Conference on
‘The Punjab and its Language’
7th and the 8th of September, 2018 at
Lee Hall, Wolfson College, Cambridge

Introduction

Punjabi is among the oldest spoken languages in human history. It is the second-most spoken in the UK and the eighth most spoken in the world.

Yet in the land of its origin it is not taught in schools, let alone at the higher educational level. Because of the history of its land it is written in two different scripts. We all know that Punjabi is an Indo-Aryan language which emerged from Old Indo-Aryan languages, from which Vedic and Classical Sanskrit emerged. New research suggests that Old Punjabi was the language of the land when Sanskrit emerged.

In 1947 Punjab was divided into Indian and Pakistani Punjabs. On the Indian side it was further sub-divided into three States. In Pakistani Punjab the language is written in the Shahmukhi script, while on the Indian side Gurmukhi script is used. We also see Pakistani Punjabi being heavily influenced by Persian and Arabic. In Indian Punjab the language has started filling with Sanskrit words. Beliefs and politics heavily influence the discourse. In such circumstances what does the future hold for this beautiful ancient language?

To discuss various issues concerning Punjabi, the Wolfson College, Cambridge, in collaboration with the Centre of South Asian Studies, Cambridge, and the Ancient India and Iran Trust, Cambridge, is organising an international conference at the Lee Hall in Wolfson College, Cambridge, on 7th and 8th September, 2018. We hope you will participate and support this effort.

The following pages are meant to inform you of the details of the event, as well as the speakers and the topics they will discuss. If you are interested in participating and/or attending the event, you can fill in the given form along with the fee prescribed. Any donation towards the cost of the event will be acknowledged.

Kind Regards

Michelle Searle,
Registrar, Wolfson College, Cambridge.

Dr. Abdul Majid Sheikh
Research Associate, Wolfson College, Cambridge,
Research Associate, The Ancient India and Iran Trust, Cambridge
Conference on
‘The Punjab and its Language’
7th and the 8th of September, 2018 at
Lee Hall, Wolfson College, Cambridge

Sponsored by Wolfson College, Cambridge, in collaboration with the Centre for South Asian Studies (University of Cambridge), and the Ancient India and Iran Trust, Cambridge. Financial support from other sources is gratefully acknowledged.

7th of September, 2018.

12.30 – 1.30 pm: Registration and Sandwich Lunch;
2.00 pm Welcome and Introduction: Dr Majid Sheikh, Wolfson College, Cambridge.

2.05 pm Welcome by the President of Wolfson College, Cambridge.

2.15 pm The history of Punjab’s archaeological landscape (Dr Majid Sheikh)
3.00 pm British Education in the Punjab (Osama Ahmed);
3.40 pm Sanskritisation of Punjabi (Dr Gurinder Singh Mann)

4.20 pm Tea

4.40 pm History of Communalism in the Punjab.

5.20 pm Keynote Address: Portrait of Women in classical Punjabi literature (Mushtaq Soofi)

7.00 – 8.00 pm Dinner at Wolfson College Dining Hall (First Floor Main Building)

8th of September, 2018.

9.00 am Opening remarks and announcements;
9.10 am Music traditions of the Punjab (Kirit Singh)
10.00 am The Ghadar Movement: (Dr. Gajendra Singh/Exeter)
11.00 am Tea
11.20 am Partition and Punjab’s Museums: (Mrinalini Venkateswaran, Cambridge)

12.10 pm ‘Popular’ religious practises in the Punjab; (Dr Akhtar Sandhu)

01.00 pm Lunch
02.30 pm ‘Vaars’: A depiction of a peoples’ history: Dr. Saeed Bhutta,
03.20 pm The ‘Qissa’ genre and Punjabi culture; (Dr Ishwar Dayal Gaur)
04.10 pm Tea
04.30 pm British Punjabis and their language: Dr Opinderjit Kaur Takhar;
05.20 pm Keynote Address: ‘Globalisation and the Punjabi Identity”, Dr Pritam Singh, Oxford;

Closing Remarks and Vote of Thanks.
Farewell Punjabi Buffet Reception (at AIIT Cambridge)
Conference on
The Punjab and its Language
7th and 8th September, 2018, at Lee Hall, Wolfson College, Cambridge.
Organised by Wolfson College, Cambridge, with collaboration of the Centre of South Asian Studies, Cambridge University, and The Ancient India and Iran Trust, Cambridge.

BOOKING FORM

Name and Title______________________________________________________________

Address____________________________________________________________________

Postcode: ____________________________

Phone: ______________________________________ Email: __________________________

I wish to attend the conference. Please check the appropriate box.

To secure a place, bookings must be accompanied by the fee, which is non-refundable.

Standard rate £30.00 ☐ Student rate £15.00 ☐

My cheque/online payment (please delete as appropriate) includes a donation of £______.

I would like to attend the farewell drinks and dinner at: ☐
The Ancient India and Iran Trust, 23 Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge CB2 8BG (7 to 8 pm)
(The AIIT shall confirm by email your name on the list of invitees. No fee.)

Payment
By cheque: please make payable to:
Wolfson College, Cambridge (Punjab Conference).
Wolfson College, Barton Road, Cambridge CB3 9BB
Sort Code: 301335.
Account: 00463811
IBAN: GB44LOYD 3013 5500 4638 11

Online by Worldpay: via the Pay facility to the college website
http://www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/

Name/signature_____________________ Date________________

Please email your completed form to ams275@cam.ac.uk or send it with your cheque to the address above.