. cit.*, p. 852.
\(^{92}\) Minhaj, *op. cit.* (Rizvi), p. 164.
\(^{94}\) Isami, *op. cit.*, p. 291; Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* (Rizvi), p. 163.
\(^{95}\) Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* (Rizvi), p. 162.
Upon Balban’s death, the nobles particularly Malik Fakhr-ud din the influential Kotwal of Delhi, set aside the willingness of Balban, in appointing Kai Khusrau, the son of the Martyr Prince (the eldest son of Balban) and enthroned Kaiqubad, an eighteen year old son of Bughra Khan in 1287. The Sultan who had already witnessed the rebellions of a seasoned General, assigned the Iqta of Bawal to Firoz Khalji, a seasoned General and the latter’s brother Shihabuddin was commanded to assist his brother in his works. Both Khalji’s brothers “exerted themselves to the utmost in making it prosperous and in administering justice.” A few courtiers who were their opponents, gave the ill-advised to the Sultan about their activities. The Sultan being suspicious called them in the court. Consequently both the brothers arrived in the court via Kaithal where they met Sufi saint Bahhashish. Instead of punishing them, the Sultan conferred upon Firoz Khalji the title of Imad-ul-Mulk. After murdering Aitamar Kachchan, a Turki noble, Kaiqubad was deposed from Kingship and Kaimuras was enthroned. Kaiqubad was killed by a Turk, whose father was murdered by his orders. Firoz Khalji got the title of Shaisti Khan and became viceregent. Later Aitamar Surkha was also killed and Kaimuras, too. Indeed, Balban’s successors were too weak to assert themselves as Sultan, in the real sense. They took little attention in administering effectively in the neighbouring province of Haryana. Virtually, they did not realise the strategic importance of Haryana; the loss of Haryana meant the Capital and the kingdom.

Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khalji, having accomplished the revolution, ascended the throne in 1290. He ruled for a brief period (1290-96) but the name, he earned for his generosity and benevolence shown to ryots

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98. Ibid., p. 364.
99. A Tehsil of Kurukshetra district.
100. Isami, op. cit., p. 364.
101. Ibid., p. 365.
102. Ibid., p. 367.
103. Ibid., p. 368.
104. Ibid., p. 369.
105. Ibid., p. 368.
won for him the "golden opinion" of the people and epithet of Sultan-al-Hatim (the human Sultan). Even he treated his arch opponents with generosity. One of the most significant events of his reign which through considerable light on his character is connected with the territory of Haryana. Siraj-ud-din Savi, a poet of Samana and a member of the Mandahar tribe of Kaithal, arrived in the court in a great anxiety as he apprehended his death because of the fact that when the present Sultan, was a Naib of Kaithal and Samana, Siraj-ud-din Savi had made a complaint against the revenue officials, who had harassed him. But he had paid little attention to it. Upon this, Siraj-ud-din Savi was distressed and he wrote a satirical poem under the title of Khaljinamah and decried the Naib. Siraj-ud-din Savi left Samana. Upon this Jalal-ud-din became furious and he made an severe attack upon Kaithal and sacked and destroyed the villagers of the Mandahars. In this struggle, one of the Mandahars struck Jalal-ud-din Firoz on his face with a sword and inflicted such deep injuries that their scars remained on his face all his life. Both Siraj-ud-din Savi and the Mandahar saved themselves during his tenure as Naib. But when Jalal-ud-din became Sultan, both apprehended capital punishment of their earlier acts. They thought to present themselves in the court and making mercy appeal to the Sultan. They out rope around their necks and stood at the palace gate. Contrary to their apprehensions, Jalal-ud-din called them in and showered a great favour upon them. He embraced Siraj-ud-din Savi and gave him a robe of honour and a jagir and admitted him to the circle of his Nadmis. The Mandahar also received a lakh of jitals and was appointed wakili-i-Dar under Malik Khuram. Thus these persons belonging to Haryana were appointed in the Imperial Court.107

During the reign of Jalal-ud-din, a famine broke out and took a heavy toll of life; the people of Haryana were so distressed due to the scarcity of cereals that they preferred to die in the river Yamuna.108 Being a generous Sultan, Jalal-ud-din did utmost in distributing the grain from the government godowans.109 The Governmental grainiers were completely exhausted. The devastation condition in Haryana remained for about two years and grains had become "a rare commodity."110

109. Ibid., p. 384.
110. Ibid.
When Jalal-ud-din was murdered in 1296, anarchy again erupted in Haryana due to uncertainty in the Central Government. Thus Ala-ud-din Muhammad Shah ascended the throne in 1296 in the midst of confusion and chaos and he had to subdue it. From the beginning of his reign, he had to deal with his inveterate enemy viz. Kuddur Khan entitled Ruknuddin Ibrahim and his elder brother Arkali Khan, who were at Multan. He commanded Almas Beg entitled Alap Khan and Zaffar Khan to capture them. They seized the city of Multan and compelled them to surrender. When Alap Khan was returning along-with his captives, he received orders from his brother Alauddin that “eyes of the prisoners to be put out.” Thus both princes were blinded and imprisoned in the famous fort of Hansi, where they were murdered later on.

In 1299, when Alauddin was busy in capturing the fort of Ranthambor, Haji Maula of Rohtak district of Haryana, supported by the people of this region, got the good opportunity and went to Delhi, where he put Tirmizi, the Kotwal of the Capital under the sword and took possession “one-third” part of the city. The intelligence reached at Ranthambor about this revolt. The Sultan hurriedly despatched Ulugh Khan, but before his arrival in Delhi, the troops stationed at Delhi, defeated Haji Maula, who fled. Ulugh Khan after restoring peace in the Capital, returned to Sultan. After capturing the fort of Ranthambor, Ulugh Khan was given the charge of the said fort. Haji Maula’s rebellion left so much impression upon the mind of the Sultan that he remained outside the Capital for nearly ten days. He was so annoyed with the people of Haryana that he went towards Indri and remained in this area for a month. He returned to Tahala where he recruited soldiers and were supplied to them. Indeed, he wanted to awe the

112. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 183.
114. Isami; op. cit., p. 452.
115. Ibid.
117. Isami, op. cit., p. 452.
118. Isami, op. cit., p. 453.
119. In Karnal district of Haryana,
120. Isami, op. cit.
121. Ibid.
Haryanavis for their activities against the Khalji' Sultan.

Ala-ud-din Khalji was so much distressed about the rebellious activities of the Haryanavis that he ordered his officials to frame such laws by which the people of this region could be suppressed and wealth and property drained from their houses. He imposed heavy taxes upon the people of this area. He wanted to grind down the Hindus. Tax farmers were required to pay taxes amounting to one half, i.e., 50 per cent, and their lands were to be measured, and not even a biswah of their land was to be escaped from taxation. Besides, he also imposed taxes such as grazing tax on every animal that gives milk from a cow to a sheep-goat and that they should collect them in fold in rear of every dwelling house. Haryanavis could not tolerate the economic oppression of Ala ud-din as they had already faced severe famine. So, the people of this region revolted against the tyranny. They gave him such a harassment that the last days of the Sultan were embittered by troubles and misfortunes and Sultan died on 6 January 1316.

Mubarak Shah ascended the throne in April 1316 and assumed the title of Qutab-ud-din Mubarak Shah. He set free all the prisoners and also remitted taxes and also "granted remission of revenue to the peasants," which in turn gave a relief to some extent the Haryanvis. As the Sultan addicted himself in drinking, listening to music pleasure and scattering gifts, Khusrau Khan treacherously murdered him on 14 April 1320.

Khusrau Khan, too, abused his ill gotten powers and also squandered away the money like his predecessor in order to gain the support of the people. The Turkish nobles were against him as the Sultan’s

123. Ibid., 77.
124. Ibid.
necaricious acts had created turmoil not only in Haryana but also in other parts of the country. Besides, he was a Hindu and also bore the title of Nasiruddin but had been acting contrary to his title. So, they invited Ghazi Malik Tughluq from Dipalpur and the latter marched along with his troops. As intelligence arrived about the movement of Ghazi Malik Tughluq, Khusrau Malik despatched his brother Khan-i-Khanan, to meet the enemy. He arrived at Hansi. He moved ahead and fought a battle near Sirsa in which Ghazi Malik Tughluq became victorious and Khan-i-Khanan was put under sword. The victor rushed towards Delhi, passing through Hansi, Madina, Rohta, and reached in the plain of Lahrawat near Hauzi-Alai. Here again a battle was fought in which Ghazi Malik gave a crushing defeat to Khusrau Khan and was got executed later.

Ghazi Malik enthroned himself as Sultan on 22 August 1321 and got the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. Haryana fell under his sway and he administered the region so well that peace was established again. He was succeeded by his son Ulugh Khan in 1325 and who assumed the title of Muhammad-Tughluq. His ill-conceived ambitious projects effected the people of Haryana too. After the deportation of the inhabitants of Delhi to Deogir, the Capital city was devasted and ruined entirely. However, after a few months the Sultan pondered over about his misconceived project and again ordered

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130. For his early life see Ishwari Prasad, op. cit., pp. 1-8.
132. Present district of Haryana.
133. A village about 10 miles west of Rohtak.
134. Situated between Hauz Khas and Delhi, Ishwari Prasad, op. cit., f.n. 30, p. 15.
137. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 229.
140. About the journey performed by the people of Delhi, a pitiable account has been given by Isami, op. cit., pp. 675-680.
to re-populate Delhi. Thus the villagers of the country side of Haryana were forced to abandon their ancestral houses and to settle down in Delhi.\textsuperscript{142} In addition to this, the Sultan imposed the taxes so heavy upon the peasants, that they were compelled to leave their-fields and villages. The fertile land of the region looked like barren.\textsuperscript{143} Indeed, they became depressed and disgusted against the Sultan and did not remain behind in revolting against the oppressive policies of the Sultan. The people of Kuhram, Sunam, Kaithal and Samana revolted against him.\textsuperscript{144} Barani writes that Sultan Muhammad Tughluq, proceeded in person to put down the rebels who 'had formed Mandalas, withheld the tribute, created disturbances and plundered on the roads. The Sultan destroyed their Mandalas, dispersed their followers and carried their Chiefs prisoners to Delhi. Many of them became Musalmans... the troubles they had 'caused were stopped and travellers could proceed without fear of robbery.'\textsuperscript{145} Sayyid Ibrahim, the Governor of Sirsa, who was also known as Kharitabdar revolted and captured the government treasury. However, the latter was captured and put to death.\textsuperscript{146} Though the Sultan adopted stern measures and raided the territory of this region, nevertheless, the fact cannot be denied that they contributed a lot in disintegrating the Turkish Empire.

Before the expatriation of the people of Delhi to Deogir (later Daultabad), every thing was available in the markets of Delhi and even the 'rare commodity' was not scare in the bazars,\textsuperscript{147} which of course, effected the markets of Haryana, too, and provided various commodities to the people of this area, easily.

When Tarmashirin, the Mongol leader, was repulsed by Yusuf Bughra,\textsuperscript{148} the Sultan moved from the Capital and arrived at Thanesar.\textsuperscript{149} From here, he ordered the troops to chase the fugitives. Having succeeded in his mission, the Sultan went to Ajmer from Thanesar.

\textsuperscript{142} Isami, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 680-681 & 684-685.
\textsuperscript{143} Ferishta, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 238; Aslt Kumar Sen, \textit{People And Politics In Early Mediaeval India}, 1206-1398 A.D., Calcutta, 1963, pp. 136-137.
\textsuperscript{145} Barani, \textit{Tariikh-i-Firozshahi}, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. III, p. 245.
\textsuperscript{146} \textit{Barani’s History of The Tugluq} by S. Moinul Haq, Karachi, nodate, p. 75.
\textsuperscript{148} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 690.
\textsuperscript{149} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 701.
After paying homage to the Shrine of the Moin-ud-din-Chisti, he returned to Delhi.

Ibn Battuta, who travelled Haryana during the reign of Muhammad bin-Tughluq wrote about Sirsa, a present district of Haryana, “It is a big city which produces a great quantity of fine rice which is exported to the Capital Delhi. The revenue of Sarsuti (Sirsa) are enormous. Shams-ud-din al Fushanji, the Chamberlain, told me the exact amount, but I have forgotten it.” He had high opinion about Hansi. He says, “One of the finest and perfectly built cities, which is most thickly populated. It has a huge rampart...” He also travelled other parts of Haryana and came at Masudabad, which was at that time ten miles from Delhi.

Firoz Tughluq, after the death of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq on 20 March, ascended the throne on 23 March 1351 at Thatta. He resumed his march from Thatta to Delhi via Haryana. On his way, he founded the present town of Fatehabad naming it after his son. In order to supply the new town with water, he dug a channel from Ghaggar at Phulad, now in Patiala division of Punjab to Fatehabad. It's present name is Joiya. He tried to pacify the Haryanavis by withdrawing a number of oppressive cesses and promoting agriculture by digging canals. Indeed, he was the first Sultan, who initiated the canal system in Haryana and took keen interest in its development. Trade and Commerce also flourished in his time. At Sirsa, he heard the happy news of the death of Tughan Khan. He conferred

150. Ibid., p. 702.
152. Ibid.
154. Ibid., pp. 183-194.
156. 39 K.M. from Sirsa. It’s original name was Ilidar. Ibid., p. 96.
158. Ibid.
the title of Khan-i-Khan on Malik Maqbul,159 who had deserted Khwaja Jahan Ayaz and joined him at Fatehabad.160 Malik Maqbul became the Prime Minister. From Fatehabad, the Sultan came to Hansi, where Ahmad Ayaz was appointed the Kotwal, of Hansi. Khwaja Jahan Ayaz also came from Delhi and sought forgiveness. His life was spared and was handed over to the Chief Magistrate of Hansi.161 Here the Sultan waited upon Shaikh Qutbuddin, who blessed and advised him to give up drinking.162

Firoz Shah Tughluq also laid down the foundation stone of Hissar and it was being called after his name Hissar-i-Firoza.163 Some of his slaves settled here and in the adjoining areas,164 which in due course of time, increased the population to a great extent. The reason assigned for building of the place was the deserted and arid character of the spot which was on the direct road from Khurasan, Multan and the western Punjab to Sirsa and Hissar and thence to the Capital of the Empire at Delhi. It also afforded a good starting place for hunting expeditions. A fort and a fine palace were made for the Sultan. The materials of old Hindu temples were used in the construction and a large quantity in all probability were brought from the site of the town of Agroha.165 He also built Ferozabad Harni Khera.166 To remove the scarcity of water, a number of canals were laid out.

Haryana made a tremendous progress in respect of agriculture. Afif says that the rates of crop were cheap during the period of his rule.167 The Yamuna was flowing on the east of Haryana and the villages and towns were flourishing during the reign of Firoz Shah.168 These

159. His original name was Kanno. He was a Hindu of Talingana. He entered the service of Muhammed bin-Tughluq, who named him Maqbul. Later he granted him title Qiwam-ul-Mulk. For details, Cf. Agha Mahdi Husain, op. cit., f.n. 3, pp. 392-393.
164. Asit Kumar, op. cit., p. 88.
165. Situated on the National Highway No. 10.48 K. M from Hissar. Still a debris of the old city can be seen there.
166. A village 12 miles from Sirsa.
168. Cf. Barani, Tarikh-i-Firoz shahi (Rizvi), pp. 27-29; Afif, op. cit., pp. 73-74; Manzir Ahmad, op. cit., pp. 99-100.
villages were also paying revenue to the Government.

Firoz Shah Tughluq was succeeded by his grandson, who took the title of Ghiyas-ud-din II. He was an inexperienced and was not capable to rule as he always was engrossed in drinking and sexual pleasures. As there was a dissension among the relatives and nobles and disorder was prevailing, the Hindus of Haryana infused to pay the toll tax and Zamindars withheld the payment of taxes. Even, they took the opportunity and plundered the houses of the Muslims.

Having assassinating the Sultan on 18 February 1389, Abu Bakar enthroned himself as a Sultan. But Amir Judeeda murdered Malik Sultan, a friend of the Sultan and a Governor of Samana, invited Prince Nasiruddin Muhammad Khan, who had fled to Nagarkot, came and marched alongside his forces towards Delhi. Abu Bakar, assisted by Bahadur Nahir of southern Haryana fought a battle, at Ferozabad. Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Khan was ousted from Delhi. However, both Nasiruddin Muhammad and his son Humayun, again, fought battle at Kundle (near Panipat) and was defeated. Islam Khan revolted from Abu Bakar and invited Nasiruddin Muhammad Khan. Seeing the treachery in his household troops and the resolution of Nasiruddin Muhammad Khan, Abu Bakar fled towards southern Haryana, being a territory of his friend. Later he was pursued and confined in the fort of Meerut, where he died.

Nasiruddin Muhammad Khan again ascended the throne in 1390. The people of southern Haryana revolted against him and even Bahadur Nahir who had a good relation with Abu Bakar, plundered the area up to Delhi. The Sultan had to move and defeated Bahadur Nahir at Kotla. He was succeeded by his son Humayun entitled

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170. Ibid., p. 271.
172. Ibid.
174. Ibid.
176. Ibid.
177. Ibid., p. 274.
178. Ibid., p. 276.
Sikandar as the Sultan expired on 19 February 1394 due to his illness. Humayun reigned only one and half month and then expired. The nobles enthroned Mahmud, who was a minor son of late Nasiruddin Muhammad Khan. As he could not have had the full control over the administration and nobles were also quarreling themselves, the anarchy prevailed almost all parts of the country including Haryana. The Chiefs revolted, Khwaja Jahan declared independence at Jaunpur, Sarang Khan at Dipalpur. The later, even marched towards Haryana and reduced Samana. Nusrat Shah, who had also been challenging the authority of Mahmud and had appointed Tatar Khan, the son of Zaffar Khan of Gujrat, as a wali of Panipat, directed him and Almas Beg, to oppose him. They defeated Sarang Khan on 4 October 1396 and compelled him to fly back to Multan. Bahadur Nahir of Southern Haryana occupied the fort of Siri and remained neutral, between the struggle of the two Sultans. Mulla Yekbal Khan, too joined with him. He had also invited Nusrat Shah. But he was too ambitious even to seize Nusrat Shah, who having heared about his conspiracy fled to his wasir Tahir Khan at Panipat. As all the belonging fell in the hands of Mulla Yekbal Khan, he soon marched with his troops and captured the Sultan Mahud Tughluq, who became a pageant in his hands. He (Mulla Yekbal Khan) along with his pageant Sultan, moved towards Panipat, but in the meantime Tatar Khan, rushed towards Delhi and invested it. He was followed by Mulla Yekbal Khan. Having failed in his attempt, Tatar Khan fled to his father Zaffar Khan in Gujrat. Because of instability in the Central Government, the anarchy prevailed in Haryana and sometime, it was occupied by the Sultan and sometime, it was snatched by him and took possession by his opponents. Indeed, the people of this region suffered and their miseries increased when they had to face the invasion of Taimur.

The year 1398 witnessed the invasion of Taimur commonly known

SOUTHERN PUNJAB (HARYANA) UNDER THE SULTANS

as Tamerlane. He entered Haryana via Bhatner which fell into his hands after desperate fighting and he “caused every soul in Bhutnere to be massacred, and the city to be reduced to ashes.” He proceeded eastward along the valley of the Ghaggar and encamped at a place called Kinara-i-hauz “bank of the tank or lake.” Thence he marched on via Firozabad, Sirsa, Fatehabad, Rajpur, Ahruni, Tohana, Samana, Kaithal, Asand, Salwan, Panipat and then Delhi. At Panipat, he collected ten lakh man wheat. At Sirsa, he stayed one day and plundered the entire city and slaughtered the inhabitants as they were Hindus. At Ahruni, he collected grain, and then set it on fire. At Kaithal he ordered “a general rendezvous.” Virtually, he plundered and devastated the entire Haryana. However, the brave Jats of this region took courage and fought with the infurious invader, but they were defeated. The weak Central Government failed to extend their support and rescue them. 2000 Jats were murdered in their struggle against him. Indeed, the Haryanavis gave a tough resistance to Taimur.

Taimur was opposed by the Sultan Mahmud Tughluq and Mulla Yekbal Khan with the Delhi’s troops, but they were defeated utterly. The Sultan fled to Gujrat and Mulla Yekbal Khan left for Badaun. Taimur entered into Delhi and sacked the entire city and took immense booty. Before occupying Delhi, he got murdered 100000 capitives. He stayed at Delhi for fifteen days and then left it only on 1 January 1399. He moved towards Firozabad, where shrewd Bahadur Nahir of southern Haryana met him. From Firozabad, he retreated to Panipat.

187. For his object in attacking Haryana and other parts of India, Cf. Malfuzat-i-Timuri, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, Allahabad, no date, p. 397.
188. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 283.
192. Ibid., Ferishta, op. cit., p. 283.
196. Ferishta, op. cit., 284.
197. Ibid., pp. 285-86.
198. Ibid., p. 284.
199. Ibid., p. 286.
and then went to Meerut where Khwaja Elias Ajobdhuni, the son of Mullana Ahmad Thaniesari defended the fort gallantly, but was defeated.  

As usual, he slaughtered the inhabitants. Thence he marched towards Haridwar and then Ambala. On his return journey, he had twenty conflicts with the Hindus in the Siwaliks.

Taimur's departure, virtually created a vacuum upon the throne for nearly two months. Mahmud Tughluq had fled to Gujrat. Thus taking opportune time, Nusrat Shah came from Meerut and took possession of Delhi, but soon he was ousted by Mulla Yekbal Khan. Actually there was no ruler at Delhi, so the governors of the provinces declared their independence, Ghalib Khan of Samana too became independent. Subsequently Samana was occupied by Bairam Khan, a decendant of one of the Turki slaves. Mulla Yekbal Khan marched towards Samana in 1405. Having seen the opponents army, Bairam Khan fled to hills. Mulla Yekbal Khan marched ahead but was defeated and slain by Khizr Khan with his combined forces of Punjab and Dipalpur. Hearing the murder of Mulla Yekbal Khan, Daulat Khan Lodi, who was commander in Delhi invited Mahmud Tughluq from Kanauj and thus throne again fell into his hands. The Sultan despatched Daulat Khan Lodi towards Samana, which had again been occupied by Bairam Khan. In 1407, both met near Samana, in which Bairam Khan was defeated. But soon after this, Khizr Khan occupied this part of Haryana. Kiwam Khan had occupied Hisar. The Sultan Mahmud Tughluq marched towards Hisar and after laying contribution, returned to Delhi. In the meantime Khizr Khan marched via Rohtak, to Delhi but due to shortage of grain and fodder, he had to return back to Fatehpur. In 1411 Khizr Khan again moved ahead and plundered Narnaul and then marched towards Delhi. This time he again failed in his mission. Verily entire Haryana fell under his sway. He returned to Fatehpur via Indri. In February 1412 Mahmud Tughluq

200. Ibid., Mohammad Habib, op. cit., p. 123.
203. Ibid., p. 288.
204. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 288.
205. Ibid., p. 290.
206. Ibid.
207. Ibid., p. 291.
208. Ibid.
209. Ibid.
went to Kaithal for hunting "Where he contracted a fever," and expired.  

Daulat Khan Lodi became the new master of Delhi in April 1412. In the meantime Malik Indris and his brother Mubariz Khan of Hansi, who had surrendered to Khizr Khan, abandoned him and supported the cause of the Daulat Khan Lodi. In 1414, Khizr Khan who had made a several attack upon Delhi, but did not succeed, again came and seized the fort of Siri for nearly four months. Consequently, Daulat Khan Lodi had to surrender before Khizr Khan. The latter confined Daulat Khan Lodi in the fort of Hissar, where he died. Upon his accession on 6 June 1414, Delhi and the neighbouring territory of Haryana, fell under his control. He assigned northern Haryana to his son prince Mubarak and Malik Sidhu. Nadira was appointed his Naib (deputy). Khizr Khan died on 20 May 1421 at Deihi and was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah.  

In 1424, the Sultan marched towards Kethar and after settling the affairs there, he returned through southern Haryana where he ravaged the territory. The people of this region became furious and irritated about the Sultan's conduct. Consequently, they plundered the neighbouring districts. The Sultan repeatedly attacked southern Haryana as they were still revolting. In 1426, he again sent troops "who carried fire and sword" in southern Haryana. He had to call Malik Mahmud Husain from Multan and Hissar was placed under his control.  

In 1428, the Sultan marched to southern Haryana and subdued it entirely and the inhabitants were compelled to pay the tribute.

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210. Ibid.; Yahya, Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi (Rizvi), Aligarh, 1958, p. 11.
212. Ibid.
213. Ibid., p. 16; Ferishta, op. cit., p. 292.
215. Ibid.
216. Ibid., p. 21.
217. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
218. Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabakat-i-Akbari (Rizvi), History of the Post Timur Sultans of Delhi, Part I (1399-1526), Aligarh, p. 72.
220. Ibid.
221. Ibid., pp. 301-302.
222. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 303.
1435, the Sultan was murdered by Sidpal, a Hindu, on the instance of Malik Sarvar-ul-Malik, a wazir of the Sultanat.\footnote{223}{Ibid., p. 308.}

Prince Muhammad was raised upon the throne by the wazir. The latter received the title of Khan-i-Jahan. Sidpal an accomplice of the wazir was appointed Governor upon Narnaul and Kuhram and so Haryana came under his control.\footnote{224}{Ibid., p. 309.} Kali Khan, who had been deputy of Malik Sarvar-ul-Malik could not tolerate and thus the fort of Siri, where the wazir had shut himself.\footnote{225}{Ibid., p. 311.} However, upon the Sultan’s orders, the wazir was murdered and Kali Khan with the title of Kamal Khan got the post of wazir. The Sultan paid little attention towards administration, so Bahlul Lodi took possession of northern Haryana up to Panipat.\footnote{226}{Ibid.} Upon his instance, the Sultan ordered the execution of Hissam Khan, who was opponent of Bahlul Lodi, and was a deputy wazir in the Sultanat, the weakness of the Sultan was exposed.\footnote{227}{Ibid., p. 312.} Seeing the dilly-dally policy of the Sultan, Mahmud Khalji of Malwa came through Nagor, Hansi, Hissar and arrived near Delhi in 1440. Being panic-stricken, sent an invitation to Bahlul Lodi. The Sultan resisted the forces of Malwa with the help of Bahlul Lodi, who henceforth became an influential figure to the State.\footnote{228}{Mohammad Habib and K.A. Nizami, ap. cit., p. 662.} Muhammad Shah died in 1443.\footnote{229}{Ibid.}

After the death of Muhmud Shah, his son Alauddin Alam Shah ascended the throne. But he was not a competent ruler. In 1446-47 he attacked Samana, but had to return, because he learnt on the way that the King of Jaunpur was advancing towards Delhi. Seeing the fee-bility in the Central Government, the Amirs and other Chiefs declared independence. Bahlul Lodi was watching the rapid changes, which were taking place in the Sultanat Haryana, was already under his possession and opposition was emerging against the Sultan. Hamid Khan, the defacto ruler of Delhi was captured and Alam Shah had to surrender his throne in favour of Bahlul Lodi on 19 April 1451.\footnote{230}{Ibid., p. 673.}
Prince Nizam Khan Sikander Lodi was appointed the Governor of Sirhind including the northern part of Haryana. In 1452, when Sultan Bahlul Lodi was at Sirhind, Mahmud Sharki on the instigation of his wife, came with army and 1000 "mountain like elephants" near Delhi. But Khwaja Bayazid, Shah Sikander Sarwani and Bibi Matu, the wife of Islam Khan, tactfully, but gallantly defended the fort. Darya Khan, being Lodi, evaded attack upon Delhi. Mahmud Sharki despatched Darya Khan Lodi and Fateh Khan with an 30,000 horses and 40 war elephants towards Panipat in order to prevent Sultan Bahlul on the way as he was returning to Delhi. In the meantime Bahlul had reached at Narela. Mahmud’s army was encamped four miles away from Narela. At night, Bahlul’s 14,000 horses carried off their bullocks, camels and horses. Next day battle was ensued and Mahmud army was defeated.\(^{231}\)

No major event has been occurred during the reign of Bahlul Lodi in Haryana which is to be mentioned here. He died in July 1489 due to illness. Sikander Lodi ascended throne on 17 July 1489. Haryana remained in peace. However, during his reign, it was his plan to plunder Kurukshetra and to destory the holy tank but it was abandoned on the sagacious advice of Miyan Abdullah.\(^{233}\)

Ibrahim Lodi succeeded to the throne of his father Sikandar Lodi, who died of illness on 21 November 1517.\(^{233}\) The latter had kept the Afghan nobles under the effective control of the Central authority and had also kept himself alarmed about the activities of the nobles. With his death, the nobles got the opportunity to reassert their influence in the state affairs as they looked upon the Sultan as their leader—primus inter pares. As a result of it, the empire was divided between two brothers—Ibrahim and Jalal, but soon mistake was amended and Jalal was put to death.\(^{234}\) Initially, he succeeded in his struggle against Gwalior, but soon he was defeated by Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar, which exposed his incapability as a General. Consequently revolts


started in various parts of the country and a large number of Afghan flocked to Muhammad Shah of Bihar. Virtually eastern part of the kingdom was cut off. Ibrahim had to adopt dictatorial attitude towards nobles and put to death the prominent grandees of the Sultanat. 233 His tyrannical attitude and dubitable disposition created suspicion in the minds of other amirs. Alam Khan, 238 who was eager to capture the throne, fled away. Daulat Khan Lodi, 237 the Muqta of the rich and strategically important province of Punjab had sent his son Dilawar Khan to the court as a hostage, who also disgruntled with him. Dilawar Khan, who had watched the proceedings of the court, was frightened and perceived the ensuing danger to his father, ran away to Lahore. 238 Daulat Khan Lodi now made up his mind to get rid of himself from the Sultan forever. He sent his son Dilawar Khan Lodi to Kabul to appraise Babar about the tyranny meted out by the Sultan upon his kinsmen and nobles and sought his protection. Alam Khan too fled to Babar. Actually, they had invited him to invade India. So Babar, a conscious emperor, got an opportunity, afforded by these Afghans nobles. He first made work of his host and seized his province Lahore. 239

Passing through the territory of Punjab, he reached at Samana. Here, an intelligence reached that two armies were advancing to meet

235. Mian Bhau, who was a great noble of his father Sikandar Lodi was burnt alive, Ahmad Yadgar, op. cit., p. 60; Islam Khan rebelled and died in the battle with Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, Ibid., p. 16; Said Khan was made prisoner, Ibid., p. 21. Mahmud Sarpani and Hisham Khan Sahu Khail were put to death, Ibid., p. 21. Azam Humayun was slain, Ibid., p. 22. Nearly twenty-three were put to death, Ibid., p. 24.


237. Daulat Khan Lodi was a son of Tatar Khan, a cousin of Sultan Bahlul Lodi.

238. Abdullah, Turikh-i-Daundi, Ailgarh, text, pp. 86-87.

239. Daulat Khan Lodi surrendered to Babar at Malot and soon, later passed away on 10 January 1526 in disgrace and was buried at Sultanpur, which was founded by him in Panjab, Baburnama, pp. 459-61; Zain Khan, Tabaqat-i-Baburi, p. 59.
him; one from Hissar under Hamid Khan, *Khasa Khail*, the *Shiqdar* of that place. Hissar's army consisted of the troops of Haryana and it had advanced up to nearly twenty-five miles in order to join the Sultan's army. This was a serious news and to assess the real strength and position of his enemy, two important commanders Amir Kitta Beg and Mumin Ataka were sent to Ibrahim's camp and Hissar respectively. He himself continued his march and reached at Ambala, in February 1526. Here the real strength and position of the Hissar force was known. The army of Hissar was in a position to operate effectively on the flank of Babar's line of march from Ambala to Delhi. Babar realised the seriousness of the situation and at once ordered his son Humayun to meet the Hissar force. He further ordered to the following *Amirs* to accompany the Prince Humayun in his maiden

240. He was of Ibrahim's own family, the *Sahu-Khail*, *Baburnama*, f.n. 3, p. 465. Contrary to it, Iqtidar Husain Siddiqli writes, "...it is wrong to assume that the *Khsasa Khails*, were the members of the *Shahi Khail* of the Lodi Tribe of the Afghan race." The *Khasa Khail* was the name given to the *sawars* and officers under the immediate command of the Sultan. For further details, Cf. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqli, *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, Aligarh, 1969, pp. 1111-1117.

Ahmad Yadgar writes that when Babar left Karnal, he received the intelligence that Hamid Khan, along with 4000 *sawars* were coming with the attention to assist the Sultan, *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*, E & D, Vol. V, p. 27. However, Babar writes contrary to it, he says that he received intelligence about the coming of Hamid Khan at Sunam (in Patiala), *Baburnama*, p. 465. The latter statement seems to be correct as Karnal is only twenty miles from Panipat and it would be difficult to put hurdles in a short distance which would be no useful at all.

241. Military Collector, *Baburnama*, p. 465. According to Zain Khan, he was a *Hakim*, *Tabaqat-i-Baburi*, p. 68; Abul Fazi also writes that he was 'Hakim,' *Abkurnama*, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1907, p. 240; Ferishta says, "...Humeed Khan, on the part of the Governor of Hisar-i-Firoza was prepared to oppose him," *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. II (Briggs), Calcutta, 1965, p. 27; "Hamid Khan, Governor of Hisar-Firoza opposed Humayun," Alexander Dow, *The History of Hindustan*, Vol. II, London, MDCL XVII (1768), p. 109. Since Sultanate was parcelled out into a number of *Shiqz* (later known as *Sarkars*) and Hiszar-i-Firoza was one of them. So *Shiqdar* was appointed to maintain law and order.


244. *Ibid.*

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expedition. Amir Khwaja Kalan Beg,245 Amir Sultan Muhammad Duldai,246 Amir Wali Khazin,247 Amir Abdul Aziz,248 Amir Muhammad Ali Jang,249 Amir Shah Munsur Barlas,250 Amir Kitta Beg,251 Amir Muhibb Ali252 and several others of the aupachakian. Actually he had despatched the entire right wing of his army. It seemed that there was a grave situation and he apprehended a great anger from this part of Haryana. So he sent Chief nobles of the empire as he would not like to keep the matter with a mere chance.

Accordingly, Humayun set out against Hamid Khan on 26 February 1526 at 7 a.m.253 Although he had sent an advance guard consisted of 150 warriors, he himself, too, moved towards Hissar rapidly. The vanguard’s troops fell upon their flanks like a prey. Thus the battle ensued. They attacked with arrows and spears till the arrival of the Prince Humayun. On his arrival, he re-enforced the army. Hamid Khan along with his Haryana troops gave tough fight to Humayun but was defeated utterly.254 The wrath of Humayun fell upon the Afghans and Haryanavis. He captured two hundred men out of which one hundred were beheaded at Hissar and remaining one hundred were sent

245. Amir Khwaja Kalan was the son of Maulana Muhammad Sadruddin. He was a friend of Babar and had served in the right wing of his forces in the first battle of Panipat, Baburnama, p. 472. For his brief career, please Cf. Ibid., p. 772. Also Cf. Mitza Mohammad Haidar Dughlat, Tarikh-i-Rashidi, translated into English by N. Elias and E. Denison Ross, Patna, 1973, p. 468; Gulbadan Begam, Humayunnama, translated into English by A. S. Beveridge, Delhi, 1972, p. 7.


248. Abdul Aziz Mir Akhwur (master of the Horse) served Babar in the force in the right reserve at Panipat and also served in the right wing of his forces in the Battle of Khanwa, Ibid., pp. 473 & 567; Also Cf. Akbarnama, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1907, p. 240.


251. Son of Sayyid Qara, ibid, p. 464.

252. A man of the grand-house.

253. Baburnama, p. 466, “Next morning...when the cool sun, sitting on the sky, raised aloft the banner of his rays, the prosperous Prince, placing his fortunate steps in the stirrup of felicity, stirred up his steed of intrepidity towards the enemy.” Zain Khan, op. cit., p. 69; Gulbadan Begam, op. cit., p. 6, (Introduction).

to Babar.\footnote{255} About eight elephants were also captured. Hissar and its surrounding villages were plundered and devastated entirely.\footnote{256} Beg Irak Mughal was despatched to Babar, who conveyed the victory news to the Emperor and received a special royal robe alongwith selected horse from the royal stable.\footnote{257} The Emperor promised him to give further promotion in future. Humayun returned from Hissar on 5 March 1526. As it was a Humayun's maiden triumphant, overjoyed Babar gave a special robe of honour and a royal horse to Humayun. Besides, Hissar with its dependencies and subordinates districts of which yielded a *kror* was bestowed on the Prince with a *kror* in cash as a present.\footnote{258} Babar also ordered Ustad Ali Quli Khan,\footnote{259} the gunner to shoot one hundred prisoners which were brought from the battle field of Hissar.\footnote{259} Thus, he gave a stern warning not only to the Haryana but also to the entire nation.\footnote{261} Contrary to their funeral rites, they were buried,\footnote{262} so that the people of Haryana felt humiliation of it.

Babar now marched from Am\textsuperscript{la} to Shahabad Markanda,\footnote{263} where he halted for a few days.\footnote{264} From here, he despatched the news of early victory to Kabul.\footnote{265} At the outset in Haryana, he, like his ancestor, followed the policy of repression, as he carried 'sword and fire from Lahore to Agra.' He ransacked Shahabad Markanda and people were massacred indiscriminately.\footnote{266} Apparently, the inhabitants

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Zain Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
\item Stanley Lane-Poole, *Babar*, Delhi, 1971, p. 160.
\item Baburnama, p. 466; Cf. Zain Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
\item For Hissar Revenue, Zain Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 72; One fails to find the information regarding revenue of Hissar in *Baburnama*, p. 466; Cf. *Akbarnama*, Vol. I (H. Beveridge), Calcutta, 1907, p. 241. Hissar-i-Firoza and Jullunder were given to him; Ferishta, *op. cit.*, Vol. II (John Briggs), p. 27.
\item Master of Matchlock.
\item Stanley Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, p. 260.
\item Baburnama, p. 466; Zain Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 71; Stanley Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
\item Ferishta, *op. cit.*, p. 28; *Tarikh-i-Dutbi* also known as *Tarikh-i-Eleh-i-Zizam Shah*, edited by S. Mujahid Husain Zaidi, New Delhi, 1965, p. 70; Stanley Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
\item Zain Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
\item Gulbadan Begam, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
of this town gave a tough resistance to his onward journey but they were to flee, leaving their belongings. He paid little attention to save saint and even Ulama. He had despatched a few spies to procure intelligence as a little complacency or some miscalculation of the strength of Ibrahim Lodi’s army could alter the whole picture, to change early victory into defeat. That was not to be happen, however. Being a seasoned general, he would not like to leave anything to chance. At Shahabad Markanda, the New Year Day fell, but Babar paid little attention to celebrate it and did not observe it at all. Obviously, he did not wish to divert the attention of the military commanders, who were busy in preparations for the ensuing battle. As a General, he gave preference to his prime duty and discarded the rites and usages of his forefathers though for pro-tempore.

In an alien country, Babar had so confidence in himself that he went to Sarsawa for excursions. But this was not so as he had an intelligence about the despatch of Ibrahim’s 500 men towards Doab (Ganga-Yamuna). The news was confirmed by Haidar Quli, who told that Ibrahim had sent the Lodi’s brothers Daud Khan and Hattim Khan across the river Yamuna and was not too far from his camp. In addition to it, he had a vision for future expeditions as he on the pretext of excursion closely examined the peculiarity of the town and its surrounding tract. He had deviated himself from the bee-line route as he preferred to march to Panipat by way of water which was vital for his troops; it would also abated the labours of his army. He also avoided the confrontation with the people

268. The razor was applied to Humayum’s face, Cf. *Baburnama*, f.n. I, pp. 466-467.
270. It is not a Sirsa as Beveridge has mentioned in *Akbarnama*, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1907, p. 241, which is a district of Haryana, Sarsawa is in a Saharnpur district of Uttar Pradesh.
271. Ferista has given the strength of the army 27,000 horse, *op. cit.*, p. 28. An exaggeration statement.
273. Zain Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 73; Sultan Balban used to go in Haryana for hunting and crushed the insurgent of this region. He also got cleared all the jungles in this region.
274. He chose the battle-ground on the western side of the river Yamuna.
of Haryana as it would reduce his strength by sanguinary skirmishes with the nobles of the Lodi’s empire till he reached Panipat.  

275. Having heard the news about the second advance party, he immediately deputed Chin Timur Sultan and other distinguished commanders on 1 April 1526. They crossed the river Yamuna and encountered with the advance party of Ibrahim and defeated them. Many of the vanquished soldiers were seized and put to death. Hattim Khan alongwith seventy prisoners were captured and put under the sword. This caused a great terror in Haryana and other parts of the country.

Failure of Hamid and Habtam’s troops in putting the gigantic hurdles against the advancement of Mughal’s army precipitated the coming disaster. Babar had never under estimated the strength of Ibrahim’s army and had realised the gravity of the situation fully as it is cleared that he had to send the right and left wings of his army in the countered of Hisar and with Hatim Khan respectively. Babar left Sarsawa on 2 April 1526. He remained busy for preparations and in getting the completion of the arrangements of their equipments and apparatus. He never kept his army in leisure and ordered it to collect carts (arabas). Nearly seven hundred carts were collected. When every thing was ready for the battle, he called a meeting of the General Council, which adopted the methods and manners for the battle. He marched alongwith the western bank of the river Yamuna and reached at Karnal. In the meantime, Amin Khan,

276. He was the eighth son of Babar’s maternal uncle Sultan Ahmad Khan Chaghtai, Baburnama, f.n. 2, p. 467; E. Denison Ross, op. cit., p. 161. He died of dysentry at Agra and was buried there.


278. Baburnam, p. 468; Zain Khan writes, “Hatim Khan, with 70 or 80 other Amirs was brought before the throne of victory...” Cf. Zain Khan, op. cit., p. 75; Akbarana, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1907, p. 241; Firishta, op. cit., p. 28.


280. Zain Khan writes: “...eight hundred arabas were collected,” op. cit., p. 75.

281. Ibid.

one of the nobles of the Sultan Ibrahim deserted him and joined Babar. The latter arrived at Panipat on 12 April 1526.

Babar started in arraying the army on the battle-field in accordance with the decision taken by the General Council. He drew up his army east of Panipat. He kept a laager of seven hundred carts in his front. The wheels of these carts were tied together with ropes of raw hide. Between every two carts five or six mantelets were fixed. Behind them matchlockmen were to stand and fire. His right flank was protected by the populous city of Panipat and left one by ditches and mulahs. His entire army was divided into right wing, left wing, centre (the right hand of the centre and the left of the centre) and vanguard. Two bodies of select Turkish horsemen were placed at the outer ends of the right and left wings to make a detour of the enemy and take him in the rear in the movement called tulghuma. The reserve were also posted at the two shoulders of the centre for rushing to the rescue of the hard pressed wings.

Ibrahim’s army was consisted of 10,000 and 1000 elephants and Babar’s army was 12,000 men and artillery. Both the troops faced each other from 12 April 1526 to 19 April. Babar had directed his troops to nettle the enemy troops off and on during these seven days, he prudently and tactfully got Ibrahim’s troops in busy and got the apple of time for strengthening and fortifying his troops. There were some skirmishes during this week and a number of them were made captive. On the other hand, though the Sultan Ibrahim Lodi had resolved to fight Babar with full strength and vigour had wasted away the time and not palisaded his troops as Babar had made.

Babar had made full preparations for the battle by 20 April evening as he had already got premonition about the huge strength of Ibrahim’s army. And now he did not wish to linger the battle as wastage of time would mean wastage of food and other eatable articles which were vital for the army. Besides, his troops had been seeing the opposite gigantic army of the Sultan. Actually the Sultan’s army
was in trepidation as there was no co-ordination among the Generals as the nobles were disgruntled with him. Babar resolved finally to fight with Ibrahim on the very next day. He did not wish to go out from his temporary fort which he had constructed for the purpose. Indian nobles suggested him for a nocturnal attack on the Sultan camp. As such Babar accepted their advice. Keeping in two aims in his mind, he decided to send five or six thousand persons under the command of Mahdi Khwaja and other experienced Amirs against Ibrahim and would make night attacks; if these troops would be in triumphant, the victory would be easiest one, if they became failure it would solve the other purpose by getting the army of Ibrahim moved from his static place. Thus he succeeded in the second aim.

Ibrahim with a full vigour and strength moved towards the troops of his opponents. He was in the middle of the army. They were moving towards the right wing of the Mughal army. Seeing the huge army Babar deputed Abdul Aziz, who was in the right reserve to support the right wing of his army. They were advancing rapidly but to their outer dismay to see the hurdles put by Babar. They hesitated and slackened its pace. Babar struck immediately. The turning parties wheeled from right and left to the enemy's rear and began to rain arrows down, while the right and left wings fought with their advancing troops. Ustad Ali Quli and Mustafa discharged the shots from the left hand of the centre. So the tough fighting went on. Babar writes, "Our right, left, centre and turning parties," surrounded the enemy. Verily, the Ibrahim's troops were jammed in the centre as "right and left hands were massed in such a crowd that they could neither move forward against us nor force a way for fight." They could not use their weapons and were being put under the charge of arrows, swords and artillery. The battle began at

293. *Ibid*.
294. *Ibid*.
297. *Ibid*.

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6.00 A.M. and by noon the Lodis were defeated utterly. Ibrahim's body was lying among five or six thousand of his warriors and was found by Tahir Tibri. Nahar Khan son of Hasan Khan of southern Haryana, who fought on the side of Ibrahim was captured but due to political exigency, he was allowed to go. Vikramaditya, the last Tomara dynasty of Gwalior was killed, while he was fighting on Ibrahim's side.

Thus, the Haryana reluctantly provided a passe-partout to unlock the gates of Delhi and Agra. After the battle, Babar laid out a garden which had withered away, and built a mosque, which is one mile on the north east side of Panipat city and is better known by the name of 'Kabuli Bagh' which still commemorates his memory.

Babar's strategic devices, his capability to carry the army in the battle-field, best cavalry, supported by artillery, ability to inspire his army men, having the support of excellent band of Amirs like Muhammad who inspite of incapacitated prior to battle, fought on the

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298. "When the incitement to battle had come, the sun was sperr high, till midday fighting had been in full force; noon passed, the force was crushed in defeat..."

Ibid., please also Cf. Akbarnama, Vol.I, Calcutta, 1907, p. 244; Rushbrook Williams, An Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century, p. 137.


बन्दना पाराशार लिखी है कि "इब्राहीम 5-6 हजार सैनिकों के साथ के साथ गलत" बाबर-भारतीय सर्वनाम भें दिल्ली, 1975 पृ. 47.

This is untenable and irrational conclusion. Ibrahim's tomb lies near the road leading from Tahsil to City of Panipat. It was Sher Shah's dying regrets that he had never fulfilled his attention of erecting a tomb to the fallen monarch, Cf. Nimat Allah, Tarikh-i-Khan-Jahan Lodhi, E & D, Vol.V, Allahabad, 1975, p. 108. The British Government had erected a plain platform over it with a short Urdu inscription. Now the Municipality of Panipat had done a well in lying out a park and installing electric tubes surrounding the tomb. Lane-poole writes that "Afghans continued make pilgrimage this grave, "Babar, Delhi, 1971, p. 166; Even to day, the inhabitans of Panipat and adjoining areas used to go to, his grave and distributed sweets or meals. The reason, for this, can easily be discerned; both Sultan Ibrahim and Vikramaditya, the raja of Gwalior, died there., Cf. Archaeological Survey Report of India, part II, p. 389.


301. Personally visited the site.

battle with full valour and strength, his fine intelligence system, stuff for the army, his own discern eyes and active mind all these traits joined him in getting the victory at the First Battle of Panipat.

Ibrahim's inexperience, suspicious disposition, dictatorial and tyrannical attitude and rejecting the theory of primus-inter-pares, dissension among nobles and their unwarranted treacherous behaviour at the time of precarious situation brought ruin to the Lodi's empire. Besides, his defective spy system, raw recruitment, failure in not protecting his army on the battle-field, virtually sealed the fate of the Lodis in not only in Haryana but in the entire parts of the country.

In early Medieval period, Haryana had been the victim of many ruinous disruptions. The people had to suffer in the hands of the furious invaders as well as from its own rulers. Both had committed heinous crimes upon them as the ambitious invaders wanted to conquer it so that they could establish their rule in India; then in a zeal to consolidate the conquered territory of Haryana, the ruler awe the people of this region in disguise or made the pretext for excursions or of hunting. All these atrocities and severities compelled the submissive people of Haryana to gird their loins against the invaders and the rulers alike, and shook off the allegiance of the latter. They had to choose the path of robbery, making nocturnal attack upon the Capital, withholding the revenue and creating a economic blockade. In truth, Haryanavis had not allowed any invader to pass on their territory with an ease and occupy the throne instead, he had to face them, in his advancement and if unlucky, he took the possession of the region, he was not retreated un molested to his native country. Even, the mighty ruler, who had tried to harry them, could not take a sigh of relief in his period of regime.
BOOK REVIEW

Peasant Movement in Punjab by S. Gajrani, Madaan Publishers, Patiala, First Published 1986, Price Rs. 125.00.

The role of the peasantry in the national liberation movement of the Third World needs no further introduction to the scholars. Dr Gajrani's scholarly study is an important addition to this field of historical enquiry. It has not only challenged the thesis of Punjab peasant's loyalty to British rule but provided an interesting account of their history of resistance to colonial administrative apparatus since the beginning of the 1920. The study is divided into six chapters. In the first one, the author introduces his readers to the broad social frame work of rural society and reviews the seeds of social tension and conflict leading to a general discontent among the peasantry in the present century. On the basis of the findings of the Board of Economic Enquiry, Punjab (?), the author adds that there was a large scale 'congestion of owners in the lower group' (below five acres) and 'concentration of land in the higher once' (above twenty acres). In this connection he draws our attention to the miserable plight of small land owners who often worked as tenants at bigger holdings to supplement their meagre income. On the other hand, large scale land ownership did not lead to capitalistic farming in the rural society. Generally speaking, the zamindars collected rent in kind and imposed many arbitrary taxes on tenants. The author also points out that agricultural labourers, who constituted the lowest section of the agrarian economy, were exploited by landholders in every possible way.

Dr Gajrani devotes the second chapter to an analysis of the factors leading to peasant unrest in the countryside. Here an attempt has also been made to examine the extent to which the peasantry of the British Punjab was awakened and organised during the period under review. He briefly refers to the agrarian upsurge of 1907 as well as dwells elaborately on the role of the Kirti Kisan Party in central Punjab. The author is of the opinion that 'it failed to acquire a mass base' though he finds that it carried an effective resistance against the colonial rulers during a critical period of the history of Punjab.

The role of the different political parties formed the central theme
of the fourth chapter. It is incidentally the longest chapter of the book and seeks to highlight how the different political groups and parties took up the cause of the peasantry and made their struggle an integral part of the national liberation movement. Dr Gajrani begins this chapter with an analysis of the role of the Ghadarites, praises them for showing a lot of initiative in organising the peasants and finally, criticises them for not being able to 'carry the masses with them.' The role of the Akalis as well as their struggle for the Gurdwara reform have received the serious attention of the writer. Akalis, writes Dr Gajrani, began a 'monumental revolution.' But the 'movements of 1938-40, in the Niliabar, Montgomery, Multan, Lahore, and Harsha-Chhina alone can be called the effective peasant movements in which their demands were taken up and the attention of the masses was drawn to their problems.' The scholar has no doubt that 'No Tax' campaign was not popular in Punjab (1938-39) and by the end of 1945 the peasant struggle had lost its 'impetus and appeal.' Our author concludes his study with observation that the agrarian struggle remained more or less confined in the central districts of the province. It was never popular in the western districts across the Indus. In the Haryana region also, the author found that the zamindars remained generally unaffected and quiet by the movement of the peasants of the trans-Sutlej districts. His study reveals that the Sikh peasants of central Punjab districts persistently fought against the colonial authority due to their 'traditional hostility' to the British power in India. Regarding the leadership of the movement, Dr Gajrani did not hold a very high opinion. He was not also sure whether the peasant struggle was guided by the rich peasants who were the chief beneficiaries of commercialization of agriculture under British rule.

The study draws our attention to some of the limitations of the peasant movement in Punjab of the present century. In the first place, the demands of the peasants did not question the basic fundamentals and legitimacy of the agrarian structure. Secondly, the growing problem of rural indebtedness never received the serious attention of the peasant leaders of the period. Thirdly, communalism and casteism often affected the struggle against landlords, moneylenders and highhandedness of canal officials. Fourthly, individual terrorism caused a serious damage to the organisation and programme of the peasant struggle. In this connection he refers to the role of
the Babbar Akalis in the central districts.

Dr Gajrani has questioned the widely accepted thesis regarding the predominant element in the composition of rural structure of Punjab under British rule. Ever since the days of the coming of Thomasonians in the middle of the last century, it was believed that Punjab is a land of peasant proprietors. This became virtually an official creed of the Lahore secretariat in the late 19th century and continued to influence the writings of officials like H. Calvert (Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab) and M. L. Darling (The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt and other works) in the present century. Recent researches of Barrier and Banga have supported this view. Dr Gajrani has questioned this point without referring to any source in his defence. The vast mass of official literature (for example, assessment reports, monographs published by the Board of Economic Enquiry, Punjab, famine enquiry findings, etc.), however, hardly supports this argument. Besides, the absence of footnotes in the text of the work may raise some doubt about his observations. Recent studies of scholars like Mohinder Singh (Akali Movement), Harish K. Puri (Ghadar Movement), Prem Chowdhury (Punjab Politics), Imran Ali (Punjab Politics in the Decade Before Partition), Bhagwan Josh (Communist Movement in Punjab) and K. L. Tuteja (Sikh Politics) should have found their rightful place in this study. Further, there are a few significant errors in the Bibliography and they may be corrected when the volume would be revised. Here I quote two of them: Panjab Castes was written by the Language Department (page 110) while Sir Denzil Ibbetson (unfortunately printed as Densil in page 113 and Dannzil in page 73) authored A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province (page 113). Finally there are a few observations which require further attention of the author. I refer to six to them:

(i) ‘The Akalis’ backbone was formed by the Sikh peasantry while that of the Babbar Akalis by the Sikh Jats of Central Punjab.’ (page 27)

(ii) ‘The Akalis supported autocrates.’ ‘The villagers gained nothing from the Akali agitation.’ (page 47)

(iii) The ‘Babbar Akalis indulged in terrorism.’ (page 45) They were ‘dangerously revolutionary.’ (page 47)

(iv) The ‘Ghadr Group involved the masses,’ it ‘had failed because it could not carry the masses along with them.’ (page 44)

(v) ‘Had the urban classes made a common cause with the rural
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Muslim Communities, India would not have been partitioned.' (page 54)

(iv) 'An external factor of 13 years of constant crops failure and the epidemic of plague accelerated,' the death rate (page 14-italics mine)

In spite of these points the present work marks an interesting addition to our understanding of the history of the peasant struggle in Punjab under British rule. It fills an important gap on the peasant studies in Punjab and keeps the door wide open for many such contributions in this field of historical enquiry.

Himadri Banerjee
Department of History,
Rabindra Bharati University,
Calcutta.