Chapter – VI
RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE

The British rule over Punjab was quite like that in other parts of India. It has become clear that the scientific and technical activities of British aimed to fulfill colonial interests but their scientific and technological projects evoked great amount of interest among the local people. Its introduction through the agency of medical science, a new education system and technological innovations had direct bearing upon the local people. The people response was varied. On the one hand, there was the urge to look forward to change and break with the existing notions and practices. On the other, the tendency to look backward was common among the local people. They appreciated some innovations, adopted a few, and rejected those which did not suit their local requirements and conditions.

The first scientific lesson imparted by the British to their Indian subjects came through the agency of surveying. Initially, Indians were employed as carriers and flagmen to their European surveyors. In this capacity, they ‘ventured fearlessly to face awful dangers which have made the stoutest hearts quail and shrink’\(^1\). Later when some provisions were arranged for the training of Indians in the mathematical and trigonometrically branches, a few of Indian trainees were picked up by the European surveyors. These Indian assistant surveyors quickly learnt the rules of the game. In the physical and natural sciences also, the British employed local assistants. Mohsin Hussain, a resident of Arcot who had proved his mettle in mechanical repairs adjustment and reconstruction of the old instruments and appointed by British as the mathematical instrument maker at Calcutta\(^2\). In Punjab, in 1823, when a survey was made to access the practicability of introducing steam vessels on Indus in west Punjab, many local people’s help was taken in surveying. In similar ways, Himalayas and its riches

\(^2\) Ibid., p.458.
were explored with native assistance\(^3\). During the year 1876, one of the trained native explorers of the great trigonometrical survey named 'Mullah' ascended the Indus River from the point where it enters the plains of the Punjab at Attock to the point where the Gilgit River joins it. Nain Singh and Kishan Singh known as Pundit brothers, helped in surveying. A native officer of the Survey Department, sub-surveyor Imam Baksh Bozdar took part in eight different expeditions during twenty-five years of his service. On his retirement in 1884, he was given a grant of 250 acres of land in the Dera Gazi Khan district (now in Pakistan) and the title of 'Khan Bahadur'\(^4\).

The colonial power was a primary change-producing agent and its institutions and policies were exogenous forces, which altered the existing patterns of social change\(^5\). The British impact of various technological projects was so persuasive that the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs enjoyed the process of change\(^6\).

The European medical system, blessed as it was, with some new discoveries and the surgical art, made instantaneous impact on the people of India, and Punjab in particular, during medieval time. Their interest in the medical skills of the Europeans had begun in the seventeenth century when it is stated that one doctor Dr. Garbriel Baughton, a surgeon of the Company's ship *Hopewell*, cured the daughter of Emperor Shah Jahan who had been burnt by accidental ignition of her clothes and for whose relief Indian skill had failed\(^7\). Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab, also employed western surgeon Dr. John Martin Honingberger in his court\(^8\). With the passage of time, the Indian obsession with

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3. *Foreign Political Proceedings*, June 28, 1833, No. 4.

218
European medical science had reached such a stage that 'all Feringees were supposed to be physicians' 9.

Under colonial relations, the scope of relationship between the European medical system and Indian populace took a different shape. Now, with the disappearance of the local nobility, who used to employ European physicians in their service, the latter made inroads into the common populace, often teaching their Indian counterparts some of the skills unknown to their system. The British also opened some dispensaries in some parts of their territories for the treatment of their Indian subjects. These arrangements led to the adoption of new skills by Indian medical men from the European system. The introduction of vaccine inoculation and the revival of the surgical art are the two distinct developments of the period.

A regular staff was appointed at different centers in the British Punjab. In the beginning there were some difficulties in the successful introduction of European methods. In addition to the apathy of common men, who would not undergo the treatment, the strongest resistance came from those employed in inoculation of small pox, some of whom were Brahmans and others belonged to inferior castes who skip no ways to bring the new practice into disuse10. These antagonists even declared the vaccine as impure, since it came from the cow. In Punjab also, the vaccination campaign was carried out effectively to combat the deadly disease like small pox. But the people here also were averse to vaccination, though its good effects had been explained to them. They resorted to many subterfuges to avoid it, in some cases even leaving their homes till the tour of the vaccinator was over. The work was done under great difficulty and only with great exertion on the part of local authorities, Zaildars and Lambardars11. But gradually, the resistance died out. In Calcutta, the British took the help of influential people to make vaccination sanctioned for Indian people.

Radha Kant Deb in Calcutta\textsuperscript{12} and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in Punjab asked their community members to accept vaccination\textsuperscript{13}.

In the fields of surgery also, Indian students of medical classes at the Calcutta Sanskrit College, the Calcutta Madrassa, the government College, Lahore and Mahendra College, Patiala, demonstrated great interest in learning anatomy. People showed so much interest in anatomy that those who had viewed the opening of medical college as a direct attempt on the part of the government to Christianise the natives\textsuperscript{14} began to avail themselves of the aid of a graduate from the college.

However, European doctors and their medicines received negligible response from some people of India. Their distrust was not in the medical skill of the European but in the medicines prepared by them with some liquids\textsuperscript{15}. Besides, it was too costly to be adopted by majority of the people\textsuperscript{16}. Therefore, the natives seldom applied for the assistance of European (physicians) until the case appeared hopeless from their own prescriptions. According to Sleeman, the natives of India have much more confidence in their own practitioners than European physicians whom they consider too reckless and better adopted to treat diseases in a cold climate. Well-to-do patients often delay visiting the English physicians until they have exhausted all resources of the local Hakims or the Vaidya\textsuperscript{17}. The preference of Hakims (who charge meager amount) to doctors is clear from the extract of a folk song\textsuperscript{18}:

\begin{quote}
Panj sat rupae main Hakim nuan Denda wan,
Sajna da leina chatpat ilaj meriye jinde
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{12} Satpal Sangwan, \textit{Science, Technology and Colonization}, p.121. 
\textsuperscript{13} Ghulam Ahmad, \textit{Review of Religion}, March 1908. 
\textsuperscript{14} \textit{The Englishman}, November 17, 1857. 
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{The Samachar Darpan}, August 2, 1851. 
Some people, however preferred doctors for their treatment to Hakims is also evident from a folk song by a Punjabi who is asking his wife 19:

Jammu shahar meiñ Javan,
Utho doctor iyanwan mein,
Moohan bol peera Kindan hatdi ae

The people’s response to the scientific and technical education, introduced by the British, testifies their awareness of the new phenomenon. In the beginning, the British avoided interference in matters like education, because they thought that the Indians would not tolerate such an attempt. But when by the Charter Act of 1813, promotion of education among Indians became the responsibility of the East India Company government 20, the British began to promote Oriental literature and science. This act of the British was opposed firstly by Raja Ram Mohan Roy (founder of Brahmo Samaj). He regretted that this system of education was to keep this country in darkness 21.

The British, however, did not make much effort to introduce scientific and technical education. For them, time was premature to establish classes for European science 22. But in some colleges some kind of scientific education was introduced. The educated people immediately responded and showed keen interest in limited science education provided to them. At the Delhi College, for instance, which provided education through the medium of vernacular languages, on such subjects as geometry, geography and the Copernican system of astronomy, occupied a considerable share of the students’ attention 23. The most important part of Indian and Punjabi response was that various caste members, classes and communities of different religion, came forward to join the

19 Ibid., p. 100.
20 East India Company , a trading company established in India in 1600 A.D. After 1857 revolt, all the power of East India Company taken by the British Parliament.
22 Home Public-Letters from the Court of Directors, September 5, 1827, para 6.
23 Foreign Political Proceedings, June 5, 1829, No. 89.

221
mainstream of modern science and relinquished their hereditary professions. When the British government in Punjab decided to close down the Delhi College and to promote Panjab University College into University, some enlightened Punjabis like Pundit Manphool, a citizen of Lahore, Mul Raj and Sri Ram (President of Lahore Arya Samaj and student of Government College, Lahore) along with people all over Punjab, protested against the closure decision and made demands for a new college which would provide education in western science and technology 24.

The closure of the Delhi College in 1877 was regarded as a serious blow to science education in Punjab because the people of Punjab went to Delhi College for receiving science education and in the beginning of British rule in Punjab it was the only institution teaching western science in Punjab. Later, commenting upon the idea of British government to promote Panjab University College into University, the Safir-i-Hind says: ‘Is there at present a scarcity of Pundits and Mullahs in the Punjab that it is intended to make more Pundits and Mullahs in order that they may offer prayers everyday in the morning on behalf of the souls of the Punjab University and its supporters’ 25.

It is evident that the Punjabi valued the advantages of western science and showed great interest in the promotion of technical education. They were not satisfied with the kind of education provided to them. One contemporary newspaper wrote: ‘Practical mechanics or engineering forms no portion of native education. From the pathshala to the college they have no more practical idea of manufacturing. The aim of British education is to make Indians either accountants or letter-writers. India is full of raw materials, which are crumbling in neglect for want to men to work them. The resources of the country will never be developed unless the children of the soil learn the way to develop them’ 26.

26. The Hindu Patriot, April 6, 1854.
When the Lahore literary and scientific Institution was founded in 1854, the Lahore Chronicle suggested that the government should deliver lectures which must embrace discourses on electricity, chemistry, the electric telegraph, the steam engine, geology, hydrostatics and hydraulics, etc. A wave was thus passing over the country agitating the minds of the people and drawing their attention to these subjects.

The cultivation of science became a watchword with the people of Punjab. They began to feel that science affords the purest delight in this world. For receiving that pleasure, the students mostly boys went to foreign countries for higher studies. Among them, some got married to English or European women. When they came back with their foreigner wives, women of Punjab composed the song that:

Munda saada gaya valeit  
Ban ke London da rahi,  
Dhee Angrejan di  
Chan de chanan viyah

Slowly, English educated 'Babu' became famous in Punjab, women wanted to marry 'Babus' despite their limited income. Their response is clear from the folk song:

Bari Barsi Khattan gia se  
Khatt ke Liyani soti  
Vassana Babu de  
Bhanvei deve ik dang roti  
Hundna babuan de  
Cheete Kapde te  
Kheese Khali

27. Lahore Chronicle, February 3, 1855.  
28. The Morning Chronicle, April 22, 1854.  
30. I bid.
The continued display of new and improved technology by the British, though mainly aimed at the consolidation of their power in India and to increase its productive resources, evoked considerable response among the Indians. The first major technological innovation was the introduction of steam vessels into Indian waters. There was some speculation that Indians would object to travelling power driven boats on board paddle wheelers. The Indian response to it was positive. When stream boat had just begun plying on the Hoogly (Calcutta), the groups of wonder-struck natives, attracted by the novelty of the exhibition crowded both banks of the river to witness its surprising maneuvers. Taking advantage of their power and position, the British concluded treaties with Amirs of Sindh in 1839 for the employment of steamers on Indus. The response of Punjabi women about steam engine is given below:

Teri ban ke 'Dubakani Beri
Ve Bede Toda Vairyan de

(It means that just like steam engine Punjabi women liked to help her husband with full force and wanted to defeat the enemies).

For the majority of Punjabis, steamboat was an economic impossibility. The shortest ride between two stations cost more than an average Punjabi peasant was likely to earn in a whole year. The high cost of passage money certainly operated against its general adoption by Punjabis, which in turn, caused some doubts about the future of steam navigation in India. But at this stage, the trading class came to its rescue. They found in it a cheap and safe mode for the transportation of goods.

Indians demonstrated a large degree of interest in railways, roads and canals. Indians, especially in Punjab, railway travel became increasingly popular.

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and was amply used by a large number of passengers. Special trains were provided on holidays and on important festivals, as trains were quick and cheap\(^{34}\). The response of the local people towards rail is shown from the following composed folk song \(^{35}\):

\[
\text{Gaddi Sarse Mail di Chad Ja}
\]
\[
\text{Je Tain Jana Suranga Nu,}
\]

(The tunnels made for railway tracks also attracted people’s attention i.e. why Punjabis are saying – if you want to see tunnels, board the trains).

When pacca roads were constructed in Punjab, people liked them and composed a song\(^{36}\):

\[
\text{Kam Sarkari Shuru Ho Giya, Pakki Sadak Banai}
\]
\[
\text{Pahila Sadak te sat laye bale, pichhon lein Tikayi}
\]
\[
\text{Rasta Chhad Diyo, Heer Majajan Aayee}
\]

(At first the government constructed roads, they laid wooden sleepers and on them laid the railway line, the train has come on the line and engine is blowing whistles. Make way for the rail engine. Here, rail is compared to a beautiful woman).

The response of a chariot man regarding railway is given below\(^{37}\):

\[
\text{Mere Yakke Ne dhamak nal turana}
\]
\[
\text{Aidi Kahli Rail chad Ja}
\]

(The chariot man is saying that his chariot will move with a thud if you want to go fast then board the train, as rail is the fastest means of transportation).

\(^{34}\) Y.B. Mathur, *British Administration of Punjab*, p. 166.


\(^{37}\) Ibid., p. 979.
It is true that many people appreciated the introduction of railways and new engineering skills on roads but some looked both at its advantages and disadvantages. The important drawback of Railway was that all its machinery came packed from England so no training was given to Indians. All the benefits accrued from railways were sent to England. So, railways became one of the means to exploit India. Bhartendu Harish Chander, a Hindi poet, expressed the exploitation by British in following words 38:

Angreji Raj Sukh- Saj Saje Sab Bhari,
Pei Dhan Bidesh Chali Jat Yeh Ati Khavari

(The British provided Indians every comfort like railways, telephone etc. but all benefits are taken to England, which exhausts the Indian treasury).

According to Altaf Hussain Hali, 'As the many routes of travel and commerce were opened. The journeys that took months are accomplished in seconds. One rests more comfortably at breaks in one's journey than in ones home. Travel, which was once a fore state of hell, has now been totally changed into means of profit. In all the lands, fresh news arrives instantly. News of joys and sorrow keep coming to us. The news of every continent is openly published. Nothing, which happens anywhere, is hidden. All that happens upon the face of earth is like a mirror'39.

Just like railways, telegraph was exclusively an imperial innovation designed to serve military purposes. The selection of telegraph lines was made entirely under strategic guidelines. When, in 1855, telegraph was opened for private use, Indians used telegraph for their personal affairs. Talking to other persons through wire was almost beyond belief for Indians. Two newspapers of Punjab namely the Delhi India Gazette and the Lahore Chronicle, were the first

users of the telegraph in India for journalistic purposes 40. Though the public use of telegraph was allowed in practice, when local merchants approached the East India Company for the opening of telegraphic facilities at some places the latter would not agree to it 41.

The British interest in irrigation had direct bearing upon people of Punjab especially upon the peasantry. With the construction of more canals in the Punjab, the problem of water for irrigation was solved. People became affluent and they now had no worry for water. It is clear from the following folk songs 42.

Oh Jameen Rani
Jis de Sier Pani

(That piece of land in no less than a queen, if it has water for irrigation at its command).

Jis De Vage Khal
Ki Karooga Ohnu Kaal

(Famine cannot touch a farmer whose lands have a channel in which water flows regularly).

The British interest in the propagation of industrial technology also affected the people of Punjab. In the beginning, people did not respond well to Saw Gin (a cotton cleaning machine). The artisan’s main problem was that while on the one hand, he had to bear financial loss if he took his cotton to the ginning factory, on the other hand, it was costly and beyond the capacity of artisans to retain and maintain it. The lack of skilled workers for operating the gin was

41. The merchant community of Malwa, chiefly engaged in opium trade, for instance had solicited the extension of electric – telegraph communication between Indore and Allahabad. But their request was turned down ruthlessly, Home Electric Telegraph Proceedings, January 9, 1857, No.1, and I.C.W.
another problem. This was the problem with all industrial technologies introduced by the British. The main problem was that British relied on imported technology. All machines, screws, bolts came packed from England. That was the reason for slow progress in industrial fields. Despite all that, the industrial technology succeeded a lot in capturing the attention of people. A folk song composed in the praise of industrial technology is given below 43:

Chhoti Jehi Karamaat bicycle ki,
kinne ku bana sakade eho jihi navi shai Koi
chain kiven ghumadi dawale gadri de
Mein taan heiran hovaan pia viekh viekh
cycle di jo karamat tan karamatan kehiyan
Motra, engine, Crane, Gaddian Hawai Jahaj
tho samudri te usston vadi karamat vi hisab
kitab karana tarian di chaal da Suraj di Vith
da, dharati di gardash te bhavishbani ih
Mausama te rutan di

(The Poet is impressed by the invention of bicycle, motor engines, cranes, trains aeroplanes, and ships. All of them seem wonderful to him. But what impresses him even more are the new discoveries in the field of astronomy and geography).

The folklorist further added, the scientists and engineers seem to be greater as it is clear from his poem 44:

Mein Samjda charn je paviter kise guru peer,
peigamber yan sant de,
Tan ghat kiyon paviter charan kise vigyanik yan engineer de

44. Ibid., p. 118.
(The modernisation was the brainchild of scientists and engineers, so he feels that he would like to pay his reverence to them rather than to the saints).

The common people of Punjab also reacted to these innovations. On seeing aeroplane in the sky, they began to say 45:

Hawaii Jahaj,
Samundaron paar
(For them airplane meant traveling across the sea).

When electricity was introduced, innocent people of village sang 46:

Jinna Dian Naran Sohniyan
Bijli Di Ke Lorh.

(Those who have pretty wives, they do not require electricity).

When water taps were installed at homes, lovers sang this song 47.

Khooan Tobiyan To Milano Rahi Gayee
Chandre Lava Laye Nalke

(I could not find you either by the sides of wells or ponds because all had taps put in their homes).

With the introduction he preferred the imported combs to the hand made wooden ones, the electro-plated Sheffield scissors and knives to the solid steel ones made by local smiths. The home-boiled desi soap was replaced by pears and Vilonia soap and the shining coloured buttons to the simple cloth ones 48.

Sewing machines gramophone or a clock became the pride of many houses 49. By 1942, cinema had become popular source of entertainment 50. Radio also

45. Amrita Pritam, Punjab di Awaz, p.158.
46. Ibid., p.158.
47. Ibid.
became an important source, but in the beginning, language used by Radio speaker was difficult and different from the spoken language of people. The following couplet expresses the response

\[
\text{Appe gounda appe sunda} \\
\text{Radio vaje rashter da}
\]

(Radio of government itself is a listener and a speaker).

According to some folklorists and poets, the British did nothing except some insignificant reforms. All the expectations of public remained unfulfilled and people got frustrated as all the technological projects were meant to give benefits to the British. Railway lines and Telegraph lines were laid out only in those areas, which were important from strategic and commercial point of view. When Lord Dufferin toured Karachi, the honorable men of Karachi gathered around him and asked for a railroad through the town, Lord Dufferin got rid of them by saying that he could not make promises but there was a possibility that he might find the same needs in Calcutta which overweighed the needs in Karachi. So through their manoeuvered projects, they are actually exploiting India. In the words of Bhartendu Harish Chandra:

\[
\text{Bheetar Bheetar Sab Ras Chuse} \\
\text{Hans Hans Ke Tan Man Dhan Moose} \\
\text{Jahir Batan Mein Ati Tej} \\
\text{Kiuen Sakhi Sajjan Nahin Angrez.}
\]

(Through their scientific and technological projects, the British committed loot in India. Their innovations and reforms are no doubt praiseworthy but they are not the friends of Indians).

The response of Indian cultivators to some new agricultural implements introduced by the British was rational. The iron plough introduced by the British in India was not adopted wholeheartedly by Indian farmers. The reasons were the bullocks, which the Indian farmers yoked to plough their fields, were not strong enough to work with the heavy plough. The cost of iron ploughs was too much to be paid by Indian peasants. The cultivators in India used to produce for subsistence rather than for profit, also militated against its adoptions54.

The village farmer felt comfortable with his wooden plough due to its easy availability within village from carpenter and at a low cost. Further in order to increase the productive resources of the dependent country, the British introduced some improved varieties of cash crops. Imported seeds were given freely or at a very nominal cost to the Punjabi farmers who were desirous of trying them and this experiment met with reasonable success as is reflected in the following folklores55:

Chhole vadh ke beej de narma
Ae Chunan nu mein Takri
(O my husband! sow American cotton after harvesting gram. I am equal to the task of picking it.

Bee Changa Paavin
Bhaven cheen ton Mangavin.
(Sow only good seed, even if you may have to obtain it from a distant place i.e. china).

Pani pio pun ke,
Bee pavo chun ke.
(Drink water only after straining and sow seed only after selection).

This experiment of the British met with some success in Punjab where the British failed in some experiments in other parts of India due to the indolent character of Indians and ignorance of the British towards varied qualities of

54. Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908, p.12.
55. Kishan Singh Bedi, Agricultural Proverbs of Punjab, p.68.
Indian social customs. The failure of American cotton in Aligarh\textsuperscript{56}, Mysore\textsuperscript{57} and the failure of silk-worm rearing in Punjab\textsuperscript{58} were all due to such a lack of scientific vision.

Besides, the British failed to convince the Indian farmer of the advantages of using the imported seeds. A contemporary saying thus refers to Indian farmer's attitude\textsuperscript{59}:

Then comes a gentleman Hakim
To teach us to plough and to weed
I sowed the cotton he gave me.
But first I boiled the seed
He likes us humble farmers
And speaks so gracious and wise
As he asks for our manner and customs,
I tell him a pack of lies

Moreover, he had little or no capital. Notwithstanding his limitation, the farmers were not opposed to all improvements. He was, in fact, quite ready to cultivate new staples, if they suited his land and mode of tillage and were likely to be profitable. Success of tea in Punjab testifies to the positive responses of the farmer.

The common man in Punjab began to drink tea in place of milk and Lassie (milk leftover after extracting butter). A new folk song was composed to depict that drinking tea had become a fashion among the people of Punjab\textsuperscript{60}:

\begin{quote}
Assi rusia yaar manaia  
Chah di piyali upron
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{56} Home Public-Letters from the Court of Directors, July 8, 1829, para 5.  
\textsuperscript{57} Foreign Political Proceedings, May 14, 1858, Nos. 94-95.  
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., November 14, 1856 No. 222.  
\textsuperscript{59} W. Crook, \textit{The North-Western Provinces of India}, London, 1897, pp.330-331.  
\textsuperscript{60} Amrita Pritam, \textit{Punjab di Awaj}, p.162.
The folklore showing respect towards the guest with cup of tea ran as follows:

Chah da cup banai zara Kudia
Jammu de master ne aouna ei

(Oh girl make a cup of tea to the respected teacher who is coming from Jammu city).

The most important change in the farmer's life was that they now, on the insistence of the British, began to take the help of their wives in the agricultural field to pay land revenue. In 1921 British maintained that there was a huge waste of female labour in India. In most other countries, the proportion of female labour, on the whole, was high. If there were in western countries a movement aiming at the exclusion of female labour for all except purely domestic tasks, that movement would endanger the whole economic fabric, and if successful would turn those countries to ruin. The Indians discarded female labour what in England and elsewhere is an absolutely necessary element in the maintenance of their civilisation. No European country could maintain its present standard of living without the assistance derived from the female labour.

The importance of woman labour in the agrarian society made marriage an acknowledged 'economic necessity', so much so that a man's inability to pay his revenue dues was attributed to his unmarried status, since an 'Ekela Adami' (single man) was not promoted to use modern agricultural technology (like using of manures, making passages for canal water, growing of new exotic seeds etc.).

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Significantly, the so-called work qualities of a prospective bride were scrutinised at the time of arranging marriages. The acknowledged requirement being 63:

Hath-paer ki mazboot honi chahye,
Taake khet- kivar ki kaam thik terh ho sake

(She should be physically strong so that agricultural work can be performed well).

In some areas like Rohtak district in the south-west Punjab, women were not allowed to receive education despite the opening of various schools and colleges by the British and socio-religious reformers because the villagers opined that educated men in their areas already refused to work at the fields and the educated females were considered to have the same attitude. They said 64:

Zada Padhi Likhi Ladhkiyan
ke Kaam Karen sain
or ke Kamm kar saken hain

(Highly educated girls do not work or are unable to do agricultural work).

All people were not alike; women in the west Punjab joined hands with men not only in educational matters but also in the freedom struggle against the British. There were also those people who responded to the western science by offering financial support for its assimilation by their countrymen. Such assistance came from all sections -- the landed aristocracy, the mercantile community and the educated middle class. Maharaja Mahendra Singh of Patiala state introduced modern science in Mahendra College and bore all the expenses incurred on its infrastructure 65. R.B Gujjar Mal had donated Rs. 4000/- for Tuberculosis hospital, Amritsar and Rs. 5000/- for x-ray apparatus 66, Baba Dinga

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64. *Ibid.*, pp.207-208
Singh of Lahore donated Rs. 1,00,000/- for building a Tuberculosis hospital in or near Lahore. Baba Khem Singh Bedi gave financial assistance for operating an western Girls school at Jehlum, Gujarat, and also opened industrial school in Rawalpindi.

One of the important aspects of the Punjabi response to western science and technology during this period is that there was no resistance to its adoption on the grounds of caste or creed. It was believed that compared to the Hindus, Muslims were more antagonistic to western scientific theories. It all began during the early eighteenth century when the European observers propagated that the Hindus were more receptive to knowledge while Muslims were wedded to their superstitions, and dogmas. Williams Sleeman, for instance, stated, ‘whilst the Hindus are showing readiness, zeal and generosity towards the spread of English education among their countrymen, the Mohammedans seem to have remained completely dormant, indeed took up a hostile attitude towards the use of electricity, houses in Punjab were well-lighted, to keep the house clean, high ceiling electronic fans were designed, chairs, sofas and tables in line with the European fashion replaced old durries spread on the floor, As the markets were flooded with British goods, people preferred buying the imported articles in place of local ones. Prakash Tondon has commented on these life style changes, ‘people progress of English education among them’. Whilst many educated Hindus were eager to reconcile western ideas to their own inheritance, Muslims remained markedly indifferent for some time to accept the validity of any knowledge not blessed by the Quran.

It was at this juncture, Maulana Hafiz Maulvi Nazur Ahmed a Muslim leader, appealed to Muslim people to learn English education. To him, the economic and political future of Indian Muslims depended largely upon British

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67. Ibid., p.25.
patronage. If Muslims abstained from agitation, avoided offending the rulers and convinced them of Muslim loyalty, the British would protect Muslim interests. He further added, the British gave great consideration to the happiness of their subjects and tried to keep them agreeable. Railway, telegraph, post, parcel, roads, cleanliness, canals, sea-travels, freedom of press, exhibitions, dispensing of justice, rules and formulas all are the gifts of the British which they bestowed on Indians. So we should accept the policy of Queen Victoria, Viceroy and Lt Governor because Muslim could advance only by remaining on good terms with the British. Poem read by five Muslim boys at the October 15, 1880, Delhi meeting addressed by Maulvi Nazur Ahmed:71

The times are praising the Queen,
All in the world are happy,
Whether one is child, old or young
Refrain, Everyone pray this to God:
Oh God, long live Victoria,
Her Government is a cloud of mercy,
She is making illiteracy disappear,
She is the promoter of knowledge,
Neither is there fear of life in desert and mountains;
Nor a danger of thieves on the road.
Everyone pray this to God:
Oh God, long life to Victoria

There is no doubt that Hindus felt relieved at the arrival of the British. They gained considerably with the arrival of the new rulers. The Hindus therefore made a beeline for the new jobs and opportunities. Earlier they faced much exploitation under Mughal rulers, and there was no scope for their

71. N. Gerald Barrier, 'Muslim Politics in the Punjab, 1870-1890', pp. 84-127.
In the beginning of their rule, British were not interested in providing education in science and technology. They were only encouraging Oriental literature. However, after the expansion of their Empire, the British had to introduce education in modern science and technology and to lay out programmes of technological projects for running successfully their rule in India. Hindus were very quick to grasp the knowledge and got awareness of their rights in their own country as enjoyed by the civilians of other free countries. They now demanded their share in the running of their own country but the Muslims did not tolerate their demand and they became very restless and insecure, their antagonism is reflected in Mohammed Sham-ud-Din’s anti-congress poem 73:

It has never been seen or heard before,
They all ask for kingdom,
Those who sell floor, pulse, oil and ghee.
Now they say this to the government:
Go and breathe in London.
Lala babu has now come,
He who does not like British rule.
Congressmen, see the truth,
Consider what you were in the past.
Look and then ask for kingdom.
whose fathers and grandfathers had never heard
Of chairs and stools.
Yet they want to sit equally
with those who are now our kings

This shows that Muslim became apprehensive and agitated to see the Hindus demanding share in governance of the country. Thus, the seeds of communalism were sown in India with the spread of western education. As

Hindus were in a majority, Muslims held the view that the economic and political future of Indian Muslims depended largely upon British patronage. Muslims ceased bombarding the government with demands and tended instead to concentrate upon education and 'expressing loyalty' to the British. They began to praise all the scientific and technological achievements of the British. The Urdu Poet Mirza Ghalib appreciated the achievements of the British in the field of science and technology. Ghalib, for instance, was impressed by the manifestation and results of modern scientific knowledge. In his poem Akbarnama, he described the achievements of western civilisation in which steam and coal as sources of heat and power had a special significance. Altaf Hussein Hali describes science as a precious jewel tested as yet by no one. All its functions being thus a matter of belief and its great powers still hidden.

All these examples of increasing awareness among the Muslims of western science and technology dispel the belief that Indian Muslims were wedded to their traditional beliefs and that compared to Hindus and Sikhs they were averse to new learning. There were many among Hindus and Sikhs who were opposed to western system of education in fact every community had its own standard of judging, modern science. Religious affiliations hardly had any impact on the response of the people to the new science. Whatever resistance came, it was from those traditional classes, which had long been the sole representative of a particular profession, be it the Hindus, the Sikhs on the Muslims. While the Vaidas and Hakims would not exchange views with the British on medical matters, a Pundit would not like the teaching of European science.

It is clear that, generally Punjabis were not against the acceptance of new scientific theories and the improved technologies. Rather, they had exhibited...
remarkable praise for modern science. Their growing interest in the assimilation of modern science and technology proves that British were not interested in intellectual and material progress of the people of this country. They introduced science and technology because it was a political necessity. The British opened a few scientific seminaries not for turning out engineers and scientists, but preparing a class of flagmen, sub-overseers and apothecaries. They brought some new technologies to lead the country and Punjab to industrialisation or modernisation, but to accelerate the process of its politico-commercial colonisation. Still, Indians could not remain unaffected by the scientific activities pursued by the colonial scientist in India and Punjab in particular.

On the whole, new science and technology gave a big jolt to Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims mind which took active part in freedom struggle and they began to look forward to the day when the long-lost reputation of India shall once again be established. But, in the aspiration of getting back their lost glory, they all got involved in communal trifles, and started brow-beating one another to secure maximum privileges from their British masters which resulted in the partition of the country.