

Book Reviews

Contents of Vol. 18

Lubna Saif, *Authoritarianism and Underdevelopment in Pakistan 1947-1958: The Role of the Punjab* by **Tahir Kamran**

Arvind-pal S. Mandair, *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Postcoloniality, and the Politics of Translation* by **Michael Hawley**

Edited by Doris. R. Jakobsh. *Sikhism and Women: History, Texts, and Experience* by **Kathryn Lum**

Gurinder Singh Mann, Gurdit Singh, Ami P. Shah, Gibb Schreffler with Anne Murphy, *An Introduction to Punjabi: Grammar. Conversation and Literature* by **Harjeet Singh Gill**

Gurinder Singh Mann, Gurdit Singh, Ami P. Shah, Gibb Schreffler with Anne Murphy, *An Introduction to Punjabi: Grammar. Conversation and Literature* by **Christopher Shackle**

Lubna Saif, *Authoritarianism and Underdevelopment in Pakistan 1947-1958: The Role of the Punjab* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010). Pp. 262. ISBN 978-0-19-547703-0 (hb). RS 595.

In this book Lubna Saif has focused on the challenges that faced the newly born state of Pakistan. The author has employed the 'dependency paradigm' in her analysis of the events that unfolded in Pakistan during the first decade of its existence. Dependency theory is 'a set of theories' which asserts that the inability of the third world countries to achieve sustainable levels of development was due to their structural 'dependence on the advanced capitalist world' (*A Dictionary of Sociology* [Oxford: OUP, 1998], 150-51). These theories were advanced in opposition to modernization theory which anticipated that less developed countries would ultimately catch up with the developed world if they followed a pattern of development similar to that of the developed world. Among myriad accounts of the relationship between the advanced and underdeveloped economies encompassed by the broad framework of dependency theory, Lubna Saif, while analyzing Pakistan's initial phase of political history, opts to toe the line of André Gunder Frank, German economist of development and his contemporary from Pakistan, Hamza Alvi. Both of them complement each other in more than one way. Alvi was a social scientist, with a staunch adherence to structural Marxism.

Frank predicted not so erroneously that the less developed countries could not attain a significant level of industrialization unless they severed ties with capitalism and pursued auto-centric socialist development strategies. He devised the phrase 'the development of underdevelopment', alluding to the 'deformed and dependent economies of the peripheral states—in his terminology the 'satellites' of the more advanced metropolises.' The author of the book under review advances a similar argument with reference to India which, after the British conquest, acquired the status of a satellite to the metropolitan world.

According to the author 'authoritarianism' and 'under-development' are the product of colonial capitalism. It was in the colonial dispensation that capitalism in agriculture was introduced with 'the recognition of the institution of private property, and initiation of commercial farming'. Three institutions including the one already mentioned, namely the institution of private property in land, the growth of merchant capital in Punjab and the 'establishment of a cash nexus as the primary form of surplus extraction by the state characterized the colonial rule. These initiatives altered quite radically the agrarian complexion of Indian political economy. Corroborating her argument by citing Alvi, the author underscores the colonial impact resulting in the outbreak of bourgeois revolution in the colonies, thus 'establishing a structure of specifically colonial capitalism' *New Left Review* 74 [July-August 1972], 59-81).

That structure led to various internal developments that gave rise to the creation of a colonial economy. With minor modifications the preceding structure remained unaltered in the post-colonial period.

The land owning gentry or aristocracy too was, according to the author, a colonial creation. The British had created aristocrats by changing 'the rights to rule' the land to 'rights to own' the land, thus they 'legalized the private right to absolute land ownership (p. 3).' The principal motive for creating a land owning gentry was to provide leadership who were pliable to the wish of the rulers. To ensure the institution of private land ownership was firmly entrenched and that the newly created class of land owners could be protected, the British established another institution of civil bureaucracy. They also put in place the legal system for the same purpose. Hence extra-ordinary powers were vested in revenue officers, who were the members of civil bureaucracy and in the case of Punjab they were called the officers of Punjab Commission. The Deputy Commissioner of the district was beyond any doubt a tiny autocrat.

Saif also factors in the role of army which, in collusion with civil bureaucracy, not only impeded the process of constitution making but also prevented democratic institutions from taking root in Pakistan. While portraying the overdeveloped nature of the institution the author reflects back to the last quarter of the 19th century and traces the origins of the army to the martial race theory. That theory provided the rationale for the British to focus on the Punjab as the major recruitment region for the army. Thus Punjab came to be known as the sword arm of India. Later on, in the colony districts, the tracts of canal irrigated land were set aside for the army personnel. Even after the British period, the army held that privileged position. When Ayub Khan was elevated to the top rank in the army in 1951, it began to play a role that it was not supposed to. Thus civil bureaucracy-army oligarchy was well entrenched in Pakistani power politics. Ayub Khan became quite an active member of the ruling clique; Ghulam Muhammad, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali and Sikander Mirza being the other three. That clique, the author pleads, not only decided the fate of the politics and economy but also the direction that the country foreign policy took in 1950. The argument is almost the same argument that Hamza Alvi had already propounded in his studies about Pakistan. Just as Alvi has done, Saif also absolves Liaquat Ali Khan from any blame regarding the pro-American stance that Pakistan took in the early fifties. The coterie comprising three bureaucrats and a general torpedoed the democratic process and pushed Pakistan into the American camp. It was because of their conspiracy that Liaquat Ali Khan had to visit USA instead of Soviet Union against his wish. Pakistan suffered because it was again tied up with the metropolitan capital although it had

attained independence. That view appears to be, if not absolutely redundant, at least too simplistic.

Ironically, despite the fact that Punjab figures in the title of the book, it is discussed with extreme parsimony except in the very first chapter. The internal politics of the Punjab during the 1950s have been barely touched upon. The author has not benefited from the works of Syed Nur Ahmed, Yunas Samad, Azim Hussain and Feroze Khan Noon or from the Munir Report, which seems to be an omission of considerable proportions.

Tahir Kamran

University of Cambridge

Arvind-pal S. Mandair, *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Postcoloniality, and the Politics of Translation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). Pp. xviii, 516. ISBN 978-0-231-14724-8.

Religion and the Specter of the West is a bold attempt by Arvind-pal Singh Mandair to reconcile the theoretical tensions between continental philosophy of religion, history of religions, and secular postcolonial theory. Offering an examination of the category 'religion' *vis-à-vis* its colonial encounter with Sikh tradition, Mandair promulgates a Derridian theory of translation that privileges the *process* (rather than the results) of encounter between 'India' and Europe. In doing so, Mandair attempts to discern and to reconceptualize a range of essentialized oppositions (e.g. religion / politics, religion / secularism) that conceptually underpin the modern, 'western' university setting, and that have implications for thinking about modern immigration policy, multiculturalism, and the secular, democratic nation-state. At its most ambitious, *Religion and the Specter of the West* is a table-clearing exercise wherein the trajectory of scholarship concerning 'religion' and 'identity' is re-charted.

The volume is divided into three parts of two chapters each. *Part I: Indian Religions and Western Thought* examines the religious and linguistic encounter between the sub-continent and Europe, the transformation of religion and the production of social 'reform', and highlights the intellectual concerns of Europe that are inextricable from this encounter. Mandair argues that mimicry and power transformed both Western and Indic thinking and culture. But this very transformation is forgotten, if not overtly denied, when it comes to translating notion of 'religion' and its assumed universality. Indeed, Mandair sees such disavowal effectively removing "India and everything associated with it from the realms of theory and the political."

In Chapter 1, “Mono-theo-lingualism: Religion, Language, and Subjectivity in Colonial North India”, Mandair challenges the view that colonial interaction and exchange could be based on dialogue or inter-’religious’ communication. Mandair provocatively suggests that such a model forgets that dialogue and communicative exchange involves the process of translation, a process through which something of what is being translated becomes lost. In this case, a loss of indigenous self-understanding is subsumed under the rubric of ‘religion’. Here, Mandair offers an insightful analysis of the transformation of precolonial bhakti *sampradays* to postcolonial devotional religion.

For Mandair there exists an inviolable link between, indeed a consonance of, ‘religion’ and language that has been too often obscured. Drawing from the linguistic and cultural theorizing of Noaki Sakai, Mandair attempts to show the process by which indigenous precolonial language forms in north India were transformed from a hetrolingual mode of expression that was organic and fluid to a standardized homolingual mode of ‘communication’ and ‘exchange’ predicated on English. This process of translation highlights not only the complexity of the colonial idiom, but its iatrogenic legacy in contemporary (i.e. ‘western’) discourse, an effect Mandair refers to as the ‘specter of the West’.

In the second half of Part I, *Hegel and the Comparative Imaginary of the West*, Mandair situates this colonial interaction within the broader contemporaneous intellectual environments in continental Europe. Arguing that postcolonial critical theory cannot simply disavow religion in favour of historicism, Mandair sees a construction of identity for and by Indian elites that is both modern and religious.

Part II: Theology as Cultural Translation examines the penetration of a universal notion of religion and the process of religion-making by native South Asians in the decades leading up to and immediately following the turn of the 20th century. Here, Mandair uses Sikhism as a ‘case study’ to demonstrate the political consequences and limits of this process. While Sikh tradition is the focus of the volume, one might ask whether the process of religion-making affected affect different Indic traditions / *sampradays* in different ways. While recognizing Sikh tradition shares similarities with other Indic traditions, it also possesses distinctive features particularly in terms of the *gurnat* and the consonance of the ‘religious’, the political, and the linguistic that may have more susceptible to the problems of translation.

The first chapter of Part II is “Sikhism and the Politics of Religion-Making”. This chapter predictably focuses on the integration of ‘religion’ into the various projects (cultural, ideological, political) and identities of Sikh elites of the Singh Sabhas. However, the intellectual turning point for Mandair is an Hegelian ontotheological reframing he sees in the

translation projects of Trumpp and Macauliffe that effectively produced an ontological separation between God and the world. Such a reframing has concomitantly produced, among other things, a different logic by which Sikh identity is articulated, a system of ethics tied to 'belief' in one immutable, static God, and the ennobling of topologies of suffering and death.

The Hegelian shift and attendant God / world dualism painted above is the ground on which Mandair examines in the second chapter of Part II – "Violence, Mysticism, and the Capture of Subjectivity" – the (western) theological framework responsible for containing Sikh 'religiosity', and how that very framework has been transferred to both discourses surrounding 'religious violence' and to managing religious pluralism in the secular state. In this context, Mandair focuses on the (often latent) theological assumptions at play in the work of W.H. McLeod. Key to Mandair's argument here is his analysis of the precolonial Sikh usages of *guru*, *sabda*, and *nam*, and their subsequent manifestations in the colonial past and postcolonial present.

For Mandair, McLeod's rendering of Sikh theology and the intersection of *guru*, *sabda*, and *nam*, while systematic, lends itself to the deontologization of language. In other words, language becomes nothing more than a vehicle for the communication of ideas between human beings, rather than social, political, and immanent. Drawing from Heidegger, Mandair seeks to re-ontologize language, to regard language as 'radically immanent', and relates this to a discussion of orality and writing in the broader South Asian context.

Part III: Postcolonial Exits is comprised of two chapters: *Ideologies of Sound* and *Decolonizing Postsecular Theory*. In these final chapters, Mandair employs the radical deconstructivism of Derrida and Heidegger to interrupt the ongoing sikhizing of the Sikhs. Such an approach is Mandair's attempt to initiate a meaningful and conceptually decolonized postcolonialism. By focusing on the concept of *sabda-guru*, Mandair seeks to 're-ontologize' the question of language in such a way that is both subjective and objective. In doing so, Mandair is able to call into question and to contest a thick catalogue established dichotomies, while at the same time rendering the notion of *gurmata* in terms of temporality and contingency. Finally, Mandair concludes by speculating on Derrida's question: What if *religio* remained untranslatable?

Religion and the Specter of the West is conceptually dense, its prose thick, and assumes that the reader is more than a little conversant in Sikh historiography, postcolonial theory, and the works of several key European philosophers. Those familiar with Jacques Derrida on the act of translation, G.W.F. Hegel's philosophy of history, and Martin Heidegger's philosophy of language will have an advantage here. Moreover, Mandair's prose can be uneven. In places, his discussion is

lucid, cogent, and readily accessible; in others, arcane and abstruse. Between the author's text and the subject matter, it is at times difficult to follow the conceptual connections and correspondences that Mandair attempts to draw. Indeed, as Mandair himself recognizes, "this book pursues an oblique and often impossible engagement between several discourses not usually thought to be connected."

Religion and the Specter of the West is a book that needs to be taken seriously, to be interrogated, explored, and critiqued. It is broad in its theoretical scope, yet goes beyond and applies in new and provocative ways the work of a host of postcolonial theorists and continental philosophers. Similarly, the volume offers a critical examination of a range of scholarship within 'Sikh Studies'. Remaining true to the Derridian methodology he employs throughout the book, Mandair is candid and reflective of his own 'disorder of identity', subjectivity, and motives for writing. This book will be of interest to graduate students and scholars those working in Sikh tradition, continental philosophy of religion, history of religions, or secular postcolonial theory.

Michael Hawley

Mount Royal University

Edited by Doris. R. Jakobsh, *Sikhism and Women: History, Texts, and Experience* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010). Pp. 383. ISBN 13: 978-0-19-806002-4. Price: £31

The edited book *Sikhism and Women* brings a valuable and much needed addition to the field of Sikh Studies, which will appeal to both scholars of Sikhism/Punjab Studies as well as those interested in gender and religion more generally. With fourteen contributors representing both historical, textual and ethnographic approaches, *Sikhism and Women* covers a wide range of issues pertaining to Sikh women, in both India and the diaspora.

It begins by contextualizing well the broader field of Sikh and women's studies, highlighting how the labels 'Sikh' and 'woman' are contested terms that need to be problematized. Just as who is considered a 'true Sikh' receives various definitions, there is "no seamless category of Sikh womanhood". Diversity among Sikh women is stressed and this is reflected in the various chapters, which discuss the experiences of Sikh women of all ages and backgrounds. Jakobsh and Nesbitt highlight how the Internet is playing a key role as a new cultural authority on Sikhism and 'correct' behavior for Sikh women, with mixed results. While providing a forum for diaspora women to push for greater equality, it has also been instrumental in promoting a normative form of Sikhism in which women are consistently portrayed as wearing turbans, which does

not correspond to actual practice for the vast majority of Sikh women. This new form of Sikhism is called “identity Sikhism”. In the introduction, Jakobsh draws on her classroom experiences teaching introductory Sikhism to largely diaspora Sikh students, which reveal a common theme throughout the book: the continuing importance of the concept of *izzat* or honor in defining what it means to be a Sikh woman. Jakobsh’s second generation female students identified *izzat* as the one word which most characterized the concept of “Sikh woman”.

Sikhism and Women is divided into three parts. The first part is devoted to textual studies, with chapters focusing on the highly disputed Sikh text the *Dasam Granth* and its view of women, as well as actual gender practices during the early Khalsa period. A welcome addition to this section is Christine Fair’s chapter on the novels of legendary Punjabi author Bhai Vir Singh, bringing attention to non-theological texts in understanding historical constructions of gender. Fair’s chapter shows how Singh used his female heroines of Sundri, Sheel Kaur and Satwant Kaur to promote complete devotion to the Sikh panth, and clearly distinguish the brave Sikhs from both the rapacious Muslims and pusillanimous Hindus.

The second part deals broadly with Sikh women in India. Jagbir Jhutti-Johal, in her study of Sikh women’s perception of their role in religious institutions, found that Indian Sikh women, regardless of age, did not feel discriminated against by their gurudwaras, but that some younger university-educated women had started to question tradition in areas such as the ban on women carrying out certain forms of *seva* (service) at the Golden Temple. Despite some change observed in the younger generation, Jhutti-Johal concluded that young women continued to uphold the importance of maintaining *izzat* under community/family pressure, and generally felt powerless to change male dominated religious institutions.

The third part of *Sikhism and Women* discusses the issues and challenges faced by Sikh women living in the Western diaspora. Kamal Elizabeth Nayar for example, explores how three generations of Punjabi Sikh women negotiate gender roles in Vancouver, finding that grandmothers maintain a traditional mindset and suffer from ‘out group’ stress; mothers suffer from both in and out group stress, experiencing the clash between tradition and modernity in terms of gender expectations most intensely; and daughters, born and raised in Canada, experience primarily ‘in group’ stress, due to the yawning divide they perceive between the Sikh religion and Punjabi culture—the former no longer seen to be a seamless whole incorporating the latter. Another contributor, Elsberg, highlights the experiences of white American women converts to Sikhism via the “Healthy, Happy, Holy Organisation” (3HO) founded by Yogi Bajan. She maintains that despite Bajan’s conservative gender

ideology, which advocated modesty and “gracefulness” for women, many of his female followers found both spiritual and gender empowerment through his movement. Although she touches upon former female members who feel that they have lost years of his life to the organisation and of suits brought against him, a more thorough discussion of the charges of psychological abuse against Bhajan would have been helpful in enabling readers to learn more about the history of this movement and the charismatic figure behind it (two of Bhajan’s female secretaries charged him with sexual misconduct, cases which were settled out of court).

To conclude, *Sikhism and Women* is a strong volume of articles that I would highly recommend to all those who incorporate a gendered/feminist perspective in their work. Its contributors show how the intersection of religion and gender are crucial issues for both society and academia in the 21st Century.

Kathryn Lum

European University Institut

Gurinder Singh Mann, Gurdit Singh, Ami P. Shah, Gibb Schreffler with Anne Murphy, *An Introduction to Punjabi: Grammar, Conversation and Literature* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2011). Pp. xxiv, 354. ISBN 81-302-0296-4.

The book by Professor Gurinder Singh Mann and his colleagues at the University of California at Santa Barbara is a comprehensive manual of teaching Punjabi language and literature. Beginning with introductory notes on phonetics, phonology and Gurmukhi orthography, it gradually introduces the nominal and verbal constructs with complementary exercises. Most of its students are supposed to be the children of those Punjabis who are settled abroad, or those who have no background in the language whatsoever. In foreign environments the native Punjabi speaking atmosphere is fast disappearing but the roots are there and the parents have not lost touch with their culture. This is why this manual is not at all the type of the old Teach Yourself handbooks which were meant as very introductory guides for visiting civil servants. As such this manual is comprehensive. It goes straight to the problematic of language teaching with immediate introduction of Punjabi writing system in Gurmukhi script.

In a way the UCSB project of teaching Punjabi language along with Punjabi culture and literature is an academic continuation of the Hartford project of presenting a critical analysis of Punjabi grammar. *A Reference Grammar of Punjabi* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1962) was a revised

version of my doctoral thesis, "A Descriptive Grammar of Punjabi" completed under the supervision of the eminent linguist, Professor Henry Allan Gleason, Jr. Having completed this research, I moved to France and as Attaché de Recherche at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, and did extensive fieldwork in the French Alps under the guidance of Professor André Martinet. This experience was useful when in 1968 I was appointed Professor of Linguistics at Punjabi University, Patiala. The Patiala project led to the publication of the *Linguistic Atlas of the Punjab* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1973). After a fifteen years stint at Jawaharlal Nehru University I am back at Patiala; at present I am working on a conceptual dictionary of Punjabi where we are analyzing the words of Punjabi language from fifteenth century onwards in their conceptual contexts. Along with this dictionary, there is also an associate project of transcribing the entire Adi Granth in phonetic script.

The purpose of mentioning these studies is that the UCSB manual takes due notice of them, represents a considerable expansion of the beginnings made with my work on Punjabi grammar in the sixties, and covers a long academic distance from the Teach Yourself manuals in circulation. The pedagogic strategy that the manual employs is excellent. Whenever a certain grammatical construct, nominal or a verbal form, is introduced, it is invariably followed by its use in natural quotidian conversation. It recognizes the natural discursive formations of Punjabi language. There are no artificial conversations. Every example is culled from the natural flow, to the extent that more often than not, the texts, short or long, represent modern or older forms of expressions. The other features of this manual include the introduction of Punjabi culture and literature with beautiful sketches. As these texts were never meant for language teaching, the grammatical register is invariably highly complex. You learn to swim by jumping in and this plunge straight into the literature of the five rivers is an excellent idea. As this teaching program covers two years of intensive training, it should achieve what my *Reference Grammar* did not in the 1960s. It has taken almost fifty years to arrive at this level of advancement. *An Introduction to Punjabi* is a very important contribution to the pedagogy of foreign language teaching. My salutations to Professor Mann and his colleagues who have worked over the years to arrive at this level of perfection!

Harjeet Singh Gill

Professor Emeritus

Jawaharlal Nehru University

Gurinder Singh Mann, Gurdit Singh, Ami P. Shah, Gibb Schreffler with Anne Murphy, *An Introduction to Punjabi: Grammar, Conversation and Literature* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2011). Pp. xxiv, 354. ISBN 81-302-0296-4.

Quite a lot of Punjabi teaching material, though often privately produced and of very variable quality, has been enthusiastically generated over the years in response to the strong support in the Sikh diaspora in North America and Britain for the idea of the importance of keeping alive a knowledge of Punjabi in members of the younger generations for whom it may no longer be a natural mother tongue. A few mainstream publishers of language textbooks have also included rather more ambitiously designed books on Punjabi in their series of instructional volumes. But in obedience to the usual laws of minimizing financial risk in what must be recognized to be a strictly limited market, one title has had to be sufficient for all types and levels of learners. So compact textbooks of the “teach yourself” type, whose primary function is to meet the needs of adults learning by themselves, have also to be pressed into service as class books for all sorts of group instruction, ranging from regular school classes attended by children entered for British GCSE examinations or their equivalent to adults enrolled in evening classes.

So while growing numbers of higher education institutions in North America are now offering Punjabi courses, students looking to take such courses as regular part of their degree program have mostly had to make do either with such all-purpose books or else with ad hoc instructional materials locally produced by their course teachers. The need for a dedicated college-level Punjabi course was at one time met by the *Punjabi Reader* by Ved Prakash Vatuk, which was published in 1964 by Colorado State University in the now amateurish-looking typescript of those distant days and has long since become unavailable. Nearly half a century later we now at last have an attractively produced and (at Rs.700) economically affordable Punjabi course book which has been thoughtfully and imaginatively designed for the college market by Professor Gurinder Singh Mann and the shifting panel of his associates at UCSB who are named on the title page.

The introduction explains the successive involvement of these members of Mann’s team over several years as the course was trialed at UCSB and on the annual Summer Program in Punjab Studies at Chandigarh. As a result of this long period of gestation the book now has the reassuring feel of a course which has already been thoroughly tested in advance of publication to meet the needs of its now likely wider audiences. Given the place of Punjabi in the western academy, the great majority of users will be heritage students looking to develop literacy skills from some level of prior spoken competence, along with an

increased familiarity with the matrix of cultural and historical factors associated with Punjabi. The requirements of these students can of course be adapted by course teachers to address the overlapping demands of ab initio learners from non-Punjabi backgrounds.

The book is particularly well designed in its generous coverage of cultural topics in its reading passages, which range from specially composed elementary pieces in the earlier lessons to the literary texts around which the later lessons are based. Collectively these offer a broad view of Punjabi society across religious boundaries, since it is a welcome feature of the course that it is not narrowly focused on the Sikhs alone but regularly looks across the border to Pakistan, where the majority of Punjabis of course live (even if few of them are literate in the language). The attractive line drawings which accompany the reading passages should help stimulate class discussion in Punjabi as well as generally enhancing the interest of the course to all its users, including those with a new interest in Punjabi language and culture besides the predominant mix of heritage learners of Indian Pakistani descent from a variety of religious backgrounds.

The course is designed in two parts, each suitable for one year of study. Part One is headed “Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening,” but the emphasis is very much on the development of the first two of these skills, given the absence of accompanying audio materials (although the *expectation* is of course that the course teacher will make appropriate use of the book to develop speaking and listening skills in class). The first three lessons introduce the Gurmukhi script (a Shahmukhi edition is envisaged for some future date), which is used throughout the book in the special Gurmukhi-UCSB font whose distinctive design with its loops in shapes of letters like *aira*, *sassa*, *mamma* at first appears innovative but is in fact based on the typical script of early Gurmukhi manuscripts.

Lessons 4 through 20 then take the learner progressively through the basic grammatical structures, starting with the simplest sentences of the type *uh Panjabi hai*, and eventually reaching the level of complexity represented by e.g. *pani pindian pindian, us ne mainun ishare nal dassia* “All the while drinking water, she told me with a gesture.” The ordering of the linguistic elements and the pace with which they are introduced is generally well conceived. But as most people who have ever taught (or indeed learnt) a modern language of the Indo-Aryan family will know, there always comes a point when the level of difficulty suddenly seems to increase. This is typically felt to occur when the structures least familiar from English are introduced, as with the subjunctive tense (formally similar to the future which itself probably not long have been introduced, but semantically not always easy at first to distinguish from the indicative present, i.e. *kare* besides *karegi*, versus *karda hai*), and more acutely with the past tenses with their distinction of agreement with

the subject in the case only of intransitive verbs, but with the object in the ergative construction used with transitive verbs (i.e. *uh gia* versus *us ne filam vekhi*). In the present course all these tricky points are introduced more or less at once, in Lessons 12 and 13. Since these should occur just after the half-way point perhaps students will have sufficiently invigorated by mid-course breaks to take everything in, but teachers will probably have their work cut out to steer them through these choppy waters to the calmer seas of auxiliary verbs and time expressions which lie beyond.

At all events, by the time that the whole of Part One has been thoroughly worked through with the aid of the grammatical explanations and the drills and exercises which accompany the dialogues and reading passages around which each lesson is based, students should be well prepared to tackle Part Two “Language Through Literature” in their second year. This is a university of a very traditional type (and of course none the worse for that) whose lessons each introduce a selected literary text, which is accompanied by minimal exercises and full alphabetically arranged glossaries to extend the well designed corpus of more elementary vocabulary built up in the lessons of Part One and alphabetically listed in the Glossary at the end of the book. Lessons 21-32 introduce classic poems from the twentieth-century by such well known Sikh authors as Bhai Vir Singh, Mohan Singh and Amrita Pritam, but also others from across the border like Ahmad Rahi and Faiz Ahmad Faiz (speaking in his Punjabi voice for once). Collectively these make up a well selected small poetic anthology. Since the Punjabi prose canon is less well established, the longer prose passages which follow in Lessons 33 through 40 represent a more individual choice, but as with topics selected for the composed readings in Part One, there is good overall variety. Lesson 41 is a sort of fun appendage consisting of a range of songs of traditional and modern types, somewhat reminiscent of the folk materials collected in the language manuals produced by enthusiastic local officials in British India—and they would certainly have relished some of the obscurer appendices which are thrown in as a bonus at the end of the book. Particularly recommended is Appendix X listing animals and their sounds (*huankna* for a jackal, *kalakna* for a partridge but *patakna* for a quail!).

Students might be misled by the statement on the first page of the Introduction that the five rivers of the Punjab are “Satluj, Ravi, Chenab, Jehlam, and Sindh/Indus”, a statement which is repeated in the Punjabi reading passage on p. 90, while the river Beas which is usually reckoned as the fifth river is even omitted from the map which follows the table of contents. But the level of accuracy in this complex bilingual text is commendably so high overall that it would be churlish to make too much of any small errors here and there. However valuable they may be,

textbooks are not very highly valued in the academy, so Professor Mann and his team are to be warmly congratulated on the self-sacrifice which went into the making of this excellent Punjabi course, which deserves to be widely used for many years to come.

Christopher Shackle

SOAS, University of London (emeritus)

In the editorial preface of the previous issue of the Journal of Punjab Studies, dedicated to assessing the scholarship of the late W.H. McLeod, we invited individuals to submit thoughtful critiques and considerations of the scholarly arguments presented therein. In an attempt to broaden the discussion presented in that issue of the Journal by Louis E. Fenech regarding the presentations of martyrdom in the Sikh tradition, especially as it has related to Guru Arjan, Pashaura Singh has submitted a scholarly rejoinder on the same topic. While the debates regarding the martyrdom of Guru Arjan are complex, we hope that this article, read alongside the work of scholars such as McLeod and Fenech, will advance our understanding of critical issues in the field of Sikh Studies.

Ami P. Shah