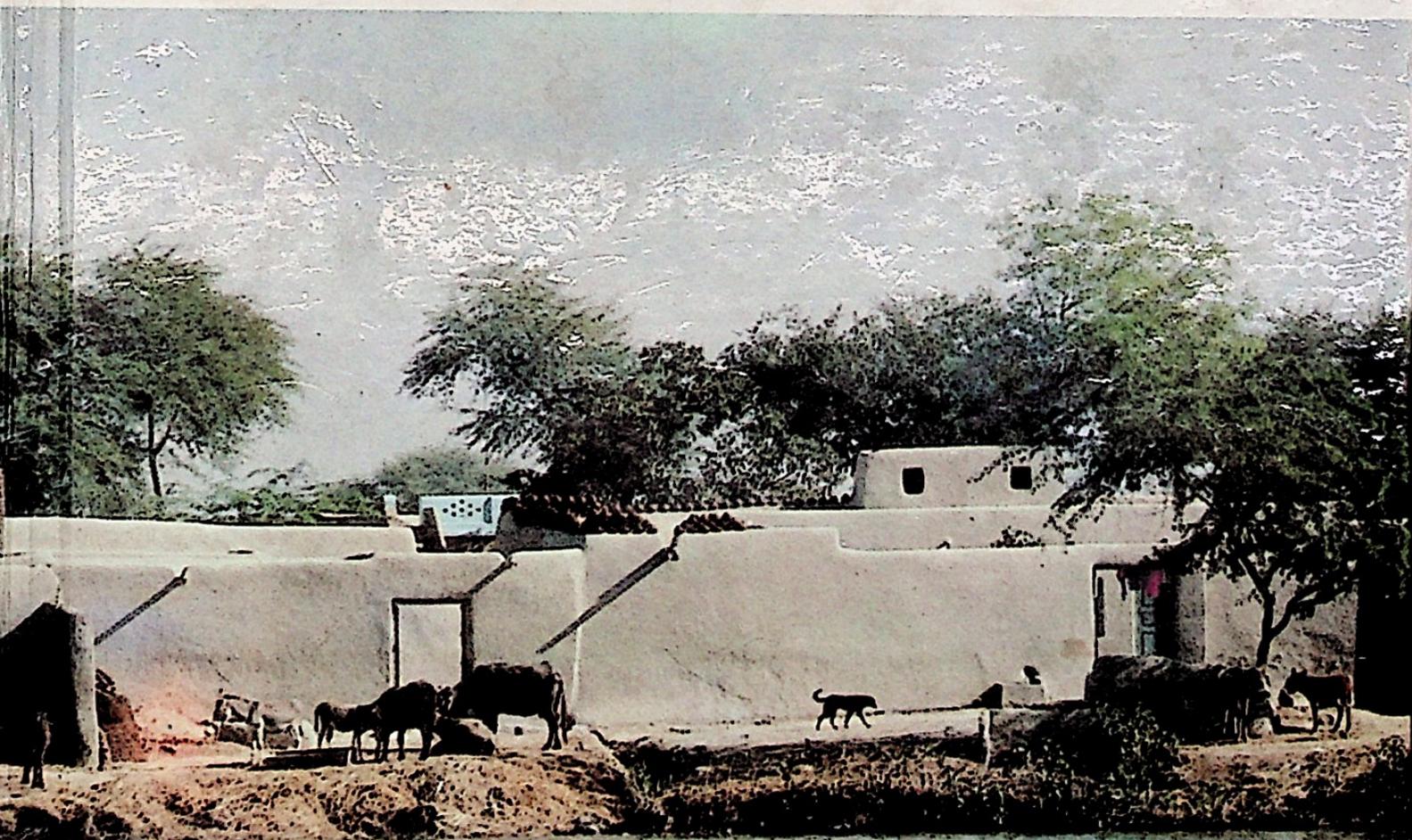


RESISTANCE THEMES IN PUNJABI LITERATURE

SHAFQAT TANVEER MIRZA



Sukhdev

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SANG-E-MEEL PUBLICATIONS

25 - SHAHRA-E-PAKISTAN (LOWER MALL), LAHORE - 2 PAKISTAN

1992

**Publishers:
NIAZ AHMED
SANG-E-MEEL PUBLICATIONS
Lahore (Pakistan)**

**Printers:
COMBINE PRINTERS
Lahore (Pakistan)**

Rs.210.00

ISBN 969-35-0101-2

**Dedicated to the memory of
SUNNY BHAI**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have borrowed at length from S.M. Lateef's History of the Punjab and from other sources, duly acknowledged in the text. To rephrase men better endowed than the present writer seemed to be futile. If this needs an apology, I tender one in all humility.

My thanks are also due to lifelong friends Iqbal Hussain Jaffery of The Pakistan Times Zafar Iqbal Mirza of Viewpoint and Kishwar Naheed without whose invaluable advice this work would not have been possible.

S.T.M.

Lahore,
January 1991

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HEER - SYMBOL OF RESISTANCE

FLOGGING or a threat of flogging is a typical aspect of the Islamic Penal Code. Heer is, perhaps, the only heroine of our romantic or folk tales, who had to face the Shariat Court and hear from the Judge or Qazi:

دے شرع دے مار اُدھیڑ دلیساں کراں عمر خطاب دانیساں ہیرے

I will do justice according to the Shariat, justice in the tradition of Caliph Umar Khitab. And that is you will be severely flogged.

No one was there to plead for Heer of Jhang Sial in the court of the Qazi (judge) appointed by the Lodhi or the Mughal rulers.

Heer, the daughter or princess of a Sial Raja of Jhang, refused to surrender her fundamental right - freedom to marry a man of her own choice, the right recognised by Islam unambiguously. She had committed no crime which came within the mischief of the Hadood Ordinance of those days. Her only crime was that she demanded the freedom to marry a man, Ranjha, whose clan was not equal in status to the Sials and who had abandoned his land and home in his ancestral village across river Chenab. After the death of his father, his elder brothers robbed Ranjha of fertile land and gave him barren tracts as his share. As an angry young man he left the place, came to Jhang, and met Heer who introduced him to her father Mehr Choochak, the chief of the Sial Rajputs, who appointed Ranjha as 'manager' of his livestock.

Ranjha, before reaching Jhang, picked up quarrels with his brothers and sisters-in-law, the boatmen on Chenab

and a Maulana of the Baitul Ateeque Mosque, where Ranjha wanted to stay one night. But the mullah refused to accommodate him saying

گھر رب دے مسجداں ہونڈیاں نہیں ایتھے غیر شرع ناہیں وارٹے اوتے
گت اتے فقیر پلٹت ہووے نال دُریاں دے بنھ مارے اوتے

A mosque is the House of God. Those not in line with the Sharia cannot be allowed to enter here. Dogs and dirty *faqirs* are to be bound and flogged by us.

Earlier, Ranjha had accused the maulvis of indecently assaulting their pupils, adultery and accepting bribes for giving religious approval to the criminal and social offences being committed by the well-to-do.

داڑھی شیخ دی، عمل شیطان والے کيہا رانجھا ای جانڈیاں راہیاں نوں
اگے کدھ قرآن تے بہیں منبر کيہا اڈیواری مکر دیاں پھابیاں نوں

You have a beard of a pious man but your actions are those of the devil. You sit on the pulpit, open the Quran and thus play your dirty tricks.

It was Ranjha who earlier had a row with a *patwari* and then a maulvi, both of them pillars of authority.

Now it was Heer who had chosen Dheedo Ranjha, an angry young man from Takht Hazara, as her would-be husband. But she was not allowed to do so by her uncle Kaido, her parents, her brothers and last but not least the judge of the Shariat Court. She had to face everybody like an emancipated young girl. The first attack came from her uncle Kaido who found Heer and Ranjha in the animal farm talking like lovers. In Kaido's view this was highly objectionable. A daughter of a chief talking to a man of inferior status and an employce of the chief, would certainly earn disgrace for the ruling family of the area. Heer was forced to expose her uncle and prove that he

was a pervert and otherwise also abnormal. She hit him hard in the meeting of the elders of her family.

Kaido was morally defeated by Heer and her friends but the points raised by Kaido were held valid by the elders.

- 1) Ranjha Jat was ethnically not a proper match for Heer Sial.
- 2) Ranjha was just a domestic servant of Heer's father. How could a master give the hand of his daughter in marriage to a slave?

Now the father, mother and brother of Heer Sial ordered her to mend her ways and abandon the idea of marrying a poor domestic servant. She refused to do so, and insisted that she had the right to choose her future companion. Come what may she would marry Ranjha, the *chaak* (servant).

Heer's determination was unshakeable and that embarrassed the chief of the Sial tribe. Heer's brother suggested that if she was allowed to have Ranjha as her husband, it would bring shame to all the Sials and they would never be able to keep their head high. This would ruin the principality of Choochak. He suggested that Heer should be done away with. She should be murdered and thrown into the Chenab. But according to her father and mother, if ever this conspiracy was discovered, it would bring greater disgrace to the family. Therefore, the Sial chief sought the help of the judge of the Shariat court (Qazi Shamsuddin) who happened to be Heer's teacher. She was presented before the Qazi who advised her:

بچہ ہیر! تینوں اسیں مت دیندے مٹھی نال زبان سمجھاؤندے نی
چاک چوہراں نال نہ گل کیجے ایہہ عنقتی کیہڑے تھاؤں دے نی

Heer, my child, I advise you never talk to these menial servants. They are just your workers they have no status at all.

Heer had already accepted the threat of his brother Sultan to lay down her life rather than forget Ranjha. She refused to listen to the wise words of the Qazi:

ہو سبھ گلاں منظور کراں راک چاک توں نہ بہٹا میاں

I will accept all your conditions but do not ask me to leave the servant.

That enraged the Qazi who shouted at the top of his voice.

سر بیٹیاں دے چا جڑا کر دے باپ غصیاں تے جدوں آوندے نہیں
سر ڈھکے نہیں وچ روڑھ دیندے باس کال، گتے، بٹے کھاؤندے نہیں

When fathers get angry they chop off the heads of their daughters. Their dead bodies are thrown in the river, whereafter they are eaten by dogs and cats.

These dreadful words from the lips of the Shariat judge failed to move the young girl. She refused to surrender and based her argument on the Quranic principles and the history of Meccan society in the days of the Holy Prophet:

پوے بہتیا، قوم اوہ نشٹ ہووے دھیاں باریاں خون گواہ میاں
مندا گھت اولاد دے نال کرنا لا تقستلوا حکم اللہ میاں

History stands witness that the nations which allowed the murder of their daughters were doomed. Allah has ordered never to kill daughters. You will be accountable to Allah for this crime on the Day of Resurrection.

Heer upset the Qazi. She had better knowledge of history and the rise and fall of nations than he. She had a more stable character than the Qazi who had so far put up not a single convincing argument. Heer made them

speechless and when the qazis have no way out they use their authority to issuing a 'fatwa' (edict).

The Qazi applies the same tactics.

جس وقت اُساں دتا چا فتویٰ او سے وقت ہی مار اتا نہیں گے

When we issue the *Fatwa* the same moment your parents will kill you.

Even that warning of the Shariat judge does not work and Heer, with all the politeness at her command, accepts that threat:

قاضی! عاشقاں بہراں توں پنڈ ٹھٹھی میں تاں شرم دی بھار نہ لدیاں گئی

Lovers have already abandoned the lust for life, O judge! They never care for any disgrace which may be the fate of love.

That answer, that will to die shatters the Qazi and he refuses to have further dialogue with Heer.

قاضی دے جواب ایہہ اٹھ ٹریا کھیہڑے پو نہ کارے ہارنی دے

The judge stood up and said, 'leave her alone, she has gone astray.

And here Waris Shah takes the side of Heer, the lover:

کیہی شریع ثبوت ہے عاشقاں دی قاضی غفلتاں وچ ذمیل یارو

The lovers have fulfilled the dictates of Shariat while the qazis have violated it and earned disgrace.

These were the early stages of the Heer's struggle for the restoration of her fundamental right usurped by the rulers, a male-dominated society and the maulvis and judges of Shariat courts. She held the Shariat supreme but her Shariat was in direct conflict with the maulvi-made Shariat of her time. She was all alone while the whole family, traditions and social practices, rituals and laws of the land were opposing her. Ranjha, for whom Heer was willing to die, was just a poor domestic servant, far away from his tribe and home. Ranjha could not extend any material or spiritual support to Heer. Even without any

internal or external support, Heer was determined to defeat all the nefarious designs of her parents, tribe, and government functionaries including the judges.

Now her parents, with the connivance of the Qazi, prepared a scheme to forcibly marry Heer to the son of the chief of another big tribe, the Khairas.

The Khairas came to marry Heer and the Qazi was brought to perform the *nikah* ceremony. The Qazi already had a bitter dialogue with Heer. He tried to convince Heer with the same old set of arguments, which had already been rejected by Heer. To put force in his arguments the Qazi gave the current interpretation of the Shariat:

مینوں دس ہیرے کیٹری گل پچھے	نال چاک مُبستاں لایاں نی
گھر بار ناہیں کوئی کھوہ کھلاڑ	کتے پنڈ نہ پیہڑ، نہ جایاں نی
موڈھے گھت بھورا، ہتھ دانگ پھڑکے	مجھیں کامیاں ہو چرایاں نی
دِچھے چاک رو لاگ بیداد ہوئی	لاہ سٹیاں شدم حیا یاں نی
وڈا ادب استاد دا سمجھ میرے	اتے ماپیاں من رضایاں نی
حکم شرع شریف مُسندی نے	انہوئیاں منع فرمایاں نی

According to the Shariat of Qazi Shamsuddin, to obey parents and teachers is essential. To disobey is a sin. Ranjha has no blue blood. He is homeless, landless. He has no village and his ancestors are ordinary, unknown people. He is just an ordinary farm hand. His total assets are his coarse blanket and a staff for the herd for which he has been employed.

The Qazi further says; that which has sanction of what they call the 'Shariat' from the times of Heer till our own times.

بھورے کبللاں چا جواب دیئے ریشم نال دو شالیاں جوڑیئے جی

بھادیں لکھ شناس بے راگ ہوئے سید مغل، پٹھان بی لوڑیے جی

There is no relationship between silk and ordinary hand-woven grey blankets. They are two different and opposing classes. No less than a Syed, Mughal or a Pathan is suitable for Heer Sial. Ultimately the origin matters. Mares are not meant for donkeys and mules.

These Syeds, Pathans and Mughals were declared almost equal in status by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi in the 20th century (*Bebishti Zaivar*, IV p 10). Qazi Shamsuddin of Heer's time was fully supported by Maulana Thanvi who issued the edict that if a woman married below her status thus annoying her father (*wali*) her marriage was illegal and immoral.

Much before Heer todate, women in this part of the world, have been made victims of ruling tribal schisms. The Shariat has brought out in support of this 'Brahmanism' in a Muslim society for many centuries. Later days Qazi Shamsuddins have shamelessly snatched the fundamental rights of Heers. They are trying their utmost to marry off Heers to the Khairas. But Heer of Jhang Sial refuses to abandon her struggle:

ہیر اکھیا قاضیا! دغا کیتو کیہہ وٹن ایس جہان توں جی
 بناں بچھیاں پڑھیں نکاح میرا ایہہ فتویٰ نہیں قسآن توں جی
 لے کے رشوتاں کریں خوشامداں توں نہیں سنگدارت بُرہان توں جی

Heer says, "You have treacherously deceived me but what will you get out of this, O Qazi? You performed my *nikah* without my consent. Your act and *fatwa* are not in accordance with the Quran: You accept bribes, you flatter those who support you in these immoral dealings. You are not afraid of God Almighty.

The marriage party of Saida Khaira of Rangpur had arrived and Heer had to be married to him at all cost. The parents of Heer, the Qazi, elders of the family and the town were determined to forcibly marry Heer to Saida Khaira. This was done. Heer refused to accept the marriage and declared:

میاں رانجھیا! عمر دے پئے جھپڑے دکھ درد میرا کس ونڈنا ہے
کھیرے نال نہیں ہونا جوڑ میرا کرے طلب تے جھاڑنا چھنڈنا ہے

Dear Ranjha, now there are lifelong sufferings for me and no one will share these with me. I refuse to accept Khaira as my husband and if he dares to come to me I will, with the help of Punj Peer, beat him up.

Heer kept her promise and never accepted the fake *nikah*. She refused to be a wife to Saida Khaira. All the time she had been accusing her parents, maulvis, councillors and government functionaries, of committing an unholy and anti-Shariat act. She kept waiting for Ranjha. And ultimately Ranjha came in disguise. Now he was a 'jogi' trained at the historical Tilla Balnath in Jhelum.

Earlier, Ranjha had refused to accept Heer's suggestion that they should elope. Ranjha was hopeful of winning her hand as her parents had given him an unambiguous assurance. But circumstances led him to believe that all moral and legal ways had been blocked by society:

پینچاں پنڈ دیاں سچ توں ترک کیتی قاضی رشتوئاں مار کے چور کیتے
پہلے ہورناں نال قرار کر کے طمع دیکھ دا ماد چا ہور کیتے

The qazis have gone corrupt and criminal. The councillors or elders have nothing to do with truth. Parents promise the hands of their daughters to one but because of their greed for wealth and power, hand them over to others.

In Ranjha's view, no institution was worth the name. He left with no other way except to reconsider Heer's earlier proposal. So was the case with Heer. Both agreed to run away to far away land where nobody would know them. They were escaping out of Rangpur, when the Khairas chased and caught them. They were presented in the court of Raja Adali who was sympathetic to the couple but he again sent them to his Shariat court headed by a Qazi, no less vile than Shamsuddin. He was already prejudicial against Heer and Ranjha whose affair was known to him. Therefore, his decision was quite obvious. Heer was separated from Ranjha and restored to the Khairas. She was shocked at the decision. She had nothing left to fight for, but in desperation she prayed to God to reduce the city to ashes:

ایڈاقہر کیتا دلس وایاں نے ایس شہرنوں قادرا آگ لائیں

Heer never surrendered. She had to suffer a great deal but ultimately she secured her right to freedom from the Khairas as well as the Sials.

Heer's end is a different story but she continues to inspire because of her relentless struggle for the restoration of her fundamental rights. She is a beacon light, particularly for women in Pakistan fighting for their rights. Heer should not be taken as the love-lorn heroine of a romantic story. She is a powerful indigenous champion of women's cause. She is the Joan of Arc of the women's struggle for equal rights in South Asia. (1985)

HUSAIN AND DULLAH BHATTI--INTERLINKED HEROES

THE biography of sufi poet Shah Husain in Persian verse under the name of "*Haqeeqatul Fuqra*" was written by one Sheikh Mohammad Pir in 1071 A.H., just 63 years after the death of the poet. Nine years before that Dara Shikoh in his book "*Hasnatul Aarifeen*" had painted Shah Husain as a strong man whom nobody could ever check for his living outside the Shariah.

Sheikh Mohammad Pir says that when Akbar and his Sheikhu Islam, Abdullah Sultanpuri, got information about this sufi, the King ordered his *Kotwal* (S.S.P) Malik Ali to arrest and present Shah Husain before him. But the *Kotwal* failed to arrest the poet. In those days the rebel of Sandal Bar area, Dullah Bhatti, was in prison and Akbar ordered that he should be publicly hanged in Nakhas area (now the area of Landa Bazar). Ali Malik was the executioner and when Bhatti was being hanged Shah Husain together with his party of dancing dervishes arrived at the scene. Sheikh Mohammad says about Ali Malik:

بود در جستجوئے او ہمہ پیوست کز قضا ناگہ اندراں اشن بود دولائے بھٹی آل طاعنی بود در بوم خود زمیندارے	تا مراد بیاورد در دست کردشہ حکم کشتن دولّا کز رہ بغض بود او باغی مفسدے، رہنر نے، ستمگارے
--	---

بود جمع آمدہ ز غوغائش خلق لاہور بر تماشا نشس
 از رہ اتفاق ناگاہاں بود آل جاسین ہم بمیاں

Ali Kotwal was in search of Shah Husain who was not found anywhere. The King ordered that Dullah Bhatti a landlord of his area, be hanged. He was a rebel and a tyrant. On the hanging day a big crowd of Lahorites gathered at the spot and suddenly Shah Husain also appeared on the scene.

Thus, according to the story, Malik Ali Kotwal arrested Shah Husain for his nonconformist living. Shah Husain was much annoyed when Ali not only abused him but also threatened him with a disgraceful death. Shah Husain told him that what he intended to do to Husain would be done to Ali himself. So far nobody knew why Husain had arrived there, whether he was angry with Akbar and Ali over the hanging of Bhatti or whether he had been antagonised by the misbehaviour of Malik Ali. But it so happened that after the hanging of Bhatti, Malik Ali lost of King's favour and he also was hanged in the way Shah Husain had predicted.

Husain was presented before the King who afterwards set him free. Later on prominent ministers and commanders used to pay respect to Shah Husain and sought his good wishes for their success in different campaigns.

Shah Husain was an anti-establishment man and because of the Sheikhu'l Islam's performance not happy with the regime. It is possible that he had developed some romantic views about rebels like Dullah Bhatti or he might had some relations with the rebels. There does seem to have been an indirect link between Husain and Bhatti.

Shah Behlol, a prominent man of the Qadiri Sufi order, had visited all sacred places in Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq and Arabia. On his return he came to Lahore and spotted out Husain at a mosque school. Later on he taught and trained Shah Husain and when Husain was twenty-six he went

back to his ancestral area in a Chiniot village which is adjacent to Dullah Bhatti's Pindi Bhattian. He lived in Qilla Kingran and off and on came to Lahore and visited Shah Husain. In 983 A.H. Shah Behlol died. This is the time when Dullah Bhatti was hanged and Mohammad Ali, son of Behlol, also slipped away from this area and took refuge in Hyderabad Deccan which was not under the direct rule of Akbar. Haider Ali of Mysore was a grandson of this Mohammad Ali, who was a Sipra jat.

Behlol's travels

About one-fourth of the biography "*Ilaqeeqatul Fuqra*" is devoted to the travels of Shah Behlol, the teacher of Shah Husain. He must have had great influence on Shah Husain. Shah Husain is the first Punjabi poet who referred to and exploited the Heer Ranjha romance for his poetic expression. Before Shah Husain only a Persian poet, Baqi Kolabi (d-1556 A.D.) had written a small poem about Heer Ranjha and before that the first ever reference to this story is found in '*Muqamat-e-Daudi*' written in Humayun's period (1530-1556).

The romance of Heer and Ranjha had tremendous influence on Shah Husain and in the whole of his poetry no other love story (Iranian, Arab, or Indian) has ever been mentioned

ماہی ماہی کو کدی میں آپے رانجھن ہوتی رانجھن رانجھن مینوں سبھ کوئی اکھوتہ ہر نہ اکھو کوئی

(Heer), call my beloved Ranjha and in that process I myself am turned into Ranjha.

Everybody should call me Ranjha. Nobody should call me Heer.

It seems that Shah Behlol was not only a link between Shah Husain and Dullah Bhatti but also a strong bond between the story of Heer Ranjha and Shah Husain. Heer

Ranjha was a story from the area of Shah Behlol. The events took place in the period of Behlol Lodhi. But it was Shah Husain, under the influence of Shah Behlol, who first projected this indigenous material with great success.

So far as Dullah Bhatti is concerned, no official record of Akbar's period ever mentioned his name. But when Noor Ahmad Chishti, while compiling his book "*Tebqiqat Chishti*", met the guards of Malik. Ali Kotwal's family graveyard in Miani Sahib in 1860, they also narrated the version given above with a small difference. They told Chishti that Dullah Bhatti was a court jester and because of his stubbornness he annoyed Akbar.

Whether a highwayman or a rebel or a jester, Dullah Bhatti has been made a great hero by poets since Akbar's time. In our times Najm Hosain Syed had in his drama "*Takht Labore*" made him as well as Shah Husain two heroes who were fighting on physical and intellectual fronts against the tyranny of the Mughal rule. Major Ishaq Mohammad also wrote a drama in Punjabi on Dullah Bhatti, titled '*Quqnas*'.

And the hero Dullah of the folk war poem says:

دیواں پور دے پور اُختل	دل دل ماراں مغلان دیاں ڈھانیاں
تے کوٹھیں عمر مختل	میں بدل بنا دیاں دھوڑ دے
اددی ہیٹھ وچھاواں کھل	میں مار دیاں بگے شیر نوں
میری جگ تے رہ جاؤ گل	میں چڑھ کے گھوڑا پھینلاں
آوے دے جوان تے چل	کون، کھین بادشاہ

"I lower the fortresses of the Mughals, I repulse the waves after waves of Mughal troops.

I can raise clouds of dust and terrorise Umarnkot (the birth place of Akbar).

I will kill the white lion and put his skin under my feet.

I will ride on my horse upto the enemy's lines. And I will earn lasting fame.

What mean king will ever dare to attack Dullah - the warrior."

And about Bhattis, a Persian proverb was coined which was current till the arrival of the British in the area. Mr. H.A. Rose in his "*Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and Frontier*" writes: And there is a Persian proverb which says the Dogars, the Bhattis, and the Kharls are all rebellious people and ought to be slain". (1987)

NADIR SHAH AND THE PUNJAB

Around five miles to the north-east of Qila Didar Singh lie the ruins of Papnakh which is said to be the birth place of Rani Luna, the second wife of Raja Salwahan, the step-mother of Puran Bhagat with whom the Punjabi legend of Puran Bhagat is connected. It is thus also connected with the shrine of Bohar near Rohtak, whose mahant (priest) had an important position amongst "Kanphata Jogis, who wear enormous earrings of wood as a rule" (District Gazetteer, Gujranwala, p. 170).

From the religious point of view, the Bohar may have been an important place but from the viewpoint of the resistance put up by Punjabis against invaders from the west, it is much more important. The Papnakh ruins explain why Nadir Shah was attacked before he reached Delhi in February 1739 by the Kanphata jogis under the leadership of Bhopat Rai.

The Gujranwala District Gazetteer puts highlights on the after-effects of the invasions of Nadir Shah and Abdali. While explaining the destruction caused by these invaders, it says:

"Over the whole, the period between the decline of the Mughal empire on the death of Aurangzeb and the rise of Sikh confederacies (roughly the first half of the 18th century) was one of indescribable confusion and anarchy. The empire was gradually falling to pieces owing to internecine quarrels and successive shocks of invasions from the north-west....It was devastated again and again by the invading armies of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali and the prosperity which had been slowly built up in the

previous two centuries gave place here as elsewhere to desolation and misery." (p. 128).

And that is why Waris Shah has said: "Nadir Shah Punjab fatoon paey (Nadir Shah caused much trouble in the Punjab).

Nadir Shah must have disrupted the Kanphata jogis of Papnakh during his march through the Gujranwala district, and that might be the reason that he was attacked by the jogis in Bohar. Pandit Hari Kishan Kaul, while writing a paper in 1916, evaluating the historical importance of Punjabi poet Najabat's "Nadir Shah di Var," could not make out why the Kanphata jogis of Bohar attacked Nadir Shah. But it can be said without any fear of contradiction that what Nadir's army might have done to the jogis of Jhelum (the Kanphatas) and of Papnakh might have infuriated the jogis of Bohar. Najabat, a contemporary of Bulleh Shah, Ali Haider and Waris Shah, belonged to a far-flung village, Matila Harlan in Sargodha district. He presents a sweeping scene of the skirmish between the jogis and Nadir Shah's army.

Nadir Shah spoke harshly to the jogis:

"You are not absconding, having earned disgrace, you have no patriotism.

"Bhopat Nath was terribly enraged and perspired from head to foot.

"Sanyasi Bhopat Rai called for his men and said.

"We are also hermits of old Shah Miran.

"The Punjab is our country and India is our jagir (fief)

"Bhopat Nath summoned all members of his order.

"(and said) this world is but for four days, how long can we live?

"Whatever is decreed by the Creator shall take place.

"You are all strong and tough, fight to the bitter end

"The fakirs prepared themselves to give battle
 "Roaring like the tigers going for the kill
 "And like the hawks sweeping down on sighting
 game
 "With the strokes of their swords, they ripped
 open heads
 "The whole army began to flee like foxes.
 "(Let someone) enter up the names of the
 warriors of Mohammad Shah record
 "The first battle was fought by the Sanyasis and it
 was a swift one
 "Those who wear ashes but are warriors by caste.
 "We are in renunciation day and night in the garb
 of fakirs
 "They have no relations to mourn their losses
 "Their after-death lamps burn in heaven beyond
 the reach of the wind
 "Their blood-shot eyes shone like fire
 "With God above as their supporter they came to
 the attack
 "They had knives and axes as their weapons
 "They ran like horses wielding their swords
 "They devoured flesh, streams (of blood) flowed
 "They killed five thousand and eighty-four
 Georgians
 "They fought to the finish and went out to the
 hills."

This was the last resistance put up against invading
 Nadir Shah in the Punjab who had to face not one but
 many attacks right from Peshawar down to Lahore and
 Batala. The first battles were at Eimanabad and Lahore.
 Najabat has recorded each incident which official
 historians have overlooked. S.M. Lateef the author (and a
 civil servant of the ICS cadre) of "*The History of the
 Punjab*" writes in his foreword:

"In short, from the time of Alexander to the invasion of
 Shah Zaman of unlucky memory, it (Punjab) has served as

a bulwark in India against all the invasions from the North and West." (p. 2)

But the performance of this bulwark has never been honestly recorded by the official historians and record-keepers of the capital - Delhi - which throughout history never defeated any invader who has earlier vanquished the Punjabis. But all invaders had to retreat many times from the Punjab. They included Alexander the Great, Mahmud, Shahabuddin Mohammad Ghauri (who was slain in district Jhelum and was buried in village Dhamyak) and Babur and Nadir and almost all Punjabis poets have, directly or indirectly, written against the invaders. As Ali Haider says:

ب۔ بھی زہر جو کھا مرن کچھ شرم
نہ ہندوستانیاں نوں
کیا حیا اینہاں راجیاں نوں کچھ لج
نہیں تو رانیاں نوں
بھیڑے بھر بھر دیون خزانے فارسیاں
نوں خراسانیاں نوں
حیدر اکھ توں اینہاں ہیچریاں نوں
اینہاں حیضان نامر انیاں نوں

"Had the Indians been honourable men, they would have taken poison.

"But the Rajas and Turanians are shameless people

"They dole out Indian wealth to the Khorasanis and
Iranians

"The hell with these eunuchs and bastards".

It was Nadir and his invasion that Najabat wrote a long poem of about 900 lines titled "Nadir Shah di var" or "Var Najabat". Nadir Shah, known as the "terror of Asia" was, according to the poem, as well as historical evidence, invited by Nizamul Mulk, the Turani faction of the court of the Delhi king Mohammad Shah, to attack India and take all the wealth amassed by the Mughal kings through the centuries. Actually, he wanted to have a showdown with the other faction led by Khan-e-Dauran.

نہ کیستی ہمک صلامی، جو ف تو را آتیاں اوہناں گھر چو غتے دے بالی آتش آن کے
 اوہناں رقعہ لکھ جو ابی بھیجا نادر شاہ میدان دلی دا خالی، بودا بادشاہ
 اہدی کوئی نہ چلے چالی، رسم چو غتیاں اہدی رعیت نہیں سکھالی کو کے رات دن
 توں چڑھ کے دے دکھالی، تخت مبارکوں پر گھن خزانوں مالی، جینی چاہتا ہیں

"The Turanians did not act loyally, fie on them.

"They struck the house of the Chughatta.

"They wrote an urgent letter and sent it to Nadir Shah

"Saying the road to Delhi was clear and the king a nonentity

"None of his ways was that of the Chughattas

"His subjects have no peace and complain day and night

"Ride thou from the blessed throne and show thy face

"Then take away from the treasury as much wealth as thou likest,"

Mansoor Ali Nizamul Mulk wanted Nadir to avenge what the early Mughals had done to the Iranians. And this was the most opportune moment as luck was in favour of Nadir Shah. But Nadir Shah did not reveal his real intentions and posed as a comrade-in-arms to the Delhi king against the turbulent Marhattas and others. After finally deciding to attack he wrote to the Delhi king Mohammad Shah.

"Be it clear to the enlightened mind of Your High Majesty that my coming to Kabul and possessing myself thereof was purely out of zeal for Islam and friendship for you. I never could have imagined that the wretches of the Deccan could have imposed tribute on the dominions of the King of the Mussalmans. My stay on this side of Attock means that when these infidels move towards Hindostan, I may send an army of victorious Kizilbashis to drive them to the abyss of hell. History is full of the friendship that had

subsisted between our kings and Your Majesty's predecessors. By Ali Murtaza I swear that excepting friendship and a concern for religion, I neither had, nor have, any other view, if you suspect the contrary, you may, but I always was, and will always be a friend to your illustrious House."

"In the name of Islam and religion," Nadir Shah begins his march from Kabul and poet Najabat says:

چڑھے قندھاروں نادر شاہ دہرے طبلق وا کے تے چھٹ پئے ہر ظلم دے کل خلق اٹھی کرا کے
 موندہ آیا کچھ نہیں چھڈوے، قتل کریندے نیل چا کے غزنی تے کابل لٹیا کل تھانیں ذبح کرا کے
 پشور، جو آلا بادلوں تخت کیتو نہیں آ کے سٹ لوٹا ناصر خانے گل پلے نہیں ٹیکے پا کے
 پھر کے ہوئے نہیں پشوا، چختے دانگ و نجا کے پھر ڈیرے اُتے اٹک اڈے کنگ جرتھیں آ کے

"Nadir Shah started from Kandhar amidst the beating of drums and tom-toms.

"And floods of tyranny were let loose making the whole populace groan

"They left nothing (alive) that came their way and ordered a general massacre

"They plundered Ghazni and Kabul after having massacred all contingents at the military post

"Peshawar and Jalalabad they devastated.

"The Nasir Khanis threw down their arms and putting on their turbans round their necks, they embraced (the conquerors)

"They turned round and became leaders having thrown to the winds the salt of the Chughattas.

"and the armies encamped at Attock"

The Mughal nominee at Peshawar, Nasir Khan, received no support from Delhi. He fought alone, was defeated and had to surrender. According to the rules of the day, he put his weight with Nadir Shah and accompanied him in his invasion on Delhi through the

Punjab. Najabat takes up the story after Nadir Shah crossed the Indus.

ایک توں چڑھیا نادر شاہ رن بھیری گئے
تے دیہہ پئے پنجاب پاتے سے مارے مٹھے
گھٹڑ، گھبے، تے گھڑپے بھینیں گئے
کوہ پنجاب جُستنی لڑ آ ہون چھٹے
ڈیرے اُتے جلمے آن لُٹڑ چھٹے

"Nadir Shah started from Attock, the military drums were beaten.

"The [troops] cantered towards the Punjab killing and plundering hundreds.

"The Khattars, Ghebas and Gakhars were routed in rushes

"The wings of the army spread out to a width of 50 'kos'

"They encamped at Jhelum and flashes of cannon went forth.

"The news reached Delhi and people began to talk

"Nadir Shah started from Jhelum, the tom-toms beaten hard.

"Like King Alexander he subjugated all countries.

دو باریں راہ نہیں گوندلاں، لچپوتاں آہے
تے دلو تے سیدو دڈھیاں اسمانیں سائے
ادھناں ہمت کیتی سورمیاں چک سیوں نگھائے

Alongside the road were the Gondal Rajputs

"Dilloo and Saidoo had risen to the sky

"[Their] sharp lances pierced the hearts and made the troops shriek

"And pinned men down like birds skewered for roast

"Those brave warriors exerted themselves and drove the army across their boundary

"The plunder shifted to Darpa and the tract was beaten hollow"

Pandit Kaul says: "The author praises the bravery of the Gondal Rajputs headed by Dilloo and Saidoo, who drive the army of Nadir Shah beyond their boundary. The Gondals are a strong tribe who reside in a tract of country extending from the Shahpur to the Gujrat district. They were evidently some distance out of Nadir Shah's way and must have had an engagement with his right flank."

From Wazirabad to Eimanabad there is distance of only thirty miles. Nadir's army was spread along distance of 50 miles and swarmed the whole district of Gujranwala. From Attock to Jhelum, he faced ill-organised Khattars, Ghebas and Gakhars and between Jhelum and Chenab, Gondal chiefs did not allow his army to devastate their land. From Chenab to the Ravi, he had to face comparatively organised but small local armies. The Delhi Darbar had so far not sent any reinforcement to their fighting pargana heads. Najabat narrates the encounter between Mirza Qalandar Beg and Nadir's army between Wazirabad and Eimanabad, thus:

چڑھے گجراتوں نادر شاہ، دھگیں دھریونا
تے لنگھ وزیر آباد تمہیں چپول جو دھسانا
تے سٹھ ہزار سوار دا وچ کوساں تانا
باتشا ہی گرداں دیکھ کے ٹنگو کمر لانا
اتن چیتے ڈٹھیاں، اوہ شکل پٹھاناں
مرزے قلندر بیگ دا وچ کچھی دے تھانا
تے مرزا کے سپاہ نوں اک سخن سیانا
یار دا یہا جو صفت اسیل دی پڑھ چٹ نہ جانا

اسماں سوہنیاں نال گواہیاں وچ شک نہ اتنا
 رنج جڑے تے بکھر پیدیاں ، ہتھ پکڑ کماناں
 تے چھٹن تیر مینہ انماں وانگ سار گھتی بانا
 اونٹھے چھٹن بت دوقاں کاڑ کاڑ کھوکت اڑاناں
 جیویں اگ لگی سی ناڑنوں توں بھوجن دھانا
 دھوں گرو چھڑی آسمان نوں نہ رہی پچھاناں
 چمکن ویکھ تپالیاں جیویں رات ٹٹا ہتہا
 لکن منساں تے گھوڑیاں گوشت چکانا
 گھوڑا تے مرد میدان وچ ڈھے پئے اتانا
 جیویں موچھے کر کر سٹیاں گنیاں تر کھاناں
 جیویں جھڑے شرابی فرس توں بانہرے سر ہانا
 کھیدے مٹتے نہیں ہولی راجپوت کر سوا بانا
 مرزے نمک حلال دا ویکھ رام کسانا
 پر عالمگیری دھڑے نال چڑھ تول دکانا

"Nadir Shah started from Gujrat with a vigorous beating of drums. And the advance guard as numerous as grains passed Wazirabad. Sixty thousand horsemen spread all over. At the sight of the dust of the Royal (army) the watchman raised hue and cry. For to him faces of the Pathans were a surprise. Mirza Qalandar Beg had his headquarters in the tract adjoining the river. The Mirza gave sound advice to his soldiers.

"Friends, the test of good birth is that one should not turn back from the battlefield. We have heard an authority which cannot be doubted."

"They put on their soldiers accoutrements and coats of mail and took their bows in hand. They entered the battlefield instilled with bravery to maintain their traditions. The arrows flew like rain following close weather, and the shafts caused burning wounds. The musket went off crack crack. Where could a man take shelter? Men were burnt like grain being parched in forest of reeds on fire.

"The smoke and dust rose to the sky and no one could identify another. The guns flashed like the firefly at night. They hit men and horses and flesh was charred. Horse and man fell upside down on the battlefield like log of woods sawn to pieces by the carpenters. Like a drunkard falling away from the carpet with his arm for a pillow.

"The Rajputs went to sleep after playing Holi, with their garments coloured-red. He turned the face of the advance guard depriving (Nadir's) army of one eye. This is the story of the glorious deeds of Mirza the faithful. He weighed his grain against the enemy's pound."

But after the day's fight the Mirza found himself unequal to the task of maintaining his ground and sent a message to the Nawab of Lahore, Zakrya Khan, seeking assistance. The infidelity of Mansoor Ali Nizamul Mulk is again recalled here. The resistance of Mirza Qalandar Beg or Khan is borne out by history. He evidently succeeded in shattering the vanguard of Nadir's army so that a fresh advance had to be made from Gujrat under Mirza Nur Beg, a Morwani chief.

مرزے قاصد سڈیا، لکھیہ پنچائے
 قاصد اگے نواب دے فریاد سنائے
 اسال بیج تے بندے اپنے سبھ اماں جائے
 نام علی دے کیرے دے لت کوہائے

منصور نظام الملک دی جڑ ٹھوں جائے
 جنہاں بال متبابی چورنوں گھر آپ دکھائے
 ایسے ملک پنجاب وچ چڑھ حکم چلائے
 تے ایتھوں بھجیا کڈ دے جگ لعنت پائے
 پر سر دنیا منظور ہے بے ہند نہ جائے

"The Mirza called a messenger who would carry his letter. The messenger went and explained to the Nawab. We had five hundred men - our own kinsmen and sacrificed them in the name of Ali (The Nawab said): cursed be Mansoor Ali Nizamul Mulk who has held the torch to the thief and shown him his own house. I have ruled this province of Punjab. If I turn my back on the place and flee, the world will say fie on me. I would rather lay down my life to save India."

Pandit Kaul while commenting on the lines of poet Najabat about a battle near Lahore, says: "They plundered Eimanabad and the scouts reached Talwandi, north-east of Shahdara while the main force encamped at Shahdara. The sack of Eimanabad is mentioned by Fraser and S.M. Lateef: "Khoja Yaqub, one of the Nawab of Lahore's generals, marched out of Lahore with 1,000 horses to dispute the passage of the Ravi. Yaqub was evidently the general who offered some resistance at the Ravi ferry. Word was also sent to Batala saying how Qalandar Beg and Yaqub Khan had fought. The battle contingent headed by Aziz Khan arrived.

اوہ مارن تیغاں گز زیاں کہوکت تھانے
 جیویں ترٹی رسی ڈھٹھیاں لوٹھاں کروانے
 شکرہ سئی اے رولی اٹھ حیرت جانے
 اوہناں وڈے رے کناں دے تہو زمانے
 کل امیر ولایتی ہو گئے حیرانے
 اسان دلی کیگر پہنچنا، گھر گھر حکامے
 نادر شاہ امیر ولایتی، پھیر سجد بلانے
 اوہ جا کھلوتا راج گھاٹ ملاح سدائے

"They plied their swords and maces with wonderful agility. Confusion beset the army (of Nadir Shah), the men lost their presence of mind. As dead bodies drop in caravan when the string [of camels] breaks, they went as far as cutting the ropes of female apartment tents. All foreign chiefs became astounded. How are we to reach Delhi if there is to be a fight at every step? Nadir Shah then summoned all his chiefs. He went and stood at the Rajghat ferry and summoned the boatmen"

When the Punjab had the worst bloodbath at the hands of invading hordes, the Delhi darbar was busy in self-destructive conspiracies. Najabat paints the following picture:

دلی نوں گرمی کھلبلی سن کٹک طوفانی تے سدا میراں نوں اکھدی ملکہ زامانی
 اج چڑھ کے ڈھکا ہے نادر شاہ، ہتھ لپے خزیں امیر رہے کلاوے میانوں چیر نکلے کچھانیں
 جیتک کار، امیر نجابت مات گھتی بادشاہاں دھیاں تے بھیناں بیٹیاں ز شرم کتیوں

"The news of the tempestuous (invading) army caused excitement and confusion in Delhi.

"The Queen Zamani called the nobles and spoke to them.

"Nadir has arrived, bent on plundering all treasures.

"The Amir failed to come within embrace and slipped through their armpits.

"Cunning councillors O Najabat! checkmate the kings.

They felt no shame on account of their daughters and sisters"

And how does Najabat pay tributes to Delhi?

دلی منس ہاریے رت دھڑی بوانی اک ماریں اک سردھریں نت حسن سوانی

"Oh hard-hearted Delhi thou paintest the parting of thy hair with blood. Thou killest one and exaltest another in thy ever-flourishing beauty"

(English translation by Pandit Hari Kishan Kaul) 1987

WARIS SHAH AND ABDALI

NADIR Shah invaded the sub-continent in the name of "Islam". In his pre-invasion letter to the Delhi King, Mohammad Shah, he expressed grave concern about the threatening posture of the "infidels from the Deccan", i.e. Marhattas. Najabat, a contemporary of Waris Shah, in his war poem on Nadir's invasion clearly exposed the plans of Nadir and his coterie and of the stalwarts of the Delhi Darbar, including Prime Minister Qamar-ud-Din Khan and Nizam-ul-Mulk Mansoor Ali Khan.

Nadir, according to Najabat, had an eye on the wealth of the Punjab and Delhi and for "serving the cause of Islam" he "carried away jewels from the emperor and the nobles, treasury, goods and assets worth Rs. seventy crore. His officers and soldiers snatched Rs. ten crore in addition to twenty crore paid to them by the Delhi King as their pay and arrears." He also carried away 1,000 elephants, 7,000 horses for "Soldiers of Islam" across the Western borders.

In those days a proverb was coined by the Punjabis, who had to bear eight invasions by Ahmad Shah Abdali:

Khahda peeta lahey da

Baqi Ahmad Shahey da

Eat and wear whatever you can; if anything save it will be snatched away by Ahmad Shah. And Waris Shah said:

احمد شاہ از غیب توں آن پوسی آ
رب رکھ جڈیا لے نوں جاسی آوئے

Ahmad Shah would devastate the country.

But God will save Jandiala (village of the poet) from his tyranny.

The Punjabis have never painted these invaders as friends of Islam or as the saviours of Muslim rule in these areas. They always called them tyrants and free-booters. Najabat contemptuously calls Nadir Shah "as the son of a shephard" in the same way as Firdausi had called Arabs "those who drink milk of camels and eat the meat of Soosmar". Nadir Shah also took with himself "10,000 camels, 100 eunuchs, 120 writers, 200 smiths, 300 masons, 100 carpenters". Thus did Nadir Shah "strengthen" the co-religious ruler of Delhi against the "infidels" of India.

In the name of Islam the respected scholar of the capital, Shah Wali Ullah, had invited Ahmed Shah Abdali, the successor of Nadir Shah, to attack India and help restore the "rule of Islam" on the lands of kafirs'. Both Nadir and Ahmad Shah Abdali were invited by the people from the ruling classes of Delhi. None of them thought of the sufferings of the people of the areas between Peshawar and Lahore.

Shah Nawaz, the Lahore Governor, a nominee of Delhi, also appealed to Ahmad Shah to march towards Delhi because he was not happy with the rulers who had left Punjab alone to face the brunt of Nadir's attack, while the people and the poets of the Punjab, like Najabat, Waris Shah, Ali Haider and Bulleh Shah, outrightly condemned these invaders including Nadir and Ahmad Shah. About Ahmad Shah Abdali's first attack on the Punjab Waris Shah wrote a "See-harfi" a poem of about 120 lines apart from those lines he wrote in his "Heer" about Nadir and Abdali.

Shahnawaz invited Abdali but when Abdali marched from Kandhar, Shahnawaz backed out. Abdali ransacked the area and when he crossed the river Chenab near Wazirabad he overpowered the local population and completely destroyed the villages including Jamke Chatha. Waris Shah says when Abdali set Jamke Chatha on fire Shahnawaz did not confront Abdali. He was a self-styled ruler. He sat in his bungalow and never bothered about the tragedy that had befallen the people of the Punjab. He

called himself a hawk but he never took off when there was a prey.

The pawn of the chess (Abdali) has reached the Punjab and has challenged the King.

Anyhow Shahnawaz gave no resistance to Abdali till he had reached the Western bank of river Ravi. All of a sudden he decided to give a fight. Waris Shah, according to his poem also joined the force of Shahnawaz.

وارث شاہ علی دے وانگ لڑدا جیہڑا ذات دے وچ ذوالفقار آہا

Waris also fought like Ali

Who himself was a "sword of Allah".

The Punjabis, according to Waris Shah and other historians, gave a tough fight to Abdali.

راج جس دن شہر لاہور اُتے پیا شور جاں پوراہہ آن ڈھکے
ض ضرب لاہور دا دیکھ کے جی شور پیا سی کون آسمان اُتے
ط طور لاہور دا دیکھ کے جی دور زمین تے سخت بھوچال آیا
ظ ظلم دی آگ لاہور اتے جگ نالوں دی زیادہ ہلی آہی

But the Mughal ruler of Lahore could not assess the fighting spirit of the Punjabis. He was guilty of inviting Abdali and he could not face his guilt. When the Afghan was about to be routed Waris Shah had to say:

ر رناں چنگریاں اوہناں نالوں جیہڑے شاہنواز دے سنگ آہے
اک ڈنگ بھی جنگ نہ کیتا اوہناں جیہڑے اٹھو ہاں دے ڈنگ آہے
وارث شاہ اوہ لوہڑاں وانگ نستے جیہڑے سوہنے شیراں دے رنگ آہے
راج حاکم شہر لاہور واسے سنجھا چھڈ کے گئے حویلیاں نوں
کیسے ننھے اکٹھے نہ دت ہوئے ودیاع کیتا ناہی چل بیلیاں نوں
د دین دُنی وچ سرخورد ناہیں جیہڑے عورتاں چھڈ نلج گئے

ش شرم ناہیں پگاں والیاں نول جہیڑے جیو چرا کے نس گئے
 جہناں پگ ہووے سر شرم تہناں ناہیں اوہناں نامراں جس گئے

Women are much superior to those who accompanied
 Shahnawaz

They could not fight a round

They all were scorpions who sting their own people

Waris Shah, they proved cowards like jackals and ran
 away

Otherwise, they used to pose like lions

Throughout his poem Waris does not spare the rulers
 who were supposed to defend the country and the honour
 of the people. He wished that the rule of Mohammad Shah
 should continue and his nominees should fight the
 invading thieves and tyrants. But they failed the country and
 shamelessly surrendered. Waris says:

The rulers of Lahore left their palaces open and ran
 away

They shamelessly fell apart never to meet again

They could not bury their colleagues

Who gave their lives for the honour of the country

These chiefs had no self-respect and left the battle
 field

They were not the real chiefs

That is why they were deprived of real life.

Over twenty years (1748-1768) Abdali invaded the
 Punjab eight times and every time he plundered and
 looted the wealth of these areas and destabilised the
 already weakened institutions. The results of his eight
 invasions have been summed up by Waris Shah in Heer

Ranjha: احمد شاہ دانگوں میرے مگر پے کے لٹ پٹ کے چک دا تال کیتا

Like Ahmad Shah you have plundered me

Now nothing is left with me.

And ultimately:

Ahmad Shah made Punjab an integral part of his State

and appointed his son as Governor of the Punjab

حکم ہو رہا ہے اور آج ہو گیا ہے
آج ملی پنجاب قندھاریاں نول

Apart from Nadir Shah and Abdali what worried Waris Shah was the influence of East India Company -- which was another type of invasion from the east. He could not control his hatred towards the Delhi King Farrukh Secar who struck a bargain with the East India Company on terms which were clear encroachments on the sovereignty of the Mughal rulers.

وارث شاہ فرنگی دے باغ وڑکے
اول کلاوے کھوہ نول گھیریا سو

Waris was not happy with the anarchic conditions of the Punjab in which Sikh groups were emerging and Marhattas were advancing towards the Punjab. But what the murderer Qazilbash had done with the sub-continent in the name of Islam could not be undone. It reached to its logical end and Waris Shah had to say:

سارے ملک خراب پنجاب وچوں
مینوں بڑا افسوس قصور دا اے

It is a tragedy that the whole of the Punjab has been spoiled

But I mourn more the destruction of Kasur city (Waris got higher education in this city).

1987

RESISTANCE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

OVER the last many decades, an impression has been created that the Punjabis had all along been siding with the invaders from the west as well as from the east. The responsibility for spreading this view partly lies with the official or semi-official Delhi-based historians and the angry elements of those areas which considered that the 1857 uprising was let down by the reinforcements sent by the Sikh states and other Punjabi chiefs.

This is not the whole truth. Anyhow, the Punjabis are also responsible - though partly - for strengthening this impression.

The Sikhs saw this whole business in the perspective of their religion and liquidation of their rule. The Muslim Punjabis resisted the British in the Punjab war of 1842 and afterwards but they also had a biased view. The Hindus saw this problem from a different angle but, no doubt, they were next to none in the struggle. We should not rule out the influence of the Punjab chiefs who sided with the British in 1857. They became the elite after the British came to be firmly entrenched in the Punjab. Therefore, they deliberately discouraged the people who wanted to eulogise the resistance which the Punjabis offered not only to the British but also to all invaders coming from every side over the last two millenniums.

A brief note in bulletin No.1 of the National Documentation Centre about the banned material throws ample light on the character and attitude of the Punjabis. According to the bulletin, Miss O.M. Lloyd writes: "From

the passing of the Indian Press Act of 1910 to the establishment of independence in 1947, copies of certain printed material circulating in India which had been banned by government authorities were sent to the India Office and British Museum Library...It fell to Graham Shaw of the Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books of the British Library and the present author to amalgamate the data and provide an introduction and indexes...."

Miss Lloyd continues: "Material that was banned was published in a wide range of languages - in English, in other European languages, and in at least fifteen Indian tongues...The Western-language items bear imprints not only from India but from Britain, from France, Germany and other European States. Most of the material in French, etc., comprises translations from English works, published to secure sympathy and support abroad, but some is by nationals such as Romain Rolland, Lenin and Marx. While the subjects of most are directly concerned with the Indian situation (charges of exploitation of India by the British and of atrocities carried out by the police and the military, appeals to the populace to rise against British rule, whether by passive resistance, boycott of British goods, or more violent revolutionary activity), some are of a general nature; for example, on communism, anarchism, or nationalist movements in other countries such as Egypt and Ireland...."

"Much of the vernacular material was composed in verse form, glorifying nationalism and exhorting its readers to work for freedom from the British. Mass circulation of nationalist poetry broke out in particular after the Jallianwala Bagh shootings in 1919 and the execution of the revolutionary hero, Bhagat Singh, in 1931. So prolific were these outbursts that "nationalist songs" number nearly 700 in the catalogue, almost half of the whole collection...."

The last sentence of this rather long quotation bespeaks the magnitude of the resistance put up by the Punjabis against the British. But contrary to that, a strange impression has been created that the Punjabis welcomed and helped the invaders from whichever side they descended on the soil of the Indus valley.

It goes without saying that if 700 songs were exclusively devoted to Jallianwals Bagh and Bhagat Singh, several hundred must have been written about Dullah Bhatti, Jasrat Khokhar, Ahmad Khan Kharl, Murad Fatiana, Fazal Machhi, Jeevana Mor, Nizam Lohar, Jabroo Nai, Malangi and others. What is left out of this huge corpus of the resistance poetry written during the last five hundred years is Var Dullah Bhatti, Var Nadir Shah, See Harfi Waris Shah (about Ahmad Shah Abdali), Jang Hind-Punjab by Shah Mohammad and some *dholas* about Ahmad Khan Kharl and his comrades-in-arm.

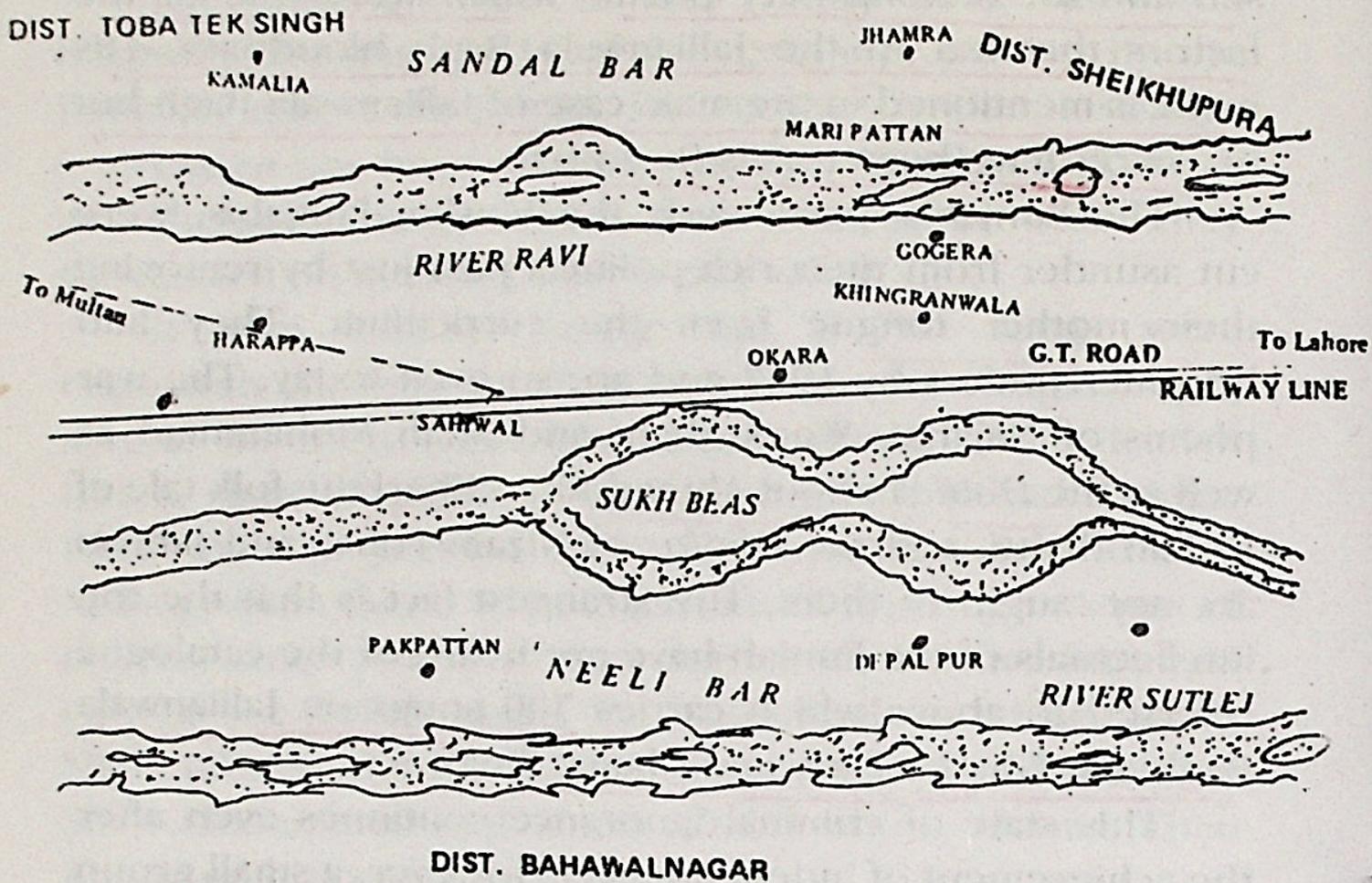
It is tragic that after the fall of the Punjab in 1849, the Punjabis, particularly the Muslim Punjabis, were weaned away from the resistance poetry of the great Punjabi writers. This trick on Muslim Punjabis was played with utmost subtlety: their medium of education was switched to Urdu. The purpose of the British rulers and their camp-followers was that the Punjabis should no more remain in contact with their glorious history from Porus to Ahmad Khan Kharl. Had the Punjabi language and literature been included in the curriculum introduced by the British, every literate Punjabi would inevitably have become fully familiar with the resistance his ancestors put up against invaders from Alexander to the British. The British and their collaborators from the eastern as well as central parts of the subcontinent were successful in making the Punjabis forget their history recorded by the folk singers or poets like Najabat, Ali Haider, Bulleh Shah, Waris Shah, and Shah Mohammad and also that which was written or narrated from 1857 to 1910. Hardly does a Punjabi remember poet Mohammad Ismail of Amritsar who was charged with

sedition for reciting fiery poems which were one of the factors that led to the Jallianwala Bagh bloodbath. His name is mentioned in the main case of Jallianwala Bagh but his works have been totally forgotten.

The Punjabis, particularly the Muslim Punjabis, were cut asunder from their rich political past just by removing their mother tongue from the curriculum. They had become rootless by 1947 and are so even today. The war poems of Najabat, Waris Shah, and Shah Mohammad as well as the *Dbolas* about Ahmad Khan Kharl the folk tale of Dullah Bhatti, and the *Dbolas* of Nizam Lohar and Jabroo are not taught to them. The strangest fact is that the top intellectuals of the Punjab have not heard of the catalogue referred to above which carries 700 songs on Jallianwala Bagh, the Ghadar Party and Bhagat Singh.

This state of criminal ignorance continues even after the achievement of independence. However, a small group of Punjabi intellectuals and writers, who have constantly been urging the Government to introduce Punjabi as a medium of instruction at primary level and as a compulsory subject from the fifth to tenth standard, have made humble contributions to recapitulating their political past by recording and making public what Dullah Bhatti was, how the Sikh army was let down by the generals who belonged to non-Punjabi areas and who were inducted under a well-thought-out plan. They helped the British to humiliate the Sikh army at Subraon. Ahmad Saleem compiled the Var of Dullah Bhatti, A.D. Ejaz compiled the *Dbolas* on the 1857 heroes of the Sahiwal area who stood up against the British in 1857 and fell due to the treachery of the collaborators of the British in October 1857. The Punjabi Adabi Board has published this book as well as a book on the heroes of the Punjab (from Kharl to Bhagat Singh) compiled by Iqbal Asad.

It is said that the Punjab had made a negative contribution towards the war of 1857. Too much stress is laid by the bigoted historians on this negative role. They



Points of uprising in the Punjab in 1857

forget the "confessions" of the British themselves that if the local forces which captured the Delhi Fort had not been erratic, it would have been difficult for them to strike and recapture India. Historical record shows that the deserting armies had no clear objective and the Delhi rulers were so weak that they could not give an alternative administration in the disturbed areas. It was they who actually failed their people.

Anyhow, the positive role of the Punjabis and the Punjab-based British army has been kept in low profile. It could be justified till 1947. But there is no justification for this after independence. The feudals who ruled this area never wanted to expose the disgraceful role of their forefathers. These people never allowed the Punjab to know its history, culture and literature and the aspirations of the Punjabis who made a solid contribution to the Pakistan movement.

As far as the role of the army (including the newly recruited Punjabis) stationed in the Punjab is concerned, *The Mutiny Reports: Punjab Government Records*, (Vol, VIII, Part I and II, Lahore, 1911, say:

- At Umballa, the incendiary fires began in March and continued at intervals until the outbreak.

- The sepoy guards at Phillour and Ferozepure were specially set aside by European troops....

- On June 8, the Jullunder Brigade had mutinied and were in full march to the Sutlej.

- Early in June an attempt was made in Koolloo to excite its population to rise in rebellion against us (the Europeans). This movement was organised by one Partap Singh who pretended to be the rightful Rajah or chief of the principality of Koolloo....

- On May 3, the Mess House of 33rd Native Infantry at Hoshiarpur was burnt to the ground. There is every reason to suppose that this was the act of incendiaries....

- On June 9, sepoys were blown from guns on the Anarkali (Lahore) parade ground for using mutinous language. Native regiments in Mian Mir had already been disarmed....

- On July 7, the 14th Native Infantry at Jhelum refused to give up their arms and made a violent and determined resistance.

- Within 48 hours of the outbreak at Jhelum the 9th Cavalry and 46th Infantry at Sialkot mutinied.

- On July 30 the 26th Infantry at Mian Mir (Lahore) rose...and went off in a body about 11 a.m...during a duststorm.

In the meantime, the Kharls and other turbulent tribes in the Gogera (Sahiwal) district rose in insurrection, disarmed the police and cut off the communication with Multan....Owing to the nature and extent of the country and the paucity of troops the disturbance was not very easily put down."

No doubt, the whole Punjab was disturbed in 1857.

Sialkot, Jhelum, Rawalpindi and Ferozepur cantonments had bloodbaths but according to the Mutiny Reports the Kharls had cut the Punjab into two and the British were worried about the resistance which they met from the unarmed Kharls, Wattoos, Qureshis and Sials of the area who were being led by old man Ahmad Khan Kharl of Toba Tek Singh district. In the *Montgomery District Gazetteer* the Kharl chief has been painted as under:

"Ahmad was a man above average - bold and crafty. In 1848 he had induced Dhara Singh of the Gogera Nakkai to hold Satghara against the English. It was this man who roused the tribes. All the important Ravi tribes rose....The first real precursor of the storm that was brewing occurred on the night of July 26 in the shape of an outbreak in the Gogera jail. This appears to have been, in all probability the work of Ahmad Khan as he had managed, with the connivance of the *darogha*, to pay an unauthorised visit to the jail during June when he, no doubt conferred with the more turbulent of its inmates. Fiftyone prisoners were killed and wounded. Ahmad Khan, however, promptly fled away from Gogera as soon as the jail outbreak occurred."

This was the man about whom the bards of the area composed *dbolas*. But most of the *dbolas* could not be recorded due to the fear of the rulers. After more than a century, recording of oral tradition started, though in a hostile atmosphere. Neither newspapers nor radio gave any importance to this most important chapter of the history of the Punjab. The situation has not yet taken a turn for the better. The people of Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh and their representatives are not aware of the importance of the part played by this son of soil, Ahmad Khan Kharl of Jhamara. Nor do the Sahiwal people remember the battles fought in Gogera. Chichawatni, Harappa and on the bank of the Ravi.

No monuments have been raised in Toba Tek Singh or Faisalabad in the memory of those who laid down their life to keep alive the traditional resistance of the Punjab

against invaders and tyrants. All credit goes to the village bards who eulogised these heroes for whom no sophisticated poem came from the pen of our renowned poets.

اگے وی نال حکومت دے اوہ لیندا مورپے
 اوس توں دلا کے لنگھ جاندا
 راجہ رنجیت سنگھ نمانا
 ایہناں کھرلاں اگے ویر مرزے خان دا جالیا ہئی
 سیالوں توں چکے ہائیں وگ پرانے
 ایہناں کھرلاں اگے جنگ اکبر بادشاہ نال وی کیتا ہئی
 مدانوں کدے نہ اوہ ڈولانے
 احمد آہندا ہے۔ مہراں ٹپیاں ہن سلطان سکندر دیاں
 او بھتوں دے مال اساں

The Kharls have been fighting with the previous governments. Ranjeet Singh avoided confrontation with them and used to bypass their areas. Their tribal leader Mirza - hero of a Punjabi love story Mirza Saheban - was murdered by the Sials (the tribe of Saheban). The Kharls squared accounts with the Sials. They attacked the Sial territory and destroyed them. They also engaged Emperor Akbar and never wavered in the battlefields. They snatched the wealth of Alexander the Great and never surrendered it. After shedding some light on the tribal and regional background of Ahmad Khan Kharl the poet narrates the British-Kharl relationship in 1857.

انگریز برکلی آہندا ہے۔ رائے احمد دیویں گھوڑیاں
 تیری لندنوں کھ لیا دساں نیک نامی

رائے احمد! ہند اے رزناں، بھوئیں نے گھوڑیاں

ونڈ کسے نہ دتیاں

ہوندیاں بہت دے وچ ساہ سلامی

آحمد تے سازنگ چٹے جناب دے کے جھامرے نوں موڑ

گھوڑیاں، دھروڑ گئے فی

The Englishman Berkely says: Provide me with horses and men. Rai Ahmad! I will secure a citation for you from London. Rai Ahmad says: No one ever shares wives, land and mares with others. Ahmad and Sarang refused pointblank and they went back to their village Jhamara.

Then the poet narrates the last part of the episode:

ہن کھل یا دکر کے خدا نوں، دھری اے لت رکابے

پھڑ کے لڑ لگام دے

آکھے تسیں ڈھڈوں نہ ڈولو

رائے احمد پیا آکھے جھبوئیں تلوار مرسیاں

چتواں مرداں دے پتے جاسن لگ چرح مدان دے

اوس دیہاڑے بھٹیڑیاں پیاں ہن فوجاں انگریز دیاں

لگھراں آ لے کلرے کولوں ہاٹھیں انگریز دیاں

چک لنگھائیاں

پکے نوں کھلے ہین ادہ نشان دے

نماز پڑھدے رائے احمد نوں گلاب رائے بیدی

ماری اے گولی

اگا ہنہ دی رے ہین، سنگ امام دے

In the name of God the Kharl rides. Says nobody must waver. Rai Ahmad says: Draw your swords and advance, this is the real test for real men. That day the British army was routed. Rebels have shown their mettle. The British army was forced to retreat throughout barren lands. There are traces of their retreat which can be seen. But Gulab Rai Bedi fired at Rai Ahmad when he was in prayer. Rai Ahmad has joined the Imam - Husain.

Alas! the Punjabis have forgotten all those who had kept the tradition of Imam Husain alive. 1987.

CONTRADICTIONS OF CHATTHAS AND SIKHS

BULLEH Shah (1692-1758) saw the most turbulent period of the history of the Punjab. Therefore, he had again and again expressed his resentment on socio-political conditions of his days. As a Muslim, he might have had some sympathy with the Muslim rulers but he was ever critical of all falling or emerging forces. About Punjab he said:

در کھلا حشر عذاب دا بُرا حال ہویا پنجاب دا

Hell had been let loose
All the Punjab is in distress
He further says:

بگھا شاہ ہن کیا بتاوے جو دسے سولڑا کت بکتی، گت بگتی، کوئی نہیں ہتھ بھڑا

The infighting knows no limit
Everybody is engaged in battle and there is no one to stop them.

When Bulleh Shah died, one of the Sikh leaders who had established his hegemony over different parts of Lahore, Multan, Sirhind and Peshawar provinces, was Charhat Singh of Sukerchak near Gujranwala. At the time (1758) he was 37. He was the grandfather of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh and he emerged as a powerful Sardar after the unending Afghan invasions from the north-west while on the east the Mughal regime was falling apart. It had lost control over Sindh, the Punjab and the Frontier areas.

S.M. Lateef writes in his 'History of the Punjab': "On the departure of Ahmad Shah Abdali from Hindustan in 1761, disorder and confusion prevailed throughout the Punjab. The absence of all regular governments and the turbulent state of the country which followed the commotion at Panipat, increased the power of the Sikhs. The king concerned himself little about the disorder that had overtaken the internal administration of the province and his Governor at Lahore was in no better position than the military commander of an outlying post. The Sikhs grew more daring and rapacious upon the villages. All the principal sardars appropriated lands to themselves...They built strongholds and fastnesses for the purpose of better securing their persons and property against the Musalman invasions and to serve as the basis of military operations against their opponents. These active measures contributed much to the strength and resources of the Sikh nation. One of the chiefs who laid the foundations of the political greatness of the Sikh nation was Charhat Singh, ancestor of Ranjeet Singh, the future Maharaja of the Punjab...."

And Bulleh Shah says:

مغلاں زہر پیالے پیتے
 بھوریاں والے راجے کیتے
 سبھاشراف پھرن چپ کیتے

People with long hair have become rulers

The Mughals have committed suicide

The peace-loving people of noble origin are dumbfounded

Charhat Singh was a Sansi Jat of the Gujranwala district. His grandfather was a Hindu who converted to the Sikh religion. Gujranwala area at the time was divided among the three major local sardars. In Gujranwala tehsil, Charhat Singh reigned supreme while in Wazirabad tehsil

the southern part was in the hands of the Chatthas and in Hafizabad, the Bhatti Rajputs held sway.

The Gujranwala District Gazetteer describes the situation thus: Over the whole district the period between the decline of the Mughal power on the death of Aurangzeb and the rise of the Sikh confederacies (roughly the first half of the 18th century) was one of indescribable confusion and anarchy. The empire was gradually falling to pieces owing to internecine quarrels and successive shocks of invasion from the north-west. There was no strong central authority to maintain peace and order. It was devastated again and again by the invading armies of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali and the prosperity which had been slowly built up in the previous two centuries gave place here as elsewhere, to desolation and misery. In the general insecurity of life and property tribe fought against tribe, village against village; all but the strongest positions were abandoned, homesteads were deserted and the face of the country became a wilderness. The traditions of nearly every village show that in this period of rapine, it was sacked, burnt, deserted; the continuity of village life was broken and the old owners fled for safety to the jungles or to fortified towns, in some cases disappearing for ever, in others returning after the lapse of a decade or a generation.

"Of the Mohammadan tribes who struggled with most success to maintain their independence the most prominent were the Bhattis and Tarars in Hafizabad and the Chatthas in the Western half of the Wazirabad tehsil who carried on an unceasing and bitter struggle against Sikh ascendancy till their final overthrow in 1799.

"The decaying power of the Mughals at the beginning of the last century had given the Chattha tribe the opportunity of making a bold push for political ascendancy in this part of the Rechna Doab. Under Nur Mohammad Chattha, the first leader of note amongst them, and Pir Mohammad and Ahmad Khan his more famous sons, they

built and fortified the strongholds of Manchar, Alipur (Akalgarh) and Rasulnagar (Ramnagar) and in about 1750 raised the standard of independence by refusing to pay tribute to the Mughal Governor at Lahore. The Mughals were unable to exact allegiance or revenues but Mir Mannu, the representative of Ahmad Shah Durrani, who had now seized the empire, laid siege of Manchar in 1764. The siege was ineffectual and soon afterwards, the Emperor recognised the Chattha chiefs and confirmed them in their possession.

"At this time they held sway over 150 villages or more than half of the Wazirabad tehsil and their increasing power soon brought them into collision with Charhat Singh.

"Charhat Singh after the occupation of Gujranwala had found himself strong enough to turn his arms against the Chatthas. The cold war was carried on for ten years between Charhat Singh and Noor Mohammad Chattha who founded that Kot Noor Mohammad later known as Rasulnagar."

The struggle between the Chatthas and Charhat Singh, Mahan Singh and Ranjeet Singh was stretched over forty years and a Punjabi poet, Peer Mohammad of village Noonanwali, wrote an epic poem on the heroic struggle of the Chatthas. The poem (606 lines) named as "Chatthian di Var" is the fourth important literary piece in Punjabi which has historical value as well. One is 'Nadir di Var' by Najabat which deals with the invasion of Nadir Shah. The second one is Shah Mohammad's 'Sikhan di Var' or 'Jang Hind Punjab' which deals with the wars between the British and the Sikhs. The fourth folk var relates to Dullah Bhatti, a rebel in Akbar's time.

'Chatthian di Var' existed in oral form which was first recorded by the late Prof. Qazi Fazl-i-Haq and published. The poem makes no mention of the first Chattha chief, Noor Mohammad. It starts with Pir Mohammad Chattha and Charhat Singh. Charhat Singh, the rising Sikh leader,

had developed some enmity with Pir Mohammad about whom the poet says:

اک پیر محمد نام سی دھن چمدی مانی رسول نگر دا چودھری، بھودشمن پانی
تے خوش قبیلہ اپنا سبھ بھیناں بھائی تے اس دی وچ پنجاب سبھ پھری ڈوہائی

Pir Mohammad was a great man
He was a leader of Rasalnagar
His enemy feared him
His tribe was big and powerful
All of the Punjab recognised his rule and greatness.

The District Gazetteer records that "on the death of Charhat Singh in 1773-4 and Ahmad Khan in 1775, the struggle was continued by their sons Mahan Singh and Ghulam Mohammad, the bravest and the ablest of the Chattha chiefs. Under his leadership the Chatthas gained several successes over the Sikhs, in one of which they captured the famous Bhangian di Toap (Kim's Gun) and it at one time looked as if the progress of the Sikh arms had been arrested and their dominion in the Doab annihilated."

According to the poet Charhat Singh could afford a head-on collision with Pir Mohammad.

Charhat Singh asked Pir Mohammad to pay tribute to him and accept his suzerainty but according to 'Chatthian di Var' Pir Mohammad refused to do so:

پر تے پیر محمدے سنگھ دھریا تک پر موبہا ایں آرزو وچ نہ ہو یا سکا
جاں دیری چڑھت سنگھ دی جا پئی چہانی تے ہیا ماں سنگھ سی تدبہہ انجانی
پر جاں ماں سنگھ نے کجھ ندبہہ پھچانی ساڑی ماں اس مار کے جا وچ چہانی

Pir Mohammad was asked by Charhat Singh to pay tribute

The Singh could not get that till he died

When Charhat Singh died and his body was cremated
His son Mahan Singh was very young
His mother became the ruler

When Mahan Singh was able to understand state affairs

He killed his mother and cremated her according to custom.

Meanwhile, Pir Mohammad Chattha of Rasulnagar also died and his brave son Ghulam Mohammad replaced him.

The people who find mention in the first part of the var are Ahmad Shah Abdali, Rahmat Khan Warraich of Jalalpur Jattan, Muqarrab Khan and Gujjar Singh Bhangi. The poet recalls Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasion of 1764. He says that Abdali was accepted and supported by the Potwar Gakhars. Gakhar ruler Muqarrab Khan joined Abdali and was given possession of Gujrat. Thus the local Warraich chief sought help from Sardar Gujjar Singh of Lahore. They both crossed the Chenab and attacked Muqarrab Khan who was then at the Gujrat Fort. The assault took Muqarrab Khan by surprise and, unable to defend himself, he fled, allowing Gujjar Singh to establish his authority in Gujrat.

According to another source, "from 1748 to 1761 Gujrat was a prey with little or no respite to the advancing and retiring armies of Ahmad Shah Durrani whose route, to and from the Punjab lay across it. The Government, meanwhile, nominally administered by Muqarrab Khan who had been confirmed in his possessions by Durrani."

The poet says: تے چڑھیا گوجر سنگھ بھی چڑھ پاروں دھائے

رحمت خان اچان چک آکنک بہائے

سلطان مقرب ماریا سبھ مال لٹائے

Gujjar Singh was closely related to Mahan Singh whose sister was wedded to the former's son, Saheb Singh. The marriage was arranged in Charhat Singh's lifetime. This matrimonial alliance made the two Sikh tribes more

powerful. They surrounded the Chattha country. According to the poet, Mahan Singh sent his ambassador to Ghulam Mohammad Chattha at Rasulnagar who, according to Peer Mohammad, was a strong ruler:

تے بالتشاہی دے سلسلے سبھ اس دے ڈیرے تے کہند اسی اوہ راجیاں ہو بہو پریرے
تے جہا کوئی نہ جمیا جو اُس نوں چھیڑے تے پیاماں سنگھ سی اک اوں دے جھیڑے

He was a king with a court

He kept the Rajas (Sikhs) at bay

The man wasn't born who could beard him in his den

Only Mahan Singh could join issue with him.

Mahan Singh's envoy Baluch Khan conveyed the message to the Chattha. The Sikh chieftain wanted that the Chattha should accept his suzerainty and pay tribute to him. Baluch Khan was specially instructed that he should convince the Chattha that it was imperative for him to see Mahan Singh at Gujranwala and settle the amount of the tribute he would pay to the latter. The Chatthas had already refused tribute to the Mughal governor and even to Mir Munno, the Abdali viceregent who had to lift the siege of the fort at Kot Noor Mohammad after several months of futile effort to subdue the Chatthas.

Ghulam Mohammad Chattha knew this well. He also knew that if he stooped once then there would be no end to it. He was also convinced that the Sikhs had not yet established their power. The Muslims were still convinced that after the failure of the Mughals, the Afghans would save them from the Sikhs. The Sikhs were also not sure of their position. Therefore, whenever there was an Afghan invasion, they shed away from defensive action. They used to leave their towns and forts and took refuge in jungles or far-flung areas. Ghulam Mohammad Chattha's answer to the envoy was:

تے گن کے دم محصول دے میں پاساں پتے پر ڈھل نہ کوئی جنگ دی جاں زور اچلے

Ask Mahan Singh to come and receive the tribute in full

But before that he must do battle with me.

For Mahan Singh who had recently married the daughter of Gajpat Singh Jind, Mai Malwain, this was a grave provocation indeed. Cut to the quick, he decided to storm Rasulnagar. As was the recognised practice in those days, the attack came without warning or a formal ultimatum, obliging the Chatthas to shut themselves up in the fort and allowed Mahan Singh to lay siege to it. Peer Mohammad describes the action thus:

تے لشکر مہاں سنگھ دا دریائی کانگاں
تے لکھے منبوتان کے سبھ ٹانگ پٹانگاں
تے چکے جیونکر بجلی سوگل تلواراں
تیر کر بندے عاجزی اسان پہلے جانا
تے سبر گویا تبکاں تد کھول دہانا
تے سیدنگرنوں و گیا کر کوکاں چاہنگاں
باہر گوردھارا دے تے اندر بانگاں
تے دسن تبکاں گویاں جوں ابر بہاراں
تے سانگاں کنبن قہر تھیں چہ ہتھ جوناں
پر ہتھ نہ پینچے کسے داسی کوٹ اسماں

The Army of Mahan Singh roared in like a river in spate.

It reached Said Nagar and set up camp

The Sikhs loudly recited from Guru Granth outside the town

The Muslims inside the fort took recourse to the Azan

The swords shone like lightening

Artillery shells and bullets rained like a summer cloudburst

It was an incessant rain of arrows

Bows are constantly taut

But no one could reach the fort as it was sky-high.

Peer Mohammad's version is that Ghulam Mohammad once again wrote a taunting letter to Mahan Singh who could not reduce the fort. Unable to win with courage, Mahan Singh made use the centuries-old strategy of cunning and won over a few Hindus of the fort. A bargain was struck and one night, one of the gates of the fort was opened for the Sikh army. However, the Sikhs could not take full advantage of this treachery except that they were able to take one of Ghulam Mohammad's sons hostage.

The young lad was in the custody of Gujjar Singh:

پر گوجر سنگھ، غلام دا ادہ پتر پھڑیا تے کر کے قید اسلام گڑھ جازوریں وڑیا
تے پچھے مہاں سنگھ بھی لے لشکر چڑھیا

On learning this Mahan Singh left his attack incomplete and went in chase of Gujjar Singh. This is the poet's version and is not supported by history. For instance, S.M. Lateef writes in his '*History of the Punjab*':

Shortly after this (marriage of Mahan Singh) he engaged in an undertaking which gained for him great celebrity as a warrior and conquerer. Rasulnagar, situated on the east bank of the Chenab, was held by a powerful tribe of Mohammadans called the Chatthas also known as Manchurids, the head of the tribe at that time being a Mussalman Jat named Pir Mohammad? Mahan Singh assisted by Jay Singh Kahnua made an attack on this town at the head of 6,000 troops, the pretext being the famous *Zamzama* gun of Ahmad Shah, which Jhanda Singh Bhangi, after his conquest of the Chatthas, had left with Pir Mohammad in deposit from its being too heavy to be taken across Chenab.

"Mahan Singh now claimed it as the property of the Khalsa. The town of Rasulnagar was besieged and the blockade continued for four months. The whole of the surrounding country belonging to the Chatthas was depopulated and to use the expression of a contemporary, not a grain of wheat was left in the house of a *zamindar*.

The Chatthas in vain sought the aid of the Bhangi chiefs, as they were at that time employed in plundering and conquering Multan and Bahawalpur. The besieged had now no alternative but to sue for peace and Mahan Singh put his seal on the Granth, binding himself not to molest Pir Mohammad if he surrendered his person. The Mohammadan chief on receiving this assurance came out unguarded but was treacherously put under arrest by Mahan Singh. His sons were tied to the mouths of guns and blown to pieces by the orders of the victor."

'Chatthian di Var' gives a slightly different version which gives the name of the Chattha as Ghulam Mohammad and not Pir Mohammad. The action took place in 1778-79. It says:

تے اوڑک مہاں سنگھ نے چالادے لائے
 تے کرکے دغا نفاق بھی اس سد بلائے
 میاں خان، غلام بھی چڑھ ڈیرے آئے
 تے دے دھرو اس دساہ بھی اس کول بہائے
 تے پھڑکے دونویں سورے چاقید کرائے

Mahan Singh invited the Chattha chief Ghulam Mohammad and his uncle Mian Khan for peace talks. He had assured their life, dignity and state. But when they reached Mahan Singh's camp, they were disarmed first and later put under arrest. Mian Khan and Ghulam Mohammad both were unhappy over Mahan Singh's treachery who had broken a promise which he made after oath on the Granth.

تے جو فسہ مایا سنگھ نے نہ اوہناں بھیایا
 تے بے فرمانی دیکھ کے ادہ کاوڑ آیا
 تے میاں خان دھرتوپ دے مونہہ مار اڈایا

Mahan Singh forced the Chatthas to accept his terms and hand over Rasulnagar to the Khalsa. Lateef says:

"Mahan Singh's name spread throughout the length and breadth of the country owing to his having captured Rasulnagar and the reputation for valour obtained by him was so great that many sardars who had hitherto been dependent on the Bhangi now acknowledged the Sukerchakia sardar as their chief and transferred their allegiance to him and deemed it an honour to fight under his banner. The name of Rasulnagar was changed into Ramnagar and that of Alipur into Akalgarh. The governorship of the newly acquired territory was given to Dal Singh, a lieutenant of Mahan Singh. The relics of the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon Him) which fell into the hands of the victors in their sack of Rasulnagar were removed by Mahan Singh to Gujranwala."

Under the dictates of Mahan Singh, the Chatthas were ousted from Rasulnagar. They retreated to Manchar which is now known as Manchar Chattha. Peer Mohammad says:

تے مال متاعیں چٹھیاں ڈھونڈن پھر سٹے
 تے نگرے ڈیرا سنگھ دا وچ منچر چھٹے
 جاں نگر کھڑا یا چٹھیاں سر کرے نہٹے

Ghulam Mohammad again reorganised his tribe. Though he was humiliated but in his heart of hearts he never accepted of Mahan Singh's suzerainty. Ghulam Mohammad built a fort at Manchar and the Chatthas felt a bit safer. After some time, Ghulam Mohammad put his tribe together and the Chatthas trained themselves in guerrilla tactics. The poet says:

تے چڑھدے چھست سورے نپ سانگاں بھلے
 تے بل کے مارن پاستیں کر زور اوّے
 تے راہیں ہک دو آدمی نہ ٹرن اکلے

The Chatthas used to arm themselves. They were free looters, in the territory now in the control of Mahan Singh. They waylaid those who were politically associated with Mahan Singh. Ghulam Mohammad was heading this operation.

According to 'Chatthian di Var',

تے لوکاں اگے سنگھ دے فریاداں لائیاں
 تے چھوڑ غلام محمدے، تده لیکان لائیاں
 تے پیو دادے دیاں کھٹیاں اسال آن گوائیاں
 تے دانگوں دے بھئیے بریا تیاں چائیاں
 پرکتھے اکبر بادشاہ جس پھیر موڑائیاں

The people complained to Mahan Singh that he had spared Ghulam Mohammad who was now looting and plundering them in broad day light. He was a wrongdoer like Dullah Bhatti. Akbar, the King, dealt severely with Dullah and everything was restored to him from whom it was snatched. Alas you (Mahan Singh) have not proved yourselves, Akbar was great, indeed.

The rest of the story goes like this: Mahan Singh was totally opposed to the emergence of a reinforced Chattha tribe in Manchar. The guerrilla tactics of the Chattha youth were creating confusion in the area where Mahan Singh had been finally accepted as the new ruler. Therefore, Mahan Singh again planned to ransack the Chattha stronghold. Mahan Singh remembered his bitter past experience when he could not take Rasulnagar for four months. Now he tried to get support from within the Chattha family.

Before Mahan Singh could attack Ghulam Mohammad took the initiative and attacked Kalianwala which was then under the former's effective control. This enraged Mahan Singh and he attacked Manchar Chattha. It was a very bitter campaign fiercer and bloodier than the one at

Rasulnagar. The Sikh army was engaged on three different fronts.

Meanwhile, one of Ghulam Chattha's wives deserted him and openly sided with the Sikh forces. Even that could not help Mahan Singh to finally rout the Chatthas. The deserting wife told Mahan Singh that Chattha was very sick and he might not last long.

تے کہیا مہاں سنگھ نوں اوں بوہتی وارے
جے چٹھا ماندہ اج ہے نہ آوے وارے

Mahan Singh withdrew from active battle. He now asked for the active support of his relative Gujjar Singh. Meanwhile, he also shifted his camps on the other side of the Chenab near village Gakhara. Here he met Gujjar Singh and they both marched on Manchar where Ghulam Chattha was lying ill.

تے گوجر سنگھ دے پتر تداہی لڑائی
تے گھل پرواز سنگھ نے چا صلح کرائی
جے میری گل نبیڑ کے مڑ کر یو کائی
تے پیڑ پتر نے فوج بھی سرپٹ ملائی

Gujjar Singh and his son Saheb Singh were not on good terms with each other.

Mahan Singh asked them that they should sink their differences and join him. Both of them did so and the three forces launched an attack on Manchar Chattha.

تے لشکر مہاں سنگھ دا جیوں ساون ہاٹھاں
تے ٹریاں فوجاں جوڑ کے دریاویں بھٹاٹھاں
تے لشکر پار چڑھیندیاں نہ واری گھاٹاں

They had to cross the river Chenab. The Chatthas were ready to face the awesome Sikh host. Casualties were so numerous on both sides that they wanted an honourable peace. However, the besieged Chattha was weaker.

تے گرد بگردے منجرے لہہ پئی نوکائی
 تے دینہ راتیں جنگ بھی نت پوئے لڑائی
 تے میاں سنگھ غلام نال ایہہ پارسائی
 جے ملے غلام نہ مارساں سر پوچھی چائی
 پر گھلیا قطب الدین کوں جا مل توں بھائی

Ghulam Mohammad was assured by Mahan Singh that if he surrendered he would be spared. Ghulam Mohammad sent his brother Qutbuddin for negotiations. Mahan Singh wanted that Ghulam Mohammad himself should have come. To ensure this, he sent young Ranjeet Singh to Ghulam Mohammad who, on behalf of his father, assured the Chattha chieftain of the safety of his life and property:

تے میاں وانگ فقیر بھی چاویں دٹائے تے کر کے گیرے کپڑے گل سہیلی پاوے

Mian Ghulam Mohammad wore a hermit's attire and went to Mahan Singh and accepted his success on the term that he and his people be allowed to go on Haj. He assured that he would never return home. Mahan Singh agreed to that. The Chatthas made preparations to leave accordingly.

In the meanwhile, some spies of the Chatthas informed Mian Khan (uncle or son of Ghulam Mohammad?) that Sikhs would butcher everybody who came out of Manchar for the voyage to Mecca. Mian Khan, without informing his father went to Mahan Singh and questioned his intentions about his father and other pilgrims. Mahan Singh ordered his immediate killing and the next day when the *caravan* of Ghulam Mohammad came out of Manchar it was suddenly attacked by Mahan Singh's forces. They were put to the sword. Thus Mahan Singh, after violating his oath on the Granth and setting

aside his commitments to his adversaries, emerged as the most powerful leader of the area.

The last blow to the Chatthas which almost completed their defeat was in the early period of Ranjeet Singh. About the end of Ghulam Mohammad Chattha says the Gazetteer:

"Ghulam Mohammad was driven back into his fortress at Manchar to which siege was laid by the Sikhs and seeing that further resistance was ineffectual he offered to surrender on promise of permission to retire in safety to Makkah. The promise was given but basely broken; most of the garrison was put to the sword, Ghulam Mohammad himself was shot at the instigation of Mahan Singh, the fortress was razed to the ground and the possession of the Chattha chief was appropriated and distributed among Sikh chiefs"

To mark the overthrow of the Chattha chiefs and the triumph of the Sikhs, the names of Rasulnagar and Alipur were altered to Ramnagar and Akalgarh. The heroic resistance of Ghulam Mohammad and his treacherous end are, recorded in many a local ballads. 'Chatthian di Var' is one of them. It concludes:

تے ایویں کر پیا چٹھیاں دا پاسہ مچھا تے جیوں کر زور پزیریاں اماں کھٹا

1989.

SHAH AZEEM AND MULTAN CONFLICT

THE longest and the toughest battles had been fought in the Multan region in the second half of the XVIII and the first quarter of the XIX century. The humiliating agreement between Mohammad Shah the Mughal ruler of Delhi and the invader Nadir Shah in 1740 had opened the floodgates of foreign attacks as well as the local fights. In the east, the Bengalis, and Oudh had not only broken away as states independent of Mughal India but had accepted the East India Company's overlordship. In the south after the fall of Tipu Sultan, British rule was firmly established. Even the Delhi King was at the mercy of the British. The Punjab was the constant target of invaders from the north-west. After Nadir Shah, it was Ahmad Shah Abdali, his son Taimur Shah, then Shah Shuja and Shah Zaman. Lahore and Multan were at one time under the control of the Delhi Court but were soon to find themselves at the mercy of the Afghan invaders. The Sikhs were emerging as a force to be reckoned with. They were clever and after many humiliating defeats at the hands of the Afghans, decided to side with them to liquidate the remnants of the Mughal administration in the Punjab. That was the only way left for them to achieve their goal of establishing an independent Sikh state.

During effective Mughal rule, the Multan province was attached together with the Lahore province for all practical purposes. Therefore, in the second half of the XVIII century, if Afghans were dominating in Lahore they also appointed their governors at Multan. Sometimes direct

allegiance to Kabul was ordered. During this period the Multan province had seen untold miseries - at times created by its own rulers and at times by the invaders. Sikhs have quickly organised themselves into almost an invincible military machine in Multan also.

Some of the battles fought between different tribes and regional rulers have been recorded by Punjabi poets. One such battle between Sikhs and Nawab Muzaffar Khan of Multan was recorded by a poet Shah Azeem. His poem is known as "*Multan di Var*" or 'Nawab Muzaffar di Var'. This war was fought in 1818 between the Sikh forces under the command of Prince Kharak Singh and Nawab Muzaffar Khan of Multan during Ranjeet Singh's finest hour. The Sikhs had subdued almost all the small Hindu and Muslim princelings. The Pathans of Kasur were attacked four times by the Sikhs and had ultimately to surrender.

Kasur's Nawab Qutubuddin was also on Kharak Singh's side in his assault on Multan. According to Shah Azeem's Var, Qutubuddin went to Muzaffar Khan and with reference to his personal as well as to the general political situation in the area, advised him to come to terms with the Sikh rulers to whom he used to pay tribute already. Shah Azeem, about whom no research has so far been made by any scholar of central or southern Punjab scholars, narrates what conspired between the Nawabs Qutubuddin and Muzaffar Khan:

اسیں نیک پھان قصور دے، کم نیکیاں کر دے	قطب دین وکیل سیانا، گھلیا ای کھرک سنگھ
بھمبر چنبہ، کیسری، کشمیر درانی	ہک عرض اسادی سن گھن، توں فیض رسائی
راوی کوٹ کمالیہ بھٹ عالی شانی	اٹک، پشاور کسلوی، رات آسیر زانی
نورپور اتے کانگرہ، سبھ جاگیاں فانی	جھنگ، چٹھے، پنڈی رسول نگر اتلوار شانی
لہور دا قلعہ اراج مار یوس، کر زور زورانی	امر تسر نہیں اٹکیا، دھم پئی جہا نہیں
تاں ہن ملتان ز رہسی آ، دل منگ امانی	ہیں بھی یاراں ورسیاں لڑ دیاں کر منگھ دیرانی

According to S.M. Lateef (*History of the Punjab*), "the Maharaja...proceeded against Nizamuddin Khan of Kasur. in 1800. He failed and returned to Lahore.

In 1801, Nizam was attacked by Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia. Qutubuddin, younger brother of Nizam was sent to Maharaja as a hostage.

In 1802, the Maharaja raided Kasur again and in the bloody war which ensued the city and suburbs were looted and devastated. Nizam was reinstated on promise of paying *nazrana* (tribute). The same year, after the murder of Nizam, Qutubuddin became the new Nawab of Kasur. Not much later, there was a bitter fight between Nawab Qutub and the Maharaja. The Maharaja could not humiliate the Nawab and had to be content with a war indemnity from Kasur as a price for withdrawing from Kasur.

"The tussle between the Pathans of Kasur and the Sikhs of Lahore continued for another seven years. The Maharaja led a formidable expedition against Kasur in 1807. Qutubuddin was prepared to meet the assault from his embattled fort." The Sikh siege of the fort lasted for a month in which time the besieged consumed all their provisions....The Sikhs laid waste the whole territory with more than their ordinary vengeance and their artillery levelled to the ground a great portion of the city walls. The city being thus reduced, was given up to plunder...Much barbarity was shown by Sikhs towards the tender sex, many of whom committed suicide by strangling or throwing themselves into wells - Hundreds of women and children were carried away as slaves and numerous helpless people were deprived of even of their wearing apparel....Qutubuddin shut himself up in the fortress of Kasur. But internal sedition and squabbles completed the ruin of his family, and, at the end of March he was

compelled to surrender and retire to his territory of Mamdot."

This was the experience of Nawab Qutubuddin on the basis of which he advised Muzaffar Khan not to take on the Sikh army.

Shah Azeem, the poet, paints the latest position of the Sikh state through Qutubuddin. He says that the Sikhs had taken Attock, Peshawar from the Pathans, Kot Kamalia from the Kharls, Jhang from the Sials, Pindi from the Bhattis, Rasulnagar from the Chatthas, and Nurpur and Kangra from the Rajputs.

But all this did not deter Muzaffar Khan. Actually Muzaffar Khan looked desperate. He was again and again attacked and humiliated by the Sikhs. The situation for both the parties was so frustrating that they wanted the help of the British across the Sutlej river. According to S.M. Lateef:

"...The Multan Governor Muzaffar Khan, in the meantime opened a correspondence with the British Governor General in Calcutta and the Maharaja did the same with Colonel Sir David Ochterlong at Ludhiana and proposed a joint action against Multan but both the chiefs were left to themselves and told to settle their affairs as best as they could."

The Maharaja-Nawab conflict dates back to 1802 when Ranjeet Singh set out for Multan. "His sole idea was the prize upon which he had set his mind...Multan was rich and Multan he must have at any cost....When the troops entered the Nawab's dominion Muzaffar Khan sent his confidential agents to the Sikh chief to induce him to withdraw on receipt of a *nazrana* and promise of future submission. The Nawab met the Maharaja 30 miles from the city. The Maharaja received him with honour and having exacted a large tribute from him retraced his steps to Lahore...."

In his reply to Nawab Qutubuddin, the Multan Governor Muzaffar Khan had referred to a previous attack of the Maharaja. He said:

میرا نہیں بھرنیا آچھوہ، ایس کنگ نال
 توڑے سکھ ہوئے پنج سو، مارہکی پٹھان دی
 توپاں دی کبہہ آرو، آگے وگیاں چار ماہ
 دے نہ ایڈے توہ، مرنا اک وار
 جگ سنس نہ کہو میرے ایس جنگ دے
 میں تاں اکھلی چھڑساں جو جویں کر دھنملا
 نہ ہوئے ہا ذات نا بھو، تاں دوائیں ہا اڈا

"This happened in 1807. After the conquest of Kasur, the Maharaja then marched on Multan, an expedition taken at the instigation of Abdus Samad Khan (Abdul Karim Khan?) the Saddozai chief who had at one time been appointed Governor of Multan by Shah Zaman but was at last defeated by Muzaffar Khan and dispossessed of his fort and *jagir*...The cause of the expedition was stated to be that the Nawab after concluding his submission to the Maharaja gave protection to his enemy Ahmad Khan, the Sial of Jhang, providing him with men and money and thereby enabling him to recover a considerable portion of his territories and secondly he was suspected of intriguing with Qutubuddin of Kasur. On his way, he occupied and garrisoned various dependencies of the Multan Government and in April, he laid siege to Multan itself. The walled town was captured, but the citadel into which the principal inhabitants had retired with their valuables, offered stubborn resistance. Ranjeet Singh who was unprovided with the means of carrying on a difficult and protracted siege, was glad to accept the payment of a tribute of Rs. 70,000 and retired with credit.

In the beginning of 1817 Diwan Moti Ram Bhawani Das, Peshawaria, Hari Singh Nalva and other sardars were sent against Multan, with a large force to enforce the payment of a tribute. The Sikh army besieged the fort but Muzaffar Khan offered gallant defence and compelled the invaders to raise the siege and retire. When the army reached Lahore, the Maharaja placed Bhawani Das who had conducted the siege, in confinement besides imposing on him a fine of Rs. 10,000.

The 'Var of Multan' or the 'Var of Nawab Muzaffar' says:

سنگھ سنگھاں دا بادشاہ وٹ اندر پائے
 امیر، امرا، مشدی، سبھ کول بہائے
 جہڑا بھڑسی نہیں پھٹان نال، بے ترسی پائے
 ملتان دی ڈاڈی تا، ہمیشہ سنگھ نوں
 ہراک دی عرضات ایہہ قلعہ اج ماریتے
 خزانے، لکھ جاہذات گھن سرکاروے
 بھیڑ بیٹھن ملتان کول چڑھ لشکر بھارے

The background of the third attack on Multan has been explained in the '*History of the Punjab*' which is not different from that of Shah Azeem, the poet. The '*History*' says: "The repeated excursions and continued exactions had so strained the resources of the country (Multan) and spread such devastation over it that the Maharaja saw the time had come when his long coveted possession could be secured without any considerable difficulty. Yet he prepared himself for all possible contingencies and was fully alive to the danger of Mussalman combination in the cause of their faith... Before undertaking this expedition, he released Ahmad Khan, the Sial Chief of Jhang... with the *Jagir* of Rs. 12,000 for his subsistence in Mirowal, in the Amritsar district.

"A year earlier in 1817 a treaty was also concluded with the Nawab of Mankera...binding the Nawab to pay an annual tribute of Rs. 80,000 and to supply a number of horses and camels and a contingent of troops for service in Multan in case of war. During the latter part of the year, the Maharaja's attention was wholly absorbed in making military preparation for an expedition against Multan.

"In January 1818, an army of 25,000 Sikhs marched from Lahore to the south-west frontier...the chief command of the expedition was given to Prince Kharak Singh assisted by Misar Diwan.

بخت کھڑک سنگھ دا لکھا کلنارے (کرتارے) ہ
 سردار شہزادہ چاڑھیے دے منصب بھارے
 ہاتھی دس دانگ لشکراں، جیواں امبرتارے
 صوڑاڈانی گھوڑیاں ہڈ کرٹکن ہارے
 دیکھ شاہ غنیمت دوہر دلاں معتابلہ
 کون جیتے تے کون ہارے

"It was resolved to convey the provisions and material by the Ravi and Chenab. And the boats on these rivers were put under requisition. A large number of bullocks were procured to convey heavy artillery to the intended seat of war. *Zanzama*, the famous gun had been moved from Amritsar and all the sardars of the State were busy in collecting supplies and men from every quarter.

"An exorbitant sum was demanded with five of Muzaffar Khan's best horses and thus requisition not being complied with the fort of Khangarh and Muzaffargarh on the way to Multan were stormed and captured."

All these factors clearly indicate that Ranjeet Singh had finally decided that he would liquidate Pathan rule in Multan and adjacent areas. In that decision he had the full sanction of the Afghan rulers of Kabul whom Ranjeet Singh

represented. His all activities were with the approval of the Kabul regime. So far as other local Muslim rulers were concerned, the Mughals were a bygone story, the nearby Bahawalpur state had accepted the terms dictated by the Sikh rulers and the state was paying tribute to them. In Sindh, there were two independent states of Hyderabad and Baluchistan province. But all were under the control of either the Delhi Court or Kabul. No one came to the help of a co-religious rulers of Multan or Mankera or Dera Ghazi Khan. It was not the question of religious affinity at all. If this had been the case, the dead body of a respectable Governor of Multan, Ali Mohammad Khoogani would not had been insulted if not desired by Ahmad Shah Abdali and Nawab Shuja Khan, father of Nawab Muzaffar Khan.

The story goes that Ali Mohammad Khan Khoogani was appointed Governor of Multan by Ahmad Shah. Nawab Shuja was at the time Governor of Multan. He refused to accept Khoogani as Governor and this led to a battle. Shuja was deposed and imprisoned by Khoogani. Shuja was badly treated in jail.

On Ahmad Shah's third invasion, it was brought to his notice that his Saddozai brother was being insulted by a Khoogani. The complaint was lodged by an old aunt of Shuja Khan and his son, young Muzaffar Khan.

Ahmad Shah ordered that Khoogani be stabbed to death. His abdomen be ripped opened. His dead body be mounted on a camel and exhibited through the whole of Multan city. That was done and after that nobody dared to bury the deadbody for the next three days.

So commonality of religion did not matter. There were other factors also. The Multan rulers never extended their support to Muslim rulers of adjoining areas like Mankera, Jhang and Dipalpur. Nor did the latter come to his help. Religion was a common bond between ordinary Muslims but more important was the regional and individualistic approach of the Muslim rulers.

When the Sikh army had reached Multan, an attempt

was made by Nawab Qutubuddin to bring Muzaffar Khan to his senses. But Muzaffar Khan feared that he would not be spared by the Maharaja. He had finally decided to overthrow the Pathan rule. He was convinced that Multan and its rulers were extremely rich. He wanted all that wealth for himself. The Maharaja had officially appointed Prince Kharak Singh as his heir. He wanted to establish the Prince as a good commander. Thus the Prince was asked to lead an expedition against a major principality.

These were the obvious reasons which convinced the old Nawab to go for the deciding battle. He had consultations with the elders of his court, his sons and others who mattered.

میں پڑھیاں دانو اب، وچ ملتان دے راج ہڈا تم راج، ہتھوں اپنے
کیوں عزت کراں خراب مل کے سنگھ نوں راج اکبر دا ثواب بھڑن کفار نال

He also decided not to compromise with the invading Sikhs and accepted the challenge. His eight sons supported him to the hilt. Most of the sardars of his court also extended moral and financial support to the Nawab.

Shah Azeem explains how the eight sons of the Nawab faced the situation. About them he has written seven stanzas. The first line of every stanza follows:

سن خدمت گاراں آئے نیں پتر نواب دے
نوحسن بہاراں، سبھ تھیں چونویں
پہلا پتر: سردار خان آگاہی سرکردہ فوج دا
دوجا: شہباز خان ونگریندا، آیا دلاں وچ
تیجا: آپیا کلاواں کھاندا شاہ نواز جو
چوتھا: سر بھڈ کے سکر، تاج محمد آیا
پنجواں: پنجواں آیا پتر نواب دا ہتھیارے پنخے

پھیواں : پھیواں آیا پترنواب دا ہتھیارے سنگے
 ستواں اٹھواں پترنواب دے ننھے وت پر دیں
 کوہاون بھرا بھتریے آپنے ، قبیلے خویش
 اوہناں وطن نہیں چھوڑیا ، دیں ٹر چلے پر دیں

How did the Nawab face the enemy? This had been narrated in the contemporary histories 'Tawarikh-i-Khalsa' and 'Tazkaratul Multan'.

A proclamation was issued by the Nawab, calling on the faithful to draw the sword in the cause of Islam and hundred of Mussalmans gathered from the surrounding country and were supplied with arms by the Nawab. The Sikhs under the Diwan closely besieged Multan which was defended by Nawab Muzaffar with great valour. The siege lasted for several days until, at length several breaches having been affected in the walls of the city by incessant Sikh fire, the invaders took possession of the town in February, after a protracted struggle. Now the bombardment of the fort began. The citadel was ill-defended for a siege and the Nawab had a garrison of only 2,000 men.

With such scanty means at his disposal, Muzaffar Khan made a defence so gallant that the Sikhs had never before witnessed the like of it.

سچے ہتھیارے بدھیوس گانا، سرتے سہریاں	ہتھیارے تیرکمانا تفنگ تلوار دی
کچھ بندوق نشانہ، گڑھی کفار دی	آپنی شہادت داسا دیانہ، سینوس وجدا
جیویں جنگ یزید طوفاناں، پیش ام دے	منظف روچ ملتا نا ڈھیوس کر بلا
اس رکھی اے ہمت جو انا پچھانہ نہیں ہٹیا	شاہ عظیم اشرف نہیں سہنے طعنے، سہن کینے

"The Sikhs established batteries on commanding positions and entrenched themselves outside the ditch.

From this position they opened a steady fire from their guns and matchlocks on the fort. The besieged made many sorties and many desperate encounters took place between detachments of two armies, but the continuous Sikh fire had the effect of making several breaches in the walls of the citadel. The bombardment went on till June 2.

"The great Bhangi toap was now in full play. Other heavy guns were also used to good purpose. Two practicable breaches were made in the wall and the gates were blown up, but the defenders raised mounds of earth behind them and from these engaged in a hand to hand fight with their assailants. The Sikhs made many assaults but the small garrison repulsed them again and again with heavy losses.

"The Nawab was determined to repel the enemy or die. Desertions now began to take place on the side of the Nawab for the Sikhs offered large bribes to his Pathan adherents. At length, the defenders of the citadel were reduced to two or three hundred fighting men - for the most part the immediate dependents and connections of the Nawab. All the rest had either been killed or gone over to the enemy. This devoted little band determined to hold out to the last.

فوجاں جو نواب دیاں بنھ ہاٹھاں کھڑیاں توپاں مونہ سہاریاں آدن وات جو تڑیاں
 اگوں مظفر اپنے چاکتیاں رھڑیاں مسلماناں زبوریان قبران نہ ہندواں مڑھیاں

"Meanwhile, the Sikhs scaled the wall of the fort. The old Nawab with the remnant of his followers, his own sons, kinsmen, and personal attendants made a stand with drawn swords at the door of his residence near the Khizri Gate. This handful of heroes now rushed on their assailants and so furious and desperate was the charge that many fell beneath their swords. Cutting his way through his enemy, the Nawab with his devoted little band reached the tomb of Bahawal Haq.

"Here the Nawab determined on standing his ground to the last and such was the terror inspired by the desperate valour displayed by him, that the Sikhs drew back and opened fire on them.

"Come on like men" shouted the braves, "let us try our valour in a fair fight". This was, however, a challenge to which the Sikhs did not care to respond. Thus fell the grey-bearded Nawab Muzaffar Khan, his five brave sons Shah Nawaz, Mumtaz Khan, Ayaz Khan, Haq Nawaz and Shahbaz. And the last episode of this grim battle was the armed fight given by the daughter of the Nawab about whom Shah Azeem says:

ادہ بسم اللہ کرا جائی دھن نواب دی	بخت بھری چڑھ آئی او پھر جنگ تے
ادہ پھر چڑھ کے آئی گھنڈ اتا ریا	ٹھپ ٹھپ رکھے چائی برقعے سترے
آندی اے بندھ لجھائی چوڑے بھن کے	ہتھ پگاں ہنر کجائی بدھیوس تیج نال
اس کوں یاد جو کر بل آئی دسر باگھاروے	یاد کیتے سو بھائی نظر نہ آوندے
اس کٹک گھدی چمکائی پچھے باب دے	ادہ کوچ وانگوں کر لائی اٹھی جوش نال
ادہ تال گئی اے گھول گھمائی سارے خوش تے	اس مارن بہت سپاہی اکھرک سنگھ دے
رت ڈاہڑے قلم وگائی لوح محفوظا وچوں	اس حوراں ہندی لائی وچ بہشت دے

1989

WARRIOR SHAMS KHAN OF POONCH

THE Khan and Sultan got together in Ghori Fort and they successfully stopped the invasion of the Sikhs (and Dogras). Innumerable Sikhs were killed in battle. Sultan Najf Khan got on the top of the Noora Seeri summit. He halted the Sikhs who had invaded the area like a duststorm. Ranjeet Singh was informed about the success of the Muslims. He was told that his commander Jawala was so overawed that he was about to accept the religion of the Muslims.

Popular folk song

This was a popular folk song in Poonch and Azad Kashmir areas where Punjabi or Pahari is spoken. It used to go like this:

لڑے مومن مسلمان فرس سکھاں دا بچھایا رارو پارڈ کے سکھڑے پئی دھندتا انھیری شکر کر جوا آیا کداں کلمہ نہیں پڑھا لبا	چڑھے خان تے سلطان قلعہ کہوڑی دا اٹھایا سلطان چڑھ بیٹھا اے نورا سیری بیٹھی بہنی رنجیت سنگھ دی مُسلے کیرہ کتیا انھیر
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Ranjeet Singh and his commanders invaded Kashmir several times. They used to attack through Bhimber and Rajouri. Jammu was attacked by his father Mahan Singh and his grandfather Charhat Singh who was fatally wounded on the Jammu front. Whenever these Sukarchakya Sardars were short of money they attacked

Jammu and the surrounding areas. Ranjeet Singh invaded the area again and again with the intention of reaching the Kashmir valley but he had to suffer heavy losses in every attack before he finally got through to Srinagar.

In Bhimber, Raja Sultan Khan a Chib Rajput was the regional ruler and in Rajouri a Jarral Rajput, Raja Aghar Khan, was the headstrong who held sway. He had close relations with the Mughal rulers whose fall was at that time also complete in the Punjab and adjacent territories. Sikh and Muslim marauders were about to capture power. The Sikhs were getting the upper hand but they were punished again and again by the Muslim invaders from Afghanistan. The Afghan invaders and Sikhs had broken the back of the Mughal administration in the Lahore and Multan provinces. The British had also emerged as the third party in the eastern parts of the Punjab.

Sikh tribes

In western Punjab, Sikh misals (tribes) were getting stronger than the Muslims. Somehow or the other, Muslims of the area believed in the revival of Islamic power, be at Delhi or at Kabul. They were psychologically incapable of thinking in terms of becoming independent rulers. Therefore, they never aspired to be sovereign masters of the area. On the other hand, the Sikhs were out to establish themselves as independent rulers. On the eastern front, they no longer feared the Mughals who were overpowered by the advancing British. On the western borders, the Sikhs were always fearful of the Abdalis and the Shah Zamans. Whenever they attacked, the Sikhs either took refuge in jungles or fled away from the route of the invading Afghans. Some of them openly sided with the Afghans. Somehow they knew that the Mughals were no more their match. Therefore, it was better to side with the Afghans.

The Afghans would not stay in Lahore for any length of time. They needed the help and trust of the locals. Most of the Sikh generals extended their cooperation to these Afghans. Ranjeet Singh was fully supported by Shah Zaman and his juniors. This was the main psychological difference between the Muslim and Sikh elders. So far Hindus of the Punjab were concerned, they did not play any significant political role during the period.

Sikh problem

Now the problem of the emerging Sikh power was that it was surrounded by the British on the eastern front while on the western border, the Afghans were still more powerful and apart from them, there was advancing Russian power under the Czar. In the north, it was Kashmir which continued to remain under Mughal rule. However, with the Mughal empire on the wane, conditions in Kashmir were no better than those in the Punjab. In the south, the Multan province was no more under Delhi but under the Afghans. And beyond Multan, Bahawalpur was an independent state under the Daudpotas and then Sindh and Baluchistan were also semi-independent States. They were loosely federated with Delhi or Kabul. Both Sindh and Baluchistan were later to be captured by the British.

In central Punjab, it was the Sukarchakya Sardar Charhat Singh of Gujranwala who established his authority in Chakwal, Jalalpur Jattan, Pind Dadan Khan, Rohtas and Jammu. But he was not the sole ruler. He had other partners. So far as his own state was concerned, it was limited to tehsil Gujranwala. In Wazirabad tehsil, Muslim Chatthas were major rivals to the Sikhs.

Ambitious

Ranjeet Singh was not content with the areas comprising central Punjab and eastern Punjab up to Sutlej.

He wanted to annex Kashmir on the one side and Multan and Bahawalpur on the other. To get into the Kashmir valley, the help and cooperation of Bhimber and Rajouri Rajas was essential. Both of them were reluctant to do so. Therefore, both of them were trapped, arrested and imprisoned in Lahore. In the first attack by Ranjeet Singh himself, both the Rajas were made to accompany the Maharaja.

In 1813, the Maharaja was informed that Sultan Khan of Bhimber had made a fortune. He had annexed the surrounding areas of other local princelings. He had misappropriated the share of his own brother, Ismail Khan, who had lodged a complaint against Sultan with the Maharaja.

The Maharaja sent a message to Sultan to surrender and hand over the areas but Sultan did not comply. The Maharaja, under the command of Prince Kharak Singh, sent four platoons of infantry, five hundred cavalymen and one regiment of gunners to force Sultan to surrender and do his bidding. Sultan faced the Sikh army in the open and defeated it. The battle continued for two days. On the third day, Sultan's attack was so severe that the Sikhs were forced to retreat. They assembled again near Gujrat and sued for local help. The actual commander was Diwan Mohkam Chand. He attacked Bhimber again which was well fortified. The Diwan was not sure of victory. Therefore, he concluded an agreement with Sultan Khan under which the latter assented that he would not prolong the war and would accompany the Diwan to the Lahore Court. His country and authority would be restored, as was done earlier. Sultan agreed to these conditions but when he reached Lahore, the commitment was not honoured. He was put in prison and his state and property was confiscated. The same treatment was meted out to the Raja of Rajouri.

Released

Both of them were released when the Maharaja wanted to conquer the Kashmir valley. The Rajas were asked to accompany and guide the Sikh army into the valley. The Kabul Ambassador Fatch Khan also accompanied the Sikh commander. He had lodged complaint with Maharaja on behalf of the Amir of Kabul that his Kashmir Governor, Ata Mohammad Khan, had refused to accept the authority of the Amir.

In the campaign which followed Raja Aghar Khan and Raja Sultan Khan provided guidance and provisions to the Sikh army which was defeated by Kashmir and Afghan forces.

Two year later (1815) the Maharaja himself wanted to conquer Kashmir. The Sikh army marched from Sialkot, Raja Aghar Khan of Rajouri was now the trusted friend of the Maharaja. Up to Rajouri, there was no difficulty for the invaders. The Raja of Rajouri provided all the required provisions and from Rajouri onward he was appointed the main architect of the campaign which safely went upto Behramgalla where a small resistance was liquidated. The Maharaja's forces went to Pir Panjal where the troops of Diwan Ramdayal gave an exhibition of strange adventurism. Without the permission or knowledge of the Maharaja he advanced to Heerpur where they were surrounded by Azim Khan's forces. On the Pir Panjal front Maharaja and Raja Aghar Khan were commanding the Sikh forces. It was a very tough fight. When the Sikhs heard that Diwan Ramdayal's advance party had been completely butchered, they panicked. Raja Aghar Khan, who most probably encouraged the Maharaja to launch his attack in adverse weather conditions wanted that the Sikhs should be mauled and defeated. At this critical juncture, he told the Maharaja that the troops reaching Heerpur had been completely routed and killed. That was another factor which demoralised the Sikh army. This forced the

Maharaja to strike a bargain with Azim Khan, the Afghan Governor of Kashmir and agreed to withdraw. Azim Khan allowed the besieged Sikh army to go back and join the Maharaja's main force.

Aghar's role

Here the role of Raja Aghar Khan was quite different. It was the most prestigious Sikh attack on Kashmir, led by Maharaja himself. Raja Aghar Khan trapped the Sikh army in such a way that Maharaja himself faced the most humiliating defeat. He had never faced such a setback in the past nor would he receive such a reverse in the remainder of his career.

The Maharaja was naturally bitter about the Raja of Rajouri. Another attack was planned next year. The Maharaja badly wanted to take the Kashmir valley. The route was the same. Bhimber was subdued. In Rajouri, there was a battle between the Sikhs and Aghar Khan's army. Aghar Khan fled and fortified himself at Kotli fort. The Maharaja wanted to attack on the Kotli fort. In the meantime, he received a word that Attock fort was under great pressure from Kabul. He left his Kashmir campaign unfinished and hurried towards Attock.

Raja Aghar Khan became an headache for Lahore rulers who had already employed many Dogras in their court. The intention was to capture Kashmir and adjacent areas in which the Dogras could prove helpful. To subdue Raja Aghar, the Maharaja appointed Gulab Singh (later the founder of the Dogara State of Jammu and Kashmir) and gave him full support in equipment and men. Gulab Singh was after the Raja who was betrayed by his younger brother Rahim Ullah Khan. Raja Aghar Khan tried to take refuge in adjacent area of Budhal but because of his continuous tussle with the Sikhs and Dogras he was getting unpopular with his own people. One Qasim Khan led

Gulab Singh to Aghar Khan's hideout. Aghar Khan was imprisoned and brought to the Lahore Court (1822).

Gulab becomes Raja

The Maharaja was so happy on the arrest of an old enemy that he conferred the title of Raja on Gulab Singh and himself put musk scent on his forehead and gave him vast property in Jammu city. That was the beginning of the rise of this Dogra family. first employed by Raja Sultan of Bhimber as orderlies in the Mangla fort.

Neither the Raja of Rajouri nor Raja Sultan Khan of Bhimber are subject matter for discussion here. They acted like other Muslim rulers when they faced the emerging bigger non-Muslim forces including the Sikhs and the Dogras. Such characters were strewn all over Jammu and Kashmir -- from Sultan of Ghor Fort, Saif Ali, Subz Ali or Shams Khan of tehsil Bagh in Poonch district. Among them Shams Khan is a hero of a folk epic composed in the Pahari dialect of the Punjabi language.

Shams Khan belonged to the Maldial tribe. When he was young, Kashmir was controlled by the Sikhs through the Dogras Gulab Singh and Udham Singh. Shams Khan had heard of Gulab Singh's being the meteoric rise from a peon to governor of a vast territory. Shams Khan decided to see Gulab Singh in Jammu and asked from him a share in the administration.

ہمیا خان شمس دعویٰ بنھے تے بادشاہی
پیڑیا شمس گھوڑا کیتی جموں دے ول مہائی
راجہ! وطن میرا ہے پونچھ ملدیال دے سپاہی
پچھدالے ہمارا جہ توں کتھے ناں سپاہی

When Shams Khan was born, he dreamt of becoming a king.

He rode a magnificent steed and marched to Jammu (capital of the State) He went to the court where the Raja asked him:

'From where does the warrior come?'

'My country is Poonch and I am a Maldial warrior.'

The poem does not tell us who was the Raja at the time but all the circumstantial evidence shows that it must have been Gulab Singh just after the latter had arrested Raja Aghar Khan and Gulab was elevated by Ranjeet Singh and it looked quite obvious that the Dogras would be the future rulers of Kashmir.

After humiliating Muslim princelings, Gulab Singh wanted to win over the sympathies of his Muslims subjects. Therefore, it was in order that Shams Khan should be treated properly. The folk poem continues:

راہے بنجیا گھوڑا جوڑا جوڑی گنگناں دی پائی اگوں توں شمس خاناک گل چا سنائی
پونچھا والا مکہ تے میکی چھوڑیوتسی چائی شمشا کریں توں نمک عرا مگی مت پیسے چھوڑیں کھائی

Shams Khan was made adviser to Diwan Dilbagh Rai of Poonch. Gulab Singh honoured him and ordered him to collect State money with the help of the Diwan. He was warned by Gulab Singh not to misappropriate this money. Assurance was given by Shams Khan and he returned to Poonch.

Gulab Singh's fear was genuine. Shams never wanted to deposit State money in the treasury. With it he started welfare projects for the people.

Plight of the people

It is difficult to imagine the condition of the people of that area which has seen many attacks from all sides. They have been plundered and looted by scores of maurading armies of Sikhs, Afghans and Dogras. They were poor people who were deprived of food, hearth and homes. Therefore, Shams Khan, with the help of the money he had brought opened free food houses for the poor. Perhaps

that was his only ambition. His close partner was his uncle Rajwali.

They called in the revenue collectors of the area and asked them to submit accounts. It came to their notice that Rs. 36,000 had been spent on the people's welfare projects. They decided not to deposit the revenue with the state exchequer and if Raja Gulab Singh or his functionaries came to them they would give them battle.

Shams Khan and Rajwali had the support of their tribal warriors and other people of the area. War was declared against them and perhaps this is the time when Hari Singh Nalva was not allowed by the locals to pass through Poonch. Then the Lahore Court deputed Raja Sultan of Bhimber and Raja Rahim Ullah Khan of Rajouri to help Nalva across Poonch to Srinagar. According to Kanahya Lal, Nalva was appointed Governor of Kashmir in place of the Afghan incumbent and Nalva came from Attock through Muzaffarabad or Poonch where Shams Khan and his tribe were in revolt against the Sikh and Dogra raj.

Dogra action

The local Dogra force and administration started operation against Shams and his uncle Rajwali. In return, Rajwali and Shams Khan conquered twelve forts including Tatwala and Bhalangeywala. They had an encounter with another famous Dogra commander Tara, who was overpowered by Shams Khan. He appealed to Shams Khan to spare his life as he had accepted Islam.

ماریا تارا ڈوگرہ دیتا رام دی وہائی شمشا میچی نہ توں ماریں میں دھرم داتیرا بھائی

However, Tara Dogra was put to the sword.

The Diwan of the area known as Dhano which latter on became a Minister of Raja Gulab Singh, came to capture the rebels but he had also to flee from the battlefield. He took refuge in a village Chhaprey from where he rushed to

Jammu and reporting the situation in Poonch, said to Raja Gulab Singh.

پونچھ دے وچ اکڑ بیٹھا شمس دے سپاہی سنیاء دے مہاراج دے اس جانی

Soldier Shams is in open rebellion in Poonch.

Maharaj! he is in fury and you may lose Poonch.

Maharaja shuddered after listening to the narration

Maharaja Gulab Singh asked help from Kishtwar and other regional leaders. More armaments were forged and he himself went out to subdue Shams Khan and other rebels.

چڑھیا دے مہاراج دھونسل دھونسل پیندی آئی
نٹھے دے کشمیری بچھوں "لو لو" پیندی آئی
پہلی رات راجہ جہلم پنڈی دے وچ آئی
دوئی کناں رات پوٹھو ہاراں دے وچ آئی
تری کناں راجہ رات باغیاں پنچیا جانی

The Maharaja marched with great pomp and show

The poor Kashmiris left their villages in panic

On the first day, the Raja reached Jhelum,

And on third day, he reached Bagh.

The place where Shams Khan was in full cry.

Raja Gulab Singh asked Raja Muzaffar Khan of Ghori to help him find Shams Khan. Muzaffar Khan said he did not know where the Khan was. Anyhow, two of the sub-commanders of Shams Khan, Mali and Subz ali, were arrested.

Elimination

They were killed and their children were also butchered mercilessly.

ملي تے سبزر علی دی کھل دتی بھسروائی
نکر پیاں معصوماں دی راجے پوست دتی لابی

Some old friends of Shams Khan invited him to dinner. Shams Khan who perhaps needed a refuge, accepted the offer and also promised to stay a night with Noor Khan Teeroley in village Dhagwala. Shams Khan and Rajwali were in deep slumber when Noor Khan, Agar Khan and their men attacked them and killed them on the spot. Their heads were sent to Bagh where the Maharaja was staying. Such was the end of these brave sons of the Poonch valley about whom the poet says:

دھن وے جنیدی خاں شمس تہاڈی مائی شمس چہا بیٹیا پھر جے نہ کوئی مائی

1989

JANGNAMA HIND-PUNJAB

HISTORY may not repeat itself, but reflections of historical events can be vividly seen in the mirror of today. About one hundred and forty-eight years ago, Lord Auckland, Governor-General of India (minus Punjab, Kashmir and Frontier), wrote to Dost Mohammad Khan, Amir of Kabul, asking him to "abstain from all foreign alliances and to dismiss from his court his Russian visitors."

Analogies may be drawn between the manner in which the British acted in the last century and the way in which the U.S. has manoeuvred in the last eight years. Dost Mohammad did not like the intervention of the British Government in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and responded with admitting the Russian plenipotentiary, Capt. Vincovich, into the Darbar of Kabul. Alexander Burnes had been sent as an envoy by Lord Auckland to the court of Dost Mohammad on a commercial mission. Have the West's designs on Afghanistan changed much over a century and a half?

Coincidence

It is indeed a strange coincidence that when the British empire felt threatened by the Russians in the last century, it called back its envoy from Kabul, severed diplomatic relations with it, and coaxed the Sikh Government (controlling much of the area which now comprises Pakistan), to invade Afghanistan, dethrone its ruler and install another ruler of their own liking. Do we see history repeating itself?

The British Indian Government espoused the cause of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk (an exiled Afghan ruler and guest of the British in Ludhiana). They helped the Sikhs with their forces to install Shah Shuja. Kandhar finally fell while Ranjeet Singh lay dying on April 8, 1839.

On May 8, 1839, Shah Shuja was formally enthroned in Kandhar and Maj.-Gen. Duncan, Sir. John Keene and Mr. MacNaughten offered presents on behalf of the British Government. One wonders who is today's Shah Shuja?

Shah Mohammad (1789-1862) of Wadala, district Amritsar, has recorded the life and achievements of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh in his "*Jangnama Hind Punjab*" -- an epic poem. In it he also writes of the British intrigues that linked the political power struggle of the Punjab with that in Afghanistan. And in the pursuit of its strategy on Afghanistan the British made the Punjab their "frontline state". Says Shah Mohammad.

مہاں ملی رنجیت سنگھ ہویا پیدا نال زور دے ملک ہلا گیا
 ملتان، کشمیر، پشاور، چنوبہ، جموں، کانگر، کٹوا گیا
 مہر دیس لداخ تے چین توڑی سکد اپنے نام چلا گیا
 شاہ محمد! جان پچاس برسوں اچھا راج کے راج کما گیا

The great warrior Ranjeet Singh shook the whole country. He conquered Multan (1818) Peshawar (1834) Chamba (1808) Jammu (1800) and Kangra (1808). After conquering Ladakh (1834), he extended the boundary of his State to China. Shah Mohammad! he happily ruled for full 50 years.

The life and achievements of Ranjeet Singh (1780-1839) were thus summed up by the Punjabi poet.

Ignored poets

Shah Mohammad is one amongst hundreds of poets

completely un-known to the Punjabis. The reason for the estranged relationship between Punjabi literature and Punjabi people has been best explained by a British I.C.S. officer. C.F. Osborne. Writing in 1914 he said, "the educated native affects to despise anything that is written in spoken vernacular. He regards it with the same kind of cultivated shudder that a lady of fashion would feel if a lout from the country came into her drawing-room with muddy boots, an old blue smock and a drawling Gloucestershire accent."

This is how the Punjabis have dealt with their literary heritage, including the work of Shah Mohammad who put on record a critical period of our history. Osborne very painfully narrated the apathy prevailing among the educated Punjabis: "Although sheafs of vernacular poetry pass through the various presses year after year nobody appears to have thought it worthwhile."

Shah Mohammad was not considered worthwhile even by the Sikh historians, except for a few. Principal Nirmal Singh said that Shah Mohammad failed to expose the conspiracies of Raja Dhyani Singh, Raja Gulab Singh and Raja Heera Singh -- all Dogras from Jammu -- and Misar Lal Singh and Misar Tej Singh, the Brahman brothers from Meerut (U.P.). The fact, however, is that Shah Mohammad gives a full account of the Dogra-Brahman-Rani Jindan conspiracy:

راجہ گلاب سنگھ آپ چڑھ کے بانہوں پکڑ لاہور لیا وندا ای
"صاحب لوک جی اسان پر دیا کرنی" ادہ تال اپنا کم بن وندا ای

Raja Gulab Singh himself went to the Britishers. He led them to Lahore. He appealed to them to be merciful to him. Thus he earned their favour.

Here Shah Mohammad indirectly refers to Kashmir which was given to Raja Gulab Singh by the new masters. The infamous bargain about which Iqbal said:

توے فروختند وچہ ارزاں فروختند

How cheap did they sell a nation

Neither did Shah Mohammad spare those who were in league with the Company officials whether it was Pahara Singh of Faridkot, Tej Singh of Meerut or Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu.

پہارا سنگھ سی پانچنگیاں دا سنگھاں نال سی اوس دی غیر سالی
اوہ تاں بھج کے لاٹ نوں جا پلایا گل جا دسی ساری بھیت والی

Pahara Singh had developed enmity with the Lahore rulers. He was a friend of the Britishers. He told them of the conspiracy by Rani Jindan, her paramour and Prime Minister Lal Singh and Raja Gulab Singh.

Shah Mohammad was very bitter about those who had helped destabilise the Punjab government which was against the European imperialists.

مٹھی مٹھی سی ایس پنجاب دی جی، ایناں کھول دتا اج پانچ یارو

My friends! the Punjab was united like a fist. But today they have broken its unity.

British resentment

The Sikh kingdom, whether it was the united Punjab (including Kashmir, Peshawar and Ladakh) of Ranjeet Singh or the divided one of Rani Jindan, was considered an eyesore by the East India Company.

Ranjeet Singh had co-operated with the Company only to install Shah Shuja in place of Dost Mohammad. On the one hand, he had hoped that Shuja would give him areas beyond Peshawar and, on the other he expected that the Britishers would vacate Shikarpur and adjacent areas -- territories of which Ranjeet Singh had aspired since his conquest of Multan in 1818. But he died before his dream could materialise.

While Russian influence in Afghanistan was considered a direct threat to the vested interest of the Company,

Maharaja Kharak Singh and his son, Kanwar Naunchal Singh, who ascended the Lahore throne in quick succession, were not interested in the affairs of Kabul. They were preoccupied with their own problems. After their accidental deaths they were to be succeeded by Kanwar Sher Singh. But he, too, was apathetic towards the Company and was not concerned with the activities of the Russians in Kabul. The Company was, however, worried about Afghanistan where Shah Shuja was again being threatened by anti-British sardars. Sher Singh was, therefore, not considered to be a suitable person to rule Lahore.

Power tussle

Earlier, his succession had been challenged by Mai Chand Koran, mother of Kanwar Naunchal Singh, who had threatened his ministers that if they insisted on Sher Singh's appointment as President of the Council of Ministers, she would at once invite the Governor-General's Agent in Lahore and give him the management of the country on his terms.

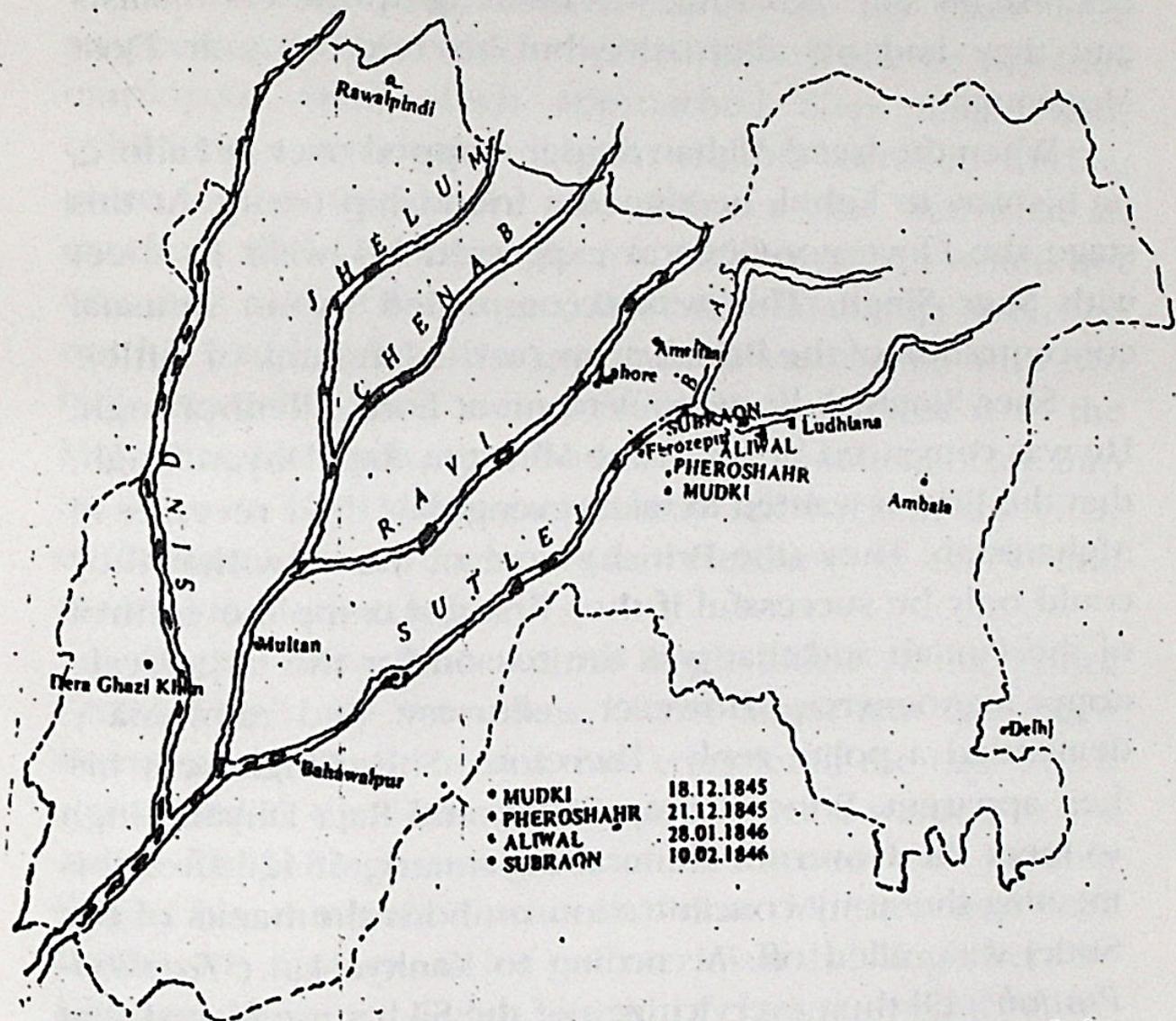
Sher Singh was, therefore, persuaded by Sindhanwala to abandon his hold on the palace and leave for Hoshiarpur, which he did. Mai Chand Koran then appointed Misar Tej Singh as the Commander-in-Chief. But most of the soldiers, the European commanders of the Khalsa army and Raja Dhyani Singh, fully supported Kanwar Sher Singh.

Mai Koran's threat of handing over the country to the Company was not taken well by the Khalsa. Therefore, Raja Dhyani Singh, the Khalsa soldiers and European commanders invited Sher Singh to invade Lahore, which he did and captured the throne.

شیر سنگھ نوں رب نے راج دتا کھوہ لیا لاہور جو رانیاں تھیں
 سندھانوالیاں دے دسیوں پیر کھسکے، جا پچھ لے راہ پدھانیاں تھیں

مرزا کے پھیراجیت سنگھ لہی بازی پیدا ہو یا سی اصل سوانیاں تھیں
 شاہ محمد اجمیا علی اکبر آندا باپ نول کالیاں پانیاں تھیں

God bestowed the realm of Lahore upon Sher Singh. He got back the throne from the queens. Sindhanwalas (close relative of Mai Chand Koran) left the motherland and took refuge in the Company's country. From where did Ajeet Singh, the Sindhanwala, get support to ultimately finish Kanwar Sher Singh? Shah Mohammad, Ali Akbar had freed his father imprisoned in Kala Pani.



Shah Mohammad has presented a clear picture of the currents and cross-currents running between British India, Sikh Punjab and sardar's Afghanistan in his poem.

After Sher Singh had captured Lahore in January 1841.

Mai Chand Koran was murdered and her close relative, Ajeet Singh Sindhanwala, took refuge in the British Punjab. Sher Singh, who was disliked by the British, further angered them when he refused to share the control of Punjab with Mr. Clerk, the Agent of the Governor-General. The British offer was ostensibly for controlling the disturbances in the Punjab, but Sher Singh suspected that the presence of the British troops would incite the Khalsa army to destroy him and ultimately the British would occupy the State.

Around the same time Sardar Dost Mohammad of Kabul, who was in a British jail in Calcutta, was released because his son, Akbar Ali, was mauling up the colonialists and they had no alternative but to release Amir Dost Mohammad.

When the freed Afghan Sardar stopped over in Lahore, on his way to Kabul, he signed a friendship treaty. At this stage the Governor-General expressed his wish to meet with Sher Singh. This was accompanied by an unusual concentration of the British army on the left bank of Sutlej.

Sher Singh did not want to meet Lord Ellenborough. He was convinced by his Prime Minister, Raja Dhyani Singh, that the British wanted to take revenge for their reverses in Afghanistan. They (the British) were of the view that they could only be successful if they first got complete control of the Punjab and that was the reason for the large scale army manoeuvres. However, courtesy and diplomacy demanded a polite reply. Therefore, Sher Singh sent his heir apparent, Prince Partap Singh, and Raja Dhyani Singh to meet the Governor-General in January, 1842. After this meeting the army concentration on both the banks of the Sutlej was called off. According to Kanhya Lal ("*Tarikh-i-Punjab*") till then every citizen of the Sikh state feared that the Company could attack the Punjab.

Around this time Maharaja Sher Singh was persuaded to take back the Sindhanwalas and he rehabilitated them in their traditional position. They drew very close to Sher

Singh with the intention of murdering him, his son Partap Singh and Prime Minister Dhyan Singh.

برس ہو یا جاں حاضری لین بد لے ڈیرا شاہ بلاول لگاؤندا ای
اجیت سنگھ گجھی قراہین سب کے شیر سنگھ نوں آن دکھاؤندا ای
سدھی جدوں شہزادے نے نظر کیتی جلدی نال چاکلا دباؤندا ای
شاہ محمد ازمین تے پیا ترے تیغ مار کے سیس اڈاؤندا ای

What Shah Mohammad said in his "*Jangnama Hind Punjab*" is narrated by Doctor Honighberger in his "*Adventures in the East*".

"He (Maharaja) reclined easily on his chair little suspecting the fate which awaited him. While he was thus employed, Ajeet Singh approached Sher Singh, and, exhibiting a handsome English double-barrelled fowling piece for his inspection, said with a smile: "See what an excellent rifle I have bought for 1,400 rupees, I would not now part with it for even 3,000". The Maharaja stretched out his hand to take the gun, which was loaded with two balls in each barrel, and as Ajeet Singh handed it to the Maharaja, he discharged both barrels simultaneously into his breast. The Maharaja instantly fell back in his chair exclaiming, Eh ki dagha, (what treachery is this?), and expired immediately."

At the same time, Lehna Singh killed young Prince Partap Singh. By noon Raja Dhyan Singh had also been assassinated. Sindhanwalas thus completed the task which a year earlier the Governor-General himself wanted to do. Infant Dalip Singh was put on the throne with Jawahar Singh, his maternal uncle, as Prime Minister and Rani Jindan, his mother, as his patron. Misar Lal Singh became Finance Minister. Gulab Singh of Jammu replaced his nephew, Raja Heera Singh. After the murder of Jawahar Singh brother of Rani Jindan, the ruling junta was convinced that only the Company across the river Sutlej would help them and that was possible only if the Khalsa

army was defeated.

جٹی ہوواں تے کراں پنجاب رنڈی سارے دس دے وچ چاٹرن واراں
چھڈاں نہیں لاہور وچ وڑن جگے سنے وڈیاں افسراں جمعداراں

عرضی لکھی فرنگی نوں کنج گوشے پہلاں اپنا سکھ آند واری
تیرے دل میں فوج نوں گھلنی آں کھٹے کریں توں اینہاں دے دند واری

پہلاں پاردا ملک توں مل ساڈا آپے کھا غصہ تیں تھیں آونی گے

According to Shah Mohammad, Rani Jindan, after the murder of her brother Jawahar Singh, decided that she would take revenge from the Punjabis. She would let down all commanders and officers in such a way that they would never dare to enter Lahore.

Punjab subjugated

To complete the subjugation of the Punjab, she in consultation with her Prime Minister (her paramour) Misar Tej Singh, (the Brahmans from U.P.) sent a message, through Nawab Shamsuddin of Kasur, to Capt. Nicholson in Ferozepur. The message said that the Khalsa army was divided into seven factions and a very small contingent was reserved for facing the British army. The Company was, therefore, advised to occupy the areas of the Lahore Government situated across the Sutlej. Calcutta Review (Vol. VIII pp 485) confirms what Shah Mohammad said in his recounting of the history. Major Broadfoot was told of the whole scheme according to which

شاہ محمد! گوریاں چھیڑ چھیڑی ملک پاردا لیا آن میاں

Shah Mohammad, the Britishers mischievously occupied the Lahore territory across river Sutlej.

The Khalsa could not stomach this. They retaliated

and then the four battles of Mudki, Ferozeshahr, Aliwal and Subraon were fought. On all four occasions Misar Tej Singh, the Commander-in-Chief, mysteriously slipped away from the scene.

تیجا سنگھ دی لشکریاں اُن ڈریا عہدیدار اوتھے سبھ اوندے نی
 کر دھم تے تیغ اٹھایے جی پئے سنگھ کچھیاں کھاؤندے نی

Tej Singh with other senior officers came there. The soldiers were impatient to open fire. But Tej Singh never gave them the orders.

S.M. Lateef in his History of the Punjab writes:

"While the fight was going on with great fierceness on both sides, Misar Lal Singh, in accordance with his original design, suddenly abandoned the field leaving the Sikhs to fight as their valour prompted. The hardy Sikhs not discouraged by their commander's absence continued the conflict with undiminished energy and devotion. This was the battle in which among those killed on the side of the British were Maj-Gen. Sir Robert Sale, famous for his gallant defence of Jalalabad, and Maj-Gen. Sir John M'Caskil."

The next battle field was Ferozeshahr (or Pheroshahr) where both the Brahman brothers Tej Singh and Lal Singh played hell with the Punjabi forces. Lateef says:

"Their (Punjabis) commander, Misar Lal Singh, had fled at an early period and his military chest was plundered by the exasperated soldiery. Tej Singh, who had commanded in this great battle brought up from the Sutlej fresh force of 20,000 infantry 5,000 cavalry and 70 guns....Tej Singh had been advised by his zealous and faithful soldiers to attack British column at day-break but he intentionally delayed and did not appear on the scene until he had seen that Lal Singh's force was defeated at every point, his object being to disperse and overawe the turbulent Khalsa army."

This was the battle in which Governor-General was

himself commanding a wing while Sir. Henry Hardinge and Sir. John Littler were also present under the command of Commander-in-Chief Sir Hugh Gough.

اوہدر آپ فرنگی نوں بھانج پئی دوڑے جان گورے دتی کنڈیاں
چلے توپ خانے سارے گوریاں تے مگر ہوئی بندوق وی پھنڈیاں
کنھے جا کے لیا کے خبر دتی لندن ہو بیٹھی تیسری رنڈیاں
شاہ محمد! دیکھ میدان جا کے رُلدی گوریاں دی پئی جھنڈیاں

The panic-stricken Britishers were not in good shape. They were about to run and London was going to be widowed.

Shah Mohammad go and see the battle field where heads of Britishers rolled.

When the tables were about to turn Pahara Singh went to the Governor-General and told him of the designs of Tej Singh.

اوتھوں ہو گیا ہرن ہے خالصہ جی چو داں ہتھ دی مار کے مرگ چھالی

Lal Singh has fled and Tej Singh who brought a great force will not join. He just wants to get the complete defeat of the Sikh army.

Next was the battle of Aliwal and the fourth and the final was that of Subraon (in its neighbourhood a bloody battle was fought by Alexander the Great which broke the morale of Macedonian soldiers who refused to advance). Here too Misar Lal Singh and his brother Tej Singh were commanding the Punjabi forces. Lateef writes: "The traitor Tej Singh, as before, had fled on the first assault and sank a boat in the middle of the bridge communicating with the opposite bank of the river."

This happened on February 10, 1846.

شاہ محمد! آمیاں میر بیٹھے، وچ دیس تے تھاں نکاریاں دے

Shah Mohammad the Britishers conquered Lahore

and descended upon Mian Mir, in place of those who failed themselves.

From here onward the Company had no difficulty in dealing with the Afghans and limiting the Russian influence in Kabul.

نیکے پوچہ ہن بیٹھ کے کرن گلاں، اسان ڈھٹی فرنگی دی چھاؤنی جی

The young generations are very easy-going. But we have seen the repression of the colonialists. 1986

KHARLS OF 1857

"WE have killed the kafirs (the British) in broad day light. We are happy over that end on being sent to Kala Pani (transportation for life) Happiness be your fate our country!"

ہم نے کافروں کو بڑے دنوں میں مار ڈالا ہے
اس میں راضی ہو گئے جانے ہائیں
کافر مار دو پہریں
خوش و سین او دیس اساڈیا

This was the last song of the freedom fighters of Neeli Bar, heard on the banks of river Ravi in 1857. Their's was the last post that fell in October 1857. No help reached them from anywhere. They fought all alone on both sides of the Ravi. Their first encounter with the British, who had taken over from the Sikhs, was in June 1857 when the war of independence broke out in Meerut cantonment. The Mujahids in uniform were led to Delhi. The revolt engulfed almost all cantonments in the Punjab (the NWFP was then part of this province). Neeli Bar and the Murree hills were the only civil areas where people, especially the Muslims, rose against the well-armed British.

Forgotten héro

Neeli Bar in Sahiwal district and Sandal Bar in Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Sheikhpura and Gujranwala districts, were the areas where rebel Rajput tribes of the Kharls, the Wattoos, the Sials and the Bhattis were settled. Sandal Bar produced Dullah Bhatti, a rebel who followed in the footsteps of Porus and Jasrat Khokhar and had a

direct clash with Emperor Akbar. The same Sandal Bar in 1857 threw up another forgotten hero of the Punjab. Rai Ahmad Khan Kharl who led the 1857 war in this part of the country. He fired his first shot on the British in June-July and kept them on their toes till September, when while he was saying his prayers in the battle field Gulab Rai Bedi, a collaborator of the British shot him dead.

Many songs were composed by unknown poets about the war fought during the six months in the two bars (jungles). The unknown bards paid rich tributes to these heroes in the Punjabi language. But the foreign educational experts deprived the Punjabi language of its rightful status which it had enjoyed since the days of Shahjehan. Therefore, the Punjabis at large forgot the long-drawn out wars between the East India Company and the Punjabis. They just forgot their proud contribution to the 1857 effort. They were forced to remember only the part played by a few hand-picked Punjabi quislings. These hand-picked men (Muslims, Hindus and the Sikhs) were made 'Chiefs of the Punjab'. The real chiefs of the Punjab like Ahmad Khan Kharl, Nadir Qureshi, Sarang. Mamed, Nathu Kathia, Wali Dad Mardana, Baba Nigahi, Amanat Ali Chishti, Suja Bhadroo Jalla Tarhana, Mokha Vahniwal and many others were forgotten by all but the unknown poets who composed 'dholas' in which they recorded almost all the events of that turbulent period. These songs are still heard on both banks of the Ravi, in the close vicinity of Harappa, the remnant of the oldest civilisation of the land of five rivers. No serious attempt has ever been made to collect this poetic record of a glorious chapter in our history. The only reason is that this would have lowered the status of the 'Punjab Chiefs' who were the creation of the British. Who among the Kharls could give supporting voice to Ahmad Khan Kharl who said to Mr. Berkely:

اگے وی نال حکومت دے اوہ لیندا مورچے

اوس توں ولا کے لنگھ جاندا

ਮੈਂ ਤੇ ਸਾਥੀ ਸਾਥੀ ਦੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹੋ
 ਹੋ ਕੇ ਤੇ ਸਾਥੀ ਦੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹੋ

ਰਾਜੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ
 ਰਾਜੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ
 ਰਾਜੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ
 ਰਾਜੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ

ਰਾਜੇ ਰੰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ

ਮਹਾਰਾਜੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ
 ਮਹਾਰਾਜੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ
 ਮਹਾਰਾਜੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ

ਐਨਾ ਕਹਲਾ ਅੱਗੇ ਓਰਿਮਰੇ ਖਾਨ ਦਾ ਜਾਇਆ ਹੈ
 ਸਿਆਲਾ ਤੂੰ ਚੱਕੇ ਖਾਨੀ ਡੱਗ ਪੁਰਾਨੇ
 ਐਨਾ ਕਹਲਾ ਅੱਗੇ ਜੰਗ ਅਕਬਰ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਨਾਲ ਓ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ
 ਮਦਾਨੋਂ ਕਦੀ ਨਾ ਓ ਡੁਲਾਨੇ
 ਅਹਮਦ ਐਨਾ ਹੈ: ਮੁਰਾ ਲੁਠੀਆਂ ਐਨਾ ਸਲਤਾਨ ਸਕੰਦਰ ਓ ਖਾਨ
 ਓ ਡੁਲਾਨੇ

"The Kharls have been doing battle with the previous governments. Ranjeet Singh avoided confrontation with them. He used to bypass their areas.

"Their tribal leader, Mirza -- hero of a Punjabi love story Mirza Saheban -- was murdered by the Sials (the tribe of the heroine of the story).

"The Kharls cleared their accounts with the Sials. They attacked the Sial territory and destroyed them. They also engaged Akbar the King. And they never wavered in the battelfield. They snatched the wealth of Alexander, the Great and never surrendered it back."

Unchallenged

This chivalrous tradition of the Kharls had produced Ahmad Khan Kharl of Jhamara (a village in district Toba Tek Singh), who was the popular leader of the areas on both sides of the Ravi. In 1857, he was in his seventies. He was a terror in his youth. Ranjeet Singh never challenged his autonomy. The Maharaja once took some Kharl prisoners. Immediately Ahmad Khan Kharl went to the Maharaja and secured their release.

The British wanted to subdue these 'trouble-making' tribes. They asked the tribal chiefs to provide them with

horses and recruits. This was resented by these chiefs including Ahmad Khan Kharl:

انگریز برکلی آہندا ہے: رائے احمد دیویں گھوڑیاں
 تیری لندنوں لکھ لیا دساں نیک نامی
 رائے احمد آہندا ہے: رناں، بھوئیں، تے گھوڑیاں
 وڈ کسے نہ دتیاں
 ہونڈیاں بت دے وچ ساہ سلامی
 احمد تے سازنگ چٹے جباب دے کے جھامرے نول گھوڑیاں دھر وڑ گئے نی

انگریز برکلی آہندا ہے: رائے احمد دیویں گھوڑیاں
 تیری لندنوں لکھ لیا دساں نیک نامی
 رائے احمد آہندا ہے: رناں، بھوئیں، تے گھوڑیاں
 وڈ کسے نہ دتیاں

ہونڈیاں بت دے وچ ساہ سلامی

احمد تے سازنگ چٹے جباب دے کے جھامرے نول گھوڑیاں دھر وڑ گئے نی

"The Englishman Berkely says 'Provide me with horses and men, Rai Ahmad and I will secure a citation for you from London.'

"Rai Ahmad says: No one in his life ever shares wives, land ad mares with others."

Ahmad and Sarang refused pointblank and went back to their village Jhamara."

That annoyed the White rulers. They gave them chase. But both Ahmad and Sarang were on a mission to muster support for a massive attack on their foreign adversaries. They were not in Jhamara. Capt. Elphinstone and Berkely (FAC) jointly crossed the Ravi and put Jhamara to the torch. An unknown poet says:

کدھی دریاوی دے اُتے، انگریز جھگے جپیاں دے پھوک مواتے ہین بالے
 اگانہ لائی اگ متانے فقیرنوں، جھگڑے اوہرے دی چاہیں ساڑے
 اکھے: اگ جھامرے دی لاوئی مانالے چھڈنے ڈھا چہارے

"The British have burnt down tenements on both banks of the Ravi. Then came the dwelling of a faqir which was also set on fire. They say: "We have to burn down Jhamara and bulldoze the town."

رائے احمد تے گھوڑیاں دھر وڑ گئے نی
 تیری لندنوں لکھ لیا دساں نیک نامی
 رائے احمد آہندا ہے: رناں، بھوئیں، تے گھوڑیاں
 وڈ کسے نہ دتیاں

ہونڈیاں بت دے وچ ساہ سلامی
 احمد تے سازنگ چٹے جباب دے کے جھامرے نول گھوڑیاں دھر وڑ گئے نی

Jhamara, residence of Ahmad Khan earned the wrath of the 'masters' but he stood his ground.

In Gazetteer

A British compiler of the District Gazetteer says: "Ahmad was a man above the average -- bold and crafty. It was this man who roused the tribes. All the important tribes of Ravi rose. The first real precursor of the storm that was brewing, occurred on the night of July 26th in the shape of an outbreak in the Gogera District jail (now in Sahiwal district). This appear to have been in all probability the work of Ahmad Khan. Reliable information was received to the effect that Ahmad with a large body of Wattoos had retreated into the jungle near Gashkori, some six miles south of Gogera. Capt. Black was sent with a detachment of cavalry to destroy them. He was joined by Lt. Chichester. A sharp skirmish took place in which the cavalry had to retreat. They were however, rallied and Ahmad together with Sarang, chief of the Begka Kharls, was killed."

ہن کھرل یاد کر کے خدا نوں، دھری اے لت رکابے پھڑے لڑا لگام دے
 اکھے: تسیں ڈھڈوں نہ ڈولو
 رائے احمد پیا اکھے جھبونپ تلواریں مریساں
 چتواں مرواں دے پتے جاسن لگ وچ مدان دے
 اوس دیہاڑے بھیریاں پیاں ہن فوجاں انگریز دیاں
 ککھراں آئے کلر دے کولوں ہاتھس انگریز دیاں چک لگھاسیاں
 پکے نویں کھلے ہین ادہ نشان دے
 نماز پڑھدے رائے احمد نوں، گلاب رائے بیدی ماری اے گولی
 اگانہ دی رائے ہین، سنگ امام دے

"In the name of God the Kharl rides his horse. Says Rai Ahmad: nobody must waver.

Draw your swords and advance. This is the real test for real men. That day the British army was mauled. Rebels have shown their mettle. The British army was forced to retreat through barren lands.

"There are traces of their retreat which can be seen. But Gulab Rai Bedi fired at Rai Ahmad when he was in prayer. Rai Ahmad has joined the Imam."

That which could not be done by the foe was done by a traitor to the motherland and today almost all Punjabis have forgotten the great struggle their forefathers put up against the invaders from the East as well as West.

Punjabi text from "Kall Bolaindi" edited by A.D. Ejaz 1985

ੴ ਖਾਨ ਆਦਿ ਸਗੋਂ ਖੁਦਾ ਹੈ, ਧਰੀ ਮੈਂ ਸਤੁ ਰਖਦੇ ਚੜ੍ਹੇ ਕਰੁ ਰਗਦ ਦੇ
ਆਖ: ਹੁਜ਼ੀ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਸਾ ਤੋੜੇ
ਗਏ ਅਭਿਮਤ ਪਿਆ ਆਖੇ ਖੁਦਾ ਤੁਸਾਰੀ ਸੀਲੀ
ਅਸੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਦੇ ਪੁੱਤੇ ਨਾਮਾ ਸੁਠੀ ਦਿਤੁ ਮੰਗਦੇ
ਉਨ ਦਿਗਰੇ ਕੀਲੀ ਪੀਲੀ, ਤੇਲੀ ਅਭਿਮਤ ਦੀਲੀ
ਪਸੰ ਆਏ ਸਗੋਂ ਕੋਰੇ ਸਗੀ ਅਭਿਮਤ ਦੀਲੀ ਚਿਰ ਕੀਲੀਲੀ
ਪਸੰ ਸੇ ਖੜੇ ਤੇ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖਦੇ
ਸਗੋਂ ਆਖਦੇ ਗਏ ਅਭਿਮਤ ਹੈ, ਕੁਸ਼ਾਖ ਗਏ ਚੰਦੀ ਧਰੀ ਮੈਂ ਸੋੜੀ
ਅਗੋਂ ਹੀ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਸੀਲੀਲੀਲੀ ਦੇ।

MURAD -- THE HERO OF FATIANAS

WE know little about our own history -- the history of the areas of Pakistan. We are not familiar with our heroes who raised their voice and arms against the internal as well as external tyranny. In the far-off northern valleys surrounded by snow clad mountains and in the deep thick jungles on the banks of our rivers many battles had been fought from time immemorial. Many men of true mettle had challenged the might of their own rulers, who became ruthless and flouted the norms of good governance. Most of these worthy men have been forgotten by us. That is most unfortunate. Anyhow, someone somewhere can still find a clue to the lost chapters in our history. One unknown, unsung hero of northern areas has been traced by Syed Mohammad Abbas Kazmi who has collected the folk songs of Baltistan. One of the songs is about Teestey Murad, a seventeenth century hero. Another Murad is from the plains of central Punjab, Murad Daleel-da (Murad son of Daleel) who was the trusted lieutenant of Ahmad Khan Kharl, who rose against the new foreign masters of the Punjab in 1857.

About Murad of Baltistan his mother sings:

اور مجید بگیا ننتخ خنقاہ بگیا لے گھوے سیکھی اتوے تیتے چوتیتے مرادیلے کھیریلے

The Raja of Teestey, the Murad of Teestey (her mother got him after visiting and saying prayers at many mosques and tombs of saints), has been arrested and is being driven to the jail.

انہیے مرادیلے کھیریلے یا بہ لایہ رن زے سکر دو ملنگ دو سے یل کھیریم یوے

Arrest of Murad has become inevitable, because in Skardu nowadays cows and goats are being sold against currency.

In Skardu in those days selling a goat or a cow was considered contrary to decent living. They were exchanged as gifts and not as a commodity. But the ruler of Baltistan, Abdullah Khan known as Abda Khan (man-eater) (1635-40), had heavily taxed his subject. The poor people had to sell their cattle. Murad, son of a poor widow, most probably objected to that. The song says that Murad was such a popular figure of the area that people just out of love used to call him Cho (Raja) of Teestey. Most probably he was a born rebel. He must have been eloquent against the highhandedness of the rulers and their bureaucrats. The Balti ruler disliked his popularity and ordered his arrest. His widowed mother's song confirms the story of this unsung hero. This song may lead us to more fruitful research on this proud Murad of the northern areas.

The other Murad was also arrested in October or November of 1857. And when he was being transported from Sahiwal areas to Andaman Island ('Kala Pani') he sang:

مراد آکھے : اسانوں تاں لکھیا ڈھینس، پیر بنگلے گو گیرے توں نہ لیسیں کچری
 لوہے دیاں بیڑیاں گھت، جا بیڑیاں وچ چڑھائے
 مراد آکھے : اسیں وگے جانے ہائیں، کافر مار دو پیری خوش و سیں او دس اسادیا !

Murad says: We have to face whatever is our fate. But you will never again hold your court in Gogera

They were fettered and put aboard the river boats.

Murad says: We have killed our enemies in broad-day light.

We are happy over that

May you live long and prosper, our country.

What happened to Murad of Teestey after he was arrested and jailed by Abdullah Khan, the man-eater. Nobody knows. But his end is not so ambiguous. What happened to Murad of district Toba Tek Singh after he had been arrested and sent to Andamans. The record is silent. But his end can also be imagined.

Murad Fatiana a Mahini Sial of Garh Fatiana of Toba Tek Singh belonged to the tribe of Saheban, the ill-fated heroine of the popular legend. Ahmad Khan Kharl, the leader of the rebels of 1857, belonged to the tribe of Mirza the hero of the above mentioned story. When Saheban eloped with Mirza and Mirza was murdered by her brothers, the tribes had a bloody battle in which the Kharls emerged victorious. The town of Mahini Sials -- Kheeva -- was ransacked and totally destroyed by the Kharls. From that time the two tribes were never on good terms with each other. They came a little bit closer when in the Sikh period Ahmad Khan Kharl got some Mahini Sials released from the custody of Ranjeet Singh. Rai Ahmad was a respected senior elder of the areas on both sides of the river Ravi. When the Meerut mutiny started and many jails were broken, Shamoo of Dherkey, who had been held in the Agra jail, came to this area and called on Rai Ahmad Khan.

شامو دھیرے کا آگرے دی جیل توں نٹھا

اوہ گھڑچھدارائے منتھو دے احمد خان دا

اس وہیا آن سنایا، مارے ہندوستان لے

Shamoo Dherkey told Rai Ahmad what had happened in Delhi and around after the armed uprising against the Whites. The District Gazetteer of Montgomery says. Emmasaries from Delhi appeared before the end of May to have crossed the river from the direction of Sirsa and Hisoar -- news of Meerut mutiny and massacre and of the disarmament of the native troops at Mian Mir reached Gogera via Lahore on the 18th May....

"Ahmad was a man above average bold and crafty. In 1848 he had induced Dhara Singh of the Gogera Nakkai to hold Satghara against the English. It was this man who roused the tribes."

And one of the dhola says:

رائے احمد گھل کے ہیر، کاٹھیے، دیہنی وال، ماہنی سیال، بگھیلے، وٹو، کھل لیس کول بجا

Rai Ahmad has called the meeting of the elders of the Hairo, Kathia, Vahniwal, Mahini Sial, Baghela, Wattoo and Kharl tribes.

Rai Ahmad sought after their collaboration and help to fight against the English. But the elders from some tribes were not ready to face the might of the foreigners.

چڑھدے رائے نون پرہیں پیاں ہٹکیندیاں متھاپیالیناں این نال سرکارے
ایہناں انگریزاں اگے راجہ رنجیت سنگھ نون تختوں لاه لیوای
مولراج رنگے دی دھکے گئے، خزانے لیانیں کھوہ انعام دا

They warn Rai Ahmad who is out to face the English.

You are challenging the Government. They had dethroned Raja Ranjeet Singh.

They have subdued Moolraj (of Multan) by force

They have plundered his coffers.

But Rai Ahmad refused to listen to them and Kathias, Wattoos, and some sections of Kharls and Sials, and Vahniwals committed their support to him. Murad of Garh Fatiana was one of them.

خان احمد آہند اے؛ ایہناں انگریزاں دی ہک ہو رگل دی جاننا ہاں
اگے چھ آنے روپیہ اگھاڑ کے کھا دا اے راجے بہاؤ الحق دا
ادوں تبتو جاٹھو کے ہانیں وچ ملستان دے
ایہناں انگریزاں نون راجے بہاؤ لپور والے من لیا ہئی
بیکانیر والیاں چھ آنیاتا ریا بہہ کے وچ ہندوستان دے

Rai Ahmad says:

I know more about the British.

They had 37% share in the collection of Pir Bahaul Haq Zakarya.

They invaded Multan.

The Nawab of Bahawalpur has recognised them

In Hindostan, rulers of Bikanir have also given them 37% share

And the Gazetteer says:

2 "The first real precursor of the storm that was brewing occurred on the night of July 26th in the shape of an outbreak in the Gogera jail. This appears to have been in all probability the work of Ahmad Khan, as he had managed with the connivance of the Darogha to pay an unauthorised visit to the jail during June, when he no doubt conferred with the more turbulent of its inmates. The outbreak in the jail was promptly suppressed, 51 prisoners were wounded and killed."

Rai Ahmad and many other chiefs were detained in Gogera at an earlier stage of the war of independence. On the banks of river Ravi his followers continued creating trouble. And one day Rai Ahmad again escaped. He crossed the river. Berkely, the Extra Assistant Commissioner, chased him but failed to catch him. In anger he looted and burnt the village Jhamara of Rai Ahmad.

Rai Ahmad with Sarang and Murad tried to win the support of tribes of the right bank of river Ravi. He succeeded in organising a sizeable force to reckon with the English. In the meanwhile his opponent and a Kharl patronised by the British, Sarfraz Khan of Kamalia, "on the night of September 16 informed Capt. Elphinstone that all the chiefs of the Ravi tribes who had been called into Kamalia had fled evidently with the intention of rising in their villages."

To quell the turbulent tribes under the leadership of

Rai Ahmad, about 10 different detachment were sent under the command of Col. Paton, Captain Black, Lieutenant Chichester. Capt. Elphinstone, Mr. Berkely, Captain Chamberlain, Lieutenant Neville, Captain Snow and Captain MacAndrew. They all were after the head of Rai Ahmad Khan Kharl. On 21st Sept, 'a sharp skirmish took place in which the cavalry had to retreat. They however, rallied and Ahmad together with Sarang, chief of the Begke Kharls was killed".

Ahmad had refused to attack a Government post in Syedwala (Sheikhupura) because it was manned by native sepoy. Throughout his armed struggle his target were the English and that was the motto of all of his lieutenants including Murad Fatiana.

When Ahmad was martyred his head was severed and brought to Gogera jail where it was put on display. This was an added insult. After three days one of his dare devil companions stole the head and it was buried in his ancestral graveyard.

After the death of Rai Ahmad, Murad Fatiana Sial became desperate. He declared that, come what may, he would kill the well-armed English commander and do the same with his dead body what they had done with the body of Rai Ahmad. Murad continued the struggle launched by Rai Ahmad and Sarang. He declared:

احمد خان شہید ہو یا تاں سر پنجاب دے نوں برطانیے جا گھتیا اے ہتھ

With the fall of Ahmad

Britain has tried to lower the head of the Punjab

برکلی آکھے: اسال راٹھاں دے دتے مونہہ کڑیا اے اتے کیتی چٹھ سواری
ہکناں نوں مار گھتیا، ہکناں دے نک وچ لئی اے گھت مہاری

بولی۔ پھٹ تلوار اے جہیڑی انگریز برکلی کدھ وجودوں ماری

ایہہ گل سُن کے گڑھ آیا فتیانیاں تھاپی ڈھول تے ماری
 اکھے مرادفتیانہ: ساوی تینوں پھیراں نت کھر کھرے تے دیواں کھنڈ نہاری
 ہک واری لے چل انگریز برکلی تے، میں دیکھاں اس دی بگھی کالی
 ساوی آکھیا: توں کر بسم اللہ دھر پیر رکابے میں جاساں مارا ڈاری
 انگریز دا کلمہ گیا ڈھے سنہری!
 تے مرہیوں کڈھ برکلی نوں سٹوس
 جیویں مرٹ وچوں لچھا لیندا جھول للاری!!

Berkely says, we have...clamped the mouths of the chiefs

We are riding with chafing bits rough-shod on their backs

Some have been killed

While others' noses have been bored and nailed

This taunt made by Berkely,

Is no less than a sword-cut

Taunts hurt the chiefs

As a spark burns through silk

After hearing this taunt, Fatianas of Garh have sounded the war drum

Murad Fatiana says to (Savi) his mare:

I have given you unprecedented service

I have given you the best to eat.

Take me once to English Berkely

I want to smash his black baggi into smithereens.

Mare says: In the name of Allah mount my back

I will fly.

And the golden headgear of the English falls.

Murad pierces Berkely

He falls from his horse as a dyer loops out a skein from his cauldron.

مارے برکلی دیاں لندن خبراں، سروں لاکھ کے پٹن گورے
 کھلیاں بانہواں کر کے روند ماں میساں
 ساڈا ماریا گیا باراں کمپنیاں داسردار
 جٹاں لٹ لیا اے گھر سرکاری

News of the death of Berkely is heard in London.
 They mourn his death and beat their bare heads in
 sorrow.

The English women weep and wail and say:
 Our commander of twelve companies has been slain.

The Jats have plundered the palace.

And thus says the Gazetteer:

"By the 4th November insurrection was over. The
 leaders were executed or transported and many persons
 sentenced to other punishments. Over four lakhs of rupees
 were realized from the insurgent tribes by fine or by
 confiscation and sale of property.'

Murad says:

مراد آکھے: اسیں راضی وگے جانے ہائیں، کافر مار دو پھری
 خوش وسیں اودیس اسادیا!

1986

A NATIONALIST OF PATHANKOT -- RAM SINGH

میں لڑنا فرنگی نال
 میرا دعویٰ فرنگی دے نال
 میں جینا دہاڑے چار

I will fight with the Farangi
 I have a claim against the English.
 My life is a thing of but four days.

This was Ram Singh, son of the Wazir to the Raja of Nurpur (now in Himachal Pradesh) who in 1848
challenged the new conquerors of the Punjab.

<p> ماہ شامی کے ہاں جینا دہاڑے چار جس دا نام رکھیا جن رکھی راجپوت بیٹا وزیر دا </p>	<p> گھر شامی دے رام سنگھ جی جی بڑا اتھاری جس دا نام رکھیا جن رکھی راجپوت بیٹا وزیر دا </p>
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Ram Singh was born in the house of Shama.
 Born in the likeness of God and named "*the Bold*".
 He it was who saved the Rajputs' honour.
 Well did the son of the Wazir fight.
 No doubt, after the fall of the Sikhs the British were ruling supreme in the land of five rivers. The British, with the help of Bengalis, Purbis, Madrasis and Gurkhas, had conquered the last post but not with any ease. They met the toughest resistance in the Punjab. From Subraon to

He called the Kotwal named Das, he called Dhian the Jarral.

Called he also Amar Singh Minhas, who bared his sword (and said) I will try against the armies how my sword works.

Then did Ram Singh backing out go up in his hand seized his sword which says "kill, kill".

Barnes' Settlement Report says:

"At the end of August 1848, a Pathania Rajput, and son of the Wazir of the ex-Raja of Nurpur, collecting a batch of adventurers from the neighbouring hills of Jammu suddenly crossed the Ravi and threw himself into the un-occupied fort of Shahpur. That night he received a congratulatory deputation from the neighbourhood and proclaimed by beat of drum that the English rule had ceased".

ہندو شاہ پور کے ایک پٹانیا راجپوت نے
اگست 1848ء کے آخر میں جہلم کے
شاہ پور کے ایک راجپوت کے ہاتھ سے
انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور
انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور
انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور
انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور

He bared his sword from his waist.

He girded it on his waist.

He gave orders to his soldiers and brought his camp to Shahpur.

Barnes writes in his Settlement Report: "In January 1849 Ram Singh persuaded Raja Sher Singh to give him two Sikh regiments, each 500 strong to make a second eruption in the hills. He took up a final position upon the Dalla heights.

انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور
انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور
انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور
انگریزوں کے خلاف بغاوت کی اور

ਜਗਤ ਭਰੇ ਆਰਾਮ ਵਾਲੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਖ਼ਬਰਗੀ ਖ਼ਬਰ ਰਾਜੇ

The drums roll on the height of Dalla, the side drums beat at Kumhani.

The news of you has reached the presence.

"This ridge (Dulla or Dalla) overhangs the Ravi and presents towards the plains the quarter from which an assailing force must proceed, a series of perpendicular blocks of sandstone, varying from 50 to 150 feet high and each forming in itself a strong and almost impregnable position. The strength of the ground, the disciplined valour of the insurgents made the assault of service of peculiar danger, and Brigadier Wheeler came up in person accompanied by a strong force of all arms. By his skilful disposition the rebels were driven from their fastnesses with considerable slaughter and we on our side had to mourn the loss of two gallant officers Cornet Christie of the 7th Cavalry and Lt. J. Peel of Hoshiarpur Local Corps."

And the ballad says!

ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਚੜ੍ਹੀ ਆਇਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਓਂਦੀਆਂ ਖੜ ਕਰਾਇਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਮਲ ਰੀ ਤੀ ਮਲਿਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ
ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ	ਮਲ ਮਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੜ ਮਲਿਆ

Malmal Sahab has come up raising the outcry as he comes.

He shot an arrow into the hands of Malmal Sahab and the hand he destroyed.

Malmal Sahab's brother Chandi Sahab came up, as he came he gave a blow.

He warded off the blow with his shield and struck his own blow on the Sahab's head.

They had his body taken to Delhi.

Burton's account

Burton gives more details about the rebel Ram Singh in his book '*First and Second Sikh wars*'.

"Ram Singh son of Shama, one of the hereditary wazirs of Nurpur, crossed the frontier and attacked several posts on the customs line in the vicinity of Pathankot and Nurpur. A force of the 15th Irregular Cavalry and 29th Native Infantry under Major Fisher was accordingly sent against him and crossed the Beas at Katgarh on the 9th September 1848. Early on the 10th, Major Fisher marched to Pathankot, where arrangements were made for attacking the rebels who were reported to be in possession of the neighbouring fort of Shahpur. As the force approached that place a body of men was seen on the hill overlooking dispersed by the cavalry. When the party neared the fort, a heavy fire of musketry was opened from the walls, by which a few sowars were wounded. Fire continued until dusk and during the night the rebels evacuated the fort, escaping by a precipitous path leading to the Ravi, which flowed several hundred feet below.

"On the 10th September, Mr. J. Lawrence, Commissioner of the Jullundur Duab, reached Kangra and on the 13th he arrived at Nurpur, when he heard that Ram Singh occupied a long narrow hill in the immediate vicinity of the town. He had perpetrated several dacoities and had written circular letters to the headmen of villages asking them to join him. On the morning of the 14th, Mr.

Lawrence and Major Fisher reconnoitred the enemy's position and the surrounding country which was difficult. It was found that cavalry could act with difficulty on the south, a wider ravine, interspersed with rice fields, running along that side, on the north the country was much more difficult, being broken in every direction into hundreds of little spurs running out from the main chain on which the insurgents were brought up, and on the morning of the 19th, Ram Singh and his followers were dispersed.

"On the 8th January (1849) Brigadier General Wheeler marched from Pathankot against a body of insurgents under Ram Singh, who had taken up a position on the Dalla mountain north of Shahpur. He sent the 4th Native infantry and a risala of irregular cavalry under command of Lt.Col. D.Downing, up the bed of the Chaki river, to take post at the opposite end of the mountain where the ascent was easier than on the Shahpur side. At Shahpur he found that a range of hills had to be crossed to reach the Dalla mountain. He had hoped to avoid this range by marching up the bed of the river Ravi, but it was found that the fords were too deep and the stream across a gorge which crossed the intervening hills, the work occupying three days. At the foot of Dalla mountain three days were employed in reconnoitring and on the 15th and 16th January three columns marched to different points from which a simultaneous attack was made on the latter date. The enemy were driven from their stronghold with considerable loss, 35 bodies being counted. On the British side Coronet Christie, 7th Light cavalry, and Jamadar Ram Kishan Singh, 18th Sikh Local Infantry were killed and lieutenant Peel, 2nd-in-command of the latter corps, was wounded."

According to the Punjabi ballad, the end of Ram Singh was:

تیرے باہمنے دغا کیا راجہ
 پوجا بیٹھا پکڑا راجہ

੨੪ ਭੈਰਾ-ਇ-ਸਮੁ ਤੇ ਕਹਿਤਾ ਹੈ ਖ਼ਾੜ-ਇ-ਦਾਗ
 ਆਇੰਦਾ ਨਾ ਚਿ ਰਾਗਾਂ ਮੇਂ ਆਈ ਵੀ ਸਾੜ ਤੇ।
 ਸੀਤਾਂ ਨਿਗਮਾ ਏ ਖ਼ੁਸ਼-ਇ-ਸ਼ਹੀਦਾਂ ਤੇ ਇਨ ਕਾ ਤੁਖਮ
 ਤੁੰ ਆਂਦੀਂਦਾ ਏਕੁ ਨਾ ੨੪ ਉਕੁ ਖ਼ਾੜ ਤੇ।

THE JALLIANWALA MASSACRE

THE massacre of Jallianwala Bagh shook the whole of the sub-continent and the resistance put up against Rowlatt Act by the Punjab was unprecedented during the first quarter of the 20th century. When Allama Iqbal visited Amritsar in connection with the special sessions of the All India Congress, the Muslim League and the Khilafat Movement, he paid tributes to those martyred in indiscriminate firing by the British army headed by Brig. Dyer.

Iqbal said:

ہرزائے عمین سے یہ کہتی ہے خاکِ باغ غافل نہ رہ جہان میں گردوں کی چال سے
 سینچا گیا ہے خون شہیداں سے اس کا تخم تو آنسوؤں کا بجل نہ کر اس خیال سے

Whosoever visits the garden (Jallianwala Bagh) the dust of the garden asks him
 Not to ignore the tricks of the rulers
 The blood of the martyrs has irrigated the roots
 Therefore weep as much as you can and pay your tributes to the departed souls

The Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and the subsequent uprising of the Punjabis was put down by ruthless state oppression. It had an immense impact on Indian politics. The British suppression which started after the 'Black Hole of Calcutta' incident, reached its height in Jallianwala from where the decline of the Raj began. Not only Iqbal and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan but also every Punjabi poet worth

the name could not keep himself aloof from this tragic event. An unknown poet says:

ہوم رول دے حامی دتے جیلاں نول ٹور	ستیاہ پال کچلو دیر دے میرے دکھڑے بھول
رام نومی جو آئی ہمسلمان ہندو نہیں بھائی	کچلو دی جے منائی وجے وا جے تے ڈھول
دن دو جا چڑھیا، کچلو حاکمیاں پھڑیا	ستیاہ پال نول اڑیا، پھڑکے لے گئے انھول
سُن کے گتیاں نہیں جاناں، ہندو تے مسلماناں	کمرے بند دوکاناں چلے ڈی سی دے کول
خلقت پل اُتے آئی دے گوڑے سپاہی	ایہناں گولی چلائی مارے کئی انھول
لوکاں طیش جو آیا نیشنل بنک جلا یا	لٹیا ہتھ جو آیا بوہے بنکاں دے کھول
جنرل ڈائر جو آیا فوجاں نال لے آیا	اھر منے فائر کرایا، مارے گئے انھول

Home Rule dey haami ditey jailan noon toar
 Satya Pal, Kitchlew veer way merey dukhray nah phoal
 Ram Nomi jo aey Musslaman Hindu ney bhai
 Kitchlew di jay manai, wajey wajey tey dhoal,
 Din dooja charhya Kitchlew hakimian pharia
 Satya Pal noon arya, phar key ley gayey anbhol
 Sun key gayyan ney jaanan Hindu tey Mussalman
 Kar key band dokanan chaley D.C.dey koal
 Khalqat pul uttey aacy dakey goarey sapahi,
 Ehnian goli chalai marey kayee anbhoal,
 Lokan tesh jo aya National Bank jalaya
 Lutia hath jo aya boohay bankan dey khoal
 General Dyer jo aya foajan nal layaya
 Ohney fire karaya marey gayey anbhol.

The poet has very simply narrated what had happened on 12-13 April, 1919, in Amritsar.

O'Dwyer's account

Now, I quote from Sir Michael O'Dwyer's book '*India As I Knew It*':-- "When the Rowlatt Bill (in place of the Defence of India Act) was passed into law on 18th March, 1919 not a single elected Indian member voted for it.

"This was the signal for the opening of Gandhi's passive resistance....On 23rd March, Gandhi began the war against the Act by proclaiming a Hartal throughout India on the following Sunday -- 30th March. In the Punjab, hartal took place on that day only at Amritsar, Multan, and a few other places, as there was some doubt about the date....

"Realising that a storm was coming up, we in the Punjab did what we could do to prevent or minimise it. On the 6th April hartals took place in nearly all the chief towns of the central Punjab....The Lahore mob that night made hostile demonstration against prominent Indian gentlemen known to be supporters of the Government. Something similar was taking place at Amritsar, Kasur, Jullundher, Multan. At Multan the previous day the 'passive resisters' refused to allow the 23 Punjabis to march through the city to receive the welcome arranged for them by the Municipality on their return from the War. At Amritsar...the situation created by the virulent agitation of Kitchlew and Satya Pal, who were still influencing it, had become so critical that on 8th or 9th April I ordered their removal to a distant place and at the same time asked the military authorities to strengthen the garrison....But unfortunately my request was not received by them till the 11th and the outbreak took place on the 10th....

Deportation

"The outbreak at Amritsar was undoubtedly precipitated on the 10th April by the deportation that morning of...Kitchlew and Satya Pal. The mob,...at once

rose and endeavoured to force its way into the civil station but was held up by the small British picquets on the bridge over the railway, which connected the city with the civil station. The mob attacked the troops with stones and sticks. In Lahore on 12th April Police fired at the mob of ten thousand people on The Mall. One or two were killed and four or five wounded. A mob...attempted to attack Central Telegraph stations...but it was driven out at the point of the bayonet. They were joined by thousands of others at the Lohari Gate and they again put up fight...police fired on them...three or four more casualties....the city was....in the hands of lawless mobs and police had to be withdrawn till the 12th.

"On the same day mobs from the town had invaded the Kasur railway station, held up the trains brutally murdered two British Warrant Officers...looted and burnt the station...They then attacked the treasury. The trouble at once spread along the line from Kasur to Amritsar."

Jallianwala

"Now comes the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy which took place on 13th April. There was de facto Martial Law in Amritsar and Gen. Dyer was the military commander. It was also *Baisakhi Day*. A call was given by political activists for a public meeting at Jallianwala Bagh at 4.30 p.m."

"It appears that General Dyer, as soon as he heard about the contemplated meeting, made up his mind to go there with troops. He intended to fire upon them with machine-guns but he was unable to use them because his armoured cars could not pass through the narrow entrance to the Bagh. When he reached there, he saw large number of people squatting on the ground and being addressed by a person from a small platform. The number of those attending the meeting varies from account to account -- from 15,000 to 20,000 but Gen. Dyer at the time believed it to be 5,000 or 6,000 strong. He put 24 Baluchis

and 25 Gurkhas on the raised ground at the entrance and, without giving any warning or asking the people to disperse, immediately opened fire at the people who were at a distance of 100 or 150 yards. Gen. Dyer's men continued firing till the ammunition ran out. In all, 1,650 rounds were fired and the casualties have now been ascertained to be at least 379 killed and about 1,200 wounded.

What happened afterwards? Another Punjabi poet, I Iakeem Abdul Lateef Arif, says:

جلیانوالے دا باغ سی لال ہو یا اٹھے واہ جدوں گولیاں آیاں نہیں
 ڈھڈاں بھار چلاؤندے خلق تائیں دیکھ ظالماں پٹھیاں چایاں نہیں
 ایہدر دیکھیا رتب دے بندیاں نے اینہاں حکماں تے اتاں چایاں نہیں
 اوہدر گولیاں نبی دے پاک روضے اُتے ظالماں جا برسایاں نہیں
 بھرے جیل خانے کھچا کھچ پورے ظفر علی نول ککھ ودھائیاں نہیں
 جس پنجاب اندر زمیندار بن کے سبھے سنگتاں جھون جگایاں نہیں

When indiscriminate firing was made in
 Jallianwala Bagh and it was all red with
 the blood of innocent citizens

They, the oppressors, forced the people to crawl on
 their belies.

The rulers have gone to the height of tyranny

They have sprayed bullets on the tomb of
 Mohammad, the Prophet.

Because of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's effort

People have courted arrest in great number

The prisons are overcrowded

Maulana through his daiy "*Zamindar*"

Coaxed all the communities to jump into the bloody
 struggle of independence

Now let us see what happened in other areas after
 the Jallianwala Bagh bloodbath. The Lt.-Governor of the
 Punjab says:

"The 14th April was the high water-mark of the rebellion...The most serious was that at Gujranwala. No troops were available...It was then that I suggested sending aeroplanes to drop bombs. The military authorities at once despatched aeroplanes. The aeroplanes speedily dispersed the rebellious mobs by bombs and machine-gun fire -- causing some dozen deaths."

'Serious disorders'

"There were serious disorders on the fourteenth at the other places along the railway line in the Gujranwala district alone -- including all the urban centres, Wazirabad, Akalgarh, Hafizabad, Ramnagar, Sheikhupura, Chuharkana, and Sangla...the rebellion spread along the line of railway north into Gujrat and west in Lyallpur. Martial Law was imposed in the districts of Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala, Gujrat and Lyallpur."

What were the atrocities committed by the Martial Law authorities? Who have repeatedly experienced those atrocities after achieving independence?

We have never formed any committee after any Martial Law which could be authorised to probe into these atrocities. The body constituted by the British Government was called the Hunter Committee. It reported: "As regards Martial Law orders and cases arising out of the breach thereof, we think it unfortunate that in several important aspects Martial Law assumed as intensive a form as it did...some of the orders were injudicious. They served no good purpose and were not, in our opinion, drawn with sufficient tact to prevent undue annoyance to the civil population." The report refers to General Dyer's Crawling Order (which no one attempted to defend) under which people ordered to crawl on all fours before the British authorities. Then there was Gen. Campbell's "Salaaming" Order, prescribing to the people of Gujranwala to salute rulers. Col. Frank Johnson's Order directed students of

four Lahore colleges to attend roll calls four times a day, and the Order to intern in the Lahore Fort for 24 hours from fifty to 100 students of a college where the Martial Law orders had been torn down. There was public flogging at Lahore and elsewhere. There were degrading punishments at Kasur, such as making convicted men touch the ground with their foreheads, whipping, fines and imprisonment.

Revolutionary move

What was the background of this movement? Was it just a momentary affair based on a single act of provocation or did it have deeper roots? Commissioner Kitchin of Lahore Division while recording his evidence before the Hunter Committee, said that in April he had formed the opinion that "there was a revolutionary movement behind the disturbances."

Jallianwala Bagh is a vital chapter in the annals of our struggle for independence. As Faiz says:

ہم پہ کیا گزرے گی اجداد پہ کیا گزری ہے؟

But who remembers the martyrs of 1919? Nothing in their memory exists in Gujranwala, Lahore, Kasur, Chuharkana or Kamoke. The people of Pakistan have bravely faced three Martial Laws. But those who suffered during this period could not earn even a small commemorative pillar anywhere. 1989

STIRRING SAGA OF 1947

THE lead story of *The Pakistan Times* of November 20, 1947, was: "Azad Kashmir Forces Take Rajori." Rajori was -- and is -- an important strategic place in Jammu and Kashmir state. Through this town Mughal rulers passed on way to the Valley. Ranjeet Singh had to wage a war against the then ruler of Rajori, Raja Agar Khan, to reach Kashmir.

In 1947, Rajori came in the limelight not because of its military importance but because of the political part played by its people. When Maharaja Hari Singh acceded to India October on 27, 1947, there was a spontaneous uprising in whole of the area.

About the fall of Rajori we have three versions. Two are almost eyewitness accounts and the third comes from a former Chief Justice of Azad Kashmir Mr. Yousuf Saraf who writes in his book *Kashmiris Fight for Freedom* "Sakhi Delair and Capt. Rehmatullah went to Rajori in early November at the head of a small force which was joined by several others as the march progressed. They camped at village Karaiyan about three miles from the town. Sheikh Zia-ud-Din of the police department, Mirza Faqir Muhammad, Mutiullah Raana Nizami, Mirza Mohammad Khan, Mirza Wazir Husain and several others who were in the town established contact with them. After the local garrison ignored a surrender call, the town was taken under seige. It was liberated on 10th November."

The second version comes from the above-mentioned Mutiullah Raana Nizami, an Urdu poet, writer, political worker and tehsildar of Rajori. He wrote a 128 page book

Jang-i-Azad-i-Kashmir aur Jaral Rajput which was published from Jhelum in 1949.

"On November," 1947, "he writes, "the Dogra commander and Hindu tehsildar of Rajori surveyed the strategic points of the city and surrounding rural areas. Meanwhile, all Hindus of the surrounding areas were asked to concentrate in the city. The subtle movements of Dogra civilian and army officials and the concentration of Hindu population aroused doubts in the mind of Muslims of the city. Within the next few days the events happening in the State made the Muslims realise that they were no more safe. So the whole Muslim population evacuated the city by November 10.

"The same day Capt. Rehmatullah Khan and Lt. Mirza Shah Wali Khan reached near Rajori. They had troops with them, including Sakhi Dalair Khan. They wanted to launch an attack but were stopped by Raana Nizami and other prominent Muslims of the city."

Now the third account from a long poem by the poet Mohammad Din Jaral (1884-1980), who belonged to village Karaiyan, situated three miles from Rajori and who was the father of Lt. Mirza Shah Wali Khan.

وچ راجور علاقے سارے شور پایا ہر طرفوں مار و مار کر بندے ہندو بچنا ہے کس حرفوں
سٹھ ہزار رجوری اندر جمع ہوئے فیر ہندو جس وچ فوجی ستر نفری افسر بھی سمجھ ہندو
شاہ ولی نے عرض چا کیتی کیسٹن صاب تہاں مسلماناں دی مدد کارن چلنا ہے یا ناپاں
ترتی تاریخ صبح تن دجے چلے طرف رجوری گارداک حفاظت والی اگے اگے ٹوری

The poet had six sons, including Lt. Shah Wali Khan, about whom this long poem or *Var* was written after his martyrdom. His other five sons also joined the Azad Kashmir forces and actively participated in the *jabad* of 1947. Mohammad Din composed this poem of about one thousand lines in the memory of his brave sons.

The poem is in the tradition of Punjabi epic (*Var*) poetry which shows that the Punjabi people offered resistance against all the invaders -- Muslims or non-Muslims. The poem about Lt. Shah Wali Khan has, no doubt, a limited convass but it contains a detailed account of the uprising against the Dogra-Delhi combine which had the patronage of the foreign masters represented by Governor-General Lord Mountbatten.

According to the poem *Laboo di Shabadat*, (Evidence of Blood), Lt. Shah Wali Khan (1912-1948) had joined the Dogra army and during the second World War served on many fronts in the Middle East and Europe.

ڈوگریاں دیاں فوجیاں اندر ادھ ملازم ہے سی
 جرمن نال اوہ جنگ کرن نوں نال انہاں دے گیا سی
 مصر، ایران، عراق تے پیرس ہور ولایت پھریا
 حج کیتا اس کے اندر پھیر دینے وڑیا
 واپس ملے مشہد رستے آئے صحیح سلامت
 دوست یار تے افسر سارے آئے وچ ریاست
 دشمن والیاں توپاں کمر کن شور پیا ہر پاسے
 ہندو مسلم آپس اندر دشمن ہوئے خلعے

When Shah Wali and other returned home the Dogra ruler had cleverly joined the newly-independent state of India. He had prior to that engineered the massacre of the Muslims population to weaken the Muslims of the areas where some martial races resided. The main such areas were those where people spoke Punjabi (Pahari or Dogari dialect). These areas are outside the Kashmir Valley. In the Kashmir Assembly these areas were represented by the Muslim Conference. While Kashmiri speaking areas were mainly represented by National Conference of Sheikh

Abdullah. The Muslim Conference, under Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas, has resolved that the State of Jammu and Kashmir would accede to Pakistan. This was a great challenge to Hari Singh and his comrades-in-arm -- Pandit Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Mountbatten.

Of the eleven battalions only two were posted in the Valley, one each at Gilgit and Sokerdu and the remaining seven in the Punjabi-speaking Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, Noshehra, Poonch and Jammu.

Yousuf Saraf writes: "In March 1947, Hindu-Muslim disturbances engulfed the whole of the Punjab.... It was in this background that Maharaja Hari Singh undertook a tour of the Jammu province. He visited Kathua, Samba, Udhampur, Dhoda, Poonch, Deva Vatala and Bhimber. It is not unusual or uncommon for a head of the state to tour border areas under the circumstances which then existed and the tour would have been perfectly normal and valid but for the fact that no Muslim officer was included in the entourage. Everywhere they remained closeted with Hindu leaders and apart from promising further arms and ammunition, distributed one thousand or so Ferozepuri rifles among the Chibs of Deva Vatala, 750 among Riasi and one thousand to those at Udhampur.

On his return from Rawala Kot the Maharaja raised a few units, mostly from among the Dogras and Hindu Rajputs of Jammu, Chamba and Kangra. Maharaj Hari Singh undertook another tour of Jammu district, Kathua, Udhampur, Kotli and Bhimber in the third week of October 1947. During this tour he is alleged to have supervised the distribution of arms among non-Muslims on a large scale. On October 20, he visited Bhimber and remained closeted with tehsildar Narindar Nath Rampal. What transpired at the meeting can be judged from the fact that the next day many Muslim majority border villages were evacuated and the killings started a day earlier.

ہندواں نے فیہ شور مچایا۔ مکک جے جلدی آوے
 راجوری، نوشہرہ، کوٹلی، توڑی دیر نہ کیتی جاوے
 ڈوگریاں دی فوج اک آئی ہیری گھاٹ سداوے
 اس نوں حکم ہری سنگھ دتا طرف راجوری جاوے
 پلٹن اک نوشہرہ پہنچی، کمپنی اک راجوری
 کوٹلی، دھرم سال، نباہ وچ دورہ کر دی سیری

The areas east of Rajoir were dominated by non-Muslims; It was Rajori from where the Muslims-majority belt started. Therefore to stop the thrust of Muslims rebels from the West, the Jammu-based newly recruited forces were asked to march towards Rajori through Noshchhra, and Dharamsal. The tribe of Jaral Rajputs had an old enmity with the dogras who had captured the Jaral state with Rajori its headquarter. The Jarals had been creating trouble for the Dogra ruler right from the beginning. In 1947 the Jarals in the army were taken as a great threat. Two Jaral army officers, Capt. Mirza Hasan Khan (Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case fame) and Capt. Mirza Mohammad Khan, led the rebellions successfully in Gilgit which was fully liberated. Another young Jaral officer Lt. Mirza Qudrat Ullah, played a heroic role on the Muzaffarabad and Uri front.

The Dogras started an operation clean-up from Riasi, the district headquarter. On November 4, Dogra troops arrived from Jammu and according to Saraf, about three to four thousand Muslims were killed in the district. Rajori is about 70 miles from Riasi. The Hindus who were mostly money-lenders had removed most of their valuables. This being a Muslim-majority area, the government had, already detailed a company to Rajori town. With the start of genocide, one more company was sent from Riasi to first "clear" the Pooni Bharakh area (again a stronghold of Jaral

Rajputs) and, after passing through Dharamsal, to reach Rajori.

However, the Wazir ordered them to proceed to Arnas in the Gool area and it was after the fall of Rajori that the mistake came to light.

Three Azad infantry companies had been raised in Rajori -- the 13th A.K. Batallion commanded by Major Rehmatullah, the 14th A.K. Batallion commanded by Lt.-Col. Ali Bahadur Khan and a third one commanded by Capt. Nausherwan. Lt.-Col. Ali Bahadur, along with the two chiefs of Bharakh and Bhajwal (both former members of the Kashmir Assembly), gave a tough battle to the invading Dogras. Ali Bahadur had raised a force, which had a serious clash with the Jan Sanghis and Hindu force, which suffered defeat and had their arms snatched by the Colonel's party.

At this juncture the Muslim officers in the State headquarters did get together. Says Mohammad Din Rajorvi:

نصر اللہ صاحب میجر ہے سن ہیڈ کوارٹر بندے
مسلماناں دی سن سن حالت اکھیں آنسو دیندے
رحمت اللہ رحمت والا کیپٹن نال اوہناں دے
کرنل اک پھٹان جبول دا نام حمید سناندے
نصر اللہ خان جلدی جلدی پہنچے آئی تھروچی
افسر مسلم رل مل بیٹھے دل وچ گل ایہ سوچی
واپس ہونا مشکل ہويا، مشکل ساڈا جینا
قسماں چاکے کرو بغاوت ہے زندہ رہنا

Maj. Nasrullah, Col. Hameed and Capt. Rehmatullah Khan saw through this conspiracy. At first they were asked to go to Tharochi but were then called back to be replaced

with non-Muslim officers and troops. It was thought that when the Muslim officers would be returning they would be ambushed and killed.

مقدوحی مقین پھر مارچ کر کے چمکر رستے آئے
 بل جو ناوچ اک بٹی سی اس پر ڈیرے لائے
 اسی بٹی پر جنگ اوہ مچیا ہندو مسلم سارے
 تن سو سٹھ ہندو سن فوجی افسر دو تن چار
 برکت رب رسول نبی دی سارے دتے مار

After this successful operation, Maj. Nasrullah Khan went to Palundri headquarter and the remaining party, under the command of Capt. Rehmatullah, marched through Bnah Sairi, Khoiratta, and Jajoot. Meanwhile, they received an urgent message from the Muslims of Rajori who had by that time evacuated the city. Says Mohammad

Din:

چھڈ محمد ایہہ کہانی طرف رجوری جائیئیں مطلوبہاں دی حالت اہلی ساری اکھ سنائیئیں

The Rajori operation started at midnight between Nov. 11 and 12. On the evening of Nov. 12 three-fourths of the town was in the control of the Mujahids. On the 13th the administration was handed over to the sitting Member of Kashmir Assembly, Mirza Mohammad Husain of Bharot.

Yusuf Saraf and Raana Nizami differ with the poet on what happened after the exit of the Hindu population, Dogra police and military force. And there lies the difference between a poet and politicians. Mohammad Din says:

انتری کتک سدھن سارے چلے طرف گھراں دی
 سخی دلیر بھی نالے گیا کر کے آس دلاں دی
 عورت اک اک نال لے گئے، فوجی سدھن سارے
 چاندی سونے دا کیہہ دساں لدرے بھارسی بھارے

Looting of Hindu property and abduction of Hindu women was one of the reasons for the fall of Rajori and other areas after six-months. Besides this, Saraf, Nizami and Mohammad Din give some other reasons. Saraf Says: "There is some evidence that the Gujjars who largely inhabited the tehsil were ill-treated by the local administration and rumours were current during those very days that some disgruntled persons amongst them collaborated with the Indians." Nizami's assessment is that (a) Sheikh Abdullah was deadly against the Jarals of the area. (b) There was a political rivalry between the Jarals and Gujjars and Kashmiris. Jarals were with the Muslim Conference and always won the Assembly seats. (c) Jarals were disliked by the Dogras because the Jaral chieftains Raja Agar Khan and Raja Rahimullah had many times fought against them. This mutual dislike resulted in Dogra rulers' close relationship with Gujjars and Kashmiris in Rajori. Sheikh Abdullah tried to exploit this difference to win over the sympathies of Gujjars and Kashmiris. (d) It is a fact that Jarals are an arrogant people. Also, they were not local in the sense as the Gujjars are. They were Hindu Rajput ruler of Pathankot area. They accepted Islam in Shahabuddin Ghauri's time. Bitter enmity with their Hindu relatives made them leave that area and shift to Rajori where they ruled till Ranjeet Singh vanquished them. (e) They had developed close relationship with Mughal rulers since Akbar's time and had been given the title of Mirza by him.

Apart from the above-mentioned reasons Mohammad Din writes:

خوب عدالت، کرے صفائی ہر اک دے مابین	وچ رجوری کردا حکومت مرزا محمد حسین
ڈوگرے دی حکومت اندراوہ سن سجد بھگیاڑ	کونسل اک بنائی او تھے بندے چن کے چا
ککڑاں دے رکھو اے بلے اوہ نگری کدوسی	بھگیاڑاں نوں بھینڈاں اُپر آن حکومت دسی

Mirza Mohammad Husain formed a duly elected advisory council among the members were people who were once favourites of the Dogras. They were wolves who had been given power over the sheeps.

The main reasons for the failure of Azad Government were its mismanagement, poorly-equipped forces, ill-planned infiltration of the Pathans and the reluctant support from the Pakistan Government, particularly military support. At one time Azad Kashmir Defence Minister Syed Ali Ahmad Shah had protested to the GHQ that it was refusing leave to those servicemen who belonged to the State areas. *The Pakistan Times* carried a story in its issue of November 23, 1947, that they wanted to evacuate their families and then join the Azad forces.

The five months from November 1947 to April 1948 saw the severest attack from Indian army with the full air cover. But Maj. Rehmatullah and Lt. Shah Wali contained the Indians around Noshehra and Jhangar for many months. They were not receiving relief and enforcement. While the Indian infantry had the support of armoured division, heavy artillery and air force. The Azad force was on verge of collapse: Our poet says:

بہم کے کرن صلاح و چاراں افسر دو تن رل کے
 قاصد ٹور و طرف رجوری ڈاک دو حرفی لکھ کے
 کرکن توپاں دشمن طرفوں ٹینکاں شور مچایا
 لگے چلن جہاز شیطانی پچھے دشمن آیا
 دو دن دشمن روک کھلو ساں مت فرجاؤ مارے

Saraf narrates the fall of Rajori thus: "The recapture of Jhangar by Indian had created serious supply problems for the elements holding Rajori. In the first week of April 1948 an Indian brigade consisting of four infantry battalions moved from Noshehra to recapture Rajori. There were

hardly four companies to hold it and obviously they could offer little resistance. The Indians resorted to killings, rape, abductions, destruction of property and plunder on such a vast scale that almost the entire Muslim population had to seek shelter in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir. Rajori was lost on April 12, 1948."

According to Mohammad Din Rajorvi, the surrounding area, including the village of Lt. Shah Wali, was evacuated in panic. The population took refuge in jungles. Shah Wali was much worried about his family. He located them in a jungle near Azimgarh fort, and begged leave of his father to rejoin the troops for recapturing the Rajori town. Shah Wali said to his family:

جے کر اللہ فتحیادتی واپس آکر ملساں نساں نہ ہی کندو کھا کے پچ لڑائی مرہاں

Sixteen days after the fall of Rajori Lt. Shah Wali also fell on the Paluli front close to Rajori. His father, the poet, writes:

شاہ ولی سی فائز کرد اغازی مرد بہادر گولہ دشمن آکر پھٹا حکم جیویں سی صادر
ٹوٹے کئی ہزاراں ہوئے گولہ پھٹ گیا کی دس محمد بن کبیرہ ہونا رونا تھہ سپا سی

and in the words of the sisters of Shah Wali:

ہجرت کر کے وطنوں ویرا جنگل ڈیرے لائے توں ہن جا کے پچ بہشتاں ساتھی ساتھ لائے

1990

UNDERDOGS VERSUS ESTABLISHMENT

"THE Punjab was the last province to be annexed by the British and this fact is not without significance. Annexation at a single stroke afforded a clearer and wider field for administrative effort of which full advantage was taken by a select body of exceptionally able officers. The officers decided from the very beginning to rule the province firmly and, if necessary, ruthlessly. In the rest of India the people retained their arms, matchlocks, swords and spears long after these became unnecessary for the protection of their persons and property, whereas in the Punjab, there was a general disarmament after the annexation....The Punjab has been the province that most young men entering the Indian Civil Service have wished to go to....It began as a frontier province, the shield of India with a military role which gave its administration the severity and the ruthlessness of the camp and the field" (*Modern India and the West* by L.S.C. O'Malley and *History of India* by Robert).

"Further...the policy of the Punjab Government was to encourage and to develop in rural areas, a landed gentry (including members of the old nobility) who would be strictly loyal to the British. The landed gentry was carefully nursed by being given jagirs, titles and land and by being constantly brought before the public eye in various spheres of administration. The landed gentry consisted of 'loyalists', as Government called them; 'moderates' as they called themselves, 'sycophants', as their opponents called them.

This was the position at the turn of the present century. It is not so difficult to guess how the common man or to be more precise the worker was suffering at the hands of the high powered officers and their subordinates as well as of landed gentry, so endeared to the British.

In April 1906 the Weekly '*Punjabee*' from Lahore published a news item which brought to light the shocking sequel to the system of begar (forced labour) as it then prevailed in Punjab. "The Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi was on tour. Two woebegone human beings were impressed to carry some of the impediments belonging to the officer. The two forlorn men were overpowered by the inclemency of the night and fell down in a dead faint in the middle of the road. The officers squared the relatives of the deceased by a munificent gift of Rs. 50 for each dead begari.

"The next week the '*Punjabee*' brought to light the death by shooting of an orderly who refused to carry on his saddle the dead carcass of a pig shot by a Saheb out for sport."

These two incidents suffice to prove the worst conditions under which the poor manual workers, ordinary farmers and tenants, washermen, weavers and blacksmiths used to live.

Jeevana Mor of Sangroor State. Nizam Lohar of district Amritsar, Jabroo Nai of Lahore and Chiragh Machhi and many others were the products of these particular conditions. Whatever they were called and whichever end they met, they were loved and respected by their class as heroes.

Nizam Lohar was born in village Sohal in district Amritsar. By profession he was a blacksmith. He joined the British army as an ordinary sepoy or a blacksmith at the monthly salary of six rupees. During military service, he was abused by a British officer. Nizam could not take it lying down. He physically attacked the officer, murdered

him and fled with whatever arms were easily available to him.

لوہارنوں شوق نوکری دا
کر کے کھاندا اے نیک کنائیاں
وگڑ گیا کم لوہار دا
کوہوں گا لھال باندر نے چا سنائیاں
نظامے پھڑی چھوی، ہتھ جتکال دی
گورے دے موڈھے توں ڈھیاں لاسیاں
نظام پھڑ کے چھوی، پستول
اوتھوں نکلیا دانگ ہوا سیاں

After killing a British officer it was no more possible for Nizam to return to his native village or to a routine life. The 'crime' he had committed could only led him to the gallows, or the firing squad. He had no other way but to join the outlaws of his own area. He joined the Cheeto-Meeto band of district Ferozepur. Chait Singh and Milkeet Singh were active supporters of the Babbar Akali Tehrik which clearly showed that they were labelled as dacoits and they were declared proclaimed offenders. However, they had their own political direction. Nizam was welcomed by the group which still used old arms like swords and spears and Lohar was a master craftsman at these. The second point was that only those who were declared absconders were accepted by such gangs which comprised usually of people who had reached a point of no return.

Before Nizam and Cheeto and Meeto there was another big name in the underworld. He was Jeevana Mor, about him a folk song says:

جیونے ماریا زیرے وچ ڈاکہ
 تے مہراں دی چھٹ لدئی
 اوبے بے بے
 جیونے موڑنے دوتماں وڈیاں
 پنڈال چوں غریبی نس گئی
 اوبے بے بے

Jeevana Mor was son of a poor Sikh farmer heavily in debt. The Hindu money-lender used through courts of law to confiscate his crops when they were ripe. Jeevana's father and his family had to face this humiliation and injustice twice a year. This enraged the young Jeevana who one day killed the money-lender and burnt his ledgers and other papers. He thus fortified his right to live a normal life. He was a murderer who deserved nothing but the hangman's noose. The only other option was to head for jungles where the outlaw groups were hiding. Jeevana joined them in Ferozepur district. His next target was the judge who used to issue decrees in favour of the money-lender against Jeevana's father and other farmers. He killed him without remorse.

Jeevana Mor made his hideout in a jungle of tehsil Zeera in Ferozepur. He had traditional arms and a black young camel known as 'Bagari Bota.'

After killing the money-lender and the judge, the first dacoity he committed was near Dharam Kot. He waylaid the wedding party of a rich family, the Nehrus of Dharam Kot. This was a known family of money-lenders. Jeevana deprived them not only of their most costly jewellery and other belongings he also ordered the male members to put down their headgears -- turbans, caps and all. As the folk song suggests, Jeevana asked those in the wedding party to stop charging an unlimited rate of interest on

loans. They should no more insult and rob the poor. That is why he had not only robbed them but also insulted them. He warned them that they should burn their *behi khatas* (ledgers and account books) otherwise a terrible doom awaited them. He did not hurt them and allowed to return to their village.

Jeevana put almost all the jewellery on his single companion, Bagari Bota, and went to a nearby village Talwandi in which the untouchable used to live. He gave them the cash and clothes he had looted:

جیونے دتے مہراں دے چھٹے تے چارپاں دے ہار بن گئے
He showered the money on poor villagers.

The Chamar women bought necklaces.

He successfully continued his Robin Hood career for some time. He was a much sought after criminal of the area. During this period political activities in that area also picked up. The Babbar Akali men were active. Many zaildars, lamberdars and mahants were killed. He found too much police around and, therefore, left the place and went to village Karyanwala in Nikodar tehsil in Jullundhar district and took refuge in the haveli of Ram Singh Kamboh.

In Taran Taaran, when he was coming after a successful operation against a money-lender he felt that his camel was very tired. He saw an old woman with a pot on her head. He stopped her and asked her to hand over whatever she had. It was five seers of butter which he immediately put in the mouth of his camel. He found small frocks in the woman's bundle. He inquired where she was going. She was going to her daughter who had given birth to a child and this butter and clothes were for her and her baby. This was the traditional '*kbichri*'.

Jeevana Mor was sorry for that. He apologised to her. Gave her two hundred rupees for the mother and another fifty for the baby. He offered the woman a ride on his camel to village Boyanwala where she had to go. The puzzled Boyanwala villagers saw a young camel, wearing

costly jewellery, at the village square. He dropped the old lady and returned to his abode.

Bhan Singh was made controller of the Zeera Tehsil while Jeevana Mor with Rahmat Khan of village Sayana in district Hoshiarpur, had made Pritam Singh and Kirtar Singh Dhillon his close associates. They looted the money-lenders and other rich people. They distributed the booty among the poor. They also gave financial support to the Akali Dal. It is said that they had contributed thousands of rupees to the construction of famous Gurdawara Anandpur Saheb.

اور انہوں نے لوٹنے والے لوگوں کو سزا دی

اور انہوں نے لوٹنے والے لوگوں کو سزا دی

اور انہوں نے لوٹنے والے لوگوں کو سزا دی

اور انہوں نے لوٹنے والے لوگوں کو سزا دی

Whatever they looted they distributed it among the poor of the area. The police was after them. It was again and again strengthened. Jeevana had gone to Banana Devi in the Himalayan range where he lived as a sadhu. One day, the police arrested him and brought him to police station Santokh Garh. He was kept in the lock-up. Meanwhile, his comrade Rahmat Khan and others attacked the police station with country-made bombs. The attack was so severe that many policemen died on the spot. The building was destroyed, the injured Jeevana Mor also died when the roof of his cell collapsed.-

اپنے جیونا موڑا اے لاڑا

پایا سوو خوراں نوں پواڑا

جدھی چھوی بن گئی اے کوہاڑا

ایہدا باسا بیٹروچ نی

Rahmat Khan, Pritam Singh and Kirtar Singh shifted to Gurdaspur district.

Nizam, the blacksmith, joined Cheeto Meeto who were hiding in a jungle on the banks of the Sutlej in Ferozepur district. They were joined by Nadiri Bhatti, Jabroo, Sunder, Tehla and many others. They were together for almost ten years. Then Lohar and his friends shifted to the Bingotha jungle. Earlier, a devastating plague had taken a heavy toll and many young men died. Anyhow after shifting to Lahore district he had Nadiri Bhatti, Prema Sansi of Badhoke and Lachhman Singh of Jabha (Kasur), Jabroo Nai of Jahman (Lahore), Ghumma and Deeva of Qan (Kasur), Chiragh Machhi of Sureej (Kasur), Sunder and Nathoo Mehra. Here again they renewed their pledge to loot and plunder only the money-lenders, supporters of the Government and face the Establishment squarely. Whatever they would get the larger portion of it would be distributed among the poor and the destitute. This is how the reiteration was versified by a local bard:

لوہار مار لکیر حدیث دی
 ایہتوں آؤنا ٹپ جوانا
 جبر و دھرمے پیر سنبھال کے
 مگروں دھرکاں ماریاں دوہاں ماناں
 چرانغا ماچھی آہندا اے سُن لوہارا
 اسیں جس وقت دے ہوئے تے تجھے، لگے مارن ڈاکے
 تلبیاں نول مہندی خون دی
 بینی بٹھ لیا اے موت دا گانا

Jabroo Nai or hairdresser belonged to village Jahman situated on the outskirts of the Lahore cantonment. Village hairdressers also used to serve as match-makers. Jabroo

had gone to another village on a match-making assignment. In his absence, a young Sikh landlord tried to molest Jabroo's young wife. Though the miscreant could not succeed, he left reason enough behind on which anyone could take the law in his own hands. In those days, these areas were dominated by Sikh landlords who had made their fortunes during the Sikh period. Therefore, for a menial like Jabroo it was difficult to face the landlord.

On his return, Jabroo was told what the landlord's son had tried to do. Because almost the whole village was witness to the incident, the elder brother of the culprit and his wife came to Jabroo and apologised on behalf of the absconder.

گنڈھیں دے کے ٹوریا جاہمنیا جبرو گھر دانائی
 ماڑی کیتی جاہمنیا، گھر سُد کے نائن دی رنگ چالاہی
 پائی جُتی، گیا سوہلاں نوں
 آہندا اے دس نظامیا
 ماڑیاں دی واہ نہ کائی

Jabroo listened to his wife. He also listened to the culprit's brother but did not reply. He made no commitment except that as per custom he gave a 'jora' (dress) to the Sikh lady who had come with her husband to apologise. After that he went straight to Nizam Lohar.

رب انھاں دے قدرت نال متھے جوڑ دتے
 جیویں مل پئے سکے بھائی
 نظام لوہار اے سوہلاں دا
 جبرو جاہمن دانائی

Jabroo put the matter before Nizam and sought his help. Should he accept the apology or should he not? If

not, what should he do? Nizam saw that Jabroo was injured and insulted by a landlord and landlords considered their workers as their slaves, who thought they were at liberty to rape women of working class at will and no one had the right to object. It was not for the serf to seek justice. Nizam was also injured and insulted in the same way. He himself had killed a British officer, deserted the army, taken refuge in the jungle and lived the life of an outlaw.

If Jabroo and his wife had been in a state of mind where compromise was possible, Nizam might have asked Jabroo to go back and accept the landlord's apology. Even the most feared outlaws secretly cherish the desire for a settled life which, unfortunately, is not possible.

جوان سوتے جھٹ پھیرے جاوڑے
 جٹ دی لئی اے کر دچ صفائی
 نظام نائین نوں آہندا اے
 بانہہ سربانے رکھ کے سوں رہ
 تینوں ہن کوئی چھڑے گا نہیں

Both Nizam, Jabroo and their other comrades raided the Jahman village late at night.

They murdered the accused zamindar.

Then they went to the wife of Jabroo.

They asked her to have a good sleep

No one would now dare to cast dirty looks on you.

Now Jabroo also joined Nizam's gang and shifted to Bingotha. The next operation of the group was in village Rukanpur of Kasur. The money-lending family here had "legally" plundered hundred of poor farmers. The police, revenue officials and the courts were all on its side. The family's area of operation was extended upto Ghawindi (now the last town on the Indo-Pakistan border in Lahore district). The poet says:

گھونڈی دے شاہواں نوں نکر لوہار دی
 پہرہ رکھدے نت کھلہاری
 لوہار لیہندا گھوڑا
 توڑ گیا رکن پورے نوں
 اوتھے آواز پاہرداں نوں مارے
 اوہناں نوں آہندا پھڑ لوو واگ میرے گھوڑے دی
 لوہار اتریا کوٹھے توں
 گھڑی دے وچ پیٹی دڈھ اتاری
 آہندا بہیاں لوو چیک کراڑ دیاں
 وچ رڑے دے چلیا جے ساڑی

The Shahs (money-lenders) of the area were afraid of Nizam Lohar. They had made invincible security arrangements. Nizam with his colleagues went up to Rukanpur. He called the men who were on guard duty for the money-lender. He asked them to hold his horse's reins. He went inside. Opened the safe and asked his men that all the account books should be collected. These books would be burnt.

Nizam's operation was successful. After burning the account books, they safely returned to the base. The wealth from money-lender's house was distributed among the poor people of the Majha and Sandal Bar areas in which this group was operating.

منصب دیکھ لوہار دا
 رُکھ جنگلاں دے کھڑے سین لوائی
 اٹھاراں جوان نال لوہار دے
 دُتے بھٹی وانگر واہندا دکھری فوج بنائی

The Lohar is a much honoured man
 Even the trees pay respect to him
 He has a group of eighteen warriors
 And like Dullah Bhatti he is also a rebel

(Dullah Bhatti, a rebel of Akbar's time, has been mentioned many times, critically at times but with due respect at others.)

In 'Chatthian di Var' Peer Mohammad also refers to Dullah Bhatti. The pro-Sikh population of the former Chattha's areas used to lodge complaints against the guerrillas of Ghulam Mohammad Chattha. They dubbed the Chattha as Dullah Bhatti:

تے وانگوں دے بھٹے بریاں چائیاں پر کتھے اکبر بادشاہ جس پھیر موڑائیاں

Nizam and his group were dare devils. But they tried their utmost to avoid police and its agents. They always remained in search of others who could join them. Jabroo Nai's proposal was that if Kapoor Singh of village Mudke was roped in, the group would be in a better position to raid money-lenders and *mukhbars* (informers). Kapoor Singh was also a known dacoit.

انگے لگ کپوریا توں سوتہا ایں ساندل بار دا
 چھڈ دے کم تگاوے اتھوہ کریں سمھتیار دا
 اوہ آہندا میں کل دا اڈیکان تہاڈے ساتھ نوں
 میں پھبیا واہندا ہاں پر پرار دا

When Nizam's group was active in Kasur sub-division the police was also looking for him. Many spies were deployed to unearth him. Zaildars, lambardars and other "respected" citizens were given arms. All the members of the Nizam group were declared proclaimed offenders. Among the spies one was Sigri Wattoo. He had another poor relative, Bahli Wattoo. The Nizam group was also

conscious of this fact and no one within reach was spared. Bahli Wattoo was a poor man but in the hope that he might get a big cash prize if he could help police trace the outlawed group or any of its members. Therefore, he accompanied his relative Sigri Wattoo on spying missions off and on.

Nathoo Mehra and Ghaseeta Chohra of Nizam's group were told that Bahli was also after them. One day, they raided Bahli's house and took away some jewellery and cloths which were to be given as dowry to his daughter who was to be married soon.

Bahli was shocked. He went to some respectable citizens of the area who were somehow in touch with Nizam. One of them was Nathoo Khan Bhatti. Bhatti approached Nizam and narrated what his men had done with Bahli Wattoo. His daughter had been deprived of her dowry.

Bahli was not hopeful. But one day an armed group stopped in his courtyard. Nizam Lohar came down from his horse, apologised to Bahli Wattoo and invited him and his family to lunch.

The next day, Bahli and her wife went to Nizam's lunch. Nizam exchanged his *pagri* with Bahli. He was given what was his and apart from that a handsome amount in cash was also given for the marriage of his daughter.

One of Nizam's friends Deeva Singh Man went to attend a marriage in his maternal village. Kaseer Sing or Kaiser Singh of village Bhichoke informed the police and Man was arrested when he was going back to his destination. The Nizam group was planning how to get Deeva Singh Man released. In the meanwhile, Chiragh Machhi and Jabroo Nai were deputed to kill the informer Kaseer Singh.

چراغ ماچھی لیندا اول کسیر سنگھ نول
بچھدا کدھر گئے او تیرے یار سپاہی

توں قید کر آیا دیوا سنگھ مان نوں
 تے پنجاہ روپے انعام پایا ای
 تیسے اُتے پتھے ہاں میں تے جسرو
 جنھاں ہیں دشمن دا گویا ای
 وجی ڈانگ شوکیندی
 کسیر سنگھ ڈھے پیا ای
 جسرو پھر گنڈاسا دوالے ہو گیا
 بوٹی بوٹی کر چھڈیا ای

Jabroo and Chiragh had killed the informer who got a fifty-rupee reward from the Government but Man was in jail and his release had to be secured.

Nizam had close relations with impermissible political groups active in the Punjab including Babbar Akali. Modern arms and ammunitions were procured. The terrorists from other districts of the Punjab also arrived and the Kasur Jail was stormed suddenly. The jail staff and police on duty were no match for Nizam and his men. Jail-break was a child's play after the police had run away for dear life. A wall was also broken and most of the prisoners fled, Deeva Singh Man was naturally among them. After that:

چوداں جوان کیتے اشتہاری
 اوہناں جیل خانہ لیا بھن سرکار دا
 گھماں مان، دیوا مان، لچھو، ددھاوا
 سو بھا، نادری بھٹی
 نہیں کوئی شک گھمیاں دا
 ایہناں دے نال چراغا ماچھی اے

ادہ کل کوٹ قندھار دا
 ایہناں دے نال جبر و نائی اے
 ادہ سچا ہتھاں دا
 دھن واہ واہ ہتھیار دا
 کل توں سرواہ نظام لوہار دا
 انگریز دیاں کنبن کوٹھیاں
 ضلعیاں نوں خوف لوہار دا

All of them were again declared proclaimed offenders and handsome cash awards offered for information leading to their arrest. More police was sent to the area. Many feudals were appointed honorary magistrates. Informers and accomplices were given with cash awards and large tracts of crown land.

The Kasur jail incident recalls to memory another assault on a prison under the command of Ahmad Khan Kharl. It was Gogera jail and the year was 1857.

نتھو پر د کے ، مٹھو بے رجو کے ، سردارے بھوجوانے تے چاوے دٹو
 چونہ جیلاں ددھن دی چا صلاح بنائی
 اوہناں لوہار تے دتا گھل سینہا ، کوہاڑی جھب بنوائی
 چاوا اٹھیا اوہ تہا کاں تے کھلا گھت کنائی
 نظام دین دروغہ دھردڑ گیا ، کولوں مٹھی گئے کر شپاہی

The war of independence started in the Punjab when the fall of the Mughals in Delhi was almost complete and the situation was firmly under British control. In Sahiwal, it started from the district jail Gogera from where Kharl got the best manpower.

After the Kasur jail operation, the administration was put on alert in Lahore, Ferozpur and Amritsar districts. Therefore, the best thing for the group to do was to lie low for a while. Nadiri Bhatti told the gang that some of his colleagues had been arrested, sentenced and imprisoned in Bikaner. It was time they moved there and secured their release.

Meanwhile Nizam Iohar attacked another police station from where he picked up police uniforms. As the poet says:

اودھراک سچھی چوری کیتی آہی
 ساری وردی انگریزاں دی لکائی
 آپوں بنیا تھا نیندر
 چڑھ کے لیندا حوالدار حسب روٹائی
 ہورناں نوں دیندا پیٹیاں
 لکھدا ناں سپاہی

The gang put on police uniforms and proceeded to Bikaner. Nizam crossed the Sutlej from Sulemanki at the head of his band of daredevils to Bikaner through Bahawalnagar. Whatever they planned and how they planned and executed it met with complete success. Nizam lost Ghumma Singh Man in an encounter with the Suba (the bodyguard of the Maharaja of Bikaner). The Suba was killed by Jabroo. They broke jail and freed their friends.

نظام جا جیل دی کنڈی کھڑ کائی
 کڈھے عمر قیدی
 اللہ اینہاں دی آس سچائی
 پنج لہریاں رسالے دیاں گھوڑیاں
 دو اٹھ باگرٹی لہے
 رہندی چاندی وچ گلبیاں دے کٹائی

Whatever they brought from Bikaner was distributed among the poor, needy and the handicapped. Jabroo dug a well in Jahman and Nizam constructed a serae in his village Sohal which was intact till 1947.

Many farmers including Malangi of Kasur and Tora Khan of district Attock were forced to become Robin Hoods of their areas. Malangi Faqir was born in village Lakho of district Kasur. His father had a tract of land measuring about 12 acres. He died six months after Malangi's birth and after that the land was forcibly occupied by another chaudhry of the village. The widow was left helpless. This helplessness forced her to marry a Sikh farmer. Malangi had a Sikh half-brother Saudagar Singh. Both were well-built.

In the meantime, there was the Gurdawara Movement. The Sikhs were out to get gurdawaras vacated by Hindu Mahants who were serving as custodians of the Sikh religious institutions. There was vested economic interest but the fight was given a religious colour. The Mahants hired Sikhs who were against the Akalis. They were given arms so that they could defend the institution against the invading Akalis. Malangi and his Sikh half-brother Saudagar Singh were given arms and deputed to some gurdawaras. No doubt, they served as mercenaries.

Anyhow, Malangi and his family were living peacefully. He fell in love with a girl of a Kalal family. Perhaps their marriage in ordinary circumstances was not possible. Therefore, one day the girl came down to Malangi.

Malangi was no more a meek boy. He was young, handsome, and courageous. After the marriage his economic needs led him to get back the land his father had left. He asked the illegal occupant to vacate it which he refused. Malangi and his brother Saudagar made it known in the village that they would plough their land the next morning and if anybody had any claim to it, he should come to challenge them. The next day, the land was resumed peacefully. No one opposed the move because

everyone knew that Malangi was the legal owner of that land and because Malangi and Saudagar had firearms and many friends who could help them if need be.

The chaudhris nevertheless felt insulted. They had their own style of intrigues. They, through their women, spread the rumour that Malangi was living with a woman out of wedlock against all the religious and ethical norms. These women asked the 'machhin' that if she baked the bread of Malangi's woman, they would boycott her. The machhin was at her wit's end. When Malangi's woman went to her, she refused to bake her bread and told her what the wives of the village elders had conveyed to her. Malangi's woman came back and told Malangi what had happened at the tandoor (bakig oven).

ماچھیاں داجا کے اوتے تندور ڈھاؤندا	اٹھ کے سی چھیتی نال جتی پاؤندا
پھڑ لو فقیرنوں تے مار گواؤ جان	کھٹے ہو گئے چودھری تے ڈھول ماریا آن
چھڈ کے مدان کتے نہیں بھجن	سوڑے نوہنہ سی مدان چھڈنا
چھیا سی ڈانگال ڈاکدار نے سی دسیاں	پنڈے اوہے اتے ڈانگال بوہت دسیاں

Malangi went to the tandoor and demolished it. That made the chaudhris very angry. Not they but their young men attacked Malangi and his brother. Malangi gave them a tough fight but they were far too many. They gave him a good thrashing. He was badly injured. They left him unconscious and lying in a pool of blood. Malangi's relatives carried him to hospital where he remained under treatment.

Many criminal cases had been registered against him by the chaudhris and the Akalis. Therefore, the police was also put on duty in the hospital. Anyhow after feeling little bit better he fled from the hospital.

What her mother asked him to do was:

لاکھو والے چودھری نوں وڈھڑٹ دے

جگ وچ بچیا سارے ٹٹ دے

Kill the chaudhri of Lakho

Surprise the world with your attack.

Malangi was joined by his brother Saudagar, Juma, a teli of Raja Jang and Odhu Bahman of Jamsheer.

The respectables of the village Lakho were coaxing the police to declare Malangi and his gang proclaimed offenders which the Government did. By that time this gang had already broken in the houses of landlords, money-lenders and government touts, agents and the so-called gentry created by the British rulers.

Sardar Uttam Singh was a big landlord of village Neelan. He used to play host of visiting deputy commissioners, magistrates and superintendents of police. Therefore, he was an eye sore for Malangi who now was known as outlaw of the area. Malangi was a powerful character of the underworld but with a difference. His declared enemies were the landlords, money-lenders, police and its agents. He was deadly against them and therefore a natural ally of the village workers known as 'kammis' and landless peasants. Malangi and his friends made this Uttam Singh their target and created a terror among all the informers, so-called respectables, money-lenders, landlords and friends of the Government. That made him popular among the poor kammis.

Malangi was known as dacoit. Therefore, his political or social role had never been evaluated by historians sociologists and politicians. Malangi's line of action was impermissible but his influence on the landlord-tenant-workers relationship could not be denied. If a politician supports and works for securing the rights of these downtrodden people, he becomes a hero. He is made hero by the parties who believe in permissible politics. But because dacoits who are socially and economically very conscious take recourse to impermissible politics their

role, which disturbs the status quo, is never appreciated.

Nizam Lohar, Jabroo Nai and Malangi Faqir are known as dacoits and they will continue to be known as such because they do not belong to any "respectable family". They are poor village workers, the slaves of the land holding families, money-lenders, and their masters in police, revenue and other departments. They might not have been conscious enemies of the social set up but what they did and the direction in which they moved proved that they were against the status quo. They revolted against the high-handedness of the ruling classes. They had no respect for established values. They may be called misfits. But what made them misfits? The injustice meted out to the lower rungs of society to which they belonged. To revolt against any type of injustice is politics purer than the politics of the multi-class political parties. So far the lowest class is bound to make a Lohar, a Nai and a farmer their hero. This is a fact and no one from the permissible side can deny it. 1989

THE QUAID, PUNJABI POETS AND BASIC RIGHTS

IT was the 28th of January, 1947. The place was the Central Jail in Ferozepur (E.Punjab). The audience had gathered to listen to a newly composed "*Mahiya*" and consisted of the Muslim Leaguers, who had courted arrest against the imposition of Section 144 by the Unionist-Congress-Akali Coalition Government headed by Sir Khizr Hayat Tiwana

ایہ نعرہ گھر گھر اے
ہندی مسلماناں دا قائد اعظم لیڈر اے

پاکستان لئی ساہ ساڈے
جیلاں انگریز دیاں ڈک سکن نہ راہ ساڈے

Sehrai Gurdaspuri composed these lines in the jail. But outside the jails many Punjabi poets composed many popular poems about the demand of the Muslim League and in praise of the Quaid.

Most of the Punjabi poets belonged to the working classes. They had deep sympathies first with the Congress and then with the Majlis-i-Ahrar which had launched a vigorous movement against the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. When the Muslim League took a clear stand in the shape of the Lahore Resolution most of these poets shifted their loyalties and extended their full support to

the Pakistan movement. Prominent among them were Malik Lal Din Qaiser, Ustad Karam Amritsari, Ustad Ishq Lehr, Zaheer Niazbegi, Aseer Sohlvi, Fazal Karim Mujahid Jhelumi, and Mohammad Din Mir.

Only spoken

These poets, along with many other Punjabi poets, were in the forefront of the movement. But unfortunately, their's was a spoken medium. They recited their poems mostly at the Muslim League's meetings. There was no Punjabi periodical. Therefore, most of the poems written in those days remained unpublished and have since been lost. Even after the achievement of independence neither the League Government nor the poets themselves made any effort to put all that poetry on record.

There can be only two reasons for that. First, the poets who participated in the movement were disenchanted due to the unprecedented bloodshed in the Punjab which embarrassed them and shattered their dreams. Second, the Muslim League, after coming into power tried to shunt out its sincere and poor elements including these poets. The League by its make-up and temperament was not in favour of regional language and literature and therefore, the contribution of the Punjabi poets to the freedom movement was not considered worth preservation. Thus, we have to a large extent lost those poems which had convinced the rural masses of the Punjab to ditch their old Unionist masters and rally under the banner of Pakistan.

Anyhow, whatever little is left of the poetry of those days needs the attention of those who are evaluating the contributions of the different regions and languages to the Pakistan movement.

As a lawyer

To the Punjabi poets, the Quaid-i-Azam became an emotional symbol at a later stage. In the beginning he was

just a member of the Central Legislative Assembly or Council who used to plead the cause of Muslims. He had no direct appeal for the masses or poets and other men of letters. There was also a crisis of credibility. The Congress and Ahrar had unleashed an unprecedented propaganda campaign against M.A.Jinnah and labelled him as a collaborator of foreign rulers responsible for creating hurdles in the achievement of freedom for India, because of his demand for a separate homeland.

But when the hard facts of economic interest came to the surface the Punjabi poets sensed that the Muslim League under the leadership of the Quaid-i-Azam had found the right direction. Fazal Karim Mujahid Jhelumi said:

✓ ۹۶

ہتھ ہندو سبھ تجارتاں کھرباں تے قلم چلان
 منڈیاں وچ ہندو آڑھتی اتے پانڈی مسلمان
 دے دھیلی لکھن جوٹیاں در سود دے چکر لان
 افسر ہندو انگریز سکھ — چپڑاسی مسلمان
 دھنپاں پالے بھل مصیبتاں ہل واہ واہ مرے کسان
 ہووے دیہلا گاہ مروڑ کے چک لالے گھر لے جان

This, most probably, is the true picture of the economic realities of the Punjab of the time. The proceedings of the Punjab Assembly, particularly the question hours, fully confirm the substance to this poetic narration. Later on, the same poet in the company of Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Feroze Khan Noon and other League leaders, addressed the rallies of the Muslims.

Now, the Quaid-i-Azam who was once just a great Muslim lawyer in the eyes of Punjab poets, became a leader of the whole Muslim community of the sub-continent. One of them said:

کوئی کہے سر شفیق نول کر یسے ہے اوہ بہت سیانا
 بعضے کہن اقبال وے ہن چلو چلیے سارے
 پڑ محمد علی جناح دی بوہتیاں صفت سنائی

When the need to defend IIm-ud-Din Shaheed in the Lahore High Court arose, the prominent Muslims of Lahore considered three names: Sir Shafi, Sir Mohammad Iqbal and M.A.Jinnah. They chose Jinnah.

Poet Fazal Karim Sindhoo was very realistic in his 7,000-lines long poem about IIm-ud-Din Shaheed and about the Quaid-i-Azam. He became a much respected leader within a few years.

ایہہ لغرہ گھر گھر اے
 ہندی مسلماناں دا قائد اعظم لیڈر اے

People together

What Mohammad Ali Jinnah did was that he brought the big landlords and the common people close to each other on a single platform. That, in the eyes of the Muslim Punjabi poets, was a big change in the Unionist-ruled Punjab. It over-awed the Punjabi poet who belonged to the lower-middle or the working classes. The changing scenes could not go unnoticed.

قائد اعظم کرم کمائے نکے وڈے اک بنائے
 پاک چین دے بھاگ جگائے.....
 رہن سدا بہاراں مسلم لیگ دیاں
 کھڑیاں نیں گلزاراں مسلم لیگ دیاں

(Daim Iqbal Daim, 1945,)

Why was Mohammad Ali Jinnah rated so high by the Punjabi poets? He was neither a Punjabi nor a Nawab or Sir or Khan Bahadur. He was not a great speaker as Bahadur Yar Jang or Maulana Zafar Ali Khan were. He was not a great writer as Iqbal or Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were. He was not a great religious authority as Maulana Husain Ahmad Madni or Shabbir Ahmad Usmani were.

There must be some other reasons which made him a hero of a large number of Punjabi poets. Another Punjabi poet of Mochi Gate, Lahore, Agha Imdad Ali Khan Ghalib offers an answer:

گاندھی ہنر و پیشہ کی کم نظری مسلمانان تائیں مسلمان کر گئی
میں تان بڑا مشکور ہاں کانگریس و اجدھی تنگ نظری امیر سامان کر گئی

The narrow outlook of the Congress and its three leaders' role in the political crisis of the subcontinent can never be forgotten.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah had agreed to the Zonal scheme. He was willing to keep the Muslim majority provinces and those of Hindu majority provinces under one federal centre for the next ten years. Jinnah would not have been there if this scheme had been accepted by the Congress leaders. The Congress had also agreed to that. But all of a sudden Pandit Nehru backed out and announced that after the exit of the foreign masters only the majority decision would prevail.

The Hindu majority had, in the eyes of the Muslims, not done justice to the Muslim minority, when it was in the saddle. This was the general feeling.

Basic rights

The two reports (Motilal Nehru Report and Pirpur Report) raised barriers between the Hindu and the Muslim communities. A final blow was dealt when the Congress scuttled the zonal plan.

When all these options were closed the Muslim Punjabi poets had no option but to support the Quaid-i-Azam and Pakistan. Chiragh Din Joneka said:

Quaid-i-Azam would have Pakistan soon.
Everybody will get freedom and peace.
There will be no injustice with anybody.
People will get their basic rights.

ملے گا سبھ نوں امن آزادی نہیں کر سکنی کسے اپادھی
حق حقوق ملن بنیادی خوشیاں ملک مناوے گا
کوئی دن پا کے قائد اعظم پاکستان بناوے گا
حق حقوق ملن بنیادی خوشیاں ملک مناوے گا

In no time he (Quaid-i-Azam) had his Pakistan. But when will come the day when "*Haq haqooq milan / buniadi kbushian mulk manaway ga?*" 1985

BARANMANH -- A FORM OF PUNJABI POETRY

WE have three different calendar years, e.g., Hijri, the Islamic calendar; Christian, which was introduced by our foreign masters; and Bikrami, which was introduced by Raja Bikramjeet. Although we give more respect to the Hijri calendar, for all practical purposes, including the announcement of "restoration of democracy", we choose the Christian calendar. This may be called the calendar of our bureaucracy, while the Hijri may be named as the calendar of the clergy. The third calendar, i.e., the Bikrami, is the one our rural (agrarian) population follows. They have to, because of their total dependence on agriculture, and its direct relationship with the changing seasons. For them Basakh has much more direct meaning than April-May or Jamadiul Sani. Basakh or Vasakh is the month when the crop sown in October-November ripens. They come to know what the return on six months' labour is going to be and in this month they reap the harvest.

Relevance to culture

The same is the case with the Punjabi poetry where the form of a longish poem is known as Baran Mah or Manh (twelve months). These "Baran Mah" are named after Bikrami months. For the Punjabi rural masses nothing in particular is associated with the Christian or Muslim calendars. For the Punjabi Muslims only two months -- Muharram and Ramazan -- have some meaning. In Muharram, Imam Husain was martyred and we recall that

great tragedy because the people have had to confront Yazids throughout history. Ramazan is a month in which our daily time-table is totally changed because of the fast. Both Muharram and Ramazan are months of rituals, therefore they matter. The remaining ten months have no particular significance for us. March and August of the Christian year are associated with the Lahore Resolution of 1940 and independence in 1947; therefore, they have some emotional appeal for the people at large. The remaining ten months of the Christian calendar are not very relevant to our cultural pattern.

Punjabi poets' calendar year starts with Chaiter (March-April) and ends with Phagan (February-March). Chaiter comes in the middle of spring and every poet is all praise for it. Wilayat Shah (Multan) says:

آیا مہینہ چیترا دا گل پھل ڈکھاوَن دھج بلبیل بھنورا گل باس گھنن خوشیاں کرنی رَج رَج
 پئی ہے بھلیاں کوس پالنی ہن گل میاں دی رَج ہک جگ وگاگن میں پھراں میڈے اوگن دیکھ نہ بھج

Spring has come with Chaiter, flowers adorn the earth. Nightingale and dark hummig bee enjoy the fragrance. Those who have noble blood, must honour their commitments in the spring. Please ignore my weaknesses. and meet me in these spring days.

Variety of subjects

This is from a Baran Mah which is categorised as a poem of separation. No doubt separation is the most common subject among the writers of Baran Mah. But this form has been successfully tried for all the subjects under the sky. It may be the tragedy of Karbala (Milkhi Ram and others), massacre of Sikh and Hindu custodians of Gurdawaras, ejection of a peasant, strike of mill workers, or romantic tales of the Punjab and Sindh, like Heer Ranjha and Sassi Punnu.

According to the research made by Mr. Iqbal Qaiser, about 500 Punjabi poets have written Baran Mahs. The list includes the most respected names of Punjabi literatures like Baba Nanak and other Sikh religious chiefs including Guru Arjan and Guru Amar Das, Waris Shah, Bullhe Shah, Shah Murad, Fard Faqir, Pir Nek Alam, Hafiz Barkhurdar, Maulvi Abdus Sattar, Ghulam Rasool, Ali Haider, Baba Wajeed, Hashem Shah, Milkhi Ram, Fazal Shah, Mian Hidayat Ullah, Mohammad Boota, Amrita Pritam, Gudaz, Afzal Pervaiz and Baqi Siddiqui.

These five hundred or so Baran Mahs can be divided into many subjects.

1. Love stories or romantic tales of the Punjab and Sindh, including Heer Ranjha, Sohni Mahinwal, Sassi Punnu, etc.,

2. Tributes to religious personalities like Prophet Mohammad, Imam Husain, Abdul Qadir Jeelani, Pir Ali Haider, Baba Nanak, Sri Krishan Maharaj, Puran Bhagat.

3. Political personalities and events. Mahatama Gandhi, Jallianwala Bagh (with special reference to Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew), Sikh-Hindu clash in Gurdawaras.

But the main theme is love and separation, and life and death.

Baran Mah is basically the yearning of a lover (who is generally a woman). It is a lover's address to the beloved who have been separated. It is the song of a wife whose husband has gone to far off lands to earn his livelihood. But that is not all. A folk Baran Mah is of a young girl married to a child who knows nothing about matrimonial life. Therefore, the young girl is full of complaints against her mother and Lord Almighty.

وساکھ پچی دا کھ نی ماں! پھلاں تے لالی آئی
 فی ماں! پھر جو بن دی دھپ میرے سرتے آئی
 تڈھ بن رہا میرا بھور نمانا
 فی ماں! تڈھا کد ہو سی جوان

Visakh has come, raisins are now ripe.

O mother my youth is at its zenith.

O God only You know how lonely I am.

O mother when will my child bridegroom grow into manhood.

The Basant of Manh or Magh, Basakhi Festival of Basakh, rains of Sawan, Devali of Katak, Lohri festival of Maghar and Holi festival of Phagan -- they are hallmarks of merry-making in a year but the girl married to a child could not enjoy these seasonal festivals.

The wife whose husband is away in the service of a raja is also sorrowful and wishes he had been with her. For her every month has a different colour and sense and, therefore, a different type of sense of frustration.

A wife beseeches her husband not to go to duty because every month has its own charm, which can only be enjoyed if he keeps her company. After hearing the narration of Baran Mah from his wife he says:

بیٹے فی بیٹے تیسے باراں مہینے

سانوں مسافراں نوں گوری جاوون وی دے

Your twelve months have passed

Now, my darling, let me, the traveller, go.

But Baran Mah is not limited to a dialogue between husband and wife or lovers. Its scope and canvas is very vast. It covers all the subjects physical as well as spiritual, historical as well as personal.

Against missionaries

In the last century, when the Christian missionaries were aggressively working in the sub-continent and poor people were converted by them, the local Hindus and Muslims firmly resisted these activities. The Punjabi poets joined their brethren and refuted the arguments advanced by the Christian preachers. One such poet Hakeem Sant Ram Acharya Musafir of Gurdaspur said:

عزت پاوے جیہڑا کوئی نال اوہناں دے لٹن تے ہو جاوے
 بیخ سداوے بھانویں چوراچکا ہووے چودھری نام دھراوے
 پکڑا جاوے جو کوئی مخالف ان کے کہہ سچ بات سداوے
 دکھا اٹھاوے خواہ اشراف ہووے اوہ کتنا بس بد معاش کہاوے

Whosoever accepts their religion and joins them in plundering the people, he is given respect. He may be a criminal but he is made a chief of an area. On the other hand, whoever tells truth is imprisoned. He may have blue blood in his veins but he is dubbed a rascal; he is made to suffer.

Hakeem Sant Ram condemned Christian missionaries' working and tactics in 1896. He also disliked the Government patronage to these missionaries. He is no doubt hard on missionaries but very soft on the Government. His predecessors among Baran Mah writers are, however, not very kind to the Government. Perhaps, they had seen the days of 1849 and 1857 when the British might was in full cry. In those days Mian Allah Ditta of Miani (District Shahpur) said:

لگھدے جیہڑا کوئی کہتے اسماں اشارے
 وسدے شہر ویران کیتو نہیں گھر گھر بہ گئے پاہرے
 اگلے حاکم بدل گئیو نہیں، مغز اٹھاں دے بھارے
 دتیا! شہر لٹی گیا دھنگیاں، کون و بنجے سرکارے

We asked the passing Jaith (May-June) what this hell is. It kept quiet. Cities were ransacked. Police were posted at every house. Rulers are changed. New rulers are arrogant. O Ditta! the cities have been plundered. Now what for one should demand justice from the Government.

Events recorded

May-June (Jaith) of 1857 witnessed the people's uprising against the rule of foreigners. Allah Ditta in his Baran Mah summed up what happened in Delhi, and Sialkot, Sahiwal, Jhelum, Rawalpindi and other cities of the Punjab and, even before that, when the Punjabis and the Britishers exchanged swords in Ferozepur, Multan, and Challianwala (Gujrat).

It is not that the Mughal or the Sikh period was very peaceful and just. Atrocities were committed during those periods also. The Sikhs did not spare those Muslims who did not accept their rule. Baran Mahs and other forms of poetry did reflect the high-handedness of the Muslim and Sikh autocratic rules. But the invasion of the Britishers from the East and atrocities committed by them received greater attention from the Punjabis poets. For instance many epic poems (Vars) were written about the battles between the Punjabis and the invading forces of the East India Company. Shah Mohammad's "Jang Hind Punjab" is the finest example, in which he covered five such battles after which the Sikh State disappeared and the Punjab and Frontier were annexed to the British Imperial India.

Lahore saw two battles of succession. One in the Mughal period (1711-1712) when three claimant princes to the throne were wiped out around Lahore fort and river Ravi. The same place witnessed the death of Ranjeet Singh and his three sons and grandsons (1843-46) and hundreds of his knights and all the intrigues which made foreigners' entry in the Punjab very easy. All this happened within a few years.

No young followers

Despite the examples set by some modern poets, like Amrita Pritam, Afzal Pervaiz and Baqi Siddiqui, none of the new and young poets has followed suit. The reason may be

that they have rightly or wrongly associated Baran Mah exclusively with seasonal changes in a year or with religious themes. The alienation of urban intellectuals and men of letters from our rural life and its cultural patterns and increasing use of the Christian calendar have confused the significance of Bikrami months which are adjusted as follows:

Chaiter (March-April), Vasakh (April-May), Jaith (May-June), Harr (June-July), Sawan (July-August), Bhathron (August-September), Assoo (September-October), Katak (October-November). Maghar (November-December). Poh (December-January), Manh (January-February.) Phagan (February-March).

Another aspect of this calendar is that the Punjab, Sindh and Bangladesh had a common heritage of this calendar year. But its significance, viz-a-viz our common agrarian economy and cultural pattern was completely and deliberately ignored. We were made allergic to Vasakhi or Basant, Devali, Lohri and Holi.

This is how a mature form of poetry with great potential passes into oblivion.

Anyhow, Amrita Pritam, Afzal Pervaiz and the late Baqi Siddiqui have used it to mirror the present times, its realities and aspirations. Amrita said:

رکرا وے کنڈیا لیا چڑھیا آج وسا کھ سامراج وے مونہ تے اڈاڈ پیندی رکھ

Vasakh has come; Imperialism is being burnt to ashes

رکرا وے کنڈیا لیا اتوں چڑھیا پوہ حق جنھاں وے اپنے آپے لین گے کھوہ

Poh has arrived; The people are up to snatch their confiscated rights.

Hopeful

Amrita Pritam is all hope for the coming generations. She has a romantic approach in his Baran Mah. Contrary to

that Afzal Pervaiz is more realistic. He is aware of the price which had to be paid by the peasantry when it struggled against the feudal system. It was suffering at the hands of feudals for centuries. It still suffers. He says:

آیا ماہ وساکھ تے ساکھ اٹھی کوئی سکھاں دا نہیں وساہ ماہی
کنکھاں پکیاں، سونا کھلر گیا کتے واڈھیاں نہیں کتے گاہ ماہی
دانے دانے تے مہردی مہر لگی کلے راہکال پلے سواہ ماہی
آپے مہرنے کوٹھیاں بھرنیاں ساڈے اودوں ای حال تباہ ماہی

The month of Vasakh has come, life has become more unreliable.

Wheat crop is ready, gold has covered the field, harvesting and thrashing is on.

But each and every grain of wheat is the property of the feudal lord.

Nothing is left with the peasant cultivators.

The feudal has stocked all the wheat,

We are left with the same old deprivation.

No room is left for the young peasant in the village. He is forced to go out and seek livelihood in cities where a new mode of production has been introduced. The young man, leaving his wife in the village, goes to a city and is employed in a mill. He is no doubt out of the fry pan of the feudal society but has fallen into the fire of capitalism. The mill-owner is another exploiter. His wife says:

پوہ پیاتے پالے نے زور کتا پل پل پیایا آؤندا اے
ہیرے جیہا ماہی دوہاں روٹیاں لئی کھیہ مٹی دچ رلدا جاؤندا اے
تنخواہ فقیر دی گوڈری اے اوہرے نال اوہ وقت ٹپاؤندا اے
آپ کھاوے ماگھر گھلے، یا قرض لہے ایہہ جھورا اوہنوں ترٹاؤندا اے

The month of Poh with severe cold has come.

My handsome husband is doing menial job to make

both ends meet.

But on such meagre salary,

How can he pay the debt, support us: the family or
pass his own time?

He is facing such a difficult situation.

Another letter of man disturbs the wife in the village.
This is the month of Manh when she receives the letter
which carries another bad news. Because of the high-
handedness and greed of the mill-owners the workers have
been forced to strike.

جس زندگی پنڈوں اٹھ نئے اوہراج زمانے دی چال ہوئی

There is no difference between the hardships of rural
and urban life, between a feudal and a mill-owner. The
same conditions which forced him to leave the village are
prevalent in the cities. Life is very hard because of
exploiters who do not hesitate to grab the earnings of the
workers.

Struggle to be joined

The wife is no doubt very disturbed. She has all
sympathies for her man who is struggling against the new
tyrants. But the last month of the year awakens a new spirit
in the wife who determines to join the struggle of her
husband and his toiling colleagues. She declares:

وخت واعدے زہدیاں کٹ یساں، روڑ سٹراں گی، سیال نوں ٹھراں گی میں
پر چہریں دچھنے دے کول جا کے بھیر کٹاں گی نال ای مراں گی میں سے

Come what may I will join my long-separated man.

I will face all the hardship of the city life.

But I will stand by the struggling men till the end.

And that is how the twelve-month circle or a calendar
year of a Punjabi poet comes to an end on a note of hope
in the future. 1986.

PRIVATION AND DEPRIVATION OF PUNJABI LANGUAGE

A young expatriate from Lahore sent a letter to his wife in Punjabi from a Gulf city. It was listened to, and greatly enjoyed, by his wife and small children who knew more spoken Punjabi than written Urdu. But the letter was not in black and white because the qualified accountant cannot write and read the language he speaks at home. This was a new form of letter -- recorded on a cassette in a Gulf town and played in a Lahore home. It was in Punjabi as it should have been. Previously whenever he went on tour within the country, he used to write letters in Urdu to his wife because all literate Punjabis can write only in Urdu or English. Those are the languages they have been taught or are being taught. The Punjabi, their mother tongue, is not considered a fit medium of instruction and is, therefore, still not approved by the Establishment.

But the Punjabi people, most of them illiterate or semi-literate, who have gone to Gulf states send back their recorded letters to their families in the language which they spoke at home. That language was denied access to the corridors of education. They were trained in letter writing but not in their mother tongue. It was, and is, just another (alien) language which was not fully known to their elders, especially women. The artificial skill of letter writing was there. But the words used in these letters were cold and lifeless. Therefore, when another medium was available to them, they used it well and reverted back to the language which was a natural mutual medium of communication for them.

New dimension

This new type of 'letter writing' is a new dimension in the chequered history of the Punjabi language. A spoken language, debarred from our education system, has once again asserted itself. All the necessary and important avenues for the advancement of any language were out of bounds for Punjabi since the fall of the Mughal and Sikh empires. The British imposed a language on the Punjabis in which their native bureaucracy was well-versed for at least a century (1757-1849).

On the eve of the fall of the Sikhs, Persian as an official language and Punjabi as the medium of instruction at the primary level, were replaced by English and Urdu. Persian was retained in newly formed schools at secondary level with Arabic and Hindi. Anyhow in Punjab there was no room left for Muslim Punjabi, that is, Punjabi written in the Persian script. The Sikhs wanted to have their separate identity and, therefore, they declared that Punjabi in Gurmukhi script was to be their religious language and had it introduced in schools, colleges and the university.

With the rising tide of communalism, Muslims of the Punjab identified themselves with Urdu which was a little bit closer to Persian and Punjabi. The Sikhs adopted Punjabi in Gurmukhi script as their religious language while the Punjabi Hindus stood for Hindi or Hindustani in the Devnagari script.

In spite of the fact that Punjabi was the only spoken medium of communication among all the Punjabis, it was disowned by more than 80 per cent Punjabis (Muslims and Hindus) and thus debarred from entering in the education system of the Punjab. Only the Sikhs owned it. But they adopted a script which was not familiar to the Muslims or the Hindus. This has been an abiding tragedy of the Punjabi language and literature.

Major contributions

Another fact is that the major contributions to Punjabi poetry and folk literature were made by the Muslims. The Hindus produced a few stalwarts but from Baba Farid Shakarganj down to Khawaja Farid, the Sikhs stand nowhere. A peculiar aspect of Punjabi literature is that it was mostly produced in West Punjab comprising the Lehnda dialect area while the Sikhs belonged to eastern parts where Majhi and Doabi dialects were in vogue.

Among the major classical poets from East Punjab were Maulvi Ghulam Rasul, Hamed Shah Abbasi and Hashem Shah who later shifted to west Punjab, while west Punjab and other adjacent areas produced Baba Farid (Pakpattan), Shah Husain (Lahore), Damodar and Sultan Bahu (Jhang), Ali Haider (Toba Tek Singh), Waris Shah (Sheikhupura), Baba Bulleh Shah (Kasur), Maulvi Lutf Ali (Bahawalpur) Sachal Sarmast (Kharipur) Hafiz Barkhurdar and Qadir Yar (Gujranwala), Nausha Ganj Bakhsh, Ahmed Yar and Fard Faqir (Gujrat), Khawaja Farid (D.G.Khan), Mian Mohammad Bakhsh (Mirpur, A.K.), Ahmed Ali Saen and Barda Peshawari (NWFP).

Lehnda

All these major poets including three from East Punjab took to Lehnda or western Punjabi as a literary language. The major romantic tales sung by these poets also belong to west Punjab or the west of the sub-continent. They are Heer Ranjha and Mirza Saheban (Jhang), Dhol Shams (Jhelum), Sassi Punnu (Thatta, Sindh) Sohni Mahinwal (Gujrat), Saiful Muluk and Yusuf Zulaikha (Egypt) and Shirin Farhad (Iran).

Among the epic poems are Raja Risalu and Puran Bhagat (Sialkot), Chatthas and Dullah Bhatti (Gujranwala), the invasion of Nadir Shah (Sargodha). Ahmed Khan Kharl (Faisalabad and Sahiwal). Nawab Muzaffar (Multan) Shams

Khan (Poonch) and Jang Hind Punjab (Kasur). Mansoor and Sarmad are two personalities which have been innumerable used in Punjabi poetry and both are Muslims. Then there is Karbala which was a favourite subject of not only Muslim poets but also of the Hindus and Sikhs.

Treasure house

Briefly, it can be said that west Punjab (Pak. Punjab) was the treasure house in Punjabi literature and its Lehnda dialect was accepted as a literary language, while east Punjab (Indian Punjab) was a barren tract which produced nothing. The Sikhs living there worked for the development of Punjabi literature using their own dialects -- Majhi and Doabi -- which pushed aside the Lehnda dialect. Anyhow, major Sikh poets and scholars also belong to west Punjab -- Prof. Mohan Singh and Dr. Mohan Singh (Rawalpindi) and Amrita Pritam (Gujranwala).

This was the position on the eve of partition of the Punjab. Urdu was the medium of expression for all Muslim Punjabi politicians, intellectuals, writers, journalists, and teachers. None of them was prepared to identify himself with the illiterate masses of the Punjab. The teacher was aware of the fact that while teaching even Urdu, his spoken medium was Punjabi, but he dared not declare that Punjabi should be made the medium of instruction at least at primary level. Punjab politicians knew that their followers knew and understood Punjabi but wherever they went to address audiences, they invariably used Urdu and very faulty Urdu at that.

Intellectuals and writers who have made a name for themselves through Urdu ignored the masses of the Punjab and tried to seek a national image. None of them was ready to declass himself linguistically and identify himself with the masses in the Punjab, the Punjabi language and its powerful literature and traditions.

Journalism

So far as journalism is concerned, practical commercial works against Punjabi. Readers are no more familiar with written Punjabi. Therefore, no attempt has ever been made to give newspapers to the Punjabi people in their own language.

But the most important point is that the Punjabis at the helm of the affairs thought that their's was not a provincial status. They were meant to play a national role. Urdu was considered a national language. Therefore, a national role could be played only through Urdu. These powerful Punjabis abandoned their mother tongue and abhorred other regional languages like Bengali, Sindhi, Pushto and Baluchi.

Literary magazines

One may cite many policies and incidents in support of the chargesheet mentioned above but one will suffice. The Government of Pakistan started publishing literary magazines in Urdu, Bengali, Sindhi, Baluchi and Pushto. The Ministry responsible for these journals was dominated by the Punjabi and Urdu-speaking bureaucracy. It conspicuously dropped the idea of Punjabi language magazine. Radio Pakistan used to broadcast news in all regional languages except Punjabi (It does so now). Punjabi language and literature was not considered worthwhile to be included in the CSS exams (this has been done since). Punjabi books were not allowed to be bought for libraries.

These were the contradictions when the pains of partition of the Punjab were given poetic form by Amrita Pritam.

آج اکھاں دارت شاہ نول کتے قبریں وچوں بول
آج بیلے لاشاں وچھیاں اٹھ تک اپنا پنجاب

Today I call upon Waris Shah to come out of his grave and look at his Punjab, where Belas-rendezvous of Heer and Ranjha and Sohni Mahinwal -- are littered with murdered human bodies.

This ignited the imagination of a few young progressive writers (they also were basically Urdu writers) like Ahmad Rahi, Shareef Kunjahi and Afzal Pervaiz. Ahmad Rahi gave tongue to the poor girls who were kidnapped, raped and murdered during the communal frenzy of 1947. Though Ustad Daman, Dr. Faqir, Maula Bakhsh Kushta, and Nauroze (Bahawalpur) were in the field, Rahi excelled them and caught the imagination of the younger generation, though not his senior contemporaries.

A stigma

But again Punjabi was considered a stigma because the rulers on this side of the divide did not want anybody to ventilate his social, moral, material, cultural and spiritual sufferings arising out of partition. Therefore, whoever expressed such view, he was either dubbed 'anti-State' or 'pro-India'. To support Punjabi language and literature was labelled an 'anti-State' act and in 1959, under Ayub's Martial Law, the Punjabi Majlis, a Lahore-based literary organisation was declared a political party and banned. So much so that from 1959 to 1962, no one dared to form a Punjabi literary organisation in Lahore lest it might be declared a political party and its associates earn social as well as economic punishment. In 1962, another group under the banner of the Government-formed Writers Guild was active but within six months, it was disbanded by the then Secretary Information, Mr. Qudrat Ullah Shahab, who happened to be the Secretary General of the Guild. The '*Nawa-i-Waqt*', the Urdu group of the Guild, the Executive

Secretary Mr. Jameeluddin Aali, the champion of Urdu Dr. Syed Abdullah, Urdu writer from Sindh Hasan Hameedi and a protagonist of Seraiki or Multani Riaz Anwar (all members of the Guild's Central Executive) extended a helping hand to the executioner in hanging the Punjabi Group.

Hameed Nizami

The '*Nawa-i-Waqt*', till recently a staunch enemy of the Punjabi language and literature and the masses who dethroned the Punjabi feudals in 1970 elections, had played a strange role at the behest of the ruling elite in different times. Its founder editor, the late Mr. Hameed Nizami, wrote an article in the monthly '*Punjabi*' Lahore, (Nov, 51) in which he vehemently pleaded the cause of the language and urged the authorities to introduce Punjabi as medium of instruction at primary level in the province. Those were the days when the Bengalis were struggling for getting recognition of Bengali as a national language, Sindhis were being linguistically and culturally invaded, and Liaquat Ali Khan as the Urdu-speaking Prime Minister disgraced the Punjab Chief Minister Khan Mamdot who was replaced by Mumtaz Daultana. Hameed Nizami was a staunch supporter of Nawab Mamdot. That contradiction forced Mr. Nizami to support Punjabi against Bengali and Urdu in that particular period. After Liaquat Ali's assassination, Mr Nizami and '*Nawa-i-Waqt*' never supported Punjabi. Rather, they opposed it and this was and is the newspaper's policy. It was in the lifetime of Hameed Nizami that the '*Nawa-i-Waqt*', with the connivance of the Urdu group of the Guild, accused the Punjabi Group of pleading for the Gurmukhi script. The Secretary of the Punjabi Group was accused of having secret relations with Sikh writers who were in the service of the Indian Government, thus conspiring against Pakistan.

The progressive writers movement was in full swing in the late forties and the early fifties. Most of the writers associated with the PWA continued to write in Urdu but they had deep sympathy with those who had lately taken to Punjabi. The Progressive Papers, The Pakistan Times' and Imroze were also sympathetic towards the cause of the promotion of regional literatures. The weekly literary supplement of the 'Imroze' started publishing Punjabi poetry and Urdu articles about Punjabi language and literature. It also devoted a weekly page to Punjabi writings mainly about current affairs. The 'Imroze' is so far the only Urdu newspaper which carries a weekly one page Punjabi literary supplement. It has been doing so since September, 1951

The Punjabi

When the cause of Punjabi was taken over by progressive writers, an other senior group patronised by the late Maulana Abdul Majeed Salik emerged on the scene with a regular monthly magazine 'Punjabi', carrying the names of Maulana Salik himself and Dr. Faqir Mohammad Faqir as its editors. We need not say that it had the blessings of one of the powerful lobbies in the Government. The contributors included Mr. Hameed Nizami, Shorish Kashmiri, Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan and writers associated with Government departments such as Radio, Education and Information. The 'Punjabi' was the first ever serious literary magazine published after independence. It is a fact that after the closure of Joshua Fazluddin's 'Punjabi Darbar' towards the end of the thirties, not a single Punjabi (Persian script) magazine was published from Lahore or any other city of undivided Punjab.

The Monthly 'Punjabi' made a good start and it was no doubt well-received by writers as well readers. It inspired many to write prose in Punjabi which was hitherto non-

existent. It was little known to new writers that Punjabi prose is being written since Akbar's time and the Janam Sakhis of Guru Nanak have many specimens of the prose of that period. Later on Naushah Ganj Bakhsh's seven addresses were also unearthed and published in the early seventies.

Central, eastern Punjab

Most of the prose contribution to the monthly "Punjabi" belonged to the central or eastern Punjab. Therefore, they had made a corrupted version of Majhi and Doabi dialects as their literary standard, drifting away from the Lehnda dialect which was recognised as the only standard vehicle of Punjabi poetry throughout the Punjab and adjacent areas of the other provinces and states since Baba Farid Shakarganj's time. This is also proved by the prose written in the Mughal period. This happened because none of the Punjabi writer was formally educated in the language. Therefore, while writing prose, they just followed urban Punjabi which had already been corrupted by Urdu. Their education and training in Urdu and English also influenced them. At a later stage, therefore, writers belonging to the southern, northern and western areas tried to declare their dialects as independent languages. They had the support of Grierson of the "Linguistic Survey of India" who has wrongly divided the dialects of Punjabi on the basis of religion or script. Whatever the Sikhs owned and produced was called Punjabi and the rest (almost the whole of west Punjab) was declared as Lehnda, independent of Punjabi language. In Punjabi-speaking areas, Grierson included only four districts of west Punjab -- Lahore, Gujranwala, Sialkot and half of Gujrat and Sheikhpura.

This gulf was deliberately widened when writers belonging to central Punjab demanded introduction of Punjabi as medium of instruction in the province which

meant the replacement of Urdu which was already threatened by Bengali. The Sindhis resisted all moves for the imposition of Urdu in place of their own language and now Punjabi was demanding its due status. To counter the demand for Punjabi, the politics of putting up dialects against the parent language ensued and it was claimed that Punjab was not a single linguistic unit. Baba-i-Urdu, Dr. Maulvi Abdul Haq, went to the extent of declaring that Urdu was the only 'Islamic language' in Pakistan while all other languages (Bengali, Sindhi, Punjabi, Pushto and Baluchi) were labelled the languages of infidels.

Jameel Jalibi

The centuries-old hypothesis that Punjabi is the mother of Urdu was indirectly abandoned by Urdu scholars like Jameel Jalibi. The idea was to divide the Punjab on the basis of dialects. The main factor was the political performance of Punjabi politicians, bureaucrats and Government intellectuals. No doubt, most of the bureaucracy belonged to central Punjab and were refugees from East Punjab, but most of the leading politicians with feudal support belonged to Seraiki or Multani, Potwari and Hinko-speaking (all included in Lehnda by Grierson) areas. Whatever disgrace was earned by these Punjabis during 38 years was credited to Punjab and logically to those living in the central Punjab. The other belts instead of sharing this disgrace or guilt want to absolve themselves of all blame by posing as non-Punjabis and claiming independent status for their dialects.

Another strange thing is that these elements have not so far demanded that their 'languages' should be introduced as medium of instruction replacing Urdu while writers from the central Punjab are unanimous in their demand for the introduction of Punjabi in schools and colleges as a teaching language.

Here it may be pertinent to place on record a few facts about the linguistic politics of different provinces. In the NWFP, the NAP-JUI coalition declared Urdu as the official language of the province. The main reason for the decision was that in the province there are two major spoken languages Pushto (60 per cent) and Hindko (40 per cent). The same was the case with Baluchistan where the NAP Government voluntarily adopted Urdu just to avoid Baluchi, Pushto and Brohi contradictions.

The Punjab has no such contradiction and the great scholar, Hafiz Mahmood Shirani, author of '*Punjab mein Urdu*' recognised all the dialects spoken in all parts of the province as part of the Punjabi language. But deliberate attempts are being made to infect the Punjab with an unnatural linguistic controversy, and to bring it to the level of Sindh, NWFP and Baluchistan and thus keep the status of Urdu intact in the Punjab. These are the major problems which are not helping to clear the minds of the intellectuals, writers, politicians, and teachers of the Punjab, hampering the progress of the Punjabi language and literature since 1947. Because of this mess neither the Federal nor the Punjab Governments have taken the issue of Punjab and Punjabi seriously. On the other hand succeeding Federal governments have taken contradictory stances on different occasions.

White Paper

The Bhutto Government in its White paper on Baluchistan said that four languages Baluchi, Brohi, Pushto and Jagdali or Seraiki were spoken in the province and Jagdali or Seraiki was declared as a dialect of Punjabi, but the then Sindh Chief Minister Mustafa Jatoi was encouraged to support a Seraiki conference in Multan in which Awami Tehrik leader Rasul Bux Pleejo also participated. But when a map of the Seraiki province including some Seraiki-speaking talukas of Sindh was

circulated, it infuriated the Sindhi participants and after their strong protest the whole show came to a standstill. Sindh was exempted but the Punjab and the Punjabi language are still the targets.

After declaring Seraiki as a dialect of Punjabi, the Federal Government, through its Academy of Letters, now recognises the same dialect as an independent language. Briefly, the Federal Government has kept a door open to play a dirty linguistic trick whenever political expediency so demands. The same is the case with most of the political parties, which have not done any home work on linguistic, educational and cultural affairs of the province.

Development

On the eve of partition, there was only one book on Waris Shah, and that too in Urdu. Today, we have ten. According to a 460 pages catalogue of printed articles -- both in Urdu and Punjabi -- on the Punjab and Punjabi (1947-1982), recently published by Iqbal Salahuddin, almost 600 are on Waris Shah, 270 on Khawaja Farid and a hundred on Bulleh Shah.

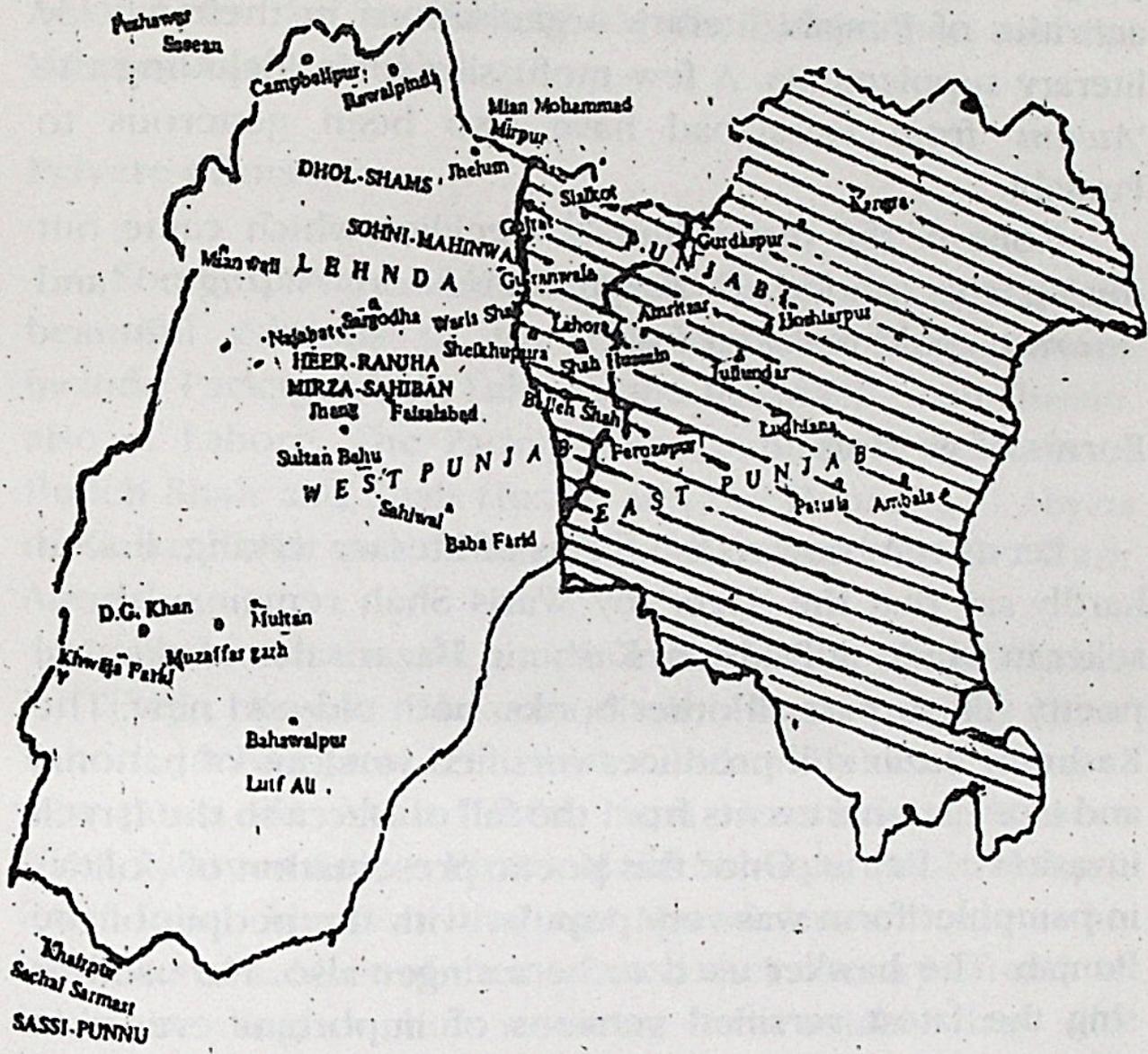
All but two of the 600 articles on Waris Shah have been written and published during the last 35 years. Out of these, only 67 are in Urdu the rest in Punjabi. Their quantity as compared to the articles on Ghalib or Mir during the same period may not be impressive but considering that we started almost from scratch, the performance is not at all unsatisfactory. So far as quality goes, one dare say that some of them are excellent pieces of literary criticism.

Apart from the publication of a monthly, a weekly page in a newspaper and a small chunk on Radio Pakistan in the early fifties, the Punjab University introduced Punjabi and Punjabi Fazil course for those who wanted to take university examinations (matriculation, F.A. and B.A.) privately. This gave an impetus to the publication of new

books, especially in prose and to the private teaching of Punjabi. A few private Punjabi tuition centres were also opened in different cities of the province. In Lahore, a seasoned journalist, who had the experience of editing a daily newspaper and a periodical and who happened to be the son of a senior Punjabi writer Maula Bakhsh Kushta, opened a Punjabi college and also started a literary monthly, '*Punj Darya*'. He was assisted by a well-known Urdu-turned-Punjabi writer Abdul Majeed Bhatti. Chaudhry Mohammad Afzal with his monthly '*Punj Darya*', Punjabi college and a Punjabi publishing house made a tremendous contribution towards the promotion of the Punjabi language and literature. The monthly '*Punjabi*', after having played the role of a pioneer, had disappeared from the scene. With the death of Chaudhry Afzal, his monthly '*Punj Darya*' and publishing house went out of business. The proprietor of another private tuition centre, Akhtar Husain Akhtar brought out the monthly '*Lebran*' which is perhaps the only literary monthly in whole of the Punjab at present. The monthly, '*Waris Shab*' from Multan and the monthly '*Punjabi Adab*' from Lahore have had their impact. Both were owned by non-professionals and played notable role before going into oblivion. The quarterly '*Seraiki*' and the monthly '*Seraiki Adab*' also played a commendable role.

The Punjabi Fazil scheme played the same role as was played by the Fort William College in the development of the Urdu language and literature. The FWC had the financial and official patronage of the East India Company while the Punjabi Fazil scheme was a lot less fortunate.

Apart from the publications mentioned above, many more book series appeared from Lahore, Karachi, Sargodha, Mianwali, Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Bahawalnagar, Sheikhpura and Taunsa -- '*Rut Laikha*' '*Sanjhan*' '*Suraj Mukhi*', and '*Likhari*' from Lahore. '*Chaj*' from Sargodha, '*Saneha*' from Taunsa, '*Neeli*' from Bahawalnagar '*Chenab Rang Digest*' from Faisalabad.



Map of the Punjab showing important poets, folk tales, international boundary line and Grierson's imaginary line dividing the Punjab in the zones of Lehnda and Punjabi "languages".

'*Racbnab*' from Gujranwala and '*Punj Rang*' from Karachi were as good as '*Punj Darya*' or '*Seraiki Adab*'.

The daily '*Imroze*' could not coax other newspapers in Lahore to devote or 'donate' a weekly page to Punjabi literature but time has forced the '*Nawa-i-Waqt*' and the '*Jang*' to publish literary writings and columns covering the activities of Punjabi literary organisations in their weekly literary supplements. A few mofussil dailies including the '*Awam*' from Faisalabad have also been generous to Punjabi.

None of the three Punjabi weeklies which came out during this period - '*Punjabi Akbbar*' '*Wangar*' and '*Saaran*' could really take off.

Forms of writing

Let us turn now to the forms of literary writing. I need hardly say that the '*Heer*' by Waris Shah remains a best-seller in whole of Pakistan. Kashmiri Bazar sales of classical poetry still surpass all other books, both old and new. The Kashmiri Bazar still produces versified versions of national and international events from the fall of Dacca to the Israeli invasion of Beirut. Once this poetic presentation of politics in pamphlet form was very popular with the people of the Punjab. The hawker used to be a singer also. He used to sing the latest versified versions of important events in crowded bazars, buses and trains and sell poetic political reviews to the common people. The practice has not yet died out but is certainly on the wane. Curbs on the freedom of expression have destroyed this brilliant Punjabi tradition in which a fair part of recent (pre-partition) history of the Punjab has been recorded. It may be mentioned here that a long biographical poem on Ilmuddin Shaheed was published some years ago. It is spread over more than 250 larger than normal pages. classics by Waris Shah, Baba Farid, Khawaja Farid, Mian Mohammad Bakhsh, Hashem Shah, Hafiz Barkhurdar,

Siddique Lali, Sultan Bahu, Maulvi Lutf Ali, Ahmad ali Sacen, Shah Murad, Peelo, Shah Husain and Maulvi Ghulam Rasul have been reproduced by Government-aided organisations like the Punjabi Adabi Academy, the Punjabi Adabi Board, the Institute of Folk Heritage, Islamabad, the Urdu Academy of Bahawalpur, the Punjabi Adabi Lehr, the Seraiki Adabi Majlis, Bahawalpur, and the Bazme-Saqafat, Multan.

Private effort

Some private organisations have also published beautiful editions of the classic. These organisations include Packages Ltd., Lahore, and the Majlis Shah Husain, also of Lahore. The Packages Ltd published the Kafis of Bulleh Shah and Shah Husain and the Dohras and Abyats of Baba Farid and Sultan Bahu all edited by Dr. Nazir Ahmad.

Apart from the old guards in the field -- Ustad Daman, Dr. Faqir, Kushta, Haakeem Nasir, Hayat Pasruri, Akbar Lahori, Janbaz Jatoi, Pir Fazal, Ghulam Haider Yateem -- new poets like Ahmad Rahi, Najm Hosain Syed, Muneer Niazi, Nasreen Anjum Bhatti, Majid Siddiqui, Baqi Siddiqui, Zafar Iqbal, Munnoo Bhai and Masud Anwar became the trend setters. Most of them started their literary careers in Urdu or English but reverting to Punjabi, they did exceedingly well.

Among the prominent Urdu poets of our time, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Sufi Tabassum, Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi, Habib Jalib, Raza Hamdani, Baqi Siddiqui, Qateel Shifai, Saifuddin Saif, Sher Afzal Jaffery, Ahmad Zafar, Hasan Raza Gardezi, Abdul Aziz Khaled, Manzoor Arif, Safdar Mir, Arif Abdul Mateen, Qayyum Nazar, Asghar Saleem, Hasan Eirafi, Jameel Malik and a large number of old hands have written in Punjabi also. In fact, some of them have had their Punjabi collections published.

More than two hundred modern Punjabi poets have had their collections published during the last 38 years. They mostly follow the traditional patterns including the ghazal, a genre borrowed from Urdu.

Ghazal

There is a striking difference between the Urdu and the Punjabi ghazal. Iqbal almost revolutionised this genre that was getting increasingly hackneyed. Modern Punjabi poets have, like Iqbal, owned the ghazal but changed its substance.

Afzal Ahsan says:

میں دریاواں دا ہانی ساں ترنے پے گئے کھاں فی مائے
شہر دے سکھ کبہہ لکھاں تینوں گل نہیں بھدی دال فی مائے

Once I was a peer of the great rivers, O mother mine, but now small rivulets have become a challenge for me. What should I tell you of the comforts of city life. O mother mine, here you can't get lentils for dear life.

In Punjabi ghazal, the poet is confronted with a sense of loss and isolation which is totally against indigenous tradition where a poet like Waris Shah wrote the 'Heer' just to amuse friends. But the modern Punjabi poet is without a friend, he is getting away from the soil in which till recently, he had deep roots.

Initial stages

Punjabi ghazal, in the initial stages, was closer to the Urdu tradition and Kushta, Pir Fazal and Dr. Faqir belonged to that tradition but their followers have brought it closer to 'dohras' (couplets), the oldest form of Punjabi, Sindhi and Hindi poetry. Afzal Ahsan, Zafar Iqbal, Tanveer Bokhari, Rauf Sheikh, Saleem Kashir, Nadir Jajvi, Nazar Bhatti, Naseem Lieha, Iqbal Sokari and Prof. Asghar Saleem

are among the innumerable ghazal writers who have given new meaning and freshness to the Punjabi ghazal.

In the field of poem, after Ahmad Rahi and Baqi Siddiqui, Najm Hosain Syed is a peculiar case. He is in search of his identity as a Punjabi. Rahi laments the horrible end of the Muslim-Hindu-Sikh joint urban society and its cultural values. Loss of innocence is his major theme. He weaves the poetic web with the threads of folk songs and stories, with all pathos at his command. He sings sadly of forced separation.

Baqi Siddiqui was basically a man belonging to a small village on the periphery of a big emerging city. He started as a village bard who used to write Punjabi 'bait' (lines) in his early career. Later, he became a major name in Urdu poetry, especially the ghazal. In his last years, he took a sharp turn and gave his readers a collection of Punjabi poems dealing with the material and spiritual metamorphosis of his co-villagers who had left their small holdings of the fertile land to work in newly installed big factories in the cities as unskilled labourers. They had to face a new social relationship, a new kind of culture which was alien to them. They had not yet forgotten the old values of a settled peaceful life where the human being was not part of a faceless machine. This sense of loss is the undercurrent of Baqi's poetry. So is the case with Muneer Niazi, who has altogether a different yet powerful style. His poem '*Bahadur di Maut*' (death of a hero) is an exhaustive commentary on his Punjabi poetry.

In search of identity

On the contrary, Najm Hosain Syed is a poet who is in search of his cultural identity which was lost after the linguistics, cultural and political invasion from the East as well as from the West. In this effort he evaluates the poetic majesty of the language, the great tradition of resistance in the history of the Punjab and the upright character of the Punjabi, which once he was. His poetry, especially his

longer poems like '*Bar di Var*' and '*Multan Sbebr di Var*' are serious efforts at rediscovering of foundations of the citadel of Punjabi culture and poetry. Refusal to compromise with untruth was the cornerstone of this grand edifice. This gave classical Punjabi poetry an imperishable verity and it has withstood repeated assaults from all sides.

Apart from traditional monotonous patterns of poetic hack work, these major currents are being followed by emerging Punjabi poets. Arif Abdul Mateen, Shafi Aqeel, Basheer Munzar, the late Altaf Qureshi, Ahmad Zafar, Fakhar Zaman, Ahmad Saleem, Hasan Eirafi, Rasheed Anwar, Abdul Qadeer Rashk, Ghulam Yaqub Anwar, Nasreen Anjum Bhatti, Raza Hamdani, Iqbal Salahuddin, Munnoo Bhai, Saleem Shahid, Zaki, Hasan Raza Gardezi, Mumtaz Dahar, Saleem Jhangir, Rahat Naseem Malik, Dildar Baluch, Sharib Ansari, Riaz Shad, Ramzan Shahid, Azra Waqar, Mushtaq Soofi, Nazeer Chaudhry, Mushtaq Basit, Laeeq Baburi, Sheikh Akhtar, Saeed Jafri, Nasir Baluch, Sultan Mahmood Aashufta, Yaqoob Momin, Kanwal Mushtaq, Rashed Hasan Rana, Akhtar Kashmiri, Akbar Kazmi, Rasheed Usmani, Qasim Jalal, and dozens of other have set on their literary voyage on these seas. Most of them have published their collections.

Fiction

In fiction we have some senior writers who had the courage to write in Punjabi before partition when the ordinary Muslim could not think of even reading Punjabi. Sajjad Haider, Agha Hameed and Nizam Tawakkli belong to this group. But again, serious attempts were made under the influence of the Progressive Writers Movement. Nawaz is perhaps the first short story writer whose collection of stories was published under the name '*Doobngian Shamman*'. Riffat, now an Urdu columnist, was second in line. They showed the way to new writers,

especially women among whom can be counted Khalida Malik, Kehkashan Malik, Farkhanda Lodhi, Nasreen Bhatti, Musarrat Kalanchvi, Naheed Akhtar, Parveen Malik, Naseema Ashraf Ali, Nazar Fatima, Satnam Mahmood, Batul Rahmani, Sheema Sial, Parveen Aziz, Rafia Abbas, Sabeeha Qureshi, Shahida Rahman Mughal, Shafqat Sultana, Rasheeda Saleem Seemeen.

Among men, Sajjad Haider, Agha Ashraf, Abdul Majeed Bhatti and Joshua Fazluddin were senior writers. Fazluddin was the only prominent writer who had to his credit a published collection of short stories before partition. All others came in the sixties and afterward when many new hands joined them. Most of them were writing in Urdu or English. They included Ghulam Ali Chaudhry, Sufi Tabassum, Anwar Sajjad, Akmal Aleemi, Afzal Ahsan Randhawa, Haneef Bawa, Saleem Khan Gimmi, Husain Shahid, Husain Shad, Akbar Lahori, Sadiq Qureshi, Anwar Ali, Iqbal Salahuddin, Mehr Kachailvi, Ghulam Mustafa Bismil, Haneef Chaudhry, Mirza Hamed Beg, Zafar Lashari, Ismail Ahmadani, Tahir Ghani, Ahsan Wagha, Amer Faheem, Tehseen Sabai-i-Walvi, Aslam Qureshi, Nasir Baluch and many others.

Local dialects

No doubt the effect of local dialects and vocabulary are visible in their work but with a view to evolving standard prose, writers in central Punjab encouraged the use of local dialects. Zafar Lashari has the flavour of Bahawalpur area while Mirza Hamed Beg's collection is in the Chachhi or Campbellpuri style. Nasir Baluch never forgets the Khushab-Sargodha dialect and Parveen Malik in her collection *'Keeb Janaan Mein Kaun'* has included stories in Awankari as well as the Lahori dialect. Ismail Ahmadani has a deep touch of the Sukkur-Sanghar Seraiki while Mukhtar Ali Nayyar is distinctly in Hindko. Husain Shahid is perfect in central Punjabi.

Novels

Only three novels in Punjabi were published before partition, two by Joshua Fazluddin and one by Miran Bakhsh Minhas. Fazluddin continued to write and published another novel after partition. He was joined by his contemporaries Dr. Mohammad Baqir and Abdul Majeed Bhatti both writing a novel each. Later, they were joined by the young writers Afzal Ahsan, Fakhar Zaman, Saleem Khan Gimmi, Zafar Lashari, Ismail Ahmadani, Dr. Razia Noor Mohammad, Raja Mohammad Ahmad, Nadim Asari, Kehkashan Malik, Ahmad Saleem, Muneer Ahmad Alvi, Ehsan Batalvi and many others.

Afzal Ahsan and Fakhar Zaman have three novels each to their credit. Fakhar is loud in terms of politics while Afzal Ahsan lives in the Punjab of the past. His novel '*Doaba*' is in the good tradition of the Urdu writer Balwant Singh.

A few novels have also been translated from the Gurmukhi script in Urdu or been transcribed in Persian script. These include novels by Rajinder Singh Bedi, Nanak Singh and Amrita Pritam.

Rediscovery of the Punjab forms an essential part of the committed Punjabi writers effort. It may not appear forceful in the ghazal, poem and the short story but it is clearly discernible in the novel and the play. In novel, Fakhar Zaman tried to remember heroes of the soil who led resistance movements against attacks on Punjabi and the Punjab. But Punjabi drama after partition is to be specially mentioned in this respect.

For drama writers a few avenues were opened after independence. First, it was Radio Pakistan which needed drama and according to its policies, Ashfaq Ahmad, Sajjad Haider, Nawaz, Sheikh Iqbal, Baqi Siddiqui, Saleem Rafiqui, Akram Butt, Agha Ashraf and, above all, Rafi Peer emerged as successful radio playwrights. Many Urdu

writers also joined them but they made no impact. For them, only money mattered.

Television

The second opening was television to which Safdar Mir, Munnoo Bhai, Younis Javaid, Ashfaq Ahmad, Bano Qudsia and many others made notable contributions. Munnoo Bhai's serial 'Jazeera', which was later published in book form, will be remembered for long.

Next come the stage. No doubt, from the commercial point of view many Punjabi plays have been staged but a very few of them can be regarded as true theatre. 'Pug' and 'Ajj Aakhan Waris Shah Noon' are rare exceptions. But what the stage has proved is that the Punjabi drama can flourish if properly handled. There is greater scope for drama in Punjabi than in many other languages.

The fourth and the most important form is the printed drama. The late Maj. Ishaq Mohammad's 'Musalli' and 'Quqnas' and Najm's 'Takht Lahore' and "Ik Raat Ravi di", Sarmad Sehbai's 'Punjawan Chiragh' and Shak Shubhey da Waila' -- all deal with the history of the province. 'Musalli' goes back to the times when the Aryans invaded the sub-continent and destroyed Harappa. It is the sad story of Musallis who were subjugated by the Aryans being labelled as "dasor achhoots" (untouchables) and made to do low menial jobs and landless, homeless farmhands. Quqnas is about Dullah Bhatti, a rebel in Akbar's period and about a political landscape where foreigners (Europeans) began to plunder the wealth of the sub-continent. Najm's 'Takht Lahore' is basically about Dullah Bhatti and his contemporary sufi, intellectual and poet Shah Husain. It deals with the ills of the Mughal establishment and curbs on the freedom of expression. It vividly shows how the whole ruling elite turned into a parasitical upper strata while productive manpower was deprived of most of its production.

Najm's second full-length play 'Ik Raat Ravi di' narrates the struggle of those who stood against the foreigners in 1857 and those who sabotaged this struggle of the Punjabis. It may be mentioned here that Ahmad Khan Kharl, the hero, was neither supported by Bahadur Shah Zafar or the Delhi inspired-soldiers based in the Punjab nor by the Nawab of Bahawalpur or the other big guns of the region. He challenged the might of the British rulers and their agents courageously and made great sacrifices but his heroic deeds went unsung. Only the rural bards and official reporters recorded his performance and transferred this oral heritage to their next generations which were recently recorded and published.

With the introduction of the M.A. Punjabi class in the Punjab University, research work and criticism began to gain momentum. First, it were the Punjabi Fazil classes which encouraged critical writings and evaluation of classical literature. Now another educational requirement brought another set of writers who have, according to the new needs produced many books of criticism and research. Though doctoral theses approved by the University are yet to be published, many collections of critical essays and research papers have appeared. Dr. Shahbaz Malik, Iqbal Salahuddin, Aslam Rana, Ismatullah Zahid Dr. Basheer Goraya, Dr. Akhtar Jaffery, Hafeez Taib, Hafiz Sarshar, Noor Ahmad Saqib, Hameedullah Hashmi, Abdul Ghafoor Qureshi, Dilshad Kalanchvi, Mirza Maqbool Beg Badakhshani, Darvaish Lahori, Qadar Afaqi, Basheer Nazim, and others did a good job.

Prof. Ali Abbas Jalalpuri, Dr. Ahmad Husain Qureshi, Najm Hosain Syed, Mohammad Asif Khan, Prof. Shaheen Malik, Sibtul Hasan Zaigham, Dr. Nazir Ahmad, Sarfraz Husain Qazi, Saif Anjum Dar, Shareef Kunjahi, Dr. Ghulam Husain Azhar, Alam kapurthalvi, Ahmad Saleem, Inamul Haq Javaid, Arif Abdul Mateen, Dr. Laeeq Baburi, Masood Hashmi, Tanveer Zahoor, Zamurrad Malik, Ramzan Shahid, Azra Waqar, Husain Shahid, Afzal Pervaiz, Sharib Ansari,

Shareef Sabir, Amin Mughal, Rahat Naseem Malik, Yusuf Kamran, Noor Ahmad Khan Faridi, Aslam Rasulpuri, Irshad Taunsvi. Dr. Mehr Abdul Haq, Arshad Multani, Masood Bokhari, Umar Ali Khan, Akhtar Baluch, Siddique Taher, Kaifi Jampuri, Mohammad Shah Khan Baluch, Shafi Aqeel, Sardar Karim Khan Taunsvi, Basheer Ahmad Zami, Qazi Javaid, Prof. Mohammad Hayat Khan Sial, Raza Hamdani, Mukhtar Ali Nayyar, Saith Ubaidur Rahman, Sahibzada Altaf Ali and many others are seriously engaged in finding out what lies in store for the Punjabi (and Sraiki) language, literature and culture. This exercise, though it started late, is producing a lot of critical literature finding new dimension in classical literature and encouraging the young writers to build the literary future on the foundations of what has been left of the cultural and literary heritage of the Punjab.

Folk heritage

There was only one volume of Punjabi folk songs in Persian script before the partition. Now we have many. Sajid Alvi, Raja Risalu, Farigh Bokhari and Raza Hamdani, Dr. Mehr Abdul Haq, Paro, Mushtaq Soofi, Sharib Ansari, Maqsood Nasir Chaudhry, Abdul Ghafoor Darshan, Mazhar-ul-Islam, Muzaffar Ahmad, Dr. Ghulam Husain Azhar, Prof. Anwar Beg Awan, Kanwal Mushtaq, Aslam Jadoon, Afzal Pervaiz, Shaheen Malik, Irshad Punjabi, Ahmad Saleem and A.D. Ejaz have at least one collection each to their credit. Many others including Saif Anjum Dar, Iqbal Asad and Saleem Khan Gimmi have done reasonable work on folk songs.

Translations

Punjabi used to borrow from other languages first from Arabic and Persian and now from all other languages of the world.

The Bahawalpur based writers who claim that Seraiki is a separate language, have mainly translated the Urdu novels of Deputy Nazeer Ahmad and Abdul Haleem Sharar, Ghalib's ghazals and some pieces of Allama Iqbal. The Lahore-based writers have translated Shakespeare, Jean Paul Sartre, Lorca, and Brecht.

Among the Urdu writers Iqbal's Persian collections have been translated into Punjabi. His lectures and book on Economics have been published in Punjabi. A translation of Faiz's poems and ghazals has been published. Ahmad Saleem has translated Sheikh Ayaz's Sindhi works into Punjabi. Mehr Kachailvi is responsible for a book in which articles on five major poets of different provinces including Khushhal Khan Khattak. (NWFP) Shah Lateef Bhitai, (Sindh) Mast Tawakkli (Baluchistan) and Lalla Aarifa (Kashmir) have been included and their poetry translated into Punjabi.

Afro-Asian verse

Sheikh Akhtar has translated poems from Africa and Asia into Punjabi and published them in book form.

With a view to introducing Punjabi literature to other countries. Baba Farid, Shah Husain, Bulleh Shah, Sultan Bahu, Khawaja Farid, Hashem Shah and Qadir Yar have been translated into English.

Most of the major Punjabi poets have also been partly translated into Urdu. They include Baba Farid, Shah Husain, Bulleh Shah, Sultan Bahu, Hashem Shah, Ali Haider, Sachal Sarmast, Khawaja Farid, Mian Mohammad Bakhsh, Shah Sharaf, Pir Mehr Ali Shah and Mohammad Shah.

I must apologise for the fact that too many names have been mentioned in this survey. Themes, trends and diction have not been dealt with properly. But every name which I have included had at least one book to his credit. This

itself is a big achievement because nothing worthwhile was being done in Punjabi before partition.

I am sorry, too that I have not referred in detail to the activities of the Kashmiri Bazar which has been producing dozens of books in Punjabi every year, including translation in verse of the Quran, Hadith, Masnavi Maulana Rum, history of Islam, history of Pakistan, down to the Punjabi version of the famous '*Marney ke Baad Kaya hoga?*' 1985

MODERN TRENDS IN LITERATURE

BOTH the Punjabs, Indian and Pakistani, have been inviting shrieking headlines in the world news network, throughout the year 1985-86. The Indian Punjab for its communal frenzy and Pakistani Punjabi for the role of its military and bureaucracy. The Indian Punjab is being widely assailed by the Hindu majority provinces, while the Pakistani Punjab is being continuously castigated by the other three smaller provinces. The Pakistan Government, dominated by the so-called Punjabis, is also accused of having a hand in the communal trouble of East Punjab. Indian diplomats were assaulted by the Indian Sikhs in Nankana and Lahore while a Pakistani diplomat (most probably a Punjabi) was seriously wounded in Delhi. He was attacked by some Indians.

Divisions

The Indian Punjab has already been divided into three provinces, namely, Punjabi Suba, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. The West Punjab once lost its identity voluntarily and joined the One-Unit scheme. In 1970 it regained its old status. But after the fall of East Pakistan, for all practical purposes the whole of West Pakistan has become another One Unit. First it was One Unit under the PPP and then it is One Unit under the M.L. (Martial Law) and M.L. (Muslim League). The other three provinces (two of which have Urdu as their official language and where primary education is imparted through Urdu as is the case in the West Punjab) are fed up with the 'hegemony of the

Punjabis'. Ignoring the basic ill of the system they are demanding a better federal or a confederal arrangement. A sizeable section of the population of the other three provinces, with the active support of the Urdu-speaking Karachi, is supporting the idea of dividing the Punjab into three provinces, i.e., Punjab (Central Punjab mainly represented by civil bureaucracy), Seraiki Suba (dominated by feudal lords), and Pothohari Suba (the army is from this area of the present Punjab).

A number of political activists and intellectuals from southern Punjab demand a status of separate nationality because in their view their dialect, Seraiki or Multani, is altogether different language from Punjabi (which Punjabi? This they cannot elaborate. The dividing line is that those who migrated from East Punjab before and after 1947 are Punjabi while the locals are Seraiki). So far as Pothohar is concerned, nobody in northern Punjab is serious about this issue. Nor do they treat their dialect as a different and independent language. Their case is being vehemently pleaded by Seraiki people. The Urdu-speaking intelligentsia, as well as the so-called Punjabi establishment in Islamabad, has a soft corner for the Seraiki and Pothohari 'nationalities'. And it may not be a surprise if one hears one fine morning that the so-called Punjabi dominated central establishment has willingly accepted the Balkanisation of the Punjab, bringing it at par with the Indian Punjab's three provinces.

Common man unaware

So far as a common Punjabi is concerned (he may be from any part of the present Punjab) he is totally ignorant of these political and cultural squabbles. For centuries he has not been allowed to study his language and literature. He had always been given a standard imported language for educational and official purposes, like Urdu, English, Persian and Arabic. He thinks that from Delhi to

Gorakhpur there is only one language, i.e., Urdu as he sees it. He does not know that from Delhi to Gorakhpur there are dozens of dialects which are more distinct from one another than the dialects of Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi. He is also not aware of the fact that from Baba Farid to Waris Shah, Khawaja Farid and Mian Mohammad everybody has used a standard Punjabi, which is closer to Lehnda or Seraiki than spoken language of East Punjab or Lahore, Gujranwala and Sialkot districts. He is quite ignorant of the fact that in one district - Gujrat - there are three vividly different dialects; Tehsil Kharian is closer to Pahari of Azad Kashmir and Pothohari of Rawalpindi, Tehsil Gujrat is just like Gujranwala and Lahore, and Tehsil Phalia is much closer to Sargodha and Jhang, which according to Seraiki linguistic standards, should be a part of the Seraiki Suba.

This is the cultural and linguistic background in which Punjabi poetry is being written and it bears the stamps of central Punjabi, Seraiki, Pahari and Pothohari simultaneously. Nirvan Noori from Lahore writes:

پھیر صدیاں ہنڈیا
 دوج بگانا
 "ہیں" دے جوشس اچ بھوتریا قلبوت
 دین جوگا تھی ولسی
 ساری رہتل گڑھتل ایہدے سرتے اُسری
 کرچی کرچی ہو جاسی

(from "Jaag" -1986)

This "thhee waisi" and "hō jasi" is pure Lehnda and Seraiki. The remaining vocabulary and grammatical syntax is prevalent all over the Punjab.

The Punjab has been made a target of shame and the anti-people elite of the Punjab is shamelessly refusing to

help people of the Punjab to regain their identity. Noori says and he fully represents the younger intellectuals and writers of the Punjab:

دلی دے درباراں وچوں اپنے گواچے نقشے لبھدا پھرنا ایں

کیوں ریگستاناں وچ پیل دیاں جھاواں لبھدا پھرنا ایں

کیوں بگانے باغاں وچوں

آپنیاں خوشبوآں لبھنا پھرنا ایں؟

In vain you are looking for your identity in the imperial courts of Delhi?

Why do you ask deserts to provide you the shadows of pipal?

You cannot find your own perfumes in other's gardens.

That is the basic mood of the young Punjabi writers. They are in search of their cultural, linguistic, historical, and political identity. That was the theme of a lecture delivered by Prof. Fateh Mohammad Malik at the Ninth European Conference on Modern South Asian studies (July 2, 1986).

"Dullah Bhatti and Shah Husain are two symbols of the Punjabi identity. One represents the heroic and the other the mystic tradition of the Punjab. The Punjabi writer of today is striving at the intermingling of these two streams into a mighty river -- an ever-flowing river to the destination of ideal human existence."

The last year (1985-86) witnessed some spectacular activities on the Punjabi literary horizon, all leading to intensive search for cultural roots. The four day World Punjabi Conference held in Lahore in April 1986, a protest procession of Punjabi writers and intellectuals in Lahore in May, Punjabi dramas staged by Lok Rahts group and Sanjh in Lahore, three bumper Punjabi magazines "Punj Rang", "Sohni Dharti" and "Ravi" from Karachi colleges and one,

"Caravan" from Jhang Government college, book series "Kharak" and "Punjab Rang" (Karachi) "Likhari", "Sanjh", "Suraj Mukhi", "Chetar" -- (Lahore), 'Adabi Savera' (Nankana) and many others. The most significant work which has been organised by the Punjabi Adabi Board is a 300-pages book, "Punjabi Literature -- After Independence". This includes seven articles by prominent writers about the religious literature, research work, evaluation of criticism, short-story, novel, drama, and poetry. Such a critical survey of almost all the forms of the Punjabi literature after 1947 was never done before. This gives a clear indication that the Punjabi writers, after having viewed the past and the present, intend to embark on another important creative journey. This year saw publication of Urdu and Punjabi articles by the late Prof. Qazi Fazl-e-Haq, a much earlier protagonist of Punjabi language and literature. All articles have been written and published in the thirties. A new edition of Heer Waris Shah contains intensive research done by Shareef Sabir with an exhaustive glossary. Perhaps it is the best-produced book of the year.

Positive efforts

The evaluation and preservation of literary and cultural heritage is expanding. The two volumes of folk songs "Rukh tan harey bharey" and "Jithey piplan di thandi chhan", edited by Dr. Saifur Rahman Dar and "Kancen Bunday" and "Bar dey Dholey" by Prof. Sharib (All published by Punjabi Board) are considered a positive effort to preserve all that is of a great worth. Credit also goes to Sajjad Haider Pervaiz who has written a 500-pages history of Seraiki literature. Iqbal Qaiser may also be mentioned for his first ever political prose book in Punjabi -- "Raj Karey ga Khalsa".

In criticism and research, Dr. Shahbaz Malik, Ismatullah Zahid, Mehr Kachailvi, Masood Hashmi, Naheed

Shahid, Asif Khan, Dr. Aslam Rana, Prof. Dilshad Kalanchvi, Shaheen Malik and many others are more active than ever.

The urge to translate literature from other languages is very much alive and Mehr Kachailvi has translated Kalidas' "Shakuntla" and Afzal Ahsan Randhawa has translated an African novel "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Acheby about which the "Observer" London carried the following review by Angus Wilson.

"The story is the tragedy of Okankwo, an important man in Obi tribe in the days when White men were first appearing on the scene....Mr. Acheby's very simple but excellent novel tells the series of events by which Okankwo, through his pride and his fears, becomes exiled from his tribe and returns only to be forced into the ignominy of suicide to escape the results of his rash courage against the White man....He handles the macabre with telling restraint and the pathetic without any false embarrassment."

Like Punjab's story

Why did Afzal Ahsan Randhawa select this novel for translation? He says, "firstly it is a very powerful novel and secondly it looks like the story of the Punjab when it fell in the last century. The story the British wrote on the bones of an African hero was the same which was written on the bones of Punjabi warriors of that period. There is a marked identity in the socio-cultural values of the African tribes and the Punjabi society. The motive is to rediscover the Punjab which has been lost due to centuries-long rule of non-Punjabi medium." Afzal Ahsan did the same thing in his own novel "Doaba" and somebody suggested to him that "Doaba" has another name, and that is Acheby's "Things Fall Apart".

The search for roots is vividly visible in many of the short stories written during the period under review. But another powerful original novel is "Tacc" by Farzand Ali.

Farzand Ali, a villager from Sheikhupura, was a great admirer of Ustad Daman and he used to visit the Ustad very regularly. He came to the Ustad as a poet but was turned into a fiction writer by the Ustad. The Punjabi Adabi Sangat heard the few chapters of the novel and encouraged the writer to complete it without giving any assurance that it will ever be published. (The same is the fate of many Punjabi writings so far). Farzand is lucky. The Punjabi Board has published the 216-page novel which depicts the socio-political life of a village on which all sorts of political experiments, including the B.D. system and Martial Law, are carried out. The Punjab in the novel, is the recent Punjab or today's Punjab. Sometime it is Martial Law which plays havoc with the set of values of the village and sometime it is the clergy which imposes its eccentric decisions on lovers and rebels. The village sees the entry of two young revolutionaries in the shape of a station master and a teacher who want to bring change in the social pattern of the village life. Farzand is a realist. In his view a deep understanding of reality, readiness to sacrifice and patience are required to bring any radical change in rural Punjab. Industrial expansion close to the village is influencing the characters of the novel but the change, whatsoever, is not healthy. His hero is lost. The central character of "Tae" faces all the onslaughts bravely. She never surrenders but in the end she is a broken woman. The B.D. chairman, duly supported by his son-in-law who is a Martial Law officer, and the Maulvi hands over the young heroine to an aged-man.

Is not that story of today's Punjab? Ranjha goes in wilderness and Heer goes to the Khairas!

But Prof. Nasir Baluch (Seetian Akhan Walley - Men with sewn eyes), Rashed Javaid Ahmad (Mittee Utey Leek -- Stories), Mehr Kachailvi, Khaled Husain Khaled, Sajjad Haider Pervaiz, Wali Mohammad Anjum, Raja Mohammad Ahmad, Kehkashan Malik, Ali Akhtar, Nemat Ahmar, and many other story writers are in search of their identity.

Some are realists and others are using modern techniques and themes.

New poetry

The year has seen many new collections of poems, most of which can be categorised as poetic documentation of the Punjab which was lost. The poet is out to discover that of which he has been criminally deprived of. The two volumes of folk-songs "Jithhey piplan di thandi chhan" and "Rukh tan harey bharey" by Dr. Saifur Rahman Dar, songs of the Bar in two volumes "Kaneen Bunday" and "Bar dey Dholley" by Sharib and the new edition of Waris Shah's 'Heer' are worthwhile attempts to strengthen the base of the Punjabi literary tradition. But new additions in the form of books are also worth mentioning. The authors include Nariman Noori, Khursheed Kamal, Mukhtar Husain Anjum, Mumtaz Haider Dahar, Kausar Siddiqui, Haneef Rana, Mian Maqbool Ahmad, Tanveer Bokhari, Ulfat Tanveer Bokhari, Ayaz Qalander, Asif Saqib, Qadar Afaqi, Saeeda Rishm, Adil Siddiqui, Sarfraz Ali Husain, Rafiq Ahmad Bajwa, Naseem-e-Sahar, Anjum Nawaz Anjum, Ameen Rahi, Tanveer Zahoor, Arif Bokhari, Ghafoor Shahid, Manzoor Wazirabadi, Iqbal Najmi, Raja Rasheed Mahmood, Ghulma Mustafa Bismil, Bashir Abid, Ashar Warsi, and M.A. Azad. Among them many names were new, while all the senior writers are making their contributions with appreciable speed. The most prolific among them are Najm Hosain Syed, Afzal Ahsan Randhawa, Afzal Pervaiz, Rashed Hasan Rana, and others

It may be mentioned that a selection of Ustad Daman's poetry has been published in magazine "Suraj Mukhi". Ustad in his life never got serious about publishing a book. His poems are scattered. Another group of his young followers is actively trying to "unearth" his poems to publish them in book form. The most welcome book is of the poetry of an old-guard from southern Punjab, Janbaz

Jatoi, "Ardasan". The book has been published by the Muzaffargarh District Council. (Muzaffargarh District Council is most probably the first Punjab local government institution which has followed the Sindh local bodies that regularly give grants to the Sindhi Adabi Board, Shah Lateef Committee, and other Sindhi literary and cultural organisations).

Here Tanveer Zahoor's lines will not be out of place.

”پنجابی تے زے ڈھگے نیں

خوڑے اوہناں دی جاگ

کدوں ہسی ؟ ”

”بس اسرافیل و اصور

چھکن دی ڈھل اے

سارے جاگ پوسن !

First voice: Punjabis are fools like bullocks. When will they awake?

Second voice: On the day of resurrection when Israfeel will blow his horn.

All will awake.,

And in the form of ghazal, Abdul Karim Qudsi says:

جیہڑے کمرے دی نینہ، میٹھاں دبی ساقی کسے وا
اس کمرے وچ آنتاں لکھ لکھ ٹنگن دا کیہہ فائدہ !

The room which has been constructed on the foundation of exploitation. It is no use to decorate it with the verses from the Quran.

Injustice

The palace or citadel of the present establishment are founded on the forcibly snatched rights of the Punjabi

language, literature and people. You may decorate these palaces with the banners inscribed with Quranic verses but that cannot hide the injustice done to the majority of this country.

1. The establishment's attitude during the year under review does not indicate any softness for Punjabi and its problems. During the year the Speaker of the Punjab Assembly prohibited the use of Punjabi language in the Assembly and when the member refused to obey the order the Speaker wanted to throw him out with the help of the police. Many members walked out of the session in protest. Later better sense prevailed.

2. The demand for restoration of Shah Hussain College remains unheaded.

3. Introduction of Punjabi at the primary level is not being considered.

4. The demand for opening of Punjabi department in more colleges has not been conceded.

5. Most responsible high-ups are ridiculing the proposal that Punjabi be declared the official language of the province.

6. Use of Punjabi as medium of instruction for adult education is not being entertained by the Adult Literacy Commission.

7 Punjabi Adabi Board is not getting a grant even 1/6th of the Sindhi Adabi Board or 1/3rd of the Pushto Academy.

8. The Punjabi textbooks are below standard.

9. The demand for Lehnda-oriented Punjabi (the standard dialect used from Baba Farid to Waris Shah, Khawaja Faird and Mian Mohammad Bakhsh) for Radio and Television is being deliberately ignored and the so-called Punjabi news bulletins are in corrupt, Urduised Punjabi. a mischievious move is on to create a wedge between the central, southern and northern dialects of the Punjabi.

Teachers' fears

The attitude of the teachers towards the adoption of the mother-tongue as medium of instruction is not helpful. They are so much accustomed to the present system that they cannot be easily brought down to earth. They are convinced that the mother-tongue is the best medium for the early education. But in their heart of heart, they are afraid of the political label on Punjabi, therefore none of them comes out with his conviction. It is they who are not asserting as teachers. They consider themselves first as government employees and then as teachers. Fear rules on this front. On the other hand if Punjabi is introduced at all levels at least 50,000 teaching jobs are to be created.

The Government, on the other hand, is even downgrading the importance of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH). The Ministry of Religious Affairs has announced prizes for books on 'seerat'. The book in English or Urdu will fetch a prize of Rs. 20,000 while books of the same standard and about the same personality in regional languages like Punjabi, Pushto, Sindhi and Baluchi can win only half of that prize. I think the defenders of the present class system have never stooped so low just to keep the status of two official languages high.

Rabid campaign

The year has seen a rabid campaign against the Punjab. It has made the Punjab politicians a little more conscious about Punjab and Punjabi. Haneef Ramay wrote a book "Punjab ka Muqaddma". One may disagree with him but it is first serious attempt to plead the case of the Punjab. But the tongue-tied Punjabi's case has not been pleaded in his own language and that is the major drawback of this book.

A few Punjabi politicians have started making their public speeches in the Punjabi language. They are being

duly appreciated by the audience and when Aitzaz Ahsan quotes Waris Shah with special reference to the present working of the State he receives wild applause.

بیڑی کا غزدی، باندر ملاج کیتا اتھ بھیجا خط لکھا ونے نون

(It is a pity that a paper boat is being floated with monkey at the oars and an eyeless scribe to write a letter. 1986

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF HEER WARIS SHAH

ON April 6, 1940, after killing Sir Micheal O'Dwyer on March 13, 1940, Udham Singh wrote a letter to the secretary of a London gurdawara, Jahal Singh, asking him to send him a copy of Heer written by Waris Shah. Udham Singh was in Brixton Jail facing a murder trial. Earlier, after gunning down O'Dwyer in a London hall he voluntarily surrendered to the police and confessed that he had avenged the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh. It was O'Dwyer who imposed Martial Law in the Punjab and handed over all power to Gen. Dyer who was responsible for butchering hundreds of unarmed people in the Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, on April 13, 1919.

Very young

Udham Singh was very young at that time but he made up his mind to avenge the massacre. He went to the U.S. where he came in close contact with the revolutionaries of the Ghadar Party. At the behest of Bhagat Singh he returned to India and worked with the former. But this work never satisfied him. He left for England determined to kill either Gen. Dyer or O'Dwyer. He got the opportunity after many years and shot O'Dwyer dead.

When a case was instituted against him, he gave his name "Ram Mohammad Singh" thus combining three major religious communities of the Punjab into one. And when he was presented before the trial court he was asked to take oath on the 'Granth Sahib'. He said that he had a

much more sacred book of the Punjab and on that book he wanted to take oath. And the book was Heer Ranjha written by Waris Shah, a copy of which he had obtained from Jahal Singh of a local gurdawara.

Waris Shah himself was a pir (saint) and people still call him Pir Waris Shah. About Heer we may say, that she is also known as a 'sufi'. Her popular name in Jhang is Mai Heer. If, therefore, Ram Mohammad Singh regarded Heer Waris a sacred book, he was not wrong. The heroine, Heer, herself was a pir and the writer Waris Shah was also a pir and Ranjha was himself the darling of all Sufi poets of the Punjab. The court allowed him to take oath on the book written by Waris Shah. Ram Mohammad Singh or Uldham Singh is perhaps the first and the last Punjabi to show such respect to Waris Shah and the Heer.

Old book survey

As far as the general people of the Punjab are concerned, it is a fact that according to a book survey on the sale of books made by a semi-official organisation of the former West Pakistan Government, after the Holy Quran the next bestseller is the Heer written by Waris. Its sale surpasses that of any other book of any of the language in use in Pakistan.

At the time the survey was conducted, the much-circulated editions of the Heer were coming from Kashmiri Bazar. Heer in modern book form had almost no sale because the urban Punjabis were no more interested in their language and the rural people used to believe that authentic books come only from Kashmiri Bazar.

This position has not yet wholly changed during the 40 years but Heer in modern book form is becoming acceptable to rural as well as urban people. It appears that the demand for Heer is on the increase and that perhaps is the reason that three different editions of the book have come out this year. The first one was edited by Abdul Aziz,

the second one by the late Dr. Faqir Mohammad Faqir and the third one is the reprint of the Hope Press edition.

The first and the third editions were published by the Punjabi Adabi Academy. The Hope Press edition was reproduced while the text prepared by Sh. Abdul Aziz was the Academy's original publication.

Little research

This may give the impression that these are just reproductions without any addition. That means no new research has been carried out on the text and the poet himself. To some extent it is true that what is required is not being satisfactorily done. But there is an urge for research.

In 1987, the Waris Shah Memorial Committee published another text of Heer which was edited by Shareef Sabir. This beautifully produced book is better produced than the Abdul Aziz edition.

But greater research work is required to satisfy the new, comparatively better-educated readers who while reading Heer come across many difficulties. Take, for instance, a dialogue of Ranjha with Heer through Sehti which starts:

لیا ہیہ سیریاں جو دید کرتے آجا او دہرا واسطہ ای

In the Hope Press edition it is stanza No. 592, and total lines are 34. In the Faqir edition it is stanza No. 506 with nine lines only. In the Aziz edition, it is numbered 500 and it has nine lines as in the Faqir edition. In the Shareef Sabir text it is stanza No. 500 with identical nine lines but with a change of a word.

In a least-remembered edition edited by Maulvi Nawabuddin Sialkoti, the stanza is without any number but it contains 42 lines.

The last line of the stanza is unanimously quoted by Faqir, Aziz, Nawab and Hope Press:

وارث شاہ نماز دافرض وڈا سروں لاه او دبیر واسطہ ای

Change of word

But shareef Sabir has changed the word *Namaz* (نماز) with "*Niaz*" (نیاز). I don't think it was the fear of much-trumpeted Islamisation at the time when the editor was compiling the text. He might have genuine reasons to replace 'namaz' with 'niaz' but he forgets the first verse:

یاد کریں اودہ قول قرار پہلے ہمن نبہاہ او دبیر واسطہ ای

Were 'namaz' (prayer) and recompense the subjects which came under discussion at the Holy Prophet's ascension and meeting with the Almighty?

The explanation offered by Sabir is not convincing at all. And another fact which needs greater attention from Punjabi scholars is why 42 or 34 lines of Nawab Sialkoti and Hope Press have been reduced to nine or ten lines when Hope Press edition is the first or one of the first three published editions of the "Heer Waris Shah" in the last century? Which edition should be regarded authentic or the basic?

Another line in the same stanza has been quoted differently:

زلف نانگ وانگوں چھک گھٹ بیٹھی گلوں لاه او دبیر واسطہ ای

Hope Press

زلف نانگ وانگوں چھک گھٹ بیٹھی گلوں لاه او دبیر واسطہ ای

Aziz, Faqir

زلفِ نانگِ دانگوں چکر گھت بیٹھی گلوں لاه وو دلبرِ اواسطہ ای

Sabir

کلے نانگِ دانگوں بیٹھی گھت کنڈل زلفِ سیاہ اودلبرِ اواسطہ ای

Nawab

Hope Press, Aziz and Faqir almost agree with each other while Nawab has changed the arrangements of the words.

Two more changes

Sabir has replaced the word 'ow' with 'wo' without any explanation or justification and then "Chhik ghut or Chhik ghat" has been replaced "Chakar ghat."

Now another line. In stanza No. 219 in the Aziz, Faqir, and Sabir editions, the following line carrying the name of the poet has been dropped while Hope Press (stanza 260) and the Nawab editions carry it:

وارث شاہ میاں حق رانجھنے دا کھڑے لے گئے زور زور میاں

There is another and first-ever (in the Punjabi language or you can call it Seraiki as in all others) version of Heer's story. The poet was Damodar Das. His version was first published in 1927. The poet Damodar (1486-1568) is a senior contemporary of Shah Husain, and Akbar the Great. He claims that he himself was present on every turning point or place of the love story which actually is a peculiar poetic style of giving credibility to the story.

Not a contemporary

Damodar is neither a contemporary of Heer and Ranjha nor senior to Akbar, Shah Husain or Daud Kirmani of Shergarh (Okara). His date of birth and the year in

which he wrote the book are not recorded. The above-mentioned years (1486-1568) are speculative and have never been proved correct beyond a reasonable shadow of doubt.

Damodar is in many respects a pioneer of the Heer Ranjha love story. He definitely had deep impact on much junior poets like Waris Shah and Bulleh Shah. Sometimes one feels that Damodar was aware of the poetry of Shah Husain. Look at these lines of his:

اٹھی ہیر، ہیرے وچ رانجھا
رانجھا رانجھا کنھوں اکھاں
حال نہ جنے کوئی
میں آپے رانجھن ہوئی

پے خرچ نہ نبھے
جنھاں تکیہ رب دا
پسکھی تے درویش
تنھاں رزق ہمیش

Over all, the reproduction and the renewed efforts to find the original texts are commendable.

All this rekindles the hope that the Punjabis would gradually come forward to save their rich and powerful literature which had been thrown to the winds since the period of Baba Farid Shakar Ganj.

So far as the status of Heer as a sacred book is concerned, which Ram Mohammad Singh claimed and a British Court granted, Waris Shah himself says.

ایہہ معنی قرآن کریم دے نیں
جہڑے شعر میںیں وارث شاہ دے نیں

(These verses by Waris Shah are an interpretation of the Quran, the Holy Book). 1988

HEER DAMODAR -- THE BASIC VERSION

THERE stands a high structure in the graveyard of Jhang city which is believed to be the mazar of Mai Heer and Mian Ranjha. The Sials, to which tribe Heer belonged, were for a long time the most powerful tribe in the area. They are still very powerful. Whenever some reference of Heer or Saheban is made in their presence they feel shy.

In 1976, Syeda Abida Husain had to preside over a function in the memory of Waris Shah in Jhang. Many writers from other cities had reached Jhang and were astonished to find the local organisers nonplussed because under the pressure of Sials, who were political supporters of the Syeda, she withdrew and left the city in haste. Sheikh Saeed, a former MIA, and a Sial poet Safdar Saleem came to the help of the organisers and the seminar and mushaira were held -- but without their patron-in-chief Syeda Abida Husain.

All that proves that there is solid substance in the love story of Heer Sial and Dheedho Ranjha and all the efforts of our intellectuals like Gilani Kamran, to prove that there was no Heer and no Ranjha and that the story has its origin in Arabic or Greek literature, miserably fail. It may be added that the structure in the Jhang graveyard mentioned earlier was raised by a Sial sardar who was ordered by her mother to do so. His mother had a dream in which Heer herself asked the lady to look after her grave. This is also history which no Sial has so far refuted.

One aspect of the story is not clear, however, in which period did this episode take place? Some scholars are of the opinion that it was at the fag end of Pathan period; the

other group holds that it was a happening of Akbar's period, during which lived the great poets Shah Husain and Damodar. The latter is believed to be first Punjabi poet who narrated the story of Heer Ranjha and claimed that he had seen all the characters of this drama.

اکھ دمودر میں اکھیں ڈٹھا جو تے طرف سدھائے جے کہہ ترے گئے اگیرے تاں اسپں بھی نالے آہے

Say Damodar I myself saw them -- Heer and Ranjha -- leaving for the south. I also accompanied them for four-and-a-half miles.

Damodar further says:

اکھیں ڈٹھا قصہ کیتا میں تال گنی نہ کوئی اسان مونہوں الایا اوہو، جو کچھ نظر پیو ای

What I saw I narrated that: I have no claim of a poet.

Whatever I have said I had seen it with my own eyes.

Now Damodar claims that he lived in Akbar's period; therefore Heer and Ranjha also lived and died in Akbar's period. In another verse, Damodar says that the two lovers were united in 1529 Bikrami which comes to 1472. But Akbar's reign started in 1556 and ended in 1605.

In *Absan-ul-Maqal* of Noor Mohammad Chela the year of the death of Heer is given as 1452. Bilal Zubairi, on the other hand, opines that Heer died in 1471 which is the period of Behlol Lodhi (1450-1488). All this shows that Heer and Ranjha never lived in Akbar's period. A Persian poet Kolabi (d. 1559) wrote the story much earlier and two Hindi poets Harya and Gang Bhat (both of Akbar's period) also did that.

Kolabi, who died three years after Akbar took over, while writing the story of Heer Ranjha, says:

درہندز ہیرور انجھا غوغاست کافسانہ ہرود در زبا نہاست

افسانہ عشق شاہ شنیدم آہ از دل ناتواں کشیدم

The story of Heer Ranjha is very popular in Hind. It is popular at folk level. When I heard their love story I was impressed by their truthfulness.

The conclusion which Mohammad Asif Khan (the editor of the text) has drawn from these references is that the episode pertains to Behlol Lodhi's period or a little earlier. It became quite well-known in the preceding period and reached the height of its popularity during the days of Humayun, Sher Shah Suri and Akbar. Later Heer and Ranjha became spiritual or mystic symbols and were used as such by Daud Kirmani of Shergarh (district Okara) and Shah Husain of Lahore.

Damodar lived in Jhang town in the period of Akbar and Jahangir. His "eye-witness" account is actually what he had heard from the elders of Jhang or elsewhere. He has only used the phrase *mein ditba* (I saw) to give credence to his poetic narration and this way of narration was not uncommon in those days and even at later stages. One of the Persian poets Saeed Saeedi of Shahjehan's period says:

دیدم پدرش مقدم دهر نامش موجو میان مردان

افسانہ ہیر کس نہ گفتہ ست از کس نہ شنیدم این حکایت

از طبع کشیدم این حکایت

I saw the father of Heer, a top officer. He was known as Mojoo. Nobody has narrated the story of Heer to me; I have not heard it from anybody else. It is a creation of my own imagination.

There are many other factors which prove that Damodar's way of telling a story was the prevailing fashion those days.

Damodar is undoubtedly the first Punjabi who not only laid the foundation of the story of Heer Ranjha to be

adapted and followed by hundreds of other Punjabi poets but he is also the first great master on this subject.

His plot is almost the same which is popularly known, having the same characters. His narration is superb and sometimes he touches the height of poetic art. The language he uses is almost the same which is spoken in Jhang, Phalia (Gujrat), Sargodha and Muzaffargarh. His metre is altogether different which is typical and known as Var. The prominent writers of Heer Ranjha story, including Muqbal and Waris Shah, have used a totally different metre from that of Damodar.

And now the last four lines of a stanza:

سن قاضی، ہک عرض اسادی، ایہہ اکتھ کہانی
 لوح، قلم، نہ عرش نہ کرسی نہ نظریں آوے پانی
 زمین، زمانہ، چند نہ سورج، جوتی جوت سمانی
 صاحب دی سونہ، سن تول قاضی، میں رانجھے دست و کانی

O, Qazi, listen to my tale script never before. Neither tablets, nor the marker, neither the heaven, nor the seat of glory, neither the seas nor the earth, neither space nor time, neither the sun nor the moon is its theme. But my story blends with the light eternal. By the Creator, Ranjha owns the very soul of Heer. 1988.

BABA FARID -- THE PIONEER OF PUNJABI POETRY

IN his booklet, "Contribution of Sufis to the Development of Urdu", Maulvi Abdul Haq claimed that Baba Farid Shakarganj was the earliest Urdu poet. The Punjabis regard him as the first-ever poet of their language. People regarding Multani or Seraiki as a language different from Punjabi claim that Baba Farid was the founding father of Seraiki poetry. The Chandigarh Punjab University has established a Chair in the name of Baba Farid. The prominent sufis of the sub-continent including Khawaja Nizamuddin Aulia and Sabir of Kalyar had duly recognised the greatness of this Chishty saint. The Sajjadanashins of the Baba had earned immense wealth in his name. Now the Auqaf Department of the Punjab is reaping the rich harvest.

Nanak collection

With all these claims and the big following that the saint has, not a single comprehensive biography of Baba Farid has been produced. His own, 'Favatul-Salekin' and two about him 'Rahat-ul-Qulub' and 'Israr-ul-Aulia' are in Persian and are not easily available. The same was the case with his Punjabi poetry. Whatever he wrote in the twelfth century was recorded by chance in the sixteenth century by Baba Nanak who visited his shrine in Pakpattan and had a meeting with the custodian of the shrine, Ibrahim Farid. Baba Nanak acquired the 'dohas' or 'ashloks' (couplets) of Baba Farid from Sheikh Ibrahim Farid which were later on

included in the 'Granth Saheb', the sacred book of the Sikhs. The total number of these couplets is 130. Soviet scholar Serebryakov says: "of Farid's poetry, one hundred and twenty-three so-called Salokas have come down to us i.e. couplets in diverse metres as well as the Nasihatnama, a poem of about forty lines written in Multani -- the literary language of the medieval Punjab" ('Punjabi Literature', p.p. 22-23).

Some scholars are of the view that the 130 couplets in the Granth include a few by Baba Nanak (four), Guru Arjan (eight), Guru Ram Das (two) and Guru Amar Das (four). This means that only 112 of Farid's couplets have come down to us through the Granth Saheb.

Another controversy was raised by Macauliffe in his book, 'Sikh Religion'. He attributes these couplets to one of the descendants of Baba Farid known as Sheikh Ibrahim Farid Sani and with whom Baba Nanak met in Ajodhan (Pakpattan). Macauliffe had no sound arguments to offer and, therefore, except for Lajwanti Rama Krishna none of the known scholars agreed with him. It is beyond doubt that Baba Farid also wrote poetry in Persian.

Local languages have been criminally ignored. This neglect can be traced back to the period when Muslims invaded this part of the sub-continent. Persian was the official language. Therefore, whosoever expressed himself in local dialects or languages was totally blacked out from official records. All sufi poets, Baba Farid, Shah Husain, and Ali Haider included, suffered accordingly.

Baba Farid was recognised as a great sufi by Khawaja Nizamuddin Aulia ('Rahat-ul-Qulub') and in 'Israr-ul-Aulia' by Maulana Badar Ishaque. In both these books, no mention is made of his Punjabi poetry. Anyhow, it was recorded in the Granth Saheb in the Gurmukhi script from where it was transliterated into the Persian script and first published when the printing press came to India late in the XIX century. In pre-partition Punjab, Hindus wanted Hindi in the Devnagari script, the Muslims adopted Urdu in the

Persian script and the Sikhs declared Punjabi as their religious language in the Gurmukhi script which thus became sacred.

Problems

Fundamental differences between the Persian and Gurmukhi scripts created some problems and the original texts were often mutilated in the process of transliteration. After independence the Muslims of west Punjab started taking interest in their cultural heritage which included the Punjabi language. Though the ruling elite and fundamentalist groups tried their best to convince the people that they should sever their centuries-old relationship with the soil, they did not entirely succeed and interest in local cultures, languages, literatures and histories increased somewhat. The first-ever history of Punjabi literature in Punjabi (Persian script) was written during this period. Some research work has since been done. Original literary work is also being produced. This interest led to the reproduction of Baba Farid's Punjabi poetry in original as well as its translation in English and Urdu.

Abdul Majeed Bhatti translated Baba Farid into Urdu while Maqbool Elahi translated him into English. Another translation in Sindhi has been attempted by Agha Khaled Saleem.

So far reproduction of Punjabi classics has been the work of three Government-aided bodies -- the Punjabi Adabi Academy, Lok Virsa of Islamabad and the Punjabi Adabi Board of Lahore which have published three collections of the couplets of Baba Farid which were edited by Dr. Faqir Mohammad, Prof. Shareef Kunjahi and Prof. Mohammad Asif Khan, respectively. There is nothing special about the Lok Virsa and Academy efforts. But the Board's book, edited by Mohammad Asif Khan, is most probably the first serious attempt to ascertain the

authenticity of and evaluate the Farid couplets in the perspective of history, language and literature. The 140-page foreword of the book and annotation of almost all the couplets encompasses all that has so far been done about Baba Farid's Punjabi poetry. But all that Asif Khan had done is in Persian script. What was needed was that scholars should be able to read Baba Farid's poetry in Persian and Gurmukhi scripts simultaneously. That is the only logical starting point for further historical and linguistic research on Farid's Punjabi poetry and his life.

Proud tradition

This much-needed and keenly-awaited work has now been accomplished by Dr. Nazir Ahmad, the former Principal of the Government College. Dr. Nazir, with the help of The Packages Ltd., has already reprinted the Punjabi poetry of Shah Husain, Bulleh Shah and Sultan Bahu. 'Kalam-i-Baba Farid' is the fourth in line. The Packages Ltd., have already made a name for themselves in book production. The book is a magnificent continuation of a proud tradition.

'Kalam-i-Baba Farid', never before printed so beautifully, also carries the couplets in the Gurmukhi. The book has four parts, the first a foreword in Urdu by Dr. Nazir, the second the couplets in the Nastaliq Persian script, the third carries couplets in the Naskh script and Gurmukhi plus their meanings in Urdu and the fourth includes 76 couplets attributed to Baba Farid but not found in the Granth Sahib. Thus, the book includes 188 couplets, two Shabads (poems) and eighteen couplets of the Sikh Gurus.

The Granth Sahib is basically not in the Punjabi language. Its compilers either belonged to the outer eastern belt of East Punjab or to the areas across the Jamuna. Its basic structure is essentially Hindi mixed with local dialects of western U.P. So we should not expect any

special linguistic justice to the dohas of Baba Farid, who belonged to the south-western part of the Punjab with the Lehnda dialect of Punjabi language. This created a baffling confusion which Dr. Nazir has tried to remove.

Old language

Another difficulty with the language of Baba Farid is that it is almost eight hundred years old. No writing of the pre-Farid period is available for research workers to assess the evolution of Punjabi over the centuries. Between Farid and the next Punjabi poet of note, Shah Husain (1539-93), there is a gap of four hundred years. That is why Farid is mostly very difficult to follow. The many special historical, poetic and cultural references that Farid makes cannot be deciphered and are thus a virtually insurmountable obstacle to further research. Dr. Nazir has tried his best to unfold every knot. Even where he fails he provides further impetus to the serious reader to apply his knowledge and mind to solve the literary, historical and linguistic riddles Farid's couplets present. 1985.

PUNJABI -- LANGUAGE OF THE MASSES

THE UNESCO recommended in 1953 that education could best be imparted in one's mother-tongue. "It is axiomatic," said its report, "that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother-tongue."

The report went on "Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind work automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is the means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through unfamiliar linguistic medium."

According to another UNICEF report of 1988, "In Punjab 70 per cent children leave school because education is not given to them in their mother-tongue."

More than 130 years ago when the British invaded the Punjab and established their government in this region, Mr. McLeod ordered: "Urdu be made familiar, in the first instance, to the educated classes and through them, as would certainly follow, to the entire body of the people, to the eventual suppression of inferior local dialect" (*A History of the Growth and Development of Western Education in Punjab* by H.R.Mehta).

The views of our other foreign rulers have been quoted by Syed Mustafa Ali Brailvi in his book *Angrezoan ki Lisani Policy* (Linguistic Policy of the British). Sir Robert Egerton said: "The people of the Punjab have no language at all". Sir Charles Aitchison was of the opinion that "I do not find Punjabi fit as a medium of instruction." P.S. Meol, Commissioner of Delhi, had remarked: "If Punjabi is given the status of court language, our educational system would

become useless. We teach Urdu instead of Punjabi. To encourage Punjabi through Gurmukhi would be a political blunder. Urdu will also suit Multan and Rawalpindi districts".

What were the reasons which forced the invaders to oppose the local language or languages? Much can be said in that respect. But the most plausible reason was that the foreign rulers had recruited their civil and military forces from areas other than the Punjab. They had, directly or indirectly, ruled all parts of India except the Punjab with the help of those whose mother-tongue was not Punjabi. Therefore, to impose their rule in the Punjab, Urdu was to be given an important place in the social, cultural and educational matrix of the Punjab. That was the language of their native servants and, as a matter of policy, needed to be foisted on the newly conquered territories. What was at the back of the linguistic policy of the British for the Punjab can best be judged from the remarks of Maj. Edward Lake that appeared in *Mutiny Reports*. Says Maj. Edward in a note to Robert Montgomery: "There were thousands of Hindoostances syces, grass-cutters and artillery drivers and thousands of camp-followers and bazar people at all the large military stations, while there were hundreds of Hindoostanee domestic servants at every place.

"Lastly, the Hindoostanee element prevailed in all more responsible and lucrative appointments. In all departments and offices of six native extra-assistants attached to this division (Jullundur Division) five were Hindoostances. Of 19 tehseeldars and 47 cotwals and thanedars, about one-half of the former and one-third of the latter were Hindoostances. The proportion among the tehsil and thana moharrirs was about the same, or from a half to a third. As to the scristadars, nazirs, and moharrirs to all the sadder offices, the greater number were from the old North-Western provinces and there were not a few Poorbeahs among the orderlies, jamadars, chaprassies, and

muzkoorecs and also among the same grades in the tehseels and thanas.

"....Recently conquered Punjab was held in subjection by a large proportion of Hindoostanee troops, while the revenues were collected and the laws were administered in a great measure through the medium of Hindoostanee officials...."

Persian, the court language of the Mughals and Sikhs, was most probably not acceptable to the British. Its best alternative could be Punjabi but because the new rulers and their manpower did not know Punjabi Urdu was adopted as the second official language. There was another reason which cannot be ruled out. The Punjabis were adamant to accept the foreign rulers and the Punjabi bards, through their verses, were constantly fanning hatred against them. It was thus in the fitness of things to discourage Punjabi at all costs. Therefore consensus among all the commissioners and deputy commissioners of the Punjab was against Punjabi. The Deputy Commissioner of Gogera, who had to face Ahmad Khan Khari and Murad Fatiana, was particularly bitter about the Punjabi language. According to him, "To make Punjabi the court language of Gogera amounts to making the rural dialect of Somersetshire the language of the courts of London."

Thus the case of the Punjabi language was deliberately spoiled by the British who introduced, in other provinces of India, the local languages as medium of instruction and for use in lower courts and the revenue departments. In this they had the support of their officials from U.P. Not only that, their Punjabi collaborators (Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus) also backed the British linguistic policy.

After the foreign rulers had left it was hoped that wisdom would prevail and the intellectuals and educationists of the Punjab would reverse the discriminatory linguistic policy. But that was not to be so. What actually happened was that the hostile attitude towards Punjabi further sharpened. Baba-i-Urdu Maulvi

Abdul Haq thought that "Urdu is the only Islamic language of Pakistan and the rest, Punjabi, Bengali, Sindhi, Baluchi and Pushto, are the languages of pagans (*but-parast*) and non-believers". And, at this juncture again, the Punjabi intellectuals sided with the U.P. wallahs. Maulana Salahuddin Ahmad, a Punjabi, went a step further. In his article *Effects of partition on Urdu Language and Literature* he said: "The future of Urdu in West Pakistan is not bad. So far as the question of the Punjabi language in our educational system is concerned, it has gone with the Sikhs. Because of the short-sightedness of easy-going Muslims Punjabi in Persian script was badly damaging Urdu. The status of a Gayani in Punjabi and Fazil in Urdu was equal in the eyes of the government, and the language (Punjabi) which has a very small quantity of literature was successfully competing with Urdu. Our rulers were ignorant and indifferent towards Urdu (before partition) and perhaps the same attitude may persist in future. Anyhow the revolution of 1947 has solved this problem for which we thank God."

This is the background in which Saeed Farani Kammi has written this book *Punjabi Zuban Nabeen Marey Gee*. Saeed has acquired a particular quality. He calls himself a "Kammi" which means "menial worker" and anybody who is not a worker is called by him "Na-kammi" (worthless). He says that his maternal grandfather was a "washerman" while his paternal grandfather was a tailor. Therefore calls himself a "Kammi" and Punjabi, he asserts, is the language of the Kammis. The book is dedicated to the "Musallis" of the Punjab. All that will naturally lead to an emotional outburst. This seriously-conceived and well-documented book is an emotion-charged attempt which may or may not look justified.

In Hajira Masroor's short story *Umat-i-Marbooma* the Urdu-speaking refugees pass derogatory remarks about Punjabis and their culture. There are many other examples of the same kind. If that is justified, then Saeed Farani's

outburst could also be justified. The weakest and, at the same time, the strongest point of this book is that it is an emotional book. But what has been said in it is fully supported by facts and figures. 1988

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