
THE HISTORIAN

VOL. 09

SUMMER

2011

A BI-ANNUAL RESEARCH JOURNAL

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**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
GOVERNMENT COLLEGE UNIVERSITY, LAHORE**

The Historian

Volume 09 Summer 2011

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GC University, Katchehry Road, 54000 Lahore, Pakistan.

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ISSN 2074-5672

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PRICE: 250 PKR

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GOVERNMENT COLLEGE UNIVERSITY, LAHORE

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THE INEFFECTUOUS OR CATASTROPHIC EPIPHANY IN JAMES JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*

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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the nature of the epiphany in Joyce's *Dubliners*. The epiphanic moments are no longer transformative and restorative as it is the case with the first three and the last story of *Dubliners*. The stories under discussion in this paper are more revealing about the intense 'centre of paralysis', which is Dublin. The world of *Dubliners* is dominated by an inaccurate view of reality. It is argued that Wordsworth's dream in *The Prelude* is helpful in interpreting the 'intense centre of paralysis'. Joyce's 'nicely polished glass' – *Dubliners* – reflects not 'a forewarning of the end of the world' but 'the replacement of a reality'; it is not a sound – 'An ode, in passion uttered' – which prophesies the destruction of the world but a destructive sight he offers to his people. He places characters in the context of a sick society which is circular in nature. They tend to seek (ineffective) escape by means of either alcohol or wandering or emigration. Struggle or movement seems very

little of any consequence to give rise to any hope of resurgence. The epiphanic model of growth developed in *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* fails to preserve and justify the existence of an independent human being.

Keywords: Education, Epiphany, Paralysis, Moral

Joyce started working on *Dubliners* in 1904. Though *Dubliners* – a collection of fifteen short stories – was ready for publication in 1907, Joyce had to wait for seven long years to see it in the published form. *Dubliners* was first published in the book form in 1914. So much critical attention has been paid to Joyce's later works that *Dubliners* appears to be a lesser work by Joyce. It is interesting to note that Joyce developed his preoccupations as a writer while living in Dublin but he materialized those preoccupations while living away from Dublin – Dublin means the same thing to Joyce as the English countryside to William Wordsworth. Out of his entire published work, *Dubliners* specifically centre on Dublin life in terms of the details he provides of the hegemonic forms of Irish society. (By hegemonic I mean the dominant prevalent ideology of the institutions of education, religion, nationality, language and family). Dublin is so much at the centre of the stories that it seems to give the impression that it is the actual protagonist of the stories.

This research paper examines the nature of the epiphany – “a sudden spiritual revelation” – in the stories beginning from “Eveline” to “Grace”. It is argued that the epiphanic moments seem to have lost their transformative and restorative potential; either they are inefficacious or catastrophic, and are directed more toward the reader. (I am indebted to Warren Beck’s study of the epiphany as an ‘empty epiphany’ in “A Painful Case”.) As Margot Norris argues, “*Dubliners* can lead students into the act of reading as a meaning-producing *process* rather than as merely confrontation with a meaning-laden *product*.”¹ There appears to be little possibility of transformation and restoration for the protagonists; either their situation remains the same or the epiphanic moments bring about catastrophic effects which add to the misery of *Dubliners*’ hopeless lives. As Trevor L. Williams sums up the bleak situation of characters in *Dubliners*: “Without the possibility of development, without a future, such characters can only flounder in the narrow space allowed to them, all potentiality displaced into false consciousness, petty snobbery, dreams of escape, and fixation upon the past. Not surprisingly, where human relationships are so alienated, images of decay abound.”² David G Wright argues that the characters in *Dubliners* not only lack self-knowledge but also lack knowledge of others.³ The characters suffer from “lack of vision” which symbolize their diseased state; the reason why the text abounds in “Joyce’s repeated references to

blindness or darkened vision.”⁴ In short, the world of Dubliners is dominated by an inaccurate view of reality. Religion (Roman Catholic Church), politics (nationalism) and culture (the Revivalist movement) tend to inculcate an inaccurate view of reality.

The stories under discussion in this paper are more revealing about the intense ‘centre of paralysis’, which is Dublin. It is argued that Wordsworth’s dream in *The Prelude* is helpful in interpreting the ‘intense centre of paralysis.’ In *The Prelude*, while sitting in a melancholic mood beside a cave situated on the sea shore, Wordsworth was reading Don Quixote. He closed the book and occupied himself by thoughts on “poetry and geometric truth.”⁵ He fell asleep in the midst of these reflections and saw a dream. He finds himself in a desert where he sees an Arab – “an uncouth shape” – riding a dromedary.⁶ He is first pleased at the sight of the Arab that he might guide him through the desert. Soon he notices that the Arab is carrying a stone and an extremely bright shell under his arms. The Arab explains that the stone is *Euclid’s Elements*. He asks Wordsworth to take the shell close to his ears and hear. Wordsworth does likewise and hears “A loud prophetic blast of harmony; / An ode, in passion uttered, which foretold / Destruction to the children of the earth / By deluge, now at hand.”⁷ Suddenly, the stone and the shell turn into books on astrology and gods as the Arab wishes to bury the books. Wordsworth does not question himself how the

stone and shell metamorphose into books. The Arab departs from the scene as he seems to be in a hurry. Wordsworth follows him and the Arab keeps looking backwards from time to time. Suddenly the Arab changes into Don Quixote but at the same time he remains what he is. At last, Wordsworth sees the gathering waters drive him away. Wordsworth woke up and found himself looking at the sea with the book in his hand. As J. Hillis Miller argues, "It is not so much a real dream as the deliberate invention of a dream sequence."⁸ It may be one of the three famous dreams of Descartes. In the 1805 edition of *The Prelude*, it is either Michel Beaupuy's or S. T. Coleridge's dream; in the 1850 edition, it is Wordsworth's dream. As Miller argues, "From Descartes to the philosophic friend to Wordsworth the dream has migrated, undergoing accretions and mutations in each metempsychosis."⁹ Wordsworth is "meditating once again on the sad destructibility of books...poetry and geometric truth, would seem exempt from 'internal injury.'"¹⁰ He realises soon that 'poetry and geometric truth' are not excepted from 'internal injury, so he shares the "Arab's madness": "the proper thing to do, in order to protect and preserve the great books of the world, is to bury them."¹¹ As "the message the poet hears in the shell is a forewarning of the end of the world."¹² The theme of the dream is that "A book, like a dream, is the replacement of a reality, which always remains at a distance from its image. The theme of the dream is

the language or the sign-making power.”¹³ However, Joyce is not so much concerned about the ‘sad destructibility of books’ in *Dubliners*. He is rather concerned about writing ‘a chapter of the moral history’ of Ireland where Dublin is the very centre of moral paralysis. He does not say that the world would end soon. Nevertheless, his moral concerns accumulate like the accumulating flood in Wordsworth’s dream, and his intention appears like a strong artistic conviction to overpower the moral wasteland of Dublin. As Miller argues, “The human mind has power to project itself outside itself.”¹⁴ Joyce is not so much concerned with the preservation of great books by means of burying them but he is creating one more to replace reality. He shares the ‘Arab’s madness’ in loving great books but not his intention to preserve great books by burying them. Joyce’s famous correspondence with Grant Richards about the publication of his book reflects his serious concerns to forewarn the Irish people. Instead of ‘a forewarning of the end of the world’, Joyce forewarns the Irish people by giving “one good look at themselves in my nicely polished glass.”¹⁵ His ‘nicely polished glass’ reflects not ‘a forewarning of the end of the world’ but ‘the replacement of a reality’; it is not a sound – ‘An ode, in passion uttered’ – which prophesies the destruction of the world but a destructive sight he offers to his people. Like the harmonious sound coming from the shell, Joyce’s is a ‘nicely polished glass’; the sound is

destructive, and so is the sight. Therefore, the characters in the stories under discussion are caught between “Dublin paralysis and entrapment” and escape.¹⁶

Joyce places characters in the context of a sick society which is circular in nature. Most of the critics agree that *Dubliners* has a circular structure. For example, Augustine Martin argues that “Joyce’s characters tend to aimlessness, to getting nowhere, to going round in circles and ending up where they began.”¹⁷ Also, Lucia Boldrini points out “a pattern of circularity in *Dubliners*.”¹⁸ P. F. Herring sees a pattern of “circular endings” in the individual stories.¹⁹ They tend to seek (ineffective) escape by means of either alcohol or wandering or emigration. Escape seems to be felt as a most desirable possibility of mechanical release from the suppression from without and repression from within: “one of the most prevalent and well-known motifs in *Dubliners* is the empty promise of escape with its subsequent frustration.”²⁰ *Dubliners* are trying to escape in vain from the ‘deluge’ – paralysis – like the Arab in Wordsworth’s dream vision. Struggle or movement seems very little of any consequence to give rise to any hope of resurgence. Paradoxically, most of the *Dubliners* are shown wandering through the streets of Dublin. In a sense, *Dubliners* seems to be a text about wandering but is it as consequential as Wordsworth’s creative wandering in the English countryside or Stephen’s wandering in *Stephen Hero*?

Wordsworth in *The Prelude* associates 'paralysis' with modern urban living as he calls it "a universe of death."²¹ Most of the critics link 'paralysis' to the combined oppression by Catholicism and Colonialism but Williams links 'paralysis' to Dubliners' own involvement in their oppression.²² In Herring's opinion, it is because of centuries of religious and political oppression by the British that render the Irishmen mentally and spiritually paralyzed; the possibility of transcendence could come only through "death" or "emigration."²³ However, I argue that it is more so because of the consequences of modern urban life. As Wordsworth writes in *The Prelude*, "True is it, where oppression worse than death / Salutes the being at his birth, where grace / Of culture hath been utterly unknown, / And poverty and labour in excess / From day to day pre-occupy the ground / Of the affections, and to Nature's self / Oppose a deeper nature; there, indeed, / Love cannot be; nor does it thrive with ease / Among the close and overcrowded haunts / Of cities, where the human heart is sick."²⁴ Likewise, Joyce is not inclined to believe that the city life is better than the rural one. In his imagination, Dublin stands as 'the centre of paralysis'. Joyce explains in a letter to Grant Richards, "My intention was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the centre of paralysis."²⁵ The stories under

discussion in this paper are more revealing about 'dear dirty Dublin'.

In the first of the stories between 'childhood' and 'maturity', the story "Eveline" features a lower-middle-class character. The story was written in 1905. Eveline is a young girl of just over nineteen years of age. It is the first of the three stories in which the protagonist is a female character. The other two are "Maria" and "A Mother". She works as a shop assistant at the Stores. Herring describes her as "a Cinderella figure of the Dublin slums."²⁶ She is a typical example of 'Dublin paralysis and entrapment'. Paradoxically, the story begins from a desire to move away from this 'paralysis and entrapment'. How far long can she sustain this desire in the face of limited and limiting circumstances? She is poised at a point in her life where she has to make a choice between 'paralysis and entrapment' and escape in the form of emigration. She is contemplating running away with her lover, Frank, a sailor (so he claims) living in Buenos Ayres. He has had a bad time in Buenos Ayres; he has come to Dublin for a holiday. Frank appears to her as a charming and sympathetic person who promises to marry her when they are in Buenos Ayres. She has already made up her mind to leave and has written farewell letters to her father and brother.

While sitting at the window of her house, Eveline casts a backward glance at her life. Sweet remembrances of her brothers and sisters and their

playmates come to her mind. She asks herself whether she could leave behind all this. Why is she so sad and reluctant to leave home? She feels herself in the grips of the memories of her domestic life. Her father usually mistreats her. He is another example of drunkard impotency like most of the Dubliners in the entire collection. As already mentioned, one form of escape from 'Dublin paralysis and entrapment' is the repeated use of alcohol. He was tolerable and reasonably benevolent before the death of her mother. Since then he has become more and more violent toward her: "It was hard work – a hard life."²⁷ Suddenly she hears an organ player outside in the street that reminds her of the night before the death of her mother; the same night she had heard an Italian organ player in the street. It brings to her mind the promise she had made to her dying mother as she wonders, "Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could".²⁸ Nevertheless, she decides to leave her home in favour of a better future for herself: "Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy?"²⁹ Despite her father's strict forewarning about Frank that he might turn out to be an imposter; life with Frank on another land appears to her a hopeful sign of relief from the tyranny of her existence.

Eveline fails to act in that moment of final leave-taking at the station; she fails to break the deadlock of her existence. She is totally paralyzed despite Frank's insistent appeal that they must leave together as the steamer is ready to depart: "She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition."³⁰ In that posture described as a 'helpless animal', she foresees her doom. She chooses unhappiness – and perhaps death – as against life holding a promise of joys. Does she feel morally obliged to waste herself like her mother? The only choice she could make is to replicate her mother's role. She decides in favour of her domestic obligations; her father is growing old, two children at home need to be looked after. She sacrifices her personal happiness for the sake of home. As Beck writes, "her real story is not of direct progress but of haltings and stalemate."³¹ The organ player, the mother's promise and her household obligations all work together to drag her back to her voiceless and joyless existence. The epiphanic moment reveals how far she has been internally paralyzed by her circumstances; it binds her ever more firmly to her state of helplessness. The epiphany does not unlock but closes doors of happiness and further growth upon her. The catastrophic effect of the epiphany is that of a 'helpless animal'.

In contrast to poor Eveline's paralyzed state, the story "After the Race" focuses on the business

ambitions of a rich Irishman who is apparently free to move. The story was written in 1904 against the background of Gordon-Bennet Motor Race. As the title of the story suggests, the word 'race' implies movement at a rapid pace; it is interesting to see how far that rapid movement either enables or disables the general condition of stalemate Dubliners are suffering from. As Beck argues, "His [Joyce's] Dubliners are only partially paralyzed, yet radically limited and incapacitated, and figuratively their motions are halting, their utterances muffled."³² Most of the characters in the story are drawn from the upper classes. Jimmy Doyle is a young man of twenty-six years old. His father's name appears in the Dublin newspapers as "a merchant prince."³³ He held "advanced" nationalist views at the beginning of his successful career as a businessman.³⁴ It means that he was either a supporter of Home Rule, or Irish independence from Great Britain. His idea of educating Jimmy is simply to know persons of high social standing so that they might be used to business advantage. First, he sent his son to "a big Catholic college" – Stonyhurst College in Lancashire – in England.³⁵ Second, he sent him to Dublin University – Trinity College – to study law. Third, he sent him to Cambridge for a term. It is evident in Jimmy's personality that he never took an interest in his education. The institutional mode of education proves another instance of an ineffectual system of education as Jimmy's character is formed by the

business ambitions of his father. As James Fairhall argues, "In spite of Jimmy Doyle's money, a feeling of poverty – spiritual rather than material – pervades the story."³⁶ Despite his father's investment on his education, he continues to be a reasonably irresponsible person. At Cambridge he gets mixed up with persons of high social standing as his father wishes him to do. While at Cambridge, Jimmy makes acquaintance with a rich Frenchman, Charles Segouin who owns some of the biggest hotels in Paris, and is on the verge of starting a motor establishment.

The story begins with the conclusion of a car race where the French team finish second: "The French, moreover, were virtual victors."³⁷ Though the German car wins the race, the Irish crowd is pleased at the success of the French. After the race, the 'virtual victors' move through a crowd where "poverty and inaction" are the characteristic features of Irish lives.³⁸ Their cheers seem to be in contrast with their miserable existence. Jimmy appears in an excited state in one of the French cars along with his friends; Charles Segouin and his cousin, André Rivière, and a poor pianist named Villona – Jimmy's friend. Jimmy seems to be enjoying very much the company of his friends as the narrator comments on his excited state: "Rapid motion through space elates one; so does notoriety; so does the possession of money."³⁹ He is thinking of investing a major part of his money in Segouin's business. The purpose of this car ride is clear to him. He has been seen by the

spectators in the company of the continentals. Later, they are to dine that evening at Segouin's hotel. His father is proud of Jimmy because Jimmy has managed to attract one of the richest businessmen, Segouin; by doing so, Jimmy fulfils his father's scheme of educating him at the prestigious institutions.

Segouin introduces a young Englishman named Routh to the party of four at the dinner; he came to know of Routh at Cambridge. After the dinner, they take a walk along Stephen's Green where they meet an American named Farley. They journey towards Farley's yacht for a night of merrymaking; supper, music and cards are planned. Villona entertains the party with music while the rest of them dance. Supper follows dance and music; they drink to Ireland, England, France, Hungary and the United States of America. After the supper, they play cards while drinking. Jimmy becomes confused as he loses a great deal without knowing exactly how much has he lost. He is left a spectator of his folly in the midst of cheering and laughter around him. He sinks gradually into the knowledge of his folly: "He knew that he would regret in the morning but at present he was glad of the rest, glad of the dark stupor that would cover up his folly."⁴⁰ How far can he hide the sense of shame from himself? The darkness of the night no longer hides his folly as Villona announces: "Daybreak, gentlemen."⁴¹ What the epiphanic moment gives to Jimmy is the knowledge of his own

folly which stands in sharp contrast to his father's pride on him. He has seen a bit of life and is struck down by the knowledge of experience. The institutions of education, the "solid instincts" of his father's business acumen and his father's pride in him could not keep him intact from the general condition of stalemate.⁴² A sharp quick look inward reveals at last how helpless he is. The flashing modern cars, the expectation of business success, the satisfaction his father has shown toward him and the calm summer night on the yacht could not block out his passage to 'the dark stupor' which implicates him in the collective moral dilemma of Irish society. The epiphany at the literal 'daybreak' proves catastrophic to his sense of his father's pride on him. The epiphany is inefficacious in the sense that it does not make Jimmy re-examine himself and cast into doubt the values he upholds; he is only guilty of shaming his father's pride on him.

In the third of the stories between 'childhood' and 'maturity', the story "Two Gallants" features a couple of lower-middle-class jobless young men – Lenahan and Corley – who are wandering through the streets of Dublin on a late summer Sunday evening. The story was written in 1906. Lenahan is a youth close to thirty-one years of age. He is described as a young man with "a ravaged look."⁴³ He is a wandering spirit and lives at other people's expense by means of his "adroitness and eloquence."⁴⁴ He is out of a job and there is no other way he could make

his living except depending on others; that is why he is known as a “leech” among the people who know him.⁴⁵ He may be a victim of his circumstances but he does not seem to be making any effort at finding a job. It is apparent from the conversation he has with Corley that Corley is vibrant, dominant and vocal; Lenehan is passive, submissive and silent. Lenehan is submissive because he is expecting some money from Corley. While talking to Corley, Lenehan’s voice shows signs of depleted strength. Corley, on the other hand, seems to be a libertine – an expression of Dublin corruption. He is the son of the inspector of police. For that very reason, his bullying personality bears the signature of a policeman; it is apparent from the way he talks and walks and behaves. He, too, is out of a regular job but works some time as a police informer. He is usually full of himself and prefers to brag about his exploits with prostitutes. He used to pick up prostitutes quite regularly. There is no pretention in disguising the fact that he is a betrayer. Lenehan tends to flatter him by referring to him as a libertine. They talk about a slavey whom Corley had picked up from Dame Street. Corley narrates his experience of having a good time with her. He exploits her to sexual and financial advantage. She not only brings cigarettes but also pays the tram fare for him. One time she brought a couple of expensive cigars for him. The purpose of their wandering is made clear in their conversation; Corley is after the slavey to extract some money out

of her. Therefore, Lenehan leaves Corley with the slavey and moves off to while away time until Corley comes back with the money.

While loitering aimlessly in the streets, Lenehan entertains himself with the distant music of a harpist. Finding nothing else to do, he enters into a workman's bar. He considers it beneath his sense of dignity to eat his dinner in a workman's bar. Nevertheless, he enjoys his dinner. Thinking of Corley and the slavey brings into his mind his own poverty. He questions himself what kind of life he is spending: "He was tired of knocking about, of pulling the devil by the tail, of shifts and intrigues."⁴⁶ The epiphanic moment sets in motion his long dormant creative energies as he envisions in that moment a better life. He thinks of a job, wife, and a house of his own. What he has been doing up to now? He is tired of wandering jobless with insignificant friends and girls in the Dublin streets. Suddenly he is revived with the feeling that "all hope had not left him."⁴⁷ Whatever remainder of hope he is left with, it points toward finding "some good simple-minded girl with a little of the ready."⁴⁸ He fails to generate hope from his own potential resources of head and heart; his hope, like his life up to now, is dependent on another person. The epiphanic moment over his dinner proves ineffectual as he resumes his former position very soon. He walks off toward the place where he left Corley and the slavey. At last, he meets the triumphant Corley with a gold coin in his hand. It

does not concern Lenehan in the least how the poor slavey might have managed to secure the coin. Both the 'gallants' have got what they wanted. They have extracted money out of the slavey – the end of their gallantry. The story in Joyce's telling is a typical example of moral corruption common among most of the Dubliners.

In the fourth of the stories between 'childhood' and 'maturity', the story "The Boarding House" features middle-class characters. The story was written in 1905. Though the story is more about Mr Doran, he appears later in the story. He is a young man of thirty-four or thirty-five years of age. He is a decently educated and serious person. He professes to be a free thinker. He has been working for thirteen years at a wine-merchant's office. He is a reasonably prosperous person. He lives at a boarding house owned by Mrs Mooney. The boarding house is usually populated with young men such as clerks, tourists, and sometimes artists from the music halls. The boarding house has developed a bad reputation in recent times. Mrs Mooney has a daughter named Polly, a nineteen year old girl. She is described in the text as "a little perverse Madonna."⁴⁹ She is only nominally educated, lacking decency and culture. The point of conflict in the story arises when Mr Doran's affair with Polly is made known to Mrs Mooney. How does Mr Doran – despite his educated and cultured perception – become easy pickings for the

inexperienced Polly and her clever, worldly-wise mother?

Mrs Mooney is a tactful woman. Her own life has been miserable as her husband turns out to be an incorrigible drunkard. He would sometimes use violence against her. At the time of their marriage, they had a butcher's shop near Spring Gardens. Her husband's bad ways ruined their business. She finally separated from him on the grounds that he was an irresponsible husband. He gets a temporary job as a sheriff's man and continues to live his life the same way. She runs a boarding house to earn her living. She manages it with tact and cleverness: "She dealt with moral problems as a cleaver deals with meat."⁵⁰ She lets things happen for a while between Mr Doran and Polly. She keeps ominously silent about the affair; she waits patiently for the opportune moment to arise so as to deal with it with a cleaver. When the opportune moment arrives, she plans a detailed interview with Mr Doran asking for compensation which means marriage. She knows that "all the weight of social opinion [was] on her side."⁵¹ Mr Doran might lose his job if the affair is made public. She prepares her grounds on which to plead her case with Mr Doran: first, she would plead her daughter's honour; second, in case he does not marry her, Polly would commit suicide.

Mr Doran, on the other hand, is quite disturbed. Despite his claim as a free thinker, he goes to a priest and confesses his sin. He weighs his own

situation from all sides but feels “more helpless than ever.”⁵² Either he can marry her (for him an act of paralysis) or he can run away (an act of escape). How could he marry a girl like Polly? His family and friends would hardly find any virtue in Polly and her family. How could he escape? He has been trapped by the mother and the daughter – though there is no obvious connivance between them – into the narrowing walls of his conscience. Therefore, his “sense of honour” tells him that he has committed a sin and compensation must be paid.⁵³ He is trapped and there is no way out of it except marrying her. When the interview between Mr Doran and Mrs Mooney takes place, it goes according to her plans. On the other hand, Polly appears least upset by the news that her affair might be made public. Toward the end, she hears her mother’s assuring voice calling her downstairs, she hardly “remembered what she had been waiting for.”⁵⁴ She receives the news of the outcome of the interview in a state of reverie. The general condition of stalemate – the city’s paralysis – now implicates Mr Doran within the collective moral dilemma of Irish society. The epiphany in this story wakes up Mr Doran from the sleep of self-complacency but it is too late to do anything about it. Despite his decent education and culture, Mr Doran could not save himself in times of a personal crisis. He is left ‘more helpless than ever’.

In the fifth of the stories between ‘childhood’ and ‘maturity’, the story “A Little Cloud” focuses on

'paralysis and entrapment' in an unhappy and loveless marriage as against poetic aspirations. The story was written in 1906. The story begins with Thomas Chandler's reflections about his friend, Ignatius Gallaher. Chandler is a lower-middle-class clerk. He is short-statured, that is why he is called little Chandler. He is a thirty-two-year old serious looking and cultured. He has a great interest in literature, especially poetry. On a late autumn evening, while sitting at his desk in his office expecting to meet his friend, he examines his life in these last eight years. It is eight years since he saw the last of him. Gallaher, on his arrival in Dublin, invites him to meet at Corless's, which is much above Chandler's social standing. Gallaher is a journalist by profession and lives in London.

While on his way to Corless's, he compares his life with Gallaher's; it puts him into a melancholic mood. Chandler thinks that Gallaher is a progressive character and is doing well in his profession. Nevertheless, Gallaher's success surprises him. Though he is a drunkard, Gallaher is talented despite being wild. On the one hand, Chandler expresses tragic resignation to the crude realities of his life; on the other hand, he expresses a desire to escape from his dull and meaningless life. The books of poetry he had bought before his marriage remained unopened. He regrets his timidity. He remembers Gallaher saying, "if you wanted to succeed you had to go away. You could do nothing in Dublin."⁵⁵ He begins to

feel himself mentally closer to London. He desires to express his melancholic life in verses. He daydreams of composing poetry. He invents a poetic name for himself and imagines the English critics' response toward his poetry; they would call him as "one of the Celtic school".⁵⁶ He asks himself whether he could "write something original."⁵⁷ The "poetic moment" enlivens him so much that "A light began to tremble on the horizon of his mind".⁵⁸

Chandler enters Corless's in a state of nervousness and is greeted by a torrent of words from Gallaher who refers to him as "old hero."⁵⁹ They talk and drink. Chandler thinks that he is more educated than his friend but he is not as successful as him. Perhaps he is too timid, nervous, serious and careful. Gallaher has seen so much in comparison with his friend who has been only to the Isle of Man. The meeting with Gallaher rouses further reflections on his life when he is back home: "A dull resentment against his life awoke within him. Could he not escape from his little house? Was it too late for him to try to live bravely like Gallaher?"⁶⁰ He feels himself "a prisoner for life."⁶¹ The artistic side of his personality cries for expression but he has chosen damnation in the form of marriage. His narrowing existence leaves him very little room to breathe freely like his friend. He casts a glance at his wife's passionless eyes in the photograph; it triggers memories of his disappointed life with her. There is very little feeling between them. He questions

himself why he married in the first place. He gets hold of a volume of Byron's poems and begins to recite a poem. He could hardly read one stanza when his sleeping child in his arms begins to cry; it breaks the spell of poetry over him. He tries to recite another stanza but the child refuses to be quiet. The cries become louder as he tries in vain to quieten the child. At last, he tries to quieten the child in an angry tone; the child begins to scream louder. His wife comes back with the parcel of coffee that very moment. She snatches the child from him in a fit of anger. Chandler stands there like a frozen figure of shame: "Little Chandler felt his cheeks suffused with shame and he stood back out of the lamplight. He listened while the paroxysm of the child's sobbing grew less and less; and tears of remorse started to his eyes."⁶² He is ashamed of his paralyzed existence. As Beck states, "The sentimental escapist yearner is stirred and stabbed wide awake to confront himself as a neglectfully unappreciative husband and father."⁶³ The epiphanic moment reveals the gap between what he aspires to be and what he has been reduced to. It proves another instance of the ineffectual epiphany as it does not point toward further possibility of his growth.

In the last of the stories between 'childhood' and 'maturity', the story "Counterparts" features a lower-middle-class character who seeks escape by means of alcohol. The story was written in 1905. Farrington is working as a copy clerk at a solicitor's

office. Mr Alleyne, his employer, tells him to copy a contract, and it must be ready before four o' clock. He receives a severe warning from his boss for not working properly; he charges him with shirking work. He is a delinquent and is in the habit of concocting excuses for shirking work. He tends to prolong the break time for lunch from an hour to an hour and a half. Mr Alleyne's behaviour angers him so much that he feels his throat dry. He takes to drinking the moment he is put under stress. Instead of doing his work, he goes out for a quick drink. On his return to the office, Mr Alleyne asks him to bring a copy of the correspondence in the Delacour case but he misses out the last two letters. When asked about the missing letters, Farrington denies that he knows anything about those letters. Mr Alleyne, in a fit of outrage, insults Farrington in the presence of his colleagues. He exclaims in anger, "Do you think me an utter fool?"⁶⁴ Farrington answers back: "I don't think, sir, that that is a fair question to put to me."⁶⁵ Farrington risks his job by saying this remark. Mr Alleyne threatens him with the direst consequences in case he does not apologise for his impudent remark.

The whole time in his office Farrington is preoccupied by spending the night at a bar with his friends but he does not have enough money to buy drinks. He thinks of getting an advance from the cashier but fears that he might not get it in the presence of the chief clerk. He thinks of borrowing

money from his friends but they are equally poor. At last, he pawns his watch-chain for six shillings. On his way to a public-house, he is full of manly pride about his angry reply to Mr Alleyne. His thoughts revolve around it until he meets his friends. In an atmosphere of cheers, excited chatter and many rounds of drinks at various bars, he wins ample praises from his friends. It keeps Farrington in high spirits until he has a contest of strength with a young person named Weathers who is an acrobat. He loses twice. It humiliates his manly pride. He is on the point of losing his temper but cannot vent. Despite drinking a great deal, he longs for another drink so as to suppress his humiliated pride. At the tram station while waiting for the tram to take him home, he regrets for not being drunk because losing twice to a young man not only awakens his violent impulses but also takes away his drunkenness: "He was full of smouldering anger and revengefulness. He felt humiliated and discontented: he did not even feel drunk and he had only twopence in his pocket. He cursed everything. He had done for himself in the office, pawned his watch, spent all his money; and he had not even got drunk."⁶⁶ Does he care about his wife and five children? What he cares about most is drinking. He does not find his wife at home which adds to his already accumulating anger. He asks his son, Tom, to bring his dinner. His dinner is not ready, so the boy offers to cook. It angers him even more. At last, he expresses his suppressed anger by using

violence against a helpless, little boy: he beats him up mercilessly with a stick. As Morris Beja states, "Mr. Alleyene's forcefulness has an outlet that society sanctions; Farrington's only outlets – or so it would seem to him – are through drink and abusing his son."⁶⁷ The boy's piteous screams could not pierce through the hardened up surface of his heart; the more the boy cries for mercy, the more pain he inflicts on him. As Beck argues that the story "shockingly illustrates how the innocent can fall victim to those who have been brutalized by environment."⁶⁸ Farrington's epiphany at the tram station proves another instance of the ineffectual epiphany.

In the first of the stories on 'maturity', the story "Clay" features a helpless and miserable spinster. The story was written in 1905. Maria works as a scullery maid at *Dublin By Lamplight* laundry – a Protestant charitable institution for the good of the fallen women and drunkards. She is described as an extremely small person; her size seems to be in keeping with her low social position. Nevertheless, she earns herself a reputation at her workplace as that of "a veritable peacemaker."⁶⁹ Florence L. Walzl argues that Maria is either "Virgin Mary or a Halloween witch."⁷⁰ She lives among the Protestants – herself a Catholic – with the values least objectionable to both sects of Christianity. She is unanimously liked by everyone as she is a loving type of a woman. Whoever comes under her care, she

pays full attention. She loves plants in her conservatory at the laundry.

The story is set on the Halloween Eve. Maria plans to spend her Halloween with Joe and her family. She has been a nursemaid to both Joe and Alphy. Joe and Alphy are no longer living on brotherly terms because Joe took to drinking and since then their quarrels started. She thinks that Joe is an agreeable person if he is not drunk. She remembers Joe saying of her, "Mamma is mamma but Maria is my proper mother."⁷¹ It is through the help of Joe and Alphy that she has secured the position of a maid at the laundry. After finishing her day's work, she sets off to buy presents on her way to Joe's home. When she goes to buy a plum-cake, the young lady at the counter thinks erroneously that she wishes to buy a wedding-cake. It makes her blush. On her way to Drumcondra, an elderly person offers her the seat because no one else noticed that she was standing. The elderly person looks like a retired colonel. Though he is a bit drunk, he behaves very nicely with her. She is so much deceived by his gentlemanly behaviour that she becomes confused. Joe and his family warmly welcome her. She feels at home among them. Everything goes on very well except that Maria finds the cake missing. Joe's wife consoles her by saying that she may have forgotten the cake in the tram. The children ask Maria to play Hallow Eve games with them. The game is arranged thus; she is blindfolded and she has to touch one of the objects

on the table. What she touches is clay, which signifies – according to the meaning given in the game – death. It quietens everyone. She is given another chance, and this time she touches the prayer-book. After that, both Joe and his wife insist on Maria to sing a song. Consciously or unconsciously, she makes a mistake in the song. It brings tears into Joe's eyes. It occasions the epiphanic moment for Joe; the song she sings reflects her diminished sense of the self. Touched so much by the epiphany, he looks obliviously for the corkscrew. He hopes to eclipse the consciousness of helplessness by means of drinking as there is no hope for Maria.

In the second of the stories on 'maturity', the story "A Painful Case" presents a middle-class character, James Duffy – a forty four year old cashier working in a private bank. The story was written in 1905. In contrast to most of the Dubliners, he seems to have a certain measure of choice but it does not make much of a difference as he meets the same end, helplessness. What he chooses is motivated by apathy and internal paralysis – a consequence of the general condition of stalemate in Irish society. Mr Duffy prefers to live alone as he "had neither companions nor friends, church nor creed."⁷² Nothing exciting happens in his life as it is described as "an adventureless tale."⁷³ He is profoundly interested in literature as it is evident from his book shelves. There is a collection of the poetry of Wordsworth in his book shelves.

Wordsworth's presence in his book shelves signifies Mr Duffy's preference to live his life in the village of Chapelizod because he wishes to distance himself from city life. Like Wordsworth, he enjoys walking a great deal. In addition to his interest in literature, he likes Mozart's music. He also likes to attend musical concerts. On one of these attendances, he comes across Mrs Sinico by chance. After the third meeting by chance, Mr Duffy picks up the courage to arrange the next meeting. Frequent sittings and walks follow. She appears to him as "a temperament of great sensibility."⁷⁴ She is only a year or so younger than him. She is lonely because her husband is apathetic toward her. She is profoundly impressed by his ideas. It comes out from one of these meetings that Mr Duffy used to attend meetings of an Irish Socialist Party but soon became disillusioned because the party had split into three segments under three different leaders. She asks him why he does not write. He is full of criticism about the writers of his times; in his opinion, they are "phrasemongers."⁷⁵ He is also full of criticism about the thick-headed middle class that lacks tastes, genuine morality and art. He tends to share his intellect with her but he holds back his emotional life from her. Roberta Jackson argues that "Duffy's social isolation is not fundamentally due to his neuroticism (the standard critical reading), but rather his neuroticism arises from his necessary isolation and his need to distance himself from the homophobia of

the patriarchy.”⁷⁶ The “strange impersonal voice” with which he conducts himself in their meetings insists on the “soul’s incurable loneliness.”⁷⁷ Nevertheless, Mrs Sinico insists on the ‘soul’s curable loneliness’ by emotionalizing his mental life. Mr Duffy not only rebuffs her emotional advances but also puts a stop to their meetings. Four years pass by, and they never meet again. Mr Duffy goes on to live his life the same way as he has been accustomed to living; a life of the mind at the cost of his heart.

One evening he comes across the news of her death in a newspaper. It is referred to in the newspaper as “A Painful Case”. Though she is killed in a train accident, she dies because of “sudden failure of the heart’s action.”⁷⁸ On the evidence of her husband and daughter it is known that she took to drinking a couple of years ago. Mr Duffy’s earlier reaction is that of moral repulsion at such a “commonplace vulgar death.”⁷⁹ He deeply regrets having known such a person. However, it triggers a train of thought in his mind. While taking a walk at the Magazine Hill, he calls into doubt what he has been up to in his life: “Why had he withheld life from her? Why had he sentenced her to death? He felt his moral nature falling to pieces.”⁸⁰ His earlier reaction at her disgraceful death changes into a sense of shame at his own life. He realizes that it is not the train that killed her but his own self-containment choked her heart. He could have saved her and by doing so could have saved himself. He looks around

and sees that he is unwanted. He certainly sees the reality of his experience more clearly but to no avail. In Beck's view, he moves from "an empty epiphany to a kind of paralysis."⁸¹ The epiphanic moment proves catastrophic as it leaves him with a destructive vision of his life.

In the first of the stories on 'public life', the story "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" makes an explicit reference to the state of Irish politics in connection with the death of Parnell. Matthew Hodgart rephrases Joyce in the context of the early twentieth century politics, "Dublin is the centre of political paralysis."⁸² Mercenary interests and Catholicism seem to determine the course of Irish politics of that period. The story takes place on 6th October which is the death anniversary of Parnell. The story was written in 1905. The characters in the story wear an Ivy leaf to commemorate their loyalty to Parnell; Ivy is associated with Parnell. The setting of the story is the committee room in Wicklow Street. Eleven years after Parnell's disgraceful fall in the Committee Room 15 of Westminster, Joyce seems to re-enact it in the committee room of the story. The occasion of the story is the by-election of the city council. Mr Richard J. Tierney – a publican – and Colgan – a bricklayer – are the competing candidates; Royal Exchange Ward is the electoral area. Mr Tierney is a nationalist candidate.

The story opens with a conversation between Old Jack, the caretaker and Mr O'Connor, a young

man who is working for Mr Tierney. They have been in the committee room the whole day long. The old man talks about his nineteen year old son who has left the Christian Brothers because he has taken to drinking. He complains of his son that he is impolite and disrespectful to him. The only fitting way to bring up children is to beat them up. He takes up the position of the middle-aged person described in the second story "An Encounter." Mr Hynes, a young man canvassing for the labour candidate, joins them in the committee room. He appears to be truly loyal to Parnell. In his opinion, Colgan represents the labour class interests because he is from the labour class. Old Jack and Mr O'Connor seem to agree with him but they are obliged to work for Mr Tierney because he pays them. Meanwhile, Mr Henchy arrives in the committee room and seems to assume the position of a controller among them. Mr Henchy is surprised to find Mr Hynes among them because he is from the other group. When Mr Hynes leaves, he suspects Mr Hynes of working as a spy for the other candidate. He brands him as one of the "hillsiders and fenians."⁸³ They are the militant revolutionaries calling themselves as Fenians. Mr O'Connor protests against it. Father Keon appears for a while; he is deprived of his priestly duties because of his equivocal role in politics. Mr Henchy makes a reference to the significance of priests in the politics of Ireland. The priests influence so much the course of politics in Ireland that Mr Henchy says to

O'Connor: "You must owe the City Fathers money nowadays if you want to be made Lord Mayor."⁸⁴ It is Father Burke who nominates Mr Tierney. Mr Crofton and Mr Lyons join them in the committee room. Since the Conservatives withdrew their candidate in favour of Tierney, Mr Crofton is canvassing for him. Mr Henchy is strongly in favour of the king's visit because it would bring capital into their country. They talk about the king of England, Edward VII's visit to Dublin next year. Mr O'Connor says if Parnell were alive, he would not welcome the king. Mr O'Connor, Mr Crofton and Mr Lyons think that Ireland should not welcome the king. Toward the end, Mr Hynes recites a poem titled "The Death of Parnell" on the insistence of Mr O'Connor and Mr Henchy.⁸⁵ In the ensuing silence after the recitation, the sound of the opening of the bottle of stout *pok* becomes the basis of the epiphany as it revives in vain their forgotten loyalty with Parnell. In the absence of a corkscrew, Mr Henchy devises a method of opening a bottle by placing it on the hub.

In the second of the stories on 'public life', the story "A Mother" centres on a middle-class character, Mrs Kearney. Mrs Kearney appears to be a strong-headed educated lady. She learnt French and music at a privileged convent. Despite "the chilly circle of accomplishments" she chose to marry a manufacturer of boots who was quite a lot older than her.⁸⁶ Her husband is an unromantic and religious character. By virtue of her tactfulness and snobbery,

she seems to direct and govern her family's affairs and earns herself the title of a dutiful wife among the people who know the Kearneys. She professes to be a nationalist as the people the Kearneys get mixed up with are nationalists. She likes to align herself with the language movement. As David Hayman states, "she is an opportunist using culture to advance her social ends."⁸⁷ She has a daughter named Kathleen. Like her mother, Kathleen attends a convent, and learns French and music. She also attends The Royal Irish Academy of Music. One day Mr Holohan suggests that her daughter should perform in the musical concerts arranged by his Society. Hoppy Holohan is so called because he is lame. He is working as assistant secretary of the *Eire Abu* society. Mrs Kearney agrees to Mr Holohan's suggestion. Therefore, Kathleen signs a contract for eight guineas as an accompanist at the four grand concerts in the Antient Concert Rooms. Mrs Kearney helps Mr Holohan in matters of arranging the concerts.

On the night of the first grand concert, she becomes impatient about the contract money. She demands that her daughter must be paid immediately; otherwise she would not perform. It surprises Mr Holohan a great deal. Finally, Mr Fitzpatrick, the secretary of the society, intervenes and gives half of the money to Mrs Kearney; she is assured the other half after the interval. Mrs Kearney is still not satisfied because the money paid to her daughter is four shillings less than agreed. She is full

of complaints about the Society. She pledges to hold her ground till her daughter gets her due: "If they didn't pay her to the last farthing she would make Dublin ring."⁸⁸

After the interval, Mr Fitzpatrick and Mr Holohan let her know that the other half of the money would be paid after the committee meeting, and if her daughter does not perform in the second part, the contract would be cancelled. It enrages Mrs Kearney; she sticks to her point and asks them to pay her daughter according to the contract she has signed with the Society. Mr Holohan appeals to her sense of decency but she continues to consider it the violation of her rights. She hardly considers the fact that her strange behaviour would put an end to her daughter's musical career in Dublin. What she considers most is that her rights have been violated by the Society and she would take revenge. Her unbecoming conduct angers Mr Holohan so much that he blurts out to himself when she leaves: "That's a nice lady! O, she's a nice lady!"⁸⁹ Mr O' Madden Burke, the *Freeman* man, affirms Mr Holohan's standpoint as he says to him, "You did the proper thing, Holohan."⁹⁰ The story proves another instance of the ineffectual epiphany as nothing is transformed. As Beck argues that Mrs Kearney is "a type of those who are defeated in attempting to impose on outsiders the same egoistic domination which a too deferential family endures."⁹¹

In the third of the stories on 'public life, the story "Grace" begins in that characteristic mood with which the first story began, a state of helplessness. The story was written in 1905. Mr Kernan, a lower-middle-class middle-aged commercial traveller, is on the decline. Like most of the other Dubliners, he finds escape in drinking and begins to neglect his home and family. He is originally a Protestant but converted to Catholicism at the time of his marriage. Even after twenty-five years of marriage, he finds very little in Catholicism to save and justify his existence. Recently he has taken to drinking heavily. One evening he falls from the stairs of a pub in a state of drunkenness. He is lying on the floor of the lavatory "face downwards" and "quite helpless."⁹² He bites his tongue in that agonizing fall. He is taken back home through the courtesy of his friend, Mr Power from the Royal Irish Constabulary. He intervenes in time to save Mr Kernan from the penalty of the law.

Two nights following Mr Kernan's disgraceful fall, his friends come to see him. Martin Cunningham is Mr Power's senior colleague; his wife is a drunkard too. He is known as a wise man among the people who know him. M' Coy is a secretary to the City Coroner. Mr Harford is a moneylender; he does not enjoy a good reputation. Mr Fogarty is a grocer. They devise a plan to reform Mr Kernan spiritually by going on a retreat. They plan to attend a sermon by Father Purdon who is delivering a talk to the businessmen. First, they talk about the supremacy of the Jesuit

Order. They talk about the infallibility of the Pope with a particular reference to Pope Leo XIII, and Pope Pius IX. They zealously talk about the Catholic religion and their talk reveals that their religious knowledge is founded on the uncritical reception of it as they fail to see at various points in their talk that their knowledge is not correct. The story typifies the middle-class's uncritical fixation with the moral complacencies of the Church as the authentic means of moral reform. The satiric title of the story signifies the inauthentic nature of the spiritual exercise which Mr Kernan's friends devise for him. Mr Kernan's position with regard to the sermon remains sceptical. It is apparent from the way he regards the attendees of the sermon. The sermon goes on till the end of the story where it seems to assure sinners that they could be given "God's grace" if they pledge to "rectify" and "set right" their spiritual "accounts."⁹³ The sermon seems to encourage moral complacency in the attendees.

The relation between Father Purdon's sermonizing about worldly wisdom and Mr Kernan's moral reform remains intangible. The epiphany seems to reinforce Mr Kernan's already powerless and helpless state. At the same time, it seems to highlight the power of the Church over her credulous devotees as it is clear in the reassuring language of the sermon that the Church can take care of her devotees' moral improvement. Mr Kernan's friends ideally fit into a model of such devotees. It is

apparent from the way they perceive Mr Kernan's literal fall from the stairs of a pub as his fall from grace. Though there is no explicit reference to Mr Kernan's response to the sermon, he appears even more helpless and powerless. Moral instruction by means of a sermon stands in sharp contrast to Joyce's moral concerns as it fails ironically to inculcate moral improvement. As Barry Pointon argues in favour of Wordsworth's distrust of religion in the moral training of an individual, "nothing in Wordsworth's writings on education, whether poetry or prose, contradicts his fundamental antipathy to enforcing religion and to teaching morality by precept."⁹⁴ Joyce's earlier conception of *Dubliners* was to end his collection with the story "Grace". As the boy of the first story feels intellectually liberated by the death of the paralytic priest, Joyce in "Grace" exposes more fully the powerful role of the Church in paralyzing her credulous devotees.

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VAR, PUNJABI ORAL TRADITION AND HISTORY: GOING BEYOND THE RUBRICS OF FORMAL LITERARY CRITICISM

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ABSTRACT

Deconstructing the binary of form and content, this article goes beyond the formal literary perspective to a historical one to locate *Var* as history within the oral tradition of the Punjab. What is origin of *Var*? Has there been a standard form or there are variants to be observed within the tradition of this genre? Have there been some major transformations to its form or content at a certain point in history and if yes, why? Among the *mirasis*, were there used to be specialists who would sing only *Vars*? These are the few important questions that this study engages with to problematize and contest the ongoing debates and arguments about the form and the content of this genre. The discussion of the formal elements of the genre is not carried out with a literary perspective; rather, the aim is to understand the importance of these elements in serving the

indigenous historiographical purposes in the backdrop of oral tradition of pre-colonial Punjab.

KEY WORDS

Var, oral tradition, form and content, historiography.

As to the origin and meaning of the word *Var*, one does not find an agreed upon etymological account of the genre. There are various explanations and interpretations. When consulting dictionaries and encyclopedias one sees the efforts of defining it in comparison to western literary parallels.¹ The most recurrent such western parallel is epic. Among the colonial folklorist concerned with the Punjabi oral tradition, the most frequent word used for the genre is Legend. RC Temple even titled his work as *The Legends of Punjab*.² In preface to his work, when referring to these Legends, he uses the word bards for those who sing and perform *Vars*, therefore, assuming it Punjabi parallel of bardic tradition.

However, this section is no place for problematizing the existing nomenclature about the genre though there remains an inclination to do so. What is a common practice in the existing literature is that before defining the genre there are etymological explanations of the word *Var*. Most of these etymological explanations fall closer to Platts' description which says that the word *Var* mean "A Knock, stroke.... attack, to make an attack...time, turn anything which causes an obstruction, a gate, a door, doorway, a vassal for holding spirituous liquor."³ Other writers have stayed close to this etymological account with few exceptions. The most common words used as the meanings of *Var* are 'to attack',

‘incursion’, ‘strike’, ‘to obstruct’, ‘to take turn’, ‘time’, ‘battle’, etc.

Ganda Singh⁴, Dr. Preetam Singh⁵, Piyara Singh Padam⁶ and Bhai Kahan Singh⁷ have almost stayed with same meaning as described above. Etymologically, they recourse to two sets of explanation: first, in which they read *Var* as *Vahr* meaning an attack, incursion, battle etc. and second, in which *Var* is read as time, an account of time or as *Vari*⁸ which means taking turn. It is the first set of account which points to the content of this genre, that is most of the times scenes of battle, war, incursions, fights etc., while the second set of explanation hints to the approach which this genre takes while describing these events. However, when defining this genre in details a large chunk of existing literature seems to hovering around the technical aspects of the genre; for example, the details include the types of meter, the stanza formation etc.⁹ There are also those who think it essential to refer to the tradition of *Varis* (the *Var* singers) in the Oral Tradition of Punjab.¹⁰ There are also reference to the tunes and ragas which are chosen to sing *Vars* and these tunes and ragas are mentioned as one of the definitional aspects of *Vars*.¹¹ Thus, Encyclopedia of Indian Literature has attempted to define the genre in as many ways as possible:

1. “*Var* is primarily a genre of poetry in which an episode of heroic struggle is narrated.
2. It fabricates a fictional universe of romance out of the legendary/historical events.

3. It depicts a fierce struggle between the protagonist and the antagonists usually representing the forces of good and evil.
4. The hero of *Var* invariably comes out victorious in the end, although he undergoes difficult trials.
5. In the narrative structure of *Var*, certain dramatic situations are highlighted by using various stylistic devices.
6. Its formal organization consists of *pauris* or short poetic stanzas of equal length. Sometimes, the *Var* itself is referred to as *pauri*, which means 'a staircase', and symbolically represents the hierarchical nature of its narrative treatment.
7. The '*chhand*' (metre) used in *var* is called '*upman*' or '*nishani*' *chhand*, which is also referred to as '*pauri*' *chhand*.
8. The *Vars* were meant to be sung in popular traditional tunes."¹²

DOING AWAY WITH THE BINARY OF FORM AND CONTENT

The all efforts of defining *Var* as we have seen above have been working under the categorizing force of one main binary that is of form and content.¹³ The difficulty in defining *Var* as to its formal elements does not owe much to some inherent structural or thematic complexity of this genre: its falling prey to this binary of form and content, the binary which collapse with its polarity when explaining some important components of the oral tradition of Punjab. What is important to note is that most of these definitions come out of the vision that sees *Vars* as written on pages, in the form of a tangible text. Here it is what we see on the pages: poetry,

poetry with certain meter, there is a particular organizational form as well; or one sees a long poem divided into sections, the sections further consisting of stanzas and the name of poet being repeated at the end of each stanza; or, on the other hand, one pays more attention to the content of this poetry which narrates the fights between tribal leaders or the resistance of local clans against the foreign incursions. Such a conception of *Var*, imagining it in its final form as printed on the pages, naively buys the binary of form and content to have a definitional explanation. On the other hand, such an understanding of the genre also runs the risk of dissociating it from the context of performance which is central to the oral tradition of Punjab. Even calling it 'genre', which is being done here also, is somehow admitting *Var* as a form of literary creative expression. However, this is this generic character of the genre that is being deconstructed here.

When dealing with various instances or what we are calling here 'genres' of oral tradition, Jan Vansina seems to get away with the binary of form and successfully.¹⁴ He prefers to call them 'messages' which are "product of thought about existing situations as well as about existing messages. They represent a stage in the elaboration of historical consciousness and are among the main wellsprings of what we often call "culture." Such sources testify sometimes to events and always to situations existing at a given time."¹⁵ He also points to the care that should be taken while dealing with those archives and 'written' records of these traditions. He asserts that "...historians dealing with oral tradition

the situation is very different. Some of these are indeed faced with a piece of writing that claims to be the record of a tradition..... The questions now are: what is the relationship of the text to a particular performance of the tradition involved and what is the relationship of that performance to the tradition as a whole? Only when it is clear how the text stands to the performance and the latter to the tradition can an analysis of the contents of the message begin.”¹⁶ Therefore, it is to be emphasized that resorting to the binary of form and content is actually coming to terms with the text while ignoring the tradition from which that particular text is created. Here, “The crucial link is the performance. Only the performance makes the tradition perceptible and at the same time only a performance is the source of the ensuing text.”¹⁷ What Vansina is trying to point out is that the operational protocols¹⁸ of text and tradition differ from each other at great length.

It is this reference to performance and tradition that may help to deconstruct the binary of form and content in the matter of *Var*. There are those who have been calling the formal elements, the meter, as the determining characteristics of *Var* and there are also views which define it only as to its content, considering formal elements as ignorable variations and transition in the history of this genre.¹⁹ However, this strict division between form and content gets diluted when the issue is talked with reference to oral tradition of Punjab. Titling of *Vars* in the oral tradition may provide the entry point to the issue. There are instances in the oral tradition

of Punjab where same *Var* is remembered and called with two or more than names; but, the two names of same *Var* may be quite bewildering for those who see the title as the description of what is inside the 'book'. They call it *Sikhan Di Var* which means *Var* of Sikhs but they also call it *Shah Muhammad Di Var* which means *Var* of Shah Muhammad. Apparently, Sikhs are the subject²⁰ of this *Var* while Shah Muhammad is the person who composed this *Var*. In the first title, it appears that *Var* is an account of Sikh rule while the second title, for those who think of title as the formal element which briefly hints to the content of the 'book', describes Shah Muhammad as the subject of *Var*. How is it possible? How may Shah Muhammad become the subject of this *Var*? Perhaps, yes! he may be. *Var* as history or as an account of incidents and happenings in a particular time may differ from what is being recorded in the courtly archives under the influence of ruling elite. *Var* may carry the perspective of common people who are subject as well as custodian of Oral Tradition.²¹ So, Shah Muhammad becomes the subject of *Var* as to the perspective he puts in narrating the events. This is *Var* of Shah Muhammad as it records his response to these events, thus, an account of what is being felt and thought in the oral tradition; as *Var* composer Shah Muhammad is to be placed and seen within the oral tradition of the Punjab. However, one may say that the title *Shah Muhammad Di Var* may also simply mean the *Var* which is composed by him. And, for an example, he may then argue that as one may title a book as *Philosophy of Bergson* instead of titling it as

Philosophy of Time. 'Of' in English is almost same as 'Di' in the Punjabi and describes the possessive case. To counter argue, it is asserted here that this example would become problematic when the word philosophy is replaced by History and in this case by Var. Moreover, when we further go into diversity of titles and nomenclature in the literature of *Var* in the oral tradition of Punjab, there are instances which may not be challenged as simply as above. These instances also point to the challenge defining *Var* under theoretical binary of form and content. For example, a very famous *Var* by Guru Nanak is titled as *Aasa Di Var*. *Aasa* is the name of raga in which this *Var* supposed to be sung.

It is to point to the fact that how music has been important in the performance context of the tradition while recording the tradition inevitably undervalues its role in the oral tradition. Moreover, what seems to form the formal elements may actually be integrated into the content to the extent that separating the two as form and content may itself become impediment in understanding a particular instance or aspect of oral tradition.

ORIGIN OF VAR AND THE PROBLEMATIC OF HISTORICITY IN ORAL TRADITION

When the points of origin are embedded in memory, they are there or nowhere. Chronology, in its literal sense, is the problem which one faces when comes across the oral tradition. "Historians then can only use lists and genealogies to establish first relative sequence and eventually absolute chronology."²² For Vansina, "the effects of a lack of chronology in most

societies.....can only be partially remedied by recourse to outside sources.”²³ Recourse to outside sources, for Vansina, is very important for the historians dealing with the oral tradition. It, of course, helps in solving the problems as that of chronology. However, care should also be taken while assisting the understanding of oral tradition through outside sources.²⁴ “Written sources also do not always obviously date or confirm oral traditions because the interests of the writers diverged so much from those of oral composers.”²⁵ Moreover, apart from genealogies and lists, there is also *internal referencing* in the oral tradition which may help in filling the apparent gaps for which we have to consult outside source. By internal referencing I mean the instances in oral traditions where ongoing narrative, verse, line or any such point is put in with reference to another such point already present in the oral tradition. For example, *Aasa Di Var*, which has been mentioned above, by Guru Nanak was advised by its composer to be sung in the same tune used for the singing of *Tindy Asraaj Di Var*. This reference on the one hand clarifies the order of composition of two *Vars* in timeline and at the same shows the important place of referent *Var* in the *Var* tradition of oral tradition.

Therefore, as far as the origin of the genre of *Var* in the oral tradition of Punjab is concerned, it is not an easy historical discovery to be made. Outside sources have very little to contribute in this regard. It has been seen as a parallel of epic tradition of world literature.²⁶ In Sansikrat tradition, Mahabharat and Ramayin are the two main examples while in Greek

tradition Odyssey and Illiad are the references to be made. Similarly, in Persian tradition, which abounds in epic literature, Shah Nama Firdosi is one main example. Urdu literature, owing to its short history, lacks oral tradition of epic literature.²⁷ Apart from these parallels, few other outside references are also made as to the history of *Var*. There is often a mention of a *Var* written by Amir Khusro but it always remains just as a mentioning.²⁸ However, these outside references and parallels fall short of providing any concrete information as to the origin of *Var* in the oral tradition of Punjab.

Again, we are left with *internal referencing* and inside information²⁹ to talk about the origin or history of *Var* in the oral tradition of the Punjab. This also helps to talk about the issue at hand in view of the pre-colonial context as, when engaged with it, oral tradition offers us a chance to interpret and comment by getting rid of our own biases. "The historian interprets from perspectives he knows. Even so, one's interpretation is always steeped in the intellectual life of one's own times and circle. Written historical interpretations too are documents of the present! So, unless there were data to tell us otherwise, we would only attribute past evolutions to factors which make sense to us today, even though the implicit or explicit cultural and social assumptions of our hypotheses are nonsense in that other day and age."³⁰ As has been mentioned above that *Aasa Di Var*, one of the *Vars* included in Guru Garanth Sahab, was advised to be sung in the tune of *Tindy Asraaj Di Var*. It means that the tradition of *Var* writing had been established long before the 16th,

17th century when Guru Garanth was being organized. *Guru Hargobindh*, the 6th Guru of Gur Mukh tradition, added ragas and tunes to the *Vars* included in the *Guru Garanth* by listening to old *Vars* of Punjabi oral tradition. Later on, these *Vars* of *Guru Garanth Sahab* were called *Dhuni Vars* as their tunes (*Dhun*) were decided as per the tunes of *Vars* already existing in the Punjabi oral tradition.³¹ It is also said that *Guru Hergobindh* would spend around two years with *Abul* and *Natha*, the *var* singers of that time, in order know more about the tunes and ragas of existing *Vars* of Punjabi oral tradition.³² Here again, it is to emphasize that proselytizers of Gur Mukh tradition consulting the *Var* tradition indicates that the genre existed with full-fledge protocols of oral tradition: there were special ragas and tunes for this genre and there would a separate specialized group of *Var* singers who would preserve the various *Vars* of this tradition. As to the origin of *Var* tradition, *Serebryakov* writes that “alongside *nath* poetry, 13th century Punjabi literature also produced the so called *Vars* or epic poems. If *nath* poetry voiced the trending current among the common people, the *Vars* expressed the aristocratic line in literature. They show primarily the circles of feudal lords and rajas with their close environments and deal with tournaments, battle, violence and treachery.”³³ However, many writers contest the aristocratic background of *Vars*.³⁴

There is another approach to look at the origin and evolution of *Var* literature in the Punjabi Oral Tradition.³⁵ This perspective, in order to talk about the origin of *Var* tradition, takes the geographical

position of Punjab as the point of reference to start the historical debate. This perspective rests on the hypothesis that the land of Punjab lying in front of north-west frontiers had to face foreign incursions as back as from aborigines to the influx of Aryans to the incursion of Alexander who is believed to get killed by the local fighters of the Punjab.³⁶ Therefore, glorifying and remembering the tribal fighters and local war heroes who would fight against the foreign incursion became an important component of the oral tradition of Punjab. That is why, it is also believed that history of *Var* tradition might be as much old as the history of this region.

CONTINUITIES, VARIATIONS, AND THE HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Howsoever long may be the history of *Var* within the oral tradition of Punjab, it is marked by various historical transformations and variations from the medieval period to this day. Colonial and Orientalist epistemological framework, however, entail an understanding of pre colonial, pre modern India as static and unchanging. The 19th century colonial folklorists in the Punjab had the task of extracting 'folklore' which they thought as "the comparison and identification of the survivals of archaic beliefs, customs and tradition in modern ages."³⁷ Having defined the folklore this way, H. H. Risley, the President of Asiatic Society of Bengal, laid out the importance of India folklore as follows: "in relation to European institutions nearly the whole body of Indian customs, usage and tradition may be regarded as a series of survivals."³⁸ "The goal of colonial

folklorist, then, was to identify and document these “survivals” and furthermore to analyze them according to universal schema established by the Folklore Society of England.”³⁹ Such an understanding of folklore presented it as the set of ‘unchanged’ archaic beliefs, customs and tradition continuing statically in the pre-modern, conventional societies. “Folklorists interpreted what they were collecting as “survivals” that confirmed British notions of a static and unchanging India.”⁴⁰ R. C. Temple when collecting Legends, thus, was working under and for the same epistemological assumption embedded in the colonial framework of knowledge. In this way, this understanding, which also had a determining effect on the historiographical assumptions, misses the dynamical, diverse and ever evolving protocols of oral tradition of Punjab. *Var* when seen through these protocols seems not as a static form of expression in the Punjabi oral tradition, rather, it is found evolving with some drastic changes and variations at various point in history.⁴¹

As to the variations and different instances of *Vars*, one comes across a diverse categorization. There are those who divide *Vars* on the basis of the type of conflict or battle a particular *Var* narrates. Following this way of classification, one comes across two main types of *Vars*: the *Vars* which narrate the battle of indigenous people or tribes against some foreign incursion and the *Vars* which narrate feuds and disputes of indigenous tribes among each other.⁴² Then, one comes across another major form of categorization. There are *Vars* which have been

called religious and there are *Vars* which include incidents and happenings only in social, political and economic context.⁴³ R. C. Temple also describes various kinds of Legends which are sung and celebrated in the Punjab: there would be 'proper' legends of 'national' stature; and, there were *swangs*, the dramatic executions of Hindu religious legends; in the same wake, there would be *swangs* of low-caste Hindus; then, there were legends associated with a particular shrine, be it Muslim or Hindu.⁴⁴ It is quite surprising that despite narrating the diversity and variations embedded in the traditions of legends, Temple thinks of diversity as just wrongs of 'whimsical bards' and invests more energies in reducing this diversity to 'universal norms'. Even at some points he notes that "in a country like the Panjab the process of the bardic legend breaking down into the ordinary folktale is constantly met with. The first story of all in this collection is a case in point. The 'Adventures of Raja Rasalu is a discursive aggregate of tales fastened on to that great legendary hero and told in prose interspersed with frequent verses. Later on in the work are given at length versified legends relating the details of these stories, and there can be little doubt to the careful reader of both that the story in prose arose out of the story in verse."⁴⁵ Despite such complexity, which comes with diversity and fulsomeness of a tradition, Temple would be working under reductionist framework of colonial epistemological assumptions.

In addition to these variations and diversity noted above, the tradition of *Var* also seems going

through various historical transformations. “..it undergoes the first major transformation with Guru Nanak (1469-1538). He experimented with the thematic structure of the *Var* by introducing abstract, conceptual thematic statements in int. this displacement of concrete/historical by the abstract/ahistorical drastically modified its structural organization. The absence of concrete characters made the narrative impossible which restricted the *Var* to the mode of thematic statement. The outward formal features of *Var*, like the stanza, form and structural principle, were retained by Guru-poet. But its internal form had undergone a drastic change, making it quite distinct from the folk-var. some of other of the *Adi Granth* also composed *Vars* based on the tradition set by Guru Nanak. These are 22 in number and can be considered a class by themselves.”⁴⁶

VARI (VAR SINGERS), VAR AND ORAL TRADITION

Temple divides the oral tradition of the Punjab in two main categories⁴⁷: folktale and bard's poem. In the Punjab, he holds, both exist 'side by side'. Calling latter as 'true reflex of popular notions', Temple thinks that for a folklorist it is gaining more value than the folktale. While folktale is remembered and memorized by every person, children and women in special, the folk poem, *Var* will fall in this category, is sung by a separate group of people in the Punjab whom he thinks eastern parallel of western bards. He also points how this tradition was dying out in the Punjab because the bards had started to move out from the towns and did not own this tradition the

way they used to. "...The wandering bard is beginning to ' die out is becoming clear in many ways. Already he has begun to leave the towns, and confine his peregrinations to the villages. In Patiala, the head-quarters of the Native State of that name, I could find no bards at all, although they were specially searched for. In former days, they were honoured visitors and often pensioners of the native chiefs and nobles, and now I find that these people are rather ashamed to own that they have any about them."⁴⁸

This situation as narrated by Temple brings forward two very important things about the bardic tradition: i) it tells how bardic tradition, *Vari* being among them, made an integral part of the oral tradition of the Punjab as a whole section of this tradition in the form of folk-poem depended on them for preservation, and ii) this tradition had already started to die out by end of 19th century in the colonial Punjab. The two points are also interrelated; the tradition was also in danger because its holders, the bards, were no more proud of it and had started to huddle back to the spaces where the colonial state, along with the influences it had made on economy, politics, culture and society and more importantly colonial forms of knowledge, had not yet penetrated. Right after one century, in 1970, these spaces had further shrunk to the level that one had to take great pains in searching *Varis* across the villages of the Punjab. Ahmad Saleem, the then Assistant Director of Folklore Research Center Islamabad, set off to Chakk no. 09 of the then district Layllpur, now called Faisalabad, to meet Ghulam

Muhammad Rulia, a *Vari* who self-admittedly had almost abandon on this vocation.⁴⁹ And now when this dissertation is being written it has become almost impossible to find a *Vari* or what Temple would call a bard in the Punjab, and even if one has any he would remain unable to recall much from their memory which has undergone through *palimpsestical experiences*.⁵⁰ That is why, now when one has to consult the 'oral' tradition of the Punjab, he goes to libraries, archives, personal collections, bookshops etc. and not to the bard whose Iktara, Chimta, Sarangi and Dhudh could not survive the strokes of colonial forms of knowledge. May be only words survived and among those also only selected ones. But, would only words be able to tell the whole narrative? This may be a very hard question to answer, especially for a historian. If the history of Punjabi literary formation is studied through the case of *Var* one may find results different from Farina Mir's which she concluded by studying the case of *Qissa*.

However, in the second half of 19th century Punjab, when the colonial state had not yet transformed all spheres of native life, there were villages, occasions, festivals and spaces where bards could be find, a possibility that made Temple's project viable. He tells about the various kinds of bards he came across during his project. Here is a detailed account those kinds as narrated by Temple:

"There are several kinds of bards. There is the bard proper, kept at the courts of native grandees who sings, inter alia, national legends and warlike feats, and is the depository of the genealogy and

family history of the local chief, which alas! he shifts and changes to suit the exigencies of the hour, till a mushroom family develops a lineage adequate to its present position. He is not always a very reputable personage, and is a fair representative of the lower classes that hang about an Indian chief's palace. Then there is the priestly depositary of the sacred legends of the Hindus, who with his company sings *swangs*, those curious semi-religious metrical plays that are partly acted and partly recited, and are of such unconscionable length. He is called in—on payment always—to perform at the various stated festivals—at the *Holi* (in Spring) and at the *Dasahra* (in Autumn) especially. Of the same description is the wandering devotee who attaches himself to some saint—Hindii or Musalman—and sings laudatory legends at the festivals peculiar to his hero. He frequently makes it his business to collect alms for the benefit of his patron's shrine, often situated at a great distance from the scene of his labours, which alms are faithfully collected and clubbed with those of others similarly engaged, and then divided between themselves and the shrine. There is also the professional ballad singer or *mirasi*, who accompanies dancing girls, and sings for hire at the various joyous ceremonies connected with marriages and the like. He will sing any kind of song, from a fine national legend to the filthiest dirt imaginable, and he is invariably a most disreputable rascal. Quite another kind of being is he who performs, as one of themselves, at the feasts and festivals of the low 'out-castes' of India—in imitation of the Brahman reciter of the true *swang*. With a prodigious memory

and some notion of verse and metre he will drone away in language suited to himself and his humble audience through hundreds of lines of legend, sometimes a story picked up from the regular professional singers, and sometimes a tale connected with the object of worship peculiar to his class or sect, and always valuable. And lastly, there is the rough villager—especially in the hills—with a turn for poetry and recitation, who relates stories strictly local in their scope to an admiring crowd of his friends and neighbours, in language that is at once the joy of the philologist and the plague of the folklore collector.”⁵¹

Therefore, from the rough villager to the bard proper there existed a categorization within the bardic tradition of the oral tradition of Punjab. The basis of this categorization, which implied a hierarchy from within, rested on the dynamics of the oral tradition. Sometimes it was the subject of folk-poem that would earn a bard a distinctive stature within his profession. This stature also depended upon their association i.e. they are associated with some shrine, with the haveli of some local chief or noble, with some group of sacred pursuits sharing a collective identity etc. There is also evidence as to how their subject and association earned them a status that mattered to the extent that it affected their choices of marital bonds.⁵²

CONCLUSION

It is the binary of form and content that has prevailed the theoretical assumptions of critics, philologists, academics, lexicographers etc. while defining the genre of *Var*. It is also giving up to this binary that has resulted in defining the *Var* in comparison to its western parallels i.e ode, epic, bards, ballads, etc. The binary of form and content assumes a textual existence of *Var*, thereby, ignoring the dynamic processes of transmission inherent to the oral tradition of the Punjab. The issue is discussed in terms of subject, meter, poetic tools, variations in the content and form etc. and the protocols of oral tradition that form an essential part of *Var* tradition are zoomed out of the whole debate. Similarly, discussing and defining it in comparison to western literary parallels glosses over the uniqueness of Punjabi oral tradition. Those who refer to the processes of transmission, the elements like music, tunes, the part of *Var* called *Vichar* etc., discuss them only as secondary elements as to the definition of the genre. That is why, there are instances of variation and transformations, the *Gurmukh* tradition of *Var* and issue of titling, which cannot be fathomed through simplifying definitions formulated under the imperatives of binary of form and content.

Deconstructing the binary of form and content and paying more attention to the processes of transmissions in order to understand the *Var*, its etymology, origin and place in the oral tradition of the Punjab, on the one hand helps us to comprehend the various variations and transformations that this

genre went through and on the other makes us understand the importance of these elements in featuring the historiographical characteristics of *Var*. For example, the *Vichar* part appears as connecting details consisting of events, encounters and other happenings between the two points of historical narrative being told in the verse form. The advice of Gurus to sing *Aasa Di Var* in the popular tune of *Tindy Asraj Di Var* makes it clear that *Var* as a historical narrative was popular among the masses and they were sensitive to its oral aspects like tunes and ragas. Therefore, understanding *Var* in terms of the oral tradition of the Punjab not only provides key to its historiographical characteristics but also reveals that how the processes of transmission and these historiographical characteristics were inseparable simply as form and content.

REFERENCES

¹ It is very interesting that most of the Punjabi authors who try to defend *Var* as historical narrative are found to be comparing it to western epic. However, resorting to such comparison is understandable. It might be in the wake of orientalist understanding of oral tradition as Literature. These writers, when delineating upon the subject, find themselves writing in and for the tradition of Punjabi Literature; therefore, such comparison to Western literary parallels becomes inevitable for them.

² Captain R. C. Temple, *The Legends of the Punjab* (Bombay: Education Society's Press)

³ John T. Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu Classical Hindi and English* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1983), 1173.

⁴ Dr. Ganda Singh, *Punjab Diyan Varan* (Patiala: Punjabi University Press, 1990), 1.

⁵ Dr. Preetam Singh, *Punjabi Sahat Vich Bairkao Da Vikaas* (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag Punjab, 1988), 45.

⁶ Piyara Singh Padam, *Punjabi Varan* (Patiala: Qalam Mandar, 1980), 9.

⁷ *Punjabi Kosh*, Vol. 13 (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 1990), 276.

⁸ *Vari* in Punjabi is a homograph that means 'taking turn' as well as the one who sings *Vars*.

⁹ Padam, *Punjabi Varan*, 09.

¹⁰ Muhammad Asif Khan, *Nik Suk* (Lahore: Pakistan Punjabi Adabi Board, 1992), 113.

¹¹ Abdul Ghafoor Qureshi *Punjabi Adab Di Kahan* (Lahore: Punjabi Adadbi Board), 80-90.

¹² *Encyclopedia of Indian Literature* (New Delhi: Shitya Academy, 1992), 4492-4493.

¹³ Derrida, *Acts of Literature*

¹⁴ Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 3-4. Instead of seeing various instances of Oral Traditions as genres and defining and dealing with them under the binary of form and

content, Vansina prefers to call them 'messages' or 'expressions of experiences'. More importantly, he does not see these messages static and, rather, as always in the process of transmission. Although he also comes up another kind of categorization, dividing these messages into two main sections: 'News' and 'Interpretations'.

¹⁵ Ibid., 08.

¹⁶ Ibid., 33.

¹⁷ Ibid., 34.

¹⁸ By operation protocols It is meant that the rules, both formal and informal being defined by social, political and economic factors, and procedures through which a text operates within a society. There are also such protocols which may define the relationship between tradition and socio-political and economic context.

¹⁹ Dr. Asma Qadri, *Punjabi Classiki Shairi Da Sinf Verwa* (Lahore: Department of Press and Publication, University of the Punjab, 2011), 82-83.

²⁰ The subject of Var is more about the decline of Sikh rule in the Punjab just before the mid of 19th century. It begins with a reference to the birth of Ranjit Singh, the pioneer of Sikh rule, and unfolds with the details about the courtly intrigues and conspiracies. This Var ends with the accounts of Anglo-Sikh Wars that resulted in the occupation of Punjab by British.

²¹ Najm Hosein Syed, *Gal Var Di* (Lahore: Suchaet Kitaab Ghar, 2010), 07-09. Syed holds the same discussion as to Najabat Di Var which is also called Nadir Shah Di Var.

²² Vansina *Oral Tradition as History*, 178.

²³ Ibid., 187.

²⁴ While assessing the Oral Tradition as history, Vansina finds various limitations associated with Oral Tradition. He suggests that historians dealing with Oral Tradition as source of history would have to admit its dependence on the outside sources. From African context, he gives

various examples in which oral sources supplemented with the written records can help to reconstruct the past in a more refined and inclusive way.

²⁵ Vansina *Oral Tradition as History*, 188.

²⁶ Dr. Syed Akhter Hussain Akhtar, *Punjabi Varan* (Lahore: Lehran Adabi Board, 2005), 30-50.

²⁷ Ibid., 56.

²⁸ *Tarikh Adbiat-e-Musalmanan-e-Pakistan-o-Hind* (Lahore: University of Punjabi, 1971), 203.

²⁹ Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, 197-199. While having established the dependence of Oral Tradition on the outside sources, Vansina also urges the historian to tamper with the critical stance as to the reliability of information and evidence from within the Oral Tradition. Emphasizing how irreplaceable information from Oral Tradition is, he not only points to the responsibility a historian should take in preserving the evidence from the traditions but also holds that information and evidence as invaluable being from 'inside'.

³⁰ Ibid., 198.

³¹ Muhammad Asif Khan, Introduction to *Jang Hind Punjab*, by Shah Muhammad (Lahore: Aziz Book Deput, 1972), 71-75.

³² Preetam Singh, *Punjabi Sahat Vich Bairkao Da Vikaas*, 50.

³³ Serebryakov, *Punjabi Literature* (Lahore: Progressive Books, 1975), 18.

³⁴ Muhammad Asif Khan in introduction to *Jang Hind Punjab* by Shah Muhammad contrasts the var literature with the ode tradition of other eastern literatures. He holds that in ode tradition, the kings and princess were glorified and appreciated for their deeds by poets for latter's interests. Poet would have appreciated the king or prince in order to get some benefit; as an example, he quotes Ghalib, the famous poet of Urdu, writing in praise

of Queen Victoria during colonial period. In contrast, Vars presented folk appreciation of folk heroes without any expectation of some reward or benefit. Therefore, he holds that as a historical narrative, Vars contained a more objective outlook as compared to similar traditions of other eastern literature which would always be interest oriented.

³⁵ Many Punjabi writers, like Asif Khan, Saeed Bhutta, Preetam Singh, Mohan Singh Diwana, who have written extensively on var literature, take on this approach as well to explore the origin of var tradition in the Punjabi oral tradition.

³⁶ Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2009)., 35-50.

³⁷ Circular from H. H. Risley, president of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 4 August 1898, Oriental and India Office Collections (henceforth OIOC), British Library.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Farina Mir *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab* (California: The University of California Press, 2010)., 101.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 103.

⁴¹ Vansina also sees Oral Tradition as a set of processes of transmission. Therefore, he warns against seeing the 'messages' as only 'products' or what British folklorist were calling 'survivals' as Oral Tradition applies also to the processes through which it survives.

⁴² Saeed Bhutta, *Des Diyan Varan* (Lahore: Punjab Institute of Language, Art and Culture, 2007), 11.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Temple, *Legends of the Punjab*., viii.

⁴⁵ Ibid., vii.

⁴⁶ *Encyclopedia of Indian Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1992), 4492-4493.

⁴⁷ Muhammad Asif Khan also puts forward same kinds of categorization as to the Oral Tradition of Punjab. Dividing it into two main sections, he holds that first section abounds in metaphysical, romantic, religious and lyrical pursuits while the second section of Punjabi Oral Tradition comprises of Var literature that is set in purely socio-political context with a narrative that can largely be categorized as historical.

⁴⁸ Temple, *Legends of Punjab*, vii.

⁴⁹ Ahmad Saleem, *Lok Varan: Ghulam Muhammad Rulia Aur Sathi* (Islamabad: National Council of the Arts, 1971), 18-20.

⁵⁰ This term, with a creative liberty, is derived from the William Glover's concept of Palimpsest as to explain the haphazard urban 'development' in the city of Lahore with abrupt discontinuities and unrelated plans: William Glover, *Making Lahore Modern: Constructing and Imagining a Colonial City* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 2-5.

⁵¹ Temple, *Legends of Punjab*, viii-ix.

⁵² Danziel Ibbetson, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab Vol. 02* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette, 1911).

MUSLIM POLITICS AND THE PARTITION OF PUNJAB (1940-1947)

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ABSTRACT

Punjab was a key province of the sub-continent where three major communities; i.e., Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs were living. After the British annexation of the Punjab in 1849, India wholly came under the British Raj till 1947. This region comprised of populations belonging to different religions and cultures with dissimilar tradition of economic echelons. The British extended their rule in sub-continent by implementing the policy '*Divide and Rule*' which created the socio-political and religious differences that gradually encouraged the independence movement in Punjab as well as in whole sub-continent. The 100 years of slavery under British rule provided oxygen to these freedom movements especially those in Punjab province which were finally matured in August 1947. After a long struggle, the independence movements while moving towards their finishing point arose high level of threats among large communities living in Punjab. The Punjab was divided on religious basis, i.e.,

Muslims vs. non-Muslims, in to two parts; East Punjab and West Punjab, after sacrificing lives of millions of people, losing property, abduction of women and rapes.

KEY WORDS

Punjab, Politics, Separate identity, Violence, Partition.

Punjab was an agricultural province of India; British annexed the Punjab in 1849 after conquering the Sikh Dynasty. India wholly came under the British Raj After the annexation of Punjab. At the time of partition August 1947, Punjab was consisted on five divisions¹ and twenty nine districts. The Census of 1941 reflects the total population of United Punjab 28.4 million, comprising 16.2 million 7.5 million 3.7 million Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs, respectively (the rest of the population was made up of Christians and other tiny communities).² In Punjab, Muslims were in majority with 57.1%, the Hindus with 27.8% and the Sikhs with 13.2% of the total population.³ As sub-continent was partitioned, Punjab was also divided into two parts i.e., East Punjab and the West Punjab. East Punjab became the Indian Punjab with thirteen districts while West Punjab came under the jurisdiction of Pakistan with sixteen districts. *Multan* and *Rawalpindi* Division were totally given to Pakistan⁴ whereas *Jullundur* and *Ambala* Divisions to India.⁵ However, Lahore Division divided between the India and Pakistan. The Lahore Division had a great importance for both Muslim and Sikhs religiously and economically.

MUSLIM POLITICS IN PUNJAB AFTER THE ANNEXATION

In 1849, after the annexation of Punjab, Sikhs withdrew from Punjab and the province came under the British *Raj*.

British brought immense changes in the existing policies in national and provincial administration. They changed court language from Persian to Urdu and introduced the English against the government services. These changes intensely and widely affected the Muslim standings in Punjab.⁶ Muslim and other communities tried to prove themselves loyal to the British for their uplift in the British India. Moreover, British introduced frequent political, economic, agricultural, and social reforms in sub-continent. They shaped a new sense of communitarian authorization and a particular nationalism in the Indian society. British were wanted to modify native communities for their colonial purposes. All these reforms were to encourage the natives to achieve more rights and.⁷ British introduced westernized education system, codes, railways, telegraph and advance communication.

ADVENT OF 'TWO NATION THEORY'

In 1867, Hindus of Banaras started an agitation against Urdu as official language. They insisted to replace it with *Devnagri* script because Urdu reminded them the bitter experience of Muslims rule on India. Circumstances dragged a movement for Muslim rights and Sir *Syed Ahmad Khan* (1817-1898) in 1882 realized that there are two large communities; Hindus and Muslims lived in India⁸. They had been living together from centuries besides extreme differences in religions, beliefs, social and cultural values.⁹ However, they could not live together more, because British under the policy of '*Divide and Rule*' committed the separatism in Indian society to strengthen their rule. Furthermore, the modes of separate identity stimulated among the native communities in the end of the 19th century.

During this separate identity movement the Sikhs and the Hindus were affiliated with *Singh Saba* and *Arya Samajist* Movements and some coast of Hindus had a *roti beti* relation with each other. During this time the Muslims were associated with different *Anjumans* (organizations). In 1890, the Punjab was predisposed into religious & linguistic biasness and the people were grouped in to various socio-political and communal assemblages. This scenario stemmed the formation of various militant organizations such as *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSSS), *Hindu Mahasaba*, and *Shiromani Akali Dal* (SAD) etc.¹⁰

In such circumstances, Muslims of sub-continent by using the political platform of AIML (All India Muslim League)¹¹ provided the safeguard to the Muslim interests. Muslim, Hindu, and Sikhs' efforts and movements of political rights amplified the political developments between 1920 to 1940 in Punjab.¹² On the other hand, British also were intensely participated into both world wars during this era. Particularly, World War II (1939-1945) effectively faded and damaged the Great Britain power in sub-continent. These situations gave a break through to the Indian political forces and steadily weaken British hold on subcontinent. Their weak position was more helpful and encouraged the Indian political entities to get rid from British occupancy. So, the both large communities, Muslims, and the Hindus came on the front and boxed to secure the maximum socio-political benefits in terms of Independence.

AIML'S EVOLVING POLITICAL TACTICS AND INTENTIONS

All India Muslim League was founded in December 1906 at Dacca; *Nawab Waqar-ul-Mulk* (1841-1917) delivered the first Presidential address.¹³ The key objectives of All India

Muslim League from beginning were to protect the political interests of Indian Muslims, presented their needs and aspirations to the Government, and to promote their feelings and loyalties to the British Government. In Punjab, the Muslim League could not hold a proper political weightage till 1938 because of lack in organizational structure.¹⁴ According to Governor Louise Lincoln Emerson's (1863-1941) Report which had been presented to Viceroy Linlithgow (1887-1952) on October 19, 1936, the Muslim League was not a famous party¹⁵ and it would not bear political pressure and would quit from Punjab very soon. Furthermore, League had lack in planning regarding future political developments.

But Sir *Mohammad Shafi* (1869-1932), the Muslim Leading prominent personality who was known a big landowner, Barrister by profession and a leader of stature of Mr Jinnah, played his role to increase the strength of Muslim League in Punjab. Sir *Mohammad Shafi* represented the right wing. He believed in to cooperate with the British and supported the separate electorates. Dr *Allama Mohammad Iqbal* (1877-1938) was another Punjabi eminent personality and prominent leader of Muslims. He gave first time the idea of separate state for Muslims in subcontinent on the Muslim League's platform in 1930. But on the other hand some other political leaders like *Abul kalam Azad* criticized the League's policies and demands. *Majlis-i-Ahrar's*¹⁶ Leader, Mr *Abdul Qayyum*, appealed to his Party members in an *Ahrar* conference in 1936 to support the Congress politically. He also criticized the Muslim League and its leaders by saying: "a coterie of few Knights, *Khan Bahadurs and Nawabs*."¹⁷ But Muslim League's activities in Punjab were very strident after the passing of Lahore Resolution in Punjab.

LAHORE RESOLUTION,¹⁸ A FUTURE STRATEGY

Allama Mohammad Iqbal at Allahabad in his historical Address persuaded the wishes and demands of Muslims of India. This provided the factual directions to Indian Muslims towards Separate State. Later League leadership under Mr Jinnah stepped ahead and finally, on 24 March, 1940 on the Annual Session of All India Muslim League, the historical Resolution for separate homeland for Muslims passed in Minto Park Lahore. This Resolution in history was known as the '*Lahore Resolution*'.¹⁹ *Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah* addressed the people and declared the partition of India as the only solution for the Indian political crisis. He demanded a separate state for Indian Muslim on Muslim majority areas. The Lahore Resolution was a turning point for the future of sub-continent as well as for the Punjab. In Punjab, Hindus and Sikhs responded with great fear from the idea of a separate homeland for Indian Muslims.²⁰ The reaction of both communities against Muslims was alarming. Even in February 1940, the Sikhs protested against Muslim League's idea of separate state.²¹

The strong reason of the Sikh community's reaction was the division of their community, Holy shrines and loss of agricultural lands of West Punjab. Sikhs and Hindus criticized this Resolution and labelled it satirically '*Pakistan Resolutions*'. After Passing the *Lahore Resolution*, the popularity of Muslim League increased quickly in Punjab and all over the India. This Resolution extended the breach between Hindus and Muslims as well²². Muslim League professed itself the sole representative of the Muslims community of India.²³ But another issue appeared when a communal perception emerged that either Pakistan is a '*Sunni State*'. Shias and other tiny Muslim communities had

certain apprehensions on a Sunni dominated State. Shia Leader *Syed Ali Zaheer* also shared his reservations with Jinnah in July 1944.²⁴ On 25 December 1945, The Council of Action of All Parties, Shia Conference passed a Resolution and opposed the idea of Pakistan.²⁵ But later most of Shia leadership shifted their loyalty to the Muslim League and supported the idea of Pakistan with the hope that Pakistan would be a non-Sectarian State.

PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS OF 1946 AND MUSLIM LEAGUE

Muslim League proved its political worth and changed electoral strategies before the elections of 1946. AIML contested these Elections with the slogan of independence and the safety of the rights of Indian Muslims. Eight lakh people accepted the Muslim league membership and affiliated with it before the membership closing date. This figure showed that 55% people of Punjab accepted the membership of Muslim League in Punjab.²⁶ *'The Lahore Resolution'* 1940s played an effective role in these elections. *'Lahore Resolution'* gave the Indian Muslims a vision of a separate homeland.²⁷

AIML projected the idea of Pakistan as the only solution for all the political, communal, social, and economic, problems of Muslims of the sub-continent.²⁸ So the weightage of *'Lahore Resolution'* and political strength of Punjab Province proved helpful for AIML in Elections campaign. Election campaign was outstanding and the League tried influence solely particularly to those who were confronting the ideology Pakistan and the creation of new State for Indian Muslims.²⁹ Furthermore, AIML's altered strategy remained successful. League gave the tickets to the big landlords, feudal, *Pirs* and *Gadi Nashins* and won the Elections with heavy mandate in Punjab.

MUSLIM LEAGUE'S USE OF RELIGION IN ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Many historians argued that Mr Jinnah, during the election campaign, used Islam as a tool, and remained successful to gain the support of the Muslims. One of the famous slogans was "*Pakistan ka naara kya? La Ilaha Illallah*" (what is the meaning of Pakistan it is that there is no God but Allah). AIML workers and leadership raised religious slogans loudly in public rallies. Steadily this emerged as the identity of Pakistan and a distinct recognition of Muslim population (whether old or young, male or female) of India. Previously, Dr *Allama Iqbal* also used this slogan '*La Ilaha Illallah*' in his poetry. His poetry played a pivotal role which magnified the Islamic image and spirit among the Muslim community.³⁰ In Punjab, AIML's elections campaign forcefully evolved specifically around four assemblages like (1) The Muslim students (2) The Muslim community (3) The *Ulemas* and *Pirs*.

THE ROLE OF MUSLIM STUDENTS

Muslim students played a significant role in the creation of Pakistan. *Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi* (1915-2000s) a student leader and founder of the Muslim Student Federation (MSF) in 1938, and *Hameed Nizami* (1915-1962)³¹ played key role in organizing and mobilizing the Muslim students and workers. They divided the students in small groups to visit different villages, towns, and cities of the Punjab. It was the part of election strategy to educate the people regarding independence. They started visiting in groups to various parts of the Province. Administration imposed the Section, 144 to contain the situation in Punjab. As a response, Muslim students loudly shouted the slogans like "*le k rahein*

gai Pakistan, dena hoga Pakistan, Pakistan Zindabad" (we will get Pakistan; you will have to give Pakistan, long live Pakistan).³²

In a fortnightly report of Bertrand James Glancy³³ (1882-1953) to the Viceroy Lord Wavell³⁴, (1883-1950) on February 2nd 1946, he shared that the Muslim League's students were becoming gradually successful to attract the peoples. Students were delivering the speeches against the Unionists party and to increase the Muslim League vote bank. They visited all over the Punjab to highlight the Muslim demands and to elaborate the League's Manifesto. Furthermore, he added that students are endorsing Mr Jinnah comments which he said during the election campaign in Frontier in November 1945 as, *"every vote in favour of the Muslim league candidates means Pakistan, and every vote against the Muslim league candidates means Hindu Raj"*³⁵, The Aligarh and Punjabi students played a massive role to amplify the vision of Mr Jinnah to come true about the dream of a separate State. So, this attitude of Muslim students disturbed the Sikh and Hindu political leaderships.

PARTICIPATION OF MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Initially Mr Jinnah was not in favour of Partition of the Punjab but later Lord Mountbatten convinced him for partition³⁶. So, later Muslims as majority community contributed and participated actively for the partition of the Punjab. AIML established the strong sense of Islamic *Asbiyyat* among the Muslims community.³⁷ While, Muslim living in Punjab were in majority (57.1%) but economically they depended on Hindus and Sikhs, the corporate classes. Due to above discussed socio-political efforts many politicians left Unionist Party and joined Muslim League.

Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din (1907-1962) the president of the Punjab Congress Committee also left Unionist Party and joined the Muslim League on August 25th 1945. Moreover, the ex-Unionist Minister *Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan* (1915-1998) also joined the Muslim League. Later Gradually, AIML became successful to attract many political icons to get maximum political benefits.

Most of the Muslim League candidates, during the election campaign of 1946, used the Islamic slogans and delivered speeches against the Unionist Party and non-Muslims candidates. One of such slogan was pointed out in Fortnightly Report of *Bertrand James Glancy*. According to him, *Raja Khair Mehdi Khan* a Muslim League Candidate from Jhelum, printed an Urdu poster which had been circulated to the Muslim community. This poster had the following Islamic slogan: “*Muslim League Zinda Bad. Pakistan Zinda Bad. O Muslim the time of your test has come. You have to choose between Din (religion) and Dunya (world)*”

The poster description was as follows:

| Din (Religion) | Dunya (world) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| “On one side is your belief in the almighty and your conscience | On the other side you are offered squares and Jagirs. |
| Righteousness and faithfulness are on one side | On the other side has to offer Lambardari and Zaildari |
| On one side is the rightful cause | On the other is Sufedposhi (economic advantage and status) |
| One side has Pakistan for you | The other has Kafrastan (reign of infidels) |

On the one side is the problem of saving the Muslims from the slavery of Hindus

on one side you have to bring together all those who recite the Kalima (the basis of Islam)

On the one side you have the Holy Mohammad and Ali

On the one side is the consideration of the unity and brotherhood of all Muslims

On the one side are the lovers of Muslim League and Pakistan

On the one side is the honor of the green banners

As opposed to this, there is only consideration of personal prestige of only one man

On the other side is the idol worship, bradri (clan) and cast consideration

On the other side Baldave Singh and Khizar Hayat.

On the other side is the Danda (big stick) of the bureaucracy and the terror of officialdom

On the other side are the admires of congress and Unionists

On the other side is the Government of Khizar Ministry".³⁸

CONTRIBUTIONS OF *ULEMA* AND *PIRS*

The *Ulemas* (religious scholars) and *Pirs* (religious leaders) played notable role in the partition of Punjab. They provided abundant support to the Muslim League in Punjab and all over the Country. The *Ulema* and *Pirs* led the election campaign in favour of Pakistan in their respective localities. The most conservative *Ulema* and *Pirs* specially belonged to the Sunni (*Brailvi* school of thought) encouraged their followers to join the Muslim League.³⁹ Moreover, the most prominent *Deobandi* leader *Mulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani* (1887-1949) himself joined the Muslim League along with his party, and started the

campaign for the creation of Pakistan. An eminent Muslim scholar, *Pir Jamat Ali Shah* (1834-1951), of *Alipur* (in Punjab), was persuaded to the Muslim political Leaders of the Congress and declared their politics 'Anti-Islamic'.⁴⁰ *Pir of Zakeri* was another powerful figure of *Lakki Marwat* in *Dera Ismail Khan* who provided his energies for the victory of AIML.

Furthermore, *Pir of Manki Syed Mohammad Amin-ul-Hasnat*, also known as *Pir of Manki Sharif* (1922-1960), contributed enthusiastically and formed an organization '*Anjuman-us-Asfia*' to co-ordinate the activities of *Pirs* on behalf of Muslim League in the Province. Moreover, he ordered his meridians (followers), belong to '*koh-i-daman*' area in his locality, to support the Muslim League candidates.⁴¹

COLLATIVE GOVERNMENT IN PUNJAB

According to the results of Election 1946, Muslim League appeared as largest party in Punjab Assembly with 73 seats. But later on two more members of Unionist party joined the Muslim League and its strength reached at 75. The Muslim League emerged as the largest party in the assembly. In his confidential note of Governor Sir Bertrand James Glancy to the Viceroy on March, 7, 1946, he said that, *Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Mamdot*, the leader of Punjab Muslim League, met with him and discussed the political matters related to form the Government as his party won the largest seats in the Punjab assembly. Furthermore, he told that our negotiations with the *Akalis* party had been broken down due to the *Panthic* Party. The Sikh *Panthic* party asked him to describe the zone for Sikh states to be set apart as "*Khalistan*" but it was not possible.⁴² Moreover, *Iftikhar Hussain Mamdot* claimed that by gaining the support of the 73+5 members and 10 others non-Muslims

in the assembly, so now with 88 seats our position is very clear to form the Government.⁴³

However the Governor guesstimates he had gained the support of only 80 legislature members. On the other hand, the Governor met with Sir *Khizar Hayat Khan*, *Sardar Baldev Singh* and *Bhim Sen Sachar* (1902-1961) in the process of making the government. Sir *Khizar Hayat Khan* claimed that he and his allies had a clear majority in the assembly with 94 legislature members. However, the actual number in this case was 90 seats. The Governor took the unexpected decision not to ask Muslim League to form the provincial government but asked the Unionist leader Sir *Khizar Hayat Khan* to form the coalition ministry with the help of Congress and *Akali* party.⁴⁴ As a result, the coalition ministry came in to power on March 11th 1946 and Sir *Khizar Hayat* was selected as the premier of the Punjab.⁴⁵ This coalition ministry consisted of three Muslim member (Sir *Kizer*, *Hayat Mohammad Ibrahim Barq*, and *Muzafar Ali Qizilbash*,) two Congress leaders (*Lahri Singh* and *Bhim Sen Sachar*) and one leader of *Panthic party* *Sardar Baldev Singh*. After the establishment of the Unionist ministry the Muslim League decided to go for agitation against this collated Government.

LEAGUE'S AGITATION AND *KHIZAR* MINISTRY

Muslim League called for agitation on January 24th 1947 against the Unionist Ministry. *Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din*, the Leader of Punjab Muslim League, demanded to resign *Khizar Tiwana* from Premiership or new Elections in Punjab. After call of agitation, Sir *Khizar Hayat* responded that, it is not Government's intention to restrict political activities but communal tension and conflicts responsible of disruptions in Punjab. So, in response to this agitation, Punjab

Government took step to impose section 144 of the Code of criminal procedure and as well as Punjab Safety Ordinance. Unionist Ministry band militant Organizations like RSSS and Muslim League National Guards (MLNG) in February, 1947 to restore peace. Police also raided Muslim League National Guard's office in Lahore with search warrants.

Muslim League leader *Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, Malik Firoz Khan Noon, Nawab Mamdot, Sayyed Amir Husain Shah, Begum Shah Nawaz* (1896-1979), *Mian Mumtaz Dultana*, and *Shoukhat Hayat Khan* (1915-1998) were arrested.⁴⁶ The agitation continued for 34 days from January 24, 1947 to February 26, 1947.⁴⁷ Among 79 Muslim League members of the Punjab assembly, 74 were prisoned in account of agitation against the *Khizar* collation Ministry. Furthermore, Government arrested about 13000 Muslim League workers during said period and sent to the jail.⁴⁸ However, on February 26, 1947 Punjab Government called off this gigantic agitation and released arrested members and political workers on February 27th to make political scenario peaceful in the Province.

KHIZAR TRICKLED

Massive agitation against the Unionist Ministry in Punjab brought political situations of Punjab on a worst state. But Congress and Alkalis perpetually supported *Khizar* collative Ministry in spite of reservations of League. Now Muslim League was demanding elections in Punjab while the agitation had been spread in other provinces as well. This massive agitation highlighted by the Print Media nation-wide and more disseminated by the eminent Journalists.⁴⁹ Lahore city became the main core of this Movement; however, every district of the Punjab affected severely.⁵⁰ Muslim League Students and women wing organized the

protest through a march against the *Khizar* Government. This protest in gatherings passed through the streets of Lahore in aggressive manner; with insulting and antagonistic slogans follows:

“Lay ke rahen gey Pakistan–Jaise lia tha Hindustan” (we will take Pakistan just as we once took Hindustan”), *“Khizar Kanjar hai”* (“Khizar the procurer is dead ‘O sorrow”) *“Pakistan Zindabad”* (long live Pakistan”), *“Unionist Ministry murdabad”* (“death to the Unionist ministry”), etc.⁵¹

This agitation compelled Mr *Khizar* to realize that his Ministry had no future in Punjab. He had been understood the situations sagaciously, so he decided to quit and resigned from premiership on March 2nd, 1947.⁵² Muslim League decided to rejoice the 2nd March as a *“Victory Day”*.⁵³

LEAGUE TOWARD RULE AND SIR EVAN JENKINS

On March 3rd, Sir Evan Meredith Jenkins (1896-1985) enquired to *Iftikhar Hussain Mamdot* President of Punjab Muslim League, to form the Ministry in Punjab. He agreed and gave an assurance to the Governor that soon he will hand over names of ministers on the same day. *Mamdot* met with Congress and Sikh leaderships to form the Government of Muslim League but failed to get their consent.⁵⁴ It was to assuage their fears because Master Tara Singh had clearly instigating the Sikhs. Tara Singh unveiled his intentions in an interview on February 28th to the “New York Times” as follows:

I do not see how we can avoid civil war. There can be no settlement, if the Muslims want to rule the Punjab. We cannot trust the Muslims under any circumstances. The Sikh had the ability to keep the

Muslims out of eastern Punjab but why should we stop there? We would drive them out of the Punjab entirely. The Sikhs have started to recognize their own private volunteer army in response to the Muslim League month-old agitation against the coalition Ministry of the Punjab in which the Sikhs are represented".⁵⁵

VIOLENCE AFTER *KHIZAR* RESIGNATION

The Sikhs and Hindus threatened British Administration to create agitation and lawlessness in case of formation of League's rule in Punjab. On the other hand, in response of Muslim League agitation Hindus and Sikhs got involved in shameless attitude abduction and rape of the Muslim women and burnt their houses too.⁵⁶ *Bhem Sen Sachar* ⁵⁷ before 1946 claimed to provide full support of Congress to the Sikh cause. Later in March 1947, Congress on behalf of Sikhs passed a Resolution regarding Partition of Punjab. Moreover, the communal clashes occurred in Lahore on March 4th with a procession of Sikhs and Hindu communities.

Both communities shouted loudly anti-Pakistan slogans and police took action when they tried to remove Muslim League's flags from shops and buildings. Police also opened fire in self-defence.⁵⁸ Master Tara Singh became aggressive, and waved off his *kirpan* (small sword) in front of a Muslim crowd and shouted; "*Pakistan Murdabad*" (death of Pakistan) and "*Raj Kare ga Khalsa, Aqi rahe na Koi*" (the Sikhs will rule; No resister will remain).⁵⁹ Master Tara Singh had hate for Muslims and the idea of Pakistan. He used the words "*Pakistan Murdabad*"⁶⁰ many times. He used the first time anti-Pakistan slogan in Jullundur and he said: "*Jo mange ga Pakistan, us ko mile ga Qabristan*".

Another Sikh leader and Defence Minister of India *Giani Kartar Singh* said:

This day the Crusade starts, one hundred years ago today our yellow flags were flying on the fort of Lahore. The small flag shall fly again our battle-axe shall decide if the Muslim shall rule. The Sikhs shells never disgrace the name of Guru Gobind Singh.⁶¹

The Congress leaders celebrated the Anti-Pakistan Day on March 11 1947.⁶² Their aim was to create lawlessness and also build pressure on the British administration with such activities. Moreover, they attacked on 'Head Works' and the plan of Master Tara Singh to murder Mr Jinnah's on Independence Day celebrations also disclosed.⁶³

GOVERNOR RULE IMPLEMENTED

Because of Hindu-Sikh grievances Muslim League failed to make rule in Punjab. Sir Even Jenkins imposed the Governors rule in Punjab on March 5th under section 93, Government of India Act 1935. This act provided powers to Governor to deal the business of the Government, dismissal of Assembly as well.⁶⁴ Governor more shared the polemics about hindrances of the formation of League's rule. He confessed that actually, he stood behind the Muslim League to form government but Muslim representation particularly *Nawab Mamdot* failed to convince the Governor at all.⁶⁵ After Governor Raj he said, on March 5th:

My personal belief is that no government which does not command the confidence of Punjabis generally can solve our present problems, and it is for you to consider whether in the additional time now available you should not resume negotiations with the other communities. May I also suggest that all the present juncture statement by yourself and the

leaders of the Hindus and Sikhs condemning the present communal outbreak would have an excellent effect. I have reason to believe that a move on your part for the issue of such a statement would be well received.⁶⁶

On the same day, the violence was ensued in Lahore and resulted in burning and looting of shops. This more affected the private properties in various residential and commercial localities of Lahore.⁶⁷ Steadily violence caught the entire Punjab particularly urban and rural areas of Multan, Gujranwala, Sargodha and Lyallpur. This caused thousands of casualties and came to end with the Partition of India and the Punjab.

CONCLUSION

Punjab the key Province, barometer to India had its importance due to its strong agro-economy and geographical location among the Indian Provinces. In Punjab, Muslims' proportion in population was 57.1%. Muslim League was main stream political party of Muslims of India and as well as of Punjab. Muslim League participated in the Elections 1936 but secured only two seats in Punjab. It was due to the popularity and strong hold of landlords' Unionist Party in Punjab politics.

Later in 1937 *Sikandar-Jinnah*⁶⁸ Pact and the Lahore Resolution in 1940 were turning points in the hegemonic politics of the Punjab. In the Elections of 1946 AIML changes its political strategy in Punjab and issued the Election tickets only to big landlords, feudal strata, Muslim *Ulemas*, *Gadi Nashins* and *Pirs*. Furthermore, Muslim student's and political workers mobilized the Muslim voters to amplify League's vote bank.

The leading political party of the Punjab, Unionist Party, failed gravely in the Provincial Elections of 1946. As a

result Muslim League won with heavy mandate. But a conspiracy theory emerged, Governor invited the Unionist the collative parties to form the Govt. in Punjab rather than League. Unionist Party formed the Government with the collation of *Akali* and Congress. Consequently, Muslim League called for agitation to remove the collative Government which later ended with the Unionist resignation in March 1947.

After resignation League desired to form Govt. in Punjab even Mr Jinnah, *Iftikhar Husain Mamdot* and *Liaqat Ali Khan* tried to convince Governor but in vain. Moreover, Sikhs and Congress threatened the British Administration for massive agitation in case of League Ministry in Punjab. So, political entities were responsible for the political disturbances and upsurges in Punjab. E. Jenkins enforced the Governor rule in the Province under section 93 of Indian Act 1935 to contain the horrifying situations. But situations were becoming worst gradually. Lord Mountbatten, Viceroy of India, decided the early partition of India in August 1947, and Punjab as the only solution of the critical political, communal and social issues.

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CHISHTI KHANQAHS: A CENTER OF ATTRACTION TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This article tries to draw attention towards the historically significant character of the *Sufi Khanqahs* with particular focus on *Chishti Khanqahs* which played dynamic role in molding the spiritual and thenceforth religious temperament of the medieval Indians. Subsequent research highlights the tasks *Chishti Khanqahs* performed in the particular social system which was strictly established in the region. Study is an attempt to locate the reasons behind what made *Chishti* abodes so attractive for the natives of medieval India.

KEY WORDS

Sufi, Khanqah, Chishtī, Religion

Sufism has its basis in Arabia and with the passage of time it soon established itself as a great movement in other Islamic countries. A large number of Muslim *Sufis* enhanced it with their mystical capabilities and

Sufi thinking. Sufism being a mystical facet of Islam became a central channel for the expansion of it at all levels, in particular in changing the mind-set of unbelievers and setting up of the Muslim culture. *Sufis* became incorporated as an essential inner part of the cultivation of Islamic polity. After the increasing strength and stability of the main *Sufi* orders in the central provinces of Islam, the full effect of Sufism, began to be felt in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.¹

In Indian subcontinent the most exceptional spokesperson of *Sufi* movement was Moin-ud-Din Chishti² of *Chishtiya* order. The *Chishtiya* order was initiated by *Khawaja Moin-ud-Din Chishti* who founded the first *Sufi* order in Indian subcontinent.³ He started its center in Ajmer where the order extended far and wide. Today, the *Chishti* order is one of the most widespread *Sufi* orders of Islam in the Indian subcontinent.⁴ It is established to be the most prominent *Sufi* order of India and Pakistan.⁵ *Chishti Sufi* masters expanded the well-organized system of their *Khanqahs*⁶ all over Indian subcontinent with single universal aim of serving humanity at all levels. Etymologically, *Khanqah* is a combination of two words. *Khan* is taken from the Persian word *Khana* denoting a house, and the word *Qah* which is Arabic in origin means a “practice” or an “act of worship”. Thus, *Khanqah* means an abode of worship. There are several identical terms to *Khanqah* which are used in *Sufi* literature such as *Zawiyahs*, *Ribats*, *Jama’at*

Khanas, but none of these exactly denotes the meaning what the term *Khanqah* signifies. In modern literature, the terminologies like “hospices”, “monasteries” or “convent” are frequently mentioned as equivalent to *Khanqah* but these terminologies signify their own individual sense in the perspective of Christianity. These terms, also, do not fulfill the density of the *Sufi* establishments.⁷ *Khanqah* is an edifice which specifically associated with the get-together of a *Sufi* brotherhood, and it is a place for spiritual learning and character restructuring.⁸ On the evolution of Sufism and *Khanqahs* Prof. Gibb argues that initially the *Sufis* started to appear as collective organization in the eighth century as small groups, and after that they developed their dwellings.⁹ Jonathan Berkey writes:

“One of the characteristic features of later medieval Sufism was the spread of institutions, variously known as Khanqahs ..., complete with buildings and endowments which housed and supported the activities of the mystics. Their origins are quite obscure, but it is likely that their roots lie in ninth- and tenth-century Iran.”¹⁰

From then onwards *Khanqah* maintained to have been found both within city and rural areas all the way through whole Islamic world, in particular the Persian-influenced Islamic world, such as Central Asia, Iran and South Asia. *Khanqah* worked as a spiritual organization founded on human knowledge and responsiveness. Throughout medieval age and even after, people

belonging to different religions, races, social order and beliefs, accustomed to go to *Khanqahs* in order to get curing and spiritual contentment. *Khanqahs* not just instructed spiritual learning rather they worked as the hub of education as well. In other words, the very main objective of the institution of *Khanqahs* was to give focus on the Practical Education i.e., the real execution of learnt knowledge by the trained *Sufis*.¹¹ Khalique Ahmad Nizami highlights *Khanqah's* purposes and advantages in his well-researched book *Tarikh-e-Mashaiekh-e-Chisht* as: *Khanqah* provided venerable *Sufi* a particular place where he could train and educate people according to his temperament and principles; *Khanqah* was the place where those pious men who did not have any abode to live could stay and dedicate themselves for the Religion (*Din*); *Khanqah* was the place where people of diverse intellect and of different places could sit together and learnt from each other which led them to build a strong spiritual connection of love and respect; *Khanqah* was an institution where spiritually deteriorated souls found peace. *Khanqah's* pure environment had an effect on their minds and hearts. Visitors, irrespectively from their class and creed, got highly influenced by the *Khanqah's* chaste atmosphere; *Khanqahs* are not only the places where one could satisfy spiritual hunger through spiritual exercises and training only, such as self-purification and self-edification rather they also provided religious education along with, especially in *Chishti Khanqahs*.¹²

The institution of *Khanqah* and its accomplishment was mainly determined by the aptitude of the owner i.e., *Sufi* master of the *Khanqah* to comprehend and identify with the socio-cultural environment of the neighboring expanses where the *Khanqah* located. In the initial phases the primary funding for the maintenance of *Khanqahs* depended on three sources: *Futhu*, *Jagirs* (land endowments), and *Waqfs* (religious organizations to as care taker of *Khanqahs/Dargahs*). With the passage of time, the institution of *Khanqahs* turned out to be a central point of Muslim and non-Muslim communal life in medieval India. The multidimensional role of the *Khanqahs* stimulated their position among all strata of Indian society. *Khanqahs'* spiritual, social assistance, scholastic, and cultural roles which they performed without any prejudices for the indigenous inhabitants ascended their respected and admired status in their hearts. The friendly, liberal, social and humble atmosphere which was totally different to the class based societal structure of Medieval Indian population was highly welcomed. For the period of the early Muslim sovereignty over India when Muslim ruling elite somehow used to practice some intolerant exercises, the *Khanqah* was the only social institute which was considered by Islamic principles of equivalence and brotherliness practically.¹³

This paper tries to unfold the historical significance of *Chishti Khanqahs'* in medieval India that how were these *Khanqahs* able to spread the universal

message of love, peace and respect for humanity into the marginalized and strictly caste ridden Indian social set up. India's social caste milieu was strictly rigid yet it has taken into account the universal message of Islamic brotherhood. In a largely Hindu society, the position of a person was determined at birth from the elite class of *Brahmans* to the lower class of *Sudars*, to whom Indian social order acknowledged and treated as untouchables as renowned Indian author V.T. Rajshekar wrote:

These untouchables were denied the use of public wells and were condemned to drink any filthy water they could find. Their children were not admitted to schools attended by the caste Hindu children. Though they worshiped the gods of Hindus and observed the same festivals, the Hindu temples were closed to them. Barbers and washer men refused to render them service. Caste Hindus, who fondly threw sugar to ants and reared dogs and other pets and welcomed persons of other religions to their houses, refused to give a drop of water to the untouchables or to show them one iota of sympathy. These untouchable Hindus were treated by the caste Hindus as sub-human, less than men, worse than beasts . . .¹⁴

In such unusual socio-religious set up *Chishti Sufis* and their abodes emphasized love of Allah. The *Khanqah*

was an area where both its residents and the pilgrims came into contact with equivalence. The *Chishti Khanqahs* were open to all sections of the society and to all communities. From common man to the elite, old visitors or new, pious or immoral, Muslim or non-Muslim all made frequent visit to the *Khanqahs* and they were all treated alike and offered food without any discrimination. Good virtue (*Akhlaq*) at any cost was the hallmark of the *Chishti Khanqahs*. Seekers of knowledge, from local area to beyond Indian territory, were provided accommodation along with free foodstuff (*Langar*). *Chishti Khanqahs* were hugely involved in the reformation of morally deteriorated Indian Hindu society by executing the real essence of the teachings of Islam. These *Khanqahs* not just had religious (Mystical aspect of the religion) character rather social as well.¹⁵

The classless and humanistic approach of the *Chishti Sufis* engrossed the Hindu masses who were grumbling underneath the force of casteism in their own society which they belonged to and which has labeled them as untouchables. All these reasons led to the huge success and expansion of *Chishtiya* Sufism hence extremely affected the Indian the social order and culture within it. Another important facet which was associated with the *Chishti Khanqah* was the *Jama'at Khana* which had always been fundamental and important place in *Chishti Khanqahs*. It was center for the social life and it was the area where spiritual and ethical culture was formulated. *Jama'at Khanas*

were the centers of communal and cultural life.¹⁶ In *Jama'at Khana* visitors used to live together in one big hall and engaged themselves in prayers and worship.¹⁷ As at Baba Farid's *Jama'at Khana* renowned *Sufis* and *Yogis* used to meet him to converse and execute Sufism.¹⁸

The most essential element of Chishti Khanqahs was the warm hospitality where the *Langar*¹⁹ *Khana* was operated which was very well organized and worked twenty four hours a day and seven days in a week. *Langar* was generously distributed among the visitors no matter which class they belonged to. According to *Chishti* sayings, if one pays visit someone as guest and that person does not offer any food to eat to the guest, in that case, it is just like one has paid visit to the dead person. If at some moment there was nothing to offer in food at *Khanqahs* then at least a glass of water was certainly presented to the visitor. The expenditure of the *Langar Khana* was managed by the *Futuh*²⁰ and offerings. *Chishti Khanqahs* were used to receive abundance of *Futuh* in form of grain and money but it was all distributed by the end of the day. *Chishtis* did not like to keep *Futuh* at their *Khanqahs* rather there was no sound system to keep record of receiving it. However, they maintained a principle regarding the distribution of *Futuh*. They were always in a rush to give out all the gathered offerings among the needy and poor. *Langar Khana* at their *Jama'at Khanas* was always opened for the hungry.²¹ *Chishti Sufis* were extensively involved in public interaction.

They loved to mingle with the local population, mostly Hindus, and participated in their happiness and sorrow. They disliked living aloof and never had any distance between them and the inhabitants. To serve humanity was their religion. Their *Khanqahs* were always open for the oppressed and deprived.²² The *Chishti Sufis*, with their moderate and compassionate methodology and style, were strong believers in the notion of human self-esteem and human fairness and because of its distinctive character *Chishtiya* Sufism was closest to the general community. They ate less, dressed simply, and made no difference between the rich and poor, they treated equally who came to seek guidance and assistance from them irrespectively their high and low status.²³ Visitors were always welcomed and whether there was any food available or not unexpected guests always enjoyed their warm and generous hospitality.²⁴ Hindu notion of segregation has strong dissimilarity with the notion Islamic brotherhood which provides equal spiritual opportunity for all that exists within itself.²⁵

The *Chishtis* made themselves accessible to all parts of society. For the most part, the rulers and upper class by their activities proved to be disloyal to the spirit of Islam. While in the *Chishti Khanqahs*, noblemen and beggars were looked after with the similar reverence and benevolence. The *Chishti Sufis* took part in dispersion of Islam in the strictly caste based Hindu Society. Poverty itself is a big equalizer and can be effective in splitting the false and non-

natural blockades that may survive between peoples of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. *Chishtis* adopted a life of poverty as necessary sanitization. They lived among the poor and every time they were found busy in giving charity mostly in form of food to the poor around them. This made them highly admirable and beloved to Hindu community. Hindus found their way of living just similar to their own. Moreover unconditional conversion of the religion attracted them a lot.²⁶ Following statement of a Hindu Writer Rai Bahadur Harbilas Sarda in his book on Ajmer shows that how much *Chishti Sufis* were regarded in Hindu social set up. He offers tributes to Khawaja Moin-ud-Din Chishti in these words, "He never preached aggression, was a man of peace and goodwill towards all God's creatures."²⁷

One of the biggest reasons that *Chishtiya* Sufism was highly accepted by the Indian non-Muslim community was *Chishti Sufis'* simple and determined doings which were purely based on love of Allah and affection to humanity. It highly impressed many Hindus in particular those from the lower castes, it was a big socio-religious change during that period that clearly led to the transposition in India. The fact is that the *Chishti Khanqahs* kept away from any intolerance between the disciples and carried out a classless society that involved huge number of people into their fold. If truth be told "the Islamization of the country was achieved largely by the preaching of the dervishes, not by the sword."²⁸ In the cast-ridden social set up,

those were the sayings and actions of the great *Chishti Sufis* that disclosed the true spirit of their wisdom that facilitated to put down the basis of Islamic Humanism.²⁹

The order acquired a highly integrated social organization that was effectively controlled by the center and directed the actions and behaviors of those who were connected with it.³⁰ *Chishtiya* Sufism not just inspired and influenced the atmosphere of respect and tolerance for other faiths rather the Indian literature, architecture, music and even dance (under Mughal period) were inclined to Muslim *Sufi* thought [especially *Chishtis*]. Indian cultural transformation was the clear manifestation that how indigenous forms of art mingled with mystic thought of that time.³¹ Today's Hindu-Muslim Civilization is undoubtedly indebted to the *Chishtis Khanqahs* for its rich cultural life. In other words the genesis of the contemporary Indo-Pak culture can be traced through *Chishti Khanqahs* which were the center of promoting art and literature. Whether it is the historical background of Urdu language or the evolution of Hindi-Muslim music, one has to look towards these *Chishti Khanqahs*. *Chishti Sufis* learnt the local languages for building a better, close and strong relationship with natives. They also incorporated music into their *Sufi* teachings and practices as an effective tool of communication between both, Hindus and the Muslims.³² In fact devotional music was already component of Hindus' spiritual legacy and *Chishti Sufis* used this established

custom as source of producing illumination. They successfully merged both “knowledge of the laws and those of the spirit.” *Chishti*’s this liberal philosophy attracted many people to Islam.³³

They not only extended the humanistic message of Islam but they were also an instrument for circulating Mughal high culture and polishing the awareness of the common man. Local languages were frequently utilized in mystical poetry and this was another talent which straight away came from the *Sufi* realm. Likewise, the musical genre, *Qwwali* as a great artistic blend of spiritual poetry and blissful music, was an essential activity in gatherings at the *Chishti Khanqahs*. *Qwwali* being the finest classical music tradition appreciably put in to the growth of classical forms of music.³⁴

Chishtiya Sufism endorsed the “syncretic”³⁵ practice in Indo-Pakistan especially in the land of Punjab. The flexibility of the *Chishtis* in the non-Muslim atmosphere of India unleashed syncretic forces that led to the Hindi-Muslim cultural fusion. The *Chishtis* embraced an approach of religious tolerance towards the non-Muslim inhabitants of India and accustomed themselves to the needs of a non-Muslim setting. They made use of popular descriptions and expression to communicate their thoughts to their Indian followers and adopted many of their customs and rituals as well. *Chishti Sufis* customized themselves along with Indian environment and implemented some selected attributes of indigenous Punjabi religious philosophy

such as music, *Sama*, lyrical representation (language), cordiality, verbal folklore and showed remarkable "toleration" [and huge respect] with the people of other faction and religion. *Chishti Sufis'* tremendous malleability with indigenous surroundings and their well-established system of *Khanqahs* made *Chishtiya* Sufism an organization that attracted many non-Muslims of poorer level of the Punjabi society.

According to Richard M. Eaton, "the Sufi canon of "Suleh Kul or universal brotherhood had a great humanistic appeal behind which it crossed all religious barriers and developed fellow-feelings between the Hindus and the Muslims."³⁶

The very main factor which led to the *Chishtiya* Sufism's ongoing success was the execution of social justice, equality, love, respect, universal brotherhood, toleration i.e., combining simple Islamic thoughts with *Sufi* teaching, adaptability and most of all *Chishti Sufis'* simple moral life. The day Khawaja Moin-ud-Din Chishti institutionalized himself at Ajmer, the *Sufis* of the *Chishti* order held their influence over the Indo-Pak subcontinent. *Chishti Sufis* were distinguished for their strictness in religious practices. History of this region can never ignore *Chishti Sufis'* enormous involvement in spreading the true spirit of Islam. They did not like to have relationships with official class as well as the rulers and strictly turned away from taking part in any political activity.³⁷

They always kept the ruling elite at distance. The early *Chishtis* lived in *Khanqahs* that remained in

physical disconnection from the bureaucratic social hierarchy. Their *Sufi* abodes were founded on classless values where both dwellers and the visitors experienced impartiality. This is one of the reasons that they had strained link with the kings. Instead they kept themselves busy in serving humanity at their best. The history of early *Chishti Khanqahs* helps us in understanding the circumstance and conditions of the medieval Indian socio-religious set-up. This is their most significant contribution indeed. They were so successful in their attempt to convert Hindu society to another opinion i.e., Islam.

The way they welcomed the deprived and the subjugated at their *Khanqahs* has no any other example in history. The unrestricted and classless environment of the *Chishti Khanqahs* attracted large number of people from lower sections of Indian society. The *Chishti* attitude towards religion was characterized by compassion towards the underprivileged sections of the society. *Chishti Khanqahs* were not only the places where people just spiritually benefited directly from the charismatic personality of the *Chishti Sufis* but it was the institution that set the standard for the rest of the humanity from the soil of Indian subcontinent. *Chishti* teachings' humanizing influence along with *Chishti Khanqahs* amazing role led the fundamental changes to a person's life and consequentially brought radical modification in the congested and strict Indian social set up. All that immensely contributed to the

everlasting regard of the *Chishti Sufis* which is quite obvious even today in the form of millions of Muslims and non-Muslims visitors to their *Dargahs* (tombs) in Indo-Pak subcontinent. Today in modern times the immense gathering at *Chishti Dargahs* around the region of Indo-Pakistan keeping the tradition of *Chishti Khanqahs* alive in many ways.

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² Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimension of Islam* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2003), 345.

³ S. M. Ikram, *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan: A Political and Cultural History*, 7th ed. (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1997), 71. Also see *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Juane E. Campo (New York: Fact on File Inc., 2009), s.v. "Chishti Sufi Order".

⁴ Laxmi Dhau, *The Sufi Shrine of Ajmer* (New Delhi: Rupa and Co., 2004), 103.

⁵ S. Fadhlalla Haeri, *The Thoughtful Guide to Sufism* (New Delhi: Bhavana Books and Prints, 2006), 32.

⁶ Meeting or gathering place of Sufis. Oxford Concise Dictionary of World Religions, 314. Generally, the Khanqah is considered a place which is related with Sufism, a place that is reserved for those who search for the pleasure of Allah by way of devoting themselves to Him while detaching themselves from the world. In other words Khanqah was such a place which was dedicated to supporting people who required renovation and wanted to purify themselves of the humiliating transgression. Also see Muneera Haeri, *The Chishtis: A Living Light* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 2-5.

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¹⁰ Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and the Society in the Near East 600-1800* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 157. Also see Muneera Haeri, *The Chishtis: A Living Light* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 2-5.

¹¹ Nisaar Ahmad Farooqi "Khanqahi Nizam Ki Ehmiyat" *Alma'araf* Vol No. 40, October-December (2004), 57-73. The institution of *Khanqah* has always an important occupation in Islam, which is centered on the central facet of spiritual training (*Tarbiyyat*). Great *Sufis* of Islam have spent long periods in their *Khanqahs* not just in order to get spiritual training rather to execute this training through spiritual exercise by serving the humanity. By doing this *Sufis* put the theory of *Tarbiyyat* in actual practice that is specifically purifying people's heart, soul and mind and therefore correcting deteriorated manners (*Akhlaq*) in general. See Ghafir Shahzad, *Punjab Mein Khankahi Culture* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2009), 79-80.

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¹⁶ Shahzad, *Khanqahi Culture*, 81.

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See also Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaik Farid-ud-Din Ganj Shakar* (Lahore: Universal Books, 1955) Chapter No. X.

¹⁹ *Langar* means free public kitchen aiming sharing food with others irrespective of religion, class, color, doctrine, age, gender or social rank. This kitchen is opened to all and meant to make available food to all devotees and visitors. Aficionados fervently donate to it either by contributing food stuff or by partaking in the cooking and delivery of the food. Thus the concept of *Langar* is to maintain the norm of impartiality among all people of the globe. Moreover the ritual of *Langar* articulates the morals of sharing, community, comprehensiveness and unanimity of all human races. Distribution of *Langar* is a living *Chishti* tradition which is still continued with same fervor at all the *Chishti Sufis' Dargahs* of India and Pakistan.

²⁰ Shahzad, *Khanqahi Culture*, 81., *Futuh* is a Persian word and in Arabic its meanings are "gifts or offerings etc.," see for details the same book, 90-92.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 90-92.

²² Qazi Javaid, *Hindi Muslim Tehzib* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Limited, 1983), 159-60.

²³ Riaz-ul Islam, *Sufism in South Asia: Impact on Fourteen Century Muslim Society* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 198.

²⁴ Schimmel, *Dimension of Islam*, 346.

²⁵ Haeri, *The Chishtis*, 30.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

²⁷ S. M. Ikram, *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan: A Political and Cultural History*, 7th ed. (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1997), 71.

²⁸ Schimmel, *Dimension of Islam*, 345-46. "While some claim that Islam's huge population in India is a result of violence and forced conversion, the evidence does not back up this idea at all. Although Muslim leaders replaced Hindu kings in most areas, society was left as is. Stories of forced conversion are very few and often not credible enough to warrant academic discussion. If

Islam spread through violence and warfare, the Muslim community today in India would exist only in the areas closest to the rest of the Muslim world. Thus only the western part of the subcontinent would have any Muslim population at all. What we see instead is pockets of Islam throughout the subcontinent. For example, Bangladesh and its 150 million Muslims are in the far east, separated from other Muslim-majority areas by Hindu lands in India. Isolated communities of Muslims exist also exist in western Myanmar, central India, and eastern Sri Lanka. These communities of Muslims are proof of Islam spreading peacefully throughout India, regardless of whether or not a Muslim government existed there. If Islam spread by force as some claim, these communities of Muslims would not exist.” “How Islam Spread in India,” *Lost Islamic History*, <http://lostislamichistory.com/how-islam-spread-in-india/> (retrieved on April 19, 2015).

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³⁵ Syncretism means, "The amalgamation or attempted amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought".

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³⁶ Amir Khan Shahid, "Religious Syncretism in Pre-Modern Punjab", *The Historian*, (Vol 7 No. 2, July-December 2009), 107-111.

³⁷ In its best days, the order shunned from politics and *Chishti Sufis* strictly kept themselves away from the majestic and the sphere of the nobles. Even they turned down all favors through

land grants. No donation of land or any other support by the rulers was allowed in *Chishti Khanqahs*. *Chishti Sufis* were strictly used to reject any dealing with the worldly government. One of their poets said: How long will you go to the doors of *Amirs* and *sultans*? This is nothing else than walking in the traces of *Satan*.

As said by the *Chishti Sufis*, everything in the hands of the kings is to be illegitimate. The Order's principle to safeguard their freedom from state power was mainly a sound one. What chaos state intrusion could play can be seen in the post-Gesudraz period in the *Chishtiya* of the Deccan, and in the post-Rukn-ud-Din-Multan's phase in the Suharwardiya order of Multan. Baba Farid regardless of extreme poverty, strictly and strongly stick to this code throughout his long life. He advised his pupils: "If you desire to attain the position of great saints, do not pay any attention to the princes." Once he said, "Bear in mind my one advice. Do not associate with kings and nobles. Regard their visits to your house as calamities. Every dervish who opens the door of association with kings and nobles is doomed." Of all the *Chishti Sufis*, none kept up the principle of aloofness and liberty from the state with such commitment as Nizam-ud-Din Awliya did. Princes, ministers, and aristocrats were received at his monastery just like common visitors; even he considered their visits as "ruining his time". For him, what have the *Dervishes* to do with affairs of ruler? Even under the most demanding conditions, he struggled hard throughout his life to maintain the autonomy of the order from the state power and intrusion yet he his monastery was opened for princes, ministers and government servants since they were equally treated as laymen not as the elite. Only a dynamic Sufi having inspirational personality could merge these two unlike attitudes in the finest proportion. Nasir-ud-Din Chiragh also pursued the same tradition of the *Chishtis*, but he did admit among his followers those who received their income from government at a clerical level. Rather he was placed in such circumstances where he had to participate with much more dynamic responsibility in public dealings. His first participation in

politics came as consequence of Muhammad bin Tughluq's policy of pushing *Sufis* and *Ulama* (plural of *Alam* which means Muslim religious scholar) into public dealings. This policy led a direct clash between state and mystic sphere attitude. Nasir-ud-Din struggled to keep up order's practice but a divergence with a king, therefore became inevitable. He symbolized the time of changeover from the high age of *Chishti* mysticism to the days when the *Sufi's* descendants would use the monastery of their ancestors as a way of flourishing livelihood, and for the fulfillment of this intention they would keep themselves on the right side of the kings. He himself was conscious of the transformation which was approaching the mystic way of life by the inherited string and by the emerging reposing attitude of discipline. One can easily understand the varying temperament of *Chishti Sufis*, their approach and response towards the state affairs by keeping in mind their major administrative code i.e., defending their sovereignty and protecting it against state intrusion. See for detail Riaz-ul Islam, *Sufism in South Asia*, 450-51, 252-54, 241 and 266. Schimmel, *Dimension of Islam*, 347. Haeri, *The Chishtis*, 76-77 and 175.

KASHMIRI ARTS AND CRAFTS IN SULTAN ZAINUL ABIDIN'S PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

Among all nations and races who have come into contact with Kashmir none of them has left everlasting impact on the culture and civilization of the Valley as Central Asia. Contacts with Central Asia were developed long before the political domination of Muslims. The foundation of Shah Miri opened the floodgates for the infiltration of Persian and Central Asian people in Valley of Kashmir especially during the reign of Sultan Zainul Abidin. When he ascended the throne in 823 A.H/1420 A.D the whole administrative machinery had collapsed due to the narrow policy of Sultan Sikandar and Sultan Ali Shah but he reconstructed it successfully and thus earned the great name of Bud-Shah (Great King). Because of his assiduous work Kashmir was turned into industrial garden. Many new arts and crafts were introduced for the first time in valley of Kashmir. Some of the arts and crafts which were then unknown in most parts the central Asia were existing in Kashmir during his time. By this way whole valley was engulfed by peace and prosperity.

KEY WORDS

Zainul Abidin, Arts, Craft, Kashmir

Zainul Abidin (Shahi Khan) was the eighth Sultan of Shah Miri dynasty, who ruled over Kashmir for a period of fifty years (823-874 A.H /1420-70 A.D). A modern historian, M. Hassan: writes- "of all the Sultans who sat on the throne of Kashmir, Zainul Abidin was undoubtedly the greatest". He ushered in a period of nearly half a century of peace, and prosperity, and benevolent rule for his people. He introduced many arts and crafts for which Kashmir has become famous ever since. When he ascended the throne in 823 A.H/1420 A.D the whole administrative machinery of Sultan Sikandar-791-816 A.H./1389-1413 A.D). and his son Sultan Ali Shah-816-23 A.H/1413-1420 A.D had collapsed due to their narrow policy, he reconstructed it successfully. He also took series of measures for the betterment of his subjects, and thus earned the great name of Bud-Shah¹ (Great King). He was also known by the name of Akbar of Kashmir. He developed agriculture by building the network of canals², dams³ and bridges⁴. He was himself a great scholar and several books were translated⁵ during his time. He provided every sort of support and encouragement to learners. He developed the trade and commerce of the country. He also maintained friendly relation with the neighboring rulers such as, Khurasan, Turkistan, Egypt, and Mecca, Tibet etc.and also annexed a large territory into the kingdom of Kashmir.

Having been the loved son⁶ of his father, he received good education both at home and outside. He took great pleasure in traveling, and it was during his

father's time that he got an opportunity to visit in the court of Timur⁷ in Samarqand. He remained in the court of timur for several years and became fully trained of some new arts and crafts of Central Asian origin. His main aim was the peace and prosperity of the country and for this purpose he introduced several reforms. His reign was an era of glory and all-round prosperity for the people of Kashmir. His reforms touched all aspects of life social, economic, political, and religious and cultural⁸.

Chronology of Shah Miri dynasty upto Sultan Zainul Abidin.

1. Sultan Shams-ud-Din - 740-743 A.H / 1339-42 A.D.
2. Sultan Jamsheed - 743 A.H / 1342 A.D.
3. Sultan Alau-ud-Din - 743-755 A.H / 1342-1354 A.D.
4. Sultan Shihab-ud-Din - 755-775 A.H / 1354-1373 A.D.
5. Sultan Qutub-ud-Din - 775-791 A.H / 1373-1389 A.D.
6. Sultan Sikandar - 791-816 A.H / 1389-1413 A.D.
7. Sultan Ali Shah - 816-823 A.H / 1413-1420 A.D.
8. Sultan Zainul Abidin - 823-874 A.H / 1420-1470 A.D.

The most significant contribution of Zainul Abidin was that he provided every sort of encouragement and patronage to the artists and craftsmen. Large number of arts and crafts for which Kashmir has been famous throughout the world, were introduced from Persia for the first time during the time of sultans, particularly during the time of Zainul Abidin. Some of the arts and crafts which were then unknown in most parts the central Asia were existing in Kashmir during his time. Even after a century when Babar's cousin, Mirza Haider Daulghat⁹ 947-58 A.H / 1540-51 A.D invaded Kashmir, he wrote in Tarikhi-Rashidi: "In Kashmir one meets with all these arts and crafts which are in most cities uncommon, such as stone polishing, stone

cutting, bottle making window cutting, gold beating etc. In the whole Maver-ul-Nahir (Khurasan) except in Samarkand, and Bokhara, these are nowhere to be met with, while in Kashmir¹⁰ they are in abundance. This is all due to Zain-ul-Abidin." No doubt some arts and crafts were existing during the Hindu rule, but these had decayed with the down fall of Hindu rule. This was all due to the invasion of Dalucha¹¹ in 1320 A.D resulting in the death of large number of artists and craftsmen. Sikander and Ali destroyed whatever was left. Zainul Abidin revived and reorganized all these arts and crafts which were destroyed during the course of time.

For the promotion of arts and crafts he used novel methods for this purpose. He provided every sort of patronage to the foreign artists and craftsmen, due to which a large number of artists and craftsmen thronged into valley. Every sort of arrangement was made for them and they were also motivated to settle down permanently in the valley along with their families. If any artist wished to leave after a short stay, he was supposed to train the local men in his art, and after that he was allowed to leave the valley¹². The sultan invited competent teachers from various countries to Kashmir, so that they could train people here. If any local was willing to go outside to receive training in the various designs and styles of art, he was provided every sort of help, and also it was also the duty of king to look after his family.

As a result of these facilities, Sultan turned Kashmir into an industrial garden. As a result, there was tremendous development in the valley. Above all significant progress was made in the fields such as, glass making, silk¹³, shawl¹⁴ and carpet¹⁵ weaving, paper machie¹⁶ wood carving¹⁷, paper making and book

binding.¹⁸ Before the introduction of these arts and crafts Kashmir was poor in industrial sector, so much so that even loom was not indigenously found in the valley. According to Shrivara, it was introduced by the Persian craftsmen.¹⁹ For the first-time weaver brush and loom and the weaving of silk cloth²⁰ was introduced during his time. The art of making pashmina was most probably imported from Tibet for which Kashmir is still famous.

The art of making bridges²¹ in the country was also the contribution of Persian artists during the time of Zainul Abidin. To train the locals in the art of paper making and book binding, sultan sent two persons out of Kashmir to Samarkand²² to receive the training in these arts and crafts. During their stay in Samarkand, one of them learned the art of paper making, while the other learnt book binding. When they returned to Kashmir they taught these arts to others. Paper²³ making arrangement was made in Phag Pargana. The artist was also given a village as jagir.²⁴ while another village was given to book binder. The art of fire works was also introduced during his time, and a person named Habib²⁵ was trained for this purpose. It was due to the efforts of Sultan that many locals learnt the art of fire making, and as a result new weapons were made locally. Not only fire works but the Kashmiris were also fascinated by the vocal and instrumental music of Persia. The instruments like, rabab, sitar, duhal, sunray, duff²⁶ were also introduced by the immigrants during the time of Zainul Abidin. The sultan reintroduced the art of drama and dancing which had suffered due to the Puritanism of Sikander. Many actors and dancers both men and women came to Kashmir²⁷ at his invitation. Festivals were held at different places in the valley such as, Pampore, Bijbehara, Anantnag, Baramulla and etc. There

was all-round and tremendous development in social, political, economic and religious aspects of the society.

Sultan was the religious tolerant ruler; it was the chief glory of his rule that there was no discrimination between the subjects on the basis of caste colour and creed. The earlier sultans had imposed many restrictions on the Non-Muslims; all the restrictions were abolished by the great sultan of the Kashhmir. They were given full freedom to perform their festivals in accordance with their traditions and customs. Now they were free to apply tilak on their forehead, put on their dress according to Hindu customs and to educate their children.²⁸ The rate of the jazia was also reduced from two pals of silver to one masha, but later on it was totally abolished with the passage of time. Due to his policy of religious tolerance his court always remained full of learned scholars and Sufis both of foreign and local origin. These include among others, Mulla Ahmad, Syed Mohammad Rumi, Syed Shams- ud- din Andrabi, Qazi Syed Ali Sherazi, Syed Mohammad Sistani, Jonaraja, Srivara and etc. Syed Shams-ud-din Andrabi son of Syed Badur-ud-din Ibrahim Andrabi was the spiritual guide of Sultan Zainul Abidin²⁹ whose ancestors³⁰ have migrated to Kashmir from (Andrab)³¹ Afghanistan in the wake of missionary activities of Mir Sayyid Ai Hamdani during the rule of Sultan Qutub-ud-Din (775-791 A.H / 1373-89 A.D). He received his early Islamic education from his father and memorized the whole Quran at the age of only ten years; he was having no interest in the material desires of the world. Sultan was deeply impressed by his kind and compassionate nature and in-depth understanding of the Islam. He built a mosque³² for him near the Khanqahi Andrabia at Malaratta Srinagar in the year 850 A.H / 1447 A.D. The

Khanqah was earlier constructed by the Sultan Qutub-ud-Din (775-791 A.H / 1371-89 A.D) for his ancestors and later became the centre of Andrabi Syeds in the valley of Kashmir. Sultan Zainul Abidin used to visit the Khanqahi Andrabia daily to get blessings from Syed Shams-ud-din. He departed in the year 932 A.H / 1525 A.D and was buried in the fort of Hariparbat at Srinagar.³³ The place is best known by the name of Moori. After his departure his son Syed Mir Mirak Andrabi 921-990 A.H / 1515-1582 A.D carried on the ancestral profession of teaching and preaching. He was the most prominent among the Andrabi Syeds. He was putting up in the Khanqahi Andrabia at Malaratta Srinagar. He was the follower of Qadriya³⁴ Sufi order and was the prominent disciple of Syed Nimat-ullah Shah Qadri, who laid the foundation of Qadriya Sufi order in the valley of Kashmir in the second half of 16th century during the rule of Chaks (968-994 A.H / 1561-1586 A.D). He traveled to various parts of the valley for the purpose of propagation of Islam. The society has accepted him as their guide to religious path and advisor in all their day today matters. All his descendents became the followers of Qadriya Sufi order. Syed Mir Mirak Andrabi had three sons; Syed Mohammad³⁵ 963-1022-A.H / 1555-1614 A.D Syed Qasim³⁶ Ahmad Andrabi. 971-1040 A.H / 1563-1620 A.D - Andrabi and Syed Mohammad Yousuf³⁷ (1001-1063 A.H / 1592-1653 A.D). Later on, his descendents settled down at every nook and corner of the valley and benefited the people without any interest and the roots of Qadriya Sufi order were further strengthened almost in all parts where ever they visited. Not only in the valley but the people outside the valley were equally benefited. The impact of immigrants was not only seen in the arts and crafts, but the Kashmiri language under went

a great change. The impact was so profound and so deep that the Kashmiris still bear a good deal of its impression. This is strikingly visible in every aspect of Kashmiri life.

In the words Pandit Anand Koul "Sultan Zaniul Abidin possessed of a broad and tolerant outlook, with a desire to benefit mankind. He ruled with such equity, and justice and did so much to improve the material prosperity of the people that one can not fail to admire him, his benevolent rule demands special homage in as much as he lived in a period when he had no worthy and enlightened contemporary to emulate. Zainul Abidin was deservedly surnamed Budshah or the great king. In spite of six centuries having rolled by since he ruled, his name is still remembered with genuine reverence and gratitude. Take the name of Budshah before a Kashmiri, and at once with a happy countenance he will rhyme it with Padshah".

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- ³ Shrivara, 141.
- ⁴ In Srinagar he built the first wooden bridge still known by the name of Zaina Kadal. Kapur, M.L, *The history and culture of Kashmir*, (Jammu, 1992), 214.
- ⁵ The patronage of Sultan attracted scholars from various parts of Persia and Central Asia into Kashmir. Sultan established a translation bareau in which Persian books were translated into Sanskrit and Sanskrit into Persian. By the order of Sultan Mulla Ahmad translated Mahabharata and Kalhanas Rajtarngani into Persian, and the translation of Yousuf –u-zulalkha by Srivara etc. Hasan Mohibul, *Kashmir under sultans*, (Srinagar, 1959), 88-89.
- ⁶ He was the son of Sultan Sikander and belonged to Shahmirs dynasty. Bamzai P.N.K., *Cultural and political history of Kashmir*, (Srinagar, Vol, II, 2007), 31.
- ⁷ Timur belonged to Seljuk tribe of the Turks. He invaded India in 1398.A.D. His main aim was to loot and plunder the wealth of India. He spends much of the looted wealth in beautifying the Samarkand.

⁸. Hasan Mohibul, *Kashmir under sultans*, (Srinagar, 1959), 82-83. Kapur, M.L. *The history and culture of Kashmir*, (Jammu, 1992), 212. Bamzai P.N.K., *Cultural and political history of Kashmir*, (Srinagar, Vol, II, 2007), 32.

⁹. He ruled on Kashmir for a period of eleven years (947-58 A.H/1540-1551 A.D). He introduced several new arts and crafts. The hot bath system (Garam Hamam) was also introduced by him. New cities and towns were also founded. Kapur, M.L. *The history and culture of Kashmir*, (Jammu, 1992), 240-241.

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¹⁴. 'Shal' is actually the Persian word, which later on became Kashmiri Shawl.

¹⁵. Zaniab Abidin brought from Samarkand some carpet weavers and thus came into existence in Kashmir the carpet weaving industry. The carpet industry has given employment to a considerable number of shawl weavers, and some are employed in the making of namdas. The best felts are imported from Yarkand to Kashmir.

Hasan Mohibul, *Kashmir under sultans*, (Srinagar, 1959), 92-93.

¹⁶. Srinagar has earned a great reputation in the work of paper mache. The artists of the work were known as Nakash. The paper mache is also known as Kar-i-kalamddani. Hasan Mohibul, *Kashmir under sultans*, (Srinagar, 1959), 92-93.

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²¹. During the reign of early rulers there were no permanent bridges; instead boats were used for this purpose. Thus, the system of permanent bridges based on cantilever, which were in vogue, was the contribution of Persian artisans during the rule of Zainul Abidin.

²². Hasan Mohibul, *Kashmir under sultans*, (Srinagar, 1959), 92.

²³. Kapur, M.L. *The history and culture of Kashmir*, (Jammu, 1992), 217. Hasan Mohibul, *Kashmir under sultans*, (Srinagar, 1959), 92.

²⁴. Lawrence W., *The valley of Kashmir*, 380. Says paper workers were settled in Naushahra (Srinagar) and as such there were thirty such families during his time.

²⁵. Hasan Mohibul, *Kashmir under sultans*, (Srinagar, 1959), 93.

²⁶. Deambi Kaul, B.K., *Kashmir and Central Asia*, (Srinagar, 1989), 12-113. Bamzai P.N.K., *Cultural and political history of Kashmir*, (Srinagar, Vol,II, 2007), 35-36.

²⁷. Singh N.K., *Islamic heritage of Kashmir*, (Srinagar Vol., II), 40.

²⁸. Kapur, M.L. *The history and culture of Kashmir*, (Jammu, 1992), 217-218.

²⁹. Foaq, Mohammad-din, *Tarikhi Budshahi*, (Srinagar, 1928), 404-405.

30. Nabi Ahmad, *Zikri Saadati Andrabia*, (Srinagar, 1999), 5. Ahmad Syed, *Tohfa Syed*, Mss, 3-4.

³⁰. Gamgeen shams-ud-din, Genealogical table of Andrabi Syeds, Srinagar, 1-2.

³¹. Andrab is the name of a large stream in Afghanistan and of the valley it empties into, the stream which originates in the Hindu Kush, near Khawak Pass and flows to the west for about 75 miles before merging into the Surkhab. Together, the two streams form a long, narrow Valley. The upper part of that Valley is also called Andrab, the lower part alternately as Khinjan or Doshi Both parts of the valley had been united governmentally under a single leader, or hakim, who resided at Banu. Qadri Mohd.S.S. *Majmul-al-Buldan*, (urdu) (Vol,I, Srinagar, 2005), 108-109.

³². Miskeen Ghulam Mohi-ud-din, *Tarikhi Kabir*, (Srinagar, 1323), 31- 33. Foaq, Mohammad-din, *Tarikhi Budshahi*, (Srinagar, 1928), 403-405.

³³. Foaq, Mohammad -din, *Tarikhi Aqwami Kashmir*, (Srinagar, Vol, II, 1996), 142. Miskeen Ghulam Mohi-ud-din, *Tarikhi Kabir*, (Srinagar, 1323 A.H), 52-53. Tahiri, Peerzada Khaliq, *Tazikirai Auwaliya, Kashmir*, (Vol, 1, Urdu trans., 2003), 209.

³⁴. Rafiqi A.Q., *Sufism in Kashmir*, (Srinagar, 1976) 154.155.

^{35.} His activities remained confined to Srinagar city. He used to stay in the Khanqahi Andrabia.

^{36.} After completing the religious education he migrated to Drugan Dalgate Srinagar and remained there till his death. The local residents have constructed a Khanqah for him.

^{36.} On the spiritual instructions of his father he migrated on a hill at Awantipora Pulwama and remained there for a period of ten years to gain the spiritual power. After a period of ten years he came down from the hill in a floody situation and migrated to an adjacent village namely Puchal Pulwama.

BOOK REVIEW

**JARED MASON DIAMOND, *COLLAPSE: HOW SOCIETIES
CHOOSE TO FAIL OR SUCCEED* (NEW YORK: VIKING
PENGUIN GROUP 2005)**

The previous book of Jared Diamond with the name of *Guns, Germs and steel: The Fates of Human societies* ends and his book *collapse: How societies chose to Fail or succeed* starts. Both are actually related with each other in the context of environmental coincidence, humanity, its responses and particularly the struggle between man and nature. Generally, *Collapse: How societies choose to Fail or succeed* is a source, which describes the decline of different civilizations of previous time; with regard of production and productivity there were serious and sudden reductions. These civilizations collapsed due to mismanaged resources, last-friends, gained enemies, climate changes and deteriorating beliefs and cultures.

In this book *Collapse*, he provides very valuable but different accounts regarding sciences, for instance economics, environment, biology and human-nature (physical and Psychological Chemistry of man). This entire project basically points out “Past-collapse” with the parameters and paradigms of present and future. Jared Diamond, being a professor of Geography at University of California, Los Angeles, specialized in conservation biology, and studied bird diversity. “Jared Diamond and the Restoration of Reason” (QAU Islamabad: lectures of Dr. Ilhan

Niaz, 2012), Points out that with the specialization of bird-study, Jared Diamond could not initially be considered as a Philosopher of History (Social Sciences). But his books *The Rise and Fall of Third Chimpanzee*, *Guns, Germs and steel and collapse* have actually changed the above mentions perspective. And, he is now considered a well-known author of both natural and social sciences. He has provided a well-organized system of explaining and understanding human behavior on the basis of science and rationality. In this regard, he has also developed a historical theory of “everything”. Similarly, on the basis of his work, it can safely be elaborated that Diamond is the naturo-social Scientist, who contributed well in the task of restoring reason to the study of humans, and their conditions both at individual and collective levels.

Jared Mason Diamond’s *Collapse: How Societies chose to Fail or succeed*, deals with the collapses of societal contexts, particularly, on the basis of environment, climate change, hostile neighbors and human responses at collective level. Diamond is also of the view that his readers must learn from past and he also generally suggests, especially in the contexts of his book *collapse* that there must be learning from past and present history. Diamond’s collapse has been divided in sixteen chapters. And these sixteen chapters have been summed up into four major parts.

These four parts of *Collapse* can be dealt separately as four books. But Jared Diamond has developed the one thesis of different themes of four books into one with the name of *Collapse: How societies chose to fail or succeed*. The part one deals with the Collapse and survival of past civilizations. In this context, he basically has developed a multi causal theory of collapse. On the basis of this theory he explains that why the societies on Easter Island and Greenland Collapsed?

Second part is related with the parameters and projects of scientists. Through which they reconstruct past civilizations, by applying different techniques and legitimate their findings. Similarly, the first two parts are also very much interlinked in the context of their themes, concepts and description.

Part three is actually a comparative kind of study. In this portion, Diamond develops an idea that earth is like an island and we are the residents of earth are islanders. Now, what we are doings? Cutting forests, build highways etc (over exploitation of our nature and environment). In this context, he develops a deep-rooted and rational connection between past and present. In this part, he finally says that the people of past civilizations could not anticipate their deterioration. Similarly, we are also following those lines not only in our ideas but also in our practices. The final and fourth part of this book tells that how the present and future generations of this earth can be able to save themselves from the same fate of the past people and their societies. Part three and four are very much favorable for environmentalists and their cause but not in the favor of economists and their blind-cause. In this same context, he has also discussed industrial and technological growth of past two centuries in a very balanced way, which has actually accelerated this exploration.

Diamond, in his book, also interprets the facts about the collapses of past. In the light of this past, he focuses on present realities with regards of future conclusions, that, the change of paradigm and altering behavior is the key, if not, the fate of present and future man wouldn't be different from the fate of past-man. He also focuses on the fact that the mismanagement of renewable natural resources, institutional and socio-cultural failures, environmental

changes, loss of allies (friends) and gain in enemies are the factors which accelerate the process of collapse. And, he discusses all these factors both in context of past and present. Similarly, he elaborates his entire thesis through the socio-natural sciences and concerned established knowledge about the human beings and their environment.

As, Jared Diamond further focuses on the phenomenon of collapse by highlighting climate change, hostile neighborhood, environmental problems and most importantly failure of present man to deal with the issues related to environment. In this regard, he sees connections between present and future dangers, which can lead towards collapse even in near future. He says that these dangers, which are still related, have the basis in this context. Regarding these dangers he describes Deforestation and habitat destruction, soil problems (erosion, salinization and soil fertility losses), Water management problems, overhunting, overfishing, Effects of introduced species on native species, Overpopulation, increased per-capita impact of People are very dangerous, but the new factors like, Anthropogenic climate change, Buildup of toxins in the environment, Energy Shortages and Full human utilization of Earth's photosynthetic capacity are also real danger for the present and future societies. In this context, he also highlights the cultural factor. He further stresses on the factor-cum-danger of overpopulation and counts it a basic problem.

According to Jared Diamond the politics of this global world is very important, that politically unstable areas would also be environmentally stressed, and environmental problems can lead toward political and economic instability. Similarly, eco-political instability leads toward unchecked exploitation of resources and eco-system of

mismanagement. Undoubtedly, environmental degradation is also one of the most important result of political instability.

Jared Diamond's book *Collapse* is very important, even in recent scenario of different challenges, it is the most important and concerned book, which must be taken and read seriously. No doubt, it has placed Jared M. Diamond in the list of original thinkers of the world. Although the book has many positives and pluses, but the passive-optimism of Diamond about future and some statistical errors (indirect), particularly in the context of statistics of environmentalists, are really weaknesses, even in ideological and practical contexts respectively. On the other hand, it is also fact that Jared Diamond's approach is quite different than of traditional and typical historians by stressing on socio-environmental issues. He can also be considered as a great expositor of everything from anthropological basis to zoological basis. This book, has scientific basis both in idea and presentation, provides incisive history of different falls and collapses. *Collapse* is undoubtedly a thought-provoking, result-oriented, stimulating, disturbing and enthralling book. It is the book, which has clearly presented the picture of the most important relationship of humanity with nature. It is very original and basic work. It has scientifically co-related the industrialized present with agrarian past; and deduced the actual results and lessons for human survival, which is facing different challenges now, from environmental deterioration and over-exploitation of nature.

Jared Mason Diamond considers himself a very optimistic activist and this book, *Collapse* as a Socio-political act. Both the activities regarding author and the book are basically a cry, an appeal, and paradigm-shift mechanisms. There cannot be the expectation of attainment of any ambitious task in this regard. Rather, to be careful more and

more about environment, not to poison it, slowing down the global warming, preservation of our oceans, bogs, forest, streams, lakes etc (natural resources and environment). He also suggests accelerating the activities regarding different aspects of real requirements of better environment and real nature.

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Notes for Authors

1. Research papers, concept papers, review articles, comments, rejoinders and book reviews (in English) should be sent to historian@gcu.edu.pk
2. Papers will only be accepted for consideration on the understanding that they are original contributions to the existing knowledge in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences.
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4. The first page of the research article should contain the title of the paper, the name(s), abstract and any acknowledgements.
5. Tables for the main text and each of its appendices should be numbered serially and separately. The title of each table should be given in a footnote immediately below the line at the bottom of the table.
6. Endnotes should be numbered consecutively.
7. All references used in the text should be listed in alphabetical order of the author's surnames at the end of the text. References in the text should include the name(s) of author(s) with the year of publication in parentheses. Attempt should be made to conform to the style of the Journal. Further information on questions of style may be obtained from the Editor.
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THE HISTORIAN
is published by
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY,
GOVERNMENT COLLEGE UNIVERSITY, LAHORE