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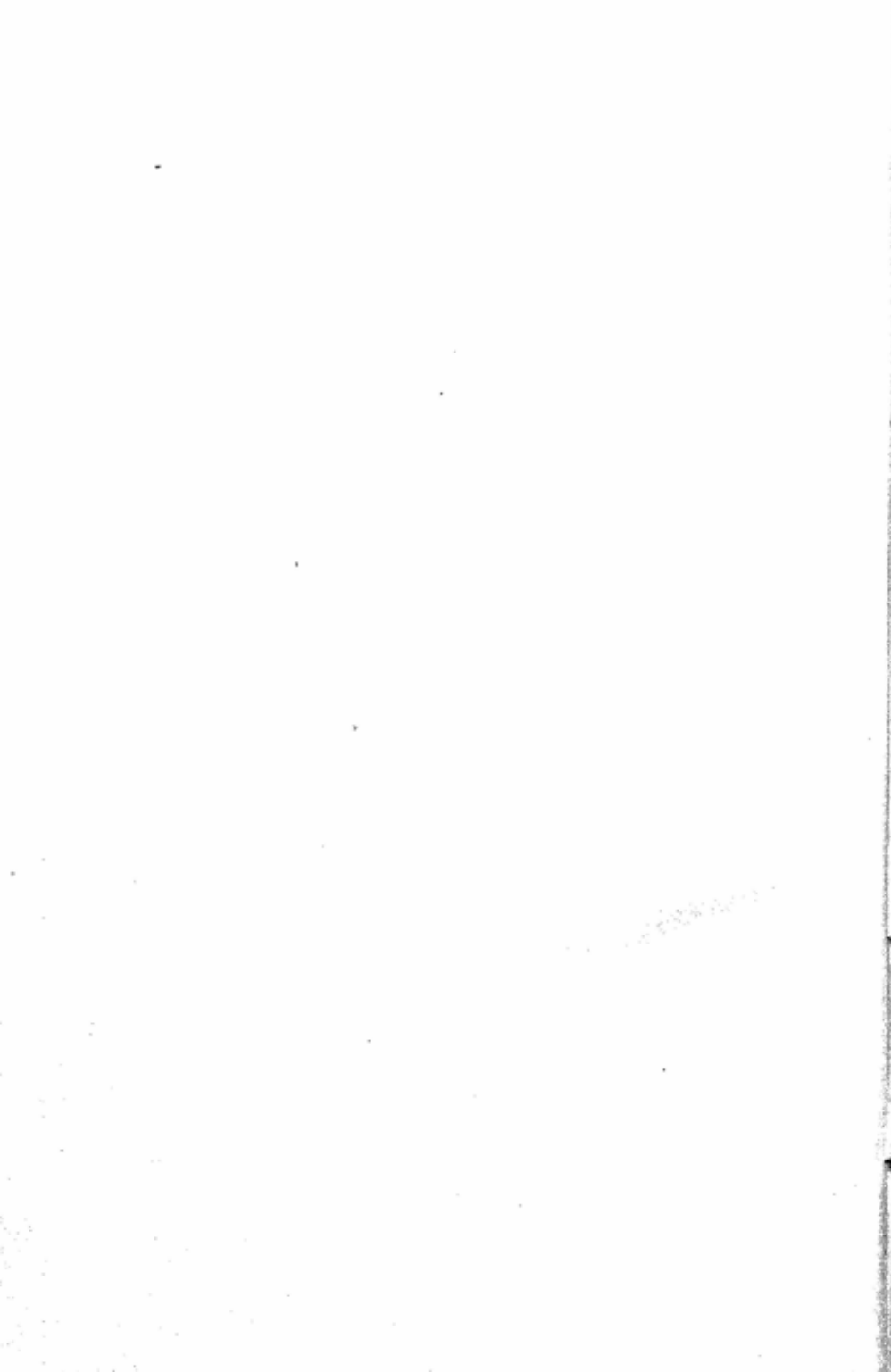
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J. S. Grewal

Ph.D., D. Lit. (London)



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FOREWORD

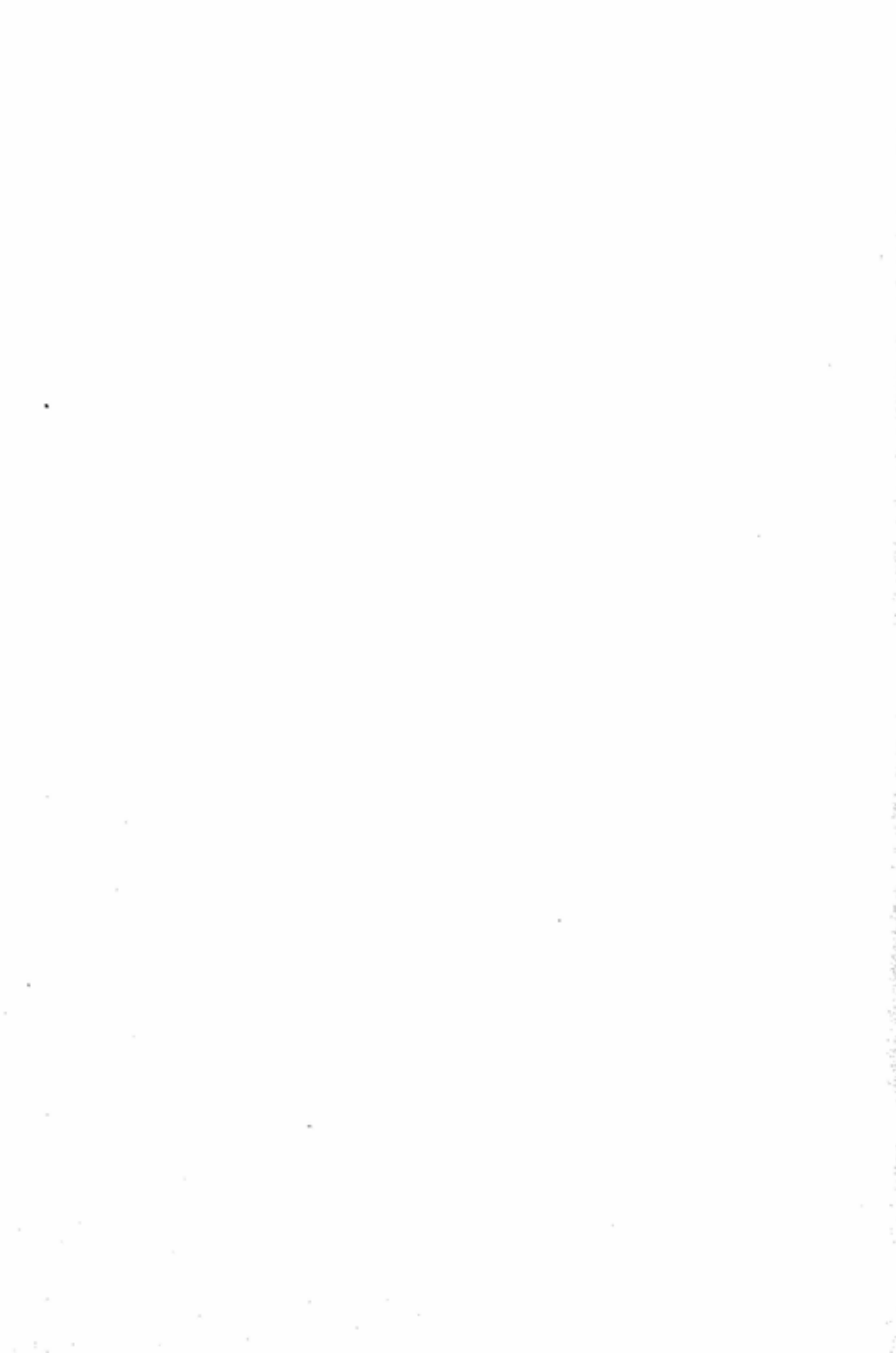
Soon after Dr J. S. Grewal joined this University as Professor and Head of the Department of History in 1971, he was awarded the degree of D. Lit. by the University of London for his published work in the field of History. Some of the articles submitted for D. Lit. in support of his major work on Guru Nanak were published by the Guru Nanak University in 1972 under the title *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh : Essays in Sikh History*.

The articles published in the present volume relate mostly to regional and local history, a field in which Dr Grewal has taken deep interest for a number of years. His work is always informed by scientific curiosity and his reputation as a historian is already well established. I am glad that these articles are being published in the form of a book. Its ready accessibility to those who are interested in local and regional history is the primary aim of this publication.

Bishan Singh Samundri
Vice-Chancellor

Guru Nanak University,
Amritsar.

November 1, 1974.



P R E F A C E

Very few words are needed to introduce these articles to the reader. Nearly all of these have already been published or accepted for publication. Half of these were submitted to the University of London in support of the author's *Guru Nanak in History* for the degree of D. Lit. which was awarded to him in 1971. Two of those had been written in collaboration with Dr B.N. Goswamy at the Panjab University, Chandigarh : "Some Persian Documents from Nurpur" and "Some Religious Land-grants in Kangra". I am glad to mention that these two articles were largely the result of Dr Goswamy's initiative and effort.

The first article in this miscellaneous collection was presented to a seminar on regional history held at The M. S. University of Baroda and the second article was presented as a 'presidential address' to the Punjab History Conference at the Punjabi University, Patiala. The last article is an 'inaugural address', delivered to the members of the Christian Institute of Sikh Studies, Batala. All these articles, and also the one on the character of Sikh rule, contain no more than the author's reflection on research carried out earlier. "The *Qāzi* in the *Pargana*" and "Jakhbar Revisited", however, are based on a study of some fresh documents. None of the articles presented appears in its original form; none has been substantially altered either.

I am grateful to Sardar Bishan Singh Samundri, Vice-Chancellor of the University, for his foreword to this publication and his kind interest in the Department of History.

J. S. Grewal

Guru Nanak University, Amritsar.
November 20, 1974.

Articles IV, V, VI, VII & VIII have been numbered
III, IV, V, VI & VII in the text.

C O N T E N T S

I	The Historian's Panjab	1
II	Medieval Panjab and the Historian	11
III	Some Persian Documents from Nurpur	19
IV	The <i>Qāzi</i> in the <i>Pargana</i>	38
V	Jakhbar Revisited	74
VI	Some Religious Land-grants in Kangra	92
VII	Minor Inscriptions	107
VIII	The <i>Shari'at</i> and the Non-Muslims	118
IX	Medieval Batala	123
X	Ganesh Das's <i>Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb</i>	135
XI	The Character of Sikh Rule	146
XII	The Present State of Sikh Studies	153

Article I

The Historian's Panjab

The Persian word *panjāb* literally means 'five rivers' and by implication, the land of five rivers. The Panjab thus is a geographical entity. It is not clear however, precisely which region is covered by the term. There are six rivers in the so called 'land of the five rivers', and it is not certain whether the river Indus, the river Sattlej or the river Beas is meant to be excluded. Furthermore, it is not clear whether the term *panjāb* refers to the valleys of the five rivers or to the area between the five rivers. The Panjab as a geographical entity is not a precise connotation. Nevertheless it is assumed that the *panjāb*, strictly, refers to the area lying between the Himalayas and the confluence of all the six rivers of the Panjab. In other words, the Panjab proper consists of the five *doābs* upto the foot-hills.

The vagueness of the Panjab as a geographical entity is further accentuated by its loose identification with a political entity. In recent times we have witnessed four Panjabs, besides the British province of the Indian empire : the Punjab of Pakistan, the original Punjab of the Indian Union, the Punjab which came to include the Patiala and the East Punjab States Union and the present day Punjab of the Indian Union which does not include Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. The first difficulty of a regional historian is to identify his region at a given time and to be clear about the criteria by which it is actually identified.

The term *panjāb* came into currency during the reign of Akbar. In the documents of the Mughal period, we find the use of the terms *Sarkār-i-Panjāb* and *Sūba-i-Panjāb*. These terms

do not refer to any geographical entity; they refer simply to the Mughal province of Lahore. The concept of the Panjab in this case sprang from the loose identification of a political entity with a geographical entity. In the reign of Aurangzeb, a chronicler refers to Sadulla Khan, the famous *Diwān* of Shah Jahan, as a *panjābī*. It is obvious that even during the Mughal times some people were conscious of the fact that people living in a certain geographical region called the Panjab were naturally to be called *panjābīs*, that is 'the people of the Panjab'. Criteria other than the politico-geographical were being unconsciously added to the original considerations of area and administration.

In the late eighteenth century during the Sikh times Waris Shah refers proudly to the Panjab as the beautiful forehead of Hindustan. In him, there is the awareness that the region called the Panjab, though distinct, was a part of the larger unit called Hindustan. Ahmad Yar, a well known Panjabi poet who wrote the *Shāhnāma-i-Ranjit Singh* in Persian, refers not only to the region and the people but also to the language *panjābī*. Shah Muhammad, another Panjabi poet writing in the early nineteenth century, refers to the Panjabi woman explicitly as *panjāban*. Also, the Panjabi sentiment is rather strong in his poem and the term clearly cuts across creeds and communities.

This articulated consciousness of the writers of the Panjab is reflected in the work of the chroniclers. In the early nineteenth century, we come upon the titles like the *Tawārikh-i-Panjāb* by Ghulam Muhiyuddin, popularly known as Butay Shah, and the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* by Ganesh Das. In these works we notice that the Panjab is equated consciously with the five *doābs*. The geographical entity of the Panjab is clearly registered in the minds of these chroniclers. However, they do not ignore the administrative or political units even when they are taking of the five

doābs. In fact, from their description of the five *doābs* the areas belonging to the Mughal province of Multan are excluded. Thus, their Panjab is nothing more than the Mughal province of Lahore. Nevertheless, in the narrative part of their history of the Panjab, the boundaries of the Panjab expand and contract with the expansion and contraction of the states established in the Panjab. Consequently, the dominions of Ranjit Singh can be treated by these writers simply as the Panjab. There is no doubt about the primacy of the politico-geographical criterion for them, but they are also aware of the cultural and social entity of the Panjab. Ganesh Das projects this consciousness even backwards when he refers to Rai Inderjit of the ancient times as a *panjābi*. It is very likely that regional consciousness originated with the upper classes, the Mughal nobles belonging to the region. This consciousness gradually percolated to the people of the lower strata.

It must be pointed out that in the early nineteenth century the claims of Sikh history were as important as the claims of regional history. It is doubtful if the historians were even conscious of these rival claims. With the background of regional consciousness, interest in the past politics of the Panjab was a compliment to the political success of the Sikhs. The chronicler's interest in the history of the Panjab was in fact an extension of his interest in Sikh history. Bakht Mal and Khushwaqt Rai, respectively, wrote the *Khālsanāma* and the *Tārīkh-i-Sikhān*. During the reign of Ranjit Singh the distinction between regional history and Sikh history was transcended by Sohan Lal and Drīwān Amar Nath in the *Umdat-ut-Tawārikh* and the *Zafarnāma-i-Ranjit Singh*. These writers did not see any difference between the history of the Panjab and the history of the Sikhs so long as their chief occupation was with past politics. Ganesh Das, for example, wrote the entire history of the Panjab but by far the largest bulk of his work is devoted to

the rise and fall of the House of Ranjit Singh. The scope of his work is, thus, practically the same as that of the *Umdat-ut-Tawārikh* or even the *Zafarnāma-i-Ranjit Singh*.

It is important to note that the Sikh historians writing on Sikh history at this time do not betray any *pañjābī* sentiment. The most important Sikh historian of early nineteenth century is Ratan Singh Bhangu who completed his *Panth Prakāsh* in the early 1840s. The words Panjab and *pañjābī* are practically absent from this work. He talks of the Khālśa Panth and if there is any regional consciousness in him, it is not of the Panjab as a whole but of the tract called Mājha, roughly the middle Bārī Doāb. It is thus a local or a communal consciousness that we find in Ratan Singh Bhangu and not a consciousness of the region called the Panjab. Transformation of communal consciousness into regional consciousness or the transformation of regional consciousness into communal consciousness can present an interesting and important problem to the regional historian. In the present case, however, we do not find signs of any such transformation. Those who thought of the Panjab as a region also thought of all the people of the Panjab, irrespective of their creed and community, as *pañjābīs*. Those who thought of the Panth did not think of the region.

The British writers did not show any interest in regional history. The counterpart of the chronicle like Ganesh Das's *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* is absent from British historical writing. The British administrators of the Panjab chose to write about the Sikhs, extending the work of a Bakht Mal rather than a Ganesh Das. They wrote about 'the land of the five rivers' but this land was not a geographical but an administrative unit. It meant simply the British province of the Punjab. They were interested in the aristocracy of the Panjab and Lepel Griffin wrote about the

chiefs and families of note. Denzil Ibbetson studied the castes; H.A. Rose wrote about the tribes as well; and R.C. Temple, about the legends of the Panjab. These works provide data and evidence of great value to the regional historian but these works are not regional histories.

During the nineteenth century only one historical work on the Panjab appeared in English and this was produced not by a British but by a *panjābī* historian : Sayyid Muhammad Latif. This work covers the entire history of the Panjab from the ancient times to the days of the author. His methodology is that of an average British historian of his day, though the scope of his work is that of a Persian chronicle. It may not be unfair to regard his work as a somewhat sophisticated extrapolation of the Persian chronicle.

Much more attention has been paid apparently to regional history during the present century. This may be evident from the following works, for example : G.L. Chopra's *The Panjab as a Sovereign State*, N. K. Sinha's *Ranjit Singh*, R. R. Sethi's *The Lahore Darbar*, S. S. Bal's *British Policy Towards the Panjab* and Bakhshish Singh Nijjar's *The Punjab Under the Sultans*, *The Punjab under the Great Mughals* and *The Punjab under the Later Mughals*. If we look at these works a little closely, we find that G. L. Chopra's book deals with the territories of Ranjit Singh and his successors; the scope of his work is confined to politics, government and administration. The scope of Sinha's work is more or less the same. R.R. Sethi's book deals primarily with diplomacy in the context of Anglo-Sikh relations. S.S. Bal's work relates to diplomacy, politics and administration. It is a study more of the British than of the Panjab. The Panjab is equated with the dominions of Ranjit Singh's successors minus Jammu and Kashmir. Bakhshish Singh Nijjar's work is intended to be regional

history proper. The region is defined but no criteria are given in support of this identification. It is an identification without a rationale. The scope of his work is not confined to politics, government and administration. However, the 'scissors and paste' method which the author generally applies does stand in the way of adding significant dimension to social history.

The largest bulk of historical writing on the Panjab relates to three and a half centuries, from the late fifteenth to the early nineteenth. This situation may be explained, but only partly, in terms of the availability of source materials. Very largely it has got to be understood in terms of the rise of Sikhism and the political ascendancy of the Sikhs during this period. The historians of the Sikhs have concentrated on the pre-British period of Sikh history : Indubhusan Banerjee in his *Evolution of the Khalsa*, N.K. Sinha in his *Rise of the Sikh Power* as well as *Ranjit Singh*, Teja Singh and Ganda Singh in *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Ganda Singh in his *Banda Bahadur* and his *Ahmad Shah Durrani*, Fauja Singh in his *Military System of the Sikhs*, for example. The scope of these works covers religion, politics and army. There is an unconscious identification of Sikh history with regional history in most of these works and, besides a new faith and a new language, social and political changes brought about by the Sikhs are underlined. This assumption emphasizes the most important development taking place in the Panjab during this period but it ignores the continuum and its strength. Also it ignores changes and developments other than those relating to Sikhism. Obviously even the most important development in a region cannot be equated with the history of the region as a whole and the problem of the regional historian is to conciliate the claims of the part with the claims of the whole.

Even a cursory survey of historical writing on the Panjab

would show that the historians of the Sikhs have concentrated on the religion of the Sikhs and their politics. Only recently some new depth has been added to the study of the region in the context of the history of the subcontinent. W.H. Mcleod's *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, for instance, can be looked upon as a study of diversity in unity. J.S. Grewal's *Guru Nanak in History* is a study of Guru Nanak's response to his total historical environment. *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, edited by B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, underlines the continuum in so far as the *jogis* retained much of their old popularity throughout the medieval period. *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, edited by B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, underlines a change other than the one brought about by Sikhism. Both these works indicate that the region can be fruitfully studied in relation to the developments in the rest of the subcontinent. The agrarian system of the Sikhs during the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century has been studied by Indu Banga in her forthcoming book based on a doctoral thesis presented successfully to the Guru Nanak University, Amritsar. It deals not only with the question of the establishment of Sikh rule but also with the nature and character of that rule. The relationship of the vassal chiefs of all creeds to their Sikh suzerains is studied for the first time in this work. The administrative framework, land revenue, land tenures, been studied in detail and the system of revenue-free grants have the system of *jāgirs* and consequently, this work adds altogether a new dimension to our knowledge of the history of the Panjab during the Sikh period.

There is no doubt that for other periods of the history of the Panjab the regional historian can fruitfully study agrarian relations. He can discuss land in relation to its use and ownership. He can study other, superior or inferior, rights over land, the modes of assessment and the methods of collection,

the administrative machinery, and the alienation of revenues whether in lieu of salary or as reward for service or by way of charity. Similarly, the structure of political power at a given time can be studied with special reference to the ruling classes, the *zamindārs*, the *jāgirdārs* and the administrators. Urbanization is another important aspect which can be studied by the regional historian. The social historian of the region can identify social groupings, their economic means and cultural life, the vertical and horizontal division of the people in a given period. In short, he can study social structure to which little attention has been paid so far. The field of technology also has been neglected and the regional historian can now concentrate on agricultural implements in use at different times, means of irrigation at different times, improved varieties of crops, techniques of building and crafts in towns and villages.

Fortunately for the history of the Punjab the regional historian can make use of a variety of sources. The historical literature, in Persian and Panjabi, provides the general framework of past politics. There is also a considerable bulk of non-historical literature : religious and secular poetry, theology and religious lore as contained in the *janamsākhis* and the *maḥfūzāt*, for example. There is also non-literary evidence from archaeology, epigraphy and numismatics. There are administrative records, *farmāns*, *parwānas*, letters, revenue records like the *Khālṣa Darbār Records* in the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, records of religious establishments, family papers like the *Bhandari Collection* in the Punjab State Archives. There are news-letters and reports, *hukamnāmas* and *panḍabahts*, paintings and drawings. To this can be added field work for local history and local tradition. With the help of this large variety of source material, analysed and interpreted from new and fruitful angles, a great advance can be made in our knowledge of the history of the Panjab and, consequently, in

our knowledge of Indian history.

There is one particular aspect of regional and even local history which must be emphasized. The word regional or local should not mislead us into thinking that the significance of such studies is confined to the locality or the region concerned. We must clearly understand that local or regional history is a study in depth based on a variety of source material, which makes it a sort of case study. Findings from these studies can be checked against evidence from other areas. There is a clear possibility that an insight gained from local history may very well be applicable to much of the Indian subcontinent. To give one example, legal deeds of the *qāzi's* court in Batala during the Mughal and Sikh times demonstrate beyond the possibility of doubt that the *shari'at* was applied alike to Muslims and non-Muslims in matters of contract. This point could not have been made without a detailed study of legal deeds belonging to a particular place. Nevertheless, we may be almost sure that Batala was by no means an exceptional town in the Panjab or even in northern India.

From this brief discussion of the historian's Panjab, a few problems emerge for consideration by the regional historian. The regional historian must not assume the existence of a region as a meaningful unit of study. He should first establish the existence of such a unit. The problem of identifying the region at a given time on the basis of a historical rationale has already been mentioned. The regional historian has also to identify the forms, if any, of regional articulation. There has been much talk about unity in diversity. The regional historian can afford to study not only diversity in unity but also variety in the region itself.

In the entire range of historical writing on India there is hardly any round study covering the entire life of the people of the subcontinent between two given points of time. The regional

historian, because of his limited canvas, can venture to study a region in the round during a given period. In order to make his study meaningful, he has not only to discover new forms of evidence but also to learn new methods and techniques of analysing available evidence. He has also to evolve concepts cutting across religious or communal affinities. A study that is truly regional cannot be parochial. Only an uninhibited and dedicated research can serve national interest in the last analysis.

Article II

Medieval Panjab And The Historian¹

Fortunately, a large mass of material is available to the historian of medieval Panjab. He can turn to historical and non-historical literature in Persian and Panjabi. He can consult travels, memoirs, administrative manuals and local histories in English, Persian and Urdu. He can examine, if he has competence or patience, official records like the *Khalsa Darbār Records* in the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, or settlement reports in manuscript in the National Archives of India. Some numismatic evidence is available in print. Some documents in Persian have been published. To these major categories of sources for the history of medieval Panjab can be added inscriptional and archaeological evidence.

All these categories of sources are known to the historian of medieval Panjab and much of this material has already been used. It is nevertheless true to say that, on the whole, the historians of medieval Panjab have leaned heavily on the Persian chronicle. Indeed, the number and the character of Persian chronicles written specifically on the Panjab, or the Sikhs, make this form of evidence rather exceptionally important for the historian of medieval Panjab. Several of these chronicles were written on the suggestion of British administrators and diplomats and much of early British historical writing on the Sikhs or the Panjab was based on these chronicles. It is extremely desirable academically to go to the original works in order to re-interpret the history of the Panjab. The works of Bakht Mal, Khushwaqt

1. This article was originally addressed to the Punjab History Conference held at Patiala in 1972 when the author was invited to preside over its medieval section.

Rai, Aliuddin, Ghulam Muhiyuddin and Ganesh Das, for example, may be carefully analysed to get at significant information on the history of the Panjab.² The political history of medieval Panjab can be largely reconstructed with the help of available chronicles. They provide the broad framework for the study of the history of this region during the medieval period.

Furthermore, the information contained in the chronicles is not confined to politics. They yield information on social, economic and administrative matters.³ This is particularly true of the chronicles which deal largely or primarily with the Sikh period in the history of medieval Panjab. Most of these chronicles contain description of each of the five *doabs* of the Panjab, their drainage, vegetation, cities and towns and important villages and forts, their population. Much of this information has been used in the gazetteers but a study of the originals is quite rewarding in forming a fair idea of the socio-economic geography of the Panjab during the late Mughal and Sikh times. However, the Persian chronicles as a form of evidence on medieval Panjab have serious limitations. The information they contain on socio-economic history is rather scanty. And even the information on political matters does not enable the historian to study power structure or administration.

The source material in Panjabi relates almost exclusively to Sikh history. It consists of contemporary and near contemporary

2. See, for instance, J.S. Grewal, "Ganesh Das on Sikh Polity" and "Ahmad Shah on Sikh Polity", *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Guru Nanak University, Amritsar 1972.

3. A detailed analysis of the evidence of Ganesh Das on medieval Panjab is available in the English translation of his description of the Panjab in the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, edited conjointly by the author and Dr Indu Banga, and published by the Guru Nanak University as *Early Nineteenth-Century Panjab*.

writings, both historical and non-historical. Much of the Sikh tradition is embodied in this source material and, with all the limitations of the evidence of tradition, it is extremely helpful in studying the self-image of the Sikhs of those centuries.⁴ Also it serves as a corrective sometimes to the treatment of Sikh history by the Persian chroniclers.⁵ The value of non-historical source material in Panjabi has been generally recognized but it has yet to be thoroughly analysed for meaningful interpretation. At the same time, fresh materials are being published, like the *Hukmnāmas* published by the Panjabi University, obliging the historians of medieval Panjab to revise their interpretations of Sikh history.⁶

Fresh evidence is not merely a quantitative addition to existing information or knowledge. It also has a qualitative aspect, for even a single new fact may oblige the historian to re-interpret a whole situation. In fact, the discovery of some documents having a bearing on the history of medieval Panjab has already demonstrated the value of fresh evidence to the historian of medieval Panjab. For example, the documents from the Jogi establishment of Jakhbar in the district of Gurdaspur, some of which have been published as *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*,⁷ have proved to be of considerable significance for Mughal history in general and for Panjab history in particular.

4. "Sikh Historians of the Sikhs" is the title of a doctoral thesis being prepared at the Guru Nanak University, Amritsar, by Mr S.S. Hans. In terms of the self-image of the Sikhs, this work is bound to add a new dimension to our understanding of Sikh history.

5. As 'distant' or 'outside' observers the chroniclers could not help being superficial in several ways.

6. The *hukmnāmas* of Guru Gobind Singh, for instance, throw an altogether new light on the institution of the *Khālsa*.

7. Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1967 (ed. B. N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal).

They throw light not only on Mughal administrative policy and practice but also on the history of an important religious establishment in the Panjab. We know for certain that Jakhbar was not the premier Jogi establishment in this region; nor was it the only one. In fact similar documents from some other Jogi establishments have come to light. Their study can revolutionize, albeit in a minor way, our knowledge of the Gorakhnāthis in the Panjab during the Mughal and Sikh times. These documents clearly show that several Jogi establishments were as well patronized by the Sikh rulers as by the Mughals.

Another collection of documents, from a Vaishnava establishment in the district of Gurdaspur, which has been published as *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*,⁸ has proved to be extremely significant for our knowledge of the policies and administrative practices of the Sikh rulers. Like the Jogis, the Vaishnavas were patronized by many Sikh rulers and princes and, in this respect, Ranjit Singh was only following the practice of the late eighteenth-century Sikh chiefs. It appears from these documents that the grants given by Mughal rulers were confirmed by the Sikh rulers almost as a matter of principle. At the same time, they gave fresh grants of revenue-free land. This is equally true of the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth. Furthermore, these documents reveal that by 1750 many a Sikh *sardār* had come to think of occupying territories and establishing his rule over them. The earliest date on the seals of documents in this collection is 1750 and the earliest order of a Sikh *sardār* as a ruler bears a date of 1752. This evidence obliges us to reconsider existing views on the establishment of Sikh rule in the Panjab after the first attempt made by

8. Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1969 (ed. B. N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal).

Banda Bahadur. It obliges us also to re-interpret the immediate background to the establishment of that rule.

These documents clarify our ideas on the nature of Sikh polity and government as well. It has been generally believed, in the absence of such documents of course, that the Sikh *sardārs* derived their sovereignty from God and thought of it as vested in the entire body of the *Khālsa*. In these documents, the *sardārs* do invoke the help of God, but each for himself. There is hardly any doubt that the authority and power on the establishment of Sikh rule in the latter half of the eighteenth century were vested in the individual *sardār*. The term *khālsajī*, which is believed to refer to the collective body of the *Khālsa*, refers in fact to the individual *sardārs* in these documents. It was interchangeable with the term *singh sāhib*.

The significance of the evidence presented by the *Pindori Collection* for Sikh history is obvious enough, but the significance of this collection is not confined to Sikh history. The Mughal documents in this collection contain valuable information on the social and economic history of the region as well as on its political and administrative history. The use of this collection in reconstructing the history of the establishment to which they belong has been amply demonstrated in the introductory part of *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*.

Religious establishments are not the only repositories of important documents. In the Punjab State Archives, for example, there is a collection acquired from a family of Bhandārī *chatris* of Batala, again in the district of Gurdaspur, which contains hundreds of documents embodying deeds executed in the court of the *qāzi* of Batala.⁹ Their importance to the local historian,

9. These documents have been carefully studied by the author and a selection is being published by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, as *In the By-lanes of History*.

or the regional historian, or even the general historian of medieval India, is unquestionable. Very little is known today of the history of an average medieval Indian town. Incidental notices in Persian chronicles, chance references in travellers and occasional mention in archaeological reports generally are the sources one can think of. To these can be added local tradition and un-noticed evidence of local traces from the past. Even so, the materials for the study of a medieval town remain extremely inadequate. It is in this context that information provided by deeds executed in the *qāzi's* court becomes extremely important. In the case of Batala, these documents contain information on the past morphology of the town, the composition of its population, professions and crafts, the languages used by the literate townsmen, the fortunes of a Bhandāri family in particular, the mutual relations of the various communities and castes living in the town. These documents contain information also on some of the officials of the town and the *pargana* of Batala. In fact, they tell us more about the functioning of the *qāzi's* office in an average medieval town than any other source of information.

Furthermore, the significance of these documents is not confined to the history of the town or its administration. They raise and clarify some points of great importance to the historian of medieval India. For instance, it is clearly revealed by these documents that the *shari'at* was as uniformly applied in matters of contract between Muslim and non-Muslim or even between non-Muslim and non-Muslim as in matters of contract between Muslim and Muslim. The full significance of this discovery dawns upon us when we realize that Batala was not an exceptional town. What was true of Batala was true of all other towns of the Panjab where the office of the *qāzi* used to function not only under the Mughals but also under the Sikh rulers. In any case, these documents clearly show that the office of the *qāzi* was kept up by the Sikh rulers of

Batala much before the ascendancy of Ranjit Singh in the Panjab. Though in all probability the *shari'at* in matters of contract was uniformly applied even outside the Panjab, it does not follow that it was universally applied. To go or not to go to the *qāzi's* court in such matters was left entirely to the choice of the individual. Many a non-Muslim in Batala, for instance, did not go to the *qāzi's* court in situations normally covered by contracts. Also, cases of dispute were occasionally taken to the *panchāyat*. There was, thus, no necessary incompatibility between 'the custom' and the *shari'at*. Both could, and did, exist side by side. If the majority of the non-Muslims in Batala, as probably in other towns, came voluntarily to accept the *shari'at* in matters of contract, it was because of their self-interest and security. The *brahman*, the *khatrī*, the goldsmith and the carpenter as much frequented the *qāzi's* court in Batala during the late Mughal and Sikh times as the *sayyid*, the *pāthān*, the *shaikhzāda* and the Muslim mason. This may explain, among other things, the continuation of the *qāzi's* office in Batala, and elsewhere, during the Sikh times.

Lastly, the legal deed called the *bai'nāma*, which embodied the provisions of the *shari'at* even to the minutest detail of its contents and form, created an absolute right to property in favour of the purchaser. Besides accounting partly for the popularity of the *bai'nāma*, the existence of such sale-deeds underlines the existence of individual rights in property, both landed and residential, during the late Mughal and Sikh times. The value of similar documents discovered outside the Panjab may be realized from the fact that in the entire range of Western historical writing on India it is not the existence but the absence of such rights that is underlined.¹⁰

Official documents are only one form of fresh evidence.

10. See also "The *Shari'at* and the non-Muslims", *infra*.

Nevertheless, what has been said about this particular form of evidence may be enough to suggest that it is absolutely necessary to locate, discover and publicize all those forms of fresh evidence which enable us to add new dimensions to our knowledge of the past. We no longer believe that history is merely past politics. To ignore the socio-economic realities of a given place at a given time is the surest way to misunderstand even its past politics. In any case, major advance in our knowledge of Indian history is possible chiefly through detailed regional studies, and no study in depth or detail is possible without adequate source materials.

Article III

Some Persian Documents From Nurpur

In the collection of Raja Devinder Singh of the family of the chiefs of the Himalayan state of Nurpur is a small set of Persian documents¹ that is of unusual interest. These documents come from the reign of Raja Mandhata of Nurpur and three of them are letters addressed to him by, or on behalf of, the Emperor Aurangzeb. Little is known in the present state of our knowledge about that prince even if we do get indirect or general indications about his importance. In the painstakingly constructed account of the history of the Panjab hill states, Hutchison and Vogel² have not been able to stretch an account of him beyond a bare paragraph. Mandhata, who is placed by them between A.D. 1661 and 1700, is described as a prince who enjoyed the confidence of the Mughal Emperor in sufficient measure to hold a *mansab* of two thousand *zāt* and *sawār* and to command for him an imperial campaign in the north-western regions. He is in fact mentioned as the last of the Pathania Rajas to hold office under the Mughal Emperors or to receive distinctions from them. His literary merits also receive a brief mention because he is credited with the authorship of some of the *Rhapsodies* which the Nurpur

1. The documents are exact and authenticated copies preserved in the family archives of Nurpur. Even though originals seem no longer to be available, there can be little doubt about the genuineness of the contents of these. We are grateful to Raja Devinder Singh for allowing us access to these.

2. J. Hutchison & J. Ph. Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, Lahore 1933, I, 260.

bard, Gambhir Rai, wrote to eulogize the exploits of the spirited Jagat Singh, grandfather of Mandhata, who had defied the power of the Emperor Shah Jahan.³ Beyond that we know little of Mandhata. The miniature portraits of him in the Museum at New Delhi⁴ and in the Bharat Kala Bhavan at Banaras⁵ do make him a little more real for the historian but do not add much to his information on the subject of this ruler apart from the fact that he preferred, like so many of his contemporaries, to dress in the manner of his Mughal overlords and to wear a turban of the Aurangzeb period. The Nurpur documents which we transcribe and translate here thus come as a valuable addition to our knowledge of the period of Mandhata in the history of the Nurpur state; they in fact constitute an important set of documents that shed some light on the relations between the hill chiefs and the Mughal Emperor, for besides occasional documents like the letters exchanged between the Princess Jahan Ara and Raja Budh Prakash of Sirmur⁶ we have few original documents that relate to this period or bring out this aspect of the history of the hill states. We have in fact, generally speaking, only a vague idea of the exact relationship between the hill chiefs and the Mughal court even if there are traditional accounts in the hills which speak of an intimacy or contact. The accounts from Basohli and Guler remain largely unsubstantiated for want of firm evidence.

3. John Beames (ed.), "The Rhapsodies of Gambhir Rai", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, LXIV, Pt. 1, No. 3 (1875).

4. National Museum, New Delhi, No. 65.

5. Reproduced in Karl Khandalavala, *Pahari Miniature Painting*, Bombay 1958, No 18.

6. H.A. Rose, "Persian Letters from Jahan Ara, daughter of Shah Jahan, King of Delhi, to Raja Budh Parkash of Sirmur", *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, VII, July 1911.

At about the same time a few documents were published also by J. Ph. Vogel from Calcutta in the *Catalogue of the Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba*.

The general tone of confidence in the Pathania ruler that emerges from these documents is entirely in keeping with a somewhat special relationship in which the Nurpur chiefs seemed to have stood to the Mughal rulers.⁷ The relations between Raja Basu, great grandfather of Mandhata, and the Emperor Jahangir of whom he was described by the traveller William Finch⁸ as 'a great minion', appear to have been especially cordial. With Jagat Singh, even after a serious rebellion by him against Shah Jahan, relationship of warmth was kept possibly due to politic reasons, and in Rajrup, the father of Mandhata, both Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb placed trust by giving him a high *mansab* and entrusting to him important campaigns. The relationship between Mandhata and the Emperor Aurangzeb as revealed by these documents thus fits in a little naturally with this sequence of events. We have here an insight into the period that is not afforded by some of the generalized accounts of the Mughal historians.

The contrast between the relations of the Katoch chiefs of Kangra which was the premier state in the eastern group of hill principalities, with the Mughal rulers, and those of the Nurpur chiefs with the Mughals in this period of history, stands out as rather bold, for while the Pathania chiefs seem generally to be cooperating well, the Katoches were defiant and remained engaged, under Chander Bhan Chand from A.D. 1627 onwards, in nearly incessant guerilla warfare which ended only in A.D. 1687 with the accession of Udai Ram Chand.⁹ The hostile relations of the Mughals with Kangra provide the background thus to the appointment of Raja Mandhata, mentioned in Document III, to the

7. Hutchison & Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, I, 225-60.

8. William Finch, *Early Travels in India* (ed. William Forster), Oxford 1921, 179.

9. Hutchison & Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, I, 172-74.

charge of the fort of Nagarkot or Kangra. This appears to have been the surest way of driving a wedge between the Pathanias and the Katoches, an alliance between whom could have created a difficult situation for the imperial authority.

The reference of a dispute over boundaries, as seen in Document I, to the chiefs of the neighbouring territories of Jaswan, Guler and Datarpur for adjudication is full of interest for it points possibly to the desire of the Mughal officers not to interfere too much or directly in local or family disputes. The document simply records the settlement of the dispute and even if one accepts with a certain reservation the observation by Hutchison and Vogel¹⁰ that the imperial authority sat very lightly on the hill chiefs, one feels inclined to agree with them that there was generally no interference in their internal affairs. This particular document is of further interest because of the seals of the various hill Rajas which use approved formulae adopted by the Mughal nobles to indicate their status of subordination to the emperor.¹¹

10. *Ibid.*, I, 74.

11. See note 13 to Document I, below.

اللہ اکبر

یاءت تخریر این مسطور در معنی آنکه چون نواب مستطاب امارت و امانت پناه عمده الملک مہر خان
 بہ جهت تشخیص مناقشہ حدود محالات پرگنہ پارلیالی و دیہات پرگنہ فتح پور
 و پرگنہ مٹو وطن جاگیر اقبال شاہ راجہ ماندھاتا و میان گج سنگھ
 امانت پناہ مرزا نذریگ و راجہ پرتھی چند دھدوال و راجہ مان سنگھ
 جوال و رائی سنگھ گوالیریہ منصفان بر سر زمین محالات مذکور
 تعیین فرمودہ اند چنانچہ امانت پناہ مذکور و راجہاے مشارالہ
 زمینداران و چودھریان و مقدمان و مزارعان وغیرہ سکنہ حسب الاقرار
 جانبین طلبہ داشتہ آنچه . . . بموجب زبدۃ
 حد حدود بر کتاب مشخص نمودہ شد

(Signatures in Tākri)

- (۱) علامت دستخط راجہ پرتھی چند دھدوال: "پرتھی چند بندہ محمد اورنگ زیب بادشاہ غازی"
- (۲) علامت دستخط راجہ مان سنگھ جوال: "۱۰۴۱ مان سنگھ بندہ عالمگیر غازی . . ."
- (۳) علامت دستخط مہر رائی سنگھ گوالیریہ: "رائی سنگھ بندہ درگاہ"

(Seal)

عمر خان پیر ۱۰۶۶ . مرشد

اورنگ زیب عالمگیر

چون گج سنگھ و گمشدگان راجہ ماندھاتا بر مواضعات پرگنات پارلیالی و فتحپور و مٹو مناقشہ
 داشتہ جهت رفع آن بلا اکراد و اجبار برضا و رغبت منصفان قبول نمودہ نوشتہ دادند
 کہ آنچه پرتھی چند دھدوال و مان سنگھ جوال و رائی سنگھ گوالیریہ مشخص نمایند طرفین را قبول است
 و ہر کہ از تشخیص و تمیز منصفان مذکور عدول نماید دروغی گردد علی ہذا منصفان
 مذکورہ . . . ملازم سرکار ہمراہ دادہ تحقیق از ساکنان جوار بموجب ذیل بدستخط
 و نمبر خود با نوشتہ دادند ہر گاہ منصفان مسطور بمضمون المتن معترف شدند مہر نمودہ شد

I

God is Great

The purpose of what follows is to the effect that the gracious *muwwāb*,¹ the asylum of authority and security, 'Umdat-ul-Mulk Mihar Khan, has appointed the asylum of security, Mirza Nazar Beg, Raja Prihti Chand Dadhwal,² Raja Man Singh Jaswal³ and Rai Singh of Guler⁴ as arbitrators to investigate into the disputes between Raja Mandhata and Mian Gaj Singh⁵ regarding the boundaries of the *mahals* of *pargana* Paryali⁶ and the villages of *pargana* Fatehpur⁷ and *pargana* Mau,⁸ the *watan-jāgīr* of (Raja Mandhata) of the kingly felicity. Consequently the above mentioned asylum of security and the aforesaid *rājās* called upon the *zamīndārs*,⁹ *chaudharis*,¹⁰ *muqaddams*,¹¹ *muzāra's*¹² and other inhabitants (of the area) according to the agreement between the two parties...;and the boundaries were entered into the book in accordance with the best precedents.

ATTESTATIONS (in Tākri)

1. 'The mark of the signatures of Raja Prithi Chand Dadhwal', followed by a seal with the inscription 'Prithi Chand, the slave¹³ of Muhammad Aurangzeb Pādshāh Ghāzī'.
2. 'The mark of the signatures of Raja Man Singh Jaswal', followed by a seal with the inscription 'Man Singh, the slave of Alamgīr Ghāzī. 1071'.
3. 'The mark of the signatures and the seal of Rai Singh of Guler', followed by a seal with the inscription 'Rai Singh, the slave of the Court'.

ENDORSEMENT

Whereas Gaj Singh and the *gumāshṭas*¹⁴ of Raja Mandhat had a dispute regarding (the boundaries of) villages in the *parganas*

of Paryali, Fatehpur and Mau, they accepted arbitrators of their own sweet will and without any compulsion whatsoever, in order to settle that (dispute). They gave it in writing that whatever was decided by Prithi Chand Dadhwal, Man Singh Jaswal and Rai Singh of Guler was acceptable to both the parties and that whosoever might deviate from the well considered decision of the arbitrators would be false (before the Law). Accordingly, the arbitrators mentioned above, along with the government officials, investigated (into the facts of the case) from the inhabitants of the area and, as detailed, put their seals and signatures (upon the deed). When the arbitrators put their 'signatures' to the text of the deed, a seal was put upon it.

(Seal)

1066

Umar Khan Pir...

Murshid Aurangzeb 'Alamgir.

NOTES

1. The plural of *nāib*, an epithet used for vicegerents, deputies and governors, marking the high status of the person for whom it is used.

2. The ruler of Datarpur, an offshoot of the Guler state, bore the clan name of Dadhwal. Prithi Chand's name occurs in the list of Rajas of Datarpur between Udai Chand and Jai Chand (Hutchison & Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, I, 212) but no detailed account of him is available.

3. The small principality of Jaswan, the rulers of which were called Jaswals, was an offshoot of the Katoch line of Kangra. Our knowledge of the history of Jaswan is very sketchy. Man Singh finds a bare mention in Hutchison & Vogel (*ibid.*, I, 209) and occurs in the third generation from Anirudh Chand who is mentioned as a contemporary of Akbar.

4. This ruler is referred to as 'Raj Singh' by Hutchison & Vogel, (*ibid.*, I, 205). The names 'Rai Singh' and 'Raj Singh' seem to be interchangeable, and the variation appears to have crept in because of the differences in the Persian and Nagari scripts in which these may have been found by the historians. Raj Singh of Chamba is also referred to in settlement records as 'Rai Singh'. See B.N. Goswamy, "The Artist Family of Rajol : New Light on an Old Problem", *Rooplekha*, XXXV, Nos. 1 & 2.

5. This appears to be the name of a member of the royal family of Nurpur as is probably indicated by the title 'Mian'. It has not been possible for us however to precisely identify Mian Gaj Singh.

6. This appears to be the present village of the same name, at a distance of nearly four miles from the Nurpur town. For the connotations of *mahal* and *pargana*, see B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1967, 64-66, nn 4 & 7.

7. Fatehpur is situated at a distance approximately of eleven miles from Nurpur. There used to be a *thākurdwāra* in this place with paintings on its walls traditionally said to have been painted during the time of Raja Mandhata. The temple was destroyed in the Kangra earthquake of 1905.

8. Mau was one of the three principal forts in the territory of Nurpur; it was probably referred to as Mankot. It was 'nearest the plains, being situated a little more than half way from Pathankot to Nurpur, on the summit

of the range of low hills running to the east of the Chakki' : Hutchison & Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, I, 237.

9. The term *zamindār* was applied to more than one category of functionaries in the Mughal empire, including the vassal chiefs. Here it is applied not to the *rājās* but to the functionaries at lower levels. For some detail, see S. Nurul Hasan, "The position of the Zamindars in the Mughal Empire", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* (Delhi 1963), I, No. 4; and B.R. Grover, "Nature of *Dehat-i-Taaluqa* (Zamindari Villages) and the Evolution of the *Taaluqdari* System During the Mughal Age", *ibid.*, II, Nos. 2 & 3.

10. The *chaudharis* held a crucial position in the machinery of revenue collection and their position was usually hereditary. See also, B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughals and the Jogs of Jakhbar*, 155-56.

11. The term was applied especially to the village headman. For his importance and functions, see *ibid.*, 142 n 1.

12. The term *muzāra'at* ordinarily means 'a compact betwixt two persons, one a proprietor of land, and the other the cultivator, by which it is agreed that whatever the land yields shall belong to both in such proportion as may be determined therein'. The word *muzāra'* refers here to the cultivator or the tenant. See also B.R. Grover, "Nature of Land-Rights in Mughal India", *The Economic and Social History Review*, I, No. 1, 5 & 19 n 29.

13. The original word used is *bandah*. Though not to be taken literally, its use was surely a mark of humility and submission.

14. The agents or representatives of Mandhata, employed to manage the affairs of his lands on his behalf. Wilson in his *Glossary* defines the term *gumāshta* as : 'An agent, a steward, a confidential factor, a representative, an officer employed by Zamindars to collect their rents, by bankers to receive money &c., by merchants to carry on their affairs at other places than where they reside and the like'.

II

(Seal).

(Tughrā)

در نیاید سخط طلائی پادشاه اورنگ زیب عالمگیر

زبده الاقران والا شان راجه ماندها تا بعثایت پادشاهانه امیدوار بوده بداند
عرضداشتی که درین ایام فرخنده نام ببارگاه غطت و جاه ارسال داشته بود
از نظر اثرات اقدس ارفع اعلی گذشت و آنچه از سواخ ولایت توران
معروضداشته بود معلوم شاهی جهان آرائی ممالک پیراگشت باید که به همین
دستور آنچه از اخبار آن دیار بآن زبده الاقران برسد و قابل
عرض داند عرضداشت میکرده باشد و دقیقه از دقایق حزم و
هوشیاری و تنقیظ و خبرداری مهمل نگذارد جمیعت خاطر در
بند و بست تخانه جات متعلقه خود سعی موفوره و کوشش نامحصور
بنظهور رساند و حسن خدمات را مشتمل بر نتایج نیک داند

بتاریخ هشتم شهر رجب سنه پنج از جلوس والا نوشته شد.

II

(The Emperor's *tughrā* in gold)¹

Be it known to the examplar of the age, the possessor of high position, Raja Mandhata who may remain hopeful of royal favour, that during these auspicious days the letters which had been despatched to the Court of Greatness and Exalted Station passed before the lofty eyes of His Exalted Highness. All that had been submitted regarding the affairs of the country of Turan² came to the knowledge of the emperor who adorns the world with his rule, adorning (many of) its countries.

It is incumbent (upon Mandhata) that following this (laudable) practice, he should continue to inform the court with important news received from that country by that examplar of the age. He should not neglect the smallest of the measures of steady vigilance and constant wakefulness. He should seek the consolidation of mind in unremitting and unlimited efforts to administer well the *thānas*³ under his jurisdiction and he should regard the best of service to consist in good acts.

Written on the 8th Rajab of the 5th regnal year.

NOTES

1. The original term used by the copyist is *dastkhāt*; but, as in other Mughal *farmāns*, the reference here should be to the *tughrā*.

2. As it appears also from Document III here, Mandhata himself was not in Turan (Transoxiana); but he had his means of obtaining information from that region.

3. If Mandhata is holding some of the Mughal *thānas* in the fifth year of Aurangzeb's reign, his appointment to Kangra in the thirteenth year was only a step.

III

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

(Seal)

۱۰۷۴

ابوالخضر محمد محی الدین

اورنگ زیب عالمگیر

بادشاه غازی

(Tughrā)

درختا طغرا بدست طلائی بادشاه اورنگ زیب عالمگیر

زبدۃ الشان و الاقران راجه ماندھاتا بعنایت پادشاهان امیدوار بوده بدانند
 عرضداشتی کہ درینولا شتمل بر اخبار توران دیار بدرگاه آسمان حباب
 ارسال داشتہ بود از نظر اشرف اقدس اعلی گذشت و مضمون آن
 معلوم را ہی عالم آرامی گشت می باید ہمہرین منوال جواسیس ہوشیار
 بدیار مذکور بفرستند و اخباری کہ بیارند معروض میداشتہ شود
 و در ضبط و ربط و بند و بست تھانہ جات متعلقہ . . .
 کوشیدہ دقیقہ از دقائق نامرعی بگنجانند و این معنی
 را در بارگاہ خلافت موجب مجرای خود شناسد
 دوازدم ذی الحجہ شہد جلوس والہ نوشتہ شد

(Reverse)

برسالہ کترین مزیدان مرشد پرست جعفرخان

(Seal) "جعفرخان بندہ بادشاه عالمگیر"

III

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful 1

1074

Abu-al-Muzaffar
Muhammad Muhiyuddin
Aurangzeb 'Alamgir
Pādshāh Ghāzi.

(The *tughrā* of Emperor Aurangzeb 'Alamgir in gold)

Be it known to the examplar of kings and contemporaries, Raja Mandhata, who may remain hopeful of royal solicitude, that the letter containing the news of the country of Turan which had been despatched to the court, lofty as the sky, passed before the eyes of His Exalted Highness and its contents became known to the emperor who adorns the world.

It is incumbent (upon Mandhata) that in conformity with his (laudable) practice he should send astute spies² to the aforementioned country, and the news which they might bring should be submitted (to the court). In the orderly administration of the *thānas* under him, he should try his utmost not to leave even the smallest detail neglected. And he should regard all this as the means of his proximity to the Court of Vicegerency.

Written on the 12th Zul'hijjah of the 5th regnal year.

REVERSE

Through the mediacy of the humblest of the *murshid*-worshipping *murids*,³ Ja'far Khan : (seal) 'Ja'far Khan, the slave of the Emperor 'Alamgir'.

NOTES

1. The *sarnāma* lent itself to a great variety. It may be noted that Aurangzeb has discarded here not only *Allahū Akbar* (which had been introduced by Akbar and adopted by Jahangir) but also the more commonly used *Hū al-Ghanī*.

2. Though one might expect the employment of *jawāsis* for such purposes during the Mughal period, this specific mention has nonetheless an interest of its own.

3. The use of the term *murīd* as a mark of personal devotion and complete submission to the emperor's will was by no means uncommon.

IV

(Seal of Aurangzeb)
A. H. 1079

زبدۃ الاشاه و الاقران مطیع السلام. راجہ مانند حاکمان با التفات
پادشاهی امیدوار بوده بدانند که چون درینولا از راه عنایت خدمت
مماذخت و محاربت حصارگر کوٹ بعد از ارمغوض فرموده ایم لهذا حکم جہاں مطاع عالم مطیع صادر میشود کہ
بعد رسول این فرمان عالیشان پانچا رسید و در حفظ و حراست قلعہ مذکورہ و قیقہ از دقایق نامرعی ندارد و در توڑک و اعشام و توپ خانہ
و موجودہ داشتن ذخیرہ پر وقت مقرر و تبدیل آن بوقت قدغن داند سرانجام این خدمت را بروچہ شائستہ در پیش گاہ خلافت
موجب جہای شناسد و کاری کہ در عمارت قلعہ مذکورہ مانده باشد با اتفاق اللہ تعالی وارودہ عمارت قلعہ با سر زمین مسند آرا
بستمکام و مشانت تمام صورت اتمام دہد

بتاریخ پانزدہم شہر ربیع الاول سنہ میزدہ جلوس مبارک معلی نوشتہ شد

(Reverse)

(Seal) "محمد منظم ابن بادشاہ عالمگیر"

برسانہ پادشاہ... راضی نسب عالی تبار نور صدقہ خلافت و اہمیت
نور مدنیقہ سلطنت و دولت فردغ و دودمان عز و اقبال چراغ خاندان
جاہ و جلال والا گہر بند مکان رفیع القدر... ایشان ستودہ خصال نجستہ
شیم شہزادہ محمد منظم

IV

(In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful)

(Aurangzeb's seal
of A.H. 1079)

Be it known to the exemplar of kings and contemporaries, the vassal of Islam,¹ Raja Mandhata, who may remain hopeful of royal favour, that we have now appointed him to serve us by holding the fort of Nagarkot under his preserving protection. Accordingly this order of the universal subduer of the subdued world is being issued (to Mandhata) to the effect that after having received this exalted *farmān* he should reach that place and (then) should not neglect the smallest detail with regard to the holding of the aforesaid fort under his protection. He should meticulously pursue all matters concerning the routine,² the troops, the artillery, the provision and the schedule.³ He should regard the discharging of duties in a commendable manner as the means of his proximity to the Court of the Vicegerency. With the collaboration of Alla Quli, the *dārogha* of the construction of fortresses in that region, he should complete in the best and strongest manner possible the unfinished work of construction in the abovementioned fort.

Written on the 15th of Rabr'al-Awwal of the 13th year of the auspicious reign.

REVERSE

Muhammad Mu'azzam son of
the Emperor 'Alamgīr

Through the mediacy of the prince⁴ ..of exalted family
the perfect light of the Vicegerency and Magnificence, the light of

the garden of imperial dominions, the illuminator of the exalted, auspicious and illustrious family, the lamp of the house of status and dignity, the precious pearl, of the eminent station and the giver of status, praiseworthy in manners and of auspicious titles, Prince Muhammad Mu'azzam.

NOTES

1. The term *mutfi' al-Islam* is not to be taken literally. Its use in this document is significant because of the acceptance of its conventional use by both the sides.

2. The term used, *tuzh*, literally means regulation.

3. The term *mugarrar-o-tabdil* refers probably to the duty of being on the guard at fixed times.

4. The reference obviously is to Mu'azzam. Mandhata's association with the prince is interesting to note.

Article III

The Qazi In The Pargana

About forty years ago Ibn Hasan was keen to correct the general but wrong impression that *qāzis* were appointed only for the capital cities and other large towns of the Mughal Empire. On the basis of 'the scattered facts' of the period he felt certain that *qāzis* were appointed in smaller towns and *pargana* headquarters also. He assumed, however, that villages were excluded from the jurisdiction of the *qāzi*.¹

More recently discovered facts of the period show that even villages were covered by the *qāzi's* court. In the last decade of the seventeenth century a *shaikhzāda* gave his *madad-i-ma'āsh* land in *ijāra* to a person named Ram Ratan through a deed executed in the court of Qazi Sayyid Hasan Muhammad. The land in question was in a village called Paighambarpur, situated in the *tappa* as well as the *pargana* of Batala in the upper *bāri doāb* of the Panjab.² Through a *bai'nāma*, or a deed of sale, executed in the court of Qazi Muhammad Wali Ulla in 1711, the Rajput *muqaddams* of Yādgarpur sold their entire landed property to Mohan Lal Puri, a *qānūngo* of Batala. Yādgarpur was a village situated in the *pargana* of Kahnuwān in the upper *bāri doāb*.³ In 1733 the *panchāyat* of a small town called Muhiyuddinpur wanted to donate one '*Ālamgiri tanka* a year for every shop in the

1. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi 1970 (reprint), 315.

2. B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1969, Document I.

3. *Ibid.*, Document II.

bāzār to Hira Nath, the *mahant* of the *jogī* establishment of Jakhbar near Pathan (kot); they signed a *yaddāsh*, as a memorandum of this donation, in the court of Qazi Sayyid Muinuddin.⁴ Through a *bai'nāma* executed in his court in January, 1738, the Gujjar *muqaddams* of a village sold 1900 *bighas* of land in the *pargana* of Kathua to Mirza Asdulla Beg, the Arab.⁵ In the month of March in his court the Brahman *muqaddams* of a village in the *pargana* of Pathan (kot) gave it as an offering (*bhet*) to Gosāin Ramdas of the Vaishnava establishment of Pindori on the river Beas.⁶ In October the *chaudharis* of Faridanagar in the same *pargana*, signed a solemn declaration that they would not meddle with the affairs of Ibrahimpur Saidhar, in the same *pargana*, which had been given by its proprietors to the Gosāin of Pindori.⁷ In the *pargana* of Paniyal, Shaikh Chhajju and Muizuddin mortgaged their *madad-i-ma'āsh* land in Rasulpur Ali by executing a *girvināma* in the court of Qazi Qutbuddin, son of Sayyid Muinuddin, in 1769. With that we have already entered the Sikh period.⁸

In theory all the subjects of the Mughal empire were more or less covered by the law of the state, the *shari'at*, and *qāzis* appointed to *parganas* were meant to cover both villages and towns falling within their jurisdiction. Sometimes a single *qāzi* was

4. B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1967, Document XIII.

5. B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Document IV.

6. *Ibid.*, Document V.

7. *Ibid.*, Document VIII.

8. *Ibid.*, Document XVII. By 1769, the upper *bāri dōāb* had been conquered and occupied by Jai Singh Kanhiya, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia and their associates.

appointed for the villages and towns of more than one *pargana*.⁹ In any case, villages (*quriyāt*) are explicitly mentioned as falling within the jurisdiction of Mir Muhammad on his appointment as the *qāzi* of Batala in the sixteenth year of Muhammad Shah.¹⁰ The standardized diction of the orders of the *qāzi*'s appointment leaves no scope for treating Mir Muhammad as an exceptional case. In fact there is no reason to treat the upper *bārī doāb* or even the province of Lahore as exceptional.

In both villages and towns, non-Muslims in various situations resorted to the *qāzi*'s court. Baillie's surmise,¹¹ made more than a century ago that the *shari'at* was applied to Hindus 'in matters of contract', finds ample support in documentary evidence relating to Batala and some other towns and villages of the Mughal Panjab.¹² There are numerous instances of transactions not only between Muslim and Muslim, and between Muslim and non-Muslim, but also between non-Muslim and non-Muslim executed in the court of the *qāzi* of Batala. The contracting parties belonged to several social groupings : Sayyids, Shaikhs, Pathans, shopkeepers, printers, dyers and potters among the Muslims; Brahmans, Khattris, Bānias, printers, goldsmiths and carpenters among the Hindus.¹³

9. Qazi Muinuddin, for example, covered the *parganas* of Kathūa and Pathan(kot) in the upper *bārī doāb* : *ibid.*, Documents IV & V. See also, Zameeruddin Siddiqi, "The Institution of the Qazi Under the Mughals", *Medieval India: A Miscellany*, Vol. I, 10.

10. Document I, *infra*

11. *The Moohummudan Law of Sale*, London 1850, viii & ix.

12. Document of the *Bhandāri Collection* for instance. These documents have been studied by the author and a selection is being published by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, as *In the By-Lanes of History*.

13. J.S. Grewal, "The *Shari'at* and the Non-Muslims of Batala", *Proceedings Punjab History Conference* (Sixth Session), Patiala 1972, 154.

Furthermore, the law administered by the *qāzī* of Batala was uniformly applied to all Muslims and non-Muslims. According to the *Fatāwā-i-Ālamgiri* when one of the parties to a transaction is a *zimmi* 'nothing is lawful between them that is not lawful between two Muslims'.¹⁴ As it may be expected, transactions between Muslims and non-Muslims correspond to transactions between Muslims and Muslims. At the same time it is absolutely clear that transactions between non-Muslims and non-Muslims also conform to that pattern. It may be pointed out that the legal practice of the times was much in conformity with the provisions of the *shari'at* which was uniformly applied to all.¹⁵

This is not to say, however, that the law was universally applied. A person had the choice to go or not to go to the *qāzī's* court; but if he chose to go, he had to accept the terms which conformed to the legal practice of the times. In fact there are several unofficial documents also in the *Bhandāri Collection* and between these and the official documents there is no important difference so far as the terms of contracts are concerned. This may be taken as a measure of the acceptance of the *shari'at* by Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

The willing acceptance of the *shari'at* by a very considerable number of the non-Muslims of Batala, in matters of contract, is not difficult to understand. The uniform application of the law of the state gave them security regarding property. In fact, the *bai'nāmas* created individual right to property and enabled a

14. *The Moohummudan Law of Sale*, 160. See, J. S. Grewal, "The *Shari'at* and the Non-Muslims of Batala", 153-54.

15. Some contrivance like *hiba bil 'iwaz* and *bai' al-wafā* had been evolved during the medieval period to evade the spirit of the *shari'at*. Much more striking, however, is the conformity of the legal practices to the legal provisions.

person to acquire more if he could. The *girvināma* too promised profit to the mortgagee.

It may now be added that Batala was by no means an exceptional town. Some of the documents in the *Bhandārī Collection* itself relate to Amritsar, Ferozepur and Ludhiana. It may be safely suggested that a considerable number of non-Muslims in every town of the Panjab accepted the *shari'at*, in matters of contract. Even in the countryside, the custom did not remain the king. In the urban centres of the Panjab, custom was subordinated to the *shari'at*, if not actually replaced by it. This may in fact be true of the majority of the Mughal towns in northern India.

The local *qāzi* worked in co-ordination with some other local officials and was assisted by some local functionaries in the performance of his duties. The most easily identifiable of these are the *krori* and the *mufti*. In some *chaknāmas* relating to the *pargana* of Batala in the early eighteenth century, the seals of the *qāzi* and the *krori* appear together.¹⁶ The *mufti* was more intimately connected with the *qāzi's* court. Their seals appear together on a large number of documents relating to Batala, though not on all. 'The assistance of the *mufti* does not appear to be compulsory'.¹⁷ In any case, his position as the expounder of the *shari'at* did not bestow upon him a superior authority. In fact, the *qāzi* could exercise his judicial discretion in accepting or rejecting the *mufti's* exposition in its application to a given case. According to the *Fatāwā-i-Ālamgiri*, the *qāzi* was entitled to accept any one of the conflicting interpretations made available to him, or even to 'decide as it appears just'.¹⁸ On all those documents which bear the seals

16. See, for example, 1.0.4720 (32), (61) and (66), India Office Library, London.

17. Ibn Hasan, *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, 314.

18. Quoted, Zameeruddin Siddiqi, "The Institution of the Qazi Under the Mughals", *Medieval India : A Miscellany*, Vol. I, 14.

of the *qāzi* and the *mufti*, the seal of the latter is placed lower and it is smaller. Several documents bear the seals of functionaries other than the *qāzi* and the *mufti*. Their connection with the *qāzi*'s court is clearly indicated by the epithet *khādīm-i-shar'* on their seals.¹⁹

The *qāzi-ul-quzāt*, notwithstanding the literal meaning of the term, had little to do with the local *qāzi*. According to the *Mīrāt-i-Ahmadi*, the provincial and the *pargana qāzis* were appointed through the *sadr-us-sudūr* and took charge of their duties on the basis of a *sanad* received through the provincial *sadr*.²⁰ The original appointment was actually made by the emperor and orders were issued by the *sadr-us-sudūr*.²¹ But neither the *sadr-us-sudūr* nor the *qāzi-ul-quzāt* exercised any appellate jurisdiction over the local *qāzi*. 'There were no fixed rules and regulations for appeal nor were there different courts of various degrees to which cases would be taken against the judgements of the court of the first instance'.²² Indeed, the assumption that the *qāzi-ul-quzāt*, or the *sadr-us-sudūr*, headed a judicial hierarchy, formally subordinating to his office the provincial and the *pargana* courts of justice, is belied by the evidence of known chronicles and legal documents.²³

19. For some detail, the reader may be referred to the author's forthcoming *In the By-Lanes of History*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Appendix on seals.

It may be pointed out that some of the seals which appear on these documents are of laymen rather than law-men. This is equally true of the documents of the Sikh times and of the reign of Aurangzeb.

20. Quoted, Ibn Hasan, *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire* 316. See also, Zameeruddin Siddiqi, "The Institution of the Qazi under the Mughals", *Medieval India: A Miscellany*, Vol. 1, 8.

21. Zameeruddin Siddiqi, *ibid.*, 11.

22. Ibn Hasan, *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, 320. See also, Zameeruddin Siddiqi, *ibid.*, 5.

23. Zameeruddin Siddiqi's article, cited above, is based on documentary evidence as well as the evidence of the chronicles.

In the present state of our knowledge of the local *qāzi*, documentary evidence has its own peculiar importance. Here we present four documents of the first half of the eighteenth century relating to the *qāzi* of Batala.²⁴ These documents provide some very useful insights into the working of the local *qāzi's* court. In the sixteenth year of Muhammad Shah's reign, Mir Muhammad was appointed as the *qāzi* of Batala in place of Qazi Amānat Ulla who was transferred to some other place. Amānat Ulla had been appointed to that office eight years earlier. In all probability, Mir Muhammad's father, Muhammad Qāim, had at one time served as the *qāzi* of Batala.²⁵ The order of Mir Muhammad's appointment was issued by Shariat Ulla Khan Tarkhān who was the *sadr-us-sudūr* at that time.²⁶ Two years later, when Mir Abdul Khāliq was the *sadr-us-sudūr*, Mir Muhammad's appointment was re-affirmed.²⁷ However, he did not survive as the *qāzi* of Batala till the end of Muhammad Shah's reign : in 1745 his place was taken by one Khawaja Muhammad Siddiq.²⁸ On the accession of Ahmad Shah, Mir Muhammad was brought back into office through the orders of Ubaid Ulla Khan Tarkhān who was the *sadr-us-sudūr*. A year later, however, Mir Muhammad was replaced by Faiz Husain.³⁰

24. These four documents are in the India Office Library, London, and are numbered 1.0.4720 (46), (62), (52) and (67) respectively.

25. In 1.0. 4720 (64), one Muhammad Qāim is mentioned as Qazi Muhammad Qaim.

26. Document II, *infra*.

27. *Loc. cit.*

28. Document XI, *In the By-Lanes of History*. See also note 4, Document I, *infra*.

29. Document III, *infra*.

30. Document XII, *In the By-Lanes of History*.

The functions which Mir Muhammad was required to perform as the *qāzī* are clearly specified. It was his duty to pronounce decrees in lawsuits, record all cases of adjudication and put penal law into execution. He was to determine the distribution of inheritance, look after unclaimed property and the property of orphans. He had to appoint legatees. The people of the town and the *pargana* of Batala were ordered to treat all records bearing his seal as authentic. The seals of the *qāzī's* of Batala appear not only on *bai'nāmas*, *girvināmas*, *'iwaznāmas* and *hibanāmas* but also on *chaknāmas* and *mahzars*.³¹ For the Muslim population, Mir Muhammad was expected to perform some other duties also. He was to ensure that congregations in general and the Friday prayer in particular were held properly; he was to induce men to piety; and he was to perform all marriages.

It may be safely assumed that Mir Muhammad was paid by the state through grant of *madad-i-ma'āsh* land.³² However, there is no mention of this fact in the order of appointment conveyed to him. Nor is there any mention of his tenure. But on this last point we know that the local *qāzī*, like all other *qāzīs* in fact, enjoyed office according to the pleasure of the emperor. Besides learning and piety, heredity counted for appointment; but the office of the local *qāzī* never became hereditary. The counterpart of the *khānāzād* among the *umarā* is found among the local *qāzīs*. In theory, the local *qāzī* was expected to give fair and impartial justice, without any regard to monetary gain for himself. However it is generally believed that the *qāzīs* were corrupt during the Mughal

31. *Bhandārī Collection* and the India Office Collection numbered 1.0.4720.

32. It is most likely that the *qāzī* of Batala was paid through *madad-i-ma'āsh* land. In Babur's *farmān* in 1.0.4720 (1), Qazī Jamal of Batala is confirmed in the enjoyment of his *madad-i-ma'āsh* land.

times.³³ What is not generally known is that the *qāzi* could not afford to be oppressive beyond a certain point.

In this context, the last document presented here is of exceptional interest and significance. It refers to a corrupt *qāzi* of Batala whose father too had been corrupt as a *qāzi* and had on that account been dismissed from service. The charge preferred against the son, Qazi Wali Muhammad, is that he did not decide any lawsuit without extorting heavy bribe, not sparing even the pious and the poor, that he forced people to yield up their old deeds of sale, that he confiscated property on false accusation and that he scourged innocent people.³⁴ The artisans and craftsmen, who are making this representation against the injustice and oppression of Wali Muhammad request for his removal from office. They request for the recall of his predecessor, Ghulam Muhammad, who had been just and honest as the *qāzi* of Batala before he was replaced by Wali Muhammad. Instead of making any appeals against the specific decisions of Wali Muhammad, the artisans and craftsmen hold out a threat in case their grievance is not redressed by his removal : they would themselves leave the town and the *pargana* of Batala and settle down elsewhere. It may only be added that this representation was made by both Hindus and Muslims.

All the four documents presented here reveal something of the position and functions of the *qāzi* of Batala during the first half of the eighteenth century. A comparison of these with similar documents from other times and places can establish the fact of uniformity or variation. In the case of Batala, we have a number of documents belonging to the Sikh times. It is possible to see that

33. See, for instance, Ibn Hasan, *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, 342.

34. The words used in the original are *bīwajah zarb-o-shallāq mīnumāid*.



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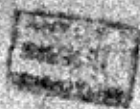
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(Vertical handwritten notes in Arabic script)



the office of the *qāzī* continued to function, now as before, without any appreciable difference.³⁵ The *shari'at*, was applied to Muslims and non-Muslims alike in matters of contract. Minor deviations from the letter of the law, which we notice during the Sikh period, had been there in the Mughal times as well. For instance, contrary to the provisions of the *shari'at* we do find Muslim witnesses to transactions between two non-Muslims.³⁶ In any case, not continuity but discontinuity should come to us as a surprise, though even continuity is not generally known in the present state of our knowledge of the local *qāzī* and his office.

35. For detail see, *In the By-Lanes of History*.

36. For instance, *ibid.*, Document I.

(Seal)

Tughrā ?

گماشتہائے جاگیرداران و کردریان و جہوری سکتہ پرگنہ بتالا مضات صوبہ پنجاب را اعلام آنکہ
 (چون بموجب حکم جہانمطاع آفتاب شعاع گردون ارتفاع منصب قضای پرگنہ مزبور مود قصبہ و قریات متعلقہ آن از تفریبات الد
 میرنجد ولد میر محمد قائم مقرر و موقوف گشتہ فرمان والا شان درست میشود باید کہ بر طبق حکم فیض شیم عمل نموده مشار الہ را
 قاضی ایجادانستہ دست تصدی ہی الہ در امور متعلقہ آن خدمت مستقل دانند و دیگر بر اہم و شریک اندانند و مملکت را
 بہرہ امتیاز شمارند کہ کمیابینی بنوازم منصب مسطور قیام نموده و فیصل قضایا و خصومات و اجرائی حدود و تحریرات و اقامت چٹوچہ جاعا
 و ترغیب مردم بطلاعات و الکاح من لا و فی لا و قسمت ترکات و حفظ اموال غیب و ایام و زمین اوصیاء و نصب قوام بای علی موقوف و بتقدیم ملند
 درین باب قدغن تمام دانستہ حسب المسطور عمل آرند

بتاریخ چہارم شہرزی جہ ۱۶ سنہ جلوس والا قلمی شد بیض

ENDORSEMENTS (on the reverse)

- (۱) بتاریخ چہارم شہرزی جہ ۱۶ سنہ جلوس والا داخل سیاہ حضور شد بیض
- (۲) بتاریخ پنجم شہرزی جہ ۱۶ سنہ جلوس والا نقل بدقت دیوان الصدات العالمہ رسید بیض ط
- (۳) مطلع شد
- (۴) داخل ...
- (۵) داخل ...
- (۶) موافق ...

I

(*Tughrā* ?)¹

Be it known to the agents of the *jāgirdārs* and the *kroris* and to all the inhabitants of the *pargana* of Batala in the province of the Panjab² that :

Whereas in accordance with the world-subduing order (of His Majesty),³ resplendent as the rays of the sun and lofty as the sky, the *qazā* of the said *pargana*, including the town and the villages, has been bounteously entrusted to Mir Muhammad⁴ Qāim, on the transfer of Amānat Ulla.⁵ That august order stands confirmed⁶ and, acting according to this bounty-like order and regarding the aforementioned (Mir Muhammad) as the duly appointed *qāzi* of that place, they should understand that all the functions connected with that office are to be performed by him. None else is to be regarded as his equal or partner.⁷ All decrees and documents bearing his seal should be regarded as trustworthy.

Having taken over the responsibilities of that office, let him diligently perform them in the interest of equity and justice in respect of deciding lawsuits, execution of penal laws, holding of Friday prayer and other congregations, inducing people to be inclined toward piety, performing marriages, effecting division of inherited property, looking after unclaimed property and the property of orphans, and appointing testators, executors and legatees.⁸

Regarding this to be an important injunction, they should act in accordance with its stipulations.⁹

Inscribed on the 4th of Zihijja of the regnal year 16. *Baiz*¹⁰

ENDORSEMENTS (on the reverse)

1. Entered in the records of the imperial office ¹¹ on the 4th of Zihijja of the regnal year 16. *Baiz*
2. Copy received ¹² in the office of the *sadr-us-sudūr* on the 5th of Zihijja of the regnal-year 16. *Baiz-Tā*
3. Entered ...
4. Entered ...
5. In accordance with ...
6. Duly informed.

NOTES

1. The original document is partly torn and in its present condition does not show any mark of seal. A kind of *tughrā*, however, is there at its top. But it has not been possible to decipher it. The possibility of its being the *tughrā* of Shariat Ulla Khan Tarkhan, the *sadr-us-sudūr* at this time, is very much there.

2. The use of the term *sūbah-i Panjāb*, instead of *sūbah-i-Lāhaur* or *sarkār-i-Panjāb* of the early Mughal period, may be noted.

3. The epithets used for the *hukm* leave no doubt that the reference here is to an imperial order. There is a clear implication, therefore, that the appointment was made initially by the emperor.

4. Qazi Mir Muhammad's seals appear on two documents : 1.0.4720 (70) and (68). In the first, the date of the seal is A.H. 1146, the sixteenth year of Muhammad Shah's reign; in the second, A.H. 1161, the first regnal year of Ahmad Shah. It is evident, therefore, that Mir Muhammad got a fresh appointment in A.H. 1161. It has been pointed out already that he was replaced by Muhammad Siddiq before the end of Muhammad Shah's reign.

5. The seal of Qazi Amānat Ulla, dated A.H. 1138, appears on 1.0.4720(65). It may be safely assumed that he was appointed in 1727.

6. The original expression is rather unusual : *farmān-i-wālā-shān drust mishawadd*. This is being said by the *sadr-us-sudūr*.

7. The prerogative of the *qāzī* in legal matters appears to be underlined here. Within his specified jurisdiction he was the only officer administering the *sharī'at*.

8. The phrase used in the original is simply *ausiā*, which would cover testators, executors and legatees.

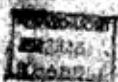
9. The phrase in the original is simply *hasb al-mastūr* : literally according as written.

10. The word *baiz* or *lā* or *baiz-lā* was very commonly used to mark the end of a statement, particularly a text, to obviate any later addition by an unauthorized person or an interested party.

11. The original words read like *siāhah-i-huzūr* which were used for

the secretariat of the provincial governor as well as the royal secretariat. The date of the entry, here, clearly indicates that the reference is to the royal secretariat.

12. A copy of the royal order appears to have been sent to the *sadr-us-sudūr*. Cf. Ibn Hasan, *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, 93-96, 265-66 & 316.

[illegible]



معلق

(Seal)

میر

محمد بن حسین موسوی
نعمت‌اللهی پادشاه غازی
محمد شاه

1138

عکس شهنشاهی جاگیرداران و کرد و ریان و جمهر سکنه پرنکه بتالا مضاف صوبه پنجاب بدانند
چون بموجب پروانه حسب الحکم چنانطاع آفتاب شعاع گردد از آفتاب بهر امارت و ایالت ترتیب صادر گردد
نواب شریعت‌الله خان ترخان مرقوم بتاریخ چهارم ذی حجه ۱۲۵۸ منسوب منصب قضای
پرنکه مذکور مع سواد قصبه و قریات متعلقه آن از تغییر امانت‌الله بمیر محمد ولد میر محمد قاسم
مقرر و مفوض است باید که بر طبق حکم فیض شیم عمل نموده مشارالیه را
قاضی آنجا دانسته دست تصدی موی الهه در امور متعلقه آن خدمت مستعمل دانند
و دیگر بر این اساسهم و شریک او ندانند و مکتوبات و محلات را بهر ادعای متبر شمایند
که کمی نیستی بواز منسوب مسطور قیام نموده در فیصل قضایا و خصومات و اجرای حدود
و تعزیرات و اقامت جمعه و جماعات و تزیین مردم بطاعات و انکاح من لادقی لا و قسمت ترکات
و حفظ اموال غیبیایام تعیین ادسیا و نصب قوامیهای موقوره و تقدیم رسانند در باب تدقیق آنکه حسب شرط معلوم اند

تحریری فی تاریخ بیست و چهارم شهر جمادی الاول ۱۲۵۸ منسوب مطابقت ۱۲۵۸ منسوب بحر مقدس
بیض

ENDORSEMENTS
(on the reverse)

- (۱) فی تاریخ ۲ جمادی الاول ۱۲۵۸ منسوب وال ... شد ص
(۲) بتاریخ بیست و چهارم جمادی الاول ۱۲۵۸ منسوب بهر مردم مجلس مطاع نقل به قتر
صدارت العالیه میر عبدالحق رسید بیض
(۳) بموجب فرد حقیقت است بیض

II

In the name of God, the Glorious. ¹

(Seal) ²

Mir Muhiyuddin Mūsawī
The Obedient Servant of the
Pādshāh-i-Ghāzī
Muhammad Shah

Be it known to the agents of the *jāgirdārs* and the *kroris* and to all the inhabitants of the *pargana* of Batala in the province of the Panjab that :

Whereas in accordance with the *parwāna* ³ issued under the seal of His Lordship, the *sadr-us-sudūr*, Nawab Shariat Ulla Khan Tarkhān, on the basis of the world-subduing order (of His Majesty), resplendent as the rays of the sun and lofty as the sky, inscribed on the 4th of Zihijja in the year 16 of the exalted ⁴ reign, the *qazā* of the said *pargana*, including the town and the villages, has been bounteously entrusted to Mir Muhammad, son of Mir Muhammad *Qāim*, on the transfer of Amānat Ulla. That august order stands confirmed and, acting according to that bounty-like order and regarding the aforementioned (Mir Muhammad) as the duly appointed *qāzi* of that place, they should understand that all functions connected with that office are to be performed by him. None else is to be regarded as his equal or partner. All decrees and documents bearing his seal should be regarded as trustworthy.

Having taken over the responsibilities of that office, let him diligently perform them in the interest of equity and justice in respect of deciding lawsuits, execution of penal laws, holding of Friday prayer and other congregations, inducing people to be

inclined toward piety, performing marriages, effecting division of inherited property, looking after unclaimed property and the property of orphans, and appointing testators, executors and legatees.

Regarding this to be an important injunction, they should act in accordance with its stipulations.

Inscribed on the 24th of *Jamādi al-Awwal* in the year 18 of the exalted reign, corresponding to the year 1148 of the sacred *hijri* era. *Baiz*

ENDORSEMENTS (on the reverse)

1. Issued on the 24th of *Jamādi al-Awwal* of the regnal year 18. *Sād* ⁵

2. Copy received in the office of the *sadr-us-sudūr*, Mir Abdul Khāliq, on the 24th of *Jamādi al-Awwal* in the year 18 of the exalted reign. *Baiz* ⁶

3. It is in accordance with the record of facts.⁷ *Baiz*

NOTES

1. *Sarnāmas*, like the present one, were often used at the top of documents in Mughal and Sikh times, with a considerable variety.

2. This is not the seal of the *sadr-us-sudūr*; in an endorsement on the reverse Mir Abdul Khāliq is mentioned as the holder of the office of *sadāvat*. Therefore, Mir Muhiyuddin Mūsawi was probably either the provincial *sadr* or the *nāim*.

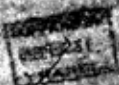
3. The use of the phrase *hasb al-hukm* clearly indicates that this *parwāna* (or order) was issued by the *sadr-us-sudūr* on the basis of an order given by the emperor.

4. The word *mu'allā* is used at the top and not in the text. Some space is left blank to indicate where it was meant to be read. This was a common practice of the Mughal scribes in marked reverence to the emperors, their posthumous titles, their *farmāns* and their reigns.

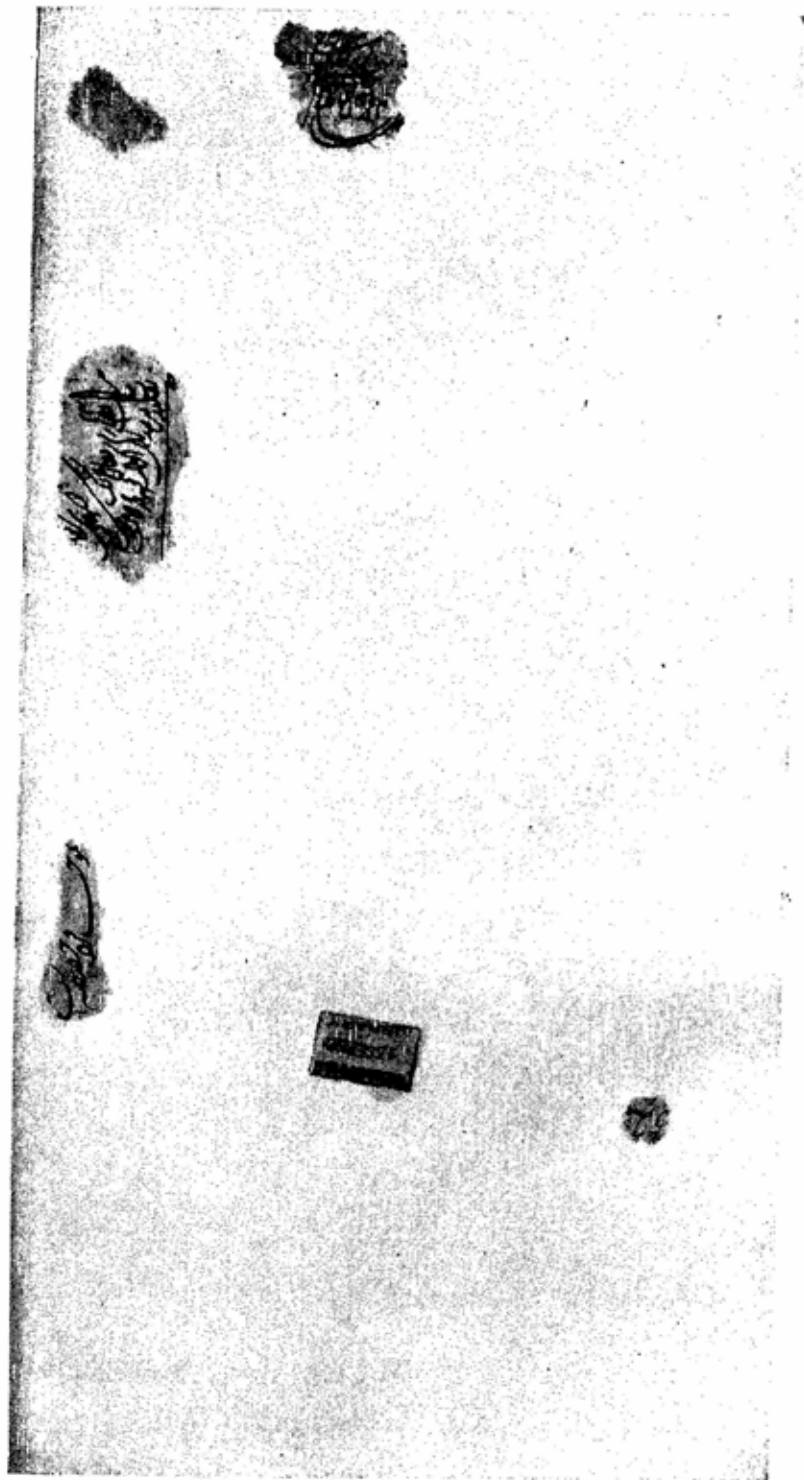
5. The letter *sād*, generally used by the issuing authority to indicate the authenticity of the order, gave final assent to it.

6. The word *baiz* is being used here at the end of an endorsement. This too was a common practice in the early eighteenth century.

7. The words in the original are *farḍ-i-haqīqat*, which would refer to a register in which the actual positions were noted down; hence, the record of facts.



Handwritten Persian text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or manuscript. The text is arranged in several lines, with some words appearing to be part of a larger phrase or sentence. The script is dense and characteristic of the Safavid or Qajar periods. The text is written on aged, slightly stained paper.



III

1

مبارک

(Seal)

سنة احد

شش پیر غان

خانزاده بادشاه غازی

احمد شاه بهادر

1161

گماشته است جایگزین داران و کردریان و جمود سکنه پراگنده بتلا مضات مسو به پنجاب بداند
چون موجب پرداخته حب انکمه جهان نظام آفتاب شعاع گردون ارتفع
بهر امارت و ایالت مرتبت نواب صدر العبدور عبید الله خاں ترخان
مرفوم نهم ماه رمضان المبارک سنة احد و بیس منصب قضای پراگنده مسطور
معهود و تصدیق و قریات متعلقه کن بنام میر محمد ولد محمد قایم مقرر و مفوض است که
کما فی بیعین بلوازم منصب مزبور قیام نموده در فیصل قضایا و خصومات و اجرای حدود و تعزیرات
و اقامت جمعه و جماعات و ترغیب مردم بطاعات و انکاح من لادنی لک و قسمت ترکات و حفظ
اموال غیب و ایتام و تعیین اوصیا و نصب قوام بساعی موفوره تقدیم رسانند باید که بر طبق
حکم فیض شمیم عمل نموده مشارالیه را قاضی آفتاب جمال و برقرار دانسته دست تصدی موی اله
در امور متعلقه آن خدمت مشتق دانند و دیگر بر این سیم و شریک اوندانند و حکوک و سجلات را
بهر او معتبر شمارند درین باب تدخین تمام دانسته حسب المسطور بعمل آرند

تحریر فی التاریخ بیت و چهارم ماه رمضان المبارک سنة دهم جلوس معظا مطابق ۱۱۶۲ هجری مقدره **بیض**

ENDORSEMENTS
(on the reverse)

- (۱) فی التاریخ ۲۴ رمضان المبارک سنة ۲ جنوس والا ... شد ص
(۲) تبارخ بیت و چهارم رمضان المبارک سنة جلوس معظا نقل بقدر تصدیقات العالیه ... محمد جمال رسید بیض
(۳) بموجب فرد حقیقت است

III

(Seal) ¹

One

Shamshir Beg Khan

The Khānazād of the Pādshāh-i-Ghāzī

Ahmad Shah Bahādur

1161

Be it known ² to the agents of the *jāgirdārs* and the *kroris* and to all the inhabitants of the *pargana* of Batala in the province of the Panjab that :

Whereas in accordance with the *parwāna* issued under the seal of His Lordship, the *sadr-us-sudūr*, Nawab Ubaid Ulla Khan Tarkhān, ³ on the basis of the world-subduing order (of His Majesty), resplendent as the rays of the sun and lofty as the sky, inscribed on the 29th of the auspicious ⁴ Ramzān in the first year of the auspicious reign (of Ahmad Shah), ⁵ the *qazā* of the said *pargana*, including the town and the villages, has been bounteously entrusted to Mīr Muhammad, son of Muhammad Qāim.

Having taken over the responsibilities of that office, let him diligently perform them in the interest of equity and justice in respect of deciding lawsuits, execution of penal laws, holding of Friday prayer and other congregations, inducing people to be inclined toward piety, performing marriages, effecting division of inherited property, looking after unclaimed property and the property of orphans, and appointing testators, executors and legatees.

Regarding this to be an important injunction, they should act in accordance with its stipulations.

Inscribed on the 24th of the auspicious Ramzān in the 2nd year of the exalted reign, corresponding to the year 1162 of the sacred *hijri* era. *Baiz*

ENDORSEMENTS (on the reverse)

1. On the 24th of the sacred Ramzān in the 2nd regnal year. *Sād*
2. Copy received in the office of the *sadr-us-sudūr* ... Muhammad Jamāl. *Sād*
3. This is in accordance with the record of facts.

NOTES

1. This, again, is not the seal of the *sadr-us-sudūr*. The epithet *khānazād* used by Shamsīr Beg Khan for himself indicates his family's long service to the Mughal emperors.

2. Instead of the usual *i'lām*, the word used here is simply *b'dānand*. It does not change the import, however.

3. In the first year of Ahmad Shah's reign Ubaid Ulla Khan Tarkhān was the *sadr-us-sudūr* but now, in the second year, he is not.

4. The word *mubārak* is used at the top and not in the text. See note 4, Document II, *supra*.

5. The name of Ahmad Shah is not mentioned but it is a very safe inference.

اهل بیابان و محروم و فقیه و در کینه با ابراهیم از حسن بسوی غلام محمد قاضی سرودی که
 در حکام سرپی و انضام و سادگی و شرف غرا و بادی و دیانت میگردید
 و ابراهیم و اهل بیابان و محروم و فقیه و در کینه با ابراهیم از حسن بسوی غلام محمد قاضی سرودی که
 در حکام سرپی و انضام و سادگی و شرف غرا و بادی و دیانت میگردید
 و ابراهیم و اهل بیابان و محروم و فقیه و در کینه با ابراهیم از حسن بسوی غلام محمد قاضی سرودی که
 در حکام سرپی و انضام و سادگی و شرف غرا و بادی و دیانت میگردید

IV

J

(torn) ...

... مایکند ... (torn) ...
 ... و مختار قصبه و پرتگاه پتال ایم از حسن ملک غلام محمد قاضی موردی که اجرائی
 ... و انفصال معاملات بر وفق شریعت عزرا و باین و دیانت میگرد راضی
 ... از دلی محمد قاضی منصوب پسر بهت الله قاضی معزول که مانند پدر خود
 ... بر ساکنان قصبه و پرتگاه و راز کرده و جنیت و افترا ... و بهمتان
 ... و قید غیر شرعی اطلاق و اموال مردم را غصب کرده میگیرد و انفصال معاملات
 ... نصف نصف قرار داده و به افتد رشوت کمر احمدی از صفای و عزایم نیستند
 ... و قرار باستانه بین و شرا سابق از دونه حکم کشیده میگیرد و مثل فویداران ...
 ... و شدتی بینمایند به جنگ آمده ایم اگر بجای او غلام محمد قاضی قدیم ...
 ... باعث آبادانی ما مردم است و الا از دست بستم دلی محمد بجلا وطن ...
 ... صورت برین منوال است

تحریر فی التاریخ هیست ویکم ...

(Seal)

(Seal)

(Seal)

(Seal)

... محمد

... ربی

... ۳۰

محمد انور

... محمد

... علی کل شے

... عزیز در دله

بن عبد اللطیف

... خادم

... حقیقت

... انور شدی لطف

نوم شرع شریعت

|||

|||

|||

ATTENTATIONS

(۱) العبد ساجد مجتهدی : (۲) العبد ... برزوه ۳۰ : (۳) العبد ججهو سنگو : (۴) العبد گلاب راسته ... (۵) العبد پروده رام ساجد
 (۶) العبد نواری ادوره (۷) العبد بولا مهابین (۸) العبد بهار کالیه (۹) العبد قول رانے اوپل (۱۰) پودری لوکتا متھ ساجد
 (۱۱) العبد بختی سیکری (۱۲) العبد سچانند دھیر (۱۳) گواه شد خان محمد ولد ملک محمد پیش (۱۴) گواه شد غلام محمد بیض

Note : There are four more attestation, in Landā.

SEALS (in the margin)

(۱) ... حسین کترین بندگان (۲) احمد محمد فاضل ۱۱۹ (۳) محمد میر بندہ درگاه (۴) کیمین و بندہ حسن بن سید حسن
 (۵) مرتضیٰ ... محی الدین (۶) محمد صوفی (۷) صادق خاک ده آل محمد ۲۸ (۸) فتح علی ... طفیل محمد (۹) محمد صدیق ۱۲۲
 (۱۰) محمود انور ... لطف در دل (۱۱) دارو امید شفاعت ز محمد مثنی ۱۱۵ (۱۲) محمد عاقل خاک قدیم بنی ۲۸ (۱۳) بدایت الله ... احمد قدی
 (۱۴) محمد اکرم ... محی الدین ... نعمت الله (۱۵) عبده محمد صدیق (above) کذا علت صحیح
 (۱۶) معصوم ... قطب عالم (above) کذا الامر

Note : Two seals are illegible.

IV

(Torn at the top) ¹

We, the craftsmen and artisans of the town and the *pargana* of Batala, were ² happy and contented with the praiseworthy conduct of the hereditary *qāzi* Ghulam Muhammad,³ who used to issue orders and decide lawsuits honestly in accordance with the provisions of the bright law.⁴ We are made miserable by the present *qāzi* Wali Muhammad,⁵ son of the dismissed *qāzi* Hibbat Ulla, who, like his father, usurps people's property through false and unjust accusation and through misapplication of the law,⁶ and thereby oppresses them with injustice. He pronounces decrees on the basis of half-and-half,⁷ and he does nothing without a bribe even in the case of the poor and the pious. He forcibly deprives people of their deeds of sale ⁸ executed formerly. ⁹ And he resorts to whipping, like the *faujdars*,¹⁰ without any reason.¹¹ If, in his place, Qazi Ghulam Muhammad is entrusted with the office, it shall win back the confidence of us people to remain settled. Otherwise we shall be obliged by Wali Muhammad's tyranny to leave ¹² the town and the *pargana*. This is the true position.¹³

Written on the 21st of(torn). ¹⁴SEALS (below the text) ¹⁵

1. 'Muhammad Anwar, son of Abdul Latif, serving the Holy Law. 1102'.¹⁶
2. '40. Latif became the beloved of Anwar's heart. 1107'.¹⁷
3. '.....He is the Protector of all'.¹⁸
4. 'Muhammad ... serving...'.¹⁹

ATTESTATIONS

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Al'abd ¹⁹ : | Saha Chand Bhandārī | |
| 2. Al'abd : | ... Berara ²⁰ | andigoli .VI |
| 3. Al'abd : | Chhajjū Singh | andigoli .81 |

4. Al'abd : Gulāb Rai ...
5. Al'abd : Hirdai Ram Sāhdan
6. Al'abd : Banwāri Arora ²¹
7. Al'abd : Bola Mahājan ²²
8. Al'abd : Pahāra Kālia ²³
(in the margin)
9. Al'abd : Nawal Rai Uppal
10. Al'abd : Chaudhari Lok Nath Sāhdan ²⁴
11. Al'abd : Bakht Mal Sikri
12. Al'abd : Suchcha Nand Dhīr
13. Witnessed by Khan Muḥammad, son of Malik Muḥammad ...
14. Witnessed by Ghulam Muḥammad ...

SEALS ²⁵

1. 'The lowest of (God's) ²⁶ slaves, ... Husain'.
2. 'One. Muḥammad Fāzil. 1119'.
3. 'The slave of His Court, Muḥammad Mūnir'.
4. 'The lowly slave, Hasan, son of Sayyid Muḥsin'.
5. Illegible
6. 'Sādiq, the dust of the path of the family of Muḥammad'.²⁷
7. 'Fateh Ali ... Muḥammad Tufail'.
8. 'Muḥammad Siddiq. 1122'.
9. 'Muḥammad ...'.
10. 'Ghani has the hope of Muḥammad's intercession. 1115'.²⁸
11. 'Muḥammad 'Āqil ...'.
12. 'Hidayat Ulla ... Ahmad Qādir'.²⁹
13. 'Muḥammad Akram ...'.
14. 'Muhiyuddin ... Ni'amat Ulla'.
15. 'The slave, Muḥammad Siddiq'.
- (above) True to the best of knowledge.³⁰
16. 'Ma'sūm ... Qutb-i-'Ālam'.³¹
17. Illegible.
18. Illegible.

NOTES

1. The first line of this document contained probably the names of those who initiated this representation.
2. In the original, present tense is used; but the reference is to a past situation.
3. The epithet used for Ghulam Muhammad is *qāzī-i-maurūsī* and probably refers to the fact of his ancestors having served as *qāzīs* in Batala. His seal appears on 1.0. 4720(63) in the 49th year of Aurangzeb's reign.
4. The phrase *sharī'at-i-gharrā* was commonly used for Muslim Law.
5. No seal of Wali Muhammad appears on any document of the India Office Library or the Punjab State Archives, Patiala. However, Qazi Muhammad Wali Ulla in 1711 (vide Document II of the *Pindori Collection*) may be the same person as Wali Muhammad of this document.
6. The phrase used in the original is *qayūd - i - ghair - shar'i*. This insistence of both Muslims and Hindus of Batala on the application of the laws of the *sharī'at* is significant.
7. The import appears to be this : that 50% of any gain from a transaction executed in the *qāzī's* court was appropriated by Wali Muhammad.
8. The phrase used in the original is *qabūlahā-i-bai'-o-sharā*; literally, deeds of sale and purchase.
9. The word *sābaq* suggests that the reference here is to the time when Wali Muhammad was not holding the office of the *qāzī*.
10. This interesting reference indicates that, in contrast with the *qāzī*, summary punishment was generally associated with the *faujdar*.
11. It is interesting to note that arbitrary action was expected from a *faujdar* but not from a *qāzī*.
12. One protest which the artisans and craftsmen could make was precisely this. Just as the peasants could leave their lands when oppressed beyond tolerance, so could the artisans and craftsmen migrate to other places.
13. This stock phrase was meant to suggest that the persons concerned made a solemn public statement in the presence of officials authorized to authenticate it.

14. The month and the year are torn. The latest date on a seal is A.H. 1122, which clearly indicates that this document belongs to the time after Aurangzeb's death. However, Muhammad Anwar's seal bears the date A.H. 1102. He is coming down from Aurangzeb's reign, like several others whose seals appear on this document. It may be safe to suggest that it belongs to the first decade after Aurangzeb's death.

15. These are probably the seals of officials connected with the *qāzī's* office. They appear to be authenticating the document and not necessarily subscribing to the representation made here. See also note 16 below.

16. Muhammad Anwar, without any doubt, was connected with the *qāzī's* office. His seal appears on some of the documents of the *Bhandāri Collection* also.

17. The use of a pun on a seal or the use of a statement containing proper names and yet giving some meaning, was not uncommon in the early eighteenth century.

18. The word in the original may be *muhīt*. In that case the meaning would be : 'God encompasses everything'.

19. *Al'abā*, literally 'the slave', was conventionally used before putting down one's name as signatures. For those who could not write and, therefore, put down merely a mark, the words used were '*alāmat al'abā*'.

20. Berara is a subcaste of the *khatrīs*. There was, and still is, a *muhalla* of the Beraras in Batala. Some of the other *khatrī* subcastes appearing on this document are Bhandāri, Sāhdan, Uppal, Sikri and Dhīr. The ability of these *khatrīs* to write Persian script may be noted.

21. The Aroras too had their own subcastes but the epithet *arora* was generally used to distinguish a person from the *khatrīs*.

22. 'Mahajan' probably refers here to the fact of this person's profession of a *sāhūkār* or a businessman. It could also be his family name. Today it has become a surname, like *arora*.

23. *Kalias* were *brahmans*. They figure frequently in the documents of the *Bhandāri Collection*.

24. *Chaudharīs* were not confined to the countryside. In towns and

cities also there were *chaudharis* belonging to various social groupings, including artisans and craftsmen.

25. All these seals are probably put by those who wanted to subscribe to the representation made in the document.

26. This is implied in *kam'tarin-i-bandgān*.

27. This *sunni* sentiment is expressed probably with the *shī'a* sentiment regarding the family of Ali in mind. At any rate, public expression of both *sunni* and *shī'a* sentiments was common in Batala during the eighteenth century. See, J.S. Grewal, "Inscriptions from Batala", *infra*.

28. Cf. note 17 above. The belief in Muhammad's intercession was almost universal among the *sunni* Muslims.

29. By the early eighteenth century Batala had come to have some Qādirī *shaiḥs* and their disciples as its inhabitants.

30. This legal expression, indicative of Muhammad Siddiq's familiarity with such matters, embodies an attitude of humility, in view of the belief that God alone knows the whole truth. Cf. note 31, below.

31. This expression is positively assertive, having a sense of finality in it.

Article IV

Jakhbar Revisited

On October 15, 1571, a *jogi* named Udant Nath was given two hundred *bighas* of land by Akbar. With no obligation to pay anything to the state in return, he got this land in the upper *bāri doāb* in a village called Bhoha on the bank of the river Ravi. Ten years later he personally met the emperor to submit that fifty *bighas* of the land given to him were submerged by the Ravi. Within ten days of his visit an order was issued by Akbar that fifty *bighas* of land should be given to him. He chose the nearby village of Narot to get this piece of revenue-free land. The two hundred *bighas* given to Udant Nath were initially measured out by the hemp rope. By the bamboo measure, this number was reduced to one hundred and seventy. With the introduction of the *gaz-i-Ilāhi*, the area was further reduced to one hundred and fiftytwo *bighas* and one *biswa*. In the 1590s, the grant of 'Udant Nath and others' was reduced to one hundred *bighas* by the *gaz-i-Ilāhi*. In all probability, Udant Nath had died by this time.¹

Before the death of Akbar, a disciple of Udant Nath, named Surat Nath, ascended the *gaddi* and succeeded in getting the grant of revenue-free land restored to two hundred *bighas* and that too by the *gaz-i-Ilāhi*. In November 1606, Surat Nath presented himself before Jahangir to say that land in Bhoha had been completely submerged under water due to excessive floods.

1. Akbar knew Udant Nath personally and it is unlikely that his grant was reduced by Akbar during his lifetime. Akbar's *farmān* of 1597, which contains the order of reduction, refers to the grant as 'in the name of Udant Nath'. Cf. B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1967, 7.

The emperor ordered that revenue-free land should be given to him in the same area, or elsewhere if he so desired: Surat Nath chose to have the whole grant in Narot where fifty *bighas* had already been given to his predecessor. The *jogis* now moved to the place of the new grant and established themselves near a small *jakh* (*yaksha*) shrine.² Because of the *bar* (banyan) tree close to the *jakh*, the settlement eventually came to be known as Jakhbar. And because it was a place of the *jogis*, it was popularly called Jakhbar Jogiān, that is Jakhbar of the *jogis*. Under that name it has survived as a village to this day.

Except for some time in the reign of Aurangzeb the successors of Udant Nath continued to hold the grant given to Surat Nath in Jakhbar. After Surat Nath's death in the 9th year of Jahangir's reign, Than Nath ascended the *gaddi* at Jakhbar. In the 15th year of Shah Jahan's reign, we find the grant being confirmed in his name. Between 1642 and 1660, he was probably succeeded by Bhav Nath. By 1660, Anand Nath had become the *mahant* at Jakhbar. His relations with Anrangzeb were close and cordial.³ Also he received an additional grant of revenue-free land from the emperor in the early 1660s.⁴ In the early 1670s however, when revenue-free lands give to non-Muslims were being resumed through Aurangzeb's orders, the *jogis* of Jakhbar lost their concession. Anand Nath died at about this time. He was succeeded by Hira Nath who remained on the *gaddi* of Jakhbar for about sixtyfive years till his death around 1740.⁵

Mahant Hira Nath appears to have consolidated the

2. Cf. *ibid.*, 7-8

3. *Ibid.*, 32-33.

4. *Ibid.*, 33.

5. In a document of 1741, Hira Nath's death is mentioned as of recent occurrence : *ibid.*, Document XVI.

concessions received by the *jogis* of Jakhbar from time to time and received fresh concessions during his long pontificate. Withdrawal of *madad-i-ma'ash* by Aurangzeb in the early 1770s had not meant actual resumption of the land. The *jogis* were prepared to pay a fixed annual revenue and *parwānas* were issued to the *mutasaddis* of the *pargana* that they would pay one hundred and seventy rupees every year.⁶ This arrangement continued for the rest of Aurangzeb's reign. In the reign of Bahadur Shah, Hira Nath succeeded in getting the concession restored; no revenue was henceforth to be paid by the *jogis*.⁷ In the 14th year of Muhammad Shah's reign, the *panchāyat* of a town named Muhiyuddinpur (now called Madhampur) donated one *tanka* from every shop in the *bāzār* to Hira Nath by way of 'first fruit' (*faslāna*) at the time of every harvest. Outside Jakhbar, in the upper *bāri doāb* or even outside the *bāri doāb*,⁸ grants of revenue-free land received by the *jogis* connected with the establishment were confirmed in the name of Hira Nath. In the 17th year of Muhammad Shah's reign, Zakariya Khan, the then Governor of Lahore, issued a *parwāna* reiterating the continuance of concessions given to Hira Nath in the *pargana* of Pathan and elsewhere. This *parwāna* shows that the *jogis* of Jakhbar were holding revenue-free land in nearly a dozen villages, granted by the Rajput chiefs of the Panjab hills as well as by the Mughal rulers of the plains.⁹ They were patronized later by the Sikh rulers. All the *pattas* and *sanads* containing concessions for the establishment were preserved at Jakhbar.

6. *Ibid.*, Document IX.

7. *Ibid.*, Document XI.

8. For a grant in the Bist Jalandhar Doāb, for instance, *ibid.*, Document XIV.

9. This statement is based on Document XV of *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*.

Only seventeen documents from the *Jakhbar Collection* have been published in *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*. On a recent visit to Jakhbar a new document was brought to our notice by the genial and enlightened Mahant Shankar Nath who now adorns the *gaddi* at Jakhbar. This document was carefully preserved by the former *mahant*, Bābā Brahm Nath, on the assumption that it contains an important concession given by Shah Jahan. The document actually belongs to the reign of Muhammad Shah. But it does contain a very important concession : water of the Shāhnahr for the revenue-free land in Jakhbar and two other villages in the *pargana* of Pathan.¹⁰

The association of this document with Shah Jahan is understandable. The Shāhnahr which brought water to the fields of the *jogis* of Jakhbar was originally dug in the reign of Shah Jahan. It was the best known of the canals which were brought into existence in the upper *bāri doāb* under the direction of Ali Mardan Khan during Shah Jahan's reign. It carried water upto Lahore, covering a distance of about 100 miles, from near Shahpur on the Ravi. There were three other canals, according to Sujan Rai : one for the *pargana* of Pathan, another for the *pargana* of Batala and the third for Haibatpur Patti. Sujan Rai testifies to the fact that these canals were meant not merely to provide water to royal gardens or towns: 'benefit accrues from these canals to cultivated areas'.¹¹ Major Napier, an English engineer who surveyed the upper *bāri doāb* about a hundred and fifty years later, concluded on the basis of the existing canal and the traces and traditions of several other

10. During the Mughal times the present town of Pathankot was known simply as Pathan. The *pargana* also was called the *pargana* of Pathan. The full name Pathankot came into currency during the Sikh times.

11. *Khulāsāt-ul-Tawārīkh* (Khalsa College MS. 475), 71. See also Ganesh Das, *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* (ed. Kirpal Singh), Khalsa College, Amritsar 1965, 208.

branches that 'the irrigation of that tract of country was fully appreciated' in former times. Such indeed was the value of irrigation and so great was the return from a naturally fertile soil that country bordering on the canal afforded 'a most delightful contrast to the bare and parched lands in the centre of the Dooab'.¹² The canal villages and their inhabitants bore an appearance of comfort and ease.

The government of the time also gained from the canals in terms of additional revenue. In 1848, the rate charged from the cultivators was one rupee a *bigha*. They had to pay *nazrs* also to the *munshis* and *chaukidars* connected with the superintendence of the canals. Also, they had to supply subsistence to 'all the Establishment when stopping at a village on canal business'. These perquisites had become a rule and, consequently, the rate per *bigha* had risen in actual practice to a rupee and a half. The additional half was kept by the functionaries as their perquisites. A part of the income from the canals was spent on maintenance and repairs. The rest of the collection was submitted to the state treasury.¹³ A considerable portion of the tax due to the government was remitted. 'Numerous grants of land', said Napier, 'have been made

12. Major Napier submitted his report to John Lawrence, who was officiating as Resident at Lahore in place of his brother Henry Lawrence, on 20 February, 1848. It can now be seen in the *Foreign/Secret Consultation*, dated 28 April, 1848 in the National Archives of India, New Delhi. A copy of the report has been seen through the courtesy of Dr Indu Banga, my colleague in the Department.

13. According to Major Napier the Shāhnahr could irrigate 70,000 *bighas* and therefore, 70,000 rupees should have been collected as tax. But the actual amount collected by the functionaries of the government was only 26,000 rupees. About 6,000 rupees were spent on maintenance and repair. The government received no more than 20,000 rupees. He explains this situation with reference to 'the dishonesty of the native managers'. That may be true, but Napier does not take into account concessions given to the grantees of revenue-free land.

on the borders of the canal to Fakeers and are always to be distinguished by their pretty groves of trees and gardens. These must be carefully respected'. These grantees of revenue-free land did not pay any tax for water.

The position in the Mughal times was not much different from what was observed by Major Napier towards the close of Sikh rule in the upper *bāri doāb*. An order of Zakariya Khan, issued in the 15th year of Muhammad Shah's reign, is addressed to the *dārogha* (Superintendent) of the Shāhnahr. It refers also to the *gumāshtās* (agents) of the *dārogha*.¹⁴ In another order, issued two years later, there is a reference to the *mutasaddis* (officials) of the Shāhnahr.¹⁵ There is hardly any doubt about the existence of the Superintendent of the Shāhnahr and his establishment during the Mughal times. It is equally certain that a certain tax was charged for supplying water from the canal for irrigational purposes. It is referred to as *nahrāna*, that is tax for canal water.¹⁶ The primary function of the *dārogha* was to keep the canals in good repair and to collect *nahrāna*. His *gumāshtas* or *mutasaddis* used to collect 'forbidden cesses' (*ab wāb-i-mamnū'a*), besides the regular cess on water (*wajh-i-nahrāna*). Also, they used to oblige the villagers to perform unpaid duties in connection with the work of repair and maintenance. Furthermore, *nahrāna* was remitted in the case of certain individuals.

In 1732, Zakariya Khan ordered the *dārogha* of the Shāhnahr

14. B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1969, Document III.

15. *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, Document XV.

16. When we studied one single document of the *Pindori Collection* which relates to the Shāhnahr, the position regarding *nahrana* and *abwāb-i-mamnū'a* was not very clear. By now, it is. Cf. *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, 98n13.

not to collect any *nahrāna* from Gosāin Ram Das, the *Mahant* of the Vaishnava establishment at Pindori, for the village Talibabad which had been given in donation to the Gosāin by an *āmīl* named Bhawani Das after purchasing it from its proprietors.¹⁷ According to an order issued two years later, the *mutasaddis* of the Shāhnahr were to continue releasing water for the orchards and the cultivated land of the village Chak Jogiān (Jakhbar) in accordance with the concessions given to the *jogis* in former times. The document presented here had been issued in the 8th year of Muhammad Shah's reign when Zakariya Khan was appointed as the Governor of Lahore. The *mutasaddis* are asked to continue releasing water for all the three channels meant for irrigating the revenue-free land of Mahant Hira Nath in three different villages. There is no explicit reference to the remission of *nahrāna* but it is almost certain that *nahrāna* was not to be levied. In fact it is clearly stated that the *mutasaddis* were not to trouble the grantee on account of *kār*, *begār* or the *abwāb-i-mamnū'a*. In other words, Mahant Hira Nath was not expected to supply any labour for work on the canal, or for catering to the needs of the functionaries of the *dārogha's* department, and he was not expected to pay any local cess.

It is not clear who issued this order to the *mutasaddis* of the Shāhnahr. The largest seal on the document is of one Abdul Ali, but there is no indication of his official position. Apparently the term *dārogha-i-shāhnahr* appears below one seal, the seal of Muhammad Sa'id. It is difficult to say, however, with any certainty that this person was the *dārogha*. Then there is the seal of one Mubarak who is called Mian Muhammad Mubarak by the scribe and who refers to himself in the seal as a servant of Zakariya Khan. The signatures of the *peshkār* of Mian Muhammad Mubarak also appear on the document. There are several other seals of Hindu

17. *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Document III.

and Muslim functionaries, but without any indication of their position. One of these seals bears the date A.H. 1145, which would make it posterior to the document. A few *qānūngos*, a few *chaudharis* and a few prominent persons have signed the document as 'witnesses'. What appears to be clear from the character of this document is that it was not issued by an authority outside the upper *bārī doāb*. Remission of *nahrāna* was familiar to almost all the functionaries of the government who were connected with revenue administration.

Remission of *nahrāna* was a logical extension of concessions given to the grantees of revenue-free land. An average cultivator of the Mughal times paid various cesses and contributed towards unpaid labour, besides paying the regularly assessed revenue to the government. In the cases of land irrigated by canal water the cultivator paid additional revenue and the officials connected with the canal imposed their own cesses and impressed labour for their own purposes. The grantees of *madad-i-ma'āsh* land did not pay any revenue or they received the revenue due to the government, if the land assigned to them did not actually belong to them as proprietors. Also these grantees were not supposed to pay any cesses, whether legally imposed by the state or forced on the cultivators by the local officials as their perquisites. They were not supposed to contribute unpaid labour for any work of the officials. If a grantee was given the additional concession of free water from a canal, he did not pay *nahrāna* or any cess imposed by the functionaries of the canal department and he did not contribute to unpaid labour. In short, the grantee owed no formal and tangible obligation to the state. However, he was supposed to repay all the more in terms of good will for the state. His good will was valuable in proportion to his influence with the people. Concessions given to the *jogis* of Jakhbar are, among other things, an index of their influence with the people.

Let us now turn to the document.

	<i>Alif</i> ¹	(Seal) ¹³ Jaswant son of Balak Ram Who remains in peace in the temple of God
Shadow of God ²		
(Seal) ⁴ Gurdit Mal (regnal) year 5 (below) <i>sād</i>	(Seal) ³ 1139 From the core of my heart I became the slave of Ali	(Seal) ¹² Chhajju son of ... Jamal
(Seal) ⁵ Ali Khan became the slave of the king of men and struck the face of the enemy with the sword		(Seal) ¹¹ Mubarak the servant of Zakriya Khan Bahadur (above) <i>sād</i> (below, beside a mark) The mark of the signatures of Muhammad Mubarak
(Seal) ⁷ Khan Chand 16	(Seal) ⁶ Mahmud Khan son of Qaim Khan 17 (below) <i>sād</i>	(Seal) ¹⁰ 1136 Muhammad Sa'id (below) Dārogha of the Shāhnahr (?)
(Seal) ⁸ Nihal Chand 2	(Seal) ¹⁴ 1138 Mir Muhammadi became a slave through God's grace	(Seal) ¹⁵ Mir Abdul Karim son of Abdul Rahim One
(Seal) ⁹ 1145 Murad ... of Muhammad Shah	(Seal) ¹⁶ The goblet they made my confidant and saviour	(Seal) ¹⁷ 1135 Amar Singh Sahni (on the left) <i>sād</i>

[illegible]

نلس سبانی

(Seal) زند بر فرق دشمن تیغ بران طایمان شد علام شاد مردان	(Seal) گور و قل سند	(Seal) بصدق دل شدم عبدالمعلی ۱۱۳۶	(Seal) مبارک قدوسی نکره خان بهادر ص (above) علامت و سخط میان محمد مبارک below	(Seal) محمد سید ۱۱۳۶ داروغه ششم بنیر below	(Seal) عبدالله بن عبدالمعز ۱۱۳۵ مس (on the left)
خان چند ۱۲ ۱۱۳۵ نمراذ ... محمد ...	(Seal) محمود خان دله تالم خان ۱۴ ۲ نهای چند	(Seal) ۱۱۳۸ سیر مهدی بنده از لطف از روی	(Seal) نهرم محمد لاری چو جام کردند	(Seal) عبدالله بن عبدالمعز ۱۱۳۵ مس (on the left)	

مستعد بان بهات مال و استتال شاه بنر تعلقه دار السلطنت لاهور
مقاصت تصویر پنجاب بدانند که موازی سه قطعه اراضی
زمین آئید جوگیان که در موضع جکیر و غیره عمل پرگنه پستان
به میرا تبه جوگی از قدیم مقرر دارد و ذراعت آنجا
را به فخران میخوانند بنا بران قلمی میگردد که اینست
خیرات بادشاهی است می باید که هر سه قطعه آئید دست آسیان
که تصدیق فرق و نوا اعیانان است بلا مزاحمت
آب از شاه نبر میداده باشند اجمال نکنند و از
لا. و بیگار و جویات اجواب ممنوعه بازگاه سلطانین
پناه مزاحم و متعرض احوال نشوند درین باب
تأکید اکید دانسته تخلف نوزند

تقریر بتاریخ بیست و دوم شوال سنه ۱۱۳۵

ENDORSEMENTS (in the margin)

۱. گواه شد طالعند قانوگویی بیش
۲. گواه شد نیک چند قانوگویی بیش
۳. گواه شد گلکبست راست قانوگویی بیش
۴. گواه شد ماسنگه چو دهری بیش
۵. گواه شد مشتقیم چو دهری بیش
۶. دسوندی مجر
۷. گوی ۱۰۰ کی in Landā.
۸. (Seal) ۱ : دله ابن جاده ثابنی
بنده درگاه
۹. (Seal) ۲ : حجر بر ابن دله
بنده درگاه
۱۰. دسخط مجر ... (below, in Landā)
۱۱. دسخط سبوزام پیشکار میان صاحب محمد مبارک ...

Be it known to the present and the future *mutasaddis* ¹⁸ of the affairs of the Shāhnahr which, under the jurisdiction of the capital of Lahore, is attached to the province of the Panjab ¹⁹ that three pieces of *ā'imma* land ²⁰ of the *jogis* in Jakhbar and other villages in the *pargana* of Pathan(kot) ²¹ stand confirmed of old ²² in the name of Jogi Hira Nath who gets the lands cultivated and feeds the *faqirs*. ²³ On that account it is inscribed that this matter relates to royal charities. ²⁴ They should allow free flow of water, without interference or negligence, to all the three pieces of *ā'imma* land which are served by three water-wheels ²⁵ and which have been made revenue-free to bring good fortune to the Shadow of God ²⁶ and the Nawābs. ²⁷ Also, they should desist from troubling the grantee on account of *kār* and *begār*, ²⁸ and all the *hubūbat* ²⁹ and *abwāb* ³⁰ which have been declared forbidden by the court, the asylum of *sultāns*. ³¹ Regarding this to be an important injunction, they should not do anything to the contrary. ³²

Inscribed on the 22nd of Shawwāl, regnal year 8. ³³

Baiz ³⁴

ENDORSEMENTS (in the margin)

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Witnessed by Tālī'mand, the <i>qānūngo</i> . ³⁵ | Baiz ³⁶ |
| 2. Witnessed by Tek Chand, the <i>qānūngo</i> . | Baiz |
| 3. Witnessed by Lakhpat Rai, the <i>qānūngo</i> . | Baiz |
| 4. Witnessed by Maha Singh, the <i>chaudhari</i> . ³⁷ | Baiz |
| 5. Witnessed by Mustaqim, the <i>chaudhari</i> . | Baiz |
| 6. (Witnessed by) Dasaundhi Gujjar. ³⁸ | |
| 7. (In Landā) The evidence of ... ³⁹ | |
| 8. (Seal) ⁴⁰ 'Dulla, son of Jādā Sahni (?), the slave of the Court'. ⁴¹ | |

9. (Seal) 'Gujjar Mal, son of Dulla, the slave of the Court.
7'.⁴²

(below, in Landā) Signatures of Gujjar Mal ...⁴³

10. Signatures of Sehaj Ram, the *peshkār* of Mian Sahib
Muhammad Mubarak ...⁴⁴

Note : There is a cryptic entry in the top right corner of the document, in all probability added for the sake of convenience in identifying the document, to the effect that it relates to exemption from *kār* and *begār* in the case of the village Jakhbar Jogiān. It does not mean, however, that there were no other concessions given to the *jogis* of Jakhbar. This very document refers to other, more important, concessions.

NOTES

1. The letter *alif* on a document like the present one conventionally stood for Allāhu Akbar (God is Great) and served as the *sarnāma*. To begin with the name of God was regarded as an appropriate expression of piety and humility.

2. This phrase refers to the Emperor and is taken out of the body of the text as a mark of respect. Some space is left blank where this phrase was meant to occur in the text. This too was a convention of the Mughal times. See also note 26, below.

3. This is the largest seal on the document and it contains a pun. The name of the person using this seal is Abdul Ali, literally 'the slave of Ali', who is playing upon the meaning of his name in order to indicate his reverence for the fourth Caliph, Ali. In another seal also, reverence for Ali is expressed : note 5, below. Reverence for Ali was not confined to the Shī'as, but Abdul Ali could be a Shī'a. In any case, the existence of the Shī'as in the upper *bāri doāb* during the eighteenth century is known from other evidence. It has not been possible to indentify the official position of Abdul Ali. He assumed office in 1727-28.

4. Gurdit Mal also appears to have been officially connected with matters relating to the Shāhnahr. He assumed office in 1724. The use of the letter *sād* below his seal indicates that he is affirming the authenticity of the order. The letter stood for *sādiq* or *sahī* and it was normally used by the highest authority connected with an order. In this document, however several officials are using the letter.

5. Ali Khan of this seal refers to the Caliph Ali as *shāh-i-mardān*, literally 'the king of men,' and regards himself as 'the slave' of Ali. On his behalf, Ali Khan professes to use his sword against the enemies of Ali. This is almost in reply to the anti-Shī'a sentiment of the Sunnis.

6. Mahmud Khan also uses the letter *sād* below his seal. See note 4, above.

7. Khan Chand got his seal prepared in the 16th year of Muhammad Shah's reign, whereas the document was prepared in the 8th regnal year. Obviously, Khan Chand placed his seal on the document at a later stage, presumably to confirm the authenticity of the document after verification. He might have replaced some other official in the 16th regnal year.

8. Nihal Chand's seal was prepared in the 2nd regnal year, though it does not necessarily follow that he put his seal on the document in the 8th year itself when the order was issued.

9. This seal, like Khan Chand's, was placed on the document at a later stage. There is a clear reference here to the reign of Muhammad Shah, besides the year A.H. 1145. Murad came to office in the 15th year of Muhammad Shah's reign.

10. This seal was prepared in the 6th year of Muhammad Shah's reign and Muhammad Sa'id, in all probability, was the *dārogha* of the Shāhnahr at this time.

11. This seal of Mubarak does not bear any date but he calls himself the servant of Zakariya Khan, the Governor of Lahore from 1726 to 1745. Mubarak was illiterate and he put merely a mark beside his seal. Only the scribe has written that this mark stands for the signatures of Muhammad Mubarak. There are numerous documents in the *Bhandāri Collection* of the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, which bear such marks by illiterate witnesses and others, clearly showing that this was quite a common practice of the Mughal times. In fact the phrase *'alāmat al-'abd* was meant strictly for such marks, indicating that the person concerned did not know how to sign.

12. It is not clear whether or not Chhajju was holding any official position. The use of seal was by no means confined to officials.

13. If our reading of the inscription on this seal is correct, Jaswant is anxious to present himself as a pious person.

14. The impression of this seal is rather faint but the inscription is easily decipherable. The seal was prepared in the 8th year of Muhammad Shah's reign. Mir Muhammadi refers to his humility as a mark of 'God's grace, a sentiment which was common among the *śūfis*. In the present case, however, it could also mean that the position enjoyed by Mir Muhammadi was a gift from God.

15. The inscription on this seal is easy to decipher but the epithet *mīr* might have been used for Abdul Rahim, the father. The seal was prepared in the first year of Muhammad Shah's reign, as the word *ahd* clearly indicates.

16. The reading of this inscription may be incorrect. It is rather

faint. However, the line has a mystical dimension and reminds of Iraqi's verse in which he says that if the wine had been poured in the goblet in the first instance how was he to be blamed :

Nukhustīn bāda kāndar jān kardand
'Irāqī rā chirā badnām kardand

17. If our reading is correct, the epithet Sahni would make Amar Singh a *khatri* of that subcaste, If the letter *sād* goes with his seal, it may be safe to assume that he was officially connected with the affairs of the Shāhnahr and came into office in the 5th year of Muhammad Shah's reign. The number of *khatri*s in the administration of the Mughal Panjab, especially at the lower levels, was by no means inconsiderable.

18. The term *mutasaddi* was used for the officials in general during the Mughal times, though it was not confined to government officials. See also, B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, 135.

19. Whereas the Shāhnahr is under the jurisdiction of the governor of Lahore, the area served by that canal falls within the territory of the province of the Panjab. That appears to be the import of the sentence used here. It is not clear, however, why this distinction is sought to be made,

20. In the eighteenth century it was rather common to refer to *madad-i-ma'āsh* land as *ā'imma* land. Strictly speaking, the latter should have been given only to the 'ulamā. But, as it is obvious from the present and many other cases, grant of revenue-free land was not confined to the 'ulamā. It was not confined in fact to Muslims during the Mughal times.

21. The present name of the town after which the *pargana* was known in the Mughal times is Pathankot, but then it was known simply as **Pathan**.

22. By 1727, Hira Nath had acted as the *mahant* of the Jakhbar establishment for over half a century. Therefore, the use of the term *az qadīm* is appropriate even for himself. But perhaps the reference here is also to the predecessors of Hira Nath.

23. The term *fāqir* in the present context refers to the *jogīs* of the Jakhbar establishment and to visiting *jogīs*.

24. The explicit reference to the grant of revenue-free land as an act of charity on the part of the ruler is rather interesting.

25. The word used in the original is *āsiya* which refers to paddles and the wheel meant for drawing water from the canal into a small channel.

26. The phrase *zill-i-subhānī*, literally the shadow of God, is not given in the text at this place. Some space is left blank and the phrase is given at the top. See note 2, above.

27. The equation of the governors of the province with the royalty in matters of *maḍād-i-ma'āsh* grant is rather unusual. It is interesting to note in this connection that in 1732 Zakariya Khan would exempt the Gosāin of Pindori in the upper *bāri doāb* from *nahrāna* without reference to any order of the Emperor : B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Document IV.

28. *Kār* and *begār* refer to compulsory labour impressed by the government officials in various situations, particularly to carry their baggage. No compensation was paid for such labour by the government. It is very likely, however, that this service was generally performed by the village *hamīns* who were paid in kind by the cultivators or proprietors at fixed rates for their services for the whole year but not specifically for *hār* or *begār*. Cf. *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, 91 n. 20; Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1963, 150, 239 & 248.

29-30. According to Irfan Habib, *abwāb* and *hubūbāt* can be equated with *ikhrajāt* : *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, 243. These terms refer to cesses imposed in addition to the regular revenue demand. See also, *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar*, 149-50; *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, 98.

31. The words used in the original are *bārgāh-i-salāṭīn panāh*. The imperial character of the Mughal state and the emperor's status as a suzerain over vassal chiefs make this phrase appropriate even for the reign of Muhammad Shah.

32. This is a stock sentence used in Mughal *farmāns* and *parwānas* to underline the obligation of obeying the order conveyed.

33. The name of the ruler is not given but there is hardly any doubt that it was the reign of Muhammad Shah.

34. The word *baiz* was generally written at the end of a document to indicate the end and to obviate any later unwarranted addition.

35. The signatures of a *qānūngo* on this document could be expected from the fact that his primary functions were related to land and its revenue. He was the permanent repository of information concerning revenue receipts, area statistics, local rates of revenue and local customs and practices. See also, *The Mughals and the Jogs of Jakhbar*, 170.

36. The word *baiz* at the end of signatures was not common but several instances of this kind are known. The purpose would be the same as in note 34, above.

37. The *chaudhari* occupied a crucial position in the machinery for the collection of revenue. His signatures on the document, like those of the *qānūngos*, could be expected even *a priori*.

38. A considerable number of Gujjars lived in the upper *bāri doāb* in the 18th century and Dasaundhi appears to be one of their leading men or *chaudharis*.

39. It has not been possible to decipher the name of the witness but he is certainly a different person from the rest of the witnesses. *Landā* was the script commonly used by the business communities in the Panjab plains, though it was by no means confined to them.

40. The seal of Dulla, as also the seal of Gujjar Mal, appears to have been used by him not in any official capacity but merely as a witness. In the case of Gujjar Mal it is added in *Landā* that the seal impression stands for the signatures of Gujjar Mal. The use of a seal was not confined to officials. In fact many an influential but illiterate person found it convenient to make use of a seal for signatures. It was also respectable.

41. The phrase used in this seal, as in that of Gujjar Mal, is *banda-i-dargāh* which is suggestive of both the royal court and the Court of God.

42. Dulla and Gujjar Mal of these seals appear to be the father and the son.

43. This is added by Gujjar Mal himself who could write in *Landā*, but not in Persian.

44. No signatures of Sehaj Ram, the *peshkār* of Mian Muhammad Mubarak of note 11, appear on the document separately from this note.

Article V

Some Religious Land-Grants In Kangra

The small town of Sujanpur in the Kangra valley, with its vast *chaugān*, its impressive temples, the magnificent ruins of Tira on the hill just above it and the Beas below and the garden city of Alampur across, is rich in its association with Maharaja Sansar Chand (A.D. 1775-1823). The memory of that Katoch chief still lingers in the town and in the affections of its inhabitants. That memory is also preserved in some written records, manuscripts of grants, to three of which this short study is devoted.

These land-grants are in the possession of Shri Bhu Dev Shastri, who comes from a distinguished family of religious men who served the Maharaja and who now teaches in the Government High School at Sujanpur. The large collection of manuscripts that is there in Shri Shastri's family dates back to the 18th century and many of these were specifically written for the Katoch chief by one of Shri Shastri's ancestors. Two of the grants are issued by Sansar Chand himself while the third, to which we draw attention below, mentions him indirectly though it was issued by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, presumably after he had gained complete control over the whole valley following the flight of Anirudh Chand, son of Sansar Chand, in 1828 to Garhwal.

We believe that considerable interest attaches to these, and similar other grants. They possess interest for anyone interested in the history – social, religious and even political – of this region, an interest that is powerfully fed, and served, by going into the field and locating this kind of material. This material is not very hard to track down, even though in the present case we were helped greatly by the generosity of Shri Shastri who gave us easy access to it. But whatever effort is needed is well-made, for

through this kind of material it is possible to arrive sometimes at insights which are denied to the historian by the sources on which he most often relies.

Two of the documents reproduced here are copies the authenticity of which we have no reason to doubt. The third is an original *patta* in severely illegible *Tākri* and bears the signatures of Sansar Chand himself. The copies we believe to be genuine because they come from the family to which the grants were originally given, and because they are not being used now to advance any interests. They were found in a file of papers which had come down to Shri Bhu Dev by heritage and this circumstance is to be seen combined with the fact that at the time when the British after taking over, began the land-settlement operations in 1865, many of the original documents in support of their claims had to be submitted by people, who generally kept copies in their possession authenticated most often by an official. They agree entirely with the third, and original document, that we have in this group both in form and the nature of contents. The grants are also not so unusual as to cause unnecessary doubt about their genuineness. They must be among many which the hill rulers issued in large numbers. We take these copies, then, to be as the document which we have seen, in the original, in *Tākri*.

All the three documents refer to grants made to an individual and not to establishments like temples at least one of which was also looked after by the ancestors of Shri Bhu Dev Shastri. The lands attached to the temples were apparently different and in addition to these grants which were enjoyed by the priests in their personal capacity. The priests are mentioned by name in all the documents; so is the extent of land and the occasion of the grant. The priests had quite clearly deserved well of the rulers, either because of their piety or the services which they must have rendered.

Several points which merit attention emerge from these documents. First, about the form of these. The grant by Maharaja Ranjit Singh follows a form with which we are by now familiar and of which we have reproduced several in our study of the Pindori documents. The grants by Sansar Chand differ from the Sikh grant in their slightly higher degree of formality. While the formal nature of Mughal documents is not to be seen in these, there are elements here which suggest a more formal approach. Both these documents mention, for example, at the outset the name of the grantor at whose behest these are being drawn up – '*Shri Maharaja Sansar Chand vachane*' – as also the person in whose presence that grant has been made. Thus, in Document I, Raja Jodhbir Chand is cited as a witness – '*Shri Raja Jodhbir Chand hāzar*' – and in Document II the presence of Rai Anirudh Chand is clearly indicated. One is reminded here of the details of a like nature in the endorsements of the *ta'ltqa* of the Imperial *farmāns* of the Mughals. The Sikh documents do not indicate this as precisely as these two grants of Sansar Chand do. The name of the person inscribing the document is indicated in only one document, Wazir Khushala in Document II. The place from which the grant is issued is recorded in the Sansar Chand grant as much as it is in the Ranjit Singh grant here. The word '*sahi*' denoting the sign of the grantor in approval of the correct recording of his wish, is shared by the Sansar Chand grant with a large number of Sikh documents and is quite clearly the counterpart of the '*sād*' which appears on Mughal documents with such regularity in the eighteenth century.

The Mughal pattern can be seen to stand quite distinctly in the background of these documents. The terms are themselves indicative of this. The *chak* which is described as being 'carved out' for Pandit Ram Rath in Document II, the reference to the *rasm-rusūm* the *hukum māphak* at the end of both Documents I & II, the use of the word *patta* are all eloquent indications. Of special

interest is the use of the word *ā'imma* in Document I over the deciphering of which we had our share of difficulty. But we are quite certain of the reading, and are led to believe that land grants thus given were referred to, long after the Mughal rule had disappeared from the hills, as '*aimma*'. The artist Chandulal of Rajol, who comes from a family of Pahari painters, recalls that many families of artists also enjoyed '*aimma*', a word which he knows refers to land-grants but the literal meaning of which he does not at all suspect. The word *dharmarth*, by which most religious grants were known in the Hindu tradition, is also employed in these documents. One sees, in fact, quite clearly, the circumstance of Mughal usages and institutions in these documents, as in life in the hills.

The grant by Maharaja Ranjit Singh appears to have been occasioned by a circumstance which arose in the year 1828-1829. The grant refers to the same area of land in the same *ta'alluqa* to which Document II refers, but this confirmation might have become necessary because of the fact that authority had changed hands in this year in the area in which the land was situated. In 1828, Anirudh Chand fled from Kangra, leaving it open to the Sikh Maharaja to take under his direct control even those areas which, after 1809, he had allowed Sansar Chand and his family to hold under their personal control. The passing of the region of Marinda to the Sikh authority must, in all likelihood, have been the occasion on which the grantee, in this case, Pandit Zorawar Dikshit, approached the new authority to renew and confirm the grant. The grant by Ranjit Singh repeats virtually all that is contained in Document II which it confirms, with the further concession that the holder is exempted from personal service, which might well have been expected of all who held *jāgir* lands from the previous reign.

While the occasion for issue of Document III is probably

the change in authority, the first two grants had been issued on special occasions. Document I specifically mentions the land being given on account of charity associated with the Lohri festival, an occasion on which the pious make gifts. Document II records the date of issue as the 1st of Magh, which, being Maghi day, was held sacred by the Hindus for charities to be given to *brahmans*.

The grants by Sansar Chand mention their being made in the name of Krishna, which is highly interesting in the context of his personal faith. While the Katoch chiefs generally believed in the Devi, from whose brow their prime ancestor is believed to have sprung, Sansar Chand is also associated actively with the worship of Shiva. The Gauri Shankar temple at Tira and the Narbedeshvar temple at Sujampur are both Shaiva shrines. The mention of Krishna is, therefore, indicative here of the catholicity of Sansar Chand's personal belief unless of course, we take the '*Krishna arpan*' to be only a formula, like the '*Shri Ram Ji*' with which many documents open.

A concept to which both the documents of Sansar Chand draw clear attention is that of the 'Raja's *dharma*' which is to be understood in the sense of a solemn commitment. To say that the Raja's '*dharma*' was involved in any deed or commitment was to attach to it the highest sanctity in that society. The word is used also in many Sikh documents in which the '*dharm-i-khālā jio*' is cited as the reason for the grant being made or confirmed.

The solemnity of the commitment is further strengthened in the Sansar Chand grants by a specific injunction to his successors to uphold the grants. The grant, as worded, is thus made in perpetuity : the Raja and his successors always to remain as the grantors, and the priest and his descendants to remain the grantees. The Raja quite clearly says that the maintenance of the grant by his successor would be an act which would uphold *dharma*.

A likelihood that strikes us strangely is that one of the sons is made by the Maharaja as a witness in the document with the intention that he thereby becomes a party to the future commitment also. But we cannot be certain of this, since evidence from more documents would have to be taken to establish the point.

Another point that may appear interesting we should like to mention in the end. This is the designations used for the two sons of the Maharaja in Documents I and II. Of these the elder and the heir apparent was Anirudh Chand who is referred to as 'Rai' whereas the younger son, who was by his Gaddan wife and thus considered as not wholly legitimate, Jodhbir Chand, is described as a 'Raja'. The situation, apparently odd, is to be explained perhaps with reference to custom in the Katoch House of Kangra. The heir apparent was given the title of 'Rai' which he enjoyed not only in the lifetime of his father but for full four years after his death. It was only after these four years had elapsed since his father's death that the prince took the title of 'Maharaja'. For Anirudh Chand to be described as 'Rai' in Document II is therefore entirely understandable as it is in keeping with this practice. That, however, still leaves the question of Jodhbir Chand being designated as a 'Raja' in his father's lifetime. This has reference possibly to a situation in which Sansar Chand who was a 'Maharaja' himself, created 'Rajas' on his own by giving them large, virtually independent *jāgirs*. Jodhbir Chand, being possibly a favourite because of his being a son from his favourite wife, might well have received the title and the *jāgīr* from this consideration. If this makes him, at least in these documents, appear as enjoying a superior-ranking title than Anirudh Chand, there was perhaps for Anirudh Chand, compensation in the thought that he was himself to become a 'Maharaja' eventually. That eventuality, however, never came, as we know in retrospect.

I

نقل پٹہ عطیہ سری مہاراج سنار چند صاحب بہادر مالک ملک کاکڑہ

بحروف ٹانگری یکم ماگھ سمت ۱۸۴۸ بکرم

دستخط بندی مہاراجہ صاحب بہادر

سری رام جی - سری مہانرا جے سری سنار چند بچنے سری رائے صاحب
سری انردھ چند حاضر۔

روزگار پنڈت دیجیتے رام رتھ کی سے روپیہ کی چک علاقہ پالمان مارنڈہ
کٹی کری ملکیت کرشن اپن کری دتا ہے اس تے آگیاں جے رسم رسوم سرکاری
جمع بھنڈار ہندے تھے سے سمہ پنڈت رام رتھ کی بنیے دتے بنیں کاردار
سرکاری ... کے نہ کرن پنڈت اس زمینان دا مالک بنائے
دتا ہے جے راجہ رہیگا سے اس دھرمیدی پاناکریگا جے پنڈت رام رتھ
دی انس بنس دا ہوگ سے کھاندا رہیگا سری سرکارا دیا پروا گلیا

ماچھک لکھیا وزیر کالیں یکم ماگھ سمت ۱۸۴۸

I

Copy of a grant in Tākri, issued on 1st Māgh, Sammat 1848 (A.D. 1791), by Sri Maharaja Sansar Chand Sahib Bahadur, the ruler of Kangra.

(Signatures of the Maharaja in Devanāgarī) ¹

SRI RAM JI : ² By the orders of the auspicious Maharaja Sri Sansar Chand; in the presence of the auspicious Rai Sahib Sri Anirudh Chand.

For the sustenance of Pandit Ram Rath Dikshit, ³ a piece of land duly measured and demarcated, worth sixty rupees a year, in the village Marinda ⁴ in the 'ilāqa' ⁵ of Pālam ⁶ has been granted with proprietary rights ⁷ out of devotion to Lord Krishna. Henceforth all the dues and revenues ⁸ that used to accrue to the state treasury should be considered as bestowed upon Pandit Ram Rath. The *kārdārs* ⁹ of the state should not offer any kind of hindrance.¹⁰ The aforesaid Pandit has been made the proprietor of the land in question. Whosoever succeeds to the throne should honour this pious commitment and whosoever is a descendant of Pandit Ram Rath will remain in the enjoyment of this grant.

Inscribed by Khushala, ¹¹ the *wazir*, in accordance with the orders of the exalted *Sarkār* on 1st Māgh, Sammat 1848 (A.D. 1791).

NOTES

1. In spite of the words used here we suggest that on the original order there was only one word, 'Sahi', and not strictly the signatures of Sansar Chand. Also that 'Sahi' was probably in Tākri.

2. This was a common mode of beginning a letter or a document. See, for instance, B.N. Goswamy, "A Painter's Letter to his Royal Patron", *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 86, no. 2.

3. An ancestor of Shri Bhū Dev. The Dikshits were among the most honoured *brahmins* in the hills and often held the position of the *Rāj-gurū*.

4. Still a sizeable town in the Palampur Tehsil.

5. The term 'ilāqa' refers simply to the area or the district. In spite of this loose use of the term, it may refer actually to the administrative unit, the *ta'alluqa* of Pālam.

6. The present town of Palampur is on the old site of Pālam.

7. The term 'milkiyat', again, is borrowed from Persian and bears the same connotation as in Mughal documents. In Document II the bestowing of proprietary rights on the grantee remains implicit; in this grant it is quite explicit. Thus, what was granted to the Pandit was a certain piece of land with full proprietary rights from the very beginning and he was exempted from all imposts and cesses for all times. It is not absolutely certain, however, that he could sell this piece of land if he chose to do so.

8. The phrase '*rasm-rūṣūm*' is being used here for the Persian '*rāsūmāt*' and refers to 'all customary dues'.

9. *Kārdārs* refers obviously to the revenue officials of the state. The term appears to have come into currency in the late eighteenth century and it occurs frequently in the Persian documents of the Sikh times as well as in the chronicles of the period.

10. We have not been able to decipher a few words in the sentence. But on the basis of our familiarity with documents of this nature we venture to suggest that the general sense of the sentence is being accurately conveyed through the translation we have given.

11. In a painting in the Chandigarh Museum from the collection of the Raja of Lambagraon, among a group of people is a person whose name is given as Khushala. He may well be the *wazir* Khushala of this document.

II

صحیح

شری مہاشری مہاراجہ شری سنسار چند بچنے
 شری مہاشری مہاراجہ شری جودھ بیر چند حاجر
 سبھے پٹے ایے دے جوتسی چنٹامن کی دھرم ارتھ دتے
 ک - ۲۵ / اکھری روپے پنجی دی جمیں کرشن اپن کری
 نسی کری دتی لوہڑی کی جوتسی دا کوئی ہوئے سے کھائے
 شری راجے دا کوئی ہوئے سے دیئے کوٹھی دے تنلکے بچ

حکم ما پھک سمت ۷۳ امر سردے ڈیرے لکھیا

II

Sahi (in Tākri)

By the orders of the great and auspicious Sri Maharaja Sansar Chand; in the presence of the great and auspicious Sri Raja Jodhbir Chand.

The *pattas* of *ā'imma* are given to Jyotishi Chintaman ¹ by way of *dharmarth*. ² Land worth rupees 25 (in words, rupees twentyfive) a year, is given in charity on account of Lohri ³ out of devotion to Lord Krishna. The descendants of the Jyotishi will enjoy this grant; the descendants of the Raja shall maintain it. In the *ta'lluqa* ⁴ Kothi. ⁵ In accordance with the orders.

Sammat 73 (A.D. 1816)

Written at the Amritsar Camp. ⁶

NOTES

1. His exact relationship with the family of Shri Bhu Dev is not known. But in all probability he was a member of the same family.

2. The expression '*rupai panjī dī jimin'*', in the context of this document, refers undoubtedly to a piece of land from which the revenues amounted to twentyfive rupees. Though it is implied that the revenues were paid in cash, it was not inevitably so. It is possible that the estimated share of the state from the produce of the land in question was calculated to be equivalent to twentyfive rupees.

3. A popular winter festival in northern India, celebrated especially for the birth of a son.

4. The '*taluka*' in Tākri is the *ta'alluqa* of Mughal documents, bearing the ordinary connotation of 'a district'. Therefore the *ta'alluqa* of Kothi refers simply to that unit for the purposes of revenue administration. The adoption of this Persian term in the hills, more or less in the sense which it has in Sikh documents, is not without significance.

5. Kothi is near modern Palampur and it is quite likely that the *ta'alluqa* of Kothi refers to the *ta'alluqa* of Pālam.

6. The fact that Sansar Chand issued this order from Amritsar, which was in the dominions of Ranjit Singh, is worth noting.

منجانب مہاراجہ رنجیت سنگھ صاحب بہادر



عاطلان حال و استقبال پرگنہ ... بسرور باشند
 مبلغ شصت روپیہ اراضی واقعہ موضع مارنڈہ دھرم
 ارتھ از عمل سری راجہ سنسار چند معاف و واگذار کردہ
 است بدستور معاف و واگذار داشتہ باشند و بیچ تکلیف
 نہہند مزید بران پنڈت جو را دھرم مورت است ہمہ کار
 خدمت معاف کردیم

تحریر ۱۱ چیت سمت ۸۶ بکرم

III

Copy of an order issued by Maharaja Ranjit Singh Sahib Bahadur.

(Personal Seal)

May the present and future 'āmils ¹ of the *pargana* ² . . . remain in happiness !

A piece of revenue-free land, worth sixty rupees (Rs. 60) a year, has been in conferment by way of *dharmarth* in the village Marinda since the time of Sri Raja Sansar Chand. They should continue to treat this land as revenue-free. They should not molest the grantee in any way. ³ Furthermore, since Pandit Jora ⁴ is the very embodiment of piety, we are pleased to exempt him from every kind of service. ⁵

Inscribed on 11 Chet, Sammat 1886 (A.D. 1829).

NOTES

1. Ranjit Singh's orders relating to grants of revenue-free lands were addressed to either *'āmils* or *kārdārs*. The two terms were interchangeable in so far as they referred to one and the same functionary, just as the terms *pargana* and *ta'alluqa* referred to the same administrative unit.

2. We have not been able to decipher the name of the *pargana* here. The term *pargana* for an administrative unit had by this time been sanctioned by its use for several centuries in northern India. It is not necessary, however, that the boundaries of *parganas* under Ranjit Singh coincided with their boundaries in Mughal times. Even in Mughal times the old *pargana* boundaries changed when some new *pargana* was created.

3. The word used in the original is *'taklif*', the singular of *takālīf* which finds frequent use in the *madad-i-ma'āsh* documents of the Mughal government. It obviously refers to 'imposts', which, through the orders contained in this document, were not to be levied. Hence the *'āmils* are being instructed to resist the temptation of levying any.

4. One of the ancestors of Shri Bhu Dev. Some early nineteenth century manuscripts in his hand are still available in the family collection.

5. The phrase in the original is *kār-khidmat* and literally means an act of service. The recipients of revenue-free lands were generally exempted from *kār-khidmat* or *begār*.

Article VI

Minor Inscriptions

Thousands of ordinary mosques and tombs and modest *khānqāhs* stand in their urban or rural settings all over northern India. Quite a considerable proportion of these structures are rather old and many of the old buildings bear inscriptions in Arabic and Persian. On some of these old structures one may also find ordinary writing in ink. These minor or incidental inscriptions, seen casually or in isolation from one another, appear to be of little significance and, consequently, they have remained largely unattractive to the student of medieval Indian history as well as to the 'surveyor' of archaeology. However, this inscriptional evidence is of obvious use to the local or the regional historian. In fact the collective evidence of minor inscriptions is bound to be useful even to the general historian. This evidence, indeed may provide insights which no other source material can.

At any rate, the importance of minor inscriptions can be illustrated with examples from a single town : BATALA, in the upper *bāri doāb* of the Panjab.¹ It was founded in the late fifteenth century and it appears to have attained to its maximum growth by the early eighteenth. Further increase in its population took place during the British rule and, more recently, it has witnessed an enormous increase in its size as well as population. Nevertheless several old mosques and tombs, with a considerable number of rather unobtrusive inscriptions on them, may still be seen there. These inscriptions are not very striking; some of them are quite difficult to decipher because they are so faint;

1. Batala may not be a typical town, but it is not very exceptional either.

and a few of them have to be discovered underneath the coats of white-wash. But they are all quite rewarding in their significance.

On the *jāmi' masjid* of Batala there are, for instance, verses in praise of the Prophet and, also the following lines :—

چراغ و مسجد و محراب و منبر
الوکر و عمر عثمان و حیدر

Chirāgh-o-masjid-o-mihrāb-o-mimbar
Abū Bakr-o-Umar Usmān-o-Haidar

This expression of *sunni* veneration for Muhammad and the first four *khalifas* may be expected *a priori*. It is nonetheless gratifying to find it being expressed at a particular place and a particular time. Concrete evidence in support of a common assumption has its unquestionable value. In the case of Batala, moreover, these verses appear to contain a little more than the conventional expression of a conventional sentiment. In another verse on the *jāmi' masjid*, allegiance to the law of Abu Hanifa is emphasized and the position of the first four *khalifas* is regarded as superior to that of the descendants of Ali :

دوستدار چار یارم نہ باولاد علی

Dostdār-i-chār yāram na b'aulād-i-'Ali

The Sunnis of Batala appear to have been conscious of the presence of the Shr'as and of their sectarian differences with them. Some other inscriptions show that the Shr'as too liked to publicize their sentiments particularly with regard to the family of Ali.

Sentiments of piety too are expressed in some of the

Persian inccriptions on the old mosques of Batala. As it may be expected, there is a good deal of emphasis upon the merit of *namāz* :

روز محشر که جانگداز بود
اولین پُرسش نماز بود

Rūz-i-mahshar keh jān gudāz bawadd
Awwalin pursash-i-namāz bawadd

There is also a general emphasis upon virtue and meritorious acts in the idea that human existence in its short span should be treated as a good opportunity given by God. On a mosque associated with the *khānqāh* of Shah Ismail, who is mentioned by Sujan Rai among the venerable saints of Batala, there is the verse :

چربندی دل درین دنیا که روزی چند مہمانی
چون ناگاہ مرگ پیش آید خوری آندم پشیمانی

Cheh bandi dil darin dunia keh rūz-i-chand mihmāni
Chū nāgāh marg pesh āyad khuri āndam pashimāni

It may also be pointed out that most of the old mosques and tombs bear *āyāt*. It may be of some significance to know which particular *āyāt* were chosen at a given place and time by the believers to project their beliefs. Even if it were to be discovered that the number of such *āyāt* is rather small and, hence, there is a good deal of uniformity over a large area, their evidence does not lose in significance. Their variety would be equally significant.

These illustrations do not exhaust the significance and

possible uses of minor inscriptions, for much depends on the nature of the inscriptions discovered and the purpose for which they may be used. In Batala, for instance, some inscriptions reveal the popularity of some *sūfis* of the Qādirī order. Many of the inscriptions supply some information on the life and activity of some important personages of the town or afford insight into the social life of the people. For instance, one epitaph in the graveyard of the family of Sir Fazl Husain mentions Mian Din Muhammad as managing the finances of Prince Sher Singh. Inscriptions on the tombs of another important family of Batala suggest the existence of professional epitaph-writers in the town. We may presuppose in fact a certain literary tradition which threw up better known poets or chroniclers like Nuruddin Waqif or Sujan Rai and Ahmad Shah.

By far the most interesting inscriptions in Batala are to be found on a structure now locally known as the *hajirā*, from the Persian *hazirah*. Above the only door to this octagonal structure there is an inscription on what may be called 'the foundation slab' of the *hajirah*. It refers to work started on a tank, a mosque and a garden on the 25th of Safar, A.H. 997, and completed on the 15th of Ramzān, A.H. 998, by Shamshir Khan Rajput, the meekest of the slaves of the Khalīfa of the *musalmin*, Abu'l Fateh Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar Bādshāh-i-Ghāzī. Some later chroniclers mention Shamshir Khan as simply the *hākim* of Batala, but Sujan Rai mentions him more specifically as its *karori*. His work endured and the *hajirah*, which was meant to serve as his sepulchre, became also a monument to his benevolent activity.

The *hajirah* of Shamshir Khan originally did not bear many inscriptions. There are over half a dozen *āyāt* beautifully inscribed below its high domed ceiling. Outsides, at the top of its arches

there are a few inscriptions in Persian, which by now are not easily decipherable. The clearest of these is a quatrain which may remind the reader of the quatrains of Umar Khayyam :

دوران که دل تو شاد و غمناک کند
از تختۀ عمر نقش ناپاک کند
خوش باش که طینت ترا دست قضا
از خاک سرشت عاقبت خاک کند

*Daurān keh dīl-i-tū shād-o-ghamnāk kunadd
Az takhta-i-'umar naqsh nāpāk kunadd
Khush bāsh keh tīnat turā dast-i-qazā
Az khāk sirisht 'aqibat khāk kunadd*

This may be only in imitation of Umar Khayyam, but it is nonetheless significant precisely for that reason. In any case, the sentiment it embodies is very close to a definite strain in his quatrains. Indeed :

Time makes you happy or sorrowful until your life is rubbed off the board of existence. Be happy (now that you have the boon of life); for the long arm of Fate is there, always to remind that from dust you come and unto dust you return.

More interesting and much more numerous than the original inscriptions on the *hazīrah* of Shamshir Khan are the later writings of scores of visitors 'who sought immortality by this means'.² A few of these are in Devanāgarī script but the large majority are in Persian. Some of these are easily decipherable;

2. S. Paranavitana (ed.) *Sigiri Graffiti* (Archæological Survey of Ceylon), Oxford University Press, 1950, I, xxvii: 'The insatiate itch of scribbling' on monuments is not a characteristic peculiar to the sightseer of today. 'There is ample evidence that, in ancient times, too, there were men who sought immortality by this means'.

others not so, partly because they are defaced and partly because they are couched in formidable *shikastah*.³ Many of these bear dates, along with the names, places and profession or parentage of the persons who wrote them. Most of them belonged to the town itself or to the upper *bāri doab*, but a few of them came from the neighbouring hills or from across the rivers Ravi and Beas. The earliest dated graffito comes from the reign of Akbar himself and, like some others of a later period, it was scribbled by a Hindu. The large majority of these graffiti, however, bear Muslim names and, taken together, they cover the reigns of Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb and their successors. In fact the practice survived into the Sikh period; indeed, into the British.

Some of these writers simply express their appreciation for Shamshir Khan. For instance, Mir Shah Muhammad (in all probability the father of the historian Ahmad Shah) wrote the following lines about a hundred and fifty years after the death of Shamshir Khan :

آفرین باد برین هست این مرد سخا

که ہمیں باغ چنین حوض زیبی کرد بنا

Āfirin bād barin himmat-i-in-mard-i-sakhā

Keh hamin bāgh chunin hauz zihe kard binā

Another graffito has the same import :

شاهش برین خواجہ کہ از بہر خدا

این مسجد و حوض و باغ را کرد بنا

عالم شدہ فیض یاب از دولت او

بی شبہ بہ فردوس برین دارد جا

3. A large number of photographs of the *hazirah* and its graffiti and inscriptions were kindly made available to me by Dr Ram Singh and Dr W.H. Mcleod of the Baring Christian College, Batala.

*Shābāsh barīn khwājah keh az bahr-i-Khudā
In masjid - o - hauz - o - bāgh rā kard binā
'Ālam shudah faiz - yāb az daulat - i - o
Be - shubah b'firdaus - i - barīn dārad jā*

There is ample suggestion in these verses that Shamshir Khan had come to be regarded as a public benefactor. The fact that men from far and near came to pay homage to the *khwājah* of the *hazīrah* suggests indeed that he had come to be regarded as a saintly figure. The *karori* of Batala was gradually forgotten amidst the growing legend of his saintliness and nearness to God.

This by no means is the only social significance of the graffiti on the *hazīrah*. In a long graffito *shī'a* sentiments are clearly expressed :

محمد چو بالائے منبر نشست
علی شاه مردان برابر نشست

*Muhammad chū bālā-i-mimbar nishast
Ali shāh - i - mardān barābar nishast*

Furthermore, Ali and Fatima and Hasan and Husain are compared to :

چراغ و مسجد و محراب و منبر

Chirāgh-o-masjid-o-mihrāb-o-mimbar

The legitimacy of the *imāmat* of Musa and Jafar is also emphasized. The enemies of Ali are cursed and his 'family' is held in high esteem as worthy of benedictions :

علی و آل علی را بجان و دل صلوات
بدشمنان علی صد هزار لعنت باد

'Alī-o-āl-i-'Alī rā b'jān-o-dil salwāt
B'dushmanān-i-'Alī sad hazār la'nat bād

This graffito ends with imprecations upon those who may try to efface it, and with the assurance of God's protection to those who may think well of it. The graffito, obviously, has remained safe from any sectarian vandalism.

Quite a few of the graffiti give expression to religious feeling and sentiment in their varied dimension. Insistence on not injuring others, for instance :

هزار گنجِ قناعت هزار گنجِ کرم
هزار طاعتِ شبها هزار بیداری
هزار روزه دهر روزه را هزار نماز
قبول نیست تو اگر خاطری بیازاری

Hazār ganj-i-qanā'at hazār ganj-i-karm
Hazār tā'at - i - shab-hā hazār bidāri
Hazār rozah-o-har rozah rā hazār namāz
Qabūl nist tū gar khātiri b'āzāri

Emphasis upon incessant remembrance of God, for instance :

چشم که درو خار بود چون خنجر
دائیس که پے کار بود چون خنجر

Chasm-i-keh daro khār bawadd chūn khuspad
Wānkas keh payi kār bawadd chūn khuspad

There is also a mystical dimension to devotion :

دل را رباب سازم و رگهائے تار تار

دیگر نه بود هست . بجز یار یار یار

Dil rā rubāb sāzam-o-rag'hāi tār tār

Digar nah būd hast b'juz yār yār yār

Then there is the mystical metaphor of intoxication :

اگر داری دل پاکي در ا در حلقهٔ مستان

Agar dāri dil-i-pāki darā dar halqah-i-mastān

Between the literal and the metaphorical, occasionally there may be no difference :

بیاساقی که این ویرانه از بسیار کس مانده

Biyā sāqī keh in wirānah az bisyār kas māndah

in a *ghazal* attributed to Hafiz, the insignificance of earthly attainments is underlined. In the two-doored tent of human life, tossed by the storm of existence, what matters if the window of livelihood is high or low. Indeed,

به هست و نیست مرغان ضمیر و خوشدل باش

که نیستیست مرا انجام هر کمال که هست

B'hast-o-nist maranjān zamīr-o khush-dil bāsh

Keh nistist saranjām - i - har kamāl keh hast

A few more of these graffiti may be mentioned to suggest the variety of sentiments expressed by the scribblers. In one of these there is a warning against pride in beauty, for beauty is short-lived. Another contains a full-throated praise of the garden and an invitation to the visitors to enjoy its charm and comfort. One, Harkishan Das son of Jaimal, writing on the 25th of Muharram, A.H. 1090, consoles himself into the belief that the plight of his heart is known to his friend :

احوال دل بدوست چه محتاج گفتن است
بر شمع سوزِ سینه پردانه روشن است

Ahwāl-i-dil b'dost cheh muhtāj-i-guftan ast
Bar sham' soz-i-sinah-i-parwānah raushan ast

Two of the most interesting graffiti are by Shaikh Abdullah of Chak Umar in the district of Gujrat, scribbled on the 3rd of Muharram, A.H. 1265, followed closely by another written on the same day of the same month but exactly thirty years later by Ahmad Gujrati, a disciple of Shaikh Abdullah. The master had written :

برحمتِ سر زلفِ تو واقفم در نه
کَشش چو نیت از آن سو چه سود کوشیدن

B'rahmat-i-sar-i-zulfi-tū wāqifam warnah
Kashash chū nist azān sū cheh sūd koshidan

And the disciple wrote :

ای نرم گردان از کتوم دلمائے خوبان را
و گرنه جستجو را رهبر کن عشق بازان را

Ilāhī narm gardān az katūm dilhā-i-khūbān rā
Wagarnah justjū rā rāhbar kun 'ishqbāzān rā

A few of the graffiti are in prose. For instance, Khwajah Khurd wishes to submit to Mian Qutbuddin that :

هر که باشد در پناه اللہ سبحانه باشند
Har keh bāshand dar panāh-i-Allah-i-Subhānah bāshand

Last of all :

غرض از سیر و سفر صحبت اهل نظریت
 ورنه ز پیمودن این بادیه خوش در دلبریت

Gharz az sair - o - safar suhbat - i - ahl - i - nazrest
Warnah ze paimūdan-i-in bādiah khush dar-i-dilbarest

Indeed, it may be much more pleasant to sit at the door of the beloved than to wander in this wilderness called the world; but then, one may take to travel to meet 'the men of insight'.

The graffiti on the *hazirah* of Shamshir Khan, thus, reveal that this monument to his benevolent piety became a focus of the sentiments and feelings of a considerable number of people. The unlettered thousands who visited the *hazirah* of the *khwājah* to make psychological adjustment with their hopes and fears have left no tangible record behind them. Only the educated, belonging largely to the middling social strata, could have the additional satisfaction of immortalizing their emotions with indelible ink, making the *hazirah* a mirror as it were to much of the emotional life of the educated individuals of the times. Some of them have expressed their choicest sentiments in language borrowed from great poets; some have made their own modest attempt at self-expression; a few have given vent to their personal or sectarian differences; but all of them have left something for the student of history. An interesting aspect of the life of the people of Batala and the surrounding region would have been lost to the historian, but for the inscriptions on the *hazirah* of the *karori* of Akbar.

Article VII

The Shari'at and the Non-Muslims

Talking of the *shari'at* and its application to non-Muslims during the Mughal period, Baillie intuitively observed over a century ago that allowance was probably made in matters like marriage, adoption and inheritance but the *shari'at* was applied to Hindus 'in matters of contract and ordinary dealings of men with each other'.¹ He surmised, indeed, that the dealings of Hindus even among themselves 'must have been regulated' by the *shari'at*. This observation finds ample support from documentary evidence.

Ibn Hasan has given the text of one *rahnnāma* (mortgage-deed) in which the mortgagor, Rai Chand, is a *brahman* and the mortgagee is one Beni Ram, son of Lachmi Narain, 'showing the application of Islamic law in such cases'.² Bakht Mal of Lahore sold his house to Sucha Ram in 1740 in accordance with the *shari'at*.³ Some Muslim *jāts* of a village named Hari Rampur

1. Baillie, Neil B.E., *The Moohummudan Law of Sale*, London 1850, viii & ix.

2. *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, Munshiram Manohar Lal, Delhi 1970 (reprint), 362-63.

This document is in the British Museum (M.S. Add. 6585). Ibn Hasan wrongly refers to Udai Ram and Jai Kishan as the mortgagors; they are the sureties. The mortgagor clearly is Rai Chand, son of Nain Singh, son of Hirdai Ram, the *runnārdār*. It may also be added that this transaction contains one interesting condition. If the amount of money borrowed, that is 1200 rupees, is not returned within six months the mortgagee can sell the house and recover his money.

3. B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1969, Document VII.

Sukhdev in the upper *bāri doāb* sold 400 *bighas* of land to Gosain Sukhdev of Pindori through a legal *bai'nāma* (sale-deed).⁴ Some *shaikhzādas* gave their *ā'imma* land on mortgage to the Gosain of Pindori.⁵ In the *Bhandāri Collection* of the Punjab State Archives, there is a large number of documents which have significant bearing on the application of the *shari'at* to non-Muslims in Batala during the Mughal and Sikh times.

It may be pointed out, first, that the legal practice of the medieval times did not always conform to the theoretical provisions of the legal texts. Some forms of transaction had been evolved to evade the spirit of the law. For example, a gift for consideration, *hiba bil'iwaz*, which did not require the transfer of possession but which virtually amounted to sale, enabled the parties to avoid fulfilling an essential condition of sale. Similarly, the transaction of conditional sale, or *bai'at-wafā*, was simply a contrivance for *riba* (the practice of usury) which was not allowed by the *shari'at*. Occasionally, even the letter of the law was infringed in actual practice. For example, according to the *Fatawā-i-Ālamgiri* the vendor could not be compelled to deliver up the previous bill of sale while selling a property which he had acquired through purchase.⁶ But in actual practice we find vendees not only possessing the previous bills of sale but also insisting sometimes to get them from the vendors. According to the *Hedaya*, a Muslim could not be a witness to a transaction between two non-Muslims.⁷ But in the documents of the *Bhandāri Collection* we do find Muslim witnesses to transactions between Hindus.

It must be emphasized, however, that conformity to the

4. *Ibid.*, Document IX.

5. *Ibid.*, Document XVII.

6. Baillie, Niel B.E., *The Moohummudan Law of Sale*, 48.

7. Hamilton, Charles, *Hedaya, or Guide*, London 1791, II, 691.

provisions of the *shari'at* is much more striking than evasion or divergence. For example, if we closely examine a *bai'nāma* executed in the *qāzi's* court we find that it contains the name, extraction and residence of the vendor and of the vendee; it contains a quantitative and qualitative description of the property, and its exact location; it mentions the exact price of the property, specifying the coin; it specifies the legal conditions of sale that have been fulfilled; it contains the name and extraction of at least one surety who indentifies that vendor and certifies that the property in question is in the legal possession of the vendor at the time of its sale; and invariably, a deed of sale bears the signatures of the vendor and the surety and also the signature of several witnesses. Now each of these clauses is a logical corrolary of one or another provision of the *shari'at*, as it is embodied in the *Hedaya* and the *Fatāwā-i-'Ālamgiri*. Also, almost every deed of sale is accompanied by a formal receipt from the vendor, called *fāriḡhkhatī*, embodying the fact that he has actually received the price of his property. This conforms to the provision that the purchaser is first called upon to deliver the price.⁸

It may now be added that what is true of the deed of sale is also true of the transactions covered by the deed of mortgage (*rahnāma* or *girvināma*), the deed of gift (*hibanāma*) the deed of exchange (*mu'āwiza*) and the deed of rent (*ra'iyatnāma*). All these transactions relate to property and involve the question of its possession and use.

According to the *Fatāwā-i-'Ālamgiri*, when one of the contracting parties is a Muslim and the other a non-Muslim, 'nothing is lawful between them that is not lawful between two

8. *The Moohummudan Law of Sale*, 29.

Mooslims'.⁹ In the documents of the *Bhandāri Collection* there are several instances of transactions between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. As it may be expected, these transactions are strictly in accordance with those which are contracted by Muslims. The instances of transactions between Hindus, however, are more numerous and in these instances too the terms of contracts are precisely the same as in the case of transactions between Muslims. The contracting parties in these documents belong to several social groupings: *sayyids*, *shaikhs*, *pathāns* and Muslim shopkeepers, *chhāpagars*, dyers and potters; *brahmans*, *khatris*, *bānias* and Hindu *chhāpagars*, goldsmiths and carpenters. It is quite obvious, therefore, that the law administered by the *qāzī* of Batala was uniformly applied to all Muslims and non-Muslims.

This is not to say, however, that the law was universally applied. A person had the choice to go or not to go to the *qāzī's* court; but if he chose to go, he had to accept the terms which conformed to the legal practice of the times. There are several unofficial documents also in the *Bhandāri Collection*. Between these and the official documents there is no important difference so far as the terms of contracts are concerned. This may be taken as a measure of the acceptance of the *shari'at* by Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

The willing acceptance of the *shari'at* by a very considerable number of the non-Muslims of Batala, in matters of contract, is not difficult to understand. The uniform application of the law of the state gave them security regarding property. In fact the *bai'nāma* created individual right to property and enabled a person to acquire more and more if he could. The *girvināma* too promised profit to the mortgagee.

9. *Ibid.*, 160.

Batala was by no means an exceptional town. Some of the documents in the *Bhandāri Collection* itself relate to Amritsar, Ferozepore and Ludhiana. It may be safely suggested that a considerable number of non-Muslims in every town of the Punjab accepted the *shari'at* in matters of contract. Whereas in the countryside the custom probably remained the king, in the urban centres of the Panjab custom was subordinated to the *shari'at* if not replaced by it. This may in fact be true of all the Mughal towns in northern India. It must be emphasized, however, that the application of the *shari'at* did not affect the domain of custom in the area of 'personal and familial law'.

who comes to rule in the Panjab. In this connection it is significant to note that he does not deal with the successors of the Mughal Emperor Ahmad Shah precisely because the Panjab had by that time been wrested from the Mughals by (the Marathas first, and then by) the Afghans.¹⁸ It is equally significant to note that he devotes a larger number of pages to the new conquerors of the Panjab than to the predecessors of the Mughals.¹⁹ The next phase is marked by a categorical statement by Ganesh Das that 'after the negligence and absence of the hold of the *sultān* of Delhi over the vast territories of the Panjab and the ineffectiveness of the Pathans of Kabul, the effective control of the sect of the Sikhs, called the *Khālsā*, was established'. The author goes on to add, even more significantly, that 'in fact the provinces of Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar and the other adjoining territories became a part of the Panjab'.²⁰ In about thirty pages, he recounts the rise of the Sikhs to political power in the Panjab almost as a background to the rise of Ranjit Singh.²¹ It is to the establishment, decline and fall of the House of Ranjit Singh that Ganesh Das devotes the largest portion of his work.²²

18. *Ibid.*, 78.

19. 79-104, devoted to Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali and his successors.

20. *Ibid.*, 104-05.

21. *Ibid.*, 105-34. In these pages, Ganesh Das gives first a very brief account of the Sikh Gurus in which he emphasizes the importance of the measures of Guru Gobind Singh, and then of Banda and of the attempts made at the suppression of the Sikhs by the Mughal and Afghan authorities. Ganesh Das knew that numerous Sikh chiefs had risen into power in the late eighteenth century but he deliberately concerns himself with only the chiefs of his home-town, Gujrat (*ibid.*, 133).

22. In fact from page 134 onwards Ganesh Das deals with the House of Ranjit Singh and his dominions, thus devoting to them two-thirds of his work.

Ganesh Das's veneration for Ranjit Singh sprang largely from a deep, perhaps unconscious, respect for established authority. He praises Ranjit Singh for many of his personal qualities; but the greatest quality of this undoubtedly great man was his capacity to create an empire for himself.²³ Ganesh Das shows his respectful attitude not only to Ranjit Singh and his successors but also to the other Sikh Chiefs, like Sahib Singh Bhangi.²⁴ It is highly significant to note, however, that Ganesh Das has very little sympathy for the Sikhs as a people. In their war with the English, for instance, Ganesh Das blames the *qaum-i-khālsā-i-khudsar*, whom he also calls the *mūi-darāzān-i-beshā'ūr* or even the *mukhālifān-i-bad-akhtar-o-mufsidān-i-tabah-khātir*.²⁵ In fact, he attributes the fall of the family of Ranjit Singh to the *bad-masti-i-sikhān-i-khānah-kharāb*.²⁶ It may be argued that Ganesh Das, who was expecting favour from the English, would naturally show his antipathy towards their late enemies. It is important to note, therefore, that Ganesh Das betrays no sympathy with the Sikhs in their 'revolt' against the Mughal authority when they are characterized by the phrase *firqah-i-mufsidah*.²⁷ Not that he had any special consideration

23. *Ibid.*, 329.

24. In fact, Ganesh Das uses the title 'Singh Sāhib' for Gujjar Singh and Maha Singh as well as for Sahib Singh : *ibid.*, 133, 136 & 139.

25. *Ibid.*, 365, 377, 390 & 405. The English equivalents of the terms used by Ganesh Das would be something like : 'the sect of the headstrong *Khālsā*', 'the long-haired blockheads' and 'the ill-starred enemy and the evil-minded mischief-mongers'.

26. *Ibid.*, 406. The English equivalent of the term used here would be something like : 'the profligacy of the Sikhs - may they have no dwelling place'.

27. *Ibid.*, 121. Ganesh Das also uses the terms *mufsidān-i-aqwām-i-sikhān* (67) and *sikhān-i-ghāratgar* (130) for the Sikhs - the latter in their conflict with Ahmad Shah Abdali.

for the Mughals, Ganesh Das nonetheless respects their established claims. He had as much respect for the claims of Nadir Shah and, therefore, does not take sides in recounting his conflict with the rulers of Delhi.²⁸ Just as it was a legitimate goal to establish power and authority, so was it legitimate for the rulers to wage war.

This is not to say, however that Ganesh Das condones any and every use to which power was put in the past by those who held it even legitimately from his viewpoint. It is true that he sometimes repeats only the judgements of his authorities;²⁹ it is also true that he betrays no flare for explicit evaluation or moral judgment. Nevertheless, he appreciates the difference between what may be called the good and the bad use of power and authority. Talking of the benevolent public measures of Sher Shah and Salim Shah, for instance, Ganesh Das comments that in the art of good government and justice few of the rulers of the earlier days could be favourably compared with 'this father and the son'.³⁰ In his account of Akbar, Ganesh Das stresses the goodness of his reign by dwelling on the measures relating to the *jiziya* and commerce. It is interesting to note that the author grows almost lyrical on the abolition of the *jiziya*.³¹ Jahangir was benevolent and just like his father.³² Shah Jahan's reign was prosperous and happy.³³ Aurangzeb re-imposed the *jiziya* on all the non-Muslims and re-imposed discriminatory taxes; he persecuted the unorthodox

28. *Ibid.* 80-89.

29. *Ibid.*, 33.

30. *Ibid.*, 36.

31. *Ibid.*, 40-41.

32. *Ibid.*, 44.

33. *Ibid.*, 46-47.

among the Muslims and encouraged the Hindus to accept Islam.³⁴ It is quite certain that Ganesh Das did not approve of these measures.³⁵ Bahadur Shah patronized his Hindu and Muslim subjects equally well, particularly in the Panjab.³⁶ Liberal attitude of Ranjit Singh too commended itself to Ganesh Das and his tone of deep respect for the Maharaja may well be attributed to his genuine appreciation of this trait of Ranjit Singh as a ruler. This might be expected from a servant of the Lahore Durbār.

Ganesh Das's values nonetheless appear to spring from a sturdy practical sense which in turn was probably the result of his acceptance of the norms of his times. This is evident, for instance from his treatment of love. Like many of his contemporaries he evinces a deep interest in folk-tales of romantic love which he depicts with a good deal of gusto.³⁷ But when his conception of romantic love comes into conflict with his ideal of conjugal fidelity, he chooses the latter. Even so, he does not reveal much moral indignation; he only advises the reader not to pine for women.³⁸ He has much praise for the fidelity of the *khatrānis* and is rather proud of being a *khatrī* himself.³⁹ Compared with the *jāts*, the *khatris* were timid; but this timidity resulted in caution and prudence,

34. *Ibid.*, 59-60.

35. Ganesh Das's sentiment against forced conversion comes out clearly in his account of the martyrdom of Haqiqat Rai : *ibid.*, 232-45.

36. *Ibid.*, 67-68.

37. Ganesh Das's style is at its best when he deals with the love-stories of Sohni and Mahiwal (181-88), of a *Sati* (188-200), of Hir and Ranjha (211-17) and Mirza and Sahibah (265-72).

38. *Ibid.*, 15-188.

39. Ganesh Das traces his descent from the Raghuvanshi Raja Dashrath and proudly remembers at least ten generations of his ancestors : *ibid.*, 228-31.

Consequently, whereas the Sikhs (who were mostly *jāts*) had dared and done enough to become the masters of the *khatri*s, the latter had changed very little in their essential character. But they were extremely important at subordinate levels, now as before.⁴⁰ The Muslim rulers had realized the indispensability of the *khatri*s for civil administration and the Sikh rulers had followed that tradition of employing the *khatri*s who knew how to adjust themselves to a change in their masters. They possessed a practical good sense which enabled them to survive the changes at the top. Ganesh Das found no difficulty in shifting his allegiance from his Sikh and Dogra masters to the British.

Ganesh Das's anxiety to cater to the interests of the British administrators in the Panjab is understandable. In the last portion of his work, where the English are winning their war with the Sikhs, he completely identifies himself with the victors. There is tendency now to treat the armies of the Panjab as 'the other side'.⁴¹ In Ganesh Das's presentation the British occupation of the Panjab was both justified and inevitable. Furthermore, it is not only in justifying the ways of the British with the successors of Ranjit Singh that Ganesh Das caters to the interests of the new rulers of the Panjab. A large portion of his work appears particularly aimed at supplying the kind of information which would be prized by the British administrators. One hundred and fifty pages of the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* are devoted to a description of the Panjab.⁴²

40. The *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* contains innumerable references to the important Khatri clans of the Panjab and of individual Khatri holding important positions in the revenue administration of the Sikh chiefs as well as under the Mughals. His own ancestors significantly had served Bahlol Lodi.

41. *Ibid.*, 392 On page 396, Ganesh Das uses term the *fauj-i-harifān* (enemy-troops) for the Sikh army.

42. *Ibid.*, 157-305 (which is nearly one-third of his work !)

This portion furnishes a good deal of topographical, sociological, cultural and historical data and now becomes in a sense the most valuable part of Ganesh Das's work.

The opportunities which Ganesh Das had of obtaining information on the Panjab of his day must be remembered in any assessment of the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* as a source of regional history. In the introduction to his work Ganesh Das states his method to be one of judicious selection.⁴³ At several places in his work he refers to histories or historians in general.⁴⁴ He had obviously consulted a considerable number of historical works far composing the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*. However, he rarely tries to exercise his own historical judgment on the information received from the work of others.⁴⁵ Sometimes he brings the conflicting traditions or authorities to the reader's notice;⁴⁶ but generally he is content to relate in his own words whatever has been found in historical works available to him. But he did not depend upon historical or literary works alone for writing his account of the Panjab. He belonged to an old *khatrī* family of revenue officials and himself had an experience of working under the government of Ranjit Singh, just as his father had served the Bhangi chief Sahib Singh.⁴⁷ That under these circumstances he could gather a lot of factual information is evident from some of the information collected by him. For example, he reproduces the contents of a *farmān* of Nadir Shah.⁴⁸ That

43. *Ibid.*, 2.

44. *Ibid.*, 2, 9, 12, 24, 28, 32, 90 & 105.

45. The only example of historical reasoning on the part of Ganesh Das is to be found in connection with the determination of the dates of Bikramajit and Salvahan (*ibid.*, 13).

46. See, for example, *ibid.*, 9.

47. *Ibid.*, 228-32, *passim*.

48. *Ibid.*, 81.

he had collected his information carefully may be inferred from the fact that he frankly confesses his relative ignorance of the Jullundur Doab.⁴⁹

Ganesh Das's interests as a revenue official as well as his opportunities determine the range of the most valuable information to be found in the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*. The Panjab of Ranjit Singh and his immediate predecessors, particularly its administrative and economic matters, is the *forte* of Ganesh Das. His account of the Sikh chiefs (including Ranjit Singh) is particularly valuable not only because he supplies some fresh information on them but also because of his almost detached moral attitude towards them. Ganesh Das looks upon them as the legitimate rulers of the Panjab: but he does not regard them as unique in any way. His information on the polity of the Sikhs, therefore, has its own peculiar merit.⁵⁰

49. *Ibid.*, 305.

50. For an analysis of the descriptive portion of the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* see, J.S. Grewal & Indu Banga, *Early Nineteenth Century Panjab*, Guru Nanak University, Amritsar 1974.

Article XI

The Character of Sikh Rule

To discuss the question of 'secularism and theocracy in Sikh rule', with the current connotations of these terms in this country, is to discuss the attitude of Sikh rulers towards their non-Sikh subjects and the bearing of their religion on their polity. It is necessary, therefore, to turn to those aspects of Sikh history which have a bearing on this question.

There was hardly any religious belief or practice of his times, whether Hindu or Muslim, which Guru Nanak did not denounce in clear and unequivocal terms. There is hardly any doubt that he came to assume the role of a founder, the founder of a distinctive religious path. Yet it is difficult to think of a religious leader more essentially tolerant in his attitudes than the founder of Sikhism; he believed in suasion and not in coercion. The use of coercion, or even earthly inducement, in the propagation of Sikhism has found as little favour with its followers as with its founder. No Sikh of any consideration did ever disclaim the exclusive validity of his faith. But no Sikh worth the name did ever think of persecuting those who did not belong to his faith. In the writings of Bhāi Gurdās, who has been called the St. Paul of Sikhism, there is no contempt for the beliefs of others; in the works of Guru Gobind Singh there is no bitterness against his enemies.

In this perspective, the attitude of Sikh rulers towards their political enemies and towards their non-Sikh subjects acquires a meaning hitherto undreamt of Banda Bahadur was the first Sikh to proclaim formally the establishment of sovereign rule in the Panjab in the second decade of the eighteenth century. Much

atrocities are associated with his name by the Persian chroniclers and by those of the modern historians who have leaned heavily on them. He did sack a few towns. Also, he appears to have been guided by a feeling of vengeance upon the persecutors of the Sikh Gurus. For example, the town of Sarhind suffered the most at his hands, for the *faujdār* of Sarhind had executed the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh in cold blood. Ordinarily, Banda treated his opponents humanely; he was never wantonly cruel, particularly in peace. Muslim soldiers are known to have fought on his side.

After Banda's execution at Delhi in 1716, the Sikhs suffered severely at the hands of the Mughal Governors of the province of Lahore for over thirty-five years. But during these very years of persecution they organized themselves for the acquisition of power. The foundations of Sikh rule were re-laid in the 1750s. Even Ahmad Shah Abdali who had ousted the Mughals and the Marathas from the Panjab was obliged in the early 1760s to relinquish his control over the province of Lahore which the Mughal Emperor had formally ceded to him. However, in his anxiety to annihilate the Sikhs Ahmad Shah had razed the Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar to the ground and filled the tank with earth and bricks and dirt. Also, he had inflicted a heavy blow on the Sikhs in 1762, killing over ten thousand in a single day. Thus, during the fifty years after Banda's death, the Sikh aspiration for independence had brought persecution to one generation and the Sikh struggle for independence had brought suffering to another. During these fifty years of survival and struggle the Sikhs too killed the civilian supporters of their persecutors; also, in retaliation, they occasionally destroyed places of Muslim worship.

With this background, the Sikhs as rulers showed a

remarkable degree of tolerance and benevolence towards their non-Sikh subjects. A few instances of eighteenth-century Sikh chiefs who were inimical towards their non-Sikh subjects, particularly their Muslim subjects are certainly known. They all belonged to the first generation of chiefs who had borne the brunt of Mughal and Afghan animosity. Their proportion in the total number of eighteenth-century Sikh chiefs was very small, almost negligible. Alha Singh, the founder of the Patiala state, is well known for his humane treatment of all his subjects, irrespective of their creed. What is not so well known however is that Alha Singh in this respect was a typical Sikh chief of the eighteenth century. Much before Ranjit Singh became the Maharaja of the Panjab, the Sikh rulers had employed Hindus and Muslims, as well as Sikhs, in their governments. They kept up the *qāzi* and his court which continued to perform nearly all its old functions, just as the *qāzi* continued to enjoy the old grants of revenue-free land. In fact the Sikh rulers confirmed all old grants as a matter of policy. They gave fresh grants to Sikhs, but not to them alone. The patronage of the Sikh states was extended to Hindus and Muslims as well. Ranjit Singh's catholicity and liberality in these matters assimilate him to Akbar. This has been often emphasized by his historians as a remarkable trait of his statesmanship. Evidence brought to light only recently leaves no doubt that in this respect the pettiest Sikh ruler resembled the best of the Mughals. Much of that liberality may be explained in terms of exigency and may be attributed to the practical good sense of the Sikh rulers. But the secret of that liberality has to be found also in their faith, the faith of Guru Nanak.

The Influence of Sikhism on the behaviour and outlook of the Sikh rulers as individuals is one kind of bearing which Sikhism had on Sikh polity. Though this has passed un-noticed

by the historians of the Sikhs, they have generally postulated a very close connection between the religion of the Sikhs and their polity. For a proper perspective we have again to go back to the origins.

Guru Nanak's primary concern was with religion of course. It is equally important to know however that in his theological thought all earthly concerns were given a definite importance in subordination to the primacy of salvation. As is generally pointed out, he exalted manual labour to the level of religious merit. It is generally forgotten however that he equated all honest work with manual labour. Thus, a just ruler was as honourable as a carpenter. The condemnation of contemporary politics and government by Guru Nanak springs from his belief in the ideal of justice, an ideal which appeared to be flagrantly violated by the holders of political power in his days. He denounced the pursuit of political power if it ran counter to the path of salvation. He did not denounce power consecrated to the cause of justice and human welfare. This positive aspect of his outlook on politics has been generally ignored amidst too facile an insistence on his condemnation of contemporary politics.

By the end of the sixteenth century the Sikhs had come to form a distinct socio-religious group, a community closely knit by its common and unqualified allegiance to the Guru. It had no political aspirations, much less a political programme. But it was a veritable state within the Mughal Empire. It was at this juncture in Sikh history that Guru Arjan was put to death through the orders of Jahangir in the first year of his reign. Guru Hargobind, the son of Guru Arjan and the fifth successors of Guru Nanak, reacted sharply to the execution of his father and his predecessor. He trained himself and the most zealous of his followers in the art of war: he encouraged the Sikhs to send gifts of horses and arms; and, above all, he

constructed the Akāl Takht, or the Immortal Throne, beside the Harmandir Sāhib at Amritsar. A new idea was born, the idea of self-defence against physical aggression. Guru Hargobind gallantly fought three battles against the *mansabdārs* of Shah Jahan. From here, as a British historian puts it, there was no turning back for the Sikhs to the doubtful merit of mendicants, if at all they had been mere mendicants even in the days of Guru Nanak.

In 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed at Delhi through Aurangzeb's orders. He had refused to acknowledge Aurangzeb's right to interfere in the affairs of the Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh, the son of Guru Teg Bahadur and the grandson of Guru Hargobind, did not take long to revive the practices of his grandfather in preparing himself and his Sikhs for self-defence against external aggression. With his headquarters at Anandpur, he came into conflict with the chief of Kahlur (Bilaspur). To avoid further conflict he settled down at Paonta on the border of Nahan and Garhwal. There the chief of Garhwal chose to attack him, but only to suffer ignominious defeat. Guru Gobind Singh returned to Anandpur. From there he sent his men to fight on the side of the rebel hill chiefs against the Mughal *faujdār* of Kangra. Two unsuccessful campaigns were led against him by the Mughal *faujdār*. And then, for a few years he was left undisturbed at Anandpur.

It was during this interval of peace that Guru Gobind Singh instituted the Order of the Khālśa in 1699, nearly twenty-five years after the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur. This measure was meant in the first place to consolidate the Sikh community, for only those who gave their complete allegiance to the Guru, without the mediacy of the *masands*, were regarded as true Sikhs, in fact the only Sikhs. Their distinct identity was further sharpened by a distinctive outward appearance. Also, they

were asked to wear arms. They were prepared to defend themselves against external interference. Though the aims of Guru Gobind Singh were not political aims directly, his measures had serious implications for politics. His belief in the justness of his cause and the injustice of the state was likely to result, and it did result, in an open conflict of arms. Guru Gobind Singh suffered heavy losses in this conflict, including the loss of all his four sons. But he did not compromise his conscience. Upon his death, his followers rose against the Mughal authority and wrested political power from the hands of its functionaries in the Panjab. The establishment of a sovereign state under the leadership of Banda Bahadur logically stemmed from the measures of Guru Gobind Singh.

Banda's achievement was ephemeral but it served as a source of lasting inspiration for the Khālsa of Guru Gobind Singh even if they disowned him as a Guru. Banda had struck coins, the indubitable token of sovereignty, with an inscription that attributed the political success of the Khālsa to the True Lord through the grace of 'the sword' of Guru Nanak. The inscription on Banda's seal had a similar import. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, when Sikh rule was re-established, the coins struck by the Sikh rulers bore the inscriptions used by Banda. The link was provided by the first generation of leaders after Banda who had refused to accept the authority of the Mughal government and continued the struggle for independent existence against heavy odds. The Sikh writings of the early eighteenth century reveal that the followers of Guru Gobind Singh had come to believe in their ultimate destiny to become rulers. Thus, to the belief in the exclusive validity of their faith was added the positive idea of self-rule, in place of the idea of self-defence. The faith of the Sikhs therefore served partly as the motivating force of their politics. No more adding up of other factors would ever explain their rise to power without invoking this essential factor.

The common bond of faith and interest enabled the Sikhs to take collective decisions through *gurmata*s at Amritsar during a most crucial phase of their history. It also enabled them to take collective action through the Dal Khāl̄sa either in defence against the Afghans or in acquiring power and territories.

Having said so much we have said nearly all about the bearing of Sikh faith on the polity of the Sikhs. The Sikh rulers derived their authority from God, or, in a few cases, from an earthly potentate. In either case, however, they held the substance of power in their own hands and used it in accordance with the dictates of their interest or their common sense. Completely autonomous in their territories, they appointed their own *diwāns*, *nāzims*, *faujdārs* and *kārdārs*. Even before the rise of Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler was a kind of Mughal ruler in miniature. The petty scale of his operations should not oblige us to raise a difference of degree into a difference of kind.

This is not to suggest, however, that the Sikh rulers were arbitrary in the use of their power. As a rule they were against innovation in their administrative practices. So much so that they liked to refer to the Mughal rulers as their predecessors and tried to imitate them if and when they could. They found little incentive for change in fresh directions. Their public policies were seldom guided by religious considerations. Though they were closer to their predecessors in their theocentric view of the world, they were more akin to their successors, the British, in their 'secular' outlook on matters of government and administration.

Article XII

The Present State of Sikh Studies

I have chosen to speak on the state of Sikh studies within certain limitations. In the first place, I am going to consider only the work published in English, not because no contribution has been made to Sikh studies in languages other than English, but only because my own familiarity with English works is the widest. However, it is also very probable that the bulk of serious studies so far has come out in English. Secondly, though it is possible to talk at length about each and every work published in the past, I shall be speaking about the broad development of Sikh studies in the past century and a half, a development which can be outlined with reference to the work of some individual writers. Thirdly, I shall be able to indicate the lines on which Sikh studies may be developed in the future only on the basis of my limited understanding of the subject.

Of crucial significance in the context of the development of Sikh studies is the work of Joseph Davey Cunningham. He published *A History of the Sikhs* in 1849. It has been reprinted several times subsequently and even today it is treated with respect by the students of Sikh history. In a way, his work was the culmination of British interest in the Sikhs. Late in eighteenth century some travellers, diplomats, administrators and scholars had written about the Sikhs, their history and their religion. This interest was inspired by the belief that the Sikhs were politically important in the north-western parts of the subcontinent and it was therefore useful to have information about them. Their past was meant to elucidate their present for sound political action in the near or distant future. This practical interest was supported and supplemented by the intellectual

curiosity of the few who were interested in universal history or the history of religion. John Malcolm, as the author of *A Sketch of the Sikhs* in the first decade of the nineteenth century, saw no incompatibility in these two kinds of interests. In his view, to know about the Sikhs was necessary for practical purposes and in order to really know the Sikhs it was necessary to know their religion, manners and customs as well as their history. Those who wrote after Malcolm and before Cunningham were more frankly interested in Sikh politics and, therefore, in the then recent political history of the Sikhs. After the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, political interest in his kingdom excluded every other interest; a large variety of information was obtained from several sources and published. After the first Anglo-Sikh War, those who wrote on the Sikhs revealed in dwelling upon the war and its events; also, almost invariably they gloated over the success of British arms, blamed the Sikhs for bringing about the war, and justified the official policy of the British rulers of India. This immediate background, as much as the larger background of nearly three-quarters of century, enables us to understand the significance of Cunningham's work.

Cunningham had read all that his predecessors had written; he had consulted almost every source of Sikh history by then published. He wrote his work on the eve of the extinction of the kingdom of Lahore. He combined the practical and intellectual interests of his predecessors and his contemporaries. It should not come to us as a surprise, therefore, that his *History* became the epitome of British interest in the Sikhs. Once the Panjab was annexed to the British Empire, the nature of British interest in the Sikhs underwent a sudden change. No British writer on the Sikhs has ever seriously attempted to replace the work of J.D. Cunningham.

This is not to say, however, that Cunningham's work

Article IX

Medieval Batala

A mere mention of medieval Batala may bring to the mind of the student of Panjab history many a figure associated with the town : the indomitable Banda, the Durrani conqueror Ahmad Shah, the astute Mughlani Begum or Adina Beg Khan, the Kanhiya Jai Singh or the Ramgarhia Jassa Singh, the widowed *rānī* Sada Kaur, the prince Sher Singh, the poet Nuruddin *wāqif*, the historian Sujān Rai or Ahmad Shah, the *Jagat-gurū* Nanak, for instance.¹ However, it is not merely the association of well known figures with Batala that makes it important to the historian of the Panjab. Local history has an obvious importance for the study of regional history and, fortunately for us, there is enough material to know something of Batala as a medieval town.²

In the reign of Sultan Bahlol Lodi the present site of Batala was selected by a Bhatti Rajput, Ramdev, for founding a new settlement on the mound of some old ruined town.³ According to Sujān Rai, the countryside in the upper *doāba-i-bārī* had at one

1. Guru Nanak's marriage at Batala is well known. He seems to have visited Batala again in the 1530s when he came to Achal for a disputation with the *jogis* there.

2. To mention only one source, the number of documents belonging to the Bhandari family of Batala, which are now in the Punjab State archives, Patiala, is over two hundred; in the Commonwealth Relations Office (formerly India Office) Library, London, there is a set of about seventy documents from the *pargana* of Batala.

3. Sujān Rai, *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh*, Punjab State Archives, Patiala, M 1012, f. 56a; Batay Shah, *Tārīkh-i-Panjāb*, Punjab State Archives, Patiala, M 1010, ff. 17 b & 18a. A personal visit to Batala leaves one in no doubt about the foundation of the town upon an old mound.

time suffered from the ravages of a virtual deluge which ruined all towns and villages. In any case, this region was only sparsely populated in the fifteenth century.⁴ It was gradually being recovered for cultivation and settlement. Ramdev's experience as a revenue-contractor of Tatar Khan Lodi, the governor of Lahore, probably induced him to encourage the reclamation of this region as a profitable undertaking.⁵ His patronage by the Afghan governor at Lahore and his own resourcefulness seem to have resulted in the rapid growth of this new settlement into a town.⁶

Early in its history Batala became the headquarters of a *pargana*.⁷ This status it retained throughout the Mughal period and suffered no change under the Sikh Chiefs and Ranjit Singh.⁸ In fact Batala was adopted as the headquarters of a district by the British administrators on the annexation of the Panjab in 1849.⁹

4. Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1963, 17 & n55.

5. This may be inferred from Sujan Rai's statement : *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārīkh*, f. 56a.

6. Sujan Rai (*loc. cit.*) states that Ramdev had accepted Islam, which became the means of his nearness to Tatar Khan. Ramdev's resourcefulness may be inferred from Sujan Rai's statement that he had taken the whole of the Panjab on *ijāra* from the Afghan governor for a *lākh* of *tankas*.

7. Sujan Rai, *loc. cit.* Though Kalanaur was associated with the coronation of Akbar (the *maḥal-i-julūs-i-shahshāhī* of Abul Fazl's *A'in*) at the time of the *A'in-i-Akbarī* a *dastūr* of fourteen *mahals* was named after Batala.

8. There are frequent references to Batala as a *pargana* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and Ganesh Das in the early nineteenth century gives the names also of its four *tappas* : *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, Khalsa College, Amritsar 1965, 298-99. In several documents of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Batala is referred to as a *pargana*.

9. *Gazetteer of the Gurdaspur District*, Lahore 1884, 21. It was in 1855 that the district was enlarged and its headquarters were shifted to the present town of Gurdaspur.

The *shiqdār* and *amin*, whose offices in the Afghan times were located in the *pargana* headquarters,¹⁰ were in due course replaced by the Mughal *karori* or the *āmil* or by the *kārdār* appointed by the Sikh rulers.¹¹ Thus, for three hundred years these officials remained in Batala as its chief administrative functionaries. Only a little less important was the *qāzī* of Batala whose office was already in existence at the time of the occupation of the Panjab by Babur; he continued to function there until the British occupation of the Panjab.¹² Another official who continued to function at

10. R.P. Tripathi, *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, Allahabad 1956, 351-56. The author discusses the administration of Sher Shah but takes into account the Lodi times as well; he concludes: 'Over a number of villages there was a *Shiqdār* who was a circle officer to collect revenue from his division (Pargana). As he had to handle considerable revenue he was assisted by a clerk (Karkun). The money realised was placed in the charge of *Khazanadar* or *Fotadar* (treasurer)'. There were other officials also known as 'Amin and Qanungo' (*ibid.*, 354).

11. Sujan Rai, for instance, mentions Shamshir Khan as the *karori* of Batala in Akbar's reign and Mirza Muhammad Khan as holding Batala in *amānat* in the reign of Aurangzeb: *Khulāsāt-ul-Tawārīkh*, f. 56b. Ganesh Das mentions Shaikh Muhammad Daim as the *faujdār* of Batala in Farrukh Siyar's time: *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, 122. In the Bhandari Collection of the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, there are several documents containing reference to the *kārdār* or the *āmil* of Batala during the Sikh times.

12. Qazi Jalal of Batala, whose *madad-i-ma'āsh* was confirmed by Babur in 1527, was probably the *qāzī* of Batala in the reign of Ibrahim Lodi: see, Mohiuddin Momin, "A Soyurghal of Babur", *Proceedings Indian Historical Records Commission*, XXXVI, Part II, 49-54. The continuance of the *qāzī* at Batala during the Mughal period is almost certain; but what is not generally known is the continuance of his office under the Sikh chiefs and Ranjit Singh. In a collection of Persian documents from Pindori in the present district of Gurdaspur, there is a document with the seal of Qazi Sayyid Muhammad bearing the date A.H. 1170: see, B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1969. This would make him the *qāzī* of Batala in the time of Ahmad Shah Abdali. The documents in the Bhandari Collection bear the seals of Qazi Mir Muhammad, Qazi Inayatullah and Qazi Sayyid Gul Shah, ranging from the time of the Sikh chiefs to that of Ranjit Singh.

Batala, underneath the not very infrequent political changes, was the *qānūngo*.¹³ Probably this office was generally entrusted to the Puri *khairis* of Batala, at least in the eighteenth century.¹⁴

The early growth of the town as an administrative centre was accompanied by the settlement of the surrounding countryside which formed one of the most fertile tracts of land in the province of Lahore. Sujan Rai states that many villages had sprung up around Batala not long after its foundation.¹⁵ Some of these were to become well known for the eminence to which their inhabitants rose in the course of time. Raja Jagat founded the village Rangar Nangal near Batala; his descendants accepted the Sikh faith in the eighteenth century to play an important political role in alliance with Jai Singh Kanhiya; Karam Singh served the Lahore Durbār; and Chand Kaur was married to Ranjit Singh's son Kharak Singh.¹⁶ Kajal, the fifth in descent from Randhawa settled near Batala; his descendants took possession of a valuable tract around Naushera, Zafarwal, Shahpur and Khunda; and the Khundawala Randhawas joined the Kanhiya *misl* to acquire estates worth two *lākhs* of rupees.¹⁷ Their palatial *haveli* is still extant in the town and reflects their former prominence and affluence. Randhir Chand Randhawa founded the village Jhanda

13. Most of the *pargana* towns of the Mughal Empire had at least one *qānūngo*.

14. Ganesh Das mentions Rai Mahesh Das Puri as the *qānūngo* of Batala whose family had held this office all the time : *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, 298. In the Pindori Collection there is a document containing reference to a Puri *qānūngo* of Batala in the early eighteenth century : see, B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori* Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1969.

15. *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārīkh*, f. 56a.

16. *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, Lahore 1940, II, 8 & 9.

17. *Ibid.*, II, 38-39.

near Batala; his grandson founded Talwandi where his own great grandson became a *chaudhari* in the reign of Shah Jahan; his descendants accepted the Sikh faith to join Jai Singh Kanhiya; and Dal Singh Randhawa served Ranjit Singh.¹⁸ Bhago Kahlon founded the village Bhagowala near Batala; his descendants joined the Sikh chief Bhag Singh Bagga; and they served Ranjit Singh, first as the *jāgirdārs* of the Majithias and then directly under the Lahore Durbār.¹⁹ These immigrants were not the only settlers in the *pargana* of Batala. Hadi Beg, for instance, came from Samarqand in 1530 and founded the village Islampur Qazi (the present town of Qadian) and held the office of *qāzi* over seventy villages around his own; his descendants served the Mughal government in responsible offices: they conflicted with the Kanhiyas and the Ramgarhias; were given asylum by Fateh Singh Ahluwalia; and they served Ranjit Singh.²⁰ One of them founded the Ahmadiya sect.

Many of the Muslim settlers in the *pargana* of Batala were encouraged by the Mughal rulers, particularly by granting *madad-i-ma'āsh* lands. For instance, Akbar granted *ā'imma* land to the Bukhari Sayyid Muhammad Shah, Mauj Darya, in Batala; and Jahangir in the fourteenth year of his reign conferred *madad-i-ma'āsh* land upon a Muslim family in the *tappa* of Batala.²¹ The descendants of Shaikh Badr of Batala possessed *ā'imma* land in

18. *Ibid.*, II, 18

19. *Ibid.*, II, 4.

20. *Ibid.*, II, 33-34.

21. Muhammad Latif, *Lahore, Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities*, Lahore 1892. 194-95. In the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, there is a *Chaknāma* (M/451) of the reign of Muhammad Shah, which refers to the original grant by Jahangir.

the village Paighambarpur.²² In fact there is a large set of *farmāns*, *parwānas* and other papers in the Commonwealth Relations Office (formerly India Office) Library, London, relating chiefly to *madad-i-ma'āsh* grants in the *pargana* of Batala.²³ It has been observed recently by Irfan Habib in his study of the agrarian system of Mughal India that Akbar's experience of the administrative problems of *madad-i-ma'āsh* grants had impelled him to concentrate such grants in certain areas marked for that purpose. Though we have no direct statement on this point regarding the *pargana* of Batala, it appears to have been one of those areas where *ā'imma* lands came to be concentrated.

The increase of population in the town of Batala, went hand in hand with the increase of population in the countryside. Batala's population in the beginning, according to Sujan Rai, was not so much as in his own day.²⁴ A considerable increase in population took place during the reign of Akbar.²⁵ Furthermore, the excavation of the Shāhnahr from the river Ravi, from near Shahpur to Patti Haibatpur (in the British district of Lahore), provided irrigational facility to the upper Bari Doab; one branch of this canal

22. This statement is based on a document in the Pindori Collection : see, B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1969. Sujan Rai mentions the *mazār* of Shah Badruddin, at a distance of two *kos* from Batala and the *mazār* of Shamsuddin, at four *kos* (f. 57a). The present villages of Masanian and Kastiwal have to show impressive *khāngāhs* coming down from the Mughal times.

23. I.O. 4438, No. 1-70. This collection has been used by Irfan Habib in his study of the agrarian system of Mughal India.

24. *Khulāsat-ul-Tawārikh*, f. 56.

25. *Ibid.*, f. 56b; Butay Shah, ff. 17b & 18a. Ganesh Das refers in this connection to the reigns both of Akbar and Shah Jahan : *Chār Bāgh - i-Panjāb*, 298.

came to Batala itself. Sujan Rai comments on the benefits accruing from this to the Batala region.²⁶ Butay Shah surmised later that the large number of towns which he noticed in this area was due to the irrigational facilities provided by the canals²⁷ (which, we know, were dug up in the reign of Shah Jahan under the supervision of the well known Ali Mardan Khan). Indeed, Butay Shah regards the reign of Shah Jahan as an important landmark in the growth of Batala into a large town. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, Sujan Rai came to use the term 'city' (*shahr*) for his native town and suggested the prosperity of the region by equating its income with the forty treasures of Qārūn.²⁸

The growing prosperity of Batala was reflected in some of the activity of its residents, both official and non-official. Shamshir Khan, the *karori* of Batala in Akbar's reign, had constructed a mosque, dug a large tank and laid out a garden on the eastern side of the town.²⁹ His example was followed by others after him: Mirza Muhammad Khan (who was later to be given the title of *Wazir Khāni* by the Emperor Aurangzeb), during his tenure of the *amānat* of the *pargana* of Batala, built in the town a pucca *bāzār* with shops in the twelfth year of Aurangzeb's reign; Qazi Abdul Haiyi erected a mosque, a *kārwānsarā* and a *bāzār* (probably the present *Kadi Hatti*), besides other buildings of stone; Banki Rai and Sujan Singh and their sons, who were the *qānūngos* of Batala, built a *kārwānsarā*, founded a *muhalla* and erected impressive buildings; Gangā Dhar constructed a pucca well in the main *bāzār* of Batala and a *bāoli* in its environs beside the road to Lahore, where he also

26. Cf. Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, 33, 34 & n53.

27. Punjab State Archives, Patiala, M 1010, f. 13b.

28. *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh*, f. 56a.

29. Shamshir Khan's tomb and his tank may still be seen in Batala.

laid out a garden; and in Sujān Rai's time there were many gardens around the city (*shahr*), the best of which was the one laid out by the *qānūngo* Amar Singh in imitation of the famous Shālīmār at Lahore.³⁰ Soon After the composition of the *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh*, Muhammad Faziluddin who belonged to the Qādirī order of the *Sūfis* settled in Batala, founded a *khānqah* and instituted a *langar-khāna* and a *madrassa*. The Emperor Farrukh Siyar conferred a grant of revenue-free land upon the son and successor of Muhammad Faziluddin and, thus, provided stability and prestige to the family of the Qādirī saint. The historian Ahmad Shah was the fourth in descent from Muhammad Faziluddin and the present Main *muhalla* of Batala was originally founded by the illustrious founder of this family of considerable local eminence.³¹ By the end of the seventeenth century Batala had become 'the sleeping place' of many a venerable saint – like Shah Shihabuddin Bukhari, Shah Ismail, Shah Niamatullah, Shaikh Ilahadad – each of whom was regarded as a *wali* in his lifetime.³²

Notwithstanding the preponderance of Muslim population in the town, Batala appears to have borne essentially a composite character. Ganesh Das mentions the Purīs, the Bhandāris, the Khoslas, the Dhīrs and others as the old *khatri* families of Batala and attributes many tanks and gardens of the town to one or another prominent individual among these *khatri*s.³³ The Ohri and Berara *khatri*s and a few Khanna immigrants from Lahore had settled in Batala probably by the early eighteenth century.³⁴ Of all these the Bhandāris have left the most eloquent testimony to

30. *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh*, f. 56b.

31. *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Panjab*, Lahore 1940, II, 52–53.

32. *Khulāsāt-ut-Tawārikh*, f. 57a.

33. *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, 298–99.

34. They find mention in the documents of the Bhandāri Collection.

their eminence in the town. Sujan Rai, who has placed Batala on the map of medieval Indian historiography, was a member of the older branch of the Bhandārī who appear to have settled in Batala much before the reign of Aurangzeb. In the early eighteenth century, the older branch was holding fast to its important position among the inhabitants of Batala; Nihal Chand Bhandārī was prosperous enough to build a *kot* in the town.³⁵ The younger branch, the *Bhandārī-i-nau* of the eighteenth-century documents, appears to have come to Batala in the early part of the century in due course to outshine the older branch. Chūhar Mal, the father of the better known Rai Anand Singh Bhandārī, was among the respectable residents of the town in the eighteenth century.³⁶ Rai Anand Singh acquired considerable property in Batala and elsewhere.³⁷ His early connection with the government of Ranjit Singh gave good opportunities to his sons to serve the Lahore Durbār, for which they were amply rewarded.³⁸ They were easily the most eminent family of Batala at the time of the British occupation of the Panjab. Rai Kishan Chand's impressive portrait which has survived from the nineteenth century possesses a considerable artistic merit;³⁹ his frescoed temple is an eloquent witness

35. There is a reference to this *kot* in document 20 of the bound volume of documents from the Bhandārī Collection.

36. Several documents in the Bhandārī Collection are indicative of this.

37. This is evident from a considerable number of documents, relating to sales of *havelīs* in the town of Batala, and of shops in Ludhiana, in the Bhandārī Collection.

38. *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, Lahore 1940, II, 13-15.

39. The portrait reproduced in the Urdu edition of the *Chiefs and Families* is still in the possession of Rai Narindar Singh of Batala through whose kind courtesy I have been able to see the original.

to his affluence, if not also to his taste.⁴⁰

Though patronage by the state in one form or another was a factor that cannot be ignored in accounting for the prosperity of the town as a whole or of some of its residents the possibilities of trade in the medieval town of Batala should not be minimized. Batala served as a market for the agricultural produce of the surrounding countryside and it was connected with the markets of the smaller towns on all sides. It was well known for its *gur* (brown sugar) which came from the rich countryside eminently suitable for the cultivation of sugarcane; it had also its *ghalla-mandi*.⁴¹ Batala was probably connected with the hilly region through Pathankot and with Hosiarpur and Sialkot across the rivers Beas and Ravi. Its most important connection, however, was with the city of Lahore through which it was connected also with Delhi and Multan and with cities beyond the borders of the Indian subcontinent on the north-west.⁴² In due course, a large number of crafts were developed in the town. The *sūsi* and *lungi* cloth was woven by the deft workmen of Batala to be exported to several markets in India.⁴³ Batala was famous also for its leather-work, particularly saddlery and shoes.⁴⁴ Coarse quality

40. This temple can still be seen in Batala. A few of the documents in the Bhandāri Collection give some interesting information on the manner in which it was constructed by Rai Kishan Chand.

41. The *bāzār-i-ghalla-faroshān* finds mention in a document in the Bhandāri Collection.

42. This may only be inferred from Batala's direct link with Lahore which was commercially connected with the cities of Persia and Central Asia. The *Gazetteer of the Gurdaspur District*, it may be added, mentions silk coming from Bukhara to Batala.

43. *Gazetteer of the Gurdaspur District*, Lahore 1884, 60, 72, 74,

44. *Ibid.*, 61.

pashmina and shawls were meant probably for consumption nearer home.⁴⁵ The oil pressers of Batala had a *muhalla* of their own and the more talented among the carpenters of Batala took to wood-carving. It was possible for a muslim dyer of Batala to purchase three-storeyed *haveli* from a *khatri* of the town.⁴⁶ Its goldsmiths are found to be a party to several transactions of sale.⁴⁷ Butay Shah is quite near the truth when he mentions the craftsmen of all kinds as flocking to Batala, besides the *'ulmā* and the *sayyids*.⁴⁸

Medieval Batala appears to have attained to its maximum growth by the early eighteenth century. Its main *bāzārs*, the Chakri and the *bāzār-i-kalān*, were already in existence; so was its Mandi, and its *bāzār-i-sarrāffān*. Many *muhallas* had sprung up around the *tibba*, the peak of the old mound. In the reign of Muhammad Shah a new wall was erected around the town, with its main gate on the eastern side.⁴⁹ Within this walled town lived its thousands of Muslim and Hindu (and later on, also Sikh) inhabitants in its broadly marked *muhallas*. The history of its settlement was reflected in the location of its various quarters—some predominantly Muslim and others predominantly Hindu. However, the sales of houses and shops were sometimes transacted irrespective of the religious affiliation of the vendor and the vendee. Nor was the *khatri* owner of a multi-storeyed *haveli* always unwilling to have a goldsmith or a dyer as his neighbour.

45. *Ibid.*, 96–97.

46. This sale transaction is recorded in a document in the Bhandāri Collection.

47. There are several documents in the Bhandāri Collection to suggest this.

48. Ff. 17b & 18a.

49. *Loc. cit.*

This strongly walled and massive residences of the officials, the four or five-storeyed *havelis* of the rich, the mosques and temples were brought into high relief by the single or double storeyed houses with their more numerous inmates. Outside the walls of the town were the *kār wānsarās*, some *mazārs* and *samādhs*, tanks and gardens for the living and graveyards and cremation grounds for the dead.

In retrospect it is possible to see the development of medieval Batala as intimately connected with the settlement of sparsely populated but fertile tract, with the administrative policy of Akbar and his successors regarding the grant of revenue-free lands and with Shah Jahan's interest in irrigation through canals, besides the presence and activity of its chief administrative functionaries whose effort at adorning and enlarging the town was emulated by some of the rich residents of Batala. All this would not have been easily possible without the development of trade and crafts in this regional centre; its intimate connection with the surrounding countryside, with the small towns in the region and with some of the big cities through Lahore made it the most important town in the upper *doāba-i-bāri*. The presence of a considerable Muslim population in the town and the region attracted some of the pious and the learned Muslims to the town itself and Batala became in due course a modest centre of learning. We can understand something of Sujan Rai's pride in his 'fascinating town'.

Article X

Ganesh Das's *Char Bagh - i - Panjāb*

Towards the close of 1847, a *qānūngo* of Gujrat in the kingdom of Lahore compiled a historical account of the Sikhs and presented it to the British Resident at Lahore. It was entitled the *Chirāg - i - Panjāb* (which gives the Hijra year of its composition. Two years later he wrote the *Chār Bāgh - i - Panjāb*.¹ A copy of this work was presented to Richard Temple (later to become the author of *The Legends of the Punjab*) who, in 1852-54, was a settlement officer in the district of Gujrat. The *Chār Bāgh - i - Panjāb* has been published recently as 'a work of great significance'.² Our present purpose is to see some of its significance both as a historical work and as a source of regional history.

Ganesh Das, the author of the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, does not conceal his purpose for its composition. By publicizing his knowledge of Panjab history he expected to be considered favourably for some post in the British administration of the Panjab. He attributes a large measure of interest in the past to the British administrators and it is very likely that he was inspired to compile

1. *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, ed. Kirpal Singh, Sikh History Research Department, Khalsa College, Amritsar 1965, 2. The *chār bāgh* ordinarily refers to a celebrated royal garden in the environs of Ispahan and also near Delhi; hence its connotation of 'a royal garden or park'. According to the *Firūz-ul-Lughāt* (Lahore 1937), *chār bāgh* also means a large scarf with designs of plants and flowers on its four corners. The chronogram *chār bāgh-i-Panjāb* was perhaps welcome to Ganesh Das because of these suggestive connotations.

In this paper all the references to the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* are to (Dr.) Kirpal Singh's edition published from Khalsa College, Amritsar.

2. *Ibid.*, Editor's Introduction, xiv.

his work by some British officer after the first Anglo-Sikh War. At any rate, he presents this compilation to the *sāhibān-i-wālā-qadr* as his best gift.³ The fact that Ganesh Dass was writing for the new rulers of the Panjab had a decisive influence on the character of his work, but expectation of patronage from the British was only one though an important element in the historical situation which has left its mark on the *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*.

The *Chār Bāgh - i - Panjāb* reveals many a feature of the medieval Indo-Persian chronicle. Ganesh Das begins his work with the Muslim formula of invocation (which should be interpreted as his unconscious acceptance of a well established tradition rather than his servility to the Muslim conquerors);⁴ he shows his familiarity with some of the often quoted *āyāt* by quoting about a dozen of them in this work:⁵ he is rather fond of using chronograms;⁶ and he quotes verses profusely for literary effect.⁷ The inclusion of interesting anecdotes and folk-lore in his account of the past may be attributed partly to his desire for making the work interesting as a piece of literature.⁸ All this may be expected from a chronicler nurtured on Persian classics and medieval Indo-Muslim historiography. The persistence of the cultural values of the days of the *sultāns* and *pādshāhs* in the days of Ranjit Singh has nevertheless its own significance.

3. *Ibid.*, 3.

4. It is interesting to note that Ganesh Das uses similar phrases in the beginning of his other work, *Rājdarshinī*, which he wrote for the Dogra Chief, Gulab Singh : Micro-filmed copy, Panjab University Library, Chandigarh.

5. *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, 2, 59, 204, 238, 239, 281, 327 & 410.

6. *Ibid.*, 2, 36, 38, 39, 44, 46, 59, 61, 69, 70, 86, 88, 91, 92, 106, 149 & 327.

7. The total number of verses quoted by Ganesh Das is over 400. Some of them are really apt and beautiful.

8. The number of pages devoted to such anecdotes and tales is about 60. See in particular 25-27, 181-88, 188-200, 211-17, 232-45 & 265-72.

Like many a medieval chronicler, Ganesh Das is primarily concerned with past politics. In the narrative part of his work, only two major exceptions could be made to this essential concern of the author. The inclusion of anecdotes and folk-lore has already been noted. He often dwells also on some of the non-political legacies surviving into his own day from the near or the distant past. For example, the legend of Puran was being given a tangible shape in the pictures painted in Ganesh Das's own days.⁹ The annual gathering of Muslims at the *mazār* of Imam Ali al-Haqq in Sialkot commemorated his martyrdom in the tenth century of the Christian era.¹⁰ Some of the astronomical tables and astrological practices of the days of Ganesh Das were in fact a legacy left by the contemporaries of Salvahan.¹¹ Similarly, the calendar known as the Bikrami, which was equally popular with the official and the businessman, commemorated the accession of Bikramajit.¹² These examples are enough to illustrate the point, though many more can easily be added. Nevertheless, Ganesh Das was concerned essentially with the acquisition and use of political power.

This concern is reflected first in Ganesh Das's conception of the Panjab. He uses the term more as an administrative or a political unit than as a cultural or even a geographical one. The Panjab of Ganesh Das is bounded no doubt by the rivers Satlej and Indus and by the hilly regions in the Himalayas; but it is the Mughal province of Lahore that becomes often the Panjab for Ganesh Das.¹³ At the same time he thinks of the Panjab also as

9. *Ibid.*, 15.

10. *Ibid.*, 19.

11. *Ibid.*, 14.

12. *Ibid.*, 12.

13. *Ibid.*, 3, 6, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 32, 35, 38, 45, 60, 69, 78, 79, 80, 82, 88, 91, 95, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 115, 119, 121, 125, 136, 141, 153, 157, 158 & 368.

a political unit when even the adjoining territories become an integral part of the Panjab state.¹⁴ Ganesh Das never betrays any 'Panjabi' sentiment in his work.

Ganesh Das was interested in the rulers more than in the people of the Panjab. This is evident from what may be called his periodization of Panjab history. The formal sub-headings in this regard are not very helpful or even meaningful. One has to follow the working of the author's mind rather closely to realize that the important phases of the history of the Panjab were marked for him by the changes and shifts of political power. Also, he devotes more and more attention, or at least space, to the politics of the immediate past. His interest in warfare, as the means of acquiring political power, is quite obtrusive.¹⁵ In about eighteen pages Ganesh Das treats of the Pre-Muslim kings who for a short or a long time established their power in the whole or a part of the Panjab. The next phase is marked by an explicit statement that the advent of Islam in the Panjab may be dated to the invasions of Sultan Nasiruddin Sabuktigin.¹⁶ Ganesh Das deals with the major political happenings in the Panjab during the period of the Sultanate of Delhi rather briefly in about a dozen pages and pays much more attention to the Panjab under the Mughals.¹⁷ He is not at all keen to know what exactly was happening in the Panjab during these periods; he is content to note primarily

14. *Ibid.*, 104-05

15. Ganesh Das gives an animated and elaborate description, for instance, of the war of succession amongst the sons of Shah Jahan (*ibid.*, 44-58). He devotes six pages to the war amongst the sons of Aurangzeb (61-67). The description of the Anglo-Sikh wars is even more elaborate (350-67, 395-407).

16. *Ibid.*, 19.

17. *Ibid.*, 19-33 (pre-Mughal); 34-78 (Mughal).

survived merely because of negative reasons, or merely because he summarized existing knowledge about the Sikhs. He had thought deeply about the subject of his study and he was essentially in sympathy with it. He was the first among the British historians to postulate that Sikhism was a distinct faith, meant to transcend both Hinduism and Islam; he was the first to see a close connection between the essential teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, and he was the only British historian to look upon Sikh polity as closely linked with the Sikh faith. He thought of the Sikhs as being a distinct nation. Unlike most writers of his time, Cunningham disfavoured the idea of annexing the Sikh kingdom to the British Empire. In his view, the Sikhs as 'a nation' had the right to be independent. These, and many other ideas of his, have found favour with Indian writers and he has left a deep mark on subsequent studies.

In the present century, the bulk of the work published on Sikh history has been produced by Indian writers. The advance of western education and the rise of 'nationalisms' made possible and undertowed this interest. It was no accident, therefore, that two of the earliest contributors to Sikh studies were Bengalis: N.K. Sinha and Indubhusan Banerjee. They complement each other and, together, they cover Cunningham's ground. In fact, one of Sinha's books is dedicated to Cunningham. Whereas Banerjee was interested in the socio-religious history of the Sikhs and covered the period of Guru Nanak and his nine successors in the *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Sinha was interested in the political history of the Sikhs and wrote on the rise of the Sikh power in the eighteenth century and on Ranjit Singh.

With better sources at their command, Sinha and Banerjee amplified and supported, with a few exceptions, the theses

propounded by Cunningham. Banerjee's interpretation of Guru Nanak's mission is different from Cunningham's; he does not regard Guru Nanak as the founder of a distinct faith and he does not believe that Guru Nanak's message had far-reaching social implications. On most other points, however, he agrees with Cunningham. In the *Evolution of the Khalsa* the contribution of the first four successors of Guru Nanak to the development of the Sikh Panth is discussed in detail to underline the conclusion that the Sikhs had come to form a distinct socio-religious group with its distinctive ideals and institutions; they had come to form a state within the Mughal Empire. Banerjee does not see any essential departure from the early evolutionary process in the so-called 'new deal' of Guru Hargobind, who foreshadowed Guru Gobind Singh. Banerjee underlines the essentially religious interests of the latter and places his wars and the institution of the Khālśa in that perspective. He emphasizes the importance of the Jat element in the composition of the Sikh Panth and tries to relate some of the measures of the Sikh Gurus to this fact. Cunningham had been the first to recognize the relevance of the Jat peasantry to the history of the Sikh Panth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The broad similarity between Sinha's work and Cunningham's is equally marked. Sinha looks upon the measures of Guru Gobind Singh as relevant to the rise of the Sikhs to power; he sees a close connection also between the political institutions of the Sikhs and their faith; he accepts Cunningham's conception of Sikh polity as 'theocratic confederate feudalism'; and he looks upon Ranjit Singh as by far the most important Sikh ruler, as one of the heroes of Indian history. Also, Ranjit Singh, in Sinha's view, is important in his own right and not because of his relations with the British.

Cunningham's interpretation of Sikhism (for him the

counterpart of Christianity in the Judaic tradition) was not acceptable to many a British administrator whose assumptions about the role of Christianity in India were shared by Christian missionaries. In the late nineteenth century, while the Indian subcontinent had come under British rule, a general wave of aggressive optimism prevailed among the professed protagonists of evangelical work in India. They all tended to see very little of value in other religions. Sikhism was no exception, as the work of Ernest Trump clearly showed. He was encouraged to translate the *Ādi Granth* on the assumption that in order to know the religion of the Sikhs it was necessary to know their scriptures and also that, in order to persuade the Sikhs to accept Christianity, it was necessary to know what the Sikhs thought of their own religion. Trump gave an introduction to his translations from the *Ādi Granth* in which his comments on the character of the Sikh scriptures and the nature of Sikh theology reveal his contempt for both. An English translation of the *Ādi Granth* in the late nineteenth century was meant to be a major advance in Sikh studies, for nothing on this scale had been done before. But Trump's unconcealed hostility towards the Sikhs and their religion made his work (in contrast to Cunningham's) unpopular with the Sikhs. It may not be too much to say that the most fruitful result of Trump's work was the reaction it evoked after its publication in the late 1870s.

Max Arthur Macauliffe's six volumes, entitled *The Sikh Religion*, published by the Oxford University Press in 1909, were meant to replace the *Ādi Granth* of Ernest Trump. They cover almost the same ground, but with a palpable difference. Whereas Trump had written with a total disregard for Sikh susceptibilities, Macauliffe wrote on behalf of the Sikhs. His translations from the *Ādi Granth* are closer to the Sikh interpretation of their scriptures. This part of his work has been more acceptable to the students of Sikhism in general than Trump's; also, it has been very

generally regarded as more authentic. However, in his anxiety not to offend the sentiments of his Sikh contemporaries, Macauliffe deliberately adhered to Sikh traditions regarding the lives both of the Sikh Gurus and of those saints whose compositions have been included in the *Ādi Granth*. When it came to a choice between the hypercritical attitude of Trump and the uncritical attitude of Macauliffe, most scholars have chosen the latter. A student of Sikhism who does not have a working knowledge of Gurmukhi has to lean on Macauliffe even today, though other English translations of the *Ādi Granth* have appeared more recently.

Foreign scholars and missionaries after Macauliffe have continued to take interest in Sikh studies. J.C. Archer's *The Sikhs* is an example of this. Similarly, C.H. Loehlin has devoted a number of years to the study of the writings of Guru Gobind Singh. The recent work of W.H. Mcleod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, demonstrates the usefulness of a re-examination and re-interpretation of sources and themes covered by earlier writers. It casts serious doubt on the value of the *janam-sākhi* traditions to the biographer of Guru Nanak. The only legitimate reply to Mcleod is to demonstrate the value of those traditions to the biographer of Guru Nanak. But this attempt at scholarly analysis of the most important form of evidence for the life of Guru Nanak has been occasionally criticized without rational argument. The evidence of *janam-sākhi* traditions is extremely valuable in so far as it reflects the aspirations and attitudes of the people among whom it became current. However, if a *sākhi* is believed to contain the kernel of biographical truth, that has to be demonstrated rather than merely assumed. Mcleod's re-interpretation of Guru Nanak's religion, at any rate, has been generally applauded. His is probably the best interpretation of Guru Nanak's faith to appear so far in English.

Until after independence, the scope of Sikh studies

remained confined largely to the period up to the fall of the Sikh kingdom in 1849. Teja Singh, for instance, has written on the ideals and institutions of Sikhism almost entirely on the basis of its early history. In *A Short History of the Sikhs*, written conjointly with Ganda Singh, much of the eighteenth century is also covered. Ganda Singh, has written on several phases and aspects of Sikhism and Sikh history. Even so, he has shown much greater interest in the period covered by Cunningham than in later Sikh history. In fact, he has made a substantial contribution to the study of two very important figures of the eighteenth century : Banda Bahadur and Ahmad Shah Durrani. H.R. Gupta has written three detailed volumes on the rise of Sikh power in the eighteenth century.

Similary, Ranjit Singh has been a popular subject with the modern historians of the Sikhs. R.R. Sethi's *Lahore Darbar*, which aims at studying diplomatic relations between the Sikhs and the English, is a tribute to the political sagacity of Ranjit Singh. More recently, Khushwant Singh has produced a biography of the Maharaja, while Syed Waheeduddin has brought out the essential traits of Ranjit Singh's personality in *The Real Ranjit Singh*. Fauja Singh Bajwa in his *The Military System of the Sikhs* has concentrated upon the army of Ranjit Singh just as G.L. Chopra, back in the 1920s, in *The Punjab as a Sovereign State* had studied the administration of Ranjit Singh. The decade from Ranjit Singh's death to the annexation of the Panjab, the decade of decline and fall of Sikh power, has attracted the attention of several writers : Sita Ram Kohli, Khushwant Singh, B. J. Hasrat and S. S. Bal, for example. Since the publication of Cunningham's work, two major questions have agitated the minds of writers of the decline and fall of the Sikh kingdom. Did the British deliberately subvert the power of Ranjit Singh's successors ? Were the intrinsic weaknesses of the Sikh

state responsible for its inevitable fall ? Almost every writer on this decade has tried, directly or indirectly, to answer these questions. While Kohli, Khuswant Singh and Chopra have written directly on the successors of Ranjit Singh, Hasrat and Bal have concentrated on the British side of the situation by studying Anglo-Sikh relations and British policy towards the Panjab.

Loss of interest in the fortunes of the Sikhs after the loss of their political power is understandable. From the very beginning the British interest in the Sikhs was a tribute to their political power. The Sikhs as subjects, however, were of little interest, except for the purposes of government and administration. The identification of history with past politics had led many writers to study the Sikhs of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Indian scholars too have concentrated on pre-British centuries for reasons of their own. Many chose to debate with their British predecessors on the latter's grounds. Socio-religious movements of the late nineteenth and the political awakening in the early twentieth century inspired interest both in the socio-religious origins of the Sikhs and in their political development. Thus, for nearly a century after the fall of the kingdom of Lahore, the Sikhs appeared to have a more or less distant past, but no immediate past or present.

Only after the end of British Rule in India have some writers thought of turning to the Sikhs of the British period. Considerable attention has been paid to the Nāmdhāris, or *Kūkās*, as the protagonists of a socio-religious movement with political undertones, as in the *Freedom Fighters* of M.L. Ahluwalia and the *Kuka Movement* of Fauja Singh Bajwa. More recently, N.G. Barrier has brought out a comprehensive bibliography for the period between 1849 and 1919, entitled *The Sikhs and Their Literature*. It contains a brief but meaningful introduction to the Singh Sabha Movement.

Although the history of the Sikhs during the British period

is just beginning to be studied, Khushwant Singh has attempted a general history of this period in the second volume of his *History of the Sikhs*. A first rate journalist, they say, is better than a second-rate historian. But Khushwant Singh is not in competition with second-rate historians; his is the only general history of this period. In his ambitious but premature attempt, he presents Sikhism as the spearhead of Panjabi nationalism.

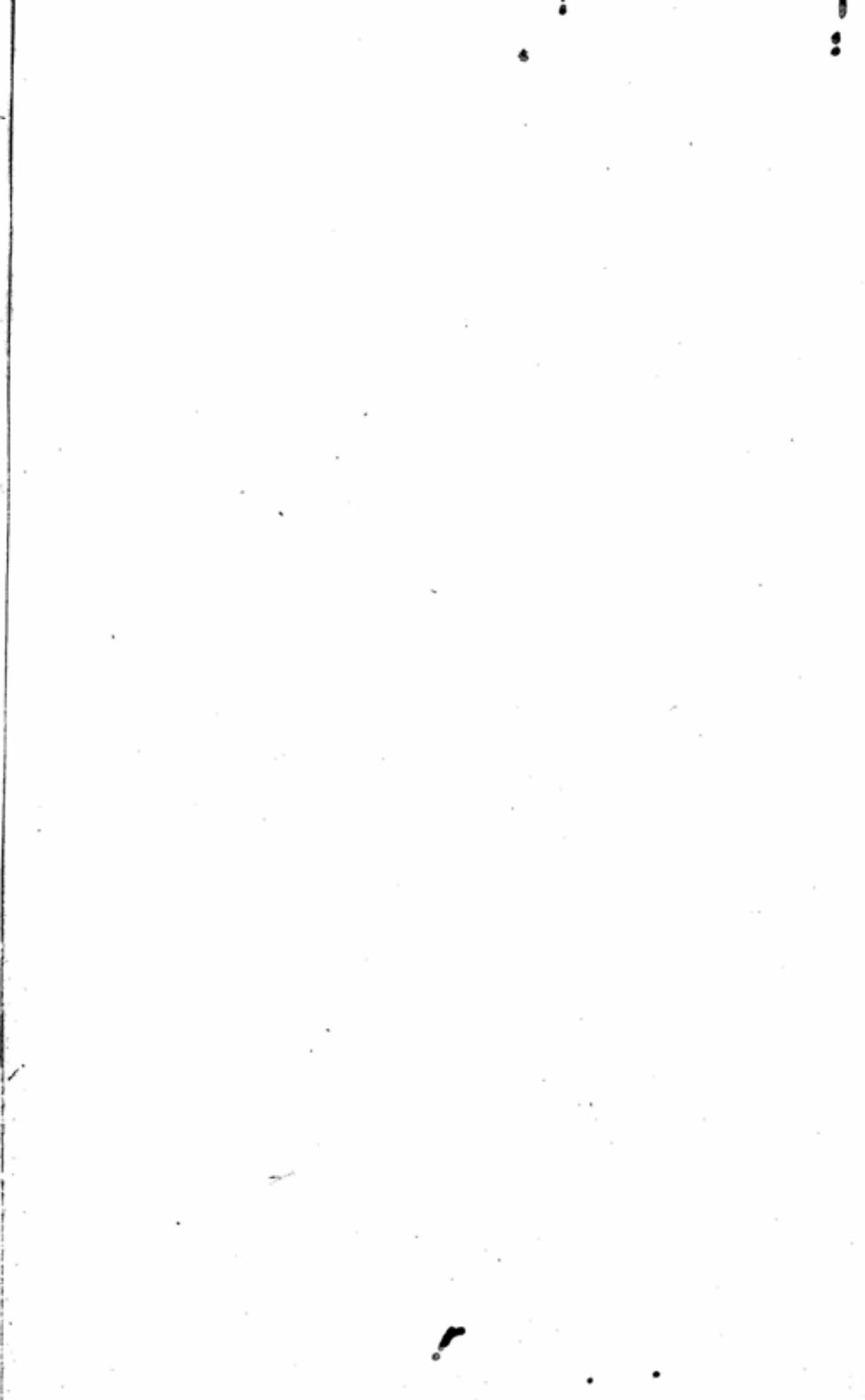
It is obvious that the period from 1849 to 1947 presents immense possibilities to the student of Sikh history. What happened for instance, to the Sikh ruling class after the annexation of the Panjab? In what sense did a Sikh social order exist during the early decades of British rule? What particular strata or groups of that social order were affected by the new order of things? With what social or political implications? The rise of the Kūkās, the Singh Sabha and the Akālīs may be studied in this context. The Sikh writers of this period were not writing about their immediate past but about the pre-British days; it may be fruitful to examine what kind of self-image they cherished in these writings and how these writings were tied up with the problems of their day. The whole range of revenue records can be tapped to study in depth the varying fortunes of Sikh land-owners and peasants. The contribution of the Sikhs to the development of commerce and industry in the country can be usefully examined. The Sikhs and the Scots, it is said, are found in every part of the world. A study of the Sikh emigrants can be very interesting and, perhaps, revealing from a socio-economic point of view. Sufficient evidence appears to exist on these and other important aspects of Sikh history during the British period.

This is not to say, however, that no further work is needed on the pre-British history of the Sikhs. Guru Nanak could be studied in terms of his response to the situations of his times in order to clarify our understanding of many debatable issues, as has

been done recently in *Guru Nanak in History*. Re-interpretations become more meaningful when a historian has the advantage of some fresh evidence at his command. The publication of a large number of *hukamnāmas* by Ganda Singh, for example, has opened up new possibilities of interpretation. Similarly, the publication of the official orders of the Sikh chiefs of the late eighteenth century more than those of Ranjit Singh and his representatives, in *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, should oblige the historians of the Sikhs to revise their views on Sikh polity.

Re-interpretation of the pre-British period of Sikh history is not only possible but extremely desirable. What is even more desirable is to concentrate on those aspects of that history which have received inadequate attention from the historians so far. To give only a few examples : the social composition of the Sikh Panth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the structure of power in the Panjab during the late eighteenth century; the agrarian system under the Sikh rulers; and social change under Sikh rule.





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