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For Correspondence

Hussain Ahmad Khan
Editor, *The Historian*,
Department of History, Government College University, Katchery Road, Lahore, Pakistan
E-mail: hussainahmad@gcu.edu.pk; historian@gcu,edu.pk

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POORNAY: AN ANALYSIS

TAHIR MAHMOOD

UNIVERSITY OF THE PUNJAB, LAHORE

SAEED BHUTTA

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE UNIVERSITY, LAHORE

ABSTRACT

Hussain Shahid's collection of essays, entitled *Poornay*, has a special significance in the history of criticism in Punjabi literature. In this article, an effort has been made to understand his concept of literary criticism. The author has focused on Hussain Shahid's two fundamental ideas. First, he outlined the responsibilities of a Punjabi writer in the given socio-historical context. Second, Hussain Shahid tried to provide a fresh evaluation of Punjabi classical literature in light of principles of New Criticism. This article appreciated the manner in which he added a new flavor to Punjabi criticism.

KEY WORDS

Poornay; Hussain Shahid, Punjabi Literature; Oral History

The British forces occupied Punjab in 1849. Unlike other provinces of the Subcontinent, residents of Punjab were deprived of the right to education in their mother tongue. In the post-colonial period, the same education policy continued in respect of the medium of instruction. Out of all regional languages of Pakistan, Bengali and Sindhi were being taught at the school level since colonial times. When an effort was made to create obstacles in the way of those languages, Bengalis and Sindhis raised their voice for obtaining education in their mother tongues. They did not allow anybody to deprive them of this right. When a trend of insisting on one's cultural identity became prevalent in Pakistan, the middle-class intellectuals of Punjab also started raising fundamental questions about their identity. Do we have any mother tongue? What is the place of Punjabi classical poetry in the poetic tradition at the international level? Is genuinely creative writing possible without employing the mother tongue? A generation of Punjabi writers, poets, and intellectuals was raised in the effort to respond to these questions. Later on, this generation proved to be a worthy asset for Punjab. Hussain Shahid's ideas are based on the same above-mentioned fundamental questions and his book titled,

Poorney documents the effort of a creative person to find responses to the same inquiry into the culture, language, and creativity.

The responsibilities of a Punjabi writer have been determined in the first four essays of the book, *Poornay*. These essays included *Mangat* (Beggars), *Bara mah tay aj day Punjabi shair* (the genre of twelve months and contemporary Punjabi poets), *Bohjhay wich Lahore* (Lahore in the pocket), and *aj da Punjabi Adab* (contemporary Punjabi literature). The Punjabi language is not taught at the school level and the Punjabi writer of today develops an inclination to Punjabi literature after learning basic concepts from other languages due to the current education system. While he feels the urge to write in his mother tongue, he continues to write under influence of the literature of other languages learned by him. Thus, his writings are devoid of the unique flavour and temperament of the Punjabi language and Hussain Shahid terms him as the 'beggar' writer.

> When the beggar writers of Punjab hold the pen, they fill it with the ink of languages other than Punjabi. They mix various ingredients and prepare such a compound dish which can be neither recognized nor digested.[1]

The personality of the writers of Pakistani Punjab is divided into three parts. In their daily conversation, they use the vocabulary of English, Urdu, and Punjabi without any hesitation. Literary writing has to be the result of a deep reflection. During the creative moment of deep reflection, a writer must maintain the original literary flavor of his own language instead of relying on the vocabulary of other languages. Our educational system has steered the Punjabi writer away from his real and rich heritage. The Punjabi vocabulary is rich and vast. Today's Punjabi writer can be more perceptive about language and develop a better command of it if he has been brought up in a village because it is the only way to learn the language in a natural manner when it is not being taught in academic institutions. According to another insightful observation of Hussain Shahid, if a Punjabi writer has not got an opportunity to live in a village, then a deep study of Punjabi classical literature might also compensate for it; Hussain Shahid expresses:

> Though Punjabi is our mother tongue, but its vocabulary is being dumped into an old, bottomless well. It is a risky endeavor to jump or even dip into the well. One may lose life in this adventure. Therefore, artificiality creeps in the writings of lazy and slothful writers who cannot take the risk as they love their life too much. It is because of these writers that people ask what is so unique about Punjabi literature. They do not know that if a piece

is written in real 'Punjabi', then one does not need to explain its uniqueness because the writing itself calls one's attention to itself and makes it self-evident that it has been written in this language.[2]

Hussain Shahid is of the view that Punjabi literature has a vast and diverse treasure of literary genres and contemporary Punjabi poets should utilize them and make them current. He has discussed this point at length in his essay titled, *Bara mah tay aj day Punjabi shair* (the genre of twelve months and contemporary Punjabi poets). In our culture and literary tradition, the genre of *Bara mah* (twelve months) holds a very high place. Our poets have been writing in this genre for centuries and, therefore, it has got the elevated status of a classic. Today's poet may like to articulate the contemporary truths by composing *Bara mah* (twelve months). Only such poets can do so who have their roots deep into the soil and who are familiar with the literary landscape at the international level. Hussain Shahid demands from the contemporary poets that they must be familiar with their respective traditions. There is so much misunderstanding about the Punjabi language and literature, therefore, a Punjabi writer needs to know about the nature of the misunderstanding and act as a self-aware creative personality that is familiar with one's shortcomings also. According to Hussain Shahid,

> Actually, our writer has not proved to be a good salesman. Some parts of his shop continue to be covered with dust. The uneven heaps of sellable products are scattered all over. He does not bother to organize them or make them presentable. He does not clean dust from the product before presenting it to the customer. He gropes blindly in the shop and whatever comes to his hand, he presents it to the customer. If the customer likes it, then it is alright. If the customer does not like it when the product is again thrown into the same heap from where it was picked up earlier. A Punjabi writer neither adds a new flavor nor gets rid of the discarded material. He does not like Kashmiri Bazar any more. He is attracted by Anarkali Bazar and Mall road. It amounts to undo one's earlier achievements in the effort to achieve more.[3]

These ideas were referred to with a condescending sneer on Punjabi writers in the 1960s. Hussain Shahid strongly felt about these issues and made writers of his times aware of his thoughts on them. He pointed out the responsibilities of the middle-class writers in that milieu and thus these views were disseminated among them. These essays are still fresh after several decades because the Punjabi writer has not yet fully resolved the dilemmas which were highlighted by Husain Shahid.

Eight essays of the book *Poornay* focus on Punjabi classical poetry. A close reading of these essays makes one infer that he was influenced by "New Criticism". In reaction to historical, psychological, and Marxist criticism, a trend in criticism emerged in Europe and the United States which shifted focus from the artist and his environment to the art and his work. In the light of the ideas of T.S. Eliot, this view became prevalent through the impersonal theory of poetry and objective metaphor. During the same period, the Russian formalists also underlined that there was no art outside the work of art. The theory of New Criticism also resembled it because it was defined as:

> A type of formalist literary criticism that reached its height during the 1940s and 1950s, and that received its name from John Crowe Ransom's 1941 book The New Criticism. New Critics treat a work of literary art as if it were a self-contained, self-referential object.[4]

In the essays contained in *Poornay*, ideas of New Criticism have been reflected clearly. In his essay titled, 'Shah Hussain di art gallery' (Shah Hussain's art gallery), Hussain Shahid writes: "Many times, one thinks that if Shah Hussain had a brush instead of a pen in his hand, he would have done wonders".[5]

In the first instance, this statement sounds meaningless that if Shah Hussain had been into painting, he would have been a great painter. Hussain Shahid wants to say that Shah Hussain's poetry is replete with matchless imagery and the pictures drawn by him in words are immortal. In New Criticism, the imagery has a prominent place. When the New Criticism deviates its attention from social sciences, then it is left with only literary criteria to evaluate literary works.

In three essays of *Poornay*, literary symbols have been analyzed. These were European writers who introduced the trend of symbolism. When Hussain Shahid applied the theory of symbolism for explaining Shah Hussain's work, he mesmerized readers of Punjabi literature. He analyzed in-depth the symbols employed in Shah Hussain's poetry. He discovered Shah Hussain's symbolic system in symbols like woman, spinning wheel, in-laws, parental house, buffalo, goldsmith, and crow. According to Hussain Shahid,

> (Shah) Hussain has revolved the whole philosophy of life around the handle of a spinning wheel. The edifice of Hussain's mysticism has been raised upon pillars of the spinning wheel.[6]

Another essay titled, *Sadian varan dey kirdar—Dhol Batshah* (Characters of our legendary epics—*Dhol Batshah*) is a unique study that reminds us of those ancient

literary, cultural, and civilizational similarities between Rajasthan and Punjab which have been altogether forgotten by the modern generation. The analysis of the story of *Dhol Simi* is found in Punjabi folk literature and the tradition of storytelling but it could not attract a great artist who might have made it a classic. Hussain Shahid analyzed the story and declared *Dhol Batshah* to be one of the earliest characters of our folk tales who is not only an embodiment of virtues but has faults and failings also. According to Hussain Shahid,

> In characters of folk tales, we usually find all positive virtues. But it is not the case in respect of the evolution of the character of *Dhol*. Authors of the character of *Dhol* have also highlighted his weaknesses to determine his identity. His virtues and flaws have been shown in the story in such an artistic manner that *Dhol* has become an ordinary human character. He does not seem to be an artificial collection of virtues.[7]

The character of *Dhol Batshah* has strong romantic feelings. Therefore, he has to face difficulties at every step. *Tota* of *Dhol Batshah* is very intelligent and helps him overcome difficulties. In this folk tale, *Tota* is the symbol of reason. According to Hussain Shahid,

> One such symbol is Dhol Batshah's Tota who accompanies him throughout the story. Tota is an artistic extension of Dhol's character.[8]

Hussain Shahid brought to our attention another artistic aspect of this folk tale. *Heera Hiran* and *Tota* do not have the personality of a character. *Heera Hiran* and *Tota* are extensions of the characters of *Simi* and *Dhol Batshah* respectively.

A symbolic drama by a Bengali playwright Saeed Ahmad was translated by Najam Hussain Syed with the title, *Jungle da rakha* (custodian of the jungle). This drama was played in Lahore. In his essay titled, *janwaran dai monhoon bandian dian gallan* (conversation of humans through animals), Hussain Shahid has analyzed the animal characters of this play. In this essay, there is more explanation of characters and less criticism.

Humor and irony have always been part of the literature. There are several examples of it in oriental literature. An important aspect of New Criticism is irony. Therefore, it has been noted that:

> New critics especially appreciate the use of literary devices, such as irony and paradox, to achieve a balance or reconciliation between dissimilar, even conflicting, elements in a text.[9]

Some important features of Heer Waris Shah include jokes, humour, irony and literary allusions. Hussain Shahid has looked at Waris Shah's Heer in a creative manner which has benefitted the reader of Punjabi literature. Nobody can guess whether it is his own wisdom, or it is borrowed one. He has enumerated nine types of Warish Shah's humour and irony. He has concluded that Waris Shah has no match in the field of humour and irony. According to Hussain Shahid,

> The picture of Waris Shah that emerges from the book is that of a wise man who employs satire and irony. He stands, with half opened lips and slight smile, at some elevated place. The worldly matters are as ordinary and routine for him as a game for an administrator.[10]

There are two main methods for studying classical poetry. First, to analyze the political, social, historical, and cultural situation of the period in which the under-study poet lived. It helps the reader understand the environment of the creative experience of the poet. The second method involves a reading of classical literature with contemporary consciousness, pathos, and literary taste. When a critic uses the latter method, he or she is determining a new value of the classical literature. All of Hussain Shahid's essays on classical literature constitute an example of it. However, in essays like *Mein tay Waris Shah* (Waris Shah and I) and *Shah Hussain dai adalti faislay* (Shah Hussain's court decisions), this style is more clearly there. The title, *Mein tay Waris Shah* (Waris Shah and I) creates an impression as if it is some impressionistic essay. An in-depth reading of this essay makes one realize that Waris Shah's classical significance in it and, as a result, his poetry emerges as a beacon of universal wisdom in contemporary times.

Sahiban da kirdar meri nazar vich (the character of Sahiban in my view) is a memorable essay by Hussain Shahid. He has tried to understand the psychology of Sahiban's character. When he wrote this essay, the critic of Punjabi literature was not unfamiliar with names like Freud, Jung, and Adler. Rather Punjabi criticism was quite influenced by these psychologists at that time. However, Hussain Shahid did not tread on the familiar and tried path. He tried to understand the relationship between brother and sister in the context of its importance in the social system of Punjab. For obvious reasons, Sahiban's character has been a complex one in Punjabi literature. Hussain Shahid has loosened and unfastened the knot of complexity. According to Hussain Shahid,

> If we assume that Sahiban caused the death of her brother at the hands of Mirza, can she lead the rest of her life with contentment as murderer or devourer of her brother. There was no feeling other than selfishness behind the idea of keeping Mirza alive. There was some higher emotion behind the sacrifice of dying with Mirza and keeping brothers alive. Sahiban knew her brothers the most. By looking at her brothers, she knew with certainty that the final moment of death had finally approached her and Mirza. Along with Mirza, she welcomed the death and did not like living with Mirza after the death of her brother with the social label as brother devourer.[11]

A woman of Punjab can never lead a comfortable life after getting her brother murdered. If the loyalty to her love is possible only through the murder of her brothers, then life is not worth living. Like many other essays of Hussain Shahid, this study also bears testimony to his unique ideas and adds much to the psychological criticism of Punjabi literature.

Hussain Shahid is a prominent critic of Punjabi literature. He has not followed other Punjabi critics. Rather he has guided them to the new paths in criticism of the Punjabi literature. As a responsible critic, he has made contemporary writers realize their shortcomings. He is influenced by the New Criticism but here again he has not blindly followed the European critics. He has determined afresh the value of Punjabi classical poetry in the light of rational criteria. Sometimes, there is an echo of Marxist and psychological criticism in his writings, but he has not written anything in detail from that perspective. He advocates for the pure Punjabi language. He considers only those writings as Punjabi writings which reflect the flavor and temperament of the language. His writings also familiarize the mind of the reader with the original and authentic fragrance of Punjabi literature. He has a special command over the language which enables him to articulate the most difficult and complex ideas with extraordinary ease. For many, criticism is a dry subject, but he makes it tolerable due to his sense of humor. Sometimes, his jokes and anecdotes are not relevant to the intellectual field of criticism. Punjabi criticism is not very old. However, after reading *Poornay*, one can say that in the twilight of syllabus-based criticism of educational institutions, Hussain Shahid might not be a sun, but he is certainly a candle that continues to provide light to Punjabi readers.

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PIR-MURID RELATIONSHIP: STEREOTYPES AND PRACTITIONER'S PERSPECTIVES

ARSLAN WAHEED
UNIVERSITY OF BONN
GERMANY

ABSTRACT

The *Pir-Murid* relationship is a source of transmitting spiritual knowledge and the training of the *Murids* (disciples) to get union with God through their master often called *Sheikh, Pir*, or *Murshid*. Focusing on the *Idreesia* order in Multan, Pakistan, this study attempts to examine the *Pir-Murid* relationship, its cultural history, and to negate certain stereotypes that have been associated with this institution. It is also important to have religious knowledge, cultural conceptualisations, and experiences to understand the difference between religious experiences and other experiences. Based on the ethnography of *Idreesia* order spanning over five years (2013-2018) as a *Murid*, this article argues that the traditional understanding of the *Pir-Murid* relationship is largely an outsider's perspective. The present study shows that the relationship is dynamic, fluid, and continuously negotiated by both *Pir* and his *Murids* – an aspect that is absent in mainstream literature but eminent in day to day practices.

KEY WORDS

Pir-Murid; Sufism; *Idreesia* order

Religion is a set of beliefs and rituals that demands complete obedience from its followers. There is a long debate in philosophy about the rationalizing capacity of the human mind. However, to conceptualise and rationalize every belief of religion has remained far beyond the capacity of the human mind. There is a long debate in theology and philosophy about the blind faith in religious belief. Our topic falls in the same category that involved a superhuman as a source for spiritual elevation. In the *Pir-Murid* relationship, The *Murid* (disciple) depends upon his *Pir* (Master) and follows him to get union with God. God and Superhuman as social actors have been

widely discussed by scholars based on the works by Durkheim and Weber.[1] Religious beliefs are like religious cultures having their own logic and trajectory. Therefore, to understand the cultural logic, reasons, and philosophy, the complete belief in culture and following it seems inevitable. The matrix theory of religious beliefs holds the same view.[2] The theory believes that one can experience God or religious beliefs only if one has a framework or the necessary concepts that help to interpret experiences and to distinguish these religious experiences from the other experiences.[3]

For religious institutions and religious teachings, the human reason cannot be considered as a credible source by the believers. Our theological system is not dependent upon the books and religious creeds and knowledge but based on our religious beliefs, the existence of God, and the interpretation under the leading of the Holy Spirit.[4] Furthermore, the ascetical typifications that have been discussed by Max Weber are the property of specific social groups and are handed down to generations by them.[5] For such an arrangement, it is essential to share those beliefs and have faith in them. By the same token, the studies of *Pir-Murid*, as a Sufi institution in Pakistan, would be considered as 'distant observation' as the work has been done mostly by non-believers or by Muslim historians without ethnographic details like that of Riazul Islam (2009).[6] The present study aims at analyzing the *Pir-Murid* relationship, its cultural logic, and religious rationale as well as certain stereotypes that have been associated with such a relationship from a practitioner's perspective.

The Pir-Murid relationship is the basic pillar of any Sufi order throughout the Islamic world. In every *Silsla* (order), the relationship of *Pir* (Master) and *Murid* (Disciple) has been given a certain set of both formal and informal rules to follow. The *Pir-Murid* relationship is a source of transmitting spiritual knowledge, mystic culture, and the training of the *Murids* on their way to union with God through their masters.[7] In different mystic orders, the dynamics of the *Pir-Murid* relationship are different. However, generally, rules are very similar and bear a lot of resemblance with a few differences. It would be interesting to note that these 'rules' are not codified or implement by some external institution. These informal sets of instructions can be regarded as recommendations that have been evolved over the centuries in subcontinental Sufism. This set of recommendations is both for *Pir* and *Murid*.

SUFISM IN PAKISTAN

The roots of Sufism and *Pir-Murid* relationship in the region can be traced back to 644 AD when Muslims from the Arab had touched the shores of India. In this part of the world, the preaching of Islam has done mostly at the hands of mystics, Sufis, and other *Aulias* (literally, Friends of God). Therefore, the tradition of Islam in Pakistan is present in saintly traditions of the *Pir-Murid* relationship. The reason that has been found for this is that the fundamental teachings of Islam are present in the Arabic language, which is alien to the people of the subcontinent. Therefore, people had started following these mystics as former don't have any understanding of Islamic teachings and for them, Islam is what has been told and done by these mystics.[8] However, this *Pir-Murid* relationship had been later on criticized by the reformers such as Shah Wali Ullah who regarded this as a Persian Mysticism. The roots of the *Pir-Murid* relationship are neither political nor a source of spiritual elevation but simply a source of learning of the basic principles of Islam in new geographies. Furthermore, the aims of the Sufis and mystics were not solely the spiritual elevation of the existing Muslims as portrayed in the literature. The Arab mystics and traders were just spreading the new religion in India and were treating the non-believers and believers equally as both of them knew nothing about the fundamental teachings of Islam. However, over time and with the emergence of new *Silsala* (orders), the relationship between *Pirs* and *Murids* began to change because the numbers of practicing Muslims have been increasing.

Since it has been argued that the primary reason for the divine status of the *Pir*s in Pakistan is because the mystics were once sole representatives of Islam. People didn't know about Islam and its fundamental teachings. For them, what a saint does is Islam and to follow a saint is akin to follow God. Therefore, the following of the *Pir* is being considered as an essential part of the belief system of Islam in Pakistan. Philip Lewis to some extent is right when he remarks that:

> *Piri-Muridi* relations are deeply rooted in traditional Pakistani society. Parents often expect their children to follow a *Pir*, preferably their own. In village society, someone without a *Pir* may well court ostracism since 'it is believed that he does not have a source of spiritual guidance and his sins cannot be written off on the Day of Judgment.[9]

Frithof Schuon, as quoted by Muhammad Ajmal, has analyzed the role of *Pir* who "represents and transmits first the reality of 'being', the second reality of intelligence or 'truth', and third reality of 'love', union or happiness".[10] Generally, it is believed that a *Pir* is a person who is a friend of God and is capable of performing

some wonders through either amulets or his recitation of selected verses from the Quran. Unlike Catholicism, there is no formal institution in Islam to bestow sainthood or to recognize the spiritual elevation of an individual. It is the religious experience of the people and widely held believes in the capabilities of an individual that would elevate a person to the status of *Pir*. Since the *Pir* is expected to be of exceptional talent, piety, qualities, and piousness, therefore, many people would come to him to seek guidance, treatments of various kinds of ailments, paying respects, and s*Pir*itual training to elevate themselves for both this world and hereafter. Not every follower of a *Pir* is *Murid*. Only those who make a promise, often through *Bai't* (Oath of Allegiance to the *Pir*), can be categorized as *Murid*. The relationship that then establishes enters a new phase in which mere respect or visiting is not enough. Rather, *Murids* are expected to be devotees of the *Pir* who have to follow their master blindly and should remain available whenever called.

GLIMPSES OF THE FIELD

I have been following a *Sheikh* who is residing in Multan and is the head of the *Silsala-e-Idreesia.* Based in Mecca since the 18th century, the order has its roots in Libya, Egypt, East Africa, Malaysia, Singapore, as well as in Pakistan. Contrary to other Sufi orders in the subcontinent, *Idreesia* order is working on different principles in which *Ehad* (Promise) with God is of prime importance instead of *Bai't* (unconditional submission) on the hands of *Pir*. It is perhaps important to discuss a bit about *Ehad* to show the foundations of the differences in the *Pir-Murid* relationship. Unlike *Bai't, Ehad* is a practice of making a promise with God and not with the *Pir.* In this case, *Pir* is more like a witness of the promise who will be there to help out his *Murids* to fulfill their promises and guide them to make progress on their spiritual paths. Unlike *Bai't*, which is to be performed on the hands of the *Pir, Ehad* can be made from anywhere by simply narrating a couple of lines after *Pir's* recitation. I also happened to know about a rather unusual Sufi order back in 2008 when one of my friends told me about this. Before that, Sufism and *Bai't* were the same things for me. Knowing about the *Ehad* was already enough for me to take a look inside the new forms of *Pir-Murid* relationship where the promises are to be made with God and not with the *Pir.*

I formally started visiting headquarter of *Idreesia* order (where the head resides) in 2011 and less frequently, but regularly, since 2013. I started practicing Sufism or spiritual Islam from this order and became a part of it not only as a *Murid* but as someone who has access to certain organisational and management aspects. Being a *Murid,* I have been given certain opportunities to talk to the chief

organisers, senior *Murids* who were performing various management duties, ceremonies of the inclusion of new *Murids*, guiding them in the order to make the relationship successful. Along with the observations and ethnographies, I also managed to talk to the people at a different position on the hierarchical scale of the order to understand their religious experiences and to compare them with mine.

In this context, the present study carries a lot of information and poses some questions on the existing set of literature that is (re)producing stereotypes, fixes the dynamics, and stabilizing the ever-changing nature of the *Pir-Murid* relationship. Based on the detailed ethnography and interviews, this study highlights the stereotypical evaluation, over-generalisations, and simplification of the *Pir-Murid* relationship while bringing forth new pieces of evidence from the field. Empirical data and its subsequent analysis show that the *Pir-Murid* relationship is neither fixed nor static. The relationship is dynamic, flexible, and is continuously negotiated by both *Pir* and *Murid(s).*

PIR-MURID RELATIONSHIP IN THE MAINSTREAM LITERATURE

Bikram N. Nanda and M. Talib in "Soul of the Soulless: An Analysis of the *Pir-Murid* Relationship in Sufi Discourse" discussed the nature of the relationship between *Pir* and his *Murid.* They believe that the relationship is divine and is above the capacity of human reason. *Pir* is divinity and the analogy they have used is of master-slave. Bikram and Talib believe that *Pir* is a model sufferer for his *Murid.*[11] The depiction of *Pir* as a model is a widely acknowledged and accepted notion but, in terms of sufferings, the role of *Pir* has been depicted inadequately. *Pir* is not a sufferer but a source that can teach you how to avoid sufferings in the way of God.

Irina Tweedi's diary, Daughter of fire, is an excellent piece of writing on this subject which is carrying her personal experience as *Murid* in the *Pir-Murid* relationship. She depicts *Pir* as a supernatural being who is having strange powers like that of God which make him God.[12] S*Pir*itualism is a very delicate line of faith. Here, *Murid* has to be very careful about the difference between *Pir*, Prophet (PBUH), and God. Irina was a converted Muslim and the elements of s*Pir*itual Christianity can be seen in her study when she frequently links *Pir* with God.[13] In Christianity, the concept of Trinity and The Holy S*Pir*it links supernatural humans, Jesus and Merry, with God. Irina is also dealing with *Pir* like a God that might not true with traditional Sufi orders in Islam.

The account given by the Riaz-ul-Islam is covering the set of 'perceived codes' and rules governing the relationship of *Pir* and his *Murid*. Islam is of the view that

the basic and most common pattern that is adopted in almost every mystic order is the "unconditional acceptance of *Pir*'s order by his *Murids*".[14] Similarly, Muhammad Ajmal widely acknowledges the supremacy of the *Pir's* knowledge and his mastership over the disciple (*Murid*), therefore, supporting the idea of unconditional acceptance and following of the orders that have been discussed by Riazul Islam.

Furthermore, the works of Richard Eaton and David Gilmartin show the historic-political aspects of the *Pir-Murid* relationship. Richard Eaton has given a historical account of the Shrine of Baba Farid. The author has discussed in detail the political aspects of *Sajjada-Nashin* (The successor of the Sufi master). For instance, in 1757, Diwan Abdul Subhan (the successor of Baba Farid, a *Pir*) gathered an army comprising of his *Jat Murids* and attacked the Raja of Bikaner, and expanded the territorial holdings of the Shrine.[15] Eaton believes that the *Pir-Murid* relationship can be used as a source of both moral and political authority of the *Pir*s over their *Murids*. It seems that the historical analysis that has been done by Eaton to conceptualize the *Pir-Murid* relationship is explaining the peculiar aspects of Islamic mysticism and cannot be regarded as a general principle. The work of David Gilmartin also follows a similar line as that of Eaton. The political aspect is too dominated in the works of both scholars that the essence of the *Pir-Murid* relationship seems dead as the primary function of the relationship is to secure the blessings of God instead of mundane prosperity.

The study of the *Pir-Murid* relationship is the study of two persons, their belief systems, their religious standings, and their positions. To attempt to understand their relational dynamics, ethnographic accounts may be of some grave importance. The works of Pnina Werbner and Katherine Pratt Ewing are important in this regard. The ethnographic account of *Zinda Pir* (The Living *Pir)* by Werbner shows the religious orientation of the *Pir-Murid* relationship in which *Murids* of the *Zinda Pir* are blind followers and accept every advice or order of their *Pir*. The ethnographic account by Werbner is a clear manifestation of what has been called "unconditional acceptance or following" by Riazul Islam. Werbner conceptualized the *Pir-Murid* relationships in the words of her respondent:

> The Sheikh always tells us that whenever *Murids* meet, *you must think that I am between you*. Between real brothers there is marriage, there is land and there is wealth (*Rishta, Zamin aur daulat*), but not between *Murids*.[16]

Ewing also emphasizes the similar pattern of the *Pir-Murid* relationship in which the unconditional following of the *Pir* is involved. In her study, Ewing emphasized the fixation of the asymmetrical relationship between *Pir* and his *Murids.* As can be seen in the above-mentioned quotation, *Sheikh* is portrayed as a superhuman social actor who will always be present among its *Murids* even if they are operating outside their spiritual realm. The presentation of *Pir* as an over encompassing reality constituting the reality of his *Murid* is perhaps an attempt to romanticize the *Pir-Murid* relationship in which *Murid* has no agency and individuality and can only be seen in his individualization. The basic idea, however, that can be derived from the existing and discussed literature is that the *Pir-Murid* relationship is the fundamental relationship in a Sufi organisation. The dynamics of the relationship revolve around the two basic factors: the securing of blessings of God in this world; and the spiritual elevation of one's soul so that the union with God can be made possible.[17] Since the relationship is socially constituted and constitutive of social realities through which both *Pir* and *Murids* exist, their day to day interaction and symbolic order that they establish has largely been ignored.

In a critical evaluation of the existing literature on the topic, one may find the observations and analysis too distant and out of the cultural context. The ethnographic accounts are more vulnerable to criticism because of the obvious difference in the researcher's background, respondent's reflexivity, and the belief systems of both interviewer and the one who is being interviewed. On the other hand, the historical researches that have been conducted by Gilmartin and Eaton are also subject to criticism because of the long colonial rule in South Asia. The patronage that has been extended to the Shrines and *Pir*s by the Mughal state has a different orientation than that of British colonial rule. The obvious difference came from the fact that the Mughal rulers were Muslims and most of them like the Sultans of the Slave dynasty had great affection and respect for the *Pir*s and Sufis.[18] On the other hand, the dynamics of the British patronage were entirely different. Their aim was, primarily, to strengthen their colonial rule and to give a soft image to the natives.

In the following section of the paper, the fragility of the stereotypical evaluations of the *Pir-Murid* relations is discussed. Taking *Idreesia* order as a point of reference, the following section argues that the *Pir-Murid* relationship is both dynamic and continuously fluctuating showing that the generalisations are not possible. Also, the way the *Pir-Murid* relationship exists and operates in everyday life is much more different than that of common understanding or distant observations made by non-practitioners or scholars from their ivory towers.

DIFFERENT STATURES OF *MURIDS*

One of the most common generalizations that we may find in the discussed literature is that the division among the *Murids* of the same *Pir* is very superficial and general consists of ordinary *Murids* and *Khalifas* (Deputyship). The relationship is neither two-fold nor too simple to be categorized in one of the above-mentioned divisions. Sometimes, the ordinary *Murid* who remains very close in contact with the *Pir* derives much of the blessings of *Pir* and moral authority over the ordinary *Murids*. He enjoys a sense of superiority over the people who aspire to see and meet *Pir*. This is not only my personal feeling when I began as an ordinary and new *Murid* but also reported to me by my respondents. Some of them blindly believe that they need to stay as close as possible to gain maximum out of this relation, while others strongly aspire to those who had access to the *Pir* for most of their time. This difference of position brings some ordinary *Murids* more than their counterparts and less than *Khalifas* in their spiritual standing. It would be interesting to note that the personal *Khadim* (servant) of the *Pir* uses his position as an inevitable step in meeting with the *Pir*. Communication with the *Pir* through the *Khadim* leaves him with much room to exploit his position for both mundane affairs and the affairs of the life hereafter. For instance, it has been reported to me that one of the *Khadims* exploited his position for securing monetary gains from the *Murids* to let them meet with their *Sheikh*. In the same *Silsala*, many incidents were reported during my stay in which the people were asked to bring gifts for *Khadims* so that their path can be made hurdle-free towards the Sheikh.

Similar divisions can be seen even in normal visits to any Shrine in Pakistan. Even among the ordinary *Murids*, the treatment differs from person to person. The one who is *Murid* and came from a distant place to visit would have different standing than those who are serving there in the shrine and volunteer themselves for everyday tasks like cleaning, organising, and maintaining the premises. Such a visitor would feel alien, as I did in my initial days, among those who remain in service for most of their time. For instance, the *Futuh* (gifts and grants) that were given to Baba Farid were most of the time distributed among his followers who were present close to him and the distant *Murids* or *Khalifas* of him are unable to get these gifts because of poor modes of traveling.[19] A similar phenomenon was also witnessed at my *Sheikh's* where nearby *Khadims* are most likely to receive gifts or blessings.

UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF *PIR'S* INSTRUCTIONS

The unconditional acceptance of *Pir's* orders has also been regarded as the fundamental principle in the *Pir-Murid* relationship. No doubt, most of the Sufi orders are a clear manifestation of the principle but there are exceptions in this regard too. The indoor meetings, as my fieldwork demonstrates, were very informal and quite open to making management policies of *Urs*, the anniversary of Sufi's union with God at the time of death, or some other events like *Eid-Milad-un-Nabi* (PBUH). In those meetings, the consultants are all *Murids* of the *Pir* and they took unanimous decisions regarding the management of the event. Sometimes, the proposals of the *Pir* were dropped after discussion and the proposal of a *Murid* is executed. However, the final authority of the approval lies with the *Pir*. Contrary to the authoritarian outlook of the *Pir-Murid* relationship, the relationship has some democratic aspects to it that can be exercised by *Murids* in both religious and mundane affairs. The *Pir* is believed to be a learned man of the highest intellect, love, piety, and piousness. Nevertheless, that does not mean that the *Pir* is not learning from his *Murids* and is not happy if any one of them comes up with something new. It has been narrated to me by the *Pir* himself in a number of gatherings that he also learns from *Murids* about several political, economic, and social issues. In this way, the authority of the *Pir* is not fixed but continuously changing and evolving and is also dispersed among his *Murids.*

The delegation of authority by the *Pir* is another aspect of the *Pir-Murid* relationship. Literature has suggested that the *Pir* delegates some of his authority to the *Khalifas* so that they could have *Bai't* (vows) to make new *Murids*. But, the delegation of authority is not limited to this extent. The decision regarding management of the Shrine, *Urs*, and *Langar* (free food) is also delegated to other *Murids* who then became less dependent on the *Pir* regarding their decisions. Under the broader framework of instructions given by the *Pir*, much room is left for the *Murids* involved in administration to take their decisions as per the situation. Instead of fixing the *Pir-Murid* relationship, as most studies do, the delegation of authority (both religious and mundane) reflects that the relationship is neither spatially fixed nor temporally static. Rather, the relationship is the one of engagement, fluctuations, and change in which negotiations are performed by both *Pir* and his *Murid.* Therefore, the notion of 'unconditional acceptance' as a basic premise of the *Pir-Murid* relationship is itself problematized in our case.

The principle of unconditional acceptance and blind following of the *Pir* cannot be generalised to every Sufi order; however, it depends very much on the *Pir-Murid*

relationship. Riaz-ul-Islam has quoted an incident from the *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar:* Once Nasir-ud-din, a *Murid* of Sheikh Nizam-ud-Din left the *Sama'* (musical recitation of religious poetry) by declaring it against the fundamental teachings of Islam. *Sama'* is common practice in *Chishti Silsala*. When the companions of *Nasir-ud-Din* reported the incident to their *Pir,* Sheikh Nizam-ud-Din accepted the religious interpretation of Nasir-ud-din and did not feel disrespected by it.[20] This holds with our case as well where it has been communicated that if something does not feel good to conscience, one should better leave it at that without judging others or discouraging others. The principle of rationality is very much present in the *Pir-Murid* relationship. It would be interesting to note that the Nizam once reported that his *Pir*, Farid, once remarked that the three qualities are necessary for the *Khalifa* (deputyship) and these are: *ilm* (Knowledge), *aql* (Intelligence), and *ishq* (Love).[21] The use of knowledge and intelligence as two of the three fundamental qualities for an ideal *Murid* clearly shows that blind following or unconditional acceptance is perhaps not the first choice of the *Pir.* The use of knowledge and intelligence is desirable as it opens up the way through which *Pir* can also learn from his *Murids* and guide them better. After all, the relationship is based on the fact that it is established for guidance and not for the ruling.

EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL BROTHERHOOD

Another very important aspect of the *Pir-Murid* relationship is the evolution of social brotherhood. There is a concept called *Pir Bhai* (All *Murids* of a *Pir* are like brothers). The *Pir-Murid* relationship gives way to the formation of new social bonds that are stronger than blood relations as per the teachings of some Sufi orders.[22] It is often described as a stronger bond than the bond of the blood. To have a *Pir* is not only having a Master that would be of some help in union with God and the prosperity in the mundane affairs but also a source of having a membership of certain Sufi order. This aspect of the *Pir-Murid* relationship has an astonishing impact on the global Sufi cult and social uplifting of many disadvantageous people. For instance, I remember that I have been told a number of times to be in touch with my *Pir-brothers* when I was looking for a job after my graduation back in 2012. Not knowing if it is polite to exploit the relationship outside the religious domain, I stand confused and talked about it with some of my friends in the same order. It is a very common practice and normally people will be very happy to help you, especially when they know that you are a brother (*Pir Bhai*). Similarly, I have been told that many people would ask the *Pir* who then ask his *Murid* if some of them can help. I also noted many small-scale business initiatives and shops that were founded by the brothers primarily to help each other economically. Most of the

investors in such initiatives have reported that they can trust their brothers of the order and that is why they are happy to do it.

In Pakistan, the meanings of brothers, friends, and foes are very different than that of the Western world. When the *Pir-Bhai* relationship is being propagated by the mystics, it immediately became a part of cultural Islam in Pakistan. Therefore, giving birth to stronger aspects of the *Pir-Murid* relationship, now the *Pir-Murid* relationship is not less than a club in which the members are supposed to help their brothers both as followers of Islam and of that particular *Silsala*. The political aspects of the membership of *Silsala* cannot be ignored. The *Bai't* of *Jatts* of Punjab during the times of Baba Farid is manifesting the political grouping, having military obligation as well under the *Pir* which was later used by the successor of the Shrine against the Hindu rulers.[23] Nonetheless, the institution of brotherhood in the *Pir-Murid* relationship is an important aspect as the whole social arrangement of brothers is religiously and spiritually administer by the *Pir* who provided the foundations of social brotherhood in every Sufi order.

CONCLUSION

The *Pir-Murid* relationship is the fundamental aspect of the Sufi orders in Pakistan. Every *Pir-Murid* relationship has a cultural context, multiple dynamics, different levels, and different forms. There is a long trajectory in the evolution of the *Pir-Murid* relationship and the set of rules and regulations governing this relationship has evolved over centuries in the mystic tradition of Islam in the subcontinent. To generalise the *Pir-Murid* relationship in one way or another would bring death to the evolutionary aspect of Sufi traditions in Pakistan. The role of society, the geography of the area, the political conditions, economic conditions of the people, their education level, and above all the nature of *Pir* and his *Murids* are all factors that affect the *Pir-Murid* relationship in a given area. Contrary to mainstream arguments and literature, this study finds that the *Pir-Murid* relationship is far from static, fixed, and authoritarian. As shown above, the *Pir-Murid* relationship is dynamic and ever-changing and should not be seen in fixed binaries of master-slaves, or leader-followers. The relationship enjoys mutability both in its religious and mundane dimensions. In everyday practices, the *Pir-Murid* relationship nullifies the stereotypical evolution done by certain scholars and demonstrates fluidity and flexibility. It is perhaps important to suggest that the ethnographic accounts of practitioners and more research outside the established academic approaches are necessary to decipher the realities and differences among every Sufi order and its

institution of *Piri-Muridi* to understand the novelty involved and shatter the myths and assumptions – as the present study intended.

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THE EPIC STORY OF AMIR SINGH

SAEED BHUTTA

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE UNIVERSITY

LAHORE

ABSTRACT

The region of Punjab had been ruled by other nations for a long time. Therefore, the ruling nations used to declare their languages as the official language of the land. However, some families were considered to be custodians of the social history and culture of Punjab as they preserved the achievements of sons of the soil and indigenous tribes in the local language. The poet of this legendary epic poem, Mian Bhima, belonged to such a family. In this legendary epic poem, *Mian Bhima*, documented v*ari*ous battles between *Kharal* and Virak tribes which were two major tribes of the forest area between rivers *Ravi* and *Chenab* (i.e. *Sandal Bar*). Amir Singh, the central character of this epic story, was brave and courageous but he could not meet the criteria of high moral values. The culture and local value system of Punjab did not appreciate mere murderers. For Punjabi masses and folk morality, a hero or a great person must protect the highest values of life in the most difficult situations.

The region of Punjab is unique in terms of its geography, history, and culture. Its geography has been changing during v*ari*ous periods of history. At one point in time, it was called the land of seven rivers. At the time of the Turks' invasion, Punjab spanned to Afghanistan. All invaders who attacked the Subcontinent from the North-west would conquer the present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and advance towards Punjab. If Punjabis could stop the invaders, the latter would return to their places of origin. If Punjabis lost the battle, then very few armies were defeated by Delhi. The invaders started attacking the Subcontinent since the Aryan times. Rather Aryans were among the first invaders of the Subcontinent. Later, several invaders followed the same route and ventured similar attacks. The invaders frequently declared their tongue as the official language of the land. This explained

the existence of sources of information on Punjab's history in *Vari*ous works in Sanskrit, Greek, Arabic, Persian, and English languages.

The historical works were written by invaders reflected their perspective. Invaders couldn't appreciate the achievements of the conquered nations. Therefore, a significant source of knowledge and information on suppressed masses of conquered nations was oral history. In the folk literature's genres like *Var* (legendary epic tale) and *Dhola* (verse), the viewpoint of ordinary people was tangible. The local history was kept afresh in the memory of several tribes as shortcomings and positive qualities of *vari*ous tribes were often reminded to them and reiterated generations after generations. In the sub-region called Sandal Bar (the forest area between Chenab and Ravi rivers), the household of *Mian Dara* had assumed importance as it had mastered the local history. Mian Dara himself used to compose *Var* (a legendary epic poem) in Punjabi and his two sons, *Mian Bhima* and *Mian Phogi*, were also famous poets. In response to our question on it, *Mian Khushi* said:

> The name of our great-great-grandfather was Dara. All descendants of his family were identified in the region of Sandal Bar with his name. He composed a legendary epic story or 'Var of Baga Singh'. Among sons of Mian Dara, Mian Bhima and Mian Phogi were also poets. Mian Bhima composed a legendary epic story of Amir Singh titled 'Var of Amir Singh'. In the poetry of Mian Phogi, the verses (Dhola) composed by him on the theme of the War of Independence of 1857 were significant in terms of their historical importance. Mian Bhima had six brothers. All of them were born in "Paryara". Later on, they migrated to Village Jhamra, Tehsil Tandlianwala, and Faisalabad district.[1]

The narrator of this legendary epic story (*Var*) was *Mian Khushi* who happened to be the descendant of *Mian Phogi* from the sixth generation. *Mian Phogi* and *Mian Bhima* were brothers and the latter composed the under discussion legendary epic poem (*Var*). The final battle between Virak and Kharal tribes ended in 1808. A detailed discussion on it in this article would refer to it. One could guess that this legendary epic poem (*Var*) was composed during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Mian Bhima had described himself in this legendary epic as *Meer* and *Mirasi*.

> Meers are narrators of legendary epics of people and ask for rewards from the generous ones[2]
> I supplicate to only God and His Prophet. The Mirasi said it in front of everybody[3]
> Our virtue lies in speaking truth before all people[4]

The above quotations indicated that the genre of poetry called *Var* was at its peak during the first half of the nineteenth century. The sittings were organized to listen to poetry in this genre. The genre was not restricted to the eulogy of heroes as it also pointed out flaws in their character. The poet was considered an important member of society and the masses had their perspective on his poetry. In this legendary epic story, the poet used his pen name, Bhima, only once. For example:

> As soon as the sun rose, troops from both sides faced each other.
> I, Meer Bhima, have to appreciate the man who is only three and
> a half arms (hath) tall.[5]

The poet wanted to convey that only a talented bard could admire the man of three and a half arms. In the poetry of Shah Hussain, the metaphor of three and a half arms had been employed effectively.

> Man ultimately ends up with only three and a half arms (i.e.
> grave) but occupies (illegitimately during the lifetime) vast areas
> of others.[6]

It is believed that everybody's height is equivalent to his or her three and a half arms. Despite physical similarities among human beings, every individual is endowed with unique capacities and qualities. The accurate description of human greatness and uniqueness of individuality requires the extraordinary skill of articulation. Only a great poet is likely to have the capability for such an in-depth understanding of the human dimension of events.

According to the story of this legendary epic, Amir Singh deployed the Bhangis family of Bhatti tribe of District Hafizabad for the apparent attack at the camels of Wattoo tribe. Amir Singh wanted to propagate this rumour of attack at camels of Wattoo tribe, but he targeted the camels of Kharal tribe. The current center of the Kharal tribe is Jhamra, Tehsil Tandlianwala, and Faisalabad district. Camels of Kharal tribe were based in a small settlement called Pariara currently in Police Station Satiana, District Faisalabad. Nijabat Kharal, an uncle of Ahmad Khan Kharal who was the hero of the War of Independence of 1857, visited the Virak tribe and reminded Amir Singh that the latter's father and Saleh Kharal were fast friends. Therefore, it was not socially appropriate for him to attack camels of the Kharal tribe. Amir Singh responded that his tribe cannot be friendly with 'Jats'. After the above exchange, Amir Singh captured camels of Kharal tribe. Some members of Kharal tribe reported it to their leader, Roshan Kharal, that their camels had been captured by Amir Singh. Roshan Kharal, along with other heroic fighters of Kharal

tribe, managed to bring the camel's back from the illegitimate possession of Amir Singh.

Amir Singh had captured camels of the Kharal tribe of Jhamra. The Kharal families of Syed Wala had supported the rest of Kharal tribe. It led to the enmity of Amir Singh with Kharals of Syed Wala, Tehsil Jaranwala, District Faisalabad. Amir Singh attacked again and captured buffaloes of Kharal tribe. A fighter of Kharal tribe, Muhammad Yar, fired at a fighter of Virak tribe, Majhi Pariar, at his leg and thus attackers of Virak tribe ran away after their defeat.

Next time, the Kharal tribe organized its troops with the support of its families headed by Sada, Raheema, and Rehmana and captured the cattle of Virak tribe in the vicinity of Sheikhupura. Roshan Kharal and Amir Singh faced each other in the battle. Roshan Kharal attacked Amir Singh from the shoulder side and the latter survived. Roshan Kharal proved his bravery and the troops of Virak tribe were defeated in this battle. Amir Singh was embarrassed by the repeated defeats at the hands of Kharal tribe. Amir Singh sent a spy to ascertain the exact location of the watering trough where the cattle of Kharal tribe used to drink water. In the light of new information, Amir Singh led his troops to attack the Kharal tribe but on the way, he heard a trumpet. When the sound of trumpet got close to his troops, he found out that it was a wedding procession of the Awan tribe. Amir Singh killed the bridegroom and dishonoured the bride. As a result, Awan and Kharal tribes got together and attacked the Virak tribe, killing eighteen troops of the latter. Nihal Awan attacked Amir Singh in the battle but the latter was protected by Ran Singh Mudwalia who laid his life to save Amir Singh. Massu Waga also attacked Amir Singh with the sword. Baig Waga killed Mehmood Tarar in this battle. The text of this legendary epic poem was not complete. The story of this legendary epic, according to the stanzas of the poem preserved by us, ended here.

Virak tribe is settled in Gujranwala, Sheikhupura, Hafizabad, and Nankana districts. Several prominent personalities of Punjab belonged to this tribe. The origin of Bhikhi family of Virak tribe was documented in history books. A person called Dewan of village Katrola and Tehsil Gujranwala reached the deserted land after stealing cattle and sought permission of the local ruler to settle there. He settled a village there and named it after his eldest son, Bhikhi. For the next twelve generations, descendants of founders of the village continued to live there.[7]

Descendants of Bhikhi family of Virak tribe saw the peak of their political power during the second half of the eighteenth century. Amir Singh's father, *Sahai Singh*, occupied the fort of Shekhupura.

As soon as the king left Lahore, Sikhs started their loot and plunder again and Inder Singh of Mananwala occupied this fort. The ruler of Lahore, Lehna Singh Jangi, arrested Inder Singh and executed him. Inder Singh's wife, Mrs. Sehjo, continued to be besieged in the fort. And Sahai Singh and Sahib Singh Virak, landowners of Bhikhi, occupied the fort.[8]

Amir Singh was the head of Virak tribe when their battles with Kharal tribe of Uppera started. The Kharal tribe of Uppera saw the beginning of the rise of its political power during the sixteenth century. Vira and Kharal tribes were neighbours to each other. Therefore, several anecdotes of both their affection and hostility towards each other were known in the area. On Kharal tribe, the "Gazetteer of the Chenab Colony" documented the following:

> According to their own account, Danabad is named after a Virak, and they obtained their position on the Ravi about the middle of the 16th century by dispossessing the Virak when led by Mallu, the first Uppera Kharal of renown.[9]

It was important to understand the society and culture of areas between rivers of Punjab that all members of the tribe were not engaged in these battles. The same applied to the fights between Kharal and Virak tribes. Only those families of the tribe would engage in the battle whose interests were negatively affected by the activities of the opponent. Sometimes, other members of tribes from both sides continued to have normal relations with each other. In the folk story of Masti Kharal, Amir Singh fondly recalled the friendship of his father with Kharal tribe:

> My father Sahai Singh and Saleh son of Manj Kharal were close friends. Baqir son of Mishri Kharal was also the best friend of my father. Masti son of Amin Kharal was a fast friend of my father.[10]

Despite such close contacts between Kharal and Virak tribes, somehow their enmity started. The prominent heroes of the eighteenth century like Amir Kharal and Meer Kharal were not part of these battles. However, Meer Kharal's son, Nijabat, represented the Kharal tribe in these fights. The chief of Nakai Misl (small principality), Wazir Singh, killed Amir Kharal before 1781. Bhagat Singh noted it with reference to Bootay Shah and Lepel Griffin:

> In the course of the fighting, Sardar Amir died of a gunshot. His followers were turned out of Sandal Bar. When Wazir Singh felt relieved from the side of Sardar Amir, he turned his attention to Ran Singh Bahrwalia and started operations against him. Ran Singh died at Bahrwal in 1781.[11]

It is important to note that during the battles between the chiefs of Nakai Misl (small principality) and Kharal tribe, the Virak tribe of Bhikhi had been neutral. In 1808, Maharaja Ranjit Singh defeated Amir Singh Virak and occupied the fort of Sheikhupura.[12] However, Ranjit Singh gave Amir Singh a village close to Choonian as an estate. Subsequently, Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave Amir Singh son of Sahai Singh son of Bel Singh son of Saheb Singh, instead of his lands, the area of Khai Jug where a village was settled or founded by the latter. [13]

When Amir Singh Virak shifted from Sheikhupura to Choonian, then his enmity with Kharal tribe ended. Therefore, the period of battles between Virak and *Kharal* tribes would be most probably between 1781 and 1808.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, Sikhs emerged as a political force and they occupied va*r*ious districts of Punjab. During the same period, Virak tribe of Bhikhi occupied the fort of Sheikhupura. It enhanced their social and political status from mere landowners to rulers or chiefs.

As mentioned above, this legendary epic poem is incomplete, and we could preserve only 14 stanzas of it. The central character of this legendary epic story (*Var*) is Amir Singh. Other characters appear on the scene temporarily and then disappear from the story. According to the text of this story, Amir Singh is a cruel and brutal person. His fear prevails over the whole area spanning from the Ravi to Chenab. With his power, Raja Amir Singh forces people to submit before him. While sitting in the fort, he rules over people. He also attacks with his troops the temporary residences of landowners.[14] According to another opinion, *the* people of Chenab and Ravi were scared of Amir Singh.[15]

As compared to Amir Singh, the social status of the Kharal tribe of Uppera was not high as the latter used to establish temporary dwellings for themselves and their cattle wherever water and grass were available in the forest area between Ravi and Chenab. Amir Singh led his troops and attacked the Kharal tribe. His horses, guns, and swords were of high quality. Whenever he came to the battlefield, he always put on his body an armor that protected him against arrows and swords of the enemy. During one battle, Roshan Kharal attacked him with extraordinary valour.

> He attacked Amir Singh with sword. The sword cut the body
> armour, hit his turban and touched his shoulder.[16]

In another battle, Nihal Awan also attacked Amir Singh but the Sikh guards succeeded in saving the life of the latter.

> Nihal Awan entered into the flock of birds and his turban was like the crest of a bird
> He attacked Ran Singh several times and the latter submitted before him
> Nihal Awan killed the resident of Mudwal[17]

In verses of Noori Kaimookay, one did not find a reference to Nihal Awan but he also appreciated this episode of valour. For example;

> Narad said: I was witnessing that day when troops were fleeing but three persons took the stand to face the enemy
> Sahai Singh, Nama Teli, and Ran Singh sacrificed their lives but saved the life of Amir Singh
> One must commend Gulab Singh Khahra who gave the ride to Amir Singh on his mare and ran away from the battlefield[18]

In a battle, Massu Wagha attacked Amir Singh.

> You, Massu, are the son of Bullah who always succeeded in the Panchayat
> You rode your horse faster than others and surrounded Ameer Singh
> Your sword descended into his flesh, bled him, and injured him[19]

The central character of this legendary epic story (*Var*) did not belong to the Kharal tribe. However, the poet appreciated the bravery of Nijabat, Baqir, and Roshan Kharal. Some of their fellow fighters like Muhammad Yar Sunara, Hashim Awan, Nihal Awan, Beg Wagha, and Massu Wagha also proved their courage and valour on the battlefield. These fighters appear on the battlefield, undertake daring attacks, and disappear from the scene. The central character of this legendary epic story is Amir Singh who personally participates in the battlefield against the Kharal tribe.

Amir Singh fought many battles in his life. His bravery could be easily proved with the support of folk literature. Despite his bravery and valour, the masses and the poet did not recognize him as a hero. It is not the job of a hero to kill human beings. The real hero lays down his life for higher values of life. This legendary epic story also starts with the looting of camels of Ahmad Khan Kharal's family by Amir Singh. The Kharal family tries to convey to Amir Singh that his father, Sahai Singh, and Saleh Kharal were close friends. Friendship is the highest value in life. The people who are rooted in the local culture give more importance to friends than brothers.

> 'Mir's son, Nijabat, was brave and courageous like his father and
> he had reminded people the positive role of his father
> Keep our honour intact and we shall continue to repay for this
> noble gesture throughout our lives
> Your father, Sahai Singh, and Saleh Kharal were like brothers
> You have called Nijabat 'Jat'. We do not pin any hope with you'.[20]

The character of Amir Singh, as depicted by the poet in this legendary epic, appeared to be greedy and arrogant. He captured the camels of his uncle's friends due to his greed. In his character, it was the trait of greediness that did not let him meet the criterion of high values.

In the social life and value system of areas between rivers (Bar), the honour of daughters is considered supreme. The history of Punjab is replete with examples of respecting each other's' daughters despite hostility and enmity among opponents and fighters. Nakai chief Sardar Ran Singh and *Amir Kharal* were friends. *Amir Kharal* killed Ran Singh's enemy, Qamar Singh. Later Wazir Singh took revenge on Qamar Singh by killing Amir Kharal. Ran Singh's daughter, Raj Kore, was married to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The same Raj Kore was the mother of Raja Kharak Singh. Raj Kore continued to be loyal to Amir Kharal's offsprings. Details of this incident are available in Nabar Kahani.[21]

In Sandal Bar (the forest area between Ravi and Chenab), the Awan tribe was not large in terms of number. Descendants of Awan heroes lived in Qila Awanan, Machoda, and Kot Hidayat of Tehsil and District Nankana. Awan fighters supported the Kharal tribe in several battles. On completion of the ceremony, the wedding procession of some members of Awan tribe was returning to their home with the bride and bridegroom. The wedding procession stopped for rest in the forest area between Ravi and Chenab. Amir Singh attacked the wedding procession with his troops and killed the bridegroom. He also dishonoured the bride.

> Bride, bridegroom, and the palanquin are under the shadow of a
> tree
> He killed the bridegroom, giving him the "gift" of blood
> The Virak earned a bad name by attacking the palanquin
> Today he committed an excess against the wedding procession of
> Awan tribe[22]

People started disliking Amir Singh because of the above incident. The poet labeled it as a 'bad earning' or evil deed by Amir Singh. His name was sullied forever in public imagination due to this episode of attacking the wedding procession. The

moral imperfections of Amir Singh's character prevented him from achieving the coveted status of a favourite character of people or folk hero.

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LAHORE AS A COLONIAL CITY AND THE PATH OF SOCIAL CHANGE

MOHAMMAD A. QADEER
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
CANADA

ABSTRACT

This article has addressed the question of how British rule restructured the city of Lahore, socially, economically, and physically. For analytical purposes, the 98 years of British rule are divided into two periods (1849-1900 and 1901-47) of distinct policies and socio-economic changes. In the first period, the British introduced new educational, industrial, legal, and administrative institutions. They also built public works, added a new and modern civil town and cantonment on the outskirts of the historic Lahore's walled city. The British Raj left alone the three communities of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs and their respective caste/clan structures and cultural-religious practices, promoting communitarian multiculturalism.
By the second period, the opportunities increased for interrelations in commercial and public places, jobs, sports, and literary clubs. On a personal level, the three religious communities accommodated and accepted each other's ways of life. In the second period the ups and downs of the struggle for self-rule and finally, independence, accompanied by the upsurges in British repression, Lahore's communal amity eroded. The colonial city's legacy is now an integral part of Lahore's ethos of development.

KEY WORDS
Culture; Lahore; Colonial City; Social Change; Communitarian Multiculturalism

Lahore is now a megacity of about 12 million people, the second-largest in Pakistan and the historic capital of the Punjab province. It has a documented history of more than a thousand years, though some indications of the existence of a settlement on the city's site go back almost to antiquity. Its central location along the route linking India with Central Asia and the Middle East has drawn invaders, merchants, migrants, and refugees for millennia. It has been a global city long before the term

came into vogue. Like all cities, it is made up of its people, their activities and aspirations as well as the habitat of neighbourhoods, historic settlements, and new suburbs, parks, monuments, bazaars, and markets, linked together by streets, roads, and utilities, all laid out on a flat plain. The social and physical are intertwined.

The purpose of this article is to describe how the British rule put the city on a new path, laying the base for a process of transforming its, economic, social, and cultural organisations and the physical form, which continues today. The British were a colonial power and they brought the economic and political goals of colonialism, namely transferring local resources to the metropolitan country, creating a captured market for their products, and establishing a relationship of domination. These goals were complemented by the objectives of enforcing cultural and social change. Anthony King lists thirty characteristics of a colonial city, but the essence of its meanings in the cited words of Janet Abu Lughod is the introduction of the western urban forms in non-western countries.[1]

The academic discussions about the colonial city have followed World-System debates and neo-Marxist formulations. My objective is not to probe the nature of the colonial city, bypassing these debates, but to concretely illustrate through the example of Lahore how the British colonialism operated in the form of interplay of the British influences and local institutions and cultural practices. The indigenous society was not a passive recipient of the colonial influences but an active participant in adopting, resisting, and modifying the modernisation initiatives of the British rule. This is the approach that highlights the internal dynamics of urban development in colonial Lahore.

At this point, I want to spell out the theoretical perspective of internal dynamics on which this article is based, which carries forward the approach of my earlier book on Lahore.[2] The internal dynamics are the processes that help incorporate changes in a city's institutions and restructure its social, physical, and economic organisations to maintain its functional coherence by grafting new norms and practices in the traditional ways, generating new forms of social relations. Briefly, it means the restructuring of institutions resulting from the social, economic, and technological changes in an urban system. This approach applied to Lahore is meant to show its development up to independence in 1947 and the emergence of a new social organisation.

LAHORE OF PRE-COLONIAL TIMES

Historically Lahore has been identified with the walled or inner city of about one square mile area with the population now hovering around 200,000. It is

surrounded by a circular wall with 13 gates. In old days, each gate leads to the tightly-packed neighbourhoods of distinct occupational castes and religious groups, anchored in narrow and crowded meandering streets. The northern corner of the city is the enclosed royal district of Mughal Fort-Palace, Badshahi mosque, and Raja Ranjit Singh's memorial, all three lined around a pavilion-park.

Before Pakistan's independence (1947), the walled city had a majority Muslim and slightly smaller Hindu-Sikh residential quarters, locally known as Mohallas, though in most cases other religious groups were also present in small numbers. The walled city has many historic mosques of bulbous domes and tall minarets, imposing mansions, known as Havellis. There were also flourishing Mandirs and Gurdwaras in Hindu-Sikh areas. Outside the walled city, there were suburbs, settlements, villages, mausoleums set in gardens and Mughal monuments such as Emperor Jehangir's tomb and the Shalimar Garden, dating back centuries

The city of Lahore in earlier times was a place of tightly bounded communities of tribes, clans, and castes (e.g. Mughals, Syeds, Rajputs, Arians, Jats, Blacksmiths, and Matchmakers, for example) of respective occupational specialisations. The three religious communities had carved out neighbourhoods, Bazaars, and markets as their territories. Shah Alami gate area was the largest Hindu neighbourhood, whereas Mochi, Delhi, and Yakki gates led to the predominantly Muslim neighbourhoods. There were some areas of mixed populations, such as those around Lohari and Mori gates.

Lahore had many household industries based on the occupational caste specialisations. Copper utensils, cloth and iron, and glassware were exported from the city in the pre-British days. The walled city still has neighbourhoods whose names are reminiscent of their bygone economic specializations, namely the neighbourhood of riding horse dealers, streets of arrow and bows makers, the physicians' and the gold jewellery Bazaars. The Shah Alami bazaar's wholesale markets of spices, Kashmiri bazaar as the centre of shawls, cloth and bookstores, and the grains market of Akbari Mandi drew customers from near and far.

NARRATIVES OF LAHORE

Lahore casts a spell on its inhabitants, even those who came to live there from somewhere else. It is the open-heartedness, warm and gregarious disposition, love of good food, and admiration of masculinity with which Lahoris in particular and Punjabis, in general, are known. Stop by a fruit vendor and he may address you as 'sir ji' as both a mild tease and genuine welcome. It is in Lahore that political arguments can turn into shouting matches and conclude with an embrace. Pran Neville, an Indian diplomat born and raised in pre-independence Lahore, describes

his running into a stranger in a hotel in Geneva, who hailed him from a distance (figuring out that from his demeanour probably) as " Royal highness come and sit down, I also hail from Lahore'.[3] A phrase often used to describe the city's spirit is 'Lahore is Lahore' alluding to its uniqueness. It has survived invasions, migrations, famines, and pandemics. And the spirit is alive, though it requires extra exertion to bring it out in today's mismanaged and burgeoning city.

The modern history of Lahore began with the introduction of British rule (1849). A city's fate is tied with that of the country and the political system of which it is a part. This is the first proposition of internal dynamics. A city is undoubtedly a distinct entity of some autonomy, but it is embedded in regional and national geographies and politico-economic systems. It is sometimes suggested that (some) cities are independent of their countries and relate through trade and communications with places of their kind, the 'idea of a global city',[4] or they can act independently.[5]

Lahore was transformed almost overnight by British rule. A new legal and administrative order was established, electro-mechanical technologies were introduced, and educational and economic reforms were initiated. The British did not disturb the social structure and upheld the traditions of communal peace and neighbourliness among Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs. The Christian missionaries sought to spread their religion with very limited success. The social order arising from British rule in time became the basis of Lahore's socio-cultural life. It had a big part in generating the image of Lahore as a city of educational, literary, musical, and theatrical activities of both folk and highbrow varieties.

The famous courtesans' neighbourhood, Hira Mandi, offering both popular and classical singing, music, and dance performances, including a street of licensed sex-workers, was a place of laughter and gaiety.[6] But to be seen there was considered disreputable behaviour, inviting ostracism. This neighbourhood became a source of talent for the new movie industry as well as the Lahore broadcasting station of All India Radio (1937). Lahore had an early start in 1920-30s to support the cinemas' row on Macleod road. It became one of the major movies -making centres of India. Beginning with a Kamla Movietone productions (1924) and culminating in Dalsukh Pancholi establishing the studio in the 1930s. The rich modern cultural life combined with the city's long traditions of poetry, street theatres, storytelling, festivals, and eating out gave Lahore a reputation of a place with 'one day and hundreds of celebrations (Melas)'. A happy city!

PHASE-1 OF THE BRITISH RULE (1849-1900) IN LAHORE: SOCIAL IMPACTS

About 98 years of the British rule can be divided into two phases, the first one ((1849-1900) as a time of consolidating and institutionalising their rule, and the second one (1901-1947) of the rising Indian nationalism and the slow march towards self-rule and finally independence. Each of these phases had distinct political, economic, and social impacts on Lahore.

The British conquered Punjab and adopted Lahore as Punjab's provincial capital as it had been for centuries. Though the British never numbered more than a few thousand, for example towards the end of the 19th century only about 1700 Britishers were the residents of the city, but they established legislative, administrative, legal, and military institutions ushering their rule in the modern idiom.[7] It does not mean that there were not periods of economic prosperity and cultural-social creativity in earlier times, but the fact that the British Raj set Lahore (and Indo-Pakistan) on a new historical path that continues to date justifies the focus on their times.[8]

The British acted quickly to introduce new institutions. Rang Mahal, a Haveli in the heart of the walled city, was turned into a high school in 1849, probably within months of the establishment of the British rule and three years later (1852), the Forman Christian (FC) college of the Presbyterian Mission was added to it, though it later moved to its present site in the civil station. The Hungarian orientalist, Dr. Gottlieb Leitner first helped establish the Government College in the city's Havelli Dhian Singh in 1864, which later moved to its present site in the Gothic building with a tower looming over it. Furthermore, Leitner succeeded in getting the official charter for the Punjab University (1882) for both teaching and examining purposes.[9] Following Raj's lead, first Hindu, then Sikh and Muslim communities established schools and colleges to prepare for the new professions coming with the colonial economy.

Arya Samaj, a Hindu revivalist movement established the DAV school and college aiming to preserve religious values and educating their youth in modern learnings. Muslims organised the Anjuman Hamiyat ul Islam (Association for the support of Islam) in 1884 to protect Islamic heritage and teaching Muslim youth modern subjects, following the lead of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's Aligarh movement. It established many high schools (the 1880s) and the Islamia College (1892), which later became the centre of Muslims' political struggle for independence. It also added a girls' college. The communal competition for modern education combining with the reformist religious teachings were efforts to both enter the modern age and preserve the communal-religious traditions.

Changes of a similar transformative scale occurred in the economy, transportation, technology, and the physical development of the city. The most significant initial economic impact on Lahore was the building of railways and subsequently carriage and engine workshops as well as the North Western Railway's headquarter. It not only revolutionized transportation but also spun-off new industries. Lahore railway station (1859) became the central point connecting the Punjab plains and upcountry places with the rest of India. The railways were extended to the Karachi port for the export of wheat, produced in large quantities with the building of Punjab's extensive irrigation canals network and consequent settlement of barren lands.

These developments, particularly the railways, introduced new occupations of engine drivers, draughtsmen, conductors, clerks, foremen, fitters, and precision instrument makers, which built on Lahore's crafts skills. The railways also spawned the growth of small machine shops on the Brandreth road, which in Pakistan remains a national market for manufacturing water pumps, diesel engines, pipes, and fittings or whatever is in demand. A common joke is that gives an atomic reactor to the Brandreth Road Mistris (master technicians) and they will produce its replicas.

 Later the arrival of bicycles and cars in the 1900s created garages, petrol stations and produced cycle and car mechanics. Doctors, lawyers, judges, professors, and accountants became modern professionals. These occupational changes affected the social structure of the city realigning the traditional social hierarchies and somewhat disassociating castes from occupations among Muslims. The Hindu caste system also opened up, breaking social distances and relaxing taboos against caste-based occupations.

THE POLITICAL IMPACTS OF THE BRITISH RULE

The British rule in undivided India came to its full bloom after 1857, with the formal takeover of the reins of the government by the British government from the East India Company. Lahoris by and large accepted the new regime after years of internecine wars among the successors of Ranjit Singh. Thus, all in all, the second half of the 19th century was a time of relative political and social consolidation in Punjab and Lahore. Punjab also provided soldiers for the British Indian army, who fought in wars for Britain in Asia and Europe. The British rule not only brought new opportunities but also gave the landed gentry political power as the province moved towards involving Indians in their own rule. Lahore became the seat of provincial power politics.

The ideas of representation through elections and notions of self-government brought a new political consciousness in the urban areas. The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 to represent Indians' aspirations, but Hindus being the overwhelming majority would have dominated in a democracy of majority votes. This realization made minorities particularly the Muslims feel apprehensive about their interests and identity. To safeguard Muslims' interests, the All India Muslim League was formed in 1906. Thus, the constitutional and political struggle to balance the majority-minority interests within the primary struggle to make the British yield full participation of Indians in the government defined the second phase of British rule. These political movements were centered in cities. Lahore was buffeted by them.

BRITISH CONCEPTIONS OF A MODERN INDIAN CITY

The British were acutely wary of the heat, dust, and unsanitary conditions of the city. In the early days of taking over, the British administrators and soldiers encamped in Mughal and Sikh monuments, whose remains littered the area outside the walled city. They lived in garden pavilions and mausoleums such as that of Anarkali. They dreaded the narrow alleys and teeming neighbourhoods of the walled city. Rudyard Kipling's metaphor of Lahore's walled city as the 'city of the dreadful night' in the novel Kim is an expression of this sentiment. It may be due to the lack of immunity to the local bacteria, they suffered heavily from cholera and dysentery epidemics. In 1861, over 25% of the European troops died from the cholera epidemic.[10] The British built a new Lahore in the southeast plain, called first Donald town and later civil station, made up of bungalow estates of large lawns for officials, offices, hotels, clubs, wide roads, and facilities such as the Museum, the Zoo, and parks, adding a legislature building (1938), with the Mall road serving as the axis.

The British conception of a livable Indian city was based on what 'William Glover' lists as three principles: 1) the city as a distinct social and material milieu "of a nominally secularized institutional governance", 2) separation of land uses, i.e. industries and commerce from houses, 3) Industrial and commercial economic base.[11] Yet the British regarded sanitation and order over and above every other value.

The pre-British Lahore's land and property rules were based on the laws of inheritance and other customary neighbourhood conventions of land use in respective religious communities, overseen by the Sikh rulers and Mughal governors before them. The British introduced building by-laws established municipal administration and built or improved public utilities including the

drainage network and the waterworks (1881) providing piped water in both the old and new city.

Embedded in the civil station were villages that had been there for ages. The British administrators sometimes toyed with the idea of clearing out Mozang and other villages but eventually settled on just improving their drainage. The British army chose to encamp further east and laid out an orthogonal cantonment, segregated in quarters for Indian and British regiments, in the Mian Mir plain (the 1850s). This sanitized environment became a British Lahore.

A COMMUNITARIAN MULTICULTURAL CITY

Socially and culturally the British promoted communitarian multiculturalism. Each religious group was left to follow its norms and customs in personal and community affairs including morality, food, marriage and family life, caste and clan customs, and occupational division of labour. Even practices of avoiding touching each other's food and water were accommodated by installing separate taps for Hindus and Muslims on railway stations and other public places. Customs such as Hindus' prohibitions on widows' remarriage or Muslims' practice of bigamy were not interfered with, though morally not approved. They only prohibited customs that violated the 19th-century notions of humanism or threatened their rules, such as banning Sati (widow burning on the funeral pyre of a husband) and suppressing movements or public speech threatening the public or communal peace. Of course, criminal and civil laws were modernised, regulations were instituted to control traffic and commercial dealings. This was Glover's 'secularized institutional governance applied to all'.

Though Lahore became a dual city, native and colonial, on the one hand, indigenous (old) and modern (new) on the other, tradition and modernism did not exist separately from each other. The British notions of modern sanitation and house design began to permeate into the local culture. Particularly the emerging professional classes forming the middle layer of officials in the British administration and other locals joining the ranks of the prosperous middle class began to demand airy houses with courtyards lined along a grid of wide streets in New Indigenous Communities (NIC). A number of those were laid outside the walled city, e.g. Wasanpura, Mohammad Nagar, Sant Nagar, Krishan Nagar, Muslim Town, Nisbet Road, Islamia park.

The NICs incorporated elements of the modern house design in the traditional domestic architecture and neighbourhood layouts. Most of these were made of 1-2 story houses of open courtyards and relatively low density (compared with the old city), dominated and sponsored by one or the other religious group. The British

Civil Station had more class and rank based areas. Though Lahore was not a racially segregated city, racial discrimination was practiced in jobs and social mixing openly in the 19th century and more subtly later. The British discouraged the local elite from living among them and joining their clubs or associations until late in their rule. Yet as William Glover observes, "colonial buildings looked Indian in form and English and Indian elite mixed in official ceremonies and functions".[12]

These developments point to the second proposition of the internal dynamics, namely the traditions are dynamic. They change over time, including inventing new ones, to respond to emerging functional imperatives. They incorporate new norms, giving them different meanings, and producing hybrid institutions. This interplay of tradition and modernity, in other words, their dialectical relations, is a well-recognized idea in sociology, argued a long time ago by Joseph Gusfield.[13]

THE SECOND PHASE (1901-47): POLITICAL CONFLICTS AND COMMUNAL AMITY

The second phase of British rule began in the early 20th century. The idea of a nation was not deeply rooted in Indian political ideology. Hindus saw their sense of belonging through the prism of caste. Muslims in Punjab viewed their identities either originating in Arabia, Iran, or Afghanistan, e.g. Syeds, Qureshis, Ghuris, or Toors, or derived them from the clan or nominal tribal titles e.g. Rajputs, Butts, Chaudhries. The nation was an imagined community with a little history.[14] The modern notions of nationalism, self-rule, and democratic rights gave an impetus for the united struggle, but the rising anxieties in different communities about their role sowed divisions among them. This paradox of political unity and divisions filtered down to Lahore. It is not the purpose of this article to recount the political history of the independence struggle, but only to point out the national currents that underlaid the social, political, and cultural life of the city.[15]

Three distinct social and cultural trends prevailed in the 20th century British Lahore. First, the Indian political struggle morphed from demanding a fair share in self-rule to the insistence on independence and full Commonwealth status. It went through various stages from petitioning the British government for a share in the government to the negotiations, agitations, and Gandhi's non-violent Satyagraha. Parallel to political activism, several revolutionary attempts to sabotage and spark a rebellion evolved around Lahore. Bhagat Singh's execution (1929) and the Ghadr Party's Marxist manifesto are examples of such activities. The agitations and incidents of violence put the British at the edge resulting in extreme repressive measures including General Dyer's massacre of a public meeting in Amritsar's Jallianwala Bagh (1919). People's goodwill towards the British evaporated.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNAL RELATIONS

The second socio-cultural trend in Lahore was the widening of the historic communal amity and mutual accommodation of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs, as they participated as individuals on equal terms in the new institutions of public life, such as public services, commerce, markets for modern goods, fashions, education, transport, and sports. This expansion of everyday interactions broke the insularity of communities.[16]

The cricket clubs, hockey tournaments, tennis games, traditional wrestling, and Kabaddi matches, along with seasonal festivals like Basant and Chargon Ka Mela (festival of lights) mixed people of all faiths[17]. Similarly, Anarkali street's modern stores selling shoes, fabric, watches, medicines, and books were patronized by members of all communities and the Bazaar itself was a place for the rich and poor of the walled city to come in the evening to share in the spectacle of the tantalizing shops and the gawking parade. The Mall road was the emporium for imported goods and an axis of the British commercial life including liquor stores, chemists, piano shops, cabaret shows, branches of English chain stores offering imported foods, toiletries, and travel services. The fashionable tea and coffee shops, where writers of differing ideological leanings held meetings, and restaurants offering international cuisines were other attractions of the Mall and the roads branching off it. It was known as the Tandi Sarak (cool road) shaded by leafy trees and suitable for evening strolls, which could end in the nearby Montgomery Hall in the Lawrence (now renamed as Jinnah garden) garden, zoo, or the Flatties hotel.

Although Lahore's centre of gravity shifted to the civil station area, the walled city as the historic core retained its prominence. New occupations and modern education created a Babu (clerical and supervisory officials) class to whom people turned for dealing with the British bureaucracy. They gained prestige and formed the emerging power structure. Many doctors, teachers, businessmen and writers, painters, and calligraphers grow up in the old city continued to live and work there heralding the change in the life of the native city.

COMMUNITARIAN MULTICULTURALISM AND PRACTICES OF ACCOMMODATION

The striking feature of Lahore's social life was that personal relations among Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs, remained neighbourly and amicable. There were many venues where they interacted and shared each other's customs and practices, from marriage practices to family values and seasonal celebrations. The beliefs in the spiritual values and mystical intercessions brought them together in shrines, tombs, and in the company of holy persons. Yet it was mostly as individuals.

The literary societies and professional organizations by the second quarter of the 20th century drew persons of all communities. The charitable institutions built by the affluent and public-spirited persons served all communities. For example, Ganga Ram hospital, Janki Devi dispensary, Dyal Singh College, and a library built by Hindu and Sikh philanthropists of liberal outlooks were for everybody. The point is that in Lahore, the communal differences were accepted and taken in stride. The common attitude was not of resenting each other's segregating customs, but to accept them as 'their ways'.

Within each community, two distinct ideological-lifestyle groups emerged, namely liberal-modern versus orthodox-traditional. There was much mixing among the liberal-modern segments of various communities. Whereas, the orthodox traditionalist remained respectful but distant from other communities. Another cross-cutting factor that helped bridge communal differences was the solidarity felt based on sharing historic caste/clan origins. Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs of common caste origins such as Rajputs or Jats shared myths, identities, and (some) customs. These primordial identities linked people across religious divides.

Punjab also had strong regional identities reflected in spoken dialects and territorial origins, such as Seraiki, Pothohari, Sialkot, etc. . These territorial and linguistic loyalties also mitigated the religious differences. All in all, the communal multiculturalism was woven together with many bonds. This made mutual accommodation, despite religious differences, valued behaviour. The historic social organization of Lahore was based on these norms.

Yet there was a weakness in these bonds. They were largely personal and neighbourly in scope. There were very few non-denominational civil society institutions, such as neighbourhood associations, welfare societies, or merchants' organisations that bridged across the three communities. Ashutosh Varshney's observations are relevant in this analysis. Drawn from his study of ethnic violence in India, he concludes that associational interethnic engagement as opposed to personal relations only, helped in the inter-communal peace[18] Personal friendships and mutual bonds could not contain the communal hostilities, once those were ignited.

Undoubtedly there were undercurrents of communal conflicts and distrust, particularly arising from religious passions. They would periodically flare up on specific issues. The Masjid/Gurdwara Shahidgunj affair (1935) involving rival claims of Sikhs and Muslims for its possession as their respective place of worship turned into a bloody conflict. It spoiled their communal relations for years. The High Court's verdict in favour of Sikhs eventually cooled down the passions. In the same vein, a provocative book or pamphlet casting other religion's venerated

personalities, such as the holy prophet for Muslims, could spark violence and communal tensions. The cow slaughter or a street band passing at prayer time near a mosque or Mandir could result in a disturbance. Yet such flare-ups lasted a short time, arousing hostilities for a while, but ending up with a return to the long-established attitude of 'live and let live'.

Lahore in the second phase was a city of bicycles as the means of transport for the daily commute, recreation, or visits with friends. Girls on bicycles were not an uncommon sight in the city, signifying Lahore's modernity and breaking of women's seclusion. The city expanded out towards new suburbs along Ferozepur and G T Roads. In 1936, Model Town designed on the model of the English Garden Towns, was established by a local co-operative society 4 miles from the Mall to the south-west on the Ferozepur roads. Though a bit distant from the civil station, it drew local upper middle classes. Hindus being more affluent were predominant among the residents. Yet it was open to all communities. Lahore was a livable and happy city in the second quarter of the 20th century. Much of Lahore's nostalgia literature has been inspired by the social and cultural environment of those days, centered around the civil station.

MARCH TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE AND THE RISE OF COMMUNALISM

The third trend was the gradual erosion in the 1940s of the mutual accommodation and amity between Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims, though the dissolution remained confined to the arena of politics, with little impact on everyday relations. As the prospects of independence with the partitioning of India approached, the intense competition for staking a claim for Lahore in India or Pakistan divided the three communities.

The Congress party included prominent Punjabi Muslims among its leaders. Mahatma Gandhi took Muslims concerns on board, such was his support of the Khilafat movement, agitating for the preservation of the institution of the Caliphate in Turkey. Paradoxically most Islamic religious parties, e.g. Ahrars and Jamiat-Ulema-i -Islam supported the Indian National Congress.

Muslim landed gentry found a common interest with Hindu farmers, forming the Punjab Unionist Party (1923) to keep agricultural lands out of the hands of urban money lenders. Ishtiaq Ahmed describes its ideology as promoting Punjabiyat, the shared Punjabi culture.[19] The Unionist party led by Sir Sikander Hayat and later Khizr Hayat Tiwana formed the ministerial government in the province after the 1937 elections and continued to rule until March 1947. In the 1945 elections, the Muslim League captured 75 seats almost all but two from the

majority Muslim constituencies, but the Unionist Party kept it out of the government by forming a coalition with the Congress and Sikh Panthic Party.

The adoption of the demand of Pakistan as a separate Muslim nation in March 1940 by the Muslim League's historic meeting in Lahore won over Punjab's urban classes, gradually drawing-in the rural Muslims with the support of Pirs (saintly persons) and the custodians of shrines. . Lahore was the epicenter of the Pakistan movement. The politics began to tear apart the communal tolerance and accommodations.

PARTITION, PAKISTAN AND THE BREAKDOWN OF COMMUNAL PEACE: THE END OF COLONIAL-LAHORE

The tensions building up with the prospective partition of India and the possibility of independent Pakistan proved too strong to hold together the long traditions of living with communal differences. Politics tore apart society.

The city had probably a population of about 700,000 in 1947 (671,659 as per the 1941 census). A majority were Muslims (by 1941 census-64%), though as Ishtiaq Ahmed observes it looked to be a Hindu city as" 75 percent of the property, businesses and new development schemes were owned by Hindus".[20] Even if this could be an overestimate, it is undeniable that Hindus dominated commercial, industrial, and professional activities. Muslims excelled in the orientalist pursuits. They had domination over some trades and crafts, e.g. leather and furniture trade and Urdu/ Persian literary productions. Hindus' economic domination itself became a point of resentment in the charged environment of the prospective independence in 1946-47.

The British Government promised India a responsible self-governance after World War ll in return for Indians' participation in the war. Furthermore, colonial rule was becoming an economic burden with the nascent industrialization of India, particularly to supplement British production for the war.[21] Many indigenous and British proposed formulas were put forth, but the differences in the demands of the Congress and the Muslim League under the resolute leadership of Mr. Jinnah could not be reconciled. The Independence and the partitioning of India seemed inevitable. The events started moving rapidly towards that conclusion.

Earl Attlee's Labour Party's majority government in Britain (1945) was committed to decolonization and building a welfare state in the United Kingdom. It was in a hurry to fulfill its plan. On February 24, 1947, Lord Mountbatten was appointed the Governor-General of India to wind up the British rule by June 1948.[22] He announced on behalf of the British Government on June 4, 1947, the plan to divide the country into two independent Dominions. Hindu majority provinces were

to form India and Muslim majority provinces making Pakistan with further division of the Punjab and Bengal Provinces in contiguous Muslims and Hindu majority areas to be part of Pakistan and India respectively. The princely states were to be part of one or the other country, depending on their geographic situation. More surprising was his decision to hasten the handing over of the reins of government to the two countries on August 15, 1947—a surprisingly hasty process of conferring independence and partitioning the sub-continent. The congress, Muslim League, and in Punjab the Sikh Panthic parties all started preparing for contesting, necessary by agitation and if necessary by violence, to push for a boundary of their choice in the partitioning of Punjab. Thus, the ground was laid for the communal riots that eventually unfolded in the Punjab, Bengal, Bihar, and Bombay.

Lahore's march towards the mayhem of communal riots and ripping asunder of the ages-old bonds of neighbourliness and the religious tolerance gained speed as the two territorial partitions, of India as a whole and the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal began to unfold. Within a few months, the social organisation of the city built over centuries broke down, eventually ending in the exodus of Hindus and Sikhs in July-August 1947.

A vicious cycle of attacks and counterattacks started in March 1947 in Lahore. From the incidents of isolated stabbing and arson, mutual attacks spiralled into organised raids on suburban villages/neighbourhoods in and around Lahore such as Rajgarh, Sant Nagar, and Sooter Mandi (in the walled city). All three communities were the victims as well as aggressors in these attacks. Lahore's riots were also a part of the cycles of retaliatory attacks for events in its twin city Amritsar. If Muslims in the Chowk Farid area of Amritsar were assaulted by Sikh gangsters, within days a Hindu or Sikh area was attacked by Muslim Goondas (toughs) in Lahore and vice versa.[23]

On June 22, 1947, a horrendous act of arson turned the tables for the battle of Lahore in Muslims' favour. The largest Hindu-Sikh neighbourhood in the Walled City, Shah Alam Gate area, was put to fire by a small group of Muslim bravados, presumably with the assistance of the Muslim police inspector and the area executive magistrate.[24] It spread along the street and engulfed nearby neighbourhoods. It burned for days turning the whole area into piles of rubble. Som Anand writes in his memories of Lahore that he saw the night lit by the flames of Shah Alami's fire in Model Town, five miles away.[25] This frightened Hindus and Sikhs and they started to trickle away to safer places in the eastern Punjab and Delhi. Acts of stabbing, arson, and even communal gang battles continued after June 1947, but the balance had tilted towards Muslims.

After the Boundary Commission's award of Lahore to Pakistan (announced on 17th August 1947), the trickle turned to a flood tide. Within a few weeks, almost all Hindus and Sikhs had left Lahore and the rest of Pakistan's Punjab as refugees. And conversely, Muslims from Amritsar, Jullundur, and other districts of eastern Punjab allocated to India were driven out to seek refuge in Pakistan, initially coming to Lahore. It was one of the biggest migrations in history accompanied by killings, lootings, and orgies of rape. Almost 10 million crossed the new border of India-Pakistan in both directions. The exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from Lahore marks the culmination of Colonial Lahore, though the institutional, urban imaginary and physical/architectural legacy of the British continues to define the city. Of course, the social structure changed almost overnight.

LAHORE NOSTALGIA LITERATURE

Lahore makes a deep impression on those who lived there. The middle-class Hindu and Sikhs had a very comfortable and charming life in the city. Many of them have written memoirs and accounts of their life in the city. These writings express the 'homesickness' for their ancestral homes, but they also recount the pleasures of the city. They have produced a new genre of city literature, namely Lahore nostalgia books and essays.

This genre now is being carried over by some members of the Pakistani diaspora. The glittering shops of *Anarkali* and the Mall loaded with 'English' goods are remembered as the embodiments of a good life. The British contributions of the Indo-Saracenic architectural idiom in the buildings such as the High Court, the General Post Office, Atchison college, the Museum among others made living in the bungalows of civil lines a symbol of modernity and social status.[26] Yet most of all it is the festive, stimulating, and a peaceful social life that is remembered with a twinge of loss.

Pran Neville in his book, A sentimental journey of Lahore, writes, "The old legendry city of Lahore…. continues to haunt the memory of those who are allured by its charms and peculiar flavour".[27] This sentiment is echoed in various ways by Som Anand, Ved Mehta, Gopal Mittel, Khushwant Singh, Meena Arora Nayak, Prakash Tandon, and others.[28] Ishtiaq Ahmed recounts what present and former residents remembered of the city's social life, including some Hindus and Sikhs who had left for India.[29] From Pakistani diaspora and post-independence authors, Sara Suleri and A. Hameed are often cited for glimpses of life in the city.[30] From these accounts, three themes stand out.

Lahore is remembered as a friendly city with a relaxed way of life. Religious differences and communal customs though appearing to be discriminatory were

accepted and respected in dealings with each other. The most common theme in the Lahore nostalgia literature is of personal friendships formed across these social gulfs. If Hindu food taboos required Muslim friends not to share food, they would harbour almost no resentment. And reciprocally Muslim inhibitions were respected in everyday relations. Of course, a substantial number of modern-liberal segments of all communities were relaxed about such customs. Tahira Mazhar, a prominent intellectual of socialist leanings describes how little consciousness was there about who belonged to what religion in forming friendships in her college.[31] The neighbourly and friendship bonds are repeatedly recalled in the memoirs.

The literary associations and discussion groups in Lahore spanned all communities. The progressive literary movement and its counterpart upholders of the established literary canons provided a very rich intellectual life in Lahore. The Arab Hotel, Nagina Bakery, and later India coffee house could be visited any time to find people of all faiths arguing loudly over fine points of poetry or current affairs. The memories of those saloons and intellectual life form the second theme of Lahore's memories.

Lahore's festivals, shrines, and Sufi music are remembered for making it a fun city. They were great binders of the common folks. Hindus used to serve cold milk or water to Muslims' Muharram processions going through their streets, while Muslims thronged Ram Lela festival in Minto Park, and Sikhs' *Baisakhi*.[32]

CONCLUSION

The British conquest and the consequent rule were events that could be described as the historical hinge for the city of Lahore. It was transformed into a new society and place. Yet it was not so new that its social organisation and physical form lost their moorings. This research aims at examining the emerging social organisation and the changing ideas of urbanism as a result of British rule. It is a narrative of the British conceived and developed colonial city and describes how that has laid the path for the evolution of the contemporary city.

The thrust of this article is to illuminate the internal dynamics of the change in the city. How the existing institutions and practices incorporated the British induced, social, economic, technological, and cultural changes. Another striking feature is that how traditions laid the path for the restructuring of the society and the city's form. This interplay of traditions and modernity (dialectic in other words) is the process of internal dynamics.

Lahore has been a communitarian multicultural city, where three religious' communities, the majority Muslims and significant minority Hindus and Sikhs, lived together within their respective communal organisations, accommodating and

accepting each other's ways of life with an overarching web of personal relations and common customs. The British did not disturb this social organisation, but provided a common ground of laws, administration, modern civic services, and practices. Yet they exercised enormous influence by changing the economic, technological, and legal basis of the society. The social structure of the city changed both from within and by the addition of new occupations, facilities, and practices.

Colonial Lahore was not a dual city in the sense of racial and social segregation, though it had two distinct economic organisations, i.e. the bazaar (traditional) and the modern. Undoubtedly the British developed the Civil Lines (station) and Cantonment in modern idioms with the separation of commerce, industry, and bungalow residential estates. The conceptions and institutions of this development were incorporated into the New Indigenous Communities (NIC) and were integrated into the local ideals of urban living. Thus, on the surface, there were modern and traditional sectors of the city as the manifestations of duality, but the intermixing within the modern parts of the city eroded racial and communal segregation. The social class differentiations were sharpened in the modern areas, unlike the Walled city, where the rich and poor of a clan/ caste lived in close proximity.

The British were too few to form large segregated areas and they did not settle permanently. There were periods of intense racial discrimination in the early years of the Raj in jobs, clubs, trains, associations, and residential estates. Yet as Indians' participation in the administration increased and a class of rich locals emerged, those barriers were broken. All in all, racial residential segregation was not a striking feature of colonial Lahore, except in the nineteenth century and in the turbulent years of the twentieth century. The biggest tear in the social organisation of Lahore began to appear as the ideas of nationalism began to take root among the three major communities. Two observations explain why communal amity could not be sustained. Firstly, the idea of a nation was raw and nascent. Indian nationalism had little history except for some historic myths and long spells of monarchical rules over mostly north India. Secondly, the civil society was weak, and its ties could not bridge communal divides.

Indian nationalism gradually crystallized. As the prospects of self -rule increased and the British slowly yielded to the Indians' demands, the three communities in Lahore drifted apart. The absence of intercommunal institutional ties, more importantly, shared feelings, proved to be a weak point for the social rupture. As Indian independence approached, and it became apparent that India will be divided into two sovereign nations along communal lines, social harmony and communal bonds in Punjab and Lahore snapped. 1947 brought communal arson, death, and destruction in Lahore, while the three communities jockeyed to

get Lahore included in their preferred country, India or Pakistan. Politics trumped sociology which leads to end the colonial era of Lahore. Yet its legacy continues to determine the city's development.

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COLONIAL ETHNOGRAPHY: COLLECTION AND IMPLICATIONS OF PASHTU PROVERBS

ASADULLAH MASEED

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE UNIVERSITY

LAHORE

ABSTRACT

The colonial ethnographic and cartographic projects were central to British colonialism. The knowledge, thus gathered through the ethnographic surveys, was not only used for ideological and political purposes, but it was also used to inform the people back at home about the Indian subjects. Societies, in this case, the Pashtuns of NWFP, who were labelled as savages, given their lack of written literature, were to be understood through their oral sources, particularly proverbs. Proverbs served not only as a means of gaining knowledge about the indigenous people, but also functioned as manifestation and manipulation of power for the colonial administrators who could use a relevant proverb. Colonial writers also placed great importance on proverbs as a reliable source of knowledge and often insisted that native Indians spoke in their "authentic voices" when they spoke in proverbs. It was emphasised by colonial writers that proverbs represented the true sentiments of the people.

KEY WORDS

Ethnography; Proverbs; Pashtuns; Colonial Administrators

"If [British] relations with the foreign peoples with whom they come in contact are to be successful, they must acquire a working knowledge of the habits, customs and ideas that govern the conduct of those peoples, and of the conditions in which they pass their lives…[1] (Richard Carnac Temple) As argued by Michael Foucault, colonialism created its own archaeology of knowledge".[2] The knowledge thus constructed and disseminated about different societies and colonies was used both for political and ideological purposes. The collection of proverbs and folklore was part of this knowledge-gathering project, and indeed, played a central role in the construction of colonial knowledge regarding the empire's north-west frontier. This

article focuses on two themes: it first looks into the colonial history of a collection of folklore, those involved in this project, and the ultimate purpose of this project. Secondly, it dwells on colonial officials' interest in Pashtu proverbs collection and its ultimate use in the colonial enterprise.

FOLKLORE IN NINETEENTH CENTURY EUROPE

Charles Darwin's work *On the Origin of Species* (1859) had a profound impact on European scientific thought. While on one hand, it revolutionised the knowledge about the evolution of the human species, on the other hand, this theory was applied by social scientists to human cultures. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) introduced the term "survival of the fittest" and the concept of "natural selection" was applied to human society and culture. Edward Taylor, a renowned English anthropologist, was also inspired by Darwin's theory of evolution. He presented the idea of "cultural evolutionism" and argued that it could be used to "reform British society". Taylor presented the concept of "universally shared mental development" and gave a uni-linear evolutionary model.[3]   His model was comprised of three stages i.e. savagery, barbarism, and civilization.[4] He held that all societies climb on this cultural ladder at their own pace. This theory later emerged as a comparative method for measuring the advancement of different societies and cultures over the period. According to this theory, the British by analyzing their own culture and history concluded that they were at the apex of civilization. This superiority provided a justification for the imperial project in India and elsewhere.

European interest in folklores across the world increased in the nineteenth century. During this period, cultural artifacts such as riddles, tales, proverbs, and jokes came under the umbrella of the term 'popular antiquities' (it referred to the antique folklores which transmitted orally from time unknown). In 1846, William John Thomas, who was a pioneering antiquarian, in a letter to *The Athenaeum* that 'what we call popular antiquities in England would most aptly be described by a good Saxon compound 'folklore'.[5] Later on, in 1849, he started publishing his journal *Notes and Queries* to preserve the fast-fading folklore. Richard M. Dorson argues that the great bulk of work on the collection of proverbs was done from 1870 to 1910 in England. It was during this time that the first Folklore society in the world was established in 1870. In 1891, an International Congress on Folklores was held in London. It was later on agreed by the Society to accept folklore from anywhere across the world. Sadhana Naithani argues that folklore was collected from all over the colonies and was published in Britain and later travelled in different directions. These developments reflect the increasing importance attributed to oral culture as a source of obtaining knowledge about the colonized.

Naithani adds that, however, what was missing from all the data was the natives' point of view.[6] The folklore material was going from the colonies to the mother country but not the way around. Native perspectives were completely censored, overwritten, or completely neglected. Most of this corpus was used by the colonizers to maintain their supremacy and to show the lack of civility of the colonized.

Richard Carnac Temple (1850-1931), a colonial administrator and compiler of *Legends of Punjab* (1883-1890) argued that the collection and study of human culture and customs could be a very interesting occupation, as well as a useful way of "filling up the leisure hours of Europeans in a foreign country…especially in remote and lonely localities".[7] The study of human culture and customs in this context, thus, was seen as the task of the colonial official, rather than local scholars. He added that "Empire might learn to think and act in accordance with the lessons taught by the lessons of anthropology". Temple was working in India and from the 1857 rebellion, he was aware of the significance of knowing the minds of colonised people. Thus, the people who travelled around the globe or who were stationed in colonies started collecting folklores that help understand the indigenous people and to communicate the knowledge about colonial subjects back to Britain. By the end of the nineteenth century, England had become the biggest repository of folklore collections. Naithani underlines two reasons for recording these folklores: to save and store orality for future use and to formulate handy definitions with a practical application about the culture, history, and mentality of people under consideration.

THE INDIAN ANTIQUARY

The Indian Antiquary: A Journal of Oriental Research in Archaeology, History, Language, Philosophy, Religion, Folklore, & c. was an extremely significant journal, which reflected the state of interest in Indian folklore during the nineteenth century. It was launched in 1872 and was financed and edited by James Burgess. Later, in 1884, Richard Temple became its editor. At that time, according to Temple, the journal was concerned with the publication of Archaeology, geography, history, folklore, languages, literature, philology, philosophy, and religion of India and its surroundings. Temple adds that it was started as a means to bridge a gap between the East and the West on subjects related to Indian research. This journal offered an opportunity to students and scholars, both Indian and non-Indian, to send their notes and queries which were not usually accepted by the Asiatic Society (which had been founded by William Jones in 1784) to further oriental research.

PHASES OF COLLECTING FOLKLORE IN COLONIAL INDIA

England was considered to be the largest collector of folklore from its colonies in the nineteenth century. Folklore collections in India are broadly divided into three phases.[8] The first phase was carried out in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century by well-educated colonial officials of British administration. Naithani sums the periodicals generated by the colonial administration in these words: "these publications were, though, not official but quasi-official in their scope and objective. They were large "miscellanist" in nature, carrying small notes of information on subjects around which the general was conceptualized; they were generally ethnographic, and they were specially meant for the use of Anglo-Indians who were the major contributors and subscribers".[9] In the second phase, the missionaries wanted to learn the language of the people and recreated the religious literature for their religious purposes. The easy access to learning the indigenous language was through engaging with folklore. The third phase began after independence where people started taking interests in studying their folklores to define their identity.[10]

Naithani maintains that the process of collecting folklores made the contact between the colonisers and the colonised a necessity. In their daily lives, the colonial officials and their families came in contact with the indigenous people, and given their "privilege of power", they were able to abstract from the people cultural and social knowledge which was used for the specific political and militarily agendas.

BRITISH ENCOUNTER WITH THE PASHTUNS OF NWFP AND TRIBAL AREAS: EARLY ETHNOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The British encounter with Pashtuns can be traced to 1808 when Mountstuart Elphinstone headed a mission to Kabul in the face of a possible French threat. This was the first official contact between the British colonial empire and the Afghan government. Elphinstone, during his stay in Peshawar, collected information about the Pashtuns with the help of local informants. Greatly inspired by the hospitality, republicanism in the form of *Jirga* system, and egalitarianism in the form of *Wesh* system which refers to the periodic relocation of land to among the tribes, he painted a romanticised picture of Pathan and their society. During this time, since there was no confrontation between the British and the Pathans, hence the early accounts on Pathans and their society were more sympathetic. After the first Anglo-Afghan war (1839-42, however, the scenario changed.[11]

With the annexation of the Punjab (1848), of which the North-West Frontier was a part till 1901, the British described the Pathans as "Noble Savages". As

discussed above, this shift from a more romanticised picture and the later notions of barbaric, uncivilised adjectives came after a humiliating defeat in the first Anglo-Afghan war.[12] The 'noble' part stood for their romantic version for their fairness, complexion, eye, and hair colour which reminded the British of the romantic theories of Greek origin (this attribution of Greek origin was made in the context of Alexander's campaigns in this region). The 'savage' reflected the British view that frontier societies were pre-modern in contrast to the modernity associated with the industrial revolution. According to Correlli Barnett, colonisation was seen by the Victorian and Edwardian policymaking elite as part of a 'civilising mission' through which the colonisers civilise supposedly backward locals. This view is reflected in the words of the colonial administrator Henry Walter Bellew (1834-1892), who stated that "Afghans hate us because they are taught so since infancy... we have judged the Afghans as we have found him and found him very wanting. He has his virtues and vices and to our minds, the latter overbalance the former very heavily. He is not fit to govern himself or others, and sadly wants, a master. If we don't take up that role, Russia will. For a master, the Afghans want, and a master they must have sooner or later. Which is it to be?[13]

As everywhere else, the British turned towards ethnographic knowledge of NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). Early ethnographers such as H. G. Raverty and Bellew turned towards the classic literature and collected the poetry of Khushal Khan Khattak, Bayazid Ansari, and a few others. Raverty paid little attention to the contemporary life-world of the people and termed it as culturally barren. Instead, he saw the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as representing the apex of Afghan society where there can be found written literature in the form of poetry and some prose.[14] He termed, and it was also the established rule of the day, written literature of any society as a 'barometer' to gauge the civility of a particular society. He published a dictionary and grammar book of the Pashtu language and also lamented the scarcity of Pashtu prose. He also portrayed himself on many occasions as a heroic preservationist for having preserved the antique literature which otherwise the warring tribes would have lost themselves. Bellew also turned towards classical literature and paid no attention to the contemporary life-world of the people.[15]

PASHTU PROVERBS AND THE COLONIAL STATE

H. H. Riseley (1851-1911) in his book *People of India* (1908) states about the proverbs that these quaint sayings have dropped fresh from the lips of the Indian rustic; they convey a vivid impression of the anxieties, the troubles, the annoyances, and the humours of his daily life; and any sympathetic observer who

has felt the fascination of an oriental village would have little difficulty in constructing from these materials a fairly accurate picture of rural society in India.[16] Proverbs attracted colonial administrators interest for a number of reasons. On a more general lever, proverbs were perceived as tokens of patterns of thought characteristics of a specific group of people. According to Septimus Smet Thorburn (1872), proverbs are like the 'dissecting knife' that laid bare the innermost secrets of the brain.[17] Edward Taylor (1871) termed certain regional practices as 'survivals' which originated in the past but they can be studied now in the savage societies through their folk customs.[18] Proverbs were particularly regarded as 'mines of historical knowledge' and that they could provide insights into past life-worlds. Colonial folklorists were of the view that these oral artifacts give insight into ethical thoughts and cultural norms that existed independent of any established theology. R. C. Temple expressed his views about the knowledge of Indian folklore, including proverbs, to have facilitated Englishmen and in a small way their governance of India:

> the practices and beliefs included under the general head of the folklore make up the daily life of our natives of our great dependency, control their feelings, and underlie many of their actions. We foreigners cannot hope to understand them rightly, unless we deeply study them and it must be remembered that close acquaintance and a right understanding begets sympathy, and sympathy begets good government.[19]

Thorburn collected and translated proverbs, riddles, ballads, and folklores. Thorburn was of the view that to gain common knowledge about the Pashtun, proverbs offer the opportunity to do that. He collected these proverbs between 1872 and 1874. More than four hundred proverbs have been listed by the author in the English language and also a short meaning and context have also been given. However, the Pashtu version of the same proverb has not been given which makes it difficult to know about the original Pashtu version of the proverbs. Later on, proverbs have been given in Pashtu language but they are arranged thematically under the titles such as Boasting, bragging, bravery, class and local, cowardice, cooperation, death, enmity, family, fate, friendship, God, good looks, good luck, bad luck, goodness and wickedness, home, honor and shame, ignorance, joy, sorrow, justice, poverty, pride, lame excuse, selfishness, strength, wealth, women and Miscellaneous, etc. This organization of proverbs in various categories depicts the major themes and day to day life activities of local peoples. Thorburn notes that such proverbs that are obscene or derogatory have not been included in this collection. However, he does not dwell on the definition of obscene proverbs and

his reason for exclusion. These proverbs, as he notes in the preface, are limited only to district 'Bannu' where he was stationed. However, the importance of this book is that it is the first book on Pashtu proverbs translated into English. This paved the way for others to follow the suit.

French scholar James Darmesteter in 1888 published a two-volume book titled *Chants populaires des Afghnas* in which he included Pashtu poetry and proverbs. But these proverbs have been published in the French language and no translation in other languages is found. Thus it makes it difficult for scholars and researchers of other languages than French to study these proverbs.

Colonel Boyle, a British military official, collected Pashtu proverbs from the rank and files of Frontier Militias and from villagers which he regarded as large illiterates. He also gives the translation of these proverbs into English. He argues that this collection is also comprised of vulgar proverbs which may sound unpleasing for the English readers but the Pathans did not consider them so these proverbs are judged from Pathan's point of view. Thus, in order to know the people, the knowledge of folklore was necessary because unlike Englishmen, Indians were controlled by ancient customs and traditions (according to the colonial point of view). Proverbs were assumed by the officials as a means of gaining access to the otherwise inaccessible and unfamiliar territory. It was widely held that the colonial officials would easily control the Indians if they were versed in the local language and could quote a proverb or two. This is reflected in Temple's address delivered at a meeting of British Association at Birmingham "Anthropology as a practical science" where Temple argued of the officials' and magistrates' use of proverb as "a powerful force working for influence".[20] Edward O'Brien, a colonial administrator working in Multan also stressed the use of Indian discourse for their own purposes. He advised the officials that quoting an appropriate proverb in the *Katchery* (court of law) adds to his influence and control. It might also make an aggressive native leave the premises of the court peacefully instead of being kicked out by the orderlies.[21] As Colonel C.A. Boyle notes in his book about a *Jirga* in which two tribes were trying to get the favour of a political agent by pretending to be more close to the government than the other, the political agent dismissed both in a single proverb.[22] The tribal elders got the message in a proverb by the colonial official when he replied: "black dogs, white dogs, brown dogs, all are dogs for us".[23] This implied that both the tribes were responsible for the crime. Thus, proverbs served not only as a mean of gaining knowledge about the indigenous people but it also functioned as manifestation and manipulation of power.

In addition to viewing proverbs as a way of building their authority in the colonial context, colonial writers also placed great importance on proverbs as a

reliable source of knowledge and often insisted that native Indians spoke in their 'authentic voices' when they spoke in proverbs. As Riseley explained in his preface to *The People of India* he had included a separate chapter on the proverbs of Indians to "give a much-described people the chance of describing themselves in their own direct and homely fashion".[24] It was emphasized by colonial writers that proverbs represented the true sentiments of the people.

Later on, around the 1870s, a paradigm shift occurred where the colonial officials and ethnographers S.S Thorburn and M.L. Dames paid attention to the oral culture and started collecting folktales, riddles, proverbs, and tappas. As argued by many scholars and the nationalist intellectuals of the present-day Pashtuns the Pashtu language thrived under the British for giving grammar books and dictionaries[25] Also the colonial officials and the present-day intellectuals argues that before the advent of the colonial era, Pashtu had not any prose and the poetry was also a mixture of Pashtu and Persian.[26] However, this is not historically true. For instance, in 1806-7 Nawab Mahabatullah Shahbaz-e-Jang, son of Rohilla Chieftain Hafiz Rahmat Khan compiled a work entitled *Riaz alMahabbat*. It was comprised of two parts; the first part is dedicated to extensive discussions on verbs and their various forms and the second part is a Pashtu-Persian dictionary. Riaz is also regarded as the first person to illustrate Pashtu sounds with examples from other languages. *Ajaib al-Lughat* was compiled in 1813 by another son of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Ilahyar Khan. It was a dictionary of four languages i.e. Pashtu, Persian, Arabic, and Hindustani. These two were the primary lexicographical sources which were later consulted by Raverty. Moreover, we should bear in mind that these endeavours were meant not for the development of Pashtu for the sake of Pashtu but had imperial motives as to provide the officials with the know-how of Pashtu. Further, it is important to note that there was no need for the Pashtuns to have a grammar of their language, as grammar are not required by native speakers of a language. The view that Pashtu had not any significant prose is also not historically true. We can found many sources today, which are gradually being catalogued and listed in online archives. An online paper titled "Catalogue of Pashtu Manuscripts" enlists a plethora of classic literature in the libraries of the British Isles.[27] Similarly, fihrist.org.uk has abundant classic Pashtu literature on prose and poetry.[28] The poetry was a mixture of Pashtu and Persian but it is also a fact that Persian was the dominant language of both Afghanistan and India and many people were versed in Persian too besides Pashtu as their mother tongue.

Although the colonial writers and ethnographers saw themselves as allowing the indigenous people to finally "describe themselves", but these proverbs were selected, decontextualised, and were used as a means to label the people as

uncivilised.[29] For example, Risley writes that the proverbs of NWFP and Balochistan furnish the illustration of amenities found in the primitive tribal society, the members of which possess a sense of allusive humor and that proverbs are used to the prosecution "of all conceivable form of vendetta".[30] The proverbs which he has shown use derogatory language and present Pathans and Balochs as aggressive, uncivilised, and barbaric. For example, "The Afghan is faithless" (*Afghan be Iman)*, "a Pashtun's self-will will bring him to hell", "a saint one moment, a devil the next, this is a Pathan", "the Pathans took the village and the Behnas (cotton carders) got swollen heads".

Similarly, different castes and tribes were also stigmatized by proverbs used by different groups. For example, "a Khattak can ride, but he is a man of but one charge" was a saying attributed to Marwats. The Khattaks retaliate by saying "Keep a Marwat to look after asses, his stomach well filled and his feet well worn" These are followed by many other such proverbs in Risley's book. Such kinds of proverbs were used by the colonial administrators to know about the mutual animosity, their weaknesses, and then to pitch them against each other. It also helped them in devising different policies for different castes and tribes in dealing with them. The same method was employed by S.S Thorburn in his book *Bannu, Or Our Afghan Frontier* (1872).

The same motives as discussed above also holds for Pashtuns of NWFP and tribal areas. Pashtuns had a very strong oral tradition. As argued by the colonial writers, though I argue that it was a constructed view to meet their ends, they had a very scarce written literature. Moreover, some of the officials were greatly moved by the customs and traditions of the Pashtuns which in turn compelled them to understand and record the traditions inherited in oral traditions. As said by a Pashtun intellectual, "Proverbs are the soul of Pashtun society", colonial officials took a kin interest in learning and recording these proverbs. Moreover, the tribal society was also regarded as a closed and unexplored society, which was rarely influenced by modernity associated with the industrial revolution. Thus, it was a hotspot for the newly emerged 'Anthropology discipline'. So, the first task for the British, as everywhere else, was to know about the local language, customs, and traditions. As argued by the early British writers and ethnographers, the written literature which would give an insight into the Pashtun society was very rare. There were few books of poetry and also prose but they were not specific in giving the know-how of the collective society. It was the oral traditions including proverbs and tappas which directly reflected the Pashtun society and daily business of society. Proverbs provided the information about customs and traditions, the information about tribes hostile towards each other, the knowledge about the different local

weathers and crops, the information about gender relations and the division of labour, the knowledge about Pashtuns' honour, their enemy and their independence, etc. it also provided the information about the roles of various institutions e.g. *Mullah* and the relations between Pashtuns and Hindus, the portrayal of *Ferangi* i.e. British in Pashtu proverbs. Pashtuns were guided by their unwritten code of life – *Pashtunwali*. *Pashtunwali* is a yardstick through which Pashtun's behavior is evaluated.[31]

Pashtu proverbs also reflected historicism to some extent. *Pashtunwali* is embedded in Pashtu proverbs. Proverbs provided information about the composition of society and the castes living there, for example, the goldsmiths, the *Damm* (drummers), the cobblers, etc. This provided the colonial administration not only with the knowledge about taxation but also the importance of particular castes in Pashtun society. This is turn pawed the way as with whom to negotiate given their importance in society. Certain proverbs reflected the bravery of the more hostile tribes. This made it easier for the colonial officials to know about such tribes and the way to deal with them. Also, colonisation was regarded by the British as a civilising mission. The tribal people, as discussed earlier were regarded as 'Noble Savages. Societies having written literature and laws were regarded as comparatively civilised. A Pashtun society lacking written literature, though not true because they did have written literature and in some cases, there was not a need to write, for instance, the grammar, and they were lived by the unwritten code of life i.e. *Pashtunwali*. Hence, it was taken as their moral duty the colonisers to covert the oral culture into written and to codify the laws as a civilisation mission but its a fact that both these practices were for their interests. . After the socio-cultural paradigm shift, the pre-modern textual pieces of evidence were not sufficient to ascertain the dynamic nature of borderland society. Ethnographers turned to proverbs, songs, and customs either to establish a new form of scientific governance or to chastise their administration for its destabilizing impacts. Most of the books were about Pashtu proverbs have been compiled by those who were colonial officials. The various commissioners in NWFP and Political Agents in tribal areas served as a conduit for the two-way flow of information between the government and the people.[32] Knowledge about the various tribes came through *Mulacati* (informal discussions) and tribal *Jirgas* (tribal gathering). His fluency in the Pashtu language was necessary for that would eliminate the role of *Arbab*, the native middleman.[33] Either way, the political needed a ready answer in-store and the wit, guile, and stamina to meet the tribesmen on equal terms in argument and manage the meeting successfully.[34] This is needed for the administrators to be well versed in Pashtu proverbs as *Jirga* is the event where proverbs are frequently used

and a complex point is made in a single proverb. Lowis, a colonial officer, records in his personal memoir of his superior 'Frazer Noble', a Political Agent, dealing with a *Mehsud* tribal *Jirga*: "His handling of a *Jirga*, with the back row boys screaming at him was equally effective. He would produce some appalling proverb, which would have the rest of the *Jirga* in stitches and shouting at the hecklers to sit down and shut up".[35]

Certain colonial officials admired the Pathans for their values which were regarded by the British administrators as common to their own English society. As Akbar S. Ahmad points out that some of the colonial officials were unduly influenced both by their romanticised notions of frontier and the Pashtun tribesmen themselves-great warriors, immense hospitable, belonging to a deep masculine society, possessed a bawdy sense of humour, and high sense of personal humor.[36] He argues that British officials held these romantic views possibly due to the complex and layered aspects of their own society.[37] Finding these romantic characteristics of honor, simplicity, and courage in Pashtuns, they were thus compelled to act in a similar way to an extent that one political officer killed himself after believing that he had betrayed this code.[38] Winston Churchill speaking of the first Governor of NWFP, Harold Deane, in 1901 said;

> we have with us a very brilliant officer Major Deane… Apparently, all these savage chiefs were his old friends and almost his blood relations. Nothing disturbed their friendship. In between fights, they talked as man to man and as pal to pal.[39]

The friendship between the tribal elders and some colonial officials was to such an extent that there was a perception that these men were prone to 'going native'. This led to certain political officials well versed in the local language, proverbs, and their employment in a relevant context which had a deep influence on the locals.[40] Thorburn in his book *Bannu or Our Afghan Frontier (1876)* notes the effect of British speaking Pashtu on a Pathan tribesman. He notes that:

> the delight of a hill Pathan in being addressed in his mother Pashtu by Sahib is always genuine and irrepressible; his face, which usually wears touch me if you dare expression, ultimately breaks into a grin and he wonderingly asks you… 'Eh, you talk Pashtu, how did you learn it'.[41]

The gain in personal influence, besides other advantages, the ability to converse directly with the people, gives an Englishman amongst Pathan is so obvious that I need not dilate on it".[42] These personal relations also led to the colonial officials interests in proverbs. These proverbs helped the officials in conveying the message

of ownness and one among them. Another reason for the colonial officials interests in Pashtu proverbs is the rise of enlightenment ideas in Europe and the rise of Anthropology discipline to learn about the outside world. Fieldwork was central to the Anthropology discipline. Tribal society was seen as an experimental ground for anthropology because of its primitiveness and un exploration. Pashtun society was still intact, largely oral and tribal society. The knowledge of proverbs provided them with the raw material to know about ancient society because many colonial writers argued that the locals speak in pure language when they use proverbs.

CONCLUSION

Colonial administration used different models based on which to judge the stage of the civilisation of that society. Among them was the presence or absence of written literature and written law. These theories were used to provide ideological foundations to colonialism. The collection of local knowledge about languages, customs, and traditions was central to the colonial administration. Various colonial officials started collecting the folklores and compiling the grammar of various languages. Proverb collection was a key feature in colonial ethnography. Proverb collection of the Pashtuns was of particular interest to the British officials. Pashtun society was largely perceived as a bounded society with minimum interaction with the rest of the world. it was widely believed by the colonial officials that except few 'Diwans' of poetry, there was no written literature. Pashtun society was largely perceived as an oral society.it was believed by many colonial writers that the locals speak their original language when they speak in proverbs. Hence, it was taken as a duty by the colonial officials to translate this orality into written form. The necessary knowledge about local tribes, their customs and traditions, occupations, institutions, etc. were thus to be found in proverbs. This collection of proverbs was compiled (a) as a colonial project to gather knowledge, (b) as personal interests on the behalf of colonial officials who were the admirer of the Pashtuns.

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