CHAPTER V

INFLUENCE OF THE ENGLISH ROMANTIC POETS ON MOHAN SINGH, BALWANT, AMRITA PRITAM AND SINGH SAFEEER
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Political and Literary Influence on New Poetry

The resolute struggle for freedom launched by a devoted band of Indian revolutionaries failed with the tragic shooting of the Koma Gata Maru crew at Baj Baj near Calcutta in September, 1914.¹

The first World War came to an end on 11th November, 1918. And by 1936, the world was standing on the verge of facing another war. The second World War, though actually started in 1939, but with the Japanese invasion on Manchuria, its seeds were in fact sown. During these 18 years many events took place so quickly that it shook the entire world.² Pandit Nehru wrote in 1933: "The Whole World is in difficulty and the shadows of Revolution and a war are looming very large and deep."³

Though Indian was far away from these happenings of the world, but they roused the feelings and intellect of the Indians for a number of reasons. In October 1917, the great

1. Dr. I.P. Kohli: The Influence of West on the Panjabi Literature, p. 59.
Bolshevik Russian Revolution took place. A nation tired of war, and having made every body her enemy, regained her right of living with a wonderful confidence and determination, and this attracted the attention of Indian masses, and gave the intelligentsia of the world a stirring call.

The second period of twentieth century begins approximately somewhere in 1930 and like earlier period (1900-1930), it is also the time of new experiments. The numerous experiments, that Bhai Vir Singh made in regard to subject and form of poetry, became an obvious speciality to the poets of this period. Earlier, these experiments were modest and restricted, but now they were made liberally and openly. That is why we have made distinction between the poetry of 1900-1930 and thereafter.

The western socialism in general and Russian in particular were among the chief ideology of the time that affected Indian thought. This new perception gave a new dimension to Panjabi Literature known as 'progressive' literature and the chief exponents of this influence in Panjabi poetry are Prof. Mohan Singh, Bawa Balwant, and later Amrita Pritam who display this influence in their poetry after fifty.

The world wide 'Progressive Movement' became so strong in the IIIrd decade of this century, that no literature could escape its impact. The first conference of progressive writers

1. Dr. Diwan Singh: Adhunik Panjabi Sahit Te Hor Lekh, p.44.
was held in 1937 in Russia under the presidency of Maxim Gorky. A similar conference of progressive writers of the world took place in Paris in 1935. Subsequently, during the same year, the first gathering of such writers was held in Lucknow with Munshi Prem Chand in the Chair, which decided finally, the future modes to be followed in Indian literature.

The new change wrought in literature by this 'Movement' was, that now the emphasis shifted from unreal and imaginative to the real and solid facts. The idea of 'Art for art sake' was discarded and a new idea of 'art for society' was taken up. In the age of Bhai Vir Singh, the main aim of literature was social reform along with the occasional expression of patriotic feelings, but now 'the idea of socialism' was replaced by that of social reform and this type of literature comes up particularly after 1947 when the imagination of the Panjabi poets was thoroughly shaken.

So, whereas the revolution and revolting ideas of our poets owe much to the 'Russian Revolution' and 'Progressive Movement', they raised their voice for liberty as Shelley and Byron had done in their own times in England. And in our attempt, we have to discover the similarity of thought, combined with the impact of the poetry and poetic form of English poets on the poets of our language, during this period.

Mohan Singh's initiation into poetry synchronized with a tumult in national life and in Sikh consciousness. The Revolutionary sentiment which swept the country in the twenties and which formed the Singh Sabha Movement brought forth a crop
of verse that had by and large more passion than craft, more piety than beauty. For quite sometime, Panjabi poetry had been sliding into 'stage and symposium' verse, and the language had become, hard and rhetorical. It could send the assembled audiences and congregations into low raptures, but seldom solicited the imagination into deeper and darker realities. It was not a poetry of perception and lacked the power to surprise, hurt or ignite the mind. There, no doubt, was the soulful poetry of Bhai Vir Singh and Prof. Puram Singh, but it could not fully rescue the Panjabi poetry from the captivity of convention.

Vir Singh lifted the poetry of convention to the spectacular heights with the shee weight of his genius. He, alongwith modernity had evolved an idiom suited to his religious and mystical vision. And Prof. Puram Singh's free verse had yet few followers. Even Chatrik's poetry, despite its felicity and elegance, was essentially a poetry of 'inorganic convention'.

Thus, Mohan Singh came at a time when Panjabi poetry had not yet evolved a pattern of prosody which could render the whole range of contemporary experience.

Mohan Singh

Mohan Singh was born in the romantic atmosphere of the Pothohar terrains in 1905, and his early childhood, naturally,

2. Ibid., p. 81.
was receptively and responsive to romantic influences. While at school, he used to read the selected poems of Keats, Shelley and other English poets on the persuasion of his headmaster Harain Singh, who was preparing for M.A. English. He also read with deep devotion the poetry of Wordsworth and Browning and in the imagery of his poetry, he accepts Keats as his guide. The new and modern ideas of Shelley and love-philosophy of Browning had a deep impact on him. Mohan Singh himself admits that the Oxford Book of English Ballads had a captivating effect on him.

Mohan Singh defines poetry as an outcome of the excitement and ecstasy of love for beauty, (Kavita). He says:

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God fashioned Beauty
to reveal Himself
And Beauty's unbearable blendishments
brought forth Love.
The magic of Love
rode the ravished heart,
And when this ecstasy
turned eloquent;
The flood of verse burst out at last.
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(Kavita: Save Pattar)

Poetry here is seen as a flood of unpremeditated strains whose origin is divine. The poet is spurred into song when the agony or the ecstasy of existence cannot be contained. His definition of poetry coincides with that of Keats to greater extent and also with that of Shelley for whom poetry is the

3. Mohan Singh: Save Pattar (Green Leaves)
4. Darshan Singh Maini (Trans.): Studies in Panjabi Poetry, p. 82.
expression of the happiest moments of life in the best words and it is the language of true lovers.

Nearly all the leading motif of Mohan Singh's verse may be seen in the lovely lyrics and lyrical narratives of 'Save Patter'. Love and beauty, nature and universe, God and religion, time and flux, death and eternity, freedom and patriotism are the subjects which engage the poet's attention. Social injustice and class consciousness, dominant interest of his later verse, do not as yet make a significant show. Even poverty is "blessed" if it finds a habitat in the figure of a beautiful young woman as in the poem 'Gulehi' (The Woman Pedlar). "Beauty", says the poet, "will not be contained; it bursts out at the seams." The poet here does not deeply involve in the nature of Godhead, or in arcane mysteries of life.

Romance is the staple muse food of Mohan Singh's muse. Such poems as 'Anarkali', and 'Noor Jehan' celebrate triumphantly the power of Romantic love, whether it leads to tragic death or cold neglect.

Mohan Singh is a poet of words who creates a magical spell with his choice of words. He is as much an expert in inventing new form of poetry as he is the poet of deep poetic experience. In the use of language, metaphors; the arrangement of words; the selection of metre; he excels all the Panjabi poets.

2. Ibid., p.83.
of the 20th century. He has given the best songs and ballads to Panjabi and in the field of writing Ghazals also, he has not been found wanting. He has written metrical as well as free verse. He wrote traditional songs and adopted the English form of poetry.

Supernatural elements found in the poetry of Coleridge can be easily discovered in Mohan Singh's poetry (Kashmir, Nurjhan, Tej Mahal, Basant). His supernaturalism is discernible in the portraying of 'Basant' his dead wife, whom he meets in a dream and reminds the reader of a woman 'wailing for her demon-lover' in 'Kubla Khan'. The difference is only that in 'Kubla Khan' the lover was a 'demon', but here in Mohan Singh his wife is of another world. In Mohan Singh's poem 'Kashmir', the pines tree weave circles, the creepers and water waves fasten tightly round his legs; coming of seven dames like fairies and falling of flowers from their mouths, all create supernatural atmosphere. This description again is reminiscent of the atmosphere of 'Kubla Khan' and 'Ancient Mariner'. The poem borrows the detail of its narrative from 'Ancient Mariner' of Coleridge and from Keats 'La Belle Sans Merci' and 'Ode to Nightingale'. In 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' a knight falls in love with a lady without pity and gives her a lift all day long and she takes him into a 'fairy-cave', where she begins to weep and the knight quietens her with 'kisses four'. The knight says:

1. Mohan Singh: Saidan Te Sabzan, 'Desh Pair', 'Mangli'.
She took me to her elfin grot
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
with kisses four.

In the beginning of the poem, the poet wanders in Pahalgam just like the sojourn of the knight of Keats' poem, and walks in greenery as the knight walks in the withered grass by the side of a lake.

A beautiful dame exactly like that of Keats comes to the poet (Kashmir) and takes his head in her lap and sits down swinging and dancing. She kisses the poet and pacifies his otherwise disturbed and tumultuous thinking.

And again, the window that opens in the East, out of which the seven dames enter one after the other, is the window of Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale'. The lines run thus, in which 'Ruth', a woman, standing in tears, is compared to a maid:

The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn,

The lady that quietens the poet with a kiss is 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' and the cry of his for getting rid of those shackles in which he stands tied are the cries of the Pale Princes and in warriors, in the poem so entitled. The poet in a loud voice calls his wife and daughter to get him freed from the fairies of Pahalgam. See also the cry that warned Keats' knight when he

Saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death pale were they all;
Who cried 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci'
Hath thee in thrall!
How striking is the similarity between the 'fairies of Pahalgam' and the 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' and also in their handling after they had captivated the poets.

Keats' knight also experiences all the things in a 'Woe betide' dream as does the poet, Mohan Singh in his poem.

In the end, the poet is called back from the phantasy-world to the real world. He comes down to the earth on seeing the tired and sleepy eyes of his wife. Keats also wanted to fly with the Nightingale with the help of wine, 'poesy' and imagination, but ultimately, comes down to earth, back realizing the ineffectivity of the world of imagination (Ode to Nightingale). From the beginning to the end Mohan Singh's wanderings in a fairy land in a dream while passing through the beautiful pine trees, and touching the earth again at the sad memory of his longing wife and daughter are exactly Keats' doings. Keats, all the same flies with the nightingale with the help of imagination, wanders at places in the company of bird and passing through trees and flowers, suddenly comes down to earth at the idea of sad and fast approaching death of his brother, Tom.

Even the idea of writing dream poetry has been borrowed by Mohan Singh, from Coleridge. His "Kashmir", and "Basant" and Coleridge's "Kubla Khan", "Christabel" and "Ancient Mariner" are the product of their dreams.

But the supernaturalism of Mohan Singh does not give the reader that 'willing suspension of disbelief' provided
by the poetry of Coleridge. Coleridge was a master-mind in depicting supernatural world, whereas Mohan Singh's supernatural description of Kashmir is so much over-burdened with the love of details that it sounds inconvincing. Coleridge's move from real to unreal is so natural and spontaneous that nowhere he is found wanting in belief.

Another element in Mohan Singh's poetry that shows his debt to English Romantic poets is his love for the 'present' (Hun). He cares a little for the dead past and also asks his beloved to forget the future, because he wants to enjoy the 'present moment' fully. The poem is reminiscent of Browning's 'Last Ride together' in which he while riding alongside his beloved, makes the present immortal and feels 'who knows the world may come to end to night' and, therefore, for him the last ride with his beloved has the full life's enjoyment and he makes the best of it. Shelley too, in a poem (Sky-Lark) feels that our 'sincerest laughter' is fraught with the pains of the past or the future and we cannot enjoy the present because

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We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught:
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and the result is that:

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Our sweetest songs are those that
tell of the saddest thought.
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1. Mohan Singh: Hun (The Present), Kach Sach.
Exactly the feeling of either future or of the past brings some thing unpleasant. It is perhaps for this, that the poet rejects the past memories and future dreams, asking his beloved to forget all. He wants to savour love and live in the present (Hun De Andar Jeewna; Mainu Aj Kise Ne Dasya).

Mohan Singh wants to live by moments, and thus, reminds us of the optimism in the philosophy of Browning. Like Browning, he considers the few moments spent in the beloved's company all in all sufficient in themselves. He considers that love is a matter of only a few moments of authentic experience and the rest of life is a question of merely the memories and reflections of those moments (Hun: The Present).

In form also as in theme of his poem (Hun) he follows Browning. Browning was the first successful poet of Dramatic Monologue, in which only one character speaks giving all the details to a patient listener. This technique is followed by Mohan Singh, in his poem 'Ambi Da Buta' (A Mango Tree), also.

Under the influence of Wordsworth, he glorifies the common characters and discovered beauty in the rags of a poor gypsy girl (Guleli) 'Khu Di Qadhi Te' (On the seat of Persian Wheel), 'Suhan Di Kandi Utte' (On the Banks of Suhan), 'Chhatto Di Beri' (Chatto's Beri Tree), and 'Hali Da Geet' (The Song of Plowman), are examples that clearly reflect a novelty derived from the English Romantic poetry on rural life. Sometimes, he listens to the 'still sad music of humanity; the woes of Sindhan, a widow, and pities the pathetic lot of the blind girl.  

1. Dr. M.P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 66.
The sensuousness of Keats is quite obvious in Mohan Singh's poetry. Lidhri (To Lidhri Stream) and his 'Koi Tore Ve Koi Tore Ve' (O'Let someone Ravish me), are the most representative of his sensuous poems. Besides, in 'Guleli' we find a note of indulgence in the sensuous beauty of a woman exhibited through her rags. 'Kashmir' is another poem that be-speaks of this quality of the poet.

After a long time in Panjabi poetry we see woman treated openly as an object of desire as well as a creature of carnal impulses seeking ravishment. The beauty of her sensuality is celebrated and adored. Mohan Singh's voluptuous muse revels in the body's ruptures and is content to seek divinity in those fleshy fields (KoiTore Ve Koi Tore):

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I crave those strong arms
that would ravish my aching flesh;
O' how should I hide
the yearnings of my youth;
They burst out of my breast,
and make me crazed.
These gardens now constrain me;
O' I crave those strong arms
that would wed my wilderness,
and revish me from top to toe.
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The poet further exhibits his sensuousness in the poem, 'Taj Mahal', wherein contours of the white marble tomb rise out of the surrounding greenery and darkness like the contours of silken snow-white breasts of a lady and the poet's fingers.

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2. Ibid., p. 88.
silently move on them, in the atmosphere full of sleep, sluggishness sloth and intoxication as Coleridge, an English Romantic himself always was. So, whereas the description is sensuous and surpasses even Keats' in its naked and free depiction, the atmosphere of 'The Taj' is reminiscent of Coleridge's poem 'Ancient Mariner'. 'Do Titlian' (Two Butterflies), 'Lehran' (Waves), 'Tare' (The Stars), 'Ek Swer' (One Morning), 'Kuri Pothohar Di' (A Girl from Pothohar) exhibit the sensuousness of Mohan Singh as the English poets of the 19th century do in all most all their poetical works and we do not feel the need to particularise any name.

The poet, Mohan Singh does not enjoy Nature for her inner recesses and for her sublime thought that natural objects are hiding, as Wordsworth finds in nature 'a sense sublime'. But he wants to derive physical pleasures from her. Moreover, Nature in Mohan Singh is never something sorrowful or sad. It is always happy and sportive. Nature to Mohan Singh is a beautiful dame, a wife or something to be played with. Here also he derives the idea of praising Nature from Wordsworth, but he could not catch his spirit behind the idea.

Mohan Singh presents human love and the pangs of separation very pathetically. It is an unrequited love, described for the first time in Panjabi poetry of the Modern Poets. The death of his wife in the early youth left him sad and he sings this pang of separation in his poem 'Basant' who
comes to him in a dream and questions him 'Mohan how you could be a poet if I had not died'. This separation from his wife becomes to him an embodiment of love and beauty and he cannot tolerate these two virtues being destroyed. Love is the sacred flame that will have no dirt done upon it. As he says in 'Basant'.

God forgives all sinners
Save those that have betrayed their love.

This love finds expression in the poems:'Ambi Da Buta', 'Murjahan', 'Saida Te Subjan', 'Mai Jiwan Ek Kuri Layn' (I Live for a Girl), 'Sufne which Koi Ave' (Let someone come in dream), 'Ajj Mile Tan Main Jiwan' (I shall live if she meets Today), 'Kadi Dhok Sadi Dar Achh Dhola' (O Lover come sometimes to our Lane), 'Sar Laen Ajj Nee' (Know my condition Today), 'Kashmir', that give the emotional description of Mohan Singh's love of a man and a woman and their anxiety to meet each other.

In another poem 'Husan te Ishk' (Beauty and Love), the poet maintains that beauty and love need each other, that the one indeed is the measure of the other's value. Though beauty be fetching and compelling, it is not a sovereign state. In 'Ek Swal' (A Question), the poet says that though the voice of reason directs him to treat love as an illusion, the argument continues in 'Vot', and the poet finds it hard to give up the consolation of love:

There are other paths, I know;
I know this well enough;
Who hath the heart to turn
Back, having come so far?
this love of Mohan Singh for a woman was transferred into that of the masses. The poet, ultimately, finds no delight in the embroidered flowers on veil and no 'warmth' in the embraces of woman, but yearns deeply for a stronger intoxication in the newly found faith (Khumb Hun Mere). He becomes conscious of the degradation involves in the pursuit of love (Ishque Ne Kitna Kameena Kar Ditta). Mohan Singh depicts chivalrous, love, transcendental love and romantic love in his different poems. His chivalrous love shows itself in his poems like 'Mur Jahan', 'Anarkali', 'Sipahi Da Dil', 'Desh Piar'; transcendental love in poems like 'Khumb Hun Mere', and romantic love in 'Kashmir', 'Ambi Da Buta', 'Basant' and other such poems.

Mohan Singh's poem 'Kuri Pothohar Di' is reminiscent of Wordsworth's and Keats' idea of 'A Thing of Beauty is a Joy for ever'. The character of the girl appears to have been borrowed from a gleaner in Keats' Ode to Autumn and not from 'Solitary Reaper' of Wordsworth as said by Prof. S. Sojh. The poem recaptures the wild beauty and serene sweetness of a young girl who carrying a flower laden load of green grass on her head crosses the rivulet, suhan in the company of the poet, and then leaves him to remain for ever beholden to the golden memories of that hour. For Wordsworth nature had a healing

1. Dr. M. P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 72.
2. Prof. S. Sojh: Mohan Singh De Kavita, p. 40.
touch permanent and everlasting. And the beautiful 'Daffodils' that he once saw beside a lake (I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud) soothed him even in his after life when he felt sad, sorrow stricken and gloomy. And the poet writes:

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For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.
And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the Daffodils.
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In the last lines of Mohan Singh's poem he also says the same thing. The poet when in after life feels surrounded by worries and sorrows, 'Kuri Pothohar Di' appears again in his imagination, catches hold of him by the arm and takes him out of that state of life.

The laden head of the girl with the heap of grass and her dancing movements remind us of Keats' 'Ode to Autumn' when he personifies Autumn as a peasant woman and

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... like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook.
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These lines depict a character as depicted by Mohan Singh in the first lines of his poem 'Kuri Pothohar Di' and the imagery of this poem is also drawn from Keats' said Ode.

The poem 'Mai Jeewan Ek Kuri Laeen' (I Live for a Girl) was written under the impact of Shelley's 'Epipsychidion'. In the Poem, Shelley sang Platonic love. According to Plato the spirit is divided into two parts - one the heart of the
lover and the other is the heart of the beloved. And unless, both are united the peace of mind cannot be attained. So, the search of a lover for his beloved or vice versa, are essential for mental peace. Shelley, therefore, like Mohan Singh tries to find out:

... Whom my Spirit oft,
Met on its visioned wanderings, far aloft,
In the clear golden Prime of My Youth's dawn,
Upon the fairy isle of Sunny lawn.

(Spipsychidion Lines 190-94)

And when Shelley is not able to discover her there, he tries to search her among other beautiful young girls:

In many mortal forms I rashly sought
The shadow of that idol of my thought,
And some were true - beauty dies away,
Others were wise, but honeyed words betray.

(Spipsychidion Lines 266-70)

Mohan Singh exactly does the same thing. He also sometimes sees close resemblances of his beloved in the face of a girl and his spirit and life become restless. But when he gets closer and tries to recognise her, she turns out to be some one else.

A beautiful song of Keats may have given Mohan Singh, the idea of his Romance 'Saidan Te Sabjan'. The song runs as follows:
The stranger lighted from his steed,
And ere he spake a word,
He seized my lady's lily hand,
And kiss'd it all unheard.

The stranger walk'd into the hall,
And ere he spake a word,
He kiss'd my lady's cherry lips,
And kiss'd them all unheard.

The stranger walk'd into the bower-
But my lady first did go
Aye hand in hand into the bower
Where my lord's roses below

My lady's maid had a slaken scarf,
And a golden ring she had,
And a kiss from the stranger as off he went
Again on his fair pelfray.

Mohan Singh though true to the theme of the original
source changes the description and plot of his romance entirely
and there his greatness lies. He punjabiised the entire
plot and took popular Punjabi romantic character, but Keats
advanced his idea only with the help of two lovers without
caring for their identity.

The poetry of Mohan Singh is personal and subjective
in tone like that of all the English romantics. Like Shelley
he gives vent to his personal sufferings in his poems. But
he cannot be condemned as a poet only 'pouring forth his
own suffering' in his poetry and beating his 'luminous wings
in vain'. Mohan Singh tries to universalize his despair in
relation to the humanity as a whole and is a step in advance
to Shelley in admitting that the welfare of society is the
precondition of personal pleasure.

1. John Keats: Song from Poems and Verses, Ed. Middleton
Murray 1949, p.227.
Mohan Singh can be called a romantic to the core. He romanticises everything and also like Puran Singh sees this world through a coloured glass. In a poem 'Sipahi Da Dil' (The Heart of a Soldier), he gives the romantic colour to the dreadful fighting scene. The separation of a soldier from his wife loses the very tinge of pathos and the reader gets lost in the romantic description of war when the soldier assures his wife of his love. The soldier says that he will take the pellets being fired as the earrings of his wife and the smoke curling up from the guns will remind him of her dark and curly hair. The slow and measured steps of the elephants will be suggestive of her graceful gait and the arrows bring before him the bright and sharp eyes of her.

The theme of the poem is, no doubt, patriotic, but the narrative is full of romance. Also it is a beautiful ballad in Panjabi written under the impact of the English poets. The other poem of the same theme is 'Des Piar' (Love of the Country).

Mohan Singh's friendship with Sant Singh Sekhon prompted him to study the philosophy of Marx. Sekhon was a prominent member of the 'Progressive Writers' Association', a movement by Sajjad Zahir, and organised by Faiz Ahmed 'Faiz' in the Panjab. Mohan Singh met Sajjad Zahir and established his contacts with the other progressive writers.\footnote{Sayyed Sajjad Zahir: Rau-shni (Urdu), p.433.}
An item of the manifesto of this 'Progressive Writers' Association' was to write for the freedom of the country, but they were more attracted towards the communist world than the thought of the freedom of their own country.¹ Mohan Singh considered the freedom of his country in 1947 as partial freedom that benefitted only a few capitalists. He speaks about it in his poem 'Sunde San' (We used to hear). Here the element of revolt enters his poetry. He like P.B. Shelley sings of revolt against the rich and the capitalists and condemns the complacent sadhus, whose prayers did little to remove the misery of the masses (Bhagti). His attention is focussed on the hungry and depressed society and the grandeur of the Taj, when he thinks of the days of its construction and visualizes thousands of poor labourers working on it, compels him to think if it can be called beautiful at all. For him the beautiful building has been constructed on the bones of the poor people, who worked on it with their spongy bellies curved inside, besmeared with dust and dirt. He doubts whether the 'beauty' fed on tears of millions is worth this name - Beauty.

The poet loves the equality between the bourgeois class and workers and peasants. The influence here was that of October Revolution of Russia wherein "the earth became red with the blood of those, who had sucked the

¹ Dr. M. P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 71.
blood of the masses", but the theme of his such poems have roots in that of Shelley's. He hates now, the idea of earth's division in two parts: one occupied by the common masses and the other by the blood-suckers of the poor and considers, in the destruction of the imperialistic capitalism, the bright future of the earth ('Do Totian Vich Hoon Vandi': Earth divided into Two Parts); but in doing so, he stoops to the level of a mere propagandist, in poems "Loha" (Steel), "Tharat Bansi Lohe Di" (The earth will be of steel), "Hathiar" (Weapon), the characteristic of the Romantic Rebel Shelley (Song to the Men of England).

His approach in Awazan (The Calls 1954) is uncompromising in preaching the doctrine of violence (Hathiar: Weapon), (Shashtar: Weapon), 'Do Aman Geet' (Two Songs of Peace), 'Jwana Da Geet' (A Song of the Youth). The poet wants the peasants and the labourers to rise against the Landlords and the capitalists with their 'sickles' and 'hammers'. The capitalists, he terms as Rakash (the monsters) and feels that the lamps in the huts of the peasants can be lighted only if the 'lamps' in the palaces are extinguished. In 'Trishul' he gives a promise of the red revolution through violence - through the unity of the workers and the writers. And in his lyrics that he appends to 'Vada Vela' (1958), Mohan Singh uses a surgeon's skill of cutting away the gangrous part of the body and wants to drain out the poisonous blood so that the rest of the body may be saved.¹

¹ Dr.M.P.Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p.74.
He welcomes the Russian Revolution as the 'rays of the early dawn, which have blown away the laws of the palaces and the workers walk in dignity with their heads raised in pride.¹

Shelley's invocation to the west wind to bring the dawn of a new world of his dreams, is used as a model by Mohan Singh for his revolutionary verse. There is a singularity of purpose in both the poets and both are equally fed up with the old values, institutions and social inequality.

It will be interesting to compare the strength of west wind to that of the power and weapons (sickles and hammers) of Mohan Singh. In 'West Wind', in the very first lines, Shelley says:

O wild west wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Though from whose unseen presence the leaves dead are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing.

Here the dead leaves are symbolic of old values and old traditions and the west wind that of weapons to be used to root out those values. And the wind also has the dreadful power to:

Waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams

Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves:

And further, the poet wants the wind to spread his revolutionary message:

Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!

So, it may be seen that both the poets want the world to change and vehemently express their feelings. Both want a violent and a revolutionary change. Both want the strongest weapon to use to quicken the dawn of a new age. But Shelley is quite symbolic and displays higher intellect in wishing the change. Mohan Singh does it in a rugged and rustic manner preaching the direct use of 'hammers' and 'sickles'.

Mohan Singh wants the freedom where there is no distinction between high and low, and no difference of caste and creed, black and white. He wants all the people to dance together, Hindu, Muslims, Young and Old, and all should dance. The hair of a low caste woman should curl round the neck of a Pandit (Aoe Nachia: Let us Dance) and all their hearts should throb together to usher in a new era of Shelley's imagining. Mohan Singh's conception of liberty is patterned on the anarchists'. He does not want the 'chartered freedom' which Wordsworth sought in Ode to Duty. He wants a world:
Where the birds sing in free voice,
where the butterflies kiss the petal of their choice,
where the blossoms smile when they like,
where the rivers turn the way they like,
where the pines grow of their sweet will,
where the creepers ascend with desired skill,
in such a sound and free space
I'll create my own place.1

The poet Mohan Singh also possesses the romantic quality of an escapist. In another set of poems, the poet longs to be a 'wild flower', outside the haunt of the people, a quality quite reminiscent of Keats (Ode to Nightingale) and Shelley's (Ode to the West Wind). He read Shelley's Ode to the West Wind and was induced to write 'Hava Da Jeewan' (The Life of the Wind) wherein he is constantly pursuing new life and a new vision. Feeling frustrated like the English poet, he sings in dejection:

The sun has set, and shades have fallen dark and deep
In sooth by morrow it'll come again; but alas! my sun has set for ever
And will not return to me, never, O'never.2

This dejection of Mohan Singh also reminds us of Shelley's 'Stanzas written in Dejection, Near Naples.' In his Rubaiats, the poet also seeks a life of ecstasy and asks for the aid of wine. He is not concerned with the philosophy of how the 'earth' and 'stars' are there nor it is his business to know how were these made. He asks a large peg from the hands of his beloved and does not want to tread

1. Translated Dr. M.P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 65
2. Ibid., p. 66.
the paths of hatred.

His asking for wine to escape from the world takes us back to Keats' 'Ode to Nightingale' which we have already discussed somewhere.

The poet writes personal lyrics, a characteristic of the English romantics. These lyrics abound in the poetry of Mohan Singh who indulges in the luxary of evanescent feelings. Sometimes, he enjoys the heavenly bliss, by sitting on the banks of Suhan (Suhan De Kande), and at another time he desires his ashes to be flown to Jhna (The Chenab), where Sohini and Mahival the lovers, had immolated themselves in the lap of rising waves. He is charmed by a mere touch of the damsel of Pothohar (Kuri Pothohar Di), and wants to live his life for only a particular girl (Main Jeewan Ek Kuri Laeen).

Mohan Singh takes delight in Nature and loves painting the beautiful natural scenes. The pen pictures of such scenes can be witnessed in 'Kashmir', and 'Suhan Di Kandi'. He often gives tongue to natural objects like wild flowers and leaves (Save Pattar, 'Kasumbhra). This tendency in the poetry of English Romantics needs no explanation.

After the study of his poetry, there remains no doubt regarding Mohan Singh writing under the influence of the English Romantics. He occupies a prominent and enviable position in the history of Modern Panjabi poetry. His poetic grandeur is second to none. He is pioneer in evolving many new trends.
in Panjabi poetry. Mohan Singh is a poet who started from emotional romance, guided first by indigenous traditions and then under the inspiration of English romantics, he created a personal idiom leading him to the anarchists' ideology until he became the chief exponent of the progressive ideals. He had an ambivalent loyalty to the Marxian doctrines on the one hand and on the other, he was obsessed with the delusive idea of 'revolution' and swinging back to the lyrical impulse simultaneously. His late publications reveal him more of a poet than a member of political group.

Balbir Singh Dil says that Mohan Singh read Wordsworth, Keats and Tennyson also, but the deep effect that his poetry shows is that of Shelley and Browning. We would not have hesitated to agree with him if he had included in his list Keats, and Wordsworth also whose impact is equally visible in Mohan Singh's poetry.

Mohan Singh under the influence of the English Romantics made experiments with new metres. There appears no major difference in the language of poetry and that of prose in him, is a direct derivation from Wordsworth's Preface to 'Lyrical Ballads' (1798). Mohan Singh has succeeded to bring

2. Dr.M.P.Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature,p.75.
music in diction, in the poem 'Kuri Phthohar Di' (Ksumbhra). This musical rhythm with new English stresses is a new invention in Panjabi poetry. Mohan Singh's 'Hawa Da Jeewan', 'Khuh Di Gadhi Te', 'Sikhi' are the earliest odes in Panjabi, that brought western odes to be followed by Panjabi poets and are reminiscent of Shelley's Ode to the West Wind.

The close study of Mohan Singh's poetry reveals that it has almost all the qualities of the English Romantic poets and tries his hand to elaborate them, one by one in his various poems. Therefore, it is not possible to agree with Prof. Prem Parkash Singh when he says that 'it is impossible to discover all the romantic qualities of the English Romantic poets in Mohan Singh's poetry.'

Bawa Balwant

Born in August 1915, Bawa received primary education in his village school. He became a shopkeeper, but at the same time he continued his study of the history of Panjab. He voraciously read the old literature of Hindi and Urdu and the works of Bhai Vir Singh. He tried to acquire knowledge from the literary men of the world around him. The days were of the freedom struggle and the slogan of Bhagat Singh 'Long Live Revolution' awakened the whole country from a long

1. Prem Parkash Singh: Mohan Singh Da Kav Lok, p.65.
slumber. Balwant was young and his impressionistic mind caught the thread of these movements. He wrote his first book 'Sher-Hind' (The Lion of India), that was immediately banned.

Balwant is a supporter of modernity and a great rebel. He does not believe in superstitions, superstitious God, deception and religion. He thoroughly exposes them and condemns them. He discards the values that ensnare man in the cycle of births and death even if it be a divine voice (Sugand Samir). He condemns the black-magic, the magicians, the saints who are cheats and inhuman. To him:

The glass-palace of Religion:
The throne of man's heart and honesty,
The life of idols in the temples
The crowd in churches
The cries for God in Mosques;
Are all for my awning.

In the realm of art, he invokes the spirit of Dante and Shakespeare, and seeks kinship with Milton, Shelley and Browning, who alone would endow him with courage, "dispel darkness and bring in the light" (Usha-Dawn).¹

The poet had, no doubt, no direct acquaintance with any western writer, but the poetry of Iqbal (1873-1939) and other contemporary progressives, that had the form and mode of western expression, had a formative influence on his creative genius. It was, therefore, natural that western thought and feelings

¹. Dr. M. F. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 60.
find expression in Bawa that he acquired through his contemporary writers.

He also read as well as heard a number of translations of the poetry of Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Byron, Tennyson and Browning and we must not harbour an idea that as Bawa did not receive any high school or college education, he was not influenced by the English romantic poetry of the 19th century.

So, the rebellious element in Shelley's poetry, naturally led Balwant to the folds of 'progressive thought' (Mahanach: The Great Dance). It is true, that he was also influenced by marxian ideology and developed a strain of feeling against the capitalists. Till the time of publication of 'Bandergah', he had read Faiz Ahmed 'Faiz' and H.M.Rashad, staunch protagonist of the 'progressive' movement in the Panjab, and his poetry was largely influenced by Urdu, English and Hindi poetry.  

Bawa displays all the influences of the poets of England throughout his poetry. But the scope of our thesis does not permit us to discuss his poetry written after 1950 and we will confine our study to the poems written till that period.

Bawa was a born rebel as was Shelley. He revolted as already said against old religious-agencies, against old conception of God, against priest craft and even against the

old style of life. In his poem 'Zindgi Hi Zindgi' (Life and Life alone), he while laying down a principle for his poetry says that poetry is not merely a means of recreation, but a forceful medium through which 'Superman' expresses himself.\(^1\) His superman is a great Rebel and Destroyer. His great strength springs from his hatred of cruel kings like Nero of Rome and great monsters of the past and destroyer of humanity (Bagi). He is out to pull down the selfish and the greedy 'Gods' the idols of the temple from their pedestals:

I am a rebel God, I am God;
I am a sweet wish of the beating impulse of each revolt,
I dance always to my own tune,
I am fearless, dauntless, worried the least.
Mine is the mission to liberate the mind;
Mine is the will to help the fruition of desire.\(^2\)

See Shelley in a poem:

I am the eye with which the universe
Beholds itself and knows itself divine
All harmony of instrument or verse
All prophecy all medicine is mine,
All light of art or nature .... \(^3\)

The poet is bent upon destroying the evil forces in the existing order of society and invokes the moral law to ensure justice to the masses. He develops love for common man and praises Gautam and Rousseau, who brought revolution in society through love and sympathy (Bagi)\(^4\), but the revered Dr. Kohli

1. Dr. M.P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p.76.
3. P.B. Shelley: Hymn to Apollo.
4. Dr. M.P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, pp.76-77.
does not mention the names of Marx and Lenin who also find equal reverence in the poem along with Gautam and Rousseau. The poet Balwant does not care even if the revolution is brought by bloodshed. He is a revolutionary spirit and must attain his goal (Bagi) and his dedication of 'Mahanach' and 'Yawala Mukhi' (The Volcano-1943) to the great men who fought against the Fascists and the Nazis for the good of humanity confirms further his creed of, (Uth Duniya Nun Ult De), arise and change the world. Yes, the poet loves the benefactors of humanity as Shelley and Byron both eulogise Prometheus; and Bonnivard is paid tribute by Byron alone.

The poet is aware of the prevalent exploitation of the masses and knows that demand for the rights of common man will bring to them the epithets of 'Sinner'; 'Criminal' and even can send them to jails because,

The deceitful kings and the rich,
Will obstruct every step of their efforts.
Will brandish sharp sword on innocent,
And shed their blood everywhere.
And will suppress and kill them.

The poem also shows the hatred of the poet for the rich and the capitalists, quite reminiscent of Shelley (song to the Men of England). He also knows that the very weapons the poor or the labourers are manufacturing, will be used against them,

1. P.B. Shelley: Prometheus Unbound.
2. Byron: 'Prometheus' and 'Prisoner of Chillon'.

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and the English poet tells the labourers: 'The Steel Ye
tempered glance on ye'.

Both the poets equally feel for the masses and both
know that the rich will let loose on the poor, their tyranny.
Both, therefore, want to establish the kingdom of humanity
and build a new society on the Ashes of the old: Shelley in
'Ode to the West Wing' and Bawa in 'Sitare', 'Basi' and
'Desh Bhagti'. The invocation to the West Wing by Shelley
is quite similar to Bawa's 'Third Eye of the Shiva' (Shivnach),
to awaken the slumbered humanity and rise for revolt.

Shelley and other English Romantics do advocate the
liberty of common man, but none focusses his attention only
on the worsening condition of women as does Bawa (Aurat:
A Woman, 'Dur Ek Bahili Khari': Standing frightened at a
Distance, 'Harami': Illegitimate, 'Naachi': Dancer and 'Veswa':
Prostitute). The poet advocates the cause of woman who has
been always treated like a commodity by the Man. He condemns the
social customs and tradition that do not allow remarriage of
a widow (Kafan: The Shroud). The people marry their young
daughters to the rich old men who die after a few year of
their marriage, leaving the poor young widows in a lurch.
This social evil must be rooted out. The tendency of revolt
is equally romantic and perhaps has been ignored by the English
poets owing to the different culture and code of moral values
of the west. So, here Balwant turns out to be real romantic
who exposes the social evils of Indian Society.
This bent up of the poet's mind binds him to a woman of his own choice (Krishna). His love for Gy an Krishna, a girl reminds us of Wordsworth's love for Annette Valon, Shelley's love for Mary Godwin, Keats for Fanny Brawne, and Coleridge's for Genevieve (a real girl given a fictitious name). But whereas Wordsworth expressed his love for the girl in his 'Lucy poems', Cleridge in 'My Genevieve', and in a poem 'Love', Keats simply makes passing reference to his beloved calling her 'a fair creature of an hour' (When I have Fears that I may Cease to be), and Shelley longs 'for any heart now share in my emotion' (Stanzas written in Dejection, Near Naples). But Bawa openly names his beloved and freely expresses his emotions for her (Krishna De Aoon Te: On the Arrival of Krishna; 'Sunehri Sham': Golden Evening, and 'Punar Beri': The Boat Again). And what effect Lucy had on Wordsworth, Beatrice on Dante, Krishna had on Bawa (Sandargah, p. 24). In a poem 'Sunehri Sham', the poet expresses his sentiments thus:

> Your love made me an embodiment of divinity
> In your love I fondle the universe in my lap,
> Your love has made me sympathiser of humanity.

And her love in his life is not that made him fall a prey to the idea of lust. It exalted and elated him (Sunehri Sham), and from man he rose to be a God. Bawa for long had lost the rudder of life and was feeling disappointed. But his falling in love with Krishna and the silken locks of hair of his beloved touched the chords of his heart and her love related to him the secret of life (Punar Beri). This type of love is hard to find.
in the English poetry of the 19th century that remains limited only to the sensuous enjoyment of love.

Another romantic theme in the poetry of Bawa Balvant is the depiction of 'death' as something soothing. Whereas Keats was afraid of his approaching death (When I have Fears that I may Cease to be), Bawa depicts her as a boat that will take a man across the river of life that is overflowing and will never stop. This boat will give him freedom from the worries of victory and defeat (Naut Da Geet: Song of Death, 'Sandarts': Beauty).

P.E. Shelley in one of his poems calls 'Death' the brother of night (To Night). As night gives sleep and rest to our body so does death. John Donne, a metaphysical poet also expresses the same opinion about death (Death Be Not Proud). So, Bawa too, is not afraid of death (Sandarts: The Beauty).

Bawa's poem 'Adhura Sapna' (Unfulfilled Dream) is suggestive of the supernatural atmosphere of Coleridge in 'Kubla Khan'. The poet is not fully conscious of himself and walks like a drunkard. He, playing on his pipe like a singing bird, reaches a wonder land, where a magician sailed his boat twice in the day. The poet passed through the fragrant intense shades where the grass stood up to look at him and the leaves danced rhythmically. The scenes clung to his breast and laughed at him. He came near a palace on which a caption 'The World of Phantasy' was inscribed. The palace was built by the shadows of some golden
magic or the fairies who used hundreds of hues, in building it. A pillar of the palace was having millions of golden tombs and the pipe of the poet cast a spell on the palace.

On hearing the music of his pipe, a beautiful dame peeped through a window. At the sight of her beautiful and bright face, the poet felt that all the stars of the sky have melted into her being. She called the poet through the language of her eyes, and requested him to play on his pipe. The poet fearlessly went inside the palace and ascended about a thousand steps, but yet there was no end to the height of the palace. The poet looked down stairs, but saw the floors changing their colours and the clouds appeared to him rosy, blue and yellow.

In the poem the atmosphere is full of supernatural and sluggishness and the palace in the 'wonder land' is reminiscent of Kubla Khan's palace in Xandu, 'a sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice'. The girl that the poet meets and who calls him to play on his pipe is 'damsel' that Coleridge once saw 'In a Vision'. The music of the pipe of the poet, Bawa is the music of 'an Abyssian maid' (Kubla Khan). The poem appears to have been written under the direct influence of Kubla Khan, though some changes in the plot have been made by Balwant to serve a different end.

From his narratives, the poet gives the illusion of being an atheist, but he has a deep-faith in the 'Invisible Power', that creates and destroys. He addresses that power as:
The poet has full confidence in the 'Creative Power' that creates and destroys 'atom' and is a source of divine pleasure. This very power is a source of our soul's light. So, the poet seeks wine of pleasure from the jug of that power to attain a state of bliss, a permanent ecstasy, 'A sense sublime' of Wordsworth. He also has a faith that man's 'soul' is a part of some great 'Spirit' and the greatest desire of the departed 'soul' is to meet its 'realself'. The separation cannot protect the light of 'soul' and the poet urges its unity with the original source, he calls 'Ocean' (Amargeet: Eternal Song).

The same idea in Wordsworth's poetry appears to be a source of the poet. Though our poets have already been taking up this theme and it has its origin in Gurbani but Balwant must have heard the translation of Wordsworth's 'Ode on Intimation of Immortality'.

As Bawa feels that the soul in man has been separated from a 'deep sea' and wants its merger with the deep again, so does Wordsworth in his poem. For him too, as to Bawa, the soul has its home somewhere else and 'comes from afar'. The English poet says:
Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had else where its setting
And cometh from afar.

Wordsworth refers to soul as 'our life's star', and Bawa calls it the 'stream of light'. And this 'stream of light' comes from God. See Wordsworth's lines in the same poem.

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.

But whereas Wordsworth does not want the 'soul' to go back and merge again with its original source, Bawa craves for it.

In Bawa's poetry, there is a beautiful blend of myth and history. Bawa takes Shiva as a symbol of the long slumber of Indians, Paro (The Wife of Shiva) as the spirit of people and the '3rd eye' of Shiva as a sign of awakening among masses. See the lines of his poem:

Paro said:

O' the revenge of life's art, awake!
Thy fields are likely to be captured,
Thy country is likely to become slave
Awake, thou have taken enough rest
In the lap of luxuries.

Her call alarmed Shiva who opened his 'third eye' and the result was:

A flood of lightening came
That engulfed the darkness around
Brought an end to wrong notion of the past comfort,
The Pride hath a fall.
And the fortune smiled at the Nation.

As already said somewhere that the Shiva is reminiscent of
'West Wind' in Shelley to bring revolution. This message of revolution has been given in his poem 'Jawana' (Youngman).

Balwant wants to be one with the masses and speak and write for them alone, for he secures an identity with the common man, the son of the soil to attain greatness as an artist. The pleasure he seeks from the 'mother earth' surpasses, all the pleasure of heaven and the worship of masses surpasses that of God in bliss (Subash Babu De Gum Hon Te: On Subash Babu, being Lost). The earth has all the pleasure because says Shelley that:

At the creation of the Earth
Pleasure, that divinest birth,
From the soil of Heavendid rise
Wrapped in sweet wild melodies.¹

and it is also:

Sacred Goddess: Mother Earth
Thou from whom immortal bosom
Gods and men and beasts have births.²

Both the poets call Earth as 'mother' and to both of them it gives superior pleasure even to that given by God in bliss. The greatness of the country for him, lies in the fraternity of man, in the absence of racial discrimination and in the cooperation, in the worship of Earth and the prosperity of peasants (Des: Country).

Bawa like Shelley is not a singer of narrow patriotism and nationalism. He attaches little value to the love of his own country. Patriotism for him is a narrow belief and a hinderance

² Ibid.,p.612.
in the way of achieving world peace (Des). His belief is that the wars waged by patriotic nations ruin the poor masses and the fruit of victories, is generally enjoyed by the rich people. Humanity is sacrificed at the altar of a benefit for a few rich (Des). Bawa appeals to the people to give up the idea of such a narrow patriotic creed ('Desh Bhakti': Patriotism). He sings with a wish to remove all the prejudice of mind and his broader vision considers all the universe his garden. He identifies himself with the working class of the world and says:

The whole universe is my home
And the sky too.

(Mukat Geet: Free Song)

In Bawa too, as in Wordsworth, the Nature has been assigned the title of mother, a comforter, a benefactor and a companion, to man (Sham Di Lalli). Bawa cannot understand as to why the beautiful gardens and orchards stretch their arms. But soon the mystery stands revealed to him when he says that 'I am a child and perhaps they are my mothers for centuries'. This theme is attempted by Bhai Vir Singh also as already discussed and it runs through the poems of Puran Singh as well.

Bawa also paints natural scenes with the expertise of Wordsworth. This description can be found in 'Barsaat Di Ek Shaam' (An Evening in Rainy Season). He depicts what he sees immediately after the rain has stopped.

Bawa emotionally identifies himself with natural objects and discovers in them an affinity with man (Sitare). The stars too, he finds, are under some external power and have to be in
motion day and night. They are under a discipline as the poet himself is. And he makes the stars a medium of expression to express his agony. In 'Benam Phul' (a nameless flower), he makes associations with a flower. Like that roadside flower none has so far recognised the poet. He has a feeling to be recognised by a lovely spirit and this desire he expresses through the flower. Thus, Bawa like Shelley intellectualizes Nature, forming associations with her objects and expressing his own mind through them.

The sensuousness in the poetry of Keats can be discovered in that of Bawa also (Left Pose, 'Mere Ghar De Sahmne': In Front of My House). In 'Mere Ghar De Sahmne' the stretching of the body by a girl to swell her breast is reminiscent of Wordsworth's, 'her virgin bosom swelled' (Education of Nature) and full of sensuality.

His poem 'Raat Mun' (To Night), again takes us back to the rising of Night in the western horizon and inducing every body to sleep with her 'opiate wand' (Shelley, 'To Night'). The first portion of Bawa's poem is quite similar to that of Shelley, and Bawa might have written this poem after the English poet's 'To Night'.

Bawa's poetry is obscure like that of Browning, but the time has come that we should take the fresh wine that Bawa presents to us in new bottles,¹ and begin dancing on the bosom of the earth in a way once the Shiva arranged his dance (Shivnaach).

The poet looks at the playing children ('Khidone': Toys), and through his imagination he sees the world too as a big toy of the size of an elephant with which the human beings play after attaining maturity. This elephant-sized toy of life is difficult for the poet to drag; meaning thereby, that life to Bawa appears full of tiresome burdens, and he cannot enjoy it. The poem gives a deep thought of frustration in life that Shelley also experienced in his own time. He too, like Bawa is fed up and exhausted with the dragging of the elephant of life and cries:

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,  
Nor peace within nor calm around  
Nor that content surpassing wealth,  
The sage in meditation found,  
And walked with inward glory crowned  
Nor fame nor power nor love nor leisure,  
Other I see whom these surround  
Smiling they live and call life pleasure.  
To me that cup has been dealt with another measure.

(Stanzas Written in Dejection, Near Naples)

Bawa says about life that:

I am fed up with the awkward elephant  
And tired of dragging him  
As he does not walk.

The simple and detailed idea of Shelley has been expressed by Bawa in two lines symbolically. Shelley is known as an intellectual poet, but here Bawa has an edge over his intellect owing to his brevity of expression.

The poet reminds us of the mysticism of Blake when he in a starlit night (Tarian Khari Raat) expresses his surprise at:
Whose infinite spirit is shining in the blue sky?
Who is creating the glow worms of my dark garden?

In the poem 'The Tiger, Tiger' the English poet asks the same question in surprise on seeing a Tiger as does Bawa on seeing the stars. See Blake's lines:

In what distant deep or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

In another poem Blake asks the same questions on seeing a Lamb:

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

(The Lamb)

In both the poems The Tiger and in 'Tarian Bhari Raat' there is no answer to the mystery of the creator. Bawa's mysticism is not confined to God alone. It shows itself in his memories of unrequited love and in the description of beauty ('Maut Nun': To Death, 'Tun Te Main': I and You; 'Shivnach' etc.)

The poet Bawa deplores the dissection of scientists and destroying the beauty that disappears in such a process (Tera Mel: Meeting Thee). Like Keats he also cries that all charms fly at the cold touch of Philosophy. Wordsworth also raises a voice to say 'We murder to Dissect'. Science has made everything dull and boring and reason has 'Clipped the wings of Fancy'. All the poets express the same romantic tendency, live in the world of emotion and discard the age of science and technology.
Bawa, like Puran Singh, loves animals for their simplicity and innocence (Buffalo). In his poem 'Gaoo Mata Dun (To the Mother Cow), he says that 'horses and oxen are our angels'. This love for simplicity and innocence is found in the poetry of Puran Singh and that of the English Romantic poets.

But unlike the poetry of English romantics, Bawa loves rhythm in poetry. He feels that poetry without rhythm is no poetry at all and he also feels that poetry must have a purpose (Kav-Sagar: Ocean of Poetry). So, though, Bawa getting nearer to metrical composition, embodies all the romantic qualities of poetry and displays the influence of the English poets throughout his poetic works.

Sometimes the poet falls to the level of a propagandist in his poem 'Kav Sar', 'Gussa ', 'Bagi' and 'Kanwal Sar' (Lotus Pond), while forecasting Revolution and thus, reminds us of Shelley.

Bawa wrote under the impact of English Romantics his Dramatic monologues such as 'Sag Wali', 'Pramdi Nukar', 'Veswa', and 'Majboori'. His 'Usha', an ode is reminiscent of Shelley's Ode to the West Wind and his lyrics 'Tharti Mata', and 'Ashok Lat' are quite exalted and dignified and remind us of the English lyricists. He also wrote sonnet 'Peri'. Thus, as in theme so in form Bawa displays the impact of English poets.
Amrita was born on 31st August, 1919 in Gujranwala. She grew up while reading the new literature of social reawakening, the light of which reached first our urban middle class and later to the peasantry. Consequently, spreading far and wide a wave of social revolution and the idea of India's freedom. She is one of the Panjabi poets who began from a very humble origin, but touched the high peaks of glory. In 1936, her first book 'Amrit Lehram' (Waves of Hector) was published. In this book the form of her poetry is traditional and ideas borrowed from the religious life and work of her father. She herself admits that she wrote religious poems in the beginning and then wrote social poems. But her earlier writings reflect her traditional outlook, for it was very difficult for her to break with traditions at the time.

In 1936, her marriage with Pritam Singh provided a new impetus to her otherwise developing talent of writing poetry, she wrote that the tree of poetry would have faded away, had he (Pritam Singh) not given it a chance to blossom.

Her next publication was the collection of Poems 'Jionda Jeewan' (Living Life). It was full of an ideal behaviour, a flight of mind, a craze to do something, but away devoid of reality. The book displays her promise to be a good artist, but the form of her poetry was not yet beautiful and disciplined. Her 'Trel Dhote Phul' (Dew Washed Flower) was her first poetical collection with new ideas, new form and new experiences. The love pangs and the pains born out of her awareness of the socialist world around her, find expression in this book.

The next publications upto 1955 have the depth of feelings, the maturity of her art, and wonderful expression. She appears to be passing through a strange experience. Her own experiences and instincts have been given different identity, and a struggle between these two has become a source of her poetic inspiration.

Amrita was to appear in her F.A. examination when she fell ill and went to the hills, and though later she continued reading the foreign literature, but she never felt tempted to take her examination. So, Amrita, it can be said without doubt, must have read the poetry of English Romantics and their poems prescribed for the syllabus for college students of F.A. Standard. But, it is true, that the impact of her

2. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
father S. Kartar Singh Hitkari was so strong that she was not allowed at that time to write poetry after their pattern.

Only when she was 12, she lost her mother and came under the complete physical and mental tutelage of her father, a man steeped in traditional morality desiring to see his daughter grow into a poet along the lines dictated by him. This led Amrit Kaur to have a psychological fixation into her father and manifested in her continual commitment to the old scale of values and modes of perception for a long time. Gradually, she placed herself under the influence of Gurbax Singh (Preetlari) and moved towards a new frankness of expression and retarted her transition to the new realistic progressive values.

Amrita picked up 'progressive' thought from her compatriot 'progressives' and though she expresses the conflict of her mind, her bold expression is the direct suggestion from the west. And before she accepted this influence, she had been writing the conventional verse calling for reformation of the society under the influences of Bhai Vir Singh and Lala Dhani Ram Chatrik. This influence she admits in the foreward to Meri Chonvi Kavita. From 1935 to 1939, she continued singing

2. Amrita's Letter to Dr. Sher Singh 'Alochna' April, 1959.
3. Dr. M.P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p.81.
the songs of 'a wise merciful maiden giving expression to her Id.'

Amrita says that the poet is close to Nature and from her pulsating heart, he listens the eternal music of love and in turn that music resounds in his poetry, but this 'love' for Amrita is not full of lust and sexual pleasure, rather her love is as true as the name of the 'Invisible' and to her, wistful desires of man do not deserve to be called 'love'.

"Poetry", for Amrita "is a dim shadow of emotions gushing out of the depth of the heart of a poet like the dust rising from a ruin." So, poetry for Amrita is a 'powerful flow of emotions', but neither spontaneous, nor 'recollected in tranquility', as for Wordsworth. In defining poetry, she reminds us the theory of Romantic poetry that holds that poetry comes out of the heart and not the head. It has nothing to do with reason and rational thinking of a man. Contrary to Shelley and Coleridgean theory that the chief object of poetry is to provide immediate pleasure and 'it is a language of a true lover', she says poetry has its origin in pain and sufferings (Bacha Te Kavita: The Child and Poetry).

A pain I smoked silently like a cigerette
And these poems are like ashes
That I flicked off that cigerette.

In her Preface to 'Meri Chonvi Kavita', Amrita says that

1. Dr. Sher Singh: Alochna, April, 1959.
love is a basic idea of life. But this love to her appears to be the second name of pain, dissatisfaction and pangs of separation (Sanskar), and consequently, her poems are the fallen ashes from the burnt end of the cigarette of pain.

Again, the poet to Amrita is not 'a man speaking to men' as to Wordsworth, but some special being on whose moods depend the pleasure and pain of the world (Uh Kavi Ae: He is a Poet), and to whom the Nature provides the music of his songs, and she speaks to him through her various objects. He is a transmitter between the world of Nature and that of human beings and

All the messages of the earth and the sky
Are heard through him.

The consciousness of Amrita awakened at the tragic famine of Bengal in 1943. This awareness finds expression in 'Lok Peeran': The Pangs of the People (1944). The poems in the book reveal her new perceptions. Also in 'Lamia Watan' (Long Distances), a poem 'Ajj Alhan Varis Shah Nun' is representative of her wide awakening and the suffering of the people, she sings at the time of partition of the country. Like English Romantics, Amrita is not satisfied with the real and the present. She wants to see the world changing. Sometimes, she refers to the efforts being made for a change. She also paints a picture of the new world as it will shape after

the change. Thus, she enters a new field quite different from earlier one. She leaves behind the topics of mere love and beauty and talks about the 'people's voice' and 'People's Rule' (O Shahzade). She bitterly attacks the social system in which the woman is exploited (Pathar Geete -1946). Amrita is aware that in our society man has no independent existence. The forced relationship of husband and wife compel them to lead an empty and loveless life that results into the birth of children (Lamian Watan). The people marry their daughters paying scant regard to their wishes and treat them not as something like human being but commodity like.

She gets bolder and expresses herself against the capitalist order. 'Main Geet Likhdi Han' (I Write Songs) is the manifesto of her revolutionary desires, that none would exploit the sex, rob the peasants and none would suppress the desire of the innocent masses. Now she becomes aware that the golden dreams of the peasants are not realized because the landlord is there. She realizes a gap between the labourers and the capitalists. The poor workers cannot have two times meals, but the rich have plenty of sumptuous dishes to waste. The labourer works with his spongy bellies to build palaces for the rich, indifferent to his own suffering involved in the process (MainTwarikh Han Hind Di). The fruit of peasant's labour is taken away by the idle rich. The poem is reminiscent of Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England'. But Amrita identifies herself completely with

1. Dr. M.P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 81.
the workers, who have been deprived of the fruit of their labour and through their mouths expresses their anguish of ever remaining a labourer and never rising to the level of a master (Ann Data), which Shelley does not. He voices the sufferings of the labour class, but can never so closely achieve that inseparable identity with their spirit as Amrita does. He appears to be a sympathiser, but not a sufferer. But so intense is Amrita's alignment with the spirit of the labourer that the curling smoke from the chimneys of Mills and factories, she feels, contains the very breath of a worker:

In this smoke is mixed
The air of your breath.

(Sanjh Di Lalli)

Amrita also deplores the unequal distribution of wealth among society and curses this evil, for it demands of a labourer always to remain a labourer and makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. The same hoe, and plough that a labourer inherits from his great grandfathers, will be passed on by him to his grandsons (Pauri), and in exchange for his hard toil he gets suffering, starvation, lives in a broken hut and dies in the biting cold. On the other hand, the rich keep the fruit of his labour in a 'safe-deposit'. (Mihnat Te Mul). So, in the poetry of Amrita the sufferings of the poor, the ills of our society

1. Amrita Pritam: 'Pathar Geete'.
3. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
find better and detailed expression with psycho-analytical grasp, whereas Shelley voiced only the physical sufferings of the labour class. Amrita also sees a dawn of hope for the sufferers (Sarghi Vela). But like Shelley, Amrita also curses the capitalists and sympathises with the exploited, down trodden and the humble. Both the poets want an end to the cruelty and oppression and both crave for better days when man will be treated as a man and there will be no distinction between the high and low, rich and poor. This poetry of Revolt, though written by Amrita under the impact of 'progressive' contemporary poets, voices the same feelings as expressed by the English romantics.

Another dominant feature in Amrita's poetry, that reminds us of the English Romantics, her humanism and her consciousness of universal sufferings. This realization comes to her somewhere in 1943. It is in this year she is affected by the contemporary social conditions and expresses her personal feelings about them. She becomes aware of the fact that times are such that the man, the nations, the countries have become bitter enemies of one another and love is being sacrificed at the altar of war (Lok Pooran). She sees the cruelty and injustice rampant in society and ironically expresses her feelings:

Where youth fades away
Where the beauty loses her lustre
Where man soaks his hands in the blood of another man.
Where the workers sleep hungry
Where the idle are surrounded by gold
Where guns silence the free voice.
What can I say to your country.

(Ve Main Ki Akhan)
She finds the reign of hunger everywhere. But the sufferers have not yet found any tongue to express their state of mind (Be-Awaj: Voiceless).

The poet in Amrita comes to the conclusion that there is no alternative to get rid of this life except a change in the social set up. So, she voices this change to build a new society on the ashes of the old. She has begun visualizing the shape of future world and imagines the peasants and the labourers taking hold of the new world (Sarghi Vela: Kikra ve Kandealia). She feels that the changing times will bring enough for the poor and the hungry to eat and drink (Main Twarikh Han Hind Di). This tendency in Amrita reminds of Shelley's and Byron's poetry.

But Amrita does not for long remain in the ivory tower of hope imagining a better world. She is disillusioned with her dreams and feels most the loss of human values fast eroding. Her poems also possess the philosophical depth wherein she deplores the slow progress of the modern world (Ek Shahr', 'Ek Nagar'). She feels that a number of plans made by us and the efforts put in for bettering our condition, have increased, instead of lessening our difficulties. The words like honesty, truth, virtue, look like patients, ailing in front of the door of a hospital and for the time being it appears that these values have consumed their lives.

Amrita depicts Natural Phenomenon and in doing that, she exhibits her myth making power. She paints the scene of sunrise and the colour of the sky at that time appears to her as that of the mixture of milk and 'kesar' (a light yellow colour) ('Panj Darya' December, 1953). The moon hidden behind a cloud is compared to the beauty of a Kashmiri girl (hidden behind her rags (Badlan De Palle Vich). This scene exactly reminds us that of Shelley wherein his lyric 'The Cloud' he compares the hiding sun behind a cloud, to an Eagle. The cloud says:

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,  
And his burning plumes outspread,  
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack.  

like  

An Eagle elit one moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings.

Another natural phenomenon, the evaporation of sea water, its formation as cloud in the sky has been beautifully depicted by Amrita in a poem. The water after parting from the Ocean sheds tears that take the shape of rain. The English poet too is a great myth maker and expresses the formation of clouds through her own mouth. The cloud says:

I am the daughter of Earth and water,  
And the nursling of the sky.  

(To the Cloud)
Another pen picture painted by Amrita is of the scene as it appears at the time of approaching night (O Gitan Walia). In the poem the setting sun is shown as kissing the lips of the sky, while parting in the evening. The face of the sky blushes and becomes red. Shelley too, requests the Night to come quickly and kiss the day 'Until she be weared out'. This idea of myth making of Amrita is a direct derivation from that of Shelley.

The subject of her poetry is the life of man, love of man and woman, the fight of man against injustice. But while writing on these subjects, she so frequently describes the scenes of Nature that give an impression that the very theme of her poetry is 'Nature'. Occasionally, she directly writes about Nature, but mostly she mentions her in comparisons (Sarangi Vela, 'Badlan De Palle Vich').

The 'Nature' of Amrita is delicate, and soft. It is neither harsh nor annoying. It is not the stormy aspect of Nature; she is in love with, as is Byron (Calm and Storm). The disturbing, tumultuous and anguish moods of Nature, and the thunder and storm so near and dear to Byron have nothing to do with Amrita. Here is a calm, quiet, placid and sweet tempered 'Nature', as is that of Wordsworth (Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey) and Coleridge (Frost of Midnight, 'Reflection on Having Left a Place of Retirement'). Amrita personifies Nature as does Shelley and her description of her is the most lyrical, full of music, natural feelings.
and thoughts. Her "nature" does not have the fiery passions of Mohan Singh, but it remains calm and quite peaceful. She used to cite comparisons from Nature even before 1947, but it tremendously increased after 1950. In her collection 'Lamian Watan' (Long Distances) the poems 'Main Twarikh Hain Hind Di', 'Kanken Da Geet', and 'Sanun Millie Jana Ho' are notable for such illustrations.

To present Amrita as a poet of Nature in the true perspective, we take liberty to transcend the barrier of our period of study. Her collection 'Sunehre' (The Messages), shows Amrita as an introvert poet. The most dominating idea here is separation and while dwelling on this single theme, Amrita largely draws upon Nature and Natural objects. For instance, in her poem 'Ve Pardesia' (O' Stranger), she sings of morning, night, the clouds, air, birds, trees, to cite comparisons and the last line is:

> Either buy me selling wings or remain with us, O' stranger.

The poem is full of beautiful descriptions of early dawn, the night, the wet air and the rain of the month of 'Sawan'.

In another poem of the same collection (Sunehre), she takes help from scenes of Nature to describe the feelings of a separated woman, and the pleasure of a lady on the receipt of a letter from her lover.

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But gradually, Amrita instead of making odd comparisons, begins painting full and complete images from Nature (Yaad: Memory). This intensive description is found in abundance in a number of poems written after 1950, particularly, in her Lyrical drama 'Dilan De Dhet' (The Secrets of Hearts), 'Bara Mah' (Twelve Months).

So, Amrita's love and description of Nature has a number of stages. It appears that with the passing of time she read more and more of the English poetry and broke her traditional cell to fly freely in the world of romantic description of Nature.

The poetry of Amrita has the sensuousness of Keats and she enjoys things and people through her senses (O'Gitan Walia, Lamian Watan, O'Suraj, Chann, Sanjh Di Lallii, Ve Ma Chhoh Mahi), (Main Takia Si Mai Tkkna Wan).1

The Love of Amrita is pathetic as that of Shelley (Love) and Keats (Modern Love), that brings in its wake the long and dreadful pangs of separation and sufferings. Her mode of expression is lyrical quite like those of English Romantics and her poetry too like their's is subjective and strikes a personal note. She also wrote free verse and discarded metrical composition as they did.

Amrita is highly emotional and that is why like all English Romantics she has given us beautiful songs written

on love and social events. Her personal world is expressed through these songs. She is the most personal of the Romantic poets. The whole poetry of her sprung from the opposition of the modern values to that of the Middle Ages, but she presents the events of the world in the most personal form. For instance, the events of 1947 all relate to the our world, but after reading 'Aji Akhan Varis Shih Mun', we can say the lines are highly personal and emotional in content. This gives rise to her lyrical poetry, which is directly drawn from English Romantics by Amrita. Above all, not only the content of her poetry, but also the way of her presentation of social injustice, love, natural phenomenon, is highly romantic.¹

PRITAM SINGH SAFEER

Born in 1916, Pritam Singh Safeer had the advantage of being the son of a scholarly man, S. Mehtab Singh, a man with religious bent of mind and a headmaster of a high school in Tarn Taran. Safeer combined in his poetry the mysticism of Bhai Vir Singh and socialism of Mohan Singh and expressed it in a free metre of Puran Singh.² His personality combines in it all the elements of modernity. It is a complex mixture of new awakening, freedom of form, intellect, along with a new mixture of spiritualism and idealism.³

The poet passed his B.A. (1935) and later LL.B and with such a high qualification and his immense interest in poetry, he must have reaped the harvest of Western learning and especially that of the poetry of the English Poets of 19th century which was quite popular in those days. It was perhaps under this influence that he promised to write something like poetry, "to which not my self alone, nor the reader, but even the 'Formless Power' of moving times will respect and call poetry in the real sense of the word." 1

By the end of 1950, the period of our study, Safeer had given four collections of his poems to the public. 'Katak Kunjan' (1941), 'Pap De Sohle' (1943), 'Rag Rishma' (1946), and 'Rakat Bundan' (1946). And in between fifties and sixties he published another volume of poems Ad Jugad (1958), to which we may, if need be refer here and there, to elaborate some of the characteristics of his poetry. And though, the best poetry of Safeer is captioned 'Sarab Kala' (1966), it does not fall within the scope of our study.

The poet, Safeer does not want to write poetry as others have written in familiar, easy metres under the fit of emotions, but he wants to write it differently and for that he feels, he must think differently and see poetry penned down on a piece of paper in a different way. 2 Thus, it means he wants to find out

2. Ibid., p.2.
something new, seek something modern. Poetry for him is ecstasy and for that ecstasy he pines. He wants poetry to come naturally and burst out spontaneously from within and send the reader in a state of divine trance. Thus, he combines in him the instincts of Keats, Coleridge and Shelley while laying down his poetic principles.

The poet sticks to his determination. In 1936-37, the poetic inspiration becomes uncontrollable, but he puts it off with a message, because it is not the form of poetry he craves for. Ultimately, in December 1938, the poetry comes to him in the shape of 'a handful of dust' (Ek Mitti Di Mutthi) and the poet recognises her and begins singing it.

Pritam Singh wrote in the beginning with his spiritual inclination and derived the ideas direct from Gurbani. He had traditional and centuries old relations with Krishna, Gautama, Issah, Meera and Guru Gobind Singh and alongwith Chatrik he wrote a poem about Lord Krishna. Here the mention of Issah is noteworthy. This shows that the English through their literature and missionaries had, at least, given the poet an understanding of placing Issah, Guru Gobind Singh and the Krishna at the same level. What we want to arrive at is, that if in religion of the English (a very sensitive issue), Safeer recognised something better, he must have been drawn

2. Pritam Singh Safeer: Rakat Bunden, p.3.
3. Dr. Dharam Pal Singal: Pritam Singh Safeer, p.11.
towards all that he found better in their poetry also, and the ideas that he expresses in his poetry sufficiently prove this fact.

Consequently, his first publication, 'Katak Kunjan' (1941) is full of poems which are famous for their rich emotional experience, deep thought and variety of metre. Every poem has at its back the poet's heart full of sympathy for suffering of the universe, exploring some new secret of life. This idea, it is argued, is a result of 'progressive' influence on Pritam Singh who started writing under that influence. But later on, he evolved an independent line of thought, partly on the pattern of oriental mysticism and partly under the impressions of mystics of the west like Wordsworth and others. Under this influence, as already said, the poet declares that the times of the ancient slavery and blind faith are no more. The slaves and the labourers are wide awake and the rich cannot now conceal their wealth taking shelter of religious ideas and Idols of Lord Krishna. He seeks to spread revolution with the energy of the 'soul' and says:

This revolution seeks not
To establish the crown of king.
This revolution
Shall illumine the mud huts.
Now the era of Hastina pur is no more.²

(Rakt Bundan)

1. Dr. M. P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 83.
2. (Translated) Dr. M. P. Kohli: Ibid., p. 83.
Written though under progressive influence, it is full of universal ideas and feeling. See a few idea in the poems in 'Katak Kunjan':

Who can free the world?
That considers 'a change', a dreadful task
That takes the 'efforts' as 'disturbance'.

.....
The persons who ought to die must die,
None could control 'death'
Why then the unknown should not happen
And a war is waged,
To put an end to all obstacles,
Barring the establishment of Heaven on Earth.

The poet wants: the dawn of a hopeful revolution and the blowing of such winds when all will work together and share their ease and comforts equally (Katak Kunja). Here, the poet transcends all barriers of caste, creed, religion and even of narrow nationalism and taking the whole universe as his home, he prays for the hopeful days for humanity. He wants all the barriers to break down and an end to the unequal distribution, and the dawn of a world where 'every man is king and every woman is queen' (Katak Kunjan).

The poet, Safeer while voicing the universalism of Shelley also voices his feelings of revolt and a change for the new world. See Shelley speaking "To the Republicans of North America" requiring them to put an end to slavery and other woes of their countrymen, in the poem so entitled:
Shout aloud! Let every slave,
Crouching at corruption's throne,
Start into a man, and brave
Rocks and chains without a groan;
And the Castle's heartless glow,
And the hovel's vice and woe,
Fade like gaudy flowers that blow-
Weeds that peep and then are gone.
Whilst, from misery's ashes risen,
Love shall burst the captive's prison.

It, therefore, can be ascertained that the parallel idea in 'Katak Kunjan' must have been drawn by Safeer from the above poem of Shelley. Shelley too, wanted all nations to be liberated and enjoy. Another poem of his (To Ireland) is a proof to support this idea when he inspires Ireland to conquer.

The poet is very close to the English Romantics in taking his imaginative flights and again seems under their direct influence. 'Gahdi De Jaan Vele' (At the time of the death of Gandhi) is a poem in which the poet crosses the gap of centuries with the help of his imaginative power, in no time and tries to link the great social achievement of Gandhi with the work of the 'Absolute'. On seeing a singing black bird (Gutar), the poet again begins to fly on the wings of his imagination. He imagines the bird as a 'parted spirit' since the age of Rama or Krishna that sighs and expresses her agony. The poet, at times, considers her as Loi, the wife of Kabir. The poem of Safeer gives the bird a mystic identity as Shelley assigns to a bird Skylark (To A Skylark). But the colour and the bird's pearching

1. Prof. Diwan Singh: Adunik Panjabi Sahit Te Hor Lekh, p. 73.
On the branch of a tree is reminiscent of Keats' Nightingale (Ode to a Nightingale). In spirit the bird of Safeer is the skylark of Shelley, because Shelley calls her a:

```plaintext
.... blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart.
In profuse strains of unpremediated art.
```

(To a Skylark)

The bird in Safeer is:

```plaintext
The worried spirit
That has crossed the Moon, the Sun and a
A number of worlds.
```

(Catar: Katak Kunjan)

See Shelley again comparing the bird to:

```plaintext
.... a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden.
```

or

```plaintext
Like a high born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love laden
Soul in secret hour ...
```

or

```plaintext
Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass.
```

Safeer also feels that:

```plaintext
The sparkling eyes of her
Are known to Parvati, Siva, Rama and Krishna
And these very eyes
Sparkled as the 'light of knowledge'
In the eyes of Saints and Sages
```

or

```plaintext
She is Lohi of a Kabir.
Or Suman, a beloved of Puran Bhagat.
```
In the end, Pritam Singh does not want the bird to go back to her nest or the waste her being in the winds, but he wants that the ecstasy of poet's eyes should become the bird's ultimate destination. On the other hand, Shelley also wants to learn the 'gladness' of Skylark's brain and the harmonious madness of her 'lips', so that he too may be listened by the world as he 'listened' to Skylark's song.

So, Pritam Singh must have had his idea of this poem 'Gutar' from Shelley's 'Skylark' that he presents only with a slight change: Skylark in Shelley is a 'blithe Spirit', but in Safeer 'Gutar' is a 'worried spirit'. In one of his poems, Wordsworth also calls the Cuckoo, a bird:

No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery.

(To the Cuckoo)

Again, the idea of writing 'Kabristhan' (The Symmetry) by Safeer has been suggested by Coleridge's poem 'The Two Round Spaces on The Tombstone'. The people from whom even the kings and the warriors tremble and those who lie awake under the stones are the like of Counsellor in the English poem:

Both beds and bolsters are soft and Green;
Save me alone, and that's of stone,
And under it lies a Counsellor keen.

......
I trust he lies in his grave awake.

This Counsellor was:

With a waxy face and blubber lip,
And a black tooth in front, to show in part
What was the colour of his whole heart.
And again the woman with a face like burning Mishal, who spends the whole night in the graveyard (Kabristhan) in Safeer's poem, is a woman who:

On those two places void of snow,
There have sat in the night for an hour or so,
Before sunrise, and after cock-crow,
... cursing her corns.

(The Two Round Spaces on The Tombstone)

But Safeer has changed the whole plot of this poem to convey his idea and also his originality lies in the beautiful presentation of additional details.

The poet picks up a handful of soil and examines it closely (Ek Mitti Di Muthi). He narrates that the 'earth' has no value until the clay 'creator' shapes its form into an idol to be put in a temple. 'Kakhan Di Kuli' (The Cottage of Straw) is a desire to meet his master, and 'Do Pipal De Patte' (Two Leaves of Pipal Tree) is the symbolic presentation of the different values that the society attaches to the deeds performed by different categories of men. These poems have the mystic colouring of the poet's mind and show his love for God and the Creator of the universe.

Wordsworth also had faith in the Creator, but never expressed his desire openly to meet Him as Safeer does in his Poems. The English poet's pantheistic view is expressed in poems: 'A Slumber did my spirit seal', the last of the 'Lucy Poems' and some traces of it are found in 'Tintern Abbey'.
Wordsworth also felt in Nature a moral and spiritual presence moulding and working in his mind as a human teacher might have done, though more mysteriously and profoundly (Prelude Book I Lines 329) and is always conscious of the watchful invisible monitor. His dominant impression is of his communion with a vast invisible presence, felt perhaps at the most unlikely times, when climbing rocks after birds' nests, for instance, an object which he admits, to be a mean one; yet the danger of the slippery crags and the closeness of his contacts with them brings half physical, half spiritual sense of communion with something beyond the invisible frame of things.

Oh at that time
When in the perilous ridge I hung alone
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
Blow through my ears? The sky seemed not a sky
Of earth, and with what motion moved the clouds.

(Prelude Book I, lines 346)

Rowing on the lake one night, he observed before him a huge peak which suddenly appeared to him as an animated presence, 'as if with voluntary power instinct' and seemed to walk after him with measured motion, like a living thing.

This is Wordsworth's mystical experience and he was led towards God by the contemplation of Nature. Saeer in 'Ek Mitti Di Munthi' displays somewhat the same experience because without the 'invisible presence' of Wordsworth, the soil is dead and

useless, and that 'Invisible' he represents through clay creator who will shape the soil into idols. So, as already said both the poets have deep faith in God and sing of Him, through their mystical experience. The pantheistic outlook of Safeer is confirmed by Dr. Dharam Pal Singh.¹

Though Safeer talks of Revolution, yet he is essentially a poet of love. Dr. Prem Parkash Singh opines that 'we cannot think of Safeer's poetry without love'.² Love is the main theme of his poetry and he appears to be craving to meet his beloved, who is beyond his reach.³ The central place in the poetry of Safeer, therefore, has been assigned to 'love' which serves as a pivot to his poetry to revolve around.⁴ This opinion has also been confirmed by Professor Sent Singh Sekhon who adds that the love of Safeer is an 'ideal' state, but he needs a woman to satisfy his craze.⁵ In fact, the idea of Safeer's love is not without mystic element. We agree with Dr. Kartar Singh Suri that the beloved of the poet is beyond his reach, because for him:

Love is neither a husband nor a wife,
Neither it is man nor a woman,
They are all mortals.
They cannot provide the peace;
Nor the sweet light of 'eternal love',
Sought after by the soul.

(Dekh Ik Phalsa'e Hai Piar Da)

¹ Dr. Dharam Pal Singh: Pritam Sing: Safeer, p.106.
² Dr. Prem Parkash Singh: Pritam Sing: Safeer La Hay Lok, p.61.
⁵ Pritam Singh Safeer: Foreword to Meri Chonvi Kavita, p.12.
Safeer, therefore, is a poet of love, but he is also a mystic at the same time. His poems in 'Ad Jugad' (1958) show that by love he does not mean the love of a woman. That love he feels is liable to come to an end. That is why he seeks the mystic love of the eternal light. So, the philosophy of Safeer's love is not the philosophy of the 'Love' of Shelley as given by him in a poem 'Love's Philosophy':

See the mountains kiss high Heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother,
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moon beams kiss the sea;
What is all this sweet work worth
If thou kiss not me.

Shelley's love is the worldly love and he seeks a real woman to be kissed. But Safeer with his imagination gives a real shape to an unreal and invisible spirit that he loves, and enjoys the bliss of her embrace (Uh Tinwi Kidron Ave: From where that woman come? - Katak Kunjan), the woman:

A strange fairy of a new world
As sweet as beauty and as warm as love;
Falls in the arms from the Moon
And passionately clings to the breast.

Therefore, Pritam Singh's beloved appears to us a real creature, walking and loving as any other woman on the earth. Glad in beauty, she gives an illusion of a woman in flesh and blood. This may be seen when Pritam Singh like other human beings deplores her getting defamed:
Someone has just said,
Thou have become a commoner
A sympathiser revealed
Thou have earned a bad name.

These lines are reminiscent of Browning's lines. A Duke cannot tolerate his Duchess speaking to everybody with a smile, as she spoke to him (My Last Duchess). He feels jealous and says:

Oh, Sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whenever I passed her, but who passed without much the same smile?

The idea of Safeer calling his beloved a commoner might have sprung from these lines of Browning. And also, though the poet tries to transcend the limits of the charms and beauty of earthly love, yet he cannot escape the occasional attraction of it. (Tasvir Walia Mi: O the woman with a Photograph; Oh Timni Kidron Ave; Baran Te Ran Seal Mi; Pirri; Raag Walia Mi).

To some critics, Safeer's poetry is full of contradictions, and inconsistencies. He develops his poetry on a particular philosophy (Kutta Te Takir, Do Pippal De Patte), and makes it an exercise of his intellect. Partly, therefore, owing to these tendencies and partly to his divided loyalty between his love of classical traditions and his desire to be modern at the same time, it becomes obscure. Another reason of his obscurity can be traced in the use of frequent allusions both from the Eastern and Western mythology and literature. The charge of obscurity in the poetry of Safeer is also

2. Dr. H.P. Kohli: The Influence of the West on Panjabi Literature, p. 84.
confirmed Dr. Gopal Singh Dardi, who says, 'Safeer is very complex and obscure, he is more intellectual than emotional'.\(^1\) This charge is considered a defect by another scholar, who outrightly compares him with the English poet, Browning,\(^2\) but to us, to have higher intellect is a quality and not a defect in a poet. As Prof. Diwan Singh says that his intellectual subjects or abundance of intellect in his subjects is a wonderful speciality of Safeer.\(^3\)

The poet is conscious of the horrors of modern war and the havoc it brings to the masses. He curses man's love for war and strongly advocates the cause of Peace (Aman: Peace). He condemns the bombardment on 'Hiroshima and Nagasaki' in the poem so entitled and also expresses his disdain for the attack on Egypt by the English and the French. The poet knows that peace does not suit the designs of amassing wealth of the capitalists as does war (Neel: Ad Jugad). He wants the atomic energy to be utilized for promoting human comforts (Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Ad Jugad). He is a first poet of his own kind to approve the use of atomic energy, though for a better end.

Safeer writes poems making frequent use of English words (Sadian Bitan Baad: After the Passing of Centuries; Ad Jugad)

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1. Dr. Gopal Singh Dardi: Panjabi Sahit Da Itihas, p. 347.
which are enough proof of his abundant love for English literature. In other poems also, that do not form a part of our study (after 1950) or quite late after that, the poet keeps on writing under the influence of English Romantics. For example, in his poem 'Taran Taran De Khetan Vich' (In the Fields of Tarn Taran), the obvious influence of Wordsworth's poem 'we are seven' comes to the foreground. As Wordsworth depicts the innocence of a child, not knowing what is death, so does Pritam Singh records his innocence about death and other worldly ideas.

Though in popular opinion, Safeer has been called a follower of T.S. Eliot, yet a close study of his poetry shows that it has abundance of oriental mysticism combined with the variety of the English poetry of 19th century. In the use of Chhands, metres and different form of poetry, he touches a new height. He profusely uses 'free verse' in his poems with an internal rhythm in which rhyme scheme is also evident sometimes.

Writing during this period (1900-195) were other poets also, but they did not express themselves in a way, or express such ideas as can be termed romantic under the impact of the English poets of the 19th century. It was perhaps their thinking that by adopting new forms of expression their ideas

1. Prof. Diwan Singh: Adunik Panjabi Sahit Te Hor Lekh, p.155.
may not attain the desired popularity. So, they did not follow the Vir Singh or Puran Singh tradition, either in form or in spirit. This especially applies to the poets of 'Gadhar Gunj', but their originality cannot be ignored because they broke with the Love-Romances-tradition. True, that these love romances voice the simmering revolt against the Landlords' oppression, but their plots are confined to a very limited sphere (Heer Ranjha, Sohni Mahival, Sassi Punnu).

The poets of Gadhar Gunj expressed patriotic sentiments in a passionate and revolutionary vein, thinking on the lines of American Revolution. They wrote under the Gadhar Party that was established in 1913 in America.

The 'Ghadar Gunj', whose first editor was Lala Hardyal began to be issued from Yagantra Ashram at San Francisco. The poems published in Panjabi in Ghadar Gunj were later on collected in a book form entitled, Ghadar-Di-Gunj (The Echo of Revolt). Their main writers were 'Pritam' (Bhagwan Singh), 'Dukhi' (Munsha Singh), 'Tundi Lat' (Harnam Singh), 'Iqbal' (Dr. Bhag Singh), 'Ghadar', 'Faqur' and others who are yet

2. Dr.M.P.Kohli: The Influence of the West on the Panjabi Literature, p.55.
to be identified with their illusive pen names. These poems mark a complete break with the themes of the past, as already said and except the bold attitude and the love for freedom, they express, have not much that can induce us to go deep into them.

A poet that deserves a little individual attention among the Ghadarlites is Dr. Bhag Singh, K.A., Ph.D., who was writing in 'Ghadar Gunj' under the pen name of 'Iqbal'. His poems in the 'Ghadar Gunj' show a promise of his becoming a modern poet and have the emotional intensity and qualities of modern poetic composition. But the rush of political activities and his frequent travel to villages made it impossible for him to write enough poems. And a little that he wrote, was left to a great extent in the office of 'Ghadar' in America.

The poet launches his attack on the priests and Pandits, whom he considers 'white elephants' and 'impractical people', who do not work in the fields.

He also foresees the age where the labourers and hard workers will rule supreme after having done away with the reign of oppressors ('Ghadar Di Gunj: Poetry by Iqbal'). These feelings are reminiscent that of Shelley and the poet conveys this idea along with his patriotic enthusiasm to heighten the

2. Ibid., p.190.
effect of his otherwise revolutionary ideas not only against the British, but also against the social vices and social inequality.

Some poets of this period wrote for the stage to earn cheap popularity and send the audiences and congregations into low raptures, but they could never search the deeper recesses of human heart and feelings. Some other poets wrote religious and patriotic verse of a high standard, but no trace of the impact of English Romantics can be discovered in their poetry. The names of the prominent poets who vehemently wrote on freedom of the country are Hira Singh Dard, Darshan Singh 'Avara', Giani Gurmukh Singh 'Musafir' and Vichata Singh Teer.