

# Panjab Journal of Sikh Studies

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## ARTILLERY GUN IN BRASS

An artillery Gun of Sikh  
period belonging to Nakai  
family. Gurumukhi Inscription  
is written on the barrel.



ہیتل کی جی ہوئی توپ  
سکر دور حکومت کی جی  
نائدان کی ہیتل کی جی ہوئی  
توپ جس پر گور سکھی ہیں  
تحریر درج ہے

Department of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies  
Panjab University, Chandigarh

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**PANJAB JOURNAL  
OF  
SIKH STUDIES**



**Volume X, 2023**

**DEPARTMENT OF GURU NANAK SIKH STUDIES  
PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH**

**PANJAB JOURNAL  
OF  
SIKH STUDIES**

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**Professor Renu Vig**  
*Vice-Chancellor*



**PANJAB UNIVERSITY**  
**CHANDIGARH, India 160 014**



**MESSAGE**

The publication of the tenth issue of the *Panjab Journal of Sikh Studies* by the Department of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies is a matter of pride for Panjab University, as it promotes the dissemination of new ideas and perspectives. This journal has evolved into a platform dedicated to showcasing well-researched papers highlighting different aspects of society, culture, polity, law and economy.

I welcome the publication of this issue, as it promotes interdisciplinary research. I congratulate the editorial team and the support staff for putting in the effort to publish this issue of the journal.

I extend my good wishes to the contributors, and I am confident that this journal will continue to make significant advancements in research and introduce novel ideas.

  
(Renu Vig)



**OFFICE OF DEAN OF UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTION  
PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH**



**MESSAGE**

I congratulate the Department of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies in bringing out the tenth issue of *Panjab Journal of Sikh Studies*. I am sure the scholars on Sikh Studies will make substantial impact in our struggle to improve the world in the areas of human conscience and human accountability. I am happy to note that the research papers included in this Journal address major concerns related to history and culture of the Punjabis in India as well as abroad. It is equally gratifying to see that the journal encourages researchers to publish fresh research.

I hope that the *Panjab Journal of Sikh Studies* will continue to critically explore new areas of study and research cutting across disciplines.

I congratulate Professor Gurbal Singh, Editor-in-Chief, the editorial team and the staff the staff associated with the publication of this tenth issue of the Journal.

  
Prof. Yojna Rawat





## EDITORIAL

The *Panjab Journal of Sikh Studies* has carved a niche for itself in the field of academics and research. The Journal is a yearly **peer reviewed/refereed** publication addressing research in diverse areas of Sikh and Punjab studies. This Journal is bi-lingual and publishes articles in English as well as Punjabi. Its interdisciplinary scope is comprehensive enough to cover various aspects ranging from religious, literary, social, cultural, political, economic and contemporary issues. While its focus is the region of Punjab, it includes writings on Sikhs and other Punjabis living in other parts of the world as well. The *Panjab Journal of Sikh Studies* publishes articles of high standard focusing on recent advancements in research of different subjects. An opportunity is provided to both faculty and students to produce insightful research at the local and regional level that will add new dimensions to the existing state of knowledge.

I am extremely grateful to the contributors for providing extensively researched articles. I express my gratitude to the referees for their expertise and generous cooperation. Thanks are also due to the editorial board for their hard work and support. I also wish to thank Dr. Sukhwinder Singh, Dr. Rajeev Kumar, Parmveer Singh, Amandeep Singh JRF, Kulvinder Singh and Prince Kumar of Department of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies for providing valuable computer skills and to Mr Jatinder Moudgil, Manager, Panjab University Press, for the publication and printing of this issue.

**Gurpal Singh**  
Editor-in Chief



# Journey of the Dogras from Punjab to Kashmir: A Historical Analysis

\*Prof. Anju Suri, \*\*Mamta

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## Abstract

*The present research paper aims to study the journey of the Dogras from Punjab to Kashmir in the nineteenth and twentieth century. A descriptive, exploratory, interpretative, and analytical research methodology has been applied in the present paper. The rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Kashmir witnessed the rise of Gulab Singh, a well-known Dogra Rajput chieftain from the highlands. Gulab Singh joined Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army as an ordinary trooper to make quickly a name for himself. After the death of the Maharaja, Gulab Singh became the most powerful figure in the Sikh Empire. Winning the confidence of the British, Gulab Singh became the independent sovereign of Jammu and Kashmir State which was used by the British as a buffer state between the Afghans and the British. The contribution of Gulab Singh in making the state unified, strong and formidable cannot be underestimated. The succeeding line of rulers further strengthened the State. The Dogra ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh who became ruler of the State in 1925 with his keen personal interest contributed immensely towards welfare of the State's people. However, he is charged with adoption of the discriminatory policy towards the Kashmiri Muslims which led to the incidents of communal frenzy here. The geo-political location of the State evoked interest of several players in the state who played their role in the State and impacted the state politics.*

**Key words:** Kashmir, Punjab, Ranjit Singh, Gulab Singh, Hari Singh, Hindus, Muslims, Rajputs.

## Introduction

Kashmir has remained a focal point of significant importance for Maharaja Ranjit Singh as well as the British. Strategically Jammu and Kashmir is located on the northern fringes of Indian subcontinent and exhibits a varied geography. On the map of India, the state of Jammu and Kashmir looks like a crown, the precious jewel. It is bordered on the east by China, on the west by Pakistan, on the north by Afghanistan, and on the south and southeast by the plains of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. The state is separated morphologically into three physiographic units: Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh.

In the wake of the first Sikh war (1845-1846), the British rewarded services of Gulab Singh by recognising his claim on territory given to him by Maharaja

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Ranjit Singh in Jammu and Kashmir region. He was additionally given some territories between east of the river Indus and west of the Ravi, and Kashmir was sold off to him. The British accomplished the process formally by signing significant treaties of Lahore, concluded on 9 and 11 March, 1846 respectively, and the treaty of Amritsar, signed on 16 March, 1846. Gulab Singh, with his capability and courage, conquered some nearby principalities, thus consolidating his power and position to carve out for himself the independent sovereign state of Jammu and Kashmir. The new state of Jammu and Kashmir covered a large area in the Punjab Hills with an annual revenue of rupees 25,56,000 and connected the Jullundur Doab's Kangra district with the Peshawar district, lying on the north-western border.<sup>3</sup> The state was strengthened by the succeeding Dogra rulers who were conscious of welfare of the State, but they discriminated with Muslim residents in administrative and military jobs where the Rajput Hindus were preferred. The British influenced and intervened in the State through British Officer on Special Duty, Agent, and Resident. The geo-political location of the State brought into play several actors who goaded by their own interests acted their own way in Kashmir.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The present paper has been designed to fulfil the following objectives:

- to analyse the historical journey and political ascent of the Dogra dynasty from Punjab to Kashmir
- to examine the role of Maharaja Gulab Singh and his successors in unifying and consolidating the Jammu and Kashmir State
- to investigate the socio-political policies of Maharaja Hari Singh and their impact on communal relations and state politics in Jammu and Kashmir

### **Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Venture in Kashmir**

Desirous of extending and building the strong Sikh empire, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had decided to invade Kashmir in 1814. He availed the opportunity when Mohammed Shah, the Afghan leader had failed to pay him the promised amount of rupees eight lakhs in full for the previous year's campaign. The invasion, however, failed to achieve its objective and further invasion was planned at this time. The Maharaja had recruited into his army Gulab Singh, a well-known Dogra Rajput chieftain from the highlands as an ordinary trooper and in no time, Gulab Singh earned the confidence of the Maharaja with his unshaken fealty and committed service. He rendered conspicuous military service to the Maharaja during the siege of Multan in 1819 and the subjugation of Mian Dedo, the bandit leader who ruled the hills surrounding Jammu.

In 1819, a group of oppressed Pandits led by the courtier, Pandit Birbal Dhar,<sup>4</sup>invited Maharaja Ranjit Singh to help them in their sustenance amidst the

environs of unstable and un-sustained politics. The ambitious Sikh Maharaja took advantage of the situation and dispatched his forces under the command of his most loyal and courageous soldier, Gulab Singh. The Sikhs were successful in capturing the valley from the Pathan rulers in 1819. The Afghan Governor was overthrown, and Maharaja Ranjit Singh handed over the principality of Jammu to Gulab Singh as a reward for his meritorious service. In 1820, he was given a jagir near Jammu, valued at rupees forty thousand per year which considerably improved Gulab Singh's fortune and made him rise to prominence at the court of Maharaja. In 1822, he was appointed hereditary Raja of Jammu, with an annual income of rupees three lakhs<sup>5</sup> and an army of his own in recognition of his conspicuous role in the conquest of Kishtwar and subjugation of Rajouri.

The Dogras, who lived on the outskirts of Kashmir, had long been watching the developments in the valley with a keen interest. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had opened the door of Kashmir to them when in 1824, the Dogras were asked to conquer the fort of Samartah in Samba in Kashmir. Gulab Singh and the Sikh Commander-in-Chief, Hari Singh Nalwa, jointly inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Afghan army led by Sayyid Ahmed in the battle of Saidu in 1827. As a reward, Maharaja Ranjit Singh granted Gulab Singh in 1831, the royalty from the northern Punjab salt mines, as well as sovereignty over several cities of Punjab like Bhera, Jhelum, Rohtas, and Gujrat.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh passed away in the year 1839 and was succeeded by his son and successor, Kharak Singh who failed to become a favourite in the Lahore court. The Sandhanwalias and the Dogras, the two main factions in the Lahore court were vying with each other to establish their respective power and influence. Within months, Kharak Singh during his lifetime was replaced by his capable son, Nau Nihal Singh. Kharak Singh died in the jail and the whole power dynamics changed as soon as Nau Nihal Singh died in no time too, due to the probable fall of crumbling archway over his head at the Lahore Fort during his return from his father's cremation. Gulab Singh's son, Udham Singh, got killed in a tragedy about the same time. As the power struggle grew more intense, Sher Singh, was put in the control of Lahore kingdom.

Gulab Singh held the centre stage of the politics at Lahore court and decided to support Chand Kaur, the mother of Nau Nihal Singh against the claim of Sher Singh on the throne. Owing to Gulab Singh's negotiation ability, which was unarguably unrivalled, the two sides reached at an agreement. Gulab Singh and his men were permitted to depart with their weapons. The Dogras supposedly carried a considerable portion of the Lahore wealth with them to Jammu.

Undoubtedly, Gulab Singh had become the most powerful figure in the Sikh Empire after Maharaja Ranjit Singh's death. Rather than staying back at Lahore, Gulab Singh decided to return his hometown for consolidation of power. He

considered it expedient to establish his own empire in the hills. One by one, he succeeded in annexing several small principalities in the vicinity as well as between the Kashmir valley and Jammu. While his men were busy capturing Ladakh, Gulab Singh in 1841 decided to render assistance to the British as they had suffered heavy defeats and losses on the north-western frontier. It was during this time that the relation of mutual understanding and faith developed between him and the British.

### **The Dogras in Kashmir**

At the end of the first Sikh war, when the victorious British signed the Treaty of Lahore<sup>6</sup> with the vanquished Lahore Darbar on 9 March, 1846, the specific term was included related to the cessation of territory to Gulab Singh. The term provided for Maharaja Dalip Singh's agreement "to recognise the independent sovereignty of Gulab Singh, in such territories and districts as may be made over to the said Raja Gulab Singh by separate agreement between himself and the British government, with the dependencies thereof which may have been in Raja's possession since the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh."<sup>7</sup>

On 16 March, 1846, a week later, a "separate agreement" was signed with Gulab Singh<sup>8</sup>, under which the British transferred to him the territory they had compelled the Lahore state to cede to satisfy its obligation 'according to the provision of Article 4 of the treaty of Lahore' of 9 March.<sup>9</sup> Gulab Singh was awarded additional territory that included 'all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the east of the river Indus and west of the Ravi'.<sup>10</sup> The Jammu jagirs, initially assigned to the three "Dogra brothers" but controlled by Gulab Singh alone since Maharaja Sher Singh's rule, became the new state of Jammu and Kashmir, which was carved out of the Lahore Kingdom and the Kashmir and Hazara provinces.

The Treaty of Amritsar was concluded between the British and Gulab Singh on 16 March, 1846, under which, Kashmir was sold to Gulab Singh for rupees seventy-five lakhs. Gulab Singh ascended the throne of Jammu and Kashmir as the Maharaja. His state also included Ladakh and Baltistan. Since the treaty was silent about the internal governance of the state, Gulab Singh assumed unlimited power to freely act in his state. 'He was to be the master of his kingdom. He was to be its sovereign'.<sup>11</sup> Gulab Singh's free and discretionary actions as the ruler of the state invited troubles and became the source of Kashmir crisis.

One fails to comprehend as to why the British created a huge state under command of Gulab Singh while his other two accomplices, Lal Singh and Tej Singh were not rewarded in the same fashion.<sup>12</sup> It is observed that the British as a reward of the treachery to his own people made Gulab Singh the independent ruler of the state. But Cunningham argues that Gulab Singh was not the only treacherous chief in the Lahore state because Lal Singh and Tej Singh, just like him, also had



conspired with the British against their own men. They had maintained the hidden and deep connection with the British throughout the war<sup>13</sup> and perhaps they were equally desirous of becoming the “independent” Maharajas.

To truly comprehend the British aim in establishing the Dogra state of Jammu and Kashmir, Cunningham believes that since 1809, the British policy aimed at setting up a powerful Sikh state across the entire land between the Afghan kingdom and the Sutlej, which the British had designated as the empire’s north-western border in India. They envisioned such a state as a buffer between themselves and the Afghans. The establishment of such a buffer suited very well the imperial interests of the British. They were concerned about the Afghan frontier and its defence because they had become the dominant power in India up to the Sutlej river by that time. The British feared that one or more European powers might threaten its security in the nineteenth century as the latter too needed a state as richly invested in the defence of this frontier as the British. The presence of a powerful Sikh state in the area seemed to the most appropriate measure for the British. For historical and theological considerations, it seemed unlikely for the Sikhs to join forces with the Afghans as the two of them had a long history of animosity.<sup>14</sup>

During Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s reign, the policy was a resounding success. This was due to the fact that the “Sikh State” that he established met the two requirements of the British. One, it was capable of defending itself against the Afghans. The second, that it maintained cordial relations with the British. Hardinge remarks, “the Sikh Nation” under Ranjit Singh was powerful enough to protect the Afghan frontier, and ‘so hemmed in by natural boundaries, that it could never increase its power to the point of being an object of jealousy to us’.<sup>15</sup>

Following Ranjit Singh’s death in 1839, the ties between the East India Company and the Sikhs loosened as the two necessary conditions for the success of British policy began to fade. Kharak Singh, his ambitious son, Nau Nihal Singh, and the powerful wazir, Dhian Singh Dogra, had all contributed in espousing a strong anti-British sentiment in Lahore.<sup>16</sup>

It was during this time that one of the foundations of the British policy directed towards the buffer Sikh state began to erode, necessitating the creation of a new powerful kingdom on the north-western boundary, which the Dogras had then occupied. Puri contends that the British choice of a Hindu king for the Muslim-majority Kashmir under the Treaty of Amritsar seems purposeful. It appeared that a Hindu monarch had been intentionally placed on Muslim people to keep a check on each other’s ambitions.

While the Hindu ruler restrained emotional and political ties among the Muslims of the state, the mounting Muslim discontent within the state was

exploited by the British as a reason to intervene in its affairs. The state's Muslims often turned to the Resident or the Viceroy for the redressal of their grievances against their own ruler.<sup>17</sup> Many historians argue that although the Dogras were the rulers of Kashmir, 'the common Kashmiri people felt that Dogras considered Jammu as their home and the valley of Kashmir as a conquered territory'.<sup>18</sup>

'The Maharaja was awarded this bargain kingdom for two reasons: first, he aided the British in their orderly withdrawal from the catastrophic British Afghan invasion. Second, after the loss of the Lahore Kingdom in the Anglo-Sikh war of 1845, Gulab Singh promised to preserve British interests in the Punjab'.<sup>19</sup> Prem Nath Bazaz put it well when he noted that the Dogras were not like previous rulers of Kashmir as, 'they established a kind of Dogra imperialism in the state, in which the Dogras were raised to the position of masters and all non-Dogra communities and classes were relegated to subordinate status'.<sup>20</sup>

Maharaja Gulab Singh played an indispensable role in consolidating the vast and culturally diverse territory of Kashmir, extending from the plains of Punjab to the Pamir plateau. However, his health was seriously affected due to oedema in early 1856, prompting him to abdicate the throne in favour of his son, Ranbir Singh.

On 20 February, 1856, Ranbir Singh at the youthful age of twenty-six became the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir state, while Gulab Singh took over as the governor of Kashmir. Ranbir Singh's sovereignty was soon recognized by the British the same year. Gulab Singh breathed his last the following year. Due to the strategic significance of the state, the British proposed to appoint a Resident in Kashmir but Maharaja Ranbir Singh declined the proposal thus asserting his sovereignty.

External trade of Kashmir attracted special attention of the British as this was crucial both politically and economically within their imperial interests. The British sought to limit the Maharaja's influence over the frontier hill states and discouraged expansionist policies towards the hill tribes whom the Dogra durbar viewed as 'refractory' tribes. The Maharaja had maintained strategic diplomatic ties with Russia, Nepal, and Afghanistan during his reign. Recognizing the geo-political significance, he fostered cordial relations, particularly with Russia, to counter British influence in the region. His diplomatic acumen solidified alliances, ensuring stability and trade opportunities. With Nepal, Ranbir Singh cultivated a mutually beneficial relationship, fostering cultural exchanges and confirming to the trade routes. Additionally, he maintained friendly ties with Afghanistan based on mutual respect and cooperation. Ranbir Singh's astute diplomacy contributed to regional stability and enhanced the socio-economic prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir.

In beginning of 1852 an Officer on Special Duty was appointed followed by the appointment of an Agent at Leh in 1867. With the preponderant influence

and interference of these officers, the Maharaja was advised against further expansion. It is to be observed that the power and authority of these officers were considerably enhanced in subsequent years. By 1872, the enforcement of new regulations had authorised the British officer in Srinagar to permit or prohibit any British subject to reside in Kashmir. The powers of the officer were akin to that of a first-class magistrate to fulfil deep politico-economic interests of the British.

By foisting the British Resident in Kashmir in 1885, during the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, the successor of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the British progressively solidified their presence in Kashmir. It has been observed that common villagers led a miserable life due to the measures of extortion and exaction of exorbitant rates of rents charged from them by the wealthy money lending class. The state on its part remained indifferent towards the concern of the common people and claimed itself to be the owner of all land and produce while considering the farming and other 'producing classes' to be merely the tenants.<sup>21</sup> Ever since the British Resident made his presence and participation felt through interference in administrative affairs of the state, his position became certain, thus, paving the way for the era of the Residency Raj in Kashmir experienced from 1885 to 1947.

The last Dogra king, Maharaja Hari Singh, soon after ascending the throne in 1925 worked with great vigour and zeal. In the early years of his rule, he took a keen personal interest in the welfare of the people. He went out to attend several public ceremonies. He visited the district headquarters to connect closely with his subordinate officials. He personally visited countryside to know the concerns of people living there. All this presaged well and enabled him to take up welfare activities for his subjects. However, the discrimination against the community of Muslims, which had been already existing since the commencement of the Dogra rule, became more conspicuous and pronounced now. The Kashmiri Muslims felt deeply alienated which led to the formation of the "Kashmir for the Kashmiris" campaign. The campaign was supported by the Muslim educated class of Kashmiris. Hari Singh began to build a Rajput oligarchy with the help of certain short-sighted Rajputs. He offered to the mediocre Rajputs, the high administrative offices and the posts. More than sixty percent of the gazetted military posts were also offered to the Dogras, primarily the Rajputs. This invidious distinction eventually was becoming intolerable and cries of criticism from various corners of society, initially vague, were raised in protest of Maharaja Hari Singh's actions.

Many incidents of communal frenzy took place during Maharaja Hari Singh's tenure which impacted Kashmir's politics. The Khutba<sup>22</sup> incident happened in Jammu on 29 April, 1931 when a police officer named Khemchand unduly interfered with the recitation of the Khutba during the celebration of Id-ul-Bakar in Jammu. He was suspended and the incident was reported to higher officials in the police force. Khemchand's saction was denounced, and several members of the

Muslim community criticised the state administration for discriminating against the state's Muslims.<sup>23</sup> In another incident on the same day in Dagore, in Samba district (around fifteen miles from Jammu) the Eid Namaz was delayed due to police intervention over the use of a water tank for ablutions by the Muslims. Similarly certain Muslim books are believed to have been desecrated by a Hindu head constable<sup>24</sup> during an incident on 4 June, 1931 in police lines area. Though the charges against the head constable were dismissed, a few pages of the Quran are said to have been discovered in a Srinagar drain.<sup>25</sup>

On 21 June, 1931, Abdul Qadir Quraishi, a non-Kashmiri Muslim from Peshawar who had come to Kashmir to serve a European visitor, T.B. Butt, and was later alleged to be an Ahmadiyya, delivered a seditious speech (exhorting the people to fight oppression) during a meeting of Kashmiri Muslims at the Shah-e-Hamdan shrine. The police detained him on 25 June under Sections 124-A and 153 of the Ranbir Penal Code, alleging that his speech was meant to discredit the administration and incite communal violence.

In his memoirs, Sheikh Abdullah records:

No one realised the significance of Abdul Qadir's outspokenness. The incident had the same impact on our movement that the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh of 1919, had on the movement of Indian independence.<sup>26</sup>

Hari Singh's government discriminated sharply with the Muslims under solidification of the Arms Act in 1940 as it ordered the disarming of Muslims of the entire state, but allowed Hindu Rajputs to own one firearm with enough ammunition for each household for religious rituals and worship. This might have been done by the Maharaja with an intention to keep the armed Pretorian guards in the state against the growing wave of popular demand for freedom. With Hari Singh's pro-Dogra policies in place, the inhabitants of Jammu, notably the Rajputs, dominated the top jobs, while Pandits were hired as clerks to fill the vacancies left by the Punjabis. The Muslims, however, largely were conspicuous by their absence in these jobs.

Maharaja Hari Singh's policies significantly impacted communal relations in Jammu and Kashmir, contributing to a legacy of communal tension and division that may be felt in the present day. While his efforts for modernization aimed at socio-economic development of the state, his failure to address the political and communal aspirations of the Muslim majority, coupled with perceptions of favouritism towards the Hindu minority and more specifically towards the Rajputs, created an environment of mutual mistrust and conflict. The effects of these policies are evident in the ongoing communal and political dynamics of the region,

underscoring the complexities and challenges of governance in a diverse and politically sensitive state.

The Dogra rule in general is alleged to be oppressive and unsympathetic towards its subjects. The burden of taxes was too high for the commoners. The method of collection of taxes was highly callous. A majority of common people were driven into the state of impoverishment largely because of the fact that at least eighty percent of them were sunk under heavy debts.<sup>27</sup>

### **The Dogra Ruler's Stand towards Accession of Kashmir**

In 1947, the British Indian Empire was divided into two independent dominions, India and Pakistan, with the Muslim majority portions forming Pakistan and the non-Muslim majority areas forming India. Kashmir, or more precisely, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, was no different from the other 560 princely states that make up "princely India". The princes of the States had entered into relations with the British through various treaties and *sanads* which had enabled them to enjoy internal autonomy, though the British had designed means to intervene in the internal matters of the State thus controlling them indirectly. Other than these States, the rest of India was administered directly by the British. As the British colonialism in India neared its end during 1947, the princely states were offered the option of joining either India or Pakistan or maintain their independence by making appropriate political alliances with their more powerful neighbours.

Many native leaders of India including Acharya Kriplani, the President of the Indian Congress, the Maharajas of Princely States of Faridkot, Kapurthala, and Patiala, the rulers of the Punjab hill states, many of whom had already opted to join India, sought to convince the Maharaja of Kashmir to join India during independence. Lord Mountbatten, the Viceroy of India, proposed several guidelines to facilitate the accession of Princely States to India or Pakistan. The two important documents, 'Instrument of Accession' and the 'Standstill Agreement' had been prepared for the same cause. The native Princes had been advised to make decision of accession of their State by keeping in view their states' geographical location and the demands of the people.

In 1947, Lord Mountbatten proceeded to Kashmir with his plan and Gandhi trailed him. All the efforts to integrate the state with India remained unsuccessful. However, the state Prime Minister, Ram Chandra Kak, who took the stand in favour of an independent Kashmir, was replaced by the Dogra named Janak Singh. In mid-October, Prime Minister Janak Singh was further replaced by Indian Congress nominee, Mehr Chand Mahajan, who was promised that military assistance would be made available to him at his discretion. The Muslim community was instructed to disarm itself as a part of a scheme by the Maharaja. The Kashmiri people resisted

the Maharaja's effort to disarm the Muslims. Simultaneously, the Maharaja began bringing the Hindus and the Sikhs from East Punjab to Kashmir.

Meanwhile, the Maharaja had reached the Standstill Agreement with India and Pakistan on 15 August, 1947. Under this agreement, the Pakistan's government agreed to take over the post and telegraph systems in Jammu and Kashmir and also to provide the state with food and other critical supplies.<sup>28</sup> On 15 August 1947, while Pakistan signed the agreement, India requested the state to send delegates to Delhi for negotiations. It is noteworthy that no Standstill Agreement was ever reached between the state and India. As the Maharaja dithered, rioting began in Jammu and Poonch, where the local Muslim populace sought to join Pakistan.<sup>29</sup> A similar uprising occurred in Gilgit's northern hill regions.

Pakistan violated the cease-fire agreement by refraining food and other basic supplies from reaching Jammu and Kashmir through its territory. As a result, the standstill agreements that the state was attempting to reach with the two nations at the same time were disrupted.<sup>30</sup> The atrocities committed by the Maharaja's forces, as well as the Sikh and the Hindu gangs, enraged Kashmiri and Pakistani Muslims. On 22 October, 1947, tribesmen from Pakistan's tribal districts entered Kashmir to aid their co-religionists in distress. Under Pakistan's pressure, the state devolved into a war zone, but the Indian government intervened. As a result, on 26 October, 1947, the Maharaja of Kashmir opted to join India and signed 'the disputed Instrument of Accession'. Since Muslims formed a majority of the population in Kashmir, Pakistan's government was vehemently opposed to this decision.

The communal polarization that emerged during Hari Singh's rule continued to manifest in various forms, including political movements, demands for greater autonomy, and in some cases, the calls for secession. The deep-rooted mistrust and suspicion between communities over the time made the resolution of the Kashmir conflict more challenging thus becoming a significant factor responsible for the instability and violence in the region in the contemporary times.

## **Conclusion**

A historical analysis of the journey of Dogra rule from the Punjab to Kashmir reveals that the Kashmir issue, deeply rooted in history, emerges as a ground of multifaceted power struggle, strategic manoeuvres, and politico-economics agacity. Kashmir's trajectory since its inception as an independent and oppressive state under the Dogras till its contentious accession to India reflects the strong connection of the British and the Dogras as the key players with the Central Asian politics involving Afghanistan, Russia, and Nepal. Evincing the deep politico-economic interests, the British had appointed in Kashmir, in 1852, the

Officer on Special Duty, then the Agent at Leh in 1867 and then the British Resident in Kashmir in 1885, thus unleashing the Residency Raj from 1885 to 1947.

Maharaja Hari Singh's decision to accede to India, ignited a protracted conflict that continues to shape the geopolitical landscape of South Asia. The Kashmir issue serves as a microcosm of larger geopolitical dynamics, with regional powers vying for influence and control over strategic territories. The intricate interplay of historical grievances, communal tensions, and geopolitical calculations underscores the complexity of 'the Kashmir conundrum'. The Abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019 is an attempt towards resolving the Kashmir issue. However, efforts towards a lasting resolution of Kashmir issue must reckon with the region's complex history, address of the concerns of the Kashmir residents for treading the path of reconciliation and peace.

## Endnotes

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# Indebtedness and Transfer of Land in the Colonial Punjab

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## Abstract

*The research paper examines indebtedness, mortgage, and land sale in colonial Punjab from 1901 to 1947 and focuses on the post-1900-Act period. The alienation of land did not commence after the annexation of Punjab, rather, several incidents of the transfer of land are known from the period prior to 1849. The British rule abolished checks on the sale of land to outsiders and non-agriculturists in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which caused transfer of land from landowners to moneylenders at large scale and this situation created grave concern among the British officials. They recruited army personnel from agricultural tribes and for their land's protection; there was a need for legislative measures. It resulted in the enactment of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act of 1900, which aims to prevent land mortgages and transfers to money-lenders due to landowners' indebtedness in colonial Punjab. The major law related to land was The Punjab Alienation of Land Act categorized Punjabi society into agriculturist and non-agriculturist tribes, and made non-agriculturists ineligible in the land market. This act aimed to solve the issue of indebtedness and transfer of land. But, the problem of indebtedness and transfer of land in the Punjab remained the same throughout the colonial period.*

**Keywords:** Colonial Punjab, Alienation of Land Act, Zamindar, Sahukar, Benami, Moneylenders, Unionist Party.

## Introduction

The colonial state gave benefits to those who could help them in various ways and ignored those who were not valuable for them in the continuity and stability of their imperial rule. The agriculturists were collaborators of the colonial state and their protection was considered necessary by the British authorities. So, the Punjab Alienation of Land Act 1900 (hereafter PAL Act 1900) was passed to stop the alienation of land from agriculturists to non-agriculturists. The terms were created under this act to define the people who would be the holders of land. Agriculturists were under a high amount of debt, and that was a serious concern for British rule because the army personnel were recruited mainly from this group. Their indebtedness became a major threat to the colonial state. The land transfer was taking place because of the indebtedness of the peasantry. For payment of land revenue, peasants used to take loans from moneylenders. With time, the amount of the loan increased, and when they failed to pay back loan, they had to sell the land

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to moneylenders. To stop the land alienation, the act was passed in 1900. This has been analysed in this paper to see how, after 1900, it impacted the mortgage of land and alienation of land at the provincial level. The main objective of this research paper is to study the issue of indebtedness and find out the land under mortgage, and to analyse the alienation of land after 1900. This paper studies the relationship between indebtedness, mortgages, and the alienation of land in the colonial Punjab.

### **Historical insights**

The PAL Act 1900 was passed to stop land from being sold from landowners to moneylenders. It was stated that this would curb the indebtedness of the peasantry. The British believed that the restrictions on land transfer would decrease the power of the moneylenders and stop the land transfer from cultivators to moneylenders. According to Norman G. Barrier, the desired restriction on land transfer to non-agriculturist groups was fulfilled. Sales to non-agriculturists ceased after 1901, and mortgages outside the notified agriculturist tribes were reduced. The land was alienated to the rich agriculturist class because they were economical strong enough to give loans to fellow cultivators. On the failure of the loan, their land was alienated to the agriculturist landlords. Hirashima Shigemochi argues that moneylenders were practically wiped out of the land market by this act, and with the passing of the PAL Act 1900, the economic power of the professional moneylender decreased.<sup>1</sup> The price of land was increased after the Act of 1900, but the wealth of small peasants did not match the expenditure of their daily life. As a result, the land of small peasants was bought by wealthy agriculturist and landlords, and this act, therefore, benefitted the rich landowners in the Punjab's countryside.

M. Mufakharul Islam talks about the professional moneylenders, saying that they were not actually wiped out of the land market.<sup>2</sup> He mentioned in his paper that the non-agriculturist moneylenders remained active in the land market. They were taking the land from agriculturists in various ways. They learned to contravene the Act to enter the land market. Ian Talbot has opined that the PAL Act of 1900 not only ceased the increase in expropriation of the impoverished landowners but also encouraged inter-communal political cooperation by giving concentrated expression to Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh cultivators' common economic interests.<sup>3</sup> The Punjab Unionist Party supports the agriculturist's interest. However, the land continued to be transferred to non-agriculturists and agricultural landlords. Due to the small earnings, the condition of peasant deteriorated. The Unionist Party made the law to save the agriculturist landowners from the indebtedness and transfer of the land. So that marginal peasants could be protected.

Neeladri Bhattacharya talks about the land market and says that the emergence of a land market led not only to the dispossession of a large section of the agricultural population but also to the concentration of agricultural capital in the form of land in the hands of a section of landlords and rich peasants.<sup>4</sup> Guilhem

Cassan highlighted the point that, after the PAL Act 1900, the identity was manipulated by the moneylenders and others who were not listed under the list of “agricultural tribes”.<sup>5</sup> The moneylenders wanted to earn from the land market, and other dependent castes wanted to take benefits from the land market, which would increase social prestige in social affairs. Imran Ali’s work reveals that in canal colonies, land was primarily given to agriculturist tribes and sold at auctions to others, regardless of their occupation.<sup>6</sup> In the canal colonies land granted to the small peasant proprietors, yeoman farmer, and landlords. The aim of colonization was to relieve the pressure on the land in the province from those districts where the population was largely congested on the land. There was a significant economic growth in Punjab under British rule, still this region remained underdeveloped. The British's exclusive right over land grants in Punjab solidified their political position. The author suggests that if resources were used for agriculture instead of military purposes, Punjab's economic form could have changed by the mid-twentieth century. However, the expansion in agriculture did not establish a social base for rapid changes, as the British’s class structure created a hostile environment for economic change.

### **Indebtedness and Transfer of Land**

The Punjab was mainly a region of peasant proprietors, and the problem of indebtedness was almost entirely the problem of how to maintain the peasant proprietor free and comfortable control over his land. The PAL Act, 1900 (XIII of 1900) came into force on June 8, 1901.<sup>7</sup> It was passed to check the alienation of land from the agriculturist tribes to non-agriculturist tribes. When the PAL Act, 1900 was implemented, the Punjab government viewed it as the onset of the new era in the province.<sup>8</sup> In the aftermath of legislation, there was debate in the official circles about how far the real objectives were achieved. The consensus among British officials was that the PAL Act, 1900 had discouraged the lending activities of professional moneylenders.<sup>9</sup>

The question is how the act dealt with the indebtedness issues. The land was passed to moneylender due to the indebtedness of landowners. The reasons for indebtedness were the same as before: small holdings, social ceremonies’ expenditure, law suits, land revenue, natural calamities like famine, drought, and the fall of prices during the depressions. These reasons led to lower earnings for small landowners and tenants; they were forced to borrow to fulfil their daily needs. But inquiries made in the 1920s revealed that debt continued to mount and money-lending continued to flourish.<sup>10</sup> The chief problem in banking in Punjab was moneylender. In 1929, H. Calvert calculated the number of moneylenders at about 40,000. The agriculturist moneylenders, excluding those who advanced money only against mortgage, numbered about 19,000.<sup>11</sup> According to the Punjab Banking Enquiry Committee, there were 55,000 moneylenders who depended solely or in

part on money lending. The moneylenders lent money to the peasants on the security of land.<sup>12</sup> Two inquiries were conducted by the Co-operative Department to ascertain the number of agriculturist moneylenders in Punjab: the first inquiry was conducted in 1926–27 and the second inquiry in 1927–28. The inquiry shows that the business of moneylending continued to grow, which created a problem for landowners. About 75 percent or more of the land mortgaged in the last 25 years had been mortgaged to agricultural tribes, and the total mortgaged debt of the province in 1929 was about 59 crores. The tree-fourth of this sum, i.e., about 45 crores, was due to agriculturists.<sup>13</sup>

In certain districts of Punjab province, agriculturist mortgages were able to secure double the amount compared to non-agriculturist mortgages. Net mortgage debt was only 40 percent of the total, and though it varied from district to district, there were only two districts in which it was more than 50 percent.<sup>14</sup> According to the Punjab Land Revenue Administration report of 1921, the mortgage debt of the province was ascertained to be 34½ crores.<sup>15</sup> But the Punjab Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, 1928–29, inquired that the chief basis of this calculation was the usufructuary mortgage debt of the province, which in 1921 was ascertained to be 36 ½ crores, and by 1928–29 it had risen to 63 crores.<sup>16</sup> Around 9000 cases belonged to Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur, where the mortgage debt appeared to be more common than anywhere else. In the two districts, the net mortgage debt was over 60 percent of the total, against only 37 percent in the north and less than 30 percent in the south.<sup>17</sup> The total debt of proprietors was fifty-five crores, as per the inquiry made in 1918–19. The agricultural debt in Punjab in 1921 was estimated at 90 crores, 75 of which were considered due to the proprietors.<sup>18</sup> In 1921, approximately 45 percent of total agricultural debt was mortgage debt, which increased to 50 percent by 1929.

According to Malcolm Darling “total debt was 75 crores, which was fifteen-and -a-half times of land revenue.” The total debt of the Punjab’s proprietors was about 120 crores, which was 22½ times the land revenue of the province.<sup>19</sup> Many big proprietors as well as small ones were in debt, and in both cases, mortgages were only 40 percent of the total. The larger proprietors owed Rs. 570; their debt was only 10 times the land revenue, while the corresponding figures for the smaller proprietors were Rs. 310 and 27. The distribution of debt over different sections of the agricultural population was estimated by Malcolm Darling in 1921 in the following ways: Larger proprietor (owing over 8 acres): Rs. 570 per head; small proprietor (owing less than 8 acres): Rs. 310 per head; occupancy tenants: Rs. 290 per head; and tenant-at-will: Rs. 135 per head.<sup>20</sup> The rich may have borrowed because their prosperity made them reliable borrowers, but for the poor, prosperity was not the cause of their indebtedness.<sup>21</sup> Darling’s famous study which argued that there was a connection between prosperity and debt, it became quite the popular

thing to argue that in Punjab indebtedness was caused by prosperity.<sup>22</sup> Darling's argument was more sophisticated, highlighting the difference between debt causes for the poor and the rich and the differential burden it carries.

The total agricultural debt in 1921 was 90 crores; it increased by 45 crores in eight years, and the increased debt was 135 crores in 1929. Whereas the proprietors' debt was 117 crores and the tenant and farm servants' debt were 18 crores.<sup>23</sup> The Punjab Banking Enquiry Committee reported in 1930 that the total debt had risen to 177 crores, with half of it being usufructuary debt. The debt's multiple of land revenue was Rs. 19 in 1921 and Rs. 27 in 1929. The debt per cultivated acre was Rs. 31 in 1921 and Rs. 45 in 1929.<sup>24</sup> The debt per head of those supported by agriculture was Rs. 76 in 1921 and Rs. 104 in 1929. According to the Board of Economic Enquiry, Punjab, 'the mortgaged debt in 1935–36 was Rs. 34,101,433. From 1931–32 to 1935–36, the average mortgaged debt was Rs. 44,245,037. Next year, in 1936–37, mortgaged debt increased from Rs. 34,101,433 to Rs. 36,676,707. The mortgaged debt had increased to Rs. 39,993,367 in the years 1937–38.<sup>25</sup> In the year 1938–39, it decreased from Rs. 39,993,367 to Rs. 31,365,856.<sup>26</sup>

The Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee in 1929 took views on increased mortgage debt from the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners. The Commissioner of Ambala repeated the general principle that in bad years more land was mortgaged and less redeemed, and the three Deputy Commissioners of his Division, representing the Hisar, Ambala, and Gurgaon districts, gave this as the only reason for increase in mortgage debt.<sup>27</sup> The Jalandhar division's five districts termed the inferior harvest of recent years as the main cause, especially the last three years.<sup>28</sup> The Lahore Division listed the poor crops due to unfavourable climatic conditions and attacks by pests, as the key factors behind the fall in agricultural produce, especially valuable crops like cotton.<sup>29</sup> In Lyallpur, it was stated that apart from mortgages being used to purchase lands and buy proprietary rights in already allotted lands, the poor harvests of the last three years forced the landowners to mortgage their lands to meet their requirements and pay the government tax demand.<sup>30</sup> In the Rawalpindi division, the principal cause was said to be the slump, which began around 1921–22, and it was combined with the decline in wartime employment in the post-war years.<sup>31</sup> So, it is difficult to find out what was the main cause that led to an increase in debt in the decade 1919–1929 in terms of the expansion of credit and prosperity.<sup>32</sup> It appears that the drought and disease, cattle mortality, expenditure on marriage and other ceremonies, the cultivator's extravagance, his almost passionate love of litigation, land revenue, and water rate payments were combined causes that forced him to take out a loan.

The second major reason for the introduction of the PAL Act of 1900 was to prevent the alienation of land to the non-agriculturist tribes in the province. The

Act provided for the prohibition of permanent alienation by any alienee unless he happened to be a member of an agricultural tribe or a person holding land as an agriculturist in the village.<sup>33</sup> The Act also made elaborate arrangements for land mortgages or temporary alienation of land. The mortgage period of land was only 20 years after this land would be reverted to the real owner of the landholder.

**Table 1**  
**Five Years Average Mortgaged Land in the Colonial Punjab**

Years	Total cultivated area under usufructuary mortgage (Acres)	Cultivated area	
		Redeemed (Acres)	Mortgaged (Acres)
1896-1900	.....	233,925	339,398
1901-1905	3,357,683	178,773	179,842
1906-1910	3,299,743	274,226	211,415
1911-1915	3,239,284	250,717	225,551
1916-1920	3,130,953	276,547	232,691
1921-1925	2,925,945	218,230	258,868
1926-1930	3,214,449	163,660	271,549
1931-1935	3,734,740	129,690	295,999

Source: *The Annual Land Revenue Administration Reports of Punjab 1896-97 to 1934-35*.

In the immediate future after the introduction of the Act, two things happened: first, the scale of debt decreased and second, there was a slight decrease in mortgages. But this could not maintain the momentum in the long run. The agriculturist moneylenders' number increased as they took the position of moneylenders because they were far from any restriction of the Act. It does not mean that the moneylenders were wiped out of the land market; they were also active. But now there was competition among the non-agriculturist moneylenders and agriculturist moneylenders. The agriculturists were free to give money on the security of land. The agriculturist moneylenders took mortgaged land that they would be able to buy land on the failure of peasants to return the loan. The data of 5 years average mortgaged land is shown in table1. The data highlights that total mortgage increased and decreased with the years. The redemption of cultivated mortgaged area is lower than the cultivated area mortgaged out of the total area under usufructuary mortgage. So, the number of mortgages increased in the succeeding years. Thus, the Act could not stop this evil.



**Table 2**  
**Five Years Average Sale of land in the Punjab**

Years	Number of transfers	Area transferred (Acres)		Price	Price per acre	
		Total	Cultivated		Total	Cultivated
1896-1900	49,096	289,765	162,573	1,31,88,800	46	81
1901-1905	39,682	227,752	135,570	1,07,51,849	47	79
1906-1910	43,430	216,605	121,506	1,38,31,832	64	114
1911-1915	52,078	237,030	139,792	2,31,69,201	97	166
1916-1920	51,239	208,904	126,139	3,25,39,475	156	258
1921-1925	57,140	212,821	126,928	5,07,90,215	238	400
1926-1930	64,649	212,835	137,934	5,40,58,408	254	392
1931-1935	74,407	202,978	129,470	5,29,08,993	261	411

Source: *The Annual Land Revenue Administration Reports of Punjab 1896-97 to 1934-35*.

The procedure for permanent alienation of land was mentioned in Sections 3 to 5 of the Act, which required certain permanent alienation of land. The local government would, by notification in the local official Gazette published with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council, determined that bodies of persons in any district or group of districts were to be deemed to be agricultural tribes or groups of agricultural tribes for the purpose of this Act.<sup>34</sup> The Table 2 shows the 5-year average number of transfers of land, total area transferred and cultivated acres, and price per acre.

The land revenue administration reports indicate that land alienation continued throughout the period, but at a slower rate than before. The first reason was that the Punjab Alienation of Land Act of 1900 prohibited moneylenders from purchasing property from an agriculturist tribe. The moneylenders were excluded from the land market as they would mainly force the peasants to sell the land.

Secondly, most of the period, from being free from the famine until the great depression, agricultural prices were high.<sup>35</sup> It was considered that the peasantry was in a better position. Thirdly, by the end of the nineteenth century, the village common land had been sold, and this was an important factor in the high rate observed in the earlier period.<sup>36</sup> Finally, the rapid rise in the price of land during the 1910s and its mortgage value during this period allowed the peasant to incur much larger debt before he was forced to sell his land.<sup>37</sup> After the PAL Act, 1900, the sale of land decreased. But after five years, there was an increase. This was due to large-scale sales of land by the government in the canal colonies and it does not indicate that there was a tendency for agriculturists to part more freely with their land.<sup>38</sup>

The expansion of credit was influenced by the rise in land value and the growing importance of agriculturist moneylenders.<sup>39</sup> In the period of 1920s, the price of land had doubled per acre. The statement indicated that substantial investments were made. There are indications that agriculturists had a large portion of this new wealth, and as moneylending was one of the few avenues for a villager to invest, the number of agriculturist moneylenders had grown.<sup>40</sup> The agriculturist moneylender probably advanced a higher proportion of value in the case of a mortgage than the ordinary moneylender, since, unlike the latter, his powers of foreclosure were not restricted by the Land Alienation Act.<sup>41</sup> The facility with which the ignorant and unthrifty peasantry borrowed recklessly on the strength of the improved security of land led, over time, to a reduction in their status from proprietors to tenants.<sup>42</sup>

The cultivated (ownership) area sold, 106,799 acres in 1916, was the smallest that had been recorded in the last 20 years, but there was a noticeable increase in the sale of the uncultivated land, of which 126,700 acres (ownership) were transferred as compared with 86,690 acres, the corresponding figure for the previous year.<sup>43</sup> In 1917, the cultivated area sold was 107,227 acres, or only 428 acres more than in the previous year, when the figures were the lowest for 20 years.<sup>44</sup> The sale of uncultivated land fell from 126,700 acres (ownership) to 112,314 acres.<sup>45</sup> In 1918, the cultivated area sold was 100,650 acres, or about 6,500 acres less than in the previous year.<sup>46</sup> The sale of uncultivated land had also fallen from 112,314 acres to 71,803 acres.<sup>47</sup> The land revenue administration mentioned the yearly alienation of land in colonial Punjab. The land was alienated to the agriculturist moneylenders because their income was enough to make them powerful in the land market, and they were able to buy land.

### **Moneylenders and Benami Transactions**

The British believed that the restrictions on land transfer would decrease the power of the moneylenders and stop the land transfer from cultivators to moneylenders.<sup>48</sup> As a matter of fact, the moneylenders were neither actually wiped out of the land market nor was the success of the Act as supposed by the historians

or predicted by the government.<sup>49</sup> Moneylenders continued to flourish in south-western Punjab, the area where the Act was to have had the greatest effect.<sup>50</sup> The moneylenders continued their trade as they successfully learned to manipulate the law. The act could be evaded by marrying into agricultural families. The land was bought by non-agriculturists because they had surplus funds for the investment in the land market, as it was the safest and most durable asset, yielding both annual and capital gains.<sup>51</sup> According to the Annual Land Revenue Administration Reports, non-agriculturists were violating the Act by engaging in large-scale *Benami* transactions. The district reports have given significant attention to *Benami* transactions.

Professional moneylenders constituted single largest group of buyers, by and large, they were richest among the non-agriculturist classes.<sup>52</sup> They had not only the means to pay a high price for land but also the power and influence to contravene the Act of 1901.<sup>53</sup> The non-agriculturists would acquire land from the agricultural classes through *Benami* transactions (transfer nominally in favour of an agriculturist) by taking advantage of the rules framed under the Act in collusion with the petty revenue staff as well as through notifications as members of notified agricultural tribes.<sup>54</sup> The Deputy Commissioner of Ambala wrote:

*Benami* transactions were becoming numerous in the district, especially in the Ambala, Jagadhri, and Naraingarh tehsils. The names of zamindars were entered in the revenue papers, yet the actual landlords were *Banias*, who took produce or realized rents from the tenants. It had not been possible to collect accurate statistics of such transactions because many members of the subordinate revenue agency, being of the same class, sympathize with the Bania, but in Naraingarh Tehsil alone, there were 54 such transactions of sale for Rs. 9,000 involving an area of about 150 acres and 19 of mortgage for Rs. 3,175 for an area of about 50 acres during the year under report. The above figure was only a fraction of the evil that was being wrought. Though the Banias were not in possession of such lands, they had managed to get themselves entered as tenants-at-will at revenue rates. Such fictitious tenants were ordered to be struck off by the Director of Land Records, and his orders were being carried out as cases came to light.<sup>55</sup>

The *Benami* transactions appeared to be on the decrease, but the Deputy Commissioner, Multan, thought there was still a considerable amount of transfer in his district, which was contrary to the provisions of the Act.<sup>56</sup>

The Annual Land Revenue Administration Report of 1928–29 admitted that “non-agriculturists continued to defeat the objective of the Act through *Benami* transactions... It would be difficult to estimate the extent of *Benami* transactions,

but the practice undoubtedly prevails in many districts. The problem they offer was beset with difficulties: detection was not easy when both parties concerned had arrived at a collusive agreement”.<sup>57</sup> Sometimes non-agriculturist creditors get the land of their agriculturist debtor transferred in favour of another agriculturist whom they can trust and receive the rent of the land from his nominee.<sup>58</sup> The Punjab Unionist Party represented the interest of the agricultural classes.<sup>59</sup> This party had become a strong critic of this mode of evading the Act of 1901. The Unionist Party fought the provincial election held under the Government of India Act of 1935 with the objective that steps would be taken for the prevention of *Benami* transactions and the solution of other problems of the peasants, particularly the question of debt.<sup>60</sup> After the elections, the Punjab Unionist Party formed the provincial government, and the Unionist Government enacted Act X of 1938, commonly known as the *Benami Act*.<sup>61</sup> In this Act, Section 13A was attached to curb anonymous transactions.

After the Act of 1900, the small landholders turned to their fellow agriculturists for borrowing. They gave loans to the small agriculturist on the security of land. The small peasants were forced to take out loans because they had to pay land revenue at a fixed time. There was a lot of other daily expenditure by the peasants; for this, their small holdings would not provide enough income to cope with their expenditure. The mortgage of land to the agricultural landlords was the first step in the acquisition of land. When the small peasants were not able to pay back the borrowing, the land was transferred to the agricultural landlords. There was also a need to protect the smallholders from the landlords. They were buying the land from the small landholders. There was a need to protect them through law in the eyes of the Unionist Party. The Third Amendment of the 1900 Act, also known as the “*Zamindar-Sahukara Act*” was introduced in 1938.<sup>62</sup> It was observed that agriculturist moneylenders could be “as rapacious in their methods of compelling their debtors to part with their lands. This Bill was intended to check the permanent alienation of land to agriculturist moneylenders by their debtors and is a stop towards the agriculturist moneylenders being placed for the purposes of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act in the same position as non-agriculturists in the matter of permanent alienation of land under this Act.”<sup>63</sup> Chhotu Ram<sup>64</sup> claimed that by putting an effective check on the buying up of the land of agriculturist debtors by their *Zamindar-Sahukars*, the Unionist Party has given ample proof of their genuine interest in the welfare of the small peasants and backward classes.<sup>65</sup> But the Act could not stop the money-lending activities of the agriculturists. The conditions of the Punjab peasantry remained the same throughout colonial Punjab, despite the laws made for their protection. The land continued to be sold to the landlords because they had surplus money and power.

## Conclusion

The PAL Act 1900 aimed to free landowners from moneylenders' clutches, but debt continued to mount in the 1920s. Net mortgage debt was only 40 percent of the total, with only two districts having more than 50 percent. The Punjab Land Revenue Administration reported a mortgage debt of 34½ crores in 1921, but usufructuary mortgage debt increased to 63 crores by 1928-29. The total agricultural debt increased by 45 crores in eight years and 135 crores in 1929. The Act of 1900 did not protect landowners from indebtedness and land transfer issues. Moneylenders took land under mortgages for 20 years and alienated it in their own name by evading the act. The Act allowed agriculturist moneylenders to legally transfer land, making them powerful and debarring moneylenders from the land market. Despite amendments of the 1900 Act for peasantry protection, the problem of indebtedness and alienation continued throughout British rule in Punjab. The conditions of small holders remained the same; they became tenants-at-will.

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# Regal Reflections

## The Art of Royal Portraiture and its Enduring Legacy

\* Deepti Verma

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### Abstract

*The ruling class has always laid emphasis on the projection of a certain image of it through the symbolic representation of power, which till the Mughal rule was executed in a conceptual fashion; however, under the dominance of the Europeans, the new symbols were evolved to manifest the power: for example medals, honors and badges were constantly pinned to the chest of the monarchs. Moreover, this became the most preferred manner of depiction of the self – as it aimed at a common goal through the rule of various sovereigns, which was to unify the subjects of their respective kingdoms under one particular ruler. The examples of the same can be witnessed in Princely Punjab, where the art of Royal portraiture has influenced the psyche of the people and made them constantly feel like subjects of the rulers; and it has left a legacy that will continue to assert itself for the ages to come.*

**Keywords:** Royal Portraiture, Mughal Art, Humayun, George V, Queen Victoria, Maharaja Rajinder Singh, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh, Raja Randhir Singh, Maharaja Hira Singh, Delhi, Patiala, Kapurthala, Nabha, Punjab.

A portrait is traditionally defined as ‘a likeness of a person’,<sup>1</sup> while the goal of creating it is not to capture the ‘outward appearance’<sup>2</sup> of an individual, but ‘to make something corresponding to that essential image of the man that the mind has in its conception of him.’<sup>3</sup> Indian art has primarily been religious in nature<sup>4</sup> through centuries to get eventually transformed into a subject matter which was rather secular<sup>5</sup> and one major non-religious category of art includes portraiture.

### Tradition of Royal Portraiture in India

Royal portraits have been around in the peninsular subcontinent of India since the third century B.C.E. – however the very earliest among them are not in a visual format, but a literary one, in the form of Ashoka’s inscriptions. This might be an Iranian influence, wherein Darius wrote very highly about himself – whereas the Ashokan edicts exemplify his repulsion from bloodshed post the annexation of Kalinga.<sup>6</sup> A similar representation of self-image can be observed during the reign of Kushana rulers in the form of sculptures and coinage<sup>7</sup>, along with the widespread dynasty of the Guptas who too endeavored to present their subjects with ‘symbolic references to the valour and invincible prowess of the sovereign’<sup>8</sup> on their coins.

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The continuity of this tradition of portrait-making by the royals through numerous generations does not seem to be done without a purpose.

The vulnerable border of Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province (N.W.F.P.), has always been a victim of repeated invasions<sup>9</sup> from foreign lands. Post a long-drawn iconoclastic period of the Sultanates, the area witnessed the rise of the Mughals and also a large production of royal portraits through their lineage. Though belonging to the Islamic faith, wherein representation of all sorts of figures is prohibited<sup>10</sup>, Humayun (r. 1530-1556) is accredited for the acceptance of physiognomic representation among the Mughals.<sup>11</sup> The successive rulers continued this fervor of art and commissioned countless portraits of themselves<sup>12</sup> – which seemed to be a representation of their own enthusiasm for the arts at the surface level, however this passion can also be seen as a deliberate attempt of projecting their own image on their subjects, along with illustrating the history under their control in order to continue to present themselves in a certain manner.

Through several years that followed, the times became tough for the subsequent Mughal rulers due to continuous disintegration of the empire and lack of allegiance with other chieftains – leading to the rise of the Sikhs in the North western part of the Indian subcontinent by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>13</sup> The Sikh kingdom of Lahore could not survive the constant pressure from the British and the internal power struggles<sup>14</sup>, hence the latter succeeded at taking over the kingdom and also the British become a dominant power in the region. In spite of the change in authority, the tradition of portrait-making did not die out – since the symbolic

representation of virtues and the reinforcement of status was still a requirement in order to propagate a favorable public image. However, the typical Indian conceptualism was replaced by European naturalism<sup>15</sup> and the physical representation of intangible notions became an apparent feature of the British imperial portraiture and influenced the art of royal portraiture in India as well.



**Fig 1: *George V* (1914);** Charles Sargeant Jagger;Marble;Sculpture: 18ft high; Pedestal: 43.5ft high; Coronation Park, Old Delhi, India.

### Royal Portraiture of British Monarchs in British India and Princely Punjab

The consequent supremacy of the colonials resulted in the creation of their portraits and became a common element of Indian art. One such example is a marble sculpture at the Coronation Park of Old Delhi<sup>16</sup> representing *George V* (r. 1910-1936) (Fig 1).<sup>17</sup> The monarch is quite evidently witnessed in his ceremonial robes from the Delhi Durbar of 1911<sup>18</sup>, adorned with Edward the Confessor's Crown<sup>19</sup>, 'The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India'<sup>20</sup> and 'The Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire'.<sup>21</sup> All of these elements are responsible for building the image of the ruler among the natives and exhibit his 'conspicuous merit and loyalty'<sup>22</sup> represented by these adornments, acting as physical manifestations of unquantifiable qualities – unlike the royal portraiture of the Indian kings.

Post the demise of the central figure of the colonial era, Queen Victoria (r. 1837-1901) on January 23, 1901, a large number of statues were erected in India and around the world to mark the cultural tapestry weaved by her<sup>23</sup> 'with the intention of fortifying the imperial rule in the local psyche'.<sup>24</sup> This tradition of erecting sculptures of rulers continued on the lands of Punjab as well and similar representations of knighthood can be seen in the premises of Sheesh Mahal,



**Fig 2: *Queen Victoria* (1903)**

F. Derwent Wood; Bronze; Sheesh Mahal, Patiala, Punjab; India.



**Fig 3: Photograph of Lord Curzon unveiling the statue of Queen Victoria by Mr. Derwent Wood at Patiala (November 1903)**

Patiala<sup>25</sup> where the commemorative sculpture of *Queen Victoria* (r. 1837-1901) (Fig 2)<sup>26</sup> can be seen – wearing her decorations of achievement in the form of ‘The Most Noble Order of the Garter’<sup>27</sup>, ‘The Royal Order of Victoria and Albert’<sup>28</sup> and ‘The Imperial Order of the Crown of India’.<sup>29</sup> On approximately two-feet high pedestal, stands her life-sized statue – standing tall and gazing far into the distance. Her head is adorned by St. Edward the Confessor’s crown<sup>30</sup> and her left hand is extended

outwards, seeming as if she is holding something – probably the Sovereign’s Orb, which is absent here but can be spotted in the photograph clicked during the unveiling of the sculpture by Lord Curzon (Fig 3)<sup>31</sup> in 1903. Along with her pearls and sash, she is shown wearing her coronation attire adorned with her insignia – exhibiting the qualities of magnificence and grandeur.

Unlike the Indian royal subject matter, which constituted of battle and hunting scenes in order to showcase the courage and victories of a ruler, the European art introduced the viewers with a more sophisticated fashion of doing the same – as they witnessed the head of the country wearing their achievements in the form of beautiful embellishments pinned to their formal apparels – adding on to the grandeur of the image. One major reason of this subtle, yet impactful representation could be the dominance of the academic art in Europe spanning from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>32</sup> - with qualities of realism, formalism and a balanced depiction of expressions. Such representations influenced the royal portraiture of the country and a significant amount of impact can be observed in the portraits commissioned by the royals of the princely states of Punjab as well – however, their portrayal can be seen as an amalgamation of the Indian style of portraits and the newly introduced style taught at the European academies based on what they considered to be as the classical standards of art.



## Royal Portraiture in Princely Punjab

While observing the portraits depicting the royals of princely Punjab, one can quite easily sense the attempt of showcasing oneself as an authoritative figure in the eyes of the public – to the extent of imposing such a persona on the viewers. Not only this, the same resulted in the change of taste of the Maharajas of Punjab and increased influence as well as acceptance of western aesthetics.<sup>33</sup> The same is exemplified by the presence of two commemorative marble sculptures in the Baradari Garden<sup>34</sup> and Sheesh Mahal, both situated in the erstwhile royal city of Patiala. The former site consists of an imposing statue of Maharaja Rajinder Singh (r. 1876-1900), while at the other location, the sculpture commemorating his son – Maharaja Bhupinder Singh (r. 1900-1938) – placed on a plinth. Both these works comprise the qualities of academic European style of sculptural art, clearly influenced by the sculptures of British royalty displayed in the city.



**Fig 4: *Maharaja Rajinder Singh***

Marble; Patiala, Punjab; India.



**Fig 5: *Maharaja Bhupinder Singh* (1948); Clara Quien; Marble; Patiala, Punjab; India.**

him attired in an army uniform covered with medals and decorations'.<sup>39</sup>

The sculpture of *Maharaja Rajinder Singh* (Fig 4)<sup>35</sup> echoes naturalistic qualities and an attractive representation of the decorative elements – such as, ‘the pearl and diamond necklaces, medals, decorations and tassels.’<sup>36</sup> While the figure seems absolutely static and frontal, a foot extended outwards provides it a tinge of ease – however, this cannot be mistaken for any less power and authority that the figure is apparently suggesting in volumes. An extremely fascinating structure inside which this statue is placed is a ‘neo-Gothic canopy’<sup>37</sup>, adding on to its grandeur – a clear influence of the Victorian era, observed in various sculptures of Queen Victoria erected in India and other parts of the world. The figure of *Maharaja Bhupinder Singh* (Fig 5)<sup>38</sup> comprises the symbols of power and achievement, that is, his sword and military medals respectively. The representation is realistic in style and the King, in his formal regalia, succeeds in displaying his role in Punjab as a ruler. This is ‘the image that he seemed to prefer to project – the one that showed





**Fig 6: *Raja Randhir Singh***(Circa 1890)  
Unknown German Artist; Oil on Canvas;  
Kapurthala, Punjab; India.



**Fig 7: *Maharaja Hira Singh***(Circa 1900)  
Unsigned and undated; Oil on  
Canvas; Collection of Kunwar Himmant  
Singh; Nabha, Punjab; India.

In a similar fashion, the oil paintings depicting *Raja Randhir Singh* of Kapurthala (r. 1852-1870) (Fig 6)<sup>40</sup> and *Maharaja Hira Singh* of Nabha (r. 1871-1911) (Fig 7)<sup>41</sup> show them in Indian regal attires, heavily jewelled and sporting an equally embellished turban – outrightly underlining their prized possessions. They are shown wearing ‘The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India’<sup>42</sup> which signifies their distinguished services for the British Indian Empire and their loyalty towards the same, being over-emphasized by the sword accompanying each figure. To achieve a higher degree of realism, artists from foreign lands who had a formal training in handling oil paints as a medium of creating works of art were employed.<sup>43</sup> These portraits constitute the synthesis of tangible and intangible representations of qualities of royalty – probably aiming at making the viewers constantly see them as their glorious and valorous rulers.

## CONCLUSION

Royal portraiture in the Indian subcontinent has witnessed numerous transitions down the line. Since art is supported by patronage and essentially caters to the taste of the patron, it might as well be seen as propaganda with a thoughtful effort at image management. Portraits commissioned by the royals include elements that represent their respective qualities in order to make the public understand the persona of the rulers. Also, since art outlives men and forms a substantial portion of history, the patrons are generally aware of the underlying fact that their image would probably survive even after their demise while continuously reinforcing their subject's allegiance to them. Hence the art of portraiture has been always considered as a powerful tool of registering the image of oneself in a particular manner for posterity.

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# Threads of Heritage: Innovations in *Paranda* Craftsmanship

\*Kirandeep Kaur

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## Abstract

*The paper delves into the cultural significance and evolution of paranda-making in Punjab, exploring its roots from the early nineteenth century to contemporary times in visual representations. Paranda, a traditional hair accessory, emerged as an integral element of Punjab's cultural heritage. From their origins as a utilitarian item, parandas evolved into intricate pieces of art. Punjab paintings offer glimpses into the attire and hairstyles of men and women, revealing the subtle nuances of paranda usage and the intricate craftsmanship involved in its creation. The study also examines the socio-cultural context surrounding paranda-making, highlighting its role as a symbol of identity and resilience in the face of modernity seeping into the cultural changes. Through an exploration of texts and artistic representations of women wearing parandas, the paper explores the artisanal crafts and techniques passed down through generations. Thus, the study illuminates the enduring legacy of paranda as cherished artefacts that embody the traditions, creativity, and cultural vibrancy of Punjab. The primary data for this paper is collected from a field survey conducted in Patiala, whereas the secondary data is taken from books, articles and journals which are relevant. The paper explores the lives of artisans in this region through oral interviews and detailed discussions. The major focus of the study is to analyse the lives of the artisans who have been practising the craft for years initially out of passion and later as a source of income.*

**Keywords:** Cultural Heritage, Traditional Crafts, Punjab, Malwa, Patiala, Tassels, Braids, Hair Accessories, *Paranda*-making.

## Introduction

Culture serves as the defining essence of a community, embodying its language, religion, lifestyle, beliefs, and customs.<sup>1</sup> It represents a reservoir of knowledge acquired over generations. Heritage, on the other hand, encompasses cherished elements passed down through time, whether tangible or intangible. Both culture and heritage are legacies inherited from our ancestors, reflecting the essence of a collective identity.<sup>2</sup> The notion of cultural heritage has evolved and gone beyond mere monuments to encompass vibrant traditions and living expressions. From oral narratives to intricate crafts, cultural heritage encapsulates the essence of human experience. It includes both the tangible, like historic artefacts and structures, and the intangible, including music, dance, poetry and more.<sup>3</sup> The profound significance

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of understanding cultural heritage is through preserving history and traditions. It is a testament to the resilience and creativity of humanity, serving as a bridge between past, present, and future generations.<sup>4</sup>

Punjab lay on the trajectory of many foreign incursions and has endured several waves of invaders, which resulted in a dynamic tapestry of cultural exchanges and traditions.<sup>5</sup> During times of turmoil and conflict, the artisans and craftsmen in the region drew inspiration from diverse cultural traditions, thus a fusion of indigenous ingenuity and external influences emerged as the folk art of the region.<sup>6</sup> Folk art serves as a cultural expression deeply entrenched in the traditions and customs of a specific community or locality. Often crafted by individuals without formal artistic training, folk art is passed down through generations, with artisans inheriting techniques and skills from their predecessors.<sup>7</sup> From the vibrant colours to the intricate patterns adorning the handicrafts, Punjab's cultural heritage is a testament to the rich tapestry of traditions that have flourished beyond its borders. The cultural wealth of Punjab is reflected in its traditional folk art, vibrant hand-woven textiles, weaving and embroidery including phulkari, carpet, *durries*, *khes*, and *pakhi* (hand-fan), as well as its woodcraft, leather-craft, brass and copperware, ivory carving, the art of basketry and *paranda*-making<sup>8</sup> are quite a few notable craftsmanships from Punjab.<sup>9</sup> These crafts flourished in different parts of Punjab and are often motivated by land, family, social and religious affiliations.

### Origin and History

From the time of the Indus Valley Civilization, the sculptures have represented varied hairstyles and accessories that served as symbols of social status and cultural identity, thus providing a glimpse into the grooming practices of both men and women.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, the portrayal of women in Indian paintings serves as a valuable record of the prevailing fashion trends, showcasing textiles, accessories, hairstyles, ornaments, and more. These depictions offer insights into the societal and cultural norms of the era, providing rich detail about the practices and preferences of the time. The women depicted in Western Jain Manuscripts, during the thirteenth century, represent them wearing an array of hair accessories, which also includes tassels and braids. In Jain manuscripts, the hairstyle of women appears to be tied in a single plait with strings of pearls called *dhammilla*, whereas the plaited or braided hair was called *veni* and *praveni*.<sup>11</sup> The practice of plaiting hair with tassels, which was first observed among Muslim kings, courtiers, and soldiers is believed to be inspired by Turkish, Egyptian and Syrian culture except they put the silk tassels in the locks.<sup>12</sup> While initially prevalent among men, the style eventually became associated predominantly with women. From queens and laywomen to dancers and maids, this hairstyle remained a common feature in the visual representation of women till the end of the sixteenth century. In addition to the historical tradition of hairstyling and accessories, the practice of braiding hair holds a significant place in

Punjab's cultural heritage also. Women across Punjab have adorned their hair with *paranda* crafted with colourful threads and embellishments. *Paranda* has emerged as a cultural symbol and tradition in Punjab during the early nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup> Through visual representations the importance of *paranda* as a favoured hair accessory in Punjab's cultural identity is evident, highlighting its enduring legacy alongside other hairstyling traditions observed across various cultures.

### **Malwa and its Legacy - Patiala Shahi Pagh, Paranda and Phulkari**

In the aftermath of the partition in 1947, the folk art of Punjab encountered formidable challenges, especially in East and West Punjab, where large-scale migration significantly impacted both regions. In Indian Punjab or East Punjab, the area is divided into four geographical regions: Majha, Malwa, Doaba, and Powadh. The artisans practising the craft of *paranda* making settled predominantly in the Powadh and Malwa regions. Positioned between the *Sutlej* and *Ghaggar* rivers of Punjab and parts of Haryana, Powadh is situated in the southwest part of Punjab. However, Malwa, with its distinctive arid landscape, included three key principalities - Patiala, Faridkot, and Malerkotla - with Patiala emerging as the most influential destination for these artisans seeking refuge.<sup>14</sup> Cotton emerged as the primary crop, leading to the establishment of major cotton markets in Fazilka, Malout, and Bathinda. The prosperity of Patiala, supported by royal patronage, gave rise to vibrant *bazaars* where artisans traded in jewellery, *zardozi* (gold embroidery), decorative drawstrings (*Nallas*), *parandas*, gold-embroidered footwear, dyed turbans, and *dupattas* (stoles). Surrounding regions supplied goods to the market town of Malout for commerce.<sup>15</sup> Villages across different districts of Punjab including Jalandhar, Amritsar, Nakodar, and Ludhiana are primarily involved in the creation and design of *Parandas* yet Patiala holds a distinct position for crafts and as one of the oldest centres of *paranda*-making, earning it the esteemed title of '*Patiala Shahi Paranda*'. The term '*Paranda*' itself has various synonyms, such as '*Reshmi Doriya*,' signifying a bundle of silk threads, and *Chouti-tilla*, derived from the Urdu/Persian term *Choutilla*.<sup>16</sup> Besides the craft of *paranda*-making Patiala has been always known for its *reshminalle*, *Phulkari* and distinct style of tying the turban (*Pagh*).

### **Phulkari**

*Phulkari* is identified as Punjab's traditional folk embroidery, that was typically crafted by women on woven cotton fabric (*khaddar*), often dyed in red, black, and blue; and it was usually embroidered with pure silk threads in red, yellow, green and orange and these threads were widely available for personal and households use across rural and urban Punjab. The collaborative endeavour called *Trinjana*<sup>17</sup> involved women gathering in groups for embroidery. Historically, *phulkari* were embroidered by women for household use, such as head coverings and exchanged as cherished gifts for family celebrations and special occasions. These differently

embroidered *phulkari* were known by different names like *chope*, *suber*, *vari-da-bagh*, *bavan-bagh*, *satranga*, *panchranga* and many more. This tradition has been passed down by women through generations, serving as a prominent cultural heritage.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Pagh* (Turban)**

The *Patiala Shahi Pagh*, a turban tradition established by the Maharajas of Patiala, traces its origins to Sikhism's profound respect for hair, notably emphasized by Sikh Gurus to uphold sovereignty and equality. Historically, turbans served as symbols of royalty across South Asian cultures, signifying social status, with kings and rulers adorning them. Sikh Gurus adopted this tradition to emphasize the equality of humanity, rejecting social distinctions that lead to disparities based on factors such as gender, race, religion, and caste – prevalent structures in the social hierarchy.<sup>19</sup> Guru Gobind Singh elevated the turban to symbolize bravery and sacrifice within Sikhism. Maharaja Rajindra Singh of Patiala introduced the distinctive style, later adopted by successive Patiala royal family members. The turban's colours often corresponded with specific festivals or occasions, assigning particular hues for events such as Muharram, Baisakhi, and Dussehra. Featuring clear layers it is often adorned with *Sarpech* (aigrette), a turban ornament.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Reshmi Nalle* (Decorative Drawstrings)**

Drawstrings, also known as *Nallas*, serve as handwoven belts for lower garments like trousers, *salwar*, pyjamas, and *ghaghras*. Referred to as *azarband* or *izarband* in Urdu/Persian, *Kamarbandh* and *Nada* in Hindi, and waistbands in English. The drawstring made of wool is known as *dhaila*.<sup>21</sup> Patiala was renowned for its intricate handwoven crafted *Nallas*. Initially, they were elaborate, crafted with fine *resham* thread, and featured designer tassels that hung low sometimes even extending to the knees, visible from under the *kameez* (upper garment).

### **Exploring the Origins of *Paranda* in Punjab's Tradition**

The tradition of covering one's head has long been observed as a sign of modesty, a practice consistently depicted in paintings featuring Sikh men and women. In the early nineteenth century, women depicted in Punjab paintings were often shown wearing a long dupatta wrapped around their bodies, covering their heads, with only a subtle hint of the *paranda* at the nape of the neck and tassels gracefully hanging near the waist. In contrast, only a selected few paintings depict women without a *dupatta*; instead, they wear a *pagri* on their heads, as seen in the female platoon of Ranjit Singh's *darbar*. (Fig. 1)



**Fig.1. A Punjabi ‘Amazon’ or armed courtesan<sup>22</sup>**

Therefore, the *paranda* provided women with the freedom to showcase their long hair, braided with thread (*doriya*) and adorned with tassels at the end beneath the ‘*dupatta*’,<sup>23</sup> becoming an essential element of Sikh culture. Over time, women’s attire transitioned from the traditional *Ghaghara Choli* to the *Sutthan* or *Salwar and Kurta* or *Kameez*, a long tunic paired with loosely fitted bottoms, while retaining the essential element of the *dupatta* or *chaddar*. The *sutthan* was commonly worn with the *ghaghra*, particularly when leaving the house. Its practical utility likely contributed to its adoption by women of various religious affiliations, even if only within the privacy of their homes.<sup>24</sup> Despite these changes, the *dupatta* continued to play a significant role. As a result, women adapted their regional attire to highlight their accessories and adorn their hair beneath the veil of cultural norms. Initially, *parandas* were crafted using colourful *sutti* (cotton) threads. Over time, they evolved from utilitarian items to fashionable accessories. More fancy threads were used such as *zari*, silk threads, mirrors, and bells began to be put on threads which soon took the shape of *Parandi*.<sup>25</sup> *Paranda* was favoured by women from diverse social backgrounds across society. While *parandas* worn by laywomen were relatively simple (Fig.2), often featuring only a bunch of pompoms at the end, those worn by royal women were extravagant and adorned with intricate mirror

work, gold or silver threads, and a variety of colourful yarns exuding a regal appearance enhanced by fancy ribbons, pearls, and vibrant tassels with pompoms attached to them.<sup>26</sup>



**Fig. 2. A Sikh Couple<sup>27</sup>**

Punjab paintings of the early nineteenth century depict men and women wearing regional attire which includes *pyjama*, *salwar* and *ghaghra* with their drawstrings prominently displayed in the front. However, the *paranda* remained largely concealed due to the presence of the dupatta or chaddar covering the head. In several paintings, particularly those featuring women, their drawstrings are visibly showcased in the front, sometimes extending down to the knees, offering a glimpse into the intricate craftsmanship involved in the creation of *nalla* making by the women of the household. *Nallas*, much like *parandas*, were crafted from similar materials such as *resham* thread and *sutti* thread, providing insights into the art of knot-tying and various knitting and weaving techniques, earlier these were also decorated with ornated tassels including beads and pearls.

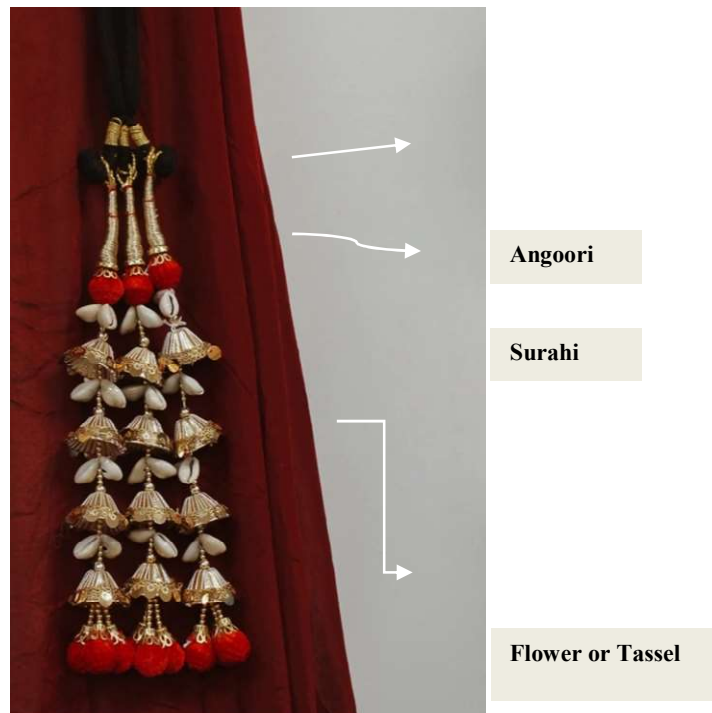
### **The Artisanal Process**

The incorporation of beads, pearls, motifs, tassels, and side hangings into *parandas* arose from its practical function as a textile product used in daily life. As a necessity-based art form, *parandas* evolved to become more than just a functional item but rather a fully accomplished accessory in its own right. The craftsmen continue to experiment with diverse materials, shapes, and a spectrum of colours. The *paranda* consists of two main parts: the upper section, made by



intertwining three long strands of threads of desired material, texture and appearance, and the lower section, known as the tassel or flower, which adds decoration. This decorative flower comes in various forms, sizes, and colours, showcasing the creativity and skill of the craftsmen.<sup>28</sup>

Furthermore, the tassel comprises three parts: *Angoori*, a loop for attaching to the upper part of the *paranda*; *Surahi*, a conical structure that holds everything together; and the tassel or flower, which forms the final, open ends of the *Paranda*. (Fig. 3)



**Fig. 3. Different Parts of Tassel<sup>29</sup>**

*Parandas* are crafted using simple tools like scissors, a comb, and a small, pillar-like object called *thullu* or *thanno*.<sup>30</sup> Over time, *parandas* have evolved. While some intricate designs have been replaced with simpler ones and materials substituted with more affordable options, silks have been replaced by nylon, polyester threads and pearls with plastic beads however certain basic elements remain unchanged. These changes in design and materials have made *parandas* more accessible to a wider range of people. Craftsmen draw inspiration from nature, architecture (*jail paranda*), and even food (*jalebiparanda*, *ladoo paranda*), enhancing *Parandis* with mirrors, pearls, *ghungroos* (small metal bells), and *zari*, adding value to their creations.<sup>31</sup>

## Insights from Field Survey

Neelam Kumar Khanna<sup>32</sup>, is the present owner of *Khanna Di Hatti* in *Quilla Bazaar*, Patiala, that was founded by his late father Om Prakash. During the interview, Khanna highlighted that the craft has undergone specific changes over time. Despite these changes, the craft has managed to endure in today's fashion landscape. However, it is no longer an integral part of everyday attire; instead, women prefer to wear it on occasion as part of a costume. He also shared that the busiest time for *paranda* sales is during the Indian wedding season, which typically spans from November to March, and on certain festivals such as *Lohri* and *Basant Panchmi*. They also prepare *parandas* specifically for young girls as female students often buy from them during annual functions and youth heritage festivals as part of their costumes. They also create *parandas* tailored to different dance forms, such as *Giddha* and *Luddi*. He also elaborated on the diverse variety of *parandas* available, ranging from simple threads with pompoms at the end to much fancier items adorned with mirrors, shells, and ghungroos. A simple *paranda* costs up to Rs. 250, while a fancy one can cost up to Rs. 700.

Prem, a local *karigar* (tassel-maker), originally hailing from Ajror Village near Bahadurgarh, Punjab, has been crafting tassels for the past 25 years. He emphasizes that his motivation comes not from financial gain but solely from his genuine interest and passion for the craft. Ahmed's, a *karigar* (tassel-maker), forefathers migrated from Pakistan and settled in Patiala. As the sole provider for his family, he not only crafts tassels for *parandas* but also works as a helper in a local shop. According to him, the demand for *parandas* has surged in the past 7-8 years, largely influenced by movies and songs, as well as the promotion of the trend by Punjabi female actors. However, he laments the declining emphasis on quality, noting that crafting *parandas* is a time-intensive process requiring dedicated hours. Despite this, consumer preference has shifted towards disposable products, undermining the value of traditional craftsmanship.

## Revitalizing Tradition in the Contemporary Trends

The relentless march of modernity and the concept of fast fashion has posed a threat to traditional values and culture, causing the younger generation to drift away from their cultural and heritage practices. It can be observed that the *paranda*, once an essential adornment in the hair of Punjabi women, has transitioned from being a favoured hair accessory to becoming an occasional embellishment worn as part of a mere costume. However, in the contemporary landscape, local artisans and social media influencers are not only safeguarding and rejuvenating the traditional art of *paranda*-making but are also elevating it to unprecedented levels of artistic innovation. By adopting an avant-garde approach, they are not just preserving the essence of *paranda* craft but are also introducing it to the younger generation, infusing a unique and modern flair. Noteworthy brands like *Ziddi*, *Navaa* and *Olio*

exemplify this fusion by collaborating with Patwa artisans in rural Rajasthan, giving *parandas* a contemporary twist to resonate with millennial audiences. They have introduced several new elements to the designs which resonate with the era of cultural development, adding *gottapatti*, *zari* work, embroidered customized name tags, miniature dolls (*guddiyan*), mirrors, contrasted colourful pompoms and much more. (Fig. 4 and 5) These additions have succeeded in reviving the essence of *paranda* as a beloved hair accessory among the younger age group.



**Fig. 4. Paranda by Ziddi<sup>33</sup>**



**Fig. 5. Paranda by Ziddi<sup>34</sup>**

## Conclusion

The *paranda*, once a beloved adornment in the hair of Punjabi women, has evolved into a cultural emblem celebrated for its craftsmanship. Over time, contemporary trends have influenced its usage, transitioning it from an everyday accessory to a costume piece worn on special occasions. While artisans and influencers strive to merge old styles with modern trends to preserve their tradition, the craft of *paranda*-making faces challenges in today's fashion landscape. The resurgence of interest in *parandas*, driven by movies, songs, and Punjabi celebrities, has revitalized its appeal among younger age groups. However, the demand for one-time use products and the changing perceptions of quality pose significant challenges to its sustainability. Despite its current popularity, there's concern about the *paranda's* survival in the face of evolving fashion preferences.

Currently, the *paranda* holds onto its status as a costume accessory, but its significance may diminish in the future. As we navigate through changing times, preserving Punjab's rich heritage becomes paramount, ensuring that the *paranda's* timeless legacy endures for generations to come.

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# Folk Religion of the Simla Hill States during the Colonial Period

\*Kmakshi Rathaur

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## Abstract

*This article delves into the folk religion existing in the Simla hill states of Colonial Punjab. The history of socio-religious practices of the hill states is completely different to that of the plains of Punjab. The geography of this region rendered their faith system a protection that they nurtured and in return, it ruled their very existence which is strongly reflected in their customs, traditions and faith. The prevalence of devta worship in the Simla hills and the ways it dictated the lives of the people imparted an intriguing hue to the spectrum of their belief system. Significantly established religions like Hinduism and Buddhism that had long before permeated into this region adjusted to the deep rooted devta worship. This paper traces the process of acculturation between organized religions like Hinduism and Buddhism and indigenous beliefs and practices.*

**Keywords:** Folk Religion, Belief, Legends, Folk-culture, Folklore, Myths, Simla, Hills, Devta, Superstition, Shaman, Godlings, Kali, Mahasu, Princely States, Khash, Kanet.

## Introduction

The hills surrounding Punjab have always been a part of its geography as well as history. In spite of being politically a part of the nineteenth century Lahore Durbar, these hills remained aloof from Punjab's religious traditions. The reason for this seems to have been the landscape of this region. Situated in the Shivalik range of the Western Himalayas these hills were secluded which gave a distinct colour to its society when compared to the plains of Punjab. Between the river Sutlej in the west and River Tons (tributary of Yamuna) in the east lay the region of the Simla hill states. It comprised of 28 big and small principalities before the birth of Himachal Pradesh (Jubbal, Bushahr, Kumarsein, Sirmur, Keonthal, Kahlur, Hindur, Bhaghat, Baghal, Bhajji, Darkoti, Rawingarh, Koti, Ghund, Sangria, Tharoch, Mangal, Bija, Dhami, Kuthar, Mailog and Balsan). Geographically, this area was protected from external interferences and so the socio-religious conditions of the people living here were similar. They shared an interknit belief system and social space. That rendered homogeneity to the socio-religious traditions of the princely states of Simla hills.

Numerous scholarly works have dealt with this region and the customs surrounding their belief system. Mian Goverdhan Singh speaks volumes about the

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social life and the fairs and festivities celebrated by the hill population. In doing so, he opines that the celebrations in this region were directly linked to their heritage that was quite evident when one observes their culture and belief system. In his book *Festivals, Fairs and Customs of Himachal Pradesh*, he speaks of the festivals celebrated in different regions of Himachal. By doing so, he mentions the *Bishu* festival celebrated at the time of Baisakhi, *Rhyali* which was a celebration of greenery at the time of onset of rainy season, another festivity called *Chira* that lasted for days during the *bhadon* (September-October), *Jagra* and also *Shand* organized in honour of the Gods of the region. He also talks about different fairs organized throughout the region that were territory specific and differed in nature. He categorized them into social fairs, trade fairs and seasonal fairs. *Minjarkamela* (festival of rain) of Chamba, *Gugga Naumi* in regions of Kangra, Mandi and Bilaspur was celebrated in September-October, *Chhariyaunkamela* in Sirmaur was also dedicated to Gugga – snake deity, *Dussehra* fair in Kullu and *Nalwari* fair held in Bilaspur was a trade fair that encouraged the sale and purchase of high breed cattle. Another trade fair that the author gives special mention to is the *Lavi* fair which was a symbol of friendly political relations between Tibet and Bushahr state. Mian Goverdhan also dedicated his formulation to the customs prevalent in the hill society. He mentions customs right from the birth to death, however in particular talks at length about the peculiar marriage rituals. *Dhari* was a term used for a form of dowry given by the bridegroom's family to the bride's father as a tradition. This form of marriage was called *reet*. Then there were other forms of matrimonial alliances like *Atta-sattakanata* by which three or more families were bound in a bond of marrying one person to another in a chain-like manner. *Jhajra* was a type of marriage which was devoid of *phas*. In case a girl eloped with a boy then by paying *dhari* to the girl's father by the boy's family, such an alliance was accepted and this form of marriage was termed as *Haar*. In case of divorce a special ceremony was performed in which a stick (*dingi*) was given by the husband to the wife. If she breaks the *dingi* it symbolizes the end of bond between them. However, the marriage is confirmed annulled only after the return of the exact amount paid as *dhari* by the husband at the time of marriage. Widow re-marriage was not a rare phenomenon in the hills and was called *karewa*. He also provides a calendar that refers to the exact time when these celebrations took place and has added pictures taken of hill people and gatherings. These pictures do help a scholar of the present to analyze the change that has taken place since the time it has been captured.

Laxman S. Thakur has dealt with temple and monastery architectures in the Himalayan region. His work titled *Architectural and Sculptural art of Himachal Pradesh: the case study of Hat Koti temples* throws light on the style of temples and statues existing in the deep valley of the region under study. His work is commendable when it comes to the study of architecture.

Chetan Singh in *Constructing the State in the Western Himalayas* has suggested the presence of a dual authority in the region under study. The temporal power co-existed with the spiritual authority. Singh suggests that Rajas of the princely states of Simla hills had a bent towards Hinduism. Therefore, Brahmanism was used as a tool to exert control over the local people who worshipped their indigenous Godlings. He states that there was a mutual respect between the human king and the reigning deity. This harmonious co-existence smoothed the process of legitimizing the temporal rule. The focus of his formulation is on the temporal and spiritual authority.

Another historian, whose works predominantly deal with the history of Western Himalayas, is Mahesh Sharma. He has extensively worked on the socio-religious aspect of this region. His book titled, *Western Himalayan Temple Records: State, Pilgrimage, Ritual and Legality in Chamba* is a detailed analysis of fifty four historical documents. It throws light on the history of the princely state of Himalayan kingdom of Chamba. The earliest set of document mentioned in his book are from the eighteenth century. These records are of a small temple, the Charpat of the Nath ascetics. The historical texts used are mainly in *Tankari* (western Himalayan script). They are categorized by him into five themes: the land grants, documents related to financial management of the temple, royal documents concerning religious celebrations, petitions to the king and a record of religious items. Sharma's book deals with the social and political life in Chamba that brings forth the relationship between the temporal authority and religious shrine by working on the theme of a small princely state situated in the Himalayan region that patronized temple. Charpat is the main focus of his discussion and through it he showed the concurrence of secular beliefs and state religion. In his another work *State, Waterways and Patriarchy: The Western- Himalayan Legend of the Walled-Up Wife* Sharma elaborately discusses the female history of the hills and its underlying concerns by the use of Oral traditions mainly folksongs and folklores. Through this work Sharma brings forth the local tradition of sacrificing a woman every time a waterway was built. The ritual of female sacrifice was an unavoidable mandatory historical convention. He makes use of the term "walled up wife" to highlight the plight of women who lost their life due to the decision made by men in power. Sharma focuses on the strong hold men of this region exerted on their counterpart. He is able to bring out the gender biases that hill women undergo similar to womenfolk in general. Sharma in his work has suggested the inspiration for waterway sacrifices were generally directions given by a deity to a man in his dream, which he would ardently follow as a commandment of that deity. If we look from the psychological perspective, it wouldn't be wrong to say that the control of deities in the hills is strongly reflected through the act of killing one's own family member for the sake of unbound loyalty. This further increases the urge to delve



deeper into the *devta cult* of the hills and the manner by which they controlled various aspects of socio-religious life of people residing here.

This article discusses one such intriguing aspect of the people residing in these hills; their folk religion. The literal meaning of folk religion as defined in the Oxford dictionary of English is “a set of spiritual beliefs and practices particular to a community and not affiliated with any major religion or religious institution.” In the words of Don Yoder, an American folklorist it is “the folk-cultural dimension of religion or the religious dimension of folk-culture”.<sup>1</sup> Yoder has worked on this concept, suggests that the term folk religion is a summation of practices and views among people of a particular society which exists parallel to the official religion. There have been innumerable researches on folk religion of America, Europe, China and Korea. Even in India we find few works that use the term folk religion referring to a unique belief system prevailing in the southern part of the Indian subcontinent. However, this paper will delve into the folk religion of western Himalayan region of Simla hills where in the nineteenth century Hinduism and Buddhism were two major religions that created place within the society of the hills and thrived along with fiercely practiced institution of Godlings (*devta/devi* cult). If we look at the spread of the official religions in the nineteenth century Simla hills, we notice the prevalence of Buddhism only beyond the *Jangi* village of Kinnaur region in Bushahr State, remaining major part of these hills was under the influence of Brahmanism.<sup>2</sup> So, there was ubiquity of both these religions but were not observed in their true sense. The reason for which was local belief system, that fiercely reflected through the undying faith in local deities. The venture of Brahmans and Lamas undoubtedly introduced some changes but those changes were to a great extent ineffectual on indigenous belief system and hence, failed to eliminate allegiance towards the hill deities. Therefore, it seems difficult to indubitably suggest the prevalence of a specific religion in the region under study. This article is an effort to unravel the belief system of this region, which has since long been a part of their existence and has not allowed other religions to overpower it but has rather resulted in a harmonious coexistence. The faith of the hill community in the local *devtas* forms the discussion of this article that will help unravel the different dimensions of the folk religion of Simla hill states.

### **Godlings and their origin**

The local Godlings of the hills were called *devta /devi*, they were an unavoidable part of the identity of the people of this region. This *devta* system was a prerequisite component socially and culturally embedded in the viability of the inhabitants. Each village had its own *devta* and sometimes more than one. All the Gods were not equal in status, some were superior to the others, some were rich and some poor.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it seems that a hierarchy existed between these *devtas*, which is discussed later. How these *devtas* originated is a question of concern that

needs academic attention. There is no single theory of their evolution, as their birth depends on the type of their existence. However, one thing remains constant in all the local folklores, stories and other written sources is the human nature of these Godlings. They were in human form originally but due to the supernatural powers they possessed during their lifetime or after death they rose to being worshipped and feared. Some were deified while they were alive and some posthumously. Powerful Gods like Mahasu seated at Hanol, Shirgul on the peak of Churdhar, Bijat in Sarain (Chopal) were humans with supernatural powers according to folklores and legends of the hills. Such sources state that these were men who possessed extraordinary powers for which they were deified by the hill people.<sup>4</sup>

Then there were some who died a violent death and thereafter, terrorized the people. As such they were appeased and with time they were worshipped. Few examples suggest that some Gods were humans belonging to the *kanet* (hill tribe also referred sometimes as *Khash*), Koli and Brahman castes who later became *devta* of their own caste. Tiru is the *devta* worshipped by the Brahmans. He was a Brahman who went to visit the Raja of his State but his request was ignored and he was ill-treated. In grief Tiru cut off his head. After he committed suicide, Tiru was worshipped by the members of his caste. Deo Chand, *devta* worshipped in Junga State was a *kanet* who is believed to have made his image and built himself a temple while he was alive and was venerated by the people.<sup>5</sup> Certain peculiar customs have also added to the list of Gods in this region like in the case of a place Sarahan, in Bushahr State, there was a tradition to raise a memorial stone for the deceased. Anyone who passed along this structure would add a stone to the heap and tie rag to it. In the course of time such memorials became sacred places and the dead were elevated to the status of *devta* of that place.<sup>6</sup> *Pap* or *newa*, was in local dialect another reason for worshipping the dead. It was generally believed that if a person was mistreated or his share of property was encroached by others; he after his death would trouble and haunt his wrongdoers. To stop the hauntings of the dead, an image of metal was worshipped; this image was called the *newa* or *orch* and in Kanawar referred to as *gurohach*. Sometimes a piece of land was left uncultivated for him; in local dialect referred to as, *sog*. Here a hut was built and his image was worshipped. Thus, it seems that in many cases these *newa* attained the position of a *devta*.<sup>7</sup> The legend of Bhambu Rai corroborates the *pap* theory. He was a Rajput Raja in Kumharsein who was killed and later his evil spirit troubled the residents of that place. The *pap* of Bhambu Rai was appeased by building a temple for him at Shuli village.<sup>8</sup> Whether it was out of respect or fear, the people of the hills believed in the supernatural powers and existence of spirit which in the cases discussed above provide evident exemplary explanation to the concept of worshipping the dead. It seems that human worship was the central feature of folk religion among the hill people. This human worship renders their Godlings human-like behavior. These Gods not only eat, dance, communicate like humans but also

have social bonds and family relations.<sup>9</sup> The famous Mahasu Gods of Simla hills is a family of four brothers worshipped throughout the hills and all the four brothers (Botha Mahasu, Chalda, Bashak and Pawasi) have different territories that they rule, exception is the Chalda Mahasu, who is always on the move and held in high esteem wherever he goes.<sup>10</sup>

Besides these local aboriginal deities there are accounts of the early nineteenth century that suggest the presence of few stray temples of Hindu Gods like Ganesh, Bhawani or Kali.<sup>11</sup> These were comparatively less in number, on the contrary the temples of the local *devta/devi* dominated the hill landscape. It reflects the undying popularity of the indigenous Godlings when compared to the otherwise already existing Brahmanical religion in the Simla hill states. Along with the presence of local divinities and Hindu Gods, there was a popular belief in ophiolatry. Hill dwellers attributed a divine nature to snakes and so the *Nag* or snake worship is said to have widely prevailed in this region. The complete Choochra valley was *Nag* worshippers. Villages like Kandru, Dhali, Dhanal, Ghunda and Baghi of Kumharsein State were also under the influence of *Nagdevta*. The *Nag* of Ghunda in Kumharsein is said to be *dudhdhari* (milk consumer) but sacrifices of goats was practiced in his name.<sup>12</sup> What is fascinating to note is the individualistic identity these hill serpent Gods possessed in contrast to the ophidians worshipped in Hinduism, due to their affiliation with Brahmanical Gods like *Shesh Nag* (Snake of Lord Vishnu) or *Vasuki* (the snake around the neck of Lord Shiva).<sup>13</sup> The presence of *Nag devta* being widely venerated perhaps points towards the existence of pre-brahmanic form of worship, whose remnants are fiercely visible in the religious sentiments of the hill people. The prevalence of female worship in the form of *Thairi*, *Jagah* or Kali has its own significance here. The deities and the spirits that these people worshipped predominantly on the hill tops were believed to be ferocious and hence had to be propitiated. Therefore, sacrificial form of worship was a method to venerate such spirits that were in most places called as Kali. The peak of Nowagarh fort is pointed out by Fraser as one such place which the people feared to visit for *Kali's* wrath.<sup>14</sup> The worship of Goddess *Kali* by the local people was very common. The *Devi* was locally referred to as *Thairi* or *Jagah*. In the region of these hills which were occupied by the *Khund Kanets* (warrior section of the *Kanet/Khash* tribe) there were raised platforms built with stone walls. On such platforms a log was fixed and rags were tied to it. It was believed that before the habitation of the Thangar village in Chopal, Goddess or *Thairi* was already residing there. The ancestors of the present settlers raised the shrine for the local *Thairi* and worshipped her as their village *devi*.<sup>15</sup> A very striking feature of *Thairi* worship in the early time was the absence of any kind of idol, the Goddess/*Thairi* in this region had no mask or statue on the platform to symbolize her, this argument is supported by Ibbetson who writes, "*Idols were almost*

*unknown*” in the shrines of Goddess.<sup>16</sup> As such it seems that worship of *Thair* in particular, perhaps dates back to the pre-brahmanical period.

### **Hierarchy of the Godlings**

There are innumerable Godlings that reign the social space of these hills from time immemorial; that’s the reason why it’s commonly referred to as *Devbhoomi*. There existed an order of hierarchy in the *devta* traditions. It was this organized stratification that formed the very core of the *devta/devi* cult, which regulated their influence and brought order in the socio-cultural life of the people living here. This ranking evolved with respect to the political and economic powers that the Godlings/*devta* held in their region of control. This means that deities in these hills have a specific area of jurisdiction. The expanse of this area of administration decides the magnitude of power a Godling withholds. The line dividing territories of control between various Godlings is rather bleak or flexible, as Godlings often indulge in usurpation and skirmishes to increase their popularity and influence. Pandoi *devta* defeated Nag *devta* in one such fight, occupied his temple and till date resides there.<sup>17</sup> Region of control seems to form a significant part of the spiritual authority of the Godlings. This spatial control decided the rank of a *devta* in the ladder of prestige. According to which, some were revered as Gods of the village, then there were those whose jurisdiction was over a particular *pargana* and some with superior influence exercised their control over a single or number of Princely States of this region.<sup>18</sup> It is important to note that every village had its own set of *devtas*. The Baindra of the Dim village in Kumharsein was solely worshipped by the residents of Dim village. He was exclusively confined to his village. Similarly, Santopia was the God of Dhar village in the Jubbal State. The *pargana devtas* had more than one village under their control like Shari *devta* of Jubbal was a common God of the *pargana* comprising of four neighboring villages. Then there was Shirgul *devta* who was venerated in eighteen *parganas* in the nineteenth century.<sup>19</sup> He was worshipped by all the people irrespective of the clan or caste affiliations. Third category was of the State Gods like Bhima Kali who resided in Sarahan but was worshipped throughout the Bushahr State. *Devi* of Hatkoti was another such Goddess who was worshipped by Jubbal, Bushahr and Ravingarh States. Padoi *devta* was just like Hatkoti Goddess, he was revered by Sangri, Kumharsein and Bhajji States.<sup>20</sup>

A sub category of Gods were the ones who were worshipped in more than one village not falling in the same *pargana* rather in different States altogether. Although such Gods did not attain the status of State or *pargana devta*, yet they were popular in various villages of distinct states and were worshipped by the same name. Nag, Dum, Mahadeo and Mahasu are some examples of this subcategory. In this category of *devta* there are some Godlings that confined themselves to a particular caste. Kot *devta* of Kamun village in Kumharsein State is the God

worshipped by the *Kolis* of this village. He is also worshipped in Kullu from where he migrated to Kumharsein, but is revered by *Koli* caste alone.<sup>21</sup> It can be deduced that people who migrated from one princely state to another (within the Simla hills) brought their God in the new area. Second factor seems to be the popularity of such deities. The powers they possessed of warding off evil and providing protection to the ones who worshipped them might have become a reason for people of other villages to revere them. It was believed that sometimes a particular region would acknowledge a deity when some influential person of that area worshipped that particular God. Like in Kotgarh, Nihal Singh a descendant of the ruling family worshipped Shri Padme. His family worshipped the Goddess who enjoyed high veneration throughout that region. The fame and status of that family popularized Shri Padme among other people.<sup>22</sup> The grading among Godlings of the region into village, *pargana* or state suggests the social, cultural and political influence they had on the people and their lives.

So far we have noticed the existence of a particular order in the hierarchy of Godlings with respect to their territorial control and spiritual influence. Next in discussion is another category of a rather lesser Godlings referred to as *bhor* in the local dialect. A *bhor* is not similar to a *devta*. Rather a *devta* is superior to a *bhor*. *Bhor* acted as his minion, entitled to do his bidding. Whatever might be the rank of the Godling in the hierarchy of power: a *bhor* will always remain subordinate to him. Not all *devtas* have *bhor* and those who have might deploy more than one who serves them. *Devta* Kot of Kullu has no *bhor* whereas Maltu *devta* of Kumharsein state has two *bhors* namely Banka and Banshira, who according to the oral traditions were ghosts before Maltu *devta* subdued them. Also it's interesting to note that *bhor* had caste affiliations that were not rigid, so to say a *bhor* could belong to any caste. The *bhors* of Malendu *devta* of Chibeshi *pargana* belonged to different castes. Jhatak was uch or superior and became the *wazir* of Malendu. As a *wazir* his work was to expel the evil spirits from the bodies of Malendu's worshippers whereas Lata, the second *bhor* originally belonged to *Koli* caste and after his death was venerated by *Kolis*.<sup>23</sup>

### **Hill Shrines and Rituals**

The hierarchy discussed before also decides the type and size of the shrine a hill Godling would represent. There is uniqueness not only in temple architecture but also in the style of representation of Godlings. The house of worship of a *devta* in a small hamlet would usually consist of a heap of stones, called *than*. This pile of stones put together had rags tied to it that symbolized the abode of that village God.<sup>24</sup> Fraser writes "*there is not a teebe, or pinnacle of a hill, that is not topped with a heap of stones.*"<sup>25</sup> In contrast to the place of worship of village *devta*, the *pargana devta* had proper structured temples. These temples were beautified with carved work on the wood. They were built out of stone and wood in combination.

The roofs were curved that sloped on the sides of the square shaped building. The corners of the roofs had pieces of wood hanging that looked like “*bobbins strung beneath the cornice*”.<sup>26</sup> Wood used in the temple was decorated with carvings. Inside the temple resides the *devta/devi*. There seems to be difference in representation of *devta* and *devi*. The *devta* was portrayed by the head and bust only. In time the idol of *devi* out grew itself from log of wood to a complete figure, which was probably due to the Brahmanical influence in the region. She was displayed with four arms that may go up to sixteen in number.<sup>27</sup> A very marvelous idol worth mentioning here is that of goddess Shuwang Chandrika, of Kothi village in Bushahr state which is made of pure gold and is seated in a palanquin.<sup>28</sup>

The Gods and Goddesses of supreme significance like the state *devtas* have large temples which are sometimes multistoried. It is observed that temples of such relevance have carvings of Hindu divinities like Shiva, Ganesha etc. on their temple walls, who are supposedly attendants of that particular temple deity. This combination of Chinese styled temple architecture with embossed Hindu Gods is referred as ‘*strange*’ by Fraser.<sup>29</sup> This seems to be the result of acculturation that occurred when Hinduism was unable to dominate hill religious life, adapted and assimilated in it. The temple of *devi* of Hatkoti was one such specimen of architecture that Fraser elaborates in his travelogue. He suggests that this temple was of great sanctity which was not only evident from the huge structure of the temple but also because when Gurkhas in the early nineteenth century raided this region, they did not touch its treasure, fearing the wrath of Goddess. The temple derived its name from the place where it is located: *Hat*. It was built inside an enclosed area of slated floor. Around the main temple there are number of other shrines one being that of Shiva built in the non-hill style i.e. *Nagara*. In different parts of the hills *Nagara* styled temples existed that with time either crumbled down or were modified as they do not seem to be of local origin. The idol of Goddess Hatkoti is placed inside the main temple which is richly ornamented and the figure of the deity is decorated with gold bangles. Similarly another temple that deserves mention is of Goddess Bhawani at, village Manjee in Kumharsein state. The workmanship and refined carvings of this temple have been elaborately discussed by Fraser. The interior of the temple walls were covered with detailed carvings of the *rakshasa*, who were defeated by the Goddess. In praise of the hill craftsmanship he writes, “*the whole roof is formed of fir wood, is richly cut into flowers and ornaments entirely of Hindoo taste, with a sharpness and precision, yet an ease that does honor to the mountain artist; & considering his tools & materials, it is truly wonderful*”.<sup>30</sup> The neatness in carvings definitely points at the exquisite craftsmanship but at the same time there seems to exist an inclination towards Brahmanical ideology in the workmanship of hill artists, as can be noticed from the monstrous figures in wood carvings of Bhawani temple.

The hill Godlings were worshipped twice or thrice a day. The *mohra /pindi* image of the God was washed and cleaned in the morning with fresh water. This water is considered to be of high religious sanctity. It was a blessing of the *devta* and was used in the process of proving one's honesty. There was a common practice in the hills whereby a man in order to prove his truthfulness would drink this holy water, it was called as *deodhoyapina*. It was a common belief that a person who has committed a crime or is lying in the court of justice of the *devta*, when drinks his sacred water will be punished by the *devta* which in local language was referred to as *devtaka dosh* and so no guilty mind ever dared to consume it fearing the wrath of the *devta*. In this manner it was used to provide justice by fishing out the guilty party. It was the faith of hill dwellers that acted as the foundation of jurisprudence in the Simla hill states.<sup>31</sup> After the cleansing of *devta's* image; it was then decorated with garland of flowers. *Dhoop- batti* was lighted, drums were played and bells were rung in his praise. Worshippers with special requests visited with offerings for the *devta/devi*. These offerings varied according to the economic condition of the worshiper and also on the wish of the God. Prosperous men brought gold or silver ornaments, clothes or money. Others offered grain, fruits and milk. The manner of venerating the Godling might differ in different regions of the hills however, one thing that is absolutely evident is the manner in which these local divinities expressed their presence and communicated with their worshippers. It was through a medium, selected by the *devta* from amongst his people. This person was called a *gur*. The choice of *gur* was not limited to a particular caste/ class affiliation. It solely depended on the will of the *devta*. In the case of depressed castes it's noticed that the *pujari* (temple priest) and *gur* were from the same caste. But in other cases *gur* could belong to any caste or class. The *gur* was medium of the *devta*, through him *devta* communicated with the pleader. This oracle/*gur*, served as his shaman. The *gur* would start the process of establishing a link between himself and the deity by chanting mantras to evoke *devta*. Once the body of the *gur* is in complete possession then in a state of trance the *devta* would foretell success or failure to the pilgrim by offering him rice, he would also discuss the cause of his disciples troubles and provide him directions for redressal.<sup>32</sup>

Sacrificial mode of worship was a regular way to appease the Godlings. Sacrifices were made for almost everything in Simla hills. Fraser suggests of a popular custom in which a goat was sacrificed whenever someone had to cross a high mountain pass. Very often goat or sheep was slaughtered in the temple of the *devta* to venerate him. The loin of the animal was given to the person making the offering and the remaining was distributed among the priests of the temple. Sometimes these priests accepted only the head and liver, rest was given to the offeror. In some cases the sacrifice was buried in the ground. Sacrifices were accepted throughout the year; however there were specific months that were considered highly auspicious. Offerings made in the month of *baisakh*, *bhadon*, or

*magh* for the *devta* and *chet* or *asauj* or a Tuesday for the *devi* were best for sacrificial ceremony. Ibbetson refers to the animal sacrifices as a “universal religious rite” that was performed in almost all ceremonies: weddings, funerals, festivals and harvest season.<sup>33</sup> Apart from sheep and goat, buffaloes were sacrificed to the Lankra *devta* who was worshipped in various regions in the Simla hill states including Kotkhai and Chopal. A very interesting fact about sacrificial offerings was observed in the case of Goddess Kali. Mostly goats were slaughtered in her name except in the case of Kali of depressed castes (*Koli* and *Mochi*) where she was referred to as the lesser Kali or *choti* Kali, and she accepted smaller animals like fowls, pigs, fish and lizards.<sup>34</sup> This suggests that the status of same Goddess (in this case Kali) and the type of offerings she accepted was according to the status of the people who worshipped her.

There was an ancient custom of human sacrifices that continued throughout the nineteenth century until the British government intervened and brought it under control. The custom of human sacrifices as offerings was for *devi* Bhima Kali (Sarahan) and Lankra *devta*. The Kali of Sarahan accepted humans as benefaction openly till 1816. It is believed that the British government opposed this rite, nevertheless there are evidences that support the continuation of this form of sacrifices being secretly practiced as late as 1827.<sup>35</sup> Another very famous ceremony that was celebrated was the *bhunda* rite, it is believed that this ritual originated in the Bushahr state and was performed by the *Parsrami* Brahmans. This rite spread to other regions in the hills when *Parsrami* Brahmans migrated and settled in new areas. The *bhunda* sacrifice that was originally conducted for *Pars Ram* with time was continued in honor of other deities across the hills. Contemporary sources especially of the second decade of the nineteenth century suggest that in this rite a man from the *bheda* tribe (menial tribe of the hills that participated in festivals and rituals) would be selected to perform it. The allegiance towards the deity was so strong that sometimes a quarrel would occur if one offered himself in the place of another.<sup>36</sup> Contemporary colonial sources misinterpret it as a human sacrificial ceremony. But when studied carefully it seems to be less of a sacrifice and more of a traditional display of faith in the hill Godlings. As not in all cases it would result in the death of the *bheda* man involved in performing it. During the *Bhunda* ceremony a *bheda* man would slide down a rope which was five to six yard long, in some cases it would result in an accidental death by falling off from a cliff during the slide. In such a scenario his sacrifice would be honored by the people attending the ceremony and the *devta* for whom it was performed. However, if the man survived and landed from the slide unharmed he would be greeted with loud hoots of merriment and presented with valuable gifts like jewelry, money and clothes. Sources suggest that the last *bhunda* continued till the early years of twentieth century. When the British administration took strict measures against it, then a man



was replaced by goat for sacrifice. The last death recorded due to *bhunda* was at Nirmand, a village in Bushahr in the year 1874.<sup>37</sup>

## Beliefs

The rituals and customs of the highlanders have already spoken at length regarding the faith in the *devta* tradition. So it wouldn't be wrong to suggest that the local belief in the Gods and Goddesses was impregnable in the nineteenth century. Life of the hill dwellers revolved around their deity. Emerson in this context had pointed out that, "*where a Jat would discuss the prospects of harvest, a Kanet will talk about the adventures of his God.*"<sup>38</sup> This means that the interests of a farmer of Punjab differed to that of Simla hill states, where the latter's world solely revolved around his *devta*. These local Godlings had an almost absolute control over the socio-cultural life of the people. Through which they impregnated their day to day activities. Their *devta* played many roles; he was their protector, doctor, mentor, and court of justice. The social life of inhabitants of the hills was incomplete without the inclusion of their deity. Even in the region of Simla hills where Buddhism had a grip (beyond the Jangi village in Kanawar), people consulted a Lama for nearly everything from sowing, ploughing to performing hawan.<sup>39</sup> Contemporary sources suggest that in Kanawar every village and *pargana* had its own local deities just like rest parts of Simla hill states. This means that the belief in the *devta* cult was very much similar in Kanawar to other regions; the only difference was that in Kanawar parallel to belief in *devta* one notices the influence of Buddhism which didn't receive absolute acceptance like Brahmanism in the rest part of Simla hills lying south to princely state of Bushahr.<sup>40</sup>

This strong affiliation towards the local Godlings that overpowered the influence of organized religions was depicted by regular customs of the hill people. There were numerous local customs but one worth mentioning is the oath ceremony. There existed a tradition that for a person to prove his/her honesty they had to take an oath which was a very important part of life in the hills.<sup>41</sup> An oath was administered in the temple of their deity either by touching the image of God or by throwing a pebble towards it. In case the person performing the oath is lying or doesn't stand by his/her words, then it would be catastrophic for him/her or his/her family members. There were many ways of conducting an oath but out of all the oaths, *taga tor* is considered one holding the highest sanctity and mostly people refrain from performing it fearing the catastrophic consequences if they failed to perform it correctly. The person who took this oath was asked to break the red thread tied around the cow's neck. The one performing the oath knows the dire consequences of perjury while breaking the thread. Similarly the process of adopting a child was complete only when performed in the presence of the deity. The validity to this ceremony is given by the Godling in his temple. When someone wants to adopt a child he goes to the temple breaks a *dingi* (wooden stick) and makes

solemn promise to look after the child. A fee called *bishti* is given to the priest of the temple and that is how the adoption process is completed.<sup>42</sup> Such traditions were a significant part of their daily life. Their customs closely bound them to their beliefs and strengthened their affinity with the Godlings.

Fraser states that superstition comes naturally to the people of the highlands. He suggests that someone who takes a fancy in the mysterious beliefs of these people will find gratification after visiting this land. There are numerous beliefs or as some might prefer the term superstitions, which dominate the life of people here. Some myths are related to agriculture, like if yield of a particular season is less than expected then it is believed that the difference was appropriated by the spirit of the fields, locally called as *dag*. In the fields of corn if a farmer notices two ears of corn growing on the same plant then he must consume it quietly without sharing the news with anyone else. If he has talked to someone about it, then in that case the ill effects of this bad omen could be neutralized by sacrificing a goat. At the time of harvest, hill Godlings were worshipped and sacrifice of animals were made for a better harvest. A portion of crop produced was set aside as an offering to the Godlings in gratitude. The hill population believed in the ill effects of an evil eye. This in their belief not only effected humans but also domestic animals. If the health of an animal deteriorated it was believed to be the work of a person possessing an evil eye. In order to end this dust was thrown over them. Similarly to ward off effects of evil eye from the agricultural fields effecting the crop production, farmers here would fix a pole tied to a bone or animal skin. If a snake is killed while ploughing the field, then one must forsake the plough, until it is purified.<sup>43</sup>

Then there were local beliefs related to houses as well. It is said that if a snake enters the upper-storey of the house it should not be driven out of the door but by pulling down the roof of the house. A goat is sacrificed to wave off the ominous effects in the house if an owl or a vulture sits on its roof.<sup>44</sup> Yawning with open mouth was considered harmful for the person as a spirit might enter his body through it. If someone is restless and acts unlike himself at night but becomes normal in the daytime it is suspected that he might be possessed by a spirit or ghost.<sup>45</sup> A possessed person would seek help from magicians, who protect the people by providing charms. A magician did not belong to some particular caste, anyone who learned the art could become one.<sup>46</sup> Magicians were approached not only to cure but also to cast spell on someone. These beliefs that dominated the way of living of the highlanders is highly suggestive of a society that possessed strong belief in supernatural and superstitions. For an outsider they might seem to be superstitions but for the people residing in these hills, it was their way of living which they fiercely believed in. By now it is quite evident that people of the Simla hills were surrounded by intriguing customs and stout beliefs that were a reflection of the folk religion of Simla hill states dominating the greater part of colonial

period. It prevailed due to the faithful dependence on the local Godlings who were venerated with much zest by the people residing here.

### **Conclusion**

The entire region of Simla hill states primarily manifests a deep inclination towards unique folk religion which predominantly comprised of the *devta* cult, while simultaneously exhibiting some aspects of either of the two official religions (Hinduism and Buddhism), that permeated these hills from the adjoining plains. The period in which these local deities were deified is rather unknown to scholars however, what is worth noticing is its ability to self-preserve and show pliability in accommodating other religions without losing its essence and control over the hill population. People here were extremely loyal to their *devta*, who was held in the same position as their king and sometimes even higher. For them he was their ruler, protector, healer, judge and the controller of their lives. From the minutest custom to their biggest celebration one notices the inclusion of the local Godlings and the fierce obedience of the hill population. The day to day conundrums of the local people of the Simla hill states was occupied by myriad shades of rituals, customs, traditions and rites that formed an integral part of their social structure and undying symbol of their legacy and identity, that they have protected since ages and continue to do so even today.

## APPENDIX\*

### Bushahr State

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village
1.	Bhima Kali	Sarahan
2.	Mahasu	Shekal
3.	Pabasi	Chapari
4.	Panch Nag	Jangleka, Devdi, Tangnu Pakha Goshakwar
5.	Chasralu	Gosakvari
6.	Deva Sheladesh	Shiladesh
7.	Nag	Khabal
8.	Pubasi	Rohal
9.	Narain	Jabal
10.	Maha deva	Pujali
11.	Deva	Jakhnoti
12.	Khantu	Devi Dhar and Ranol
13.	Bakralu	Dalgaon and Rohru
14.	Baindra	Bachhonchi
15.	Meshar	Pujarli
16.	Nag	Pujarli
17.	Lodar	Pujarli
18.	Narainu	Narain
19.	Dholu	Karasa
20.	Shalu	Melthi
21.	Nageshar	Jharag
22.	Devi Durga	Shil
23.	Mahasu	Mandhol
24.	Devi Durga Hat	HatKoti (Jubbal and Rawin)
25.	Kharanu	Kharahau
26.	Palthan	Sholi
27.	Khanasi	Barkal
28.	Kaleda	Kaleda
29.	Mangleshar	Dwara
30.	LachhmiNarain	Kumsu, Pat
31.	Khantu	Majhali
32.	Deva Khokhi	Darkali
33.	Devi Ji	Munush
34.	Kangleshar	Deothi
35.	Nag	Kim
36.	ChhariGandri	Kareri
37.	Jakh	Racholi

38.	GasDev	Gas
39.	Basheru	Basherah
40.	Narain	Kinu
41.	LachmiNarain	Manjheoli
42.	Jhangru	Manjgaon
43.	Nag	Navaru, Bari
44.	Devi	Taranda
45.	Maheshwar	Songra
46.	Okha	Nachar
47.	Durga	Kamba
48.	MahaRudr	Kiao
49.	Nag	Baranda
50.	Jal	Sarpara
51.	Nag	Baranda
52.	Maheshwar	Bhaba, Chagaon
53.	BadriNath	Kamru
54.	Chandika	Kothi
55.	Thakur Dwara	Naising
56.	Raghu NathJi	Sarahan
57.	Nar Singh	Rampur
58.	Balram	Larsa, Shingla, Dansa, Shaneri, Nirat, Nandla and Torsa

#### **Balsan State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Devi Mansa	Ghorna
2.	Kadhasan	Deothi
3.	Rai re Mole	Kadharan
4.	Cheoli	Shela
5.	Chitra	Chandni
6.	Nag	Pal
7.	Maheshwar	Mahasu
8.	Kadasan	Tali
9.	Bageshar	Bageshar
10.	Nag	Kathori
11.	Gon	Bakrari
12.	Nainon	Devti

**Rawin and Keonthal State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Banar	Sharachli
2.	Mahasu	Hanol

**Punar, Keonthal State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Nigahu	Jaili
2.	Baneshar	Chohag

**Jubbal State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Banar	Sharachli
2.	Mahasu	Hanol
3.	Shirgul	Sarahan
4.	RathiraBanar	Barbal
5.	Santopia	Dhar
6.	Shari	Shari
7.	Devi Pidi	Jubbal
8.	Devi Durga	Hatkoti
9.	Rihatna	Thalog
10.	Gona	Bodhna
11.	Devi Jagrasan	Pujarli
12.	Kanera	Pujarli
13.	Devi Dundi	Dhabas
14.	Dum	Bhot

**Tharoch State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Mahasu	Poriya
2.	Maheshwar	Mashrao
3.	Mahasu	Hanol

**Sangri State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Than	Sawau
2.	Tawansi	Baragaon

**Theog State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Banthia	Chikhur, Janog
2.	Jimpru	Padrog
3.	Mahasu	Gajyari

**Ghond State**

Serial No.	Reigning Deity	Village of God
1.	Grehn	Deoti (Shila territory)
2.	Shilgur	Ghund (Prala territory)
3.	Thakurdwara	Ghund

\*Source: *Punjab District Gazetteer*, Simla District, VIII A, Lahore, 1904, pp. 36-39.

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# Agrarian Issues of Punjab in Visual Arts : Some Reflections

\*Dr Anantdeep Grewal

## Abstract

Punjab and its culture are deeply intertwined with agriculture. The state is often referred to as the 'Granary of India' or the 'Breadbasket of India' due to its significant contribution to the nation's food production (see Fig. 1<sup>1</sup>). The rural culture of Punjab is a fundamental aspect of its identity, art, traditions, festivals, and way of life. The strong connection between the people of Punjab and the land they cultivate has been a defining feature of the region for centuries. The reflection of agriculture in the art of the Punjab region is a significant and enduring theme. Artists from Punjab, both historical and contemporary, often draw inspiration from the agrarian landscape, rural life, and the deep connection between the people and the land. Many artists from the region use various mediums, including painting, photography, videography, sculpture, and installations, to engage with agricultural and rural subjects. While there may not be an extensive list of visual artists exclusively focusing on Punjab-related issues but they have addressed socio-political, cultural, and environmental aspects of the region in their work. It's worth noting that many artists may touch upon Punjab-related issues as part of their broader exploration of social, cultural, and political themes in India. In this paper, the focus will primarily remain on the contemporary issues related to farming and farmers of Punjab as viewed through the lens of art. The exploration will be limited to the works of contemporary artists hailing from the region, Manjot Kaur, and artist duo Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra. Their pursuit of the present condition of Punjab's farming and farmers has brought into light various issues, which are seldom discussed in the context of Punjab and it inspires other artists from various fields to take up these matters as well in their work.

2.5 (b): Wheat: Area, Production and Yield during 2020-21 and 2021-22 in major Producing States alongwith coverage under Irrigation

State	2021-22#					2020-21					Area Under Irrigation(%) 2019-20*
	Area	% to	Production	% to	Yield	Area	% to	Production	% to	Yield	
	All - India	All - India	All - India	All - India	All - India	All - India	All - India	All - India	All - India	All - India	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Uttar Pradesh	9.42	30.92	33.95	31.77	3604	9.85	31.65	35.51	32.40	3604	98.61
Madhya Pradesh	6.50	21.33	22.42	20.98	3449	6.08	19.54	18.18	16.59	2989	97.21
Punjab	3.52	11.57	14.82	13.87	4206	3.53	11.34	17.19	15.68	4868	99.07
Haryana	2.30	7.56	10.45	9.78	4533	2.56	8.24	12.39	11.31	4834	99.69
Rajasthan	2.58	8.47	9.48	8.88	3676	3.00	9.64	11.04	10.07	3676	99.38
Bihar	2.24	7.35	6.22	5.83	2780	2.22	7.14	6.15	5.61	2767	95.60
Gujarat	1.04	3.41	3.33	3.12	3206	1.02	3.27	3.26	2.97	3205	97.10
Maharashtra	1.17	3.83	2.47	2.32	2117	1.13	3.62	2.07	1.89	1839	73.89
Others	1.69	5.56	3.69	3.46	2180	1.73	5.55	3.80	3.47	2200	-
<b>All India</b>	<b>30.47</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>106.84</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3507</b>	<b>31.13</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>109.59</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3521</b>	<b>95.76</b>

Source : E&S Division, DA&FW

Note: States have been arranged in descending order of percentage share of production during 2021-22.

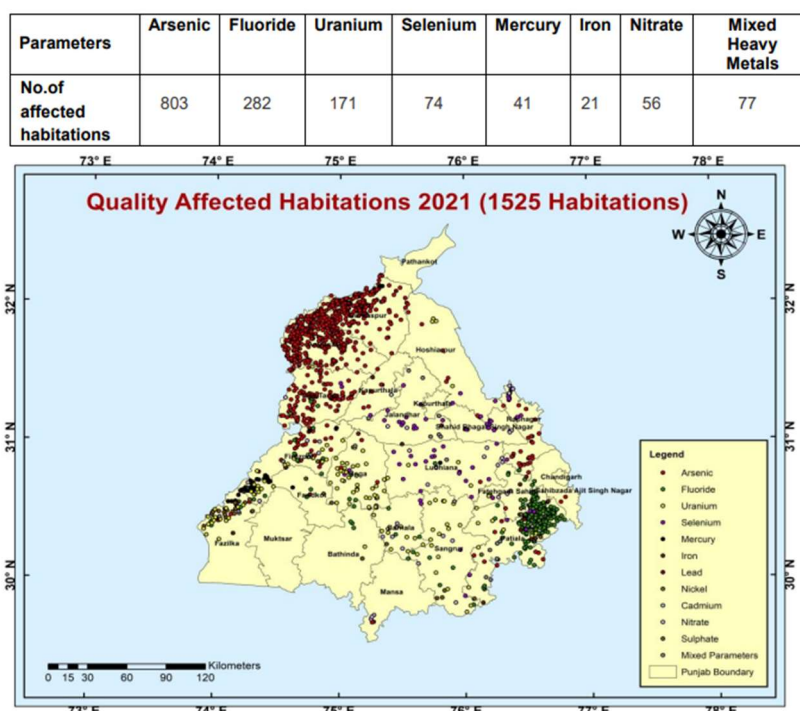
# Fourth Advance Estimates.

\*-Provisional

**Fig. 1 Table of Wheat production for the years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 in major states**

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Punjab has had a rich cultural heritage since antiquity, as seen in various archaeological remains of the Indus Valley Civilization and Buddhist sites spread around the region. However, in contemporary times, Punjab (India) is associated more with its rural and agrarian culture, seen in its music, cinema, and also visual arts. Traditionally artists of the Punjab have focused more on Punjab's religious imagery and Sikh history as seen in the murals of various Gurdwaras<sup>2</sup> and monuments.<sup>3</sup> The twentieth-century artist, Sobha Singh captured the spirituality of the Sikh faith which is embedded in the culture of the region.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand artists like Kirpal Singh focused more on Sikh history and its visual presentation in academic style of paintings.<sup>5</sup> Later on some of the eminent artists like Arpana Caur<sup>6</sup> and Manjeet Bawa<sup>7</sup> among others, showed concern in their paintings over the 1984 Delhi riots victims. Various artists in the past century have reacted to the socio-political atmosphere of the time. However, in the current times, Punjab faces pressing issues, especially related to the environment, economy, and migration and some contemporary artists respond to these in their works. In recent times, contamination of groundwater in the state and overuse of pesticides in farming have become a concerning matter and their effect shows an alarming rise in health problems. Over about fifty years the use of pesticide-treated areas in Punjab for various crops like paddy, wheat, and cotton has grown comparatively. Analysing various crops, it was observed that the percentage of land treated with pesticides is highest for cotton (98.4%), followed by sugarcane (96.3%), paddy (93.6%), and wheat (91.7%). Conversely, the lowest percentage is recorded for maize crops (71.1%).<sup>8</sup> This has led to contamination of groundwater. Both these factors have contributed to the deterioration of health among residents of Punjab. Manjot Kaur and artist duo Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra have recognised such issues regarding farming practices in Punjab and they delve into these issues and explore them in their works.



**Fig. 2 Contamination of groundwater in Punjab<sup>9</sup>**

### Environmental activism in art

Art has proven to be a powerful tool for activism, as it can convey complex messages, provoke emotions, and inspire change. It has a great potential to make positive changes, when used in environmental and social activism as well. Environmental concerns in visual arts refer to the exploration and representation of issues related to the environment, sustainability, and the impact of human activities on the natural world. Artists often use their creative expressions to raise awareness, provoke thought, and inspire action regarding environmental issues. Artists often use their creativity to shed light on various issues related to agriculture. Many Indian artists have used their creative talents as a tool for environmental activism, using various forms of art to raise awareness about pressing environmental issues and advocate for sustainable practices. With the changing times, artists around the world have been using various contemporary mediums to give expression to their works. Indian artists, like Chandra Bhattacharjee, Gigi Scaria, Manjot Kaur, Thukral and Tagra, Ravi Agarwal, and Vibha Galhotra, too have caught on with these new trends and joined the global artistic community not only in the selection of their subject matter but also in their mediums. Although many Indian artists have worked in this regard, however, in this paper, I will be essentially focusing on

Manjot Kaur and Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra who all are contemporary artists of India. Incidentally, Manjot and Jiten are both alumni of the Government College of Arts, Chandigarh, and have spent their student days in a city known for its greenery and is home to Rock Garden, an artistic venture that is created by the late Nek Chand with recycled waste material, which makes this Garden an iconic example of sustainable art.



**Fig. 4 Manjot Kaur, “Farming as Industry”, Medium: Crops growing on Land, Land Art, Size : 55 x 60 feet, Nov, 2016, Paradsingha (Village) in the interior of Madhya Pradesh<sup>11</sup>**

### **Manjot Kaur**

Manjot Kaur has a unique individual style of advocating for environmental and agrarian issues by using contemporary mediums. Although she opted for a Master of Fine Arts in painting, which she completed in 2012 from the Government College of Arts, Chandigarh,<sup>10</sup> she started to incorporate other mediums as well in her works. Manjot’s work contributes to a broader dialogue about the interconnectedness of human activity, the environment, and sustainable agriculture practices. Manjot Kaur comes from Ludhiana (Punjab) and she has observed the agrarian culture of the state very closely. Her understanding of various issues related to the farming industry, especially in Punjab, time and again emerges in her



work. Through these visual representations, the artist contributes to public awareness and discourse on agricultural issues, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding food production, distribution, and sustainability.

In 2016, Manjot initiated a site-specific Land Art project titled 'Farming as Industry'. This endeavour utilized land as her canvas and crops as her medium, with a focus on the escalating use of pesticides and genetically modified crops in agriculture. This prevalent trend poses significant health risks for both consumers and farmers alike. Farmers, residing amidst toxic atmospheres, handle harmful chemicals and consume water contaminated with pesticides, leading to severe health issues. Additionally, the financial burden imposed by genetically modified seeds and pesticides often drives farmers into insurmountable debt, tragically resulting in suicides. Manjot advocates for the adoption of indigenous seeds in farming practices. Indian Seeds not only alleviate the financial strain on farmers by enabling them to cultivate their own seeds but also reduce pesticide usage, as indigenous crops exhibit greater resilience to pests. The medium employed in this artwork is Land Art, a sustainable form utilizing locally available materials such as plants, stones, twigs, and other natural resources. In this project, crops were sown in the field by delineating the picture area with a cotton rope looped around small bamboo sticks. Two distinct types of organic seeds, one red and the other green, were utilized to imbue texture into the artwork. The addition of hay-straw introduced a yellow hue. When viewed from above, the entire composition resembled an industrial image. The artwork gradually took shape as the plants began to grow, embodying the essence of 'Farming as Industry'.

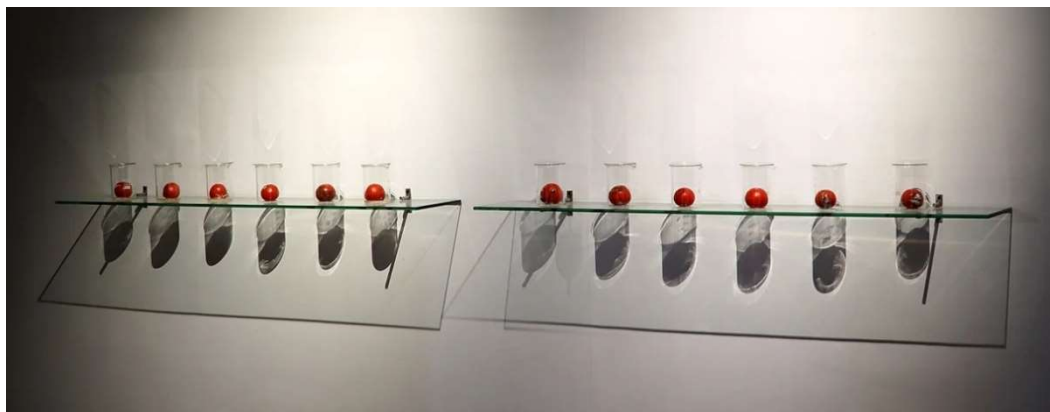


**Fig. 5 Manjot Kaur, Sustaining Collapse, 2018, Chinese ink and watercolor on wasli paper and repurposed wood, 198 x 23 x 14 in | 503 x 59 x 36 cm<sup>12</sup>**

Yet another artwork 'Sustaining Collapse', 2018, of Manjot highlights the pervasive thick black smog prevalent in Northern India, a consequence of the burning of crop

stubble resulting from intensive agricultural practices. This environmental phenomenon serves as a stark reminder of the unintended consequences stemming from the policies implemented during the Green Revolution of the 1960s and 70s in India. The artwork adopts a graphic book style, drawing inspiration from Pahari miniature paintings. It presents an imaginative landscape with a distorted perspective, telling the tale of a fragile environmental system under threat from unchecked exploitation. The exhibition navigates a dual path, drawing connections between Italy and India, yet its overarching vision seeks to encompass a broader comprehension of the contemporary environmental challenges intertwined with climate change, the capitalist system, and globalization. The base of the artwork resembles a typical household shelf used to showcase artifacts; its surface is coated in a deep black hue. Serving also as an emergency walkway, the pedestal assumes a dual function within the installation.

‘Cold Storage’ is an installation-based artwork created in 2019 that offers commentary on the challenges surrounding the production, storage, and distribution of crops. Here Manjot has placed several tomatoes in glass containers, in different stages of rotting, placed on a glass shelf. By specifically focusing on tomatoes, it symbolizes the broader issue of food abundance that fails to reach everyone due to prevailing capitalist and consumerist ideologies. Such practices increase the price of the produce and put financial burden on common people which also includes farmers. Manjot has an understanding of the problems faced by the farmers and rural people of Punjab and by using the modern medium of art and her innate aesthetical proficiency in her craft, she is able to bring these issues to the fore.



**Fig. 6 Manjot Kaur, Cold Storage | 2019, Beakers, watch glass, glass shelves and tomatoes, 102 x 12 x 8 in | 259 x 30.5 x 20 cm<sup>13</sup>**

#### **Thukral & Tagra**

Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra are another contemporary artist duo who use modern mediums like installation, videography, games, photography, and other such mediums to engage their viewers and to express themselves. Although they

work from Delhi and it's only been recently that their attention has been captured by farmers and their issues in Punjab. We see a shift in their work since the early 2010s towards this northern state. As a matter of fact, Jiten hails from Jalandhar. As natives of Punjab, Thukral and Tagra delve into their personal histories and memories to address the socio-cultural transformations most evident in their home state. Shifts in family dynamics, aspirations for 'escape' through migration, and evolving middle-class aspirations have consistently featured in their artistic endeavours. Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi organised an exhibition titled 'Farmer as Wrestler' in 2019, during the ongoing Farmers' Protest in Punjab during the time. This exhibition continues the artists' use of 'games' as a means to explore complex issues through interactive and playful methods. Their approach aims to evoke nostalgia and comfort in viewers while also challenging the status quo. "Farmer as Wrestler" confronts the pressing agrarian crisis afflicting farmers in India today. Across generations, issues such as land divisions, climate change, political manoeuvring, legal enforcement shortcomings, and the pervasive lack of formal education in rural areas have profoundly impacted the lives and livelihoods of Indian farmers. Employing the metaphor of sport and competition, the exhibition draws parallels to the practice of kushti—a traditional Indian wrestling form popular among rural communities. The wrestling match symbolizes the physical and mental struggles, endurance, and resilience inherent in the farmer's battle against the agrarian crisis.



**Fig. 7 Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra at their exhibition 'Farmer as Wrestler', 2019<sup>14</sup>**

The exhibition, 'Farmer as Wrestler,' underscores this fundamental aspect of the farmer's predicament: a life teetering on the edge. The duo has incorporated various mediums like paintings and certain drawings in ink on legal papers which depicts the Swaminathan Commission Report as a saviour and in service of the farmers. It



also includes sculptures, installation, and a twenty-three-minute-long documentary on Kisan Mukti Morcha 29-30<sup>th</sup> November made in 2018.<sup>15</sup>



**Fig. 8 Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra, 'Aftermath', 2023<sup>16</sup>**

In 2023 Thukral and Tagra created 'Aftermath' an installation with ink, drawings on paper, and a spray machine, tarpaulin. The work was displayed in 2023 at Kiran Nadar Museum of Art as part of the exhibition 'Prussian Blue: A Serendipitous Colour that Altered the Trajectory of Art'. The exhibition was curated by Dr Arshiya Lokhandwala.<sup>17</sup> This work explores the harsh reality of India's agricultural society. In this work the artists' affiliation with the colour blue originates from the ink applied to paper—a fundamental medium for recording knowledge, preserving history, and facilitating communication. Their connection to ink stems from their examination of the hardships endured by farmers in 2010. The artists informed that during the research, they were deeply moved by the handwritten ledgers utilized to document deaths and capture first hand testimonies in rural villages. These records stood as the sole testament to the toll of lives lost. A staggering statistic from Oxfam revealed a harsh reality: In India's agricultural society, a farmer succumbs to fatal accidents every 40 minutes. Inspired by this chilling statistic, the artists incorporate ink into a pesticide container, triggering periodic sprays at 40-minute intervals. The presence of the pigment symbolizes the irrevocable loss, mirroring the uncontrolled nature of indiscriminate pesticide use

across the ten life-size paper drawings depicting the struggles of farmers in their fields.<sup>18</sup>

This evolving blue ink hue serves as a dynamic canvas, reflecting the rhythm of labour and life throughout the exhibition's four-month duration. When inverted, blue transforms into yellow—a stark contrast symbolizing the need for change. By juxtaposing these two colours and their symbolic meanings, the installation prompts contemplation on the imperative for reassessment and transformation in this ever-evolving world.

## **Conclusion**

Today Punjab is facing an environmental crisis in the form of contamination of groundwater and air pollution due to stubble burning of crops which, incidentally, is also affecting farmer's health and income. Overuse of pesticides is a pressing issue in the farming sector of Punjab and our contemporary artists are not oblivious to this fact. However, we find a very limited number of artists who have taken up the agriculture sector and its problems in their works. Farmers of North India made themselves visible in 2019 when they flocked to the borders of Delhi and it was during their protest that many artists interacted with them and made an effort to understand the agrarian society of the country. Nevertheless, the focus of art on issues of rural India, especially in Punjab, is limited. Yet, among a couple of artists connected to Punjab, we see an effort to embrace this part of the state as well. Manjot Kaur and Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra are among those few artists. Manjot, and Thukral and Tagra have incorporated environmental and social activism in their art. They use modern mediums like Land Art, installations, video and New-Media along with traditional mediums like painting, drawing, and sculpture to express their creativity, although they are not limited to any one medium. Experimentation is their strong feature. However, their take on environmental concerns is shaped by their individual experiences. Manjot, although includes various environmental issues in her work, shows more concern with modern agrarian culture which in her eyes is harming the environment and in the process the farmers as well. She seems to have a practical approach and suggests solutions. On the other hand, Thukral and Tagra emotionally appeal to the viewers by focussing on the plight of the farmers. They too give solutions by suggesting steps to be taken by the government. If wholistically viewed the art of these artists, through the use of their mediums, scale, and artistic approach has taken these otherwise local issues to global audiences. Their work in this area is bound to attract the attention of other artists in the area, and new artists may emerge with a focus on Punjab-related concerns over time.

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10. Manjot Kaur's information is taken from her official website on 12/2/24. <https://www.kaurmanjot.com/bio>
11. The photograph and information about the artwork are taken from Manjot Kaur's official website with her permission on 12/2/24.<https://www.kaurmanjot.com/farming-as-industry>
12. The photograph and information about the artwork are taken from Manjot Kaur's official website with her permission on 12/2/24.<https://www.kaurmanjot.com/sustaining-collapse>
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# Religion and Environmental Ethics: Revisiting Guru Nanak's Teachings On Environmental Protection

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## Abstract

*This paper tries to emphasize the role of religion in the generation of environmental consciousness amongst the masses. It is because all faiths around the world share a common ethic based on harmony with nature. Guru Nanak Dev ji, founder of Sikhism, in his writings highlighted the symbiotic relation between nature and God. He was a visionary who included the concept of social responsibility towards the environment in his Gurbani and other writings. The researchers further try to suggest that environmentalism and environmentalists can gain from exploring the use of religion as a strategy for protection of natural resources. By examining the environmental ethics embedded in Guru Nanak's teachings, this paper argues that religion can play a crucial role in enhancing environmental awareness and promoting sustainable practices. It further explores how these teachings have been practically implemented in various contexts by providing few case studies of successful integration of religious principles in environmental initiatives. The crux of the article is that religion can still act as a medium for connecting humans to nature.*

## Introduction

Religion has historically served as a fundamental institution governing societal dynamics. Recently, the interplay between religion and environmental ethics has become a critical area of scholarly inquiry, particularly amid global environmental challenges. Emile Durkheim<sup>1</sup> posited that religious beliefs mirror a society's collective consciousness, underscoring the role of religion in shaping values, including those related to nature. Humanity's evolving appreciation for nature has amplified concerns for conserving natural resources, a theme central to many religious doctrines, which emphasize living harmoniously with nature and acting as environmental stewards. This reverence for nature, often manifested in various forms of nature worship, is evident in Indian religious scriptures, which describe practices such as sun worship, veneration of thunder gods, and the sanctity of mountains. Notably, Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism, offers profound insights into the relationship between spirituality and the environment, with his

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teachings in the Guru Granth Sahib providing a vision of environmental consciousness that remains relevant today.

### **Research Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative, interpretative approach to explore how religious doctrines, particularly those of Guru Nanak, inform environmental consciousness. Using secondary data, it conducts a textual analysis of the Guru Granth Sahib, focusing on hymns that elucidate Guru Nanak's views on nature and humanity's ethical responsibilities toward the environment. Case studies, including initiatives like Eco Sikh and Baba Seechewal's river restoration, demonstrate practical applications of religious principles in environmental practices. By synthesizing insights from literature on religious environmentalism, this research situates Guru Nanak's teachings within a broader global context, offering a comprehensive analysis of religion's role in promoting environmental consciousness and sustainable practices.

### **Religion's Influence on Environmental Ethics**

Religion profoundly influences environmental awareness, shaping beliefs, behaviors, and policies across contexts. Many traditions ascribe sacred significance to nature, fostering respect for the environment among followers. For instance, Hinduism personifies the Earth as a goddess, promoting reverence for the natural world, while Christianity's stewardship doctrine emphasizes the moral duty to protect God's creation. Indigenous spiritualities highlight the interconnectedness of life, advocating for holistic environmental approaches. Religious teachings often establish ethical frameworks advocating environmental stewardship, as seen in Islam's concept of "Khalifah," which underscores humanity's role as Earth's custodians. Buddhism's "Right Livelihood" encourages harmony with nature, while Islamic teachings against wastefulness, encapsulated in "Israf," promote conservation.<sup>2</sup>

These ethical tenets are integral to environmental ethics, delineating norms for human interaction with nature. Many religious traditions offer paradigms emphasizing environmental care, such as Hinduism's principle of Ahimsa (non-violence), which advocates minimizing harm to nature, and VasudhaivaKutumbakam (the world is one family), reinforcing life's interconnectedness and urging collective responsibility for Earth.<sup>3</sup>

### **Rituals, Practices, and Educational Roles**

Religious rituals and practices embody sustainable living principles. Jainism's adherence to non-violence extends to all beings, fostering deep environmental respect, while Hindu Yajnas (sacrificial offerings) honor natural elements, reflecting reverence for the natural world. Religious institutions also play a critical

educational role, instilling environmental stewardship values from an early age and shaping attitudes toward ecological issues. Religious communities mobilize collective action for environmental conservation through movements like Christianity's "Green Church" and "Eco-Islam," which inspire sustainable practices and activism. Religious leaders, such as the Vatican's stance on climate change in "Laudato Si'," further influence environmental policy and public discourse.<sup>4</sup>

### **Religious Perspectives on Environmental Concerns**

Religious beliefs often guide human attitudes toward the environment, with many traditions including nature appreciation or worship. Durkheim views animism as an early form of religious life, where life was considered sacred, leading to conservation efforts. Totemism evolved from animism, symbolizing the collective consciousness of a group and preserving sacred plants and animals. Christianity teaches that humanity, as part of God's creation, must protect biodiversity. Islam's concept of "Calipha" positions humans as Earth's trustees, responsible for safeguarding its diversity. Similarly, the Baha'i faith sees nature's diversity as a reflection of God, and Buddhism emphasizes the interconnectedness of all existence.

### **Environmental Ethics in Sikhism**

Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak, offers a distinctive and modern perspective on environmental ethics, deeply embedded in its scriptures and teachings. The Guru Granth Sahib emphasizes the sacredness of nature and the moral responsibility of humans to protect and preserve the environment. Guru Nanak's hymns advocate for living in harmony with nature, recognizing the interconnectedness of all life forms, and promoting stewardship over natural resources. This spiritual framework not only encourages Sikhs to engage in sustainable practices but also inspires environmental activism, as evidenced by initiatives like Eco Sikh, which integrates Sikh principles with ecological conservation efforts.

The Gurbani, or sacred scriptures of Sikhism, extensively employs natural phenomena to draw parallels with spiritual teachings, using elements such as animals, plants, seasons, and celestial bodies to illustrate the spiritual journey. Guru Nanak's works, including \*Aarti\* and \*BarahMah\*, reflect his profound connection with nature and his belief in its integral role in spiritual growth. By fostering a sense of spiritual responsibility towards the environment, Sikhism contributes significantly to the broader discourse on religious environmentalism.<sup>5</sup>

The influence of religion on environmental consciousness is multifaceted, encompassing theological teachings, ethical guidelines, community mobilization, and educational efforts. Understanding religious perspectives, like those in Sikhism, is essential for recognizing how faith-based teachings can promote

sustainable practices and address global environmental challenges. As these challenges intensify, the role of religion in fostering ecological stewardship becomes increasingly significant, offering valuable insights and approaches for building a more sustainable future.

By integrating religious principles with contemporary environmental practices, faith communities, including Sikhs, can play a pivotal role in nurturing a more sustainable and ecologically responsible world. Sikhism's emphasis on the sacredness of nature and its moral imperatives for environmental stewardship highlight the potential of religious teachings to inspire and guide sustainable living, contributing to global efforts in environmental conservation and sustainability.

Gurbani is mostly laid out in Ragas. Two of the important raags, namely Basantraag for spring and Malharraag for rain show the musical measures and their connection with the seasons or the time of day/night. Parallels are drawn between objects of nature with different states and stages of man in the quest for union with God. Some more examples are;

Sagal banasapat meh baisantar sagal dhooDh meh ghee-aa ||  
uooch neech meh jot samaanee ghat ghat maaDha-o jee-aa ||1||<sup>6</sup>

which means all vegetation has fire and all milk has butter inherent in it; similarly, every person, high or low, has the Divine light, the Master pervades the body of every living creature.

Another example is

fal kaaran foolee banarai ||  
fal laagaa tab fool bilai ||  
giaanai kaaran karam abhiaas ||  
giaan bhiaa the karam meh naas||3||<sup>7</sup>

which means the fruit tree first forms the flower and then the fruit; once the fruit forms, the flower vanishes; Similarly, people engage in rituals to know the Creator; but once true knowledge is obtained the Creator experienced within rituals are no longer necessary.

### **Guru Nanak and Prakarti.**

Guru Nanak showed a spiritual path to the world by drawing a lot of analogies with nature. Through his preaching he showed that man has an unbreakable relationship with nature. He believed that God is present in every particle of nature. So whenever he imagined nature, he could visualize God.

Several times in his baani, he glorified nature and showed appreciation for every entity present in nature. His famous contributions viz Aarti, BarahMah and several lines in Japaji show how intensely he believed that worship of nature can lead us to spiritual progress. In the present article, we have given some of the references to explain the relation of spiritual practices with nature.

In Japaji Sahib Guru Nanak wrote

Pavan guroo paanee pitaa maataa dharat mahat ||  
Dhivas raat dhui dhaiee dhaiaa khelai sagal jagat ||  
cha(n)giaaiecaa buriaaiecaa vaachai dharam hadhoor ||  
karamee aapo aapanee ke neRai ke dhoor ||  
jinee naam dhiaaiaa ge masakat ghaal ||  
naanak te much ujale ketee chhuTee naal ||1||<sup>8</sup>

In the above lines, Guru Nanak considers Air, Water and Earth as most important in life. He equates Air as the Guru, Water as the Father, and Earth as the Great Mother. Importance of Guru, father and mother is well established in the life of the individuals. These three are the basic necessities of life. As air is necessary to keep a man alive, Guru is considered necessary to give spiritual birth to an individual. Water has been equated with Father, for the protection of life on the earth. Similarly, mother and earth have been used synonymous with fertility.

When Guru Nanak gazes at the beauty of nature, he gets into the feeling of ecstasy and sings that God is present in nature and it has limitless beauty. He salutes to the all creative powers of Almighty which is pervading everywhere.

Balihaaree kudharat vasiaa ||  
teraa a(n)t na jaiee lakhiaa ||1|| rahaau ||<sup>9</sup>

In his famous contribution, Aarti, He draws the parallel to the famous form of worship of various deities by Hindus. Guru Nanak believed that God is present in nature and the sun, moon, stars, mountains, earth, water all are in the state of worship of the Almighty.

gagan mai thaal rav cha(n)dh dheepak bane taarikaa ma(n)ddal janak motee ||  
dhoop malaanalo pavan chavaro kare sagal banarai foola(n)t jotee ||1||  
kaisee aaratee hoi bhavkha(n)ddanaa teree aaratee ||  
anahataa sabadh vaaja(n)t bheree ||1|| rahaau ||<sup>10</sup>



In Aarti, Guru described how the wind appears to them like a chanwar, which swings the divine. Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji seems himself to be doing Ku-ku in the separation of God. He compares his yearning to meet God to the cuckoo's cuckoo.

kokil hovaa a(n)b basaa sahaj sabadh beechaar ||

sahaj subhai meraa sahu milai dharasan roop apaar ||2|| <sup>11</sup>

He appreciates every season. In the Barahmaah Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji describes and appreciates all the seasons. Guru likes the heat in the month of Jaith and Asaar as he enjoys to see the whole nature blooming and happy in the months of Basant and Chetra. He depicts how Bhanwar is humming, the melodious voice of the cuckoo's ku-ku is singing its unique melody

"chet basant bhalaa bhavar suhaavaRe ||

ban foole ma(n)jh baar mai pir ghar baahuRai||

pir ghar nahee aavai dhan kiau such paavai bireh birodh tan chheejai||

kokil a(n)b suhaavee bolai kiau dhukh a(n)k saheejai||

bhavar bhava(n)taa foolee daalee kiau jeevaa mar maae.|| <sup>12</sup>

He describes the season in the month of Chait, stating that spring has arrived, and the bumble bees hum with joy. The beautiful song-bird sings, perched on the mango tree; the bumble bee is buzzing around the flowering branches. Although everything is pleasant in the season, he says that his soul is not happy and yearns for unity with God.

In the month of Sawan The peacock dances with joy after hearing the loud roar of clouds in the month of Sawan and the sound of frogs also seems to be a beautiful melody In the glory of the Lord, the heart of Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji also becomes elated in the month of Sawan: Hearts who love God swell with this sight.

In other places in his *baani*, Guru Nanak tries to explain the state of every God searching soul, giving comparisons and analogies of various animals, insects and other species. Some examples are given as under.

too(n) sun haranaa kaaliaa kee vaaReeaai raataa raam ||

bikh fal meeThaa chaar dhin fir hovai taataa raam ||

fir hoi taataa kharaa maataa naam bin parataape ||

oh jev sair dheh laharee bijul jivai chamake ||

har baajh raakhaa koi naahee soi tujheh bisaariaa ||  
 sach kahai naanak chet re man mareh haranaa kaaliaa ||1||  
 bhavaraa fool bhava(n) tiaa dhukh at bhaaree raam ||  
 mai gur poochhiaa aapanaa saachaa beechaaree raam ||  
 beechaar satigur mujhai poochhiaa bhavar belee raato ||  
 sooraj chaRiaa pi(n)dd paRiaa tel taavan taato ||  
 jam mag baadhaa khaeh choTaa sabadh bin betaaliaa ||  
 sach kahai naanak chet re man mareh bhavaraa kaaliaa ||2||<sup>13</sup>

As seen in the above *baani*, Guru compares the non-believers (Manmukhs) with the deer who just roam in the world unnecessarily in the shackles of delusion and delusion. On seeing the black deer Guru says that some people get engrossed in the world and start enjoying the pleasures in it like the deer. They forget that their ultimate aim of life is to attain union with God and they should not get their identity lost in aimless life.

Similarly, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji saw the painful condition of even the vortexes. In the greed of the juice, he gets trapped in the petals of a flower and loses his life. While extracting the oil of the flower, the body of the whirlpool is also fried in the oil itself. By describing the pathetic condition of Bhanwre, Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji inspires man to divert man from the wrong path.

In these famous lines

nadheea vaeh vichhu(n)niaa melaa sa(n)jogee raam ||  
 jug jug meeThaa vis bhare ko jaanai jogee raam ||  
 koiee sahaj jaanai har pachhaanai satiguroo jin chetiaa ||  
 bin naam har ke bharam bhoole pacheh mugadh achetiaa ||  
 har naam bhagat na ridhai saachaa se a(n)t dhaahee ru(n)niaa ||  
 sach kahai naanak sabadh saachai mel chiree vichhu(n)niaa ||4||1||5||<sup>14</sup>

As the water which passes once can not reach back its source. Similarly, if a human being forgets its creator by getting engulfed in ‘maya’ the worldly pleasures, it is very difficult for him to attain unity with God. Life is like water flowing in a river, which once gone, does not come again. Guru Nanak says that, those who realize their fault and recite the name of the creator are taken by the God back into his lap.

As we dive into the deep ocean of Gurbani, many precious gems of nature are obtained. These Amolak substances have the power to give spiritual heights to man. We see that beautiful scenes of nature are found in the Bani of Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji, which he used to connect human life with the name of God. In this way we see that in the Bani of Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji beautiful scenes of nature are found from place to place, which he has used to make human life happy by connecting with the name of God.

Where nature is very beautiful and gorgeous in itself, at the same time it also makes human life beautiful like itself. After purifying the soul of man, she acts as a companion in bringing him to the door of God. It is well known that what is the need of proof of eye-sight?

purakhaa(n) birakhaa(n) teerathaa(n) taTaa(n) meghaa(n) khetaa(n)h ||  
dheepaa(n) loaa(n) ma(n)ddalaa(n) kha(n)ddaa(n) varabha(n)ddaa(n)h ||  
a(n)ddaj jeraj utabhujaa(n) khaanee setajaa(n)h ||  
so mit jaanai naanakaa saraa(n) meraa(n) ja(n)taeh ||  
naanak ja(n)t upai kai sa(n)maale sabhanaeh ||  
jin karatai karanaa keeaa chi(n)taa bh karanee taeh ||  
so karataa chi(n)taa kare jin upaiaa jag ||  
tis johaaree suasat tis tis dheebaan abhag ||  
naanak sache naam bin kiaaTikaa kiaa tag ||1|| <sup>15</sup>

In the above lines, Guru explains that God has created all humans, trees, pilgrimage centers, river banks, clouds, agricultural fields; islands, countries, galaxies, planets and universes. He explains that God is creator of all the four types of taking birth i.e., from egg, womb, soil and sweat. He also created all the land forms, the oceans and mountains. Further, he explains that only the creator knows the exact number of its creations, Things only the Creator knows their numbers; having created the Creator looks after the creatures,

He touched every aspect of the environment ie. biosphere, atmosphere and lithosphere and explained how every species is important for biodiversity.

Here he gives the concept of *Kirat karo, naam japo te vand shako*<sup>16</sup>

These three preachings take us against capitalist tendency of greed and accumulation to share the natural resources with others.

We are all aware, however, of the fact however, that a wide gap is often perceived between the religious texts and the current practices of the adherents of those religions.

## **Case Studies and Examples of Religious Environmentalism**

Taking lessons from Guru Nanak's love for nature, various organizations and religious leaders have made love for the environment as part of their preaching. Eco Sikh is an organization which tries to protect the environment by 1 million trees. Baba Seechewal is famous for cleansing Kali Bhen. Baba Sewa Singh from Khadoor Sahib also became world famous for his works related to environment protection

To understand the practical implementation of religious teachings in environmental protection, it is essential to examine case studies and examples of successful integration of religious principles in environmental practices:

Eco Sikh and the Million Tree Project are inspired by Guru Nanak's teachings on the sacredness of nature, Eco Sikh launched the Million Tree Project, which aims to plant one million trees worldwide. This initiative not only promotes reforestation but also raises awareness about the importance of environmental conservation within the Sikh community. By involving local communities and religious institutions, Eco Sikh has successfully integrated religious teachings into environmental activism, creating a model for other faith-based organizations.<sup>17</sup>

*Baba Seechewal and the Kali Bein River Restoration* Baba Seechewal, a prominent Sikh environmentalist, has been at the forefront of the campaign to restore the Kali Bein River in Punjab, India. Drawing inspiration from Guru Nanak's teachings on environmental stewardship, Baba Seechewal mobilized local communities to clean the river and revive its ecosystem. His efforts have not only restored the river but also raised awareness about the importance of protecting water resources and preserving the natural environment.<sup>18</sup>

The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative is a global alliance of religious leaders and organizations working to protect the world's rainforests. By leveraging the moral authority of religious teachings, this initiative aims to raise awareness about the importance of rainforests for biodiversity and climate regulation. The initiative brings together religious leaders from different faiths to advocate for the protection of rainforests and promote sustainable practices among their followers.

## **Recommendations for Integrating Religious Teachings into Environmental Practices**

To enhance the impact of religious teachings on environmental protection, the following recommendations are proposed:

**Promote Religious Literacy:** Environmentalists and policymakers should educate themselves about the environmental teachings of various religions.

Understanding the spiritual significance of nature in different faiths can help in designing more culturally sensitive and effective conservation strategies. Collaborate with Religious Leaders: Religious leaders can play a crucial role in raising awareness about environmental issues. By collaborating with religious institutions, environmentalists can tap into a broad network of followers and promote eco-friendly practices.

Develop Faith-Based Environmental Programs: Create programs and initiatives that integrate religious teachings with environmental education. These programs can include activities such as tree planting, clean-up drives, and workshops on sustainable living, all framed within the context of spiritual teachings.

Encourage Faith-Based Environmental Stewardship: Encourage faith communities to take an active role in environmental stewardship. This can involve adopting sustainable practices within religious institutions, such as reducing waste, etc.

## **Conclusion**

Religion has always been guiding human beings to respect nature and appreciate biodiversity. However, the human greed to take control of all the natural resources and use them for commercial purposes has led to the endangerment of nature. It's time for the environmentalists to join hands with the religious gurus and use religious ideology to influence human beings to protect the environment. In the present article, the authors have highlighted how the preaching of religion can be revisited to serve as a source of environmentalism.

According to Guru Nanak, nature teaches us how to live a happier, healthier, and more meaningful life. Gurbani encourages us to rejoice in nature with a sense of appreciation for the biodiversity, order, patterns and lessons. By taking the time to appreciate nature, we can learn to love the world around us. When we feel love for nature, it opens up our hearts to love and peace for ourselves and others.

## Endnotes

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12. It appears in *Raag Tukhaari* composed by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, *Ang 1107 Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.*
13. *Raag Asa-M:1Ang 438-439 Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.*
14. *Raag Asa-M:1 Ang439 Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.*
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## Ambala Cantonment in 19th and mid 20th Century: A History

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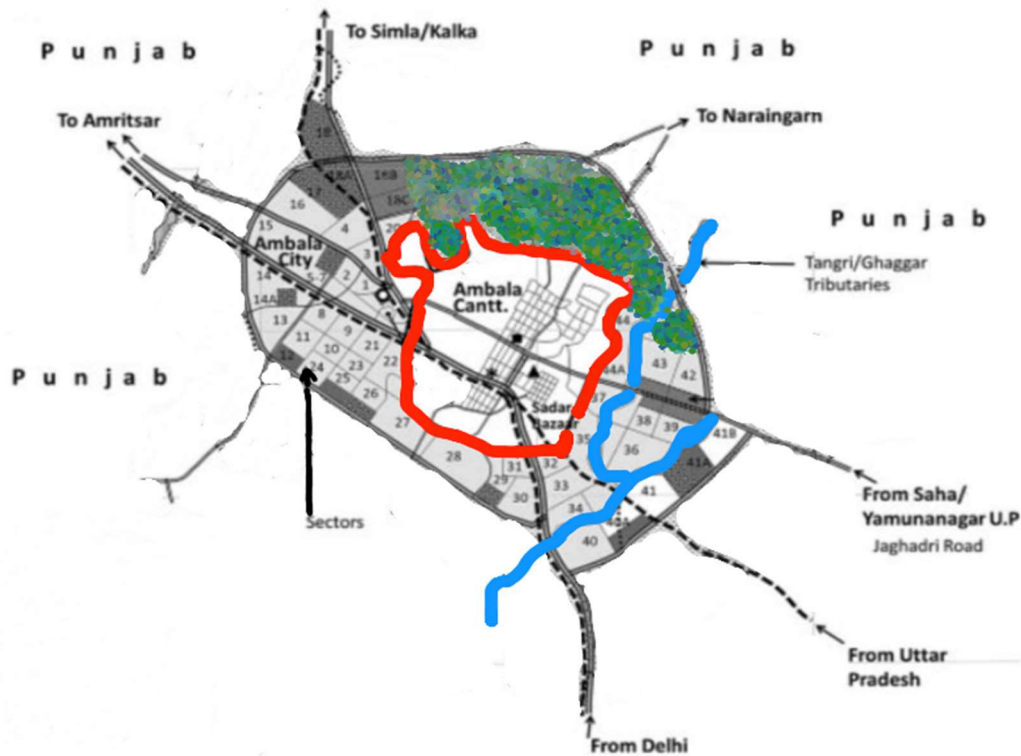
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### Abstract

*Ambala Cantonment lies four miles in the south-east of Ambala town (in the state of present day Haryana in India).<sup>1</sup> Ambala was founded probably during the 14th century, and the founder is supposed to be one Amba Rajput, from whom it derives its name. It seems more likely, however, that the name is a corruption of 'Ambwala' or the Mango-village, judging from the number of mango groves that existed in its immediate neighbourhood. The town rose to no importance either during the Mughals or Sikh times. In 1809, when the Cis-Satlaj States came under British protection, the estate of Ambala was held by Daya Kaur, widow of Sardar Gurbaksh Singh, who had died in 1783. Daya Kaur was temporarily ejected by Ranjit Singh in 1808, but was restored by General Ochterloney. On her death, which occurred in 1823, the state lapsed to the British Government, and the town was fixed upon as the residence of the Political Agent for the Cis-Satlaj States and gradually assumed great importance when the British established a permanent cantonment here in 1843.<sup>2</sup> For this purpose, they acquired about ten thousand acres of land in the surrounding villages of Ambala. They followed all the parameters of a modern city while establishing the cantonment under the supervision of Robert Napier, a distinguished civil engineer and military officer in the British army. In this paper an attempt has been made to trace the history and factors which led to the establishment and development of Ambala cantonment during the colonial times.*

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In 1600 A.D., the British came to India as traders but the two decisive battles, i.e. the Battle of Plassey (1757) and the Battle of Buxar (1764), transformed the East India Company from a trading company to a territorial colonial power. With the conquest of Bengal, began the process of the British subjugation of the entire Indian subcontinent, a process that continued for the next hundred years and more. Since colonial rule largely depended on the armed forces, but how to keep them in a healthy state was one of the biggest concerns of the British as British dreaded the heat, diseases and dust of India more than any uprising by the natives. From the Reports from Commissioners 1863, it is possible to find an account of British lives wasted in India. It is stated in the report that ‘of the troops which Sir Ibrahim Shipman brought with him to Bombay in 1662, there remained in 1664, only 94 out of 500. At the time of Major Kielpatrick’s death, in 1757, only 6 of the 250 soldiers who accompanied him from Madras in August of the previous year survived him’.<sup>3</sup> Thousands of the British soldiers sacrificed their lives in India due to the ignorance and want of arrangement.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, British started building cantonments in India as a solution to their one of the major problem how to keep the army healthy. A study of cantonments has a great significance because cantonment as an institution was instrumental in the building of the British Empire in India.



According to dictionary of Ivor Lewis, the word, cantonment has been taken from the French word 'canton' which means 'quarters'. The word was constantly used in India, and so little used elsewhere. The decline of the Mughals gave the British opportunity to transform East India Company from a trading Company to a political power. To give shape to their political ambitions in India British started establishing cantonments in India. A cantonment is in its essence an area of land reserved for military requirements. It is intended to contain accommodation for troops, residential houses for officers, store houses and offices for the various military services, ranges and parade grounds. It was applied to the permanent military stations in India where troops, both European and native, were quartered regularly.<sup>5</sup> British built a total number of 114 cantonments spreading unevenly all over India. They were located away from the major towns for two main reasons. Firstly, the idea was to locate them away from major towns so as to limit the interactions between the army and the local populace in the interest of discipline and over fears that any such proximity could lead to emotional ties that would be detrimental to the EIC's cause. However, it was ensured that each cantonment had effective means of communication in terms of metalled roads, rail links, post offices, telegraph lines, telephone connections and police station, etc., so that troops could be moved easily in case of trouble.<sup>6</sup> Secondly, the foremost objective of establishing cantonments away from the native areas (which they considered to be the centres of diseases like cholera, plague and small-pox endemic and causing great havoc during epidemics) was to ensure health, welfare and discipline of the troops quartered there with a higher level of sanitation and public safety in a healthier environment free from epidemics and crimes.<sup>7</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, leaving aside Punjab, remaining parts of India were either under their direct control or had accepted their subordination. So, Punjab was an eyesore for them. The British always coveted the land of Punjab mainly due to three reasons: its economic prosperity, secondly, due its strategic location, i.e., due to its proximity to Kashmir and Afghanistan, and thirdly, Punjab was a home to the martial race as Sikhs are tall, sturdy and brave, therefore, could serve as a best recruitment ground for the British army.<sup>8</sup>

It was not however, till 1809 that any active steps were taken by the British government to occupy these territories. British still found the North-Western Frontier as vulnerable and wanted to keep Napoleon and the French out of India. Meanwhile, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had founded the Kingdom between the rivers Indus and the Sutlej and formed a barrier against the Afghans. It did put to rest some of the British tensions, as Maharaja Ranjit Singh was apparently friendly towards the British, for he had refused to shelter Jaswant Rao Holkar in his flight from Lord Lake. However, the British were not confident about what Maharaja Ranjit Singh might do if the French found their way to Lahore. To crown the

perplexity, the Sikh princes on the British side of the river Sutlej, who had done homage to the British government during the campaigns of Lord Lake were being conquered by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and they appealed to the British government for their protection. Therefore, in 1809, a young Bengal civilian, named Charles Metcalfe, was sent on a mission to Lahore. However, the main object was to secure Maharaja Ranjit Singh as a useful ally against the French and the Afghans.<sup>9</sup>

In 1809, the Treaty of Amritsar was signed between the Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Charles Metcalfe on behalf of the British, in which river Sutlej was fixed as a boundary line between the British and Maharaja Ranjit Singh Empire. After the Treaty of 1809, Punjab came to be divided into two parts i.e., Cis and Trans-Sutlej states. The Cis-Sutlej states comprised a tract of country, which lay between the British North-Western frontier and the river Sutlej. Whereas, trans-Sutlej area was situated between the river Beas and the Sutlej under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.<sup>10</sup> This treaty having been concluded, on 25 April 1809, was faithfully observed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh until his death in 1839.<sup>11</sup> As it was deemed politic to keep an eye on them, therefore, the British came closer to the Sikh kingdom and stationed its army in Sabathu and Shimla, which were retained after the end of the Anglo-Gurkha wars in 1816. The British were waiting for the right opportunity to annex Punjab.

The situation changed in Punjab in 1839 with the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839 brought about a succession crisis at the Punjab court, and in the absence of a strong successor, the Sikh army emerged as the most powerful arbiter in the Punjab politics.<sup>12</sup> The ensuing chaos also opened up the possibilities of the occupation of Punjab by the British. Therefore, in preparation for the eventual conquest of Punjab, and in order to garrison a large number of army men, needed for accomplishing the task of annexing Punjab, the government started establishing several cantonments at Ferozepur (1839), Ambala (1843), Jalandhar (1846)<sup>13</sup>, and sanatoriums in the lower Shimla hills in Kasauli (1842), Dagshai (1847), Sabathu (1843), Jutogh (1843), where the invalid European troops could recover and strengthen themselves to fight against the Sikhs.<sup>14</sup> The East India Company established these cantonments in 1840's as the most northerly of its garrisons. They served as the auxiliary cantonments for the soldiers of Bengal Presidency serving in the hot plains of India. Up to 1838, the troops on the frontier amounted to one regiment at Sabathu and two at Ludhiana with 6 pieces of artillery, equalling in all little more than 2500 men, which Auckland increased to 8000 by increasing troops in Ludhiana and establishing a cantonment at Ferozepur. Lord Ellenborough formed further new stations at Ambala, Kasauli and Shimla and placed in all 14,000 men and 48 field guns on the frontier. Lord Hardinge increased the aggregated force to about 32000 men with 68 field guns besides having 10,000 men with artillery at Meerut.<sup>15</sup>

Ambala was equidistant from two European stations of Meerut and Ferozepur. These cantonment towns were thus, established to facilitate the annexation of Punjab, to strengthen the frontiers and prevent further skirmishes in the future.<sup>16</sup>

The Ambala cantonment was formed in 1843, on the abandonment of the not far distant Karnal as a garrison town. In 1806, the cantonment of Karnal was established by the British on the Grand Trunk road between Delhi and Ambala, (75 miles from Delhi and 48 miles from Ambala) which for a long time, i.e., until it was moved to Ambala was the first modern town established by the British with rows of houses, barracks, malls, etc. The Yamuna canal used to flow near the colony of the British officers (now Mall Road) and due to the stagnant water and its seepage into it, malaria and cholera had become an epidemic in Karnal. Cholera and Malaria were the most dreaded diseases in those days and the medication available then was not an effective one.<sup>17</sup> The two cemeteries of the late cantonment with crowded tombs bears evidence to the terrible mortality of the troops from the ravages of swamp created maladies till 1842.<sup>18</sup> Then the British Government took the decision to shift all the army men to Sirhind (town in the native state of Patiala and 28 miles from Ambala)<sup>19</sup> for the change of climate. Therefore, in 1841, the cantonment of Karnal was abandoned in consequence of its great unhealthiness due to the swamps of the Western Jamuna Canal in its vicinity.

All arrangements were made to shift all British troops from Karnal cantonment to Sirhind including troops returning from Afghanistan in great numbers.<sup>20</sup> The army left for Sirhind from Karnal, but owing to the sick health of the soldiers, army officers thought it fit to halt at Ambala for a night. A Vaid (doctor), of the army of the rank of sepoy, suggested the army officers to stay at Ambala, due to its healthy surroundings as it contained the trees of *Pipal*, *Neem*, *Safeda*, mangoes, *Kikar*, etc. British officers also thought it prudent to stay for 2 days more. Gradually, the troops started recovering. On this, the commander decided to stay there for some more days. In few days, the sick and tired troops fully recovered and became healthy. On finding the sepoys completely recovered, the British officers took the decision to abolish the cantonment of Karnal and Sirhind, and to set up the cantonment in Ambala, which later developed into one of the largest cantonments of India. For this purpose, 9920 acres of land from 27 villages was taken.<sup>21</sup> Malaria was the first reason of shifting the army cantonment to Ambala.<sup>22</sup> The second most important reason was that the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839 and the following chaos in Kingdom of Lahore, which gave the British the much-awaited opportunity to annex Panjab. To facilitate the annexation of Panjab Ambala was a perfect place for the purpose as it was situated on the Grand Trunk Road, which connected it with the Delhi on one side and was the nearest station on the line to the summer seat of the Government at Shimla. The place also derived importance as the point of departure for Shimla and the adjoining hill sanatoriums in Shimla hills namely Kasauli, Dagshai, Subathu, and Jutogh.

Keeping in view these factors, the British completely inhabited Ambala cantonment in 1843. Gradually, Ambala in 1843, except for a small military outpost at Ludhiana, formed the chief reserve station for the troops occupying Punjab or served as British extreme north-western frontier station.<sup>23</sup> It was from here that preparations were made for the Anglo-Sikh wars against the Khalsa army of Lahore.

Many bungalows, grand restaurants came up on the Mall road. The garrison consisted of three batteries of artillery, a regiment of European and of native cavalry and a regiment of European and of native infantry. European lines and barracks were built on the north-west and east, the native infantry was built towards the south. In the centre a big St. Paul Church, a semi-Gothic structure, one of the finest in the region was also constructed with a seating capacity of 1,000 persons.<sup>24</sup> The two other churches were Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Church. In the Sadar bazaar, a small church for the accommodation of the native Christian population was built. The remaining area of cantonment was occupied by the bungalows of Europeans, *bazaars*, public institutions, parade grounds, polo-grounds, racecourse club, military dairy farm, military grass farm and military poultry farm.<sup>25</sup>

The maintenance of the colonial life-style in these settlements depended upon the existence of the *bazaar* as the functional unit. Therefore, *bazaars* emerged within a defined area of colonial cultural territory. There were four division of the troops residing within the cantonment, i.e., Royal Artillery, British Cavalry, Native Infantry respectively and each division of the garrison had its own *bazaar* and accommodation for native servants and camp followers.<sup>26</sup> It is interesting to note that the troops themselves constituted a small proportion (varying from 8 to 15 percent) of the total cantonment population.<sup>27</sup> In 1892, the total population of Ambala cantonment was 51,020 souls and 23,000 souls lived in Sadar Bazar alone and number of troops were only 7,653. The Sadr *bazaar* was the largest and within its bound was concentrated the maximum of civil native population of cantonment serving the British troops.<sup>28</sup> The census returns of 1868 and 1881 show that of a total population of 40,000, about 21,000 lived in Sadar bazaar.<sup>29</sup> In 1883, 40,700 people lived in Sadar bazaar alone.<sup>30</sup> The 'native' class existed only to be commanded by their 'white' masters. Owing to its central position and the number of European residents, and of travellers that pass through it on their way to and from the hills, the Ambala Cantonment boasted of a larger number of English shops than any other place, excepting Shimla itself, in the Panjab, and a brisk trade in European commodities was constantly carried on. As the Grand Trunk Road, a national highway, passed through the town, it started functioning as centre of exchange of commodities and as service centres for the surrounding areas. The city was a considerable grain mart, received grain in large quantities, both from the districts and from the independent states to the west, and exported it both up and down the country. It carried on a considerable trade in the hill products, ginger,

turmeric etc. From the south, it imported English cloth and iron, and from the Punjab proper, salt, wool, and woollen and silk manufactures. In return it manufactured and exported cotton goods, especially *Darris*, in considerable quantities. This, however, was the only manufacture of any note.<sup>31</sup> To supply goods to the soldiers and officers, shops were amply stocked with European wares and stores of every description, items were mainly imported from Delhi markets.<sup>32</sup> Computed on the basis of personal enquiries, the largest number of shops in cantonment dealt in general goods, which were required on day-to-day basis. Among the goods displayed were hats and shoes, brass and earthen pots, cotton and woollen clothes of all description, sweetmeats and grains. All sorts of inferior European hardware goods, ornaments of women in glass and tinsel, Chinese toys and pictures, garlands of flowers for the churches were prominently displayed. It had its own diary within its own territorial limits. In case of shortage of milk, milk was supplied by the nearby areas. The number of shops dealing in perishable goods such as fruits and vegetables were quite high. The second largest numbers of shops were those of the tailors. Third important category of shops was that of the *dhobi* in Dhobi Mohalla, situated in 'native' *bazaar* section.<sup>33</sup>

The personal interviews with individual shopkeepers in the towns reveals the fact that a wider section of traders in Sadar bazaar were mostly Purbias or Easterns. i.e., people from the North-west Provinces, especially from the eastern districts and Oudh. The Purbias immigrants belonged to the middle and lower classes, the former being attracted by trade and the latter by the many lucrative menial occupations to be found in a military station.<sup>34</sup> Apart from Purbias and people from Oudh immigrants also came in large number from Delhi, Panipat, Karnal, Patiala, Kurukshetra Ludhiana, Jagadhari, Saharanpur, Hissar, Rohtak, Aligarh, Kalsia, Naraingarh, Ropar, Mustafabad, Kharar, Sadhaura, Shahbad, Thanesar, Ladwa, and in winters many migrants also came from various hill states such as Kashmir, Mandi, Chamba, Kangra, Sirmaur, Kullu, Lahaul, Spiti, Bushahar, etc. These traders came due to better prospects of business and primarily belonged to the traditional trading classes. With the passage of time this cantonment area became the most powerful center of retail and wholesale trade in the whole of India for the British. This happened due to its good connectivity with other parts of the country like Ambala became an important railway junction, where Delhi-Kalka and Saharanpur-Ludhiana railway lines intersected. The introduction of rail transport in 1891 between Ambala and Kalka and later in 1903 another rail called Kalka-Shimla Railway<sup>35</sup>, further accelerated the growth of economic activities in the region. The development of the quick transport and communication on the Kalka-Shimla Road brought a boom in the trade of the region. The horses, *tongas* and carts remained a major source of transport due to limited plying of train traffic.<sup>36</sup> An alignment of Grand Trunk road, hill roads and railway lines were made to ensure the free flow of goods and services.

To satisfy the sexual needs of the European soldiers, sex between the colonizing men and local women was commercialized in these existing *bazaars*. These *bazaars* had the 'Red Light' areas or brothels called *Chaklas*<sup>37</sup>, where the British soldiers could enjoy and entertain themselves along with wine and sex. There were two *Chaklas* in the Sadar Bazaar, one for the use of British troops and the other for that of the natives. There used to be three other *Chaklas* in Royal Artillery, British Cavalry, and British infantry, in their respective *bazaars*.<sup>38</sup> The separate *Chaklas* existed for the use of British and native troops.<sup>39</sup> Indian men were not permitted to enter the brothels visited by the British soldiers. If caught, they were beaten up and thrown out. There used to be a *Mahldarni* over each *Chakla*, who searched for young and beautiful ladies for European men. These *Mahladarnis* were paid from cantonment funds. They looked after the women, reported matters to the police that required report, presented the women for their examination, and women suspected of disease were sent to Lock hospital. They were licensed by military officials and were allowed to consort with soldiers only. The girls were compelled to receive an excessive number, more than the usual number of British soldiers due to which they lost their health from excess.<sup>40</sup> Sex was quite cheap; the standard rate in cantonments was one rupee for a Sergeant, eight *annas* (a former monetary unit of India, equal to sixteenth of a rupee) for a Corporal, six for a Lance Corporal and four for a Private. There was an instance when the Commanding Officer of a regiment asked the Cantonment Magistrate or *kotwal* to provide an adequate number of young and attractive women to be housed in the brothel area of the Regimental *bazaar*. He complained that he had only six women for four hundred men, and calculated that he needed six more.<sup>41</sup>

As the regular 'home' leave was yet unheard of, therefore, the cantonments had to be opened to a wide range of recreational activities to make their stay all the more attractive. The *Club*, a legacy of the East India Company's rule, was the *social* centre of the European men living in India. Sirhind Club was shifted to Ambala cantonment in 1856. Its entrance fee was rupees 50.<sup>42</sup> The aims of these clubs were to become 'homes away home' and in some cases, foreign languages were prohibited all in a bid to increase individuality and maintain 'Englishmen castles'. The in-door parties comprised small dancing parties, tea-parties, and conversations; but the outdoor occasions were of much greater number and variety like lawn-tennis, polo, cricket, football, archery, rifle-shooting, golf, badminton and croquet matches, a skating rink, and tobogganing, playing of orchestra on the Mall, picnics, private fetes and visiting the church.<sup>43</sup>

The plains were tropical spaces where Englishmen could not live and work in the summer, which were horribly hot and humid. By the mid of 19<sup>th</sup> century it was understood that in all the great provinces of India lofty hills exists, available as health stations. In middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, keeping with the changed policy towards environment, British established a number of hill stations, sanatoria and

cantonments, where the European invalids could recover from the heat and diseases of the tropics and also to give them a sense that they are the agents of superior culture. It presented them with surroundings peculiarly well suited for re-examining, reanimating, and refashioning themselves in their roles as agents of imperial power. Therefore, they created closed communities of their own kind in a setting of their own design.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, as the hot season came, the eyes of the invalids among the European population in India turned involuntarily to the hills and the Governments of India and of Punjab itself went to the grandest hill-station of all, Shimla. Therefore, in summers it became customary to send up half the British battalions to Kasauli, Sabathu, Jutogh, Shimla which were attached to Ambala Division on account of its better climate and lower temperature.<sup>45</sup> For instance, in winters there were 3,581 British troops but in summers the number of British troops left in the Ambala cantonment were 1224.<sup>46</sup> For about 4 months in the cold season the British troops from the hill stations in the Division were usually brought down and encamped at Ambala for manoeuvre.

The census returns of 1868 and 1881 show that the cantonment population increased at the rate of 50 percent in 13 years while that of the native city remained nearly stationary.<sup>47</sup> As illustrated in the table given below (based on the census returns of Panjab) it was found that Ambala cantonment had more population than the Ambala city. It supported more population because it was better equipped with basic amenities in terms of sanitation, health, security, good infrastructure, better connectivity with the country, its cosmopolitan character, western education and other facilities, as a result the number of people kept on increasing.<sup>48</sup>

Year	Population in Ambala Cantonment	Population in Ambala City
1868	26623	24,027
1881	40,680	26777
1891	51,016	28,278
1901	50,438	28,200
1911	54,223	25,908
1921	47,745	28,581
1931	49,368	37,224
1941	62,419	44,964

Soon after the First World War, Ambala cantonment was given Air Force Station (1919), with the 19 Royal Air Force Squadron based there. The station has since grown into major training base and is one of the biggest Air Force Stations in the country. It played a vital role in the Indo-Pak Wars of 1965 and 1971.<sup>49</sup>

The primary reason to set up cantonment was to keep the troops healthy. Therefore, these were administered under a special code of rules and were kept

under strict control. Cantonment Magistrate had the power to remove any person, whom they deemed unfit, or found indulging in unfair trading activities, without assigning any reason. The civil inhabitants were subjected to taxation of a municipal character, the income of which was devoted to the maintenance of public services within the cantonments limits.<sup>50</sup> The Ambala cantonment Board was constituted in 1925 under the Cantonment Act of 1924.<sup>51</sup> The Native Infantry Regiment quartered at Ambala was always one of the Pioneer Regiment of the Bengal Army. Ambala cantonment was the head-quarter station of the Sirhind Division. In 1849, Ambala became the head-quarters of a district and division under the newly formed Panjab Administration. With the transfer of the capital of the British India from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911, the popularity of the Ambala cantonment increased further due to its proximity to the centre of colonial authority.<sup>52</sup> The town greatly progressed and assumed importance as a centre of colonial authority in Punjab.

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# Agriculture Patterns in North-West India in the third millennia BCE

\*Vikas Rana

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## Abstract

*A comprehensive perspective of agriculture patterns in north-west India is warranted by the accumulation of recent evidences of archaeobotanical data across the region. This paper analyses the cropping patterns, crop types, cropping strategies, crop seasons and diet based upon plant remains prevalent in this region during the third millennium BCE. An attempt is also made to understand the landscape in which they exist and their sustainability in the third millennia. The sites in modern day Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh are taken up for the study i.e. Rohira and Mahorrana in Punjab, Kunal, Balu, Farmana, Masudpur I, Masudpur VII, Alamgirpur in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. A comparative analysis with other cultures showed variations in agriculture patterns. The study points out that the agriculture practices of the sites questions the traditional models and the rural settlements in this region and play an important role in agriculture strategy.*

**Keywords:** Agriculture patterns. Cropping strategies. Sustainable. Cropping seasons. Rural settlements. Archaeobotanical remains. North-west India

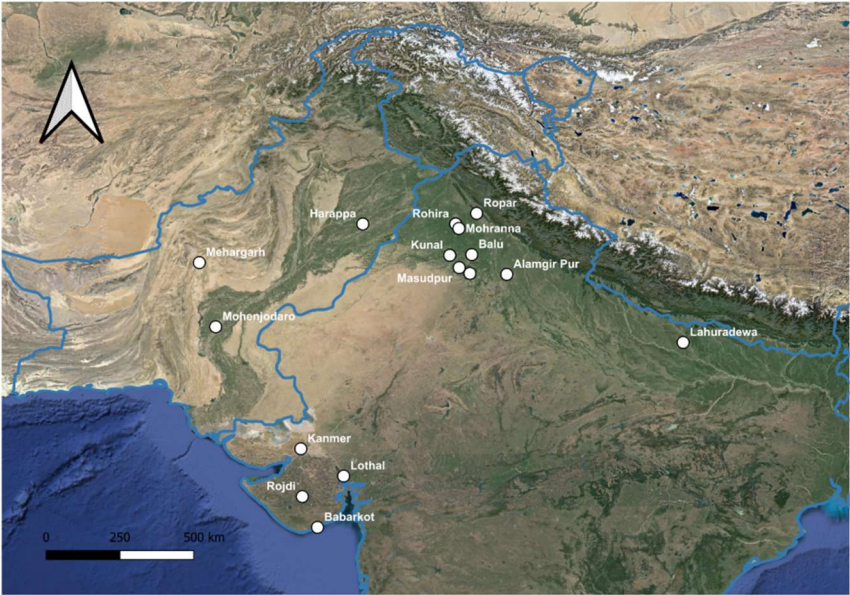
## Introduction

Agriculture in most complex societies have been an integral part of every social and economic aspect; which would directly affect the rise and decline of a society. The Northwest India lies in the censorious region between the Indus and Gangetic water cycle of perennial and rain-fed rivers with their tributaries. Thus, making the area in the sub-continent the most important one to understand agricultural development particularly in the third millennium BCE. The archaeological demonstrations reveals one of the oldest agricultural patterns in the region. These patterns pre-date Pre-Early Harappan cultures as suggested by Mughals. The Pre-Harappan<sup>1</sup> and Early Harappan cultures<sup>2</sup> were present in north-western India during the third millennia BCE. The earliest evidence of food producing economies in this region traces back to before 6000 BCE to the site of Mehargarh. If we look at the period of 5000-4000 BCE we get the culture sequences at Kili Gul Mohammad and Rana Ghundai highlighting the presence of agriculture to the village level. The set of cultural materials available during 3000-4000 BCE in the phases of Balakot, Amri, Hakra, KotDiji, and Ravi explains the complexity prevalent in the region also

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the area of undivided Punjab parts of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat (Fig.1) revealed Early and Mature Harappan phases from 3200 BCE onwards. The botanical remains helps us to understand the agriculture patterns of the societies in the third millennia BCE.



**Fig.1 Map showing sites reporting archaeobotanical remains in Harappan and Neolithic period**

**Cultural Sequence**

The cultural association of the sites selected for the study in the region are of Harappan period. The excavations of the site by the Harappa Archaeological Research Project (1998-2000) serve as a yardstick for comprehending the temporal aspect.

Period 1	—	Ravi/ Hakra Phase	—	3300-
2800 BCE				
Period 2	—	Early Harappan	—	2800-
2600 BCE				
Period 3	—	Mature Harappan	—	2600-
1900 BCE				
Period 4	—	Transition between Mature and Late Harappan	—	1900-
1800 BCE				
Period 5	—	Late Harappan	—	1800-
1300 BCE				

## Materials and Methods

The research methodology is based on collection and study of all the available primary and secondary sources. These sources have been critically and thoroughly analyzed to succor the proposed topic. Thus, the archaeobotanical data has been retrieved from the excavation reports of IAR, the surveys, excavations conducted under Land, Water, and Settlement Project in collaboration of Cambridge University and Banaras Hindu University and the material analyzed by the BirbalSahni Institute of Palaeobotany, Lucknow.

## Discussion

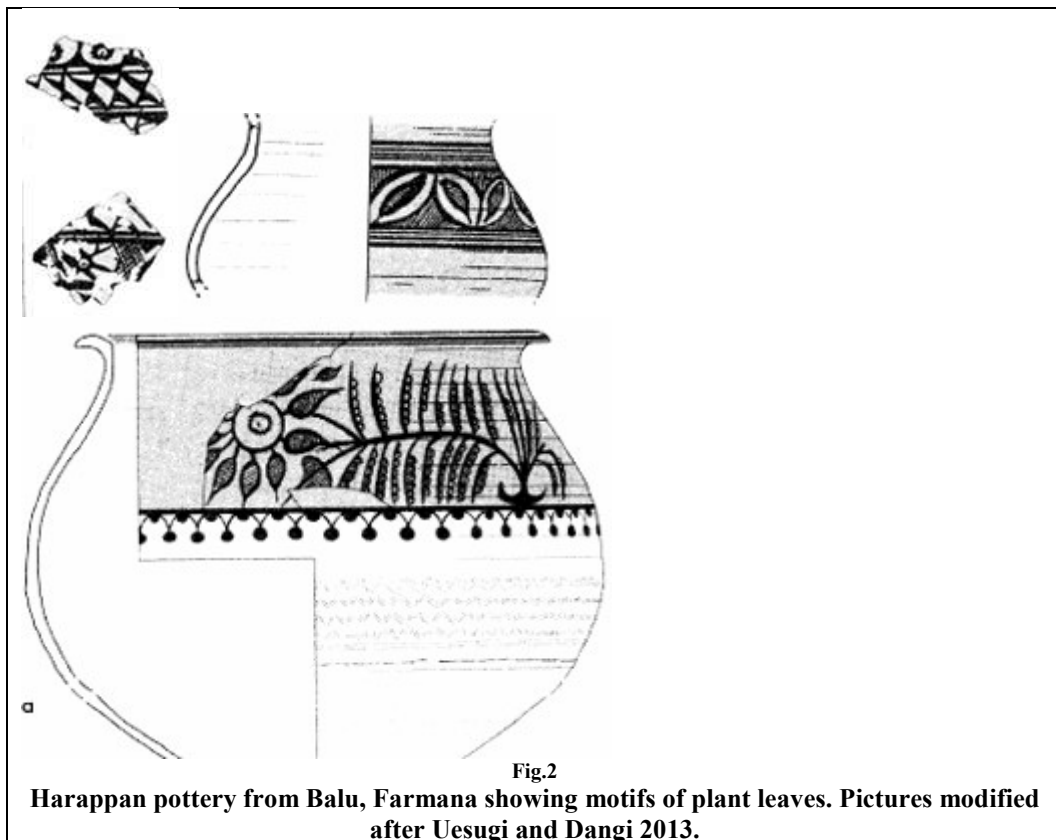
The research area of this work ideally covers number of sites present in North-west India with the availability of plant remains from this region which lies in the plains of Punjab, Haryana and parts of western Uttar Pradesh. The rivers which flows are: the Sutlej, the Yamuna, the Ghaggar, the Kaushalaya, the Markanda, the Tangri, the Saraswati, the Chautang, the Dohan, the Krishnavati, the Somb, the Sahibi and the Thapana. The soil type is of varying nature which can be understood under the following heading: Flood plains or Bet soils and Ghaggar basin soil suitable for the cultivation of paddy, wheat, sugarcane and vegetables. Loamy soil covering nearly 25% of the area is common in the Patiala, Bathinda, Nawanshahr and Muktsar districts suitable for wheat and paddy cultivation. 11% of the area in the state is covered with desert soil falling under semi-arid and arid zones. The Alluvial i.e. Khadar, Bhangar and Bangar types are found in this area. The climate in the area is dry with intensely hot summers and cold winters. The average rainfall varies from region to region. Due to the presence of low hills i.e. Shiwaliks we get to see Himalayan type moist temperate vegetation, the sub-tropical pine vegetation, the sub-tropical scrub hill vegetation, the tropical dry deciduous forest and the tropical thorn forest in the region.

The archaeobotanical remains suggests that there is seasonal variation of cropping patterns that have been overlooked and are not studied analytically for eg. Weber did not refer to dry Zaid season crops which are sown in between Rabi and Kharif cropping seasons.<sup>3</sup> This gap in Weber's hypothesis in our region of study could be answered through careful examinations of archaeobotanical remains which belonged to Zaid season available from the Early Harappan levels. These were Cucunismeto from Kunal<sup>4</sup>; seeds of cucurbit species from Farmana<sup>5</sup>; Watermelon & Melon from Balu<sup>6</sup>, Viganaradiata from Alamgirpur, Kunal, Masudpur, Masudpur VII, Balu, Sanghol<sup>7</sup>, and Seasmum in most of the sites.<sup>8</sup> However, the quantity of remains is very low which does not mean that we can ignore the possibility of three crops a year but we also observed that these crops were not the part of large subsistence base as the remains were not found from all the sites in the region. This means that these crops could have been used as a supplementary to the main crops for which small pots and kitchen gardens were

preferred.<sup>9</sup> As there is the possibility of more than two cropping seasons we can clearly see cultivation of different crops within the same season in the archaeological sites of Rohira<sup>10</sup>, Mahorrana<sup>11</sup> in Punjab, Balu, Farmana<sup>12</sup>, Masudpur I in Haryana and Alamgirpur<sup>13</sup> in Uttar Pradesh from Early and Mature Harappan levels. The plant remains of Emmer wheat, dwarf wheat, hulled barley and naked barley were recovered from this region sown in the Rabi season whereas in the case of kharif crops we get millets i.e. *Sorghum bicolor* (*jowar*), *Panicum /Setaria* (*foxtail, little millet*) and evidence of *Oryza sativa* (*rice*) from Balu, Kunal<sup>14</sup> sown together which clearly supports our hypothesis of two crops in a single season. Thus, we can deduce that they followed multi-cropping strategies in the third millennium BCE. The diet in the third millennium BCE mainly consisted of cereals such as wheat, barley, millets as discussed earlier but along with them we also get legumes like *Lens culinaris* (*lentil*), *Pisum sativum* (*garden pea*), *Pisum arvense* (*field pea*), *Cicer arietinum* (*chickpea*), *Macrotyloma uniflorum* (*horse-gram*), *Lathyrus sativus* (*pea*) and *Vigna radiata* (*moong bean*)<sup>15</sup> which not only provided protein based diet but also helped in enhancing the soil fertility. There is the presence of spices at the Mature Harappan levels of Balu the species of these spices were Egyptian clover and garlic.<sup>16</sup> We also get evidence of cooked ginger and turmeric starch grains from the ceramic pots of Early Harappan levels in Farmana.<sup>17</sup> The botanical remains of *Trigonella foenum-graecum* (fenugreek) were recovered at Kunal with macro-remains of seeds of *Vitis vinifera* (*grapes*), *Jujube* (*ber*), phoenix cf. *dactylopera* (*date palm*), *Citrus lemon*, and *Emblica officinalis* (*amwala*) from the Early Harappan levels of Kunal. These carbonized seeds of the same plant types were excavated from the early levels in Rohira, Balu, Masudpur I & VII. The micro-botanical study in Farmana of saddle stone revealed starch remains of *Mangifera* sp. (*mango*). Another important aspect of their diet were oilseeds like til. This shows that these plants were an important part of the life of people of third millennium BCE and through consumption of these foods people were practicing diversified agriculture. These remains when compared with the botanical remains discovered from other parts of Harappan cultures which exists in peripheral zones (*Sindh and Gujarat*) shows a variability as in these peripheral zones presence of summer crops is in greater ubiquity. The reason for such a change in cropping pattern has been due to change in climate during late Holocene period where conditions became more arid.<sup>18</sup> The sites like Rojdi, Kanmer, Surkatoda, Rangpur, and Babar kot in the Gujarat region showed that the plant remains belonged to drought resistant crops i.e. millets and very low presence of winter crops. However, sites in the Punjab region show that the impact of such drastic climatic change is negligible because of the presence of much stronger climate resilient strategy in the third millennium BCE. This strategy was based on the adoption of multi-cropping strategies which resulted in sustainable agriculture. To understand the multi-cropping agriculture pattern we can observe furrows in

ploughed field found at Kalibangan.<sup>19</sup> The comparison of the area taken up by us for the study with the Ganga valley, Neolithic cultures of north and south India we witnessed a big difference in agricultural patterns. As these patterns in north-west India (Punjab) were based on the staple crop of wheat and barley but in Ganga valley and south Neolithic the preference was being given to rice cultivation. The Neolithic cultures in north and near to the Indus valley reported wheat and barley as a main crop. These cultures could be one of the frontiers of agriculture in Indian subcontinent.

The pottery and ceramic analyses confirms the fact that local cultures used to be an important part of agriculture patterns. The presence of painting of leaves, flowers and plants as a decorative motifs (Fig.2)<sup>20</sup> on storage jars, cooking vessels (*handis*, *matkas*), and bowls from the region of this study proves that the plants had a very intrinsic role to play in the life of these people. The pottery belonged to Harappan and local cultures like Bara, Sothi-Siswal, Mitathal, KotDijian and Kalibangan type as well. This shows that these local cultures had a very important role to play in the development of societies in this region.



## Conclusion

The above discussion helps to frame a picture of agriculture patterns in north-west India which are based upon a multi-cropping strategy. The pottery and the structural remains shows that the people were living in a rural-urban settings during third millennia. The presence of variety of plant remains suggests that there is a need to study whether the agriculture patterns are the part of city centric models. These can be seen through crop processing and phytolith analysis as these sites hold a huge potential to sustain by themselves and cater the needs of surplus. Our study shows that a unique pattern was being used in north-west India which highlights the adaptive and resilient nature of the societies.

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# **Sacred Spaces and Trade Networks**

## **A Study of Buddhist sites in South-East Punjab (Modern Haryana)**

**\*Baldev Singh**

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this research paper is to study all the discovered and explored ruins of Buddhist sites in South-East Punjab (Modern Haryana) that are situated on the ancient trade route uttarāpatha. The Pali canonical literature, Sanskrit Buddhist accounts, and Buddhist travelogues provide us with detailed descriptions of Buddhist stūpas and monasteries located in Haryana that have not been properly excavated yet. The paper studies sacred places associated with Buddhism near or at the trade routes and intends to show the firm presence of Buddhist monasticism in Haryana using archaeological and literary sources.*

### **Introduction**

Society always proceeds toward growth with a spur of religious, economic, and social advancements. To understand any historical period, it is essential to know the role of all these in shaping human life.<sup>1</sup> Several rituals and practices (traditions) have been performed in our routine life, created by our elders or ancestors for various purposes. The objects of these traditions are to cure yourself of any ailment or to achieve any financial purposes etc. These traditions are not self-created: they are socially controlled, both in their making and in selecting what is required for the contemporary purpose.<sup>2</sup> Several of these traditions were/are associated with sacred spaces. These sacred spaces are sites of social, economic, and cultural activities, in which people of different classes, communities, linguistic, and caste backgrounds participate in varying capacities.<sup>3</sup> Several sacred spaces have been identified in South Asia providing a glimpse of the religious and economic life of associated society. Buddhism had spread all over North-West India up to Central Asia by the early centuries CE, and several studies demonstrate that Buddhism was supported by merchants, and artisans.<sup>4</sup> The archaeological evidence of the remains of the first *Buddhist stūpa* was discovered and recorded in 1798 when Colin Mackenzie found the ruined mound of Amravati *stūpa*.<sup>5</sup> Like Mackenzie's exploration, other Buddhist monuments were found by other archaeologists including Alexander Cunningham during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The archaeological and literary sources of ancient Indian history provide us with a detailed account of Buddhist monasteries and their linkage with trade activities.

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## Buddhism and Buddhist Monasteries

The study of Buddhist scholars proclaimed that the origin of Buddhism was one of the movements that was against cattle sacrifice, and also it aimed to stop caste and gender discrimination within ancient society.<sup>6</sup> Here Govind Chander Pande also asserts that the reflection of Buddhism always shines in the favor of low-class miserable people who felt ignored and oppressed in Hindu rituals.<sup>7</sup> Buddha has often been projected as a social reformer, even as a revolutionary, who stood against social discrimination and favored equality for all.<sup>8</sup>

However, Buddhism was mainly considered the revival of the renouncer tradition that was obstructed in the Vedic period and broken by the Buddha in a single effort. The disciples of Buddhism who Buddha or Buddhism initiated called themselves Buddhist monks. The routine life functioning of these monks depended on the laymen. The monks who lived in the Buddhist monasteries at that time used to fulfill their daily needs from the local people. All the needed commodities were donated to the monks in alms and sometimes donations were given of their own free will by people. Upinder Singh stated that Buddha also did not maintain any restriction on donation and he enjoyed the hospitality of some wealthy *gahapatīs* and *setṭhis*.<sup>9</sup> This view also has been supported by the major work of K.T.S. Sarao, who emphasizes the relationship of Buddhism with the elite and high classes based on Buddhist literature.<sup>10</sup> Further, the view of Max Weber is discussed by Sarao, who demonstrates that the forces responsible for Buddhism's development were the urban centres, political situations, and elite classes of contemporary times.<sup>11</sup> The Buddhist texts credit merchants and trading groups with the setting up of religious shrines for example in the case of merchant Anāthapiṇḍaka's purchase of the park known as the Jetvana (near Sravasti, Uttar Pradesh) to present it to the Buddha and his monks for their use as a place of residence. Like Jetvana several other representations at several early Buddhist sites, such as Bharut, Bodh Gaya, Sannathi, Amravati, etc., are discovered in the archaeological remains.<sup>12</sup>

D. D. Kosambi was the first who indicates the complex pattern of Buddhist monasteries where wealth was acquired by the Buddhist monks.<sup>13</sup> This was a significant change from early Buddhism, and now the emphasis was laid on the accumulation of merits in return for food and luxurious items (beads, gold, and silver) to the monks.<sup>14</sup> The seven Jewells of Buddhism (Coral, Pearls, glass, lapis-lazuli, etc.) were exported through trade from India to China for the performance of rituals and worship at Buddhist centres.<sup>15</sup> During the *Kuṣāṇa* period, when trade in ancient India was at its peak, at the same time the interconnection of Buddhism and trade also strengthened. The work of Xinru Liu provides supportive evidence of the association of Buddhist monks with materialistic life. Liu asserts that several Buddhist texts were composed by the Buddhist monks in the *Kuṣāṇa* period, namely the *Milindhpanha*, the *Buddhacarita*, the *Saundarmapundarika*, the

*Saundarananda*, the *Mahavastu*, and the *Sukhavativyuha*, which encouraged the laity for luxurious donations to Buddhist monasteries.<sup>16</sup> It is recorded that Chinese monk Xuanzang (7<sup>th</sup>-century CE) also donated fifty gold coins, one thousand silver coins, four silk banners, two pieces of brocade, and two seeds of ritual robes to the different monasteries during his journey to India.<sup>17</sup> Gregory Schopen explains the tendency of monks to encourage the laity to donate resources in terms of money, etc., to the monasteries, and how they justified their financial activities in terms of the religious needs of those donors.<sup>18</sup>

The physical manifestation of Buddhism appeared in the archaeological records at least two or three hundred years later after the demise of the Buddha in the form of inscriptions, *stūpa*, images, and other objects of veneration. Relics and image worship were important features in the expansion of Buddhism across the subcontinent and other parts of Asia.<sup>19</sup> But by the end of the Mauryan empire, Buddhism appeared to have become localized in fixed and well-endowed *stūpa* and monasteries. It is observed that the remains of the Buddha honored by the followers were usually covered in *stūpas* that were mostly adorned with precious stones and luxurious articles.<sup>20</sup> Post-Ashokan texts such as the *apadāna*, are replete with descriptions of *stūpa* construction and relic worship conceived within a cosmic soteriological framework. There are references to individuals or groups of individuals organizing festivals at the time when construction, expansion, or renovation of a *stūpa* was proposed and similarly at the time when it was completed.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Sanjay Garg explores the ideas of the construction of Buddhist *stūpas* by people in honor of their deity, and the performance of rituals and practices for *stūpa* worship. Garg states that *atthasaddajātaka* speaks about the construction of the *stūpa* over the relics of Pratyekabuddha. Seeing the body, the king is mentioned to have paid honor with perfumes and flowers.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, Jonathan S. Walters exclaimed that the texts relating to the Buddha's biography were recited on the occasions of *stūpa* construction as well as theatrically enacted. Thus the setting up of a *stūpa* was an event when the King, the lay devotees, the stone carvers, and the monks and nuns came together to celebrate the life of the Buddha.<sup>23</sup>

### **Archaeological remains of Buddhism in Haryana**

The present-day Haryana (erstwhile South-Eastern Punjab) provides valuable archaeological material related to the Buddhist faith. In ancient India, the geographical land of Haryana was connected to the Gandhāra and the Ganga Valley of *uttarāpatha*.<sup>24</sup> Romila Thapar suggests that the royal highway from the north-west (region of Takṣaśilā) to Pāṭaliputra was considered the most important route of ancient India. It has continued to be used through the centuries, being familiar today to modern India as the Grand Trunk Road.<sup>25</sup> Here it is noticeable that Takṣaśilā was the major urban center as well as the Buddhist site located on this trade route in the

Gandhāra region. Other important cities of this region were Puskalavati, Sialkot, Sanghol, Sunetra (Near Ludhiana), and so forth, and all of these cities were situated on the *uttarāpatha* that was a major overland trade route that registered the movement of traders, artisans, and Buddhist monks from India throughout Asia. Numerous urban centers were located on the *uttarāpatha* and played a substantial role in commercial activities. The work of Upinder Singh asserts that *uttarāpatha* played an important role in the ancient Indian economy and facilitated the movement of people as well as goods and it was used by the armies, monks, traders, laymen, and other travelers.<sup>26</sup>

As discussed above the region of modern Haryana, geographically, was connected with the region of Gandhāra and Pātaliputra through *uttarāpatha*. Haryana has yielded many sculptural remains that belong to the Mathura and Gandhāra schools of arts. As such, this region seems to have been the melting pot of influence particularly in the *Kushāṇa* period, and this is well reflected in the Buddhist remains from Sanghol (in East Punjab).<sup>27</sup> Buddhism flourished in Haryana and it is evidenced by fragmentary railing pillars showing the concept and architecture of Tri-Ratna (three jewels; an auspicious symbol in Buddhism representing the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha)<sup>28</sup> which are found in southern Haryana and are now housed in the Gurukul Museum Jhajjar.<sup>29</sup>

Based on the Buddhist text, it may be said that Buddhism reached Haryana through the Buddha; according to the *Mahāvastu* and *Dīghanikāya*, the people of the Kuru tribe were converted by Buddha.<sup>30</sup> The Buddhist text *Dīpavaṃsa* also refers to Buddha's visit to the city of Kuru, where he received Almas on the bank of the Anotettalake. The city that may have been Kurukshetra of the Anotatta lake is the Anyataḥplaksha of Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.<sup>31</sup> In addition, the texts *vinaya* of the *mūlasarvāstivādins* refer to Buddha's long journey along with Ānanda and *yaksha* Vajrapāṇi from Hastināpura to Gandhāra and Uḍḍiyānavis Rohitka and back with *yakashavajrapāṇi* (a demi-god attending upon Buddha).<sup>32</sup> Some of the important urban centers viz, Rohtak, Agroha, Sugh, Ad-Badri, Sirsa, and Thanesar have provided the remains of Buddhist sculptures, which highlights the stronghold of Buddhism in Haryana in the ancient period. The Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang (Hsüan Tsang) has given a detailed account of the Aśokan *stūpas*. Giving an account of Thanesar, he says:

To the northwest of the city, 4 or 5 li is a *stūpa* about 30 feet high which was built by Aśoka-rajā. All the bricks are yellow, very bright, and shining; within is a peck measure of the relics of the Buddha. From the *stūpa* is a frequently emitted a brilliant light and many spiritual prodigies exhibit themselves.

Further, the Chinese Pilgrim Hsüan Tsang went from Thanesar to the northwest from above 400 li and came to the country Su-lo-kn-na' (Srughana), which

has rightly been identified with modern Sugh near Jagadhari on the right bank of the Yamunā River.

The archaeological data suggested that a considerable concentration of scattered Buddhist remains were discovered in different parts of Haryana. One of the *Kushāṇa* terracotta figures of Bodhisattva obtained from mid-level or period second at Sugh suggests the popularity of Buddhism here. This terracotta figure of Bodhisattva has a fairly executed head and bust wearing a high cylindrical crown, thick double earrings, and an upper garment, whose vertical folds indicate that both the shoulders of the figure were carved. It may be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>-century CE on stylistic ground.<sup>33</sup> The Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang who visited India during the reign of Harsha (C. 606-645 CE) describes three Buddhist monasteries with more than 700 Hinayanists at Thanesar. The remains of one such *stūpa* may still be seen on an elevated ground between the Brahma Sarovara (Tank) and the Kurukshetra University. In 1994, the Department of Archaeology and Museum, Haryana, cleared the area of the *stūpa* mound. In the clearance around the *stūpa*, remains of monastic establishments were also seen and the circumambulatory path around the *stūpa* was also exposed. It is suggested that the monasteries (and maybe the *stūpa* also) existed here during the *Kushāṇa* period in the early centuries CE.<sup>34</sup>

Another *Kushāṇa* period *stūpa* may have once existed near the referral hospital at Kurukshetra, but it has unfortunately been demolished recently. Some of the ruins of *Kushāṇa* and later time wares have been discovered nearby which enforces that it might belong to the *Kushāṇa* period.<sup>35</sup> An ivory bead has also been recovered from Sugh.<sup>36</sup> During the reign of Aśoka (C. 267-232 BCE), Sugh seems to have been an important center of Buddhism and was adorned by ten *stūpas* and monasteries.<sup>37</sup> The Aśoka *stūpa* and monastery outside the eastern gate of the city referred to by Xuanzang seem to have been located at Chaneti, about 5 km north-west of Sugh.<sup>38</sup> Cunningham had obtained ancient coins from Chaneti. Perhaps it was the suburb of Sugh, which was twenty li about 5 km in circumference.<sup>39</sup> Just about a hundred meters southeast of the village of Chaneti lies a huge and impressive brick mound by the side of the track of Bhuriya. The general shape and burnt yellowish-red brick colour corresponds to the Shahpur and Dharmarājika *stūpa* at Takṣaśilā.<sup>40</sup> The railing surrounding this *stūpa* may have been wooden, which disintegrated over time and was never replaced by stone railing.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, some remains of the Buddhist faith have been discovered in the *Kushāṇa* period monastery that was dug out in the southwest of Sugh village. This monastery may have been one of the five referred to by Xuanzang at Sugh.<sup>42</sup> Swami Omanand Sarasvati had published a clay sealing of the Gupta period, which has been found in Sugh in Haryana. The sealing shows Buddha sitting in *bhūmi – sparśa – mudrā* (earth touching posture) and some legend, probably the Buddhist formula ‘*Ye dharmāhetuprabhavāḥ*’ is engraved on this sealing.<sup>43</sup>

The town of Srughna, which Alexander Cunningham has identified with the village of Sugh, was situated on the old high bank of the Yamuna close to Jagadhri and Buria. Srughna was visited by Xuanzang (c. 629-644 CE) according to whom it was a town 31/2 miles in circuit, the capital of a kingdom, and a seat of considerable learning, both Buddhist and Brahmanical.<sup>44</sup> The Chinese pilgrim mentioned in his account that, he saw “five Buddhist monasteries and above 1000 Buddhist monks the majority of whom were Hinayanists, a few adhering to ‘other schools’”.<sup>45</sup> It is also interesting to note that a small ivory casket, about one inch in height, and containing paste-like white material inside has been recovered from the mound of Sugh.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, a sandstone Buddha Head from Sanghi in district Rohtak with a top-knot of curled hair may be attributed to the early eighth century CE.<sup>47</sup> Currently, this Buddha image is enshrined in the Śītalā Mātā Mandira near Gokarna Kā Tālāb and worshipped as Śiva.<sup>48</sup>

The Buddhist remains are also reported from Asandh in the district Karnal. The region Asandh (ancient Āsandīvat) has been mentioned in the *Brāhmaṇas*, *Sūtras*, *Aśh-ādhyayi*, *Mahābhābarta*, etc., and had been an important town of ancient India. It has a huge mound, partly covered by modern town, which has yielded painted Grey ware, early historic pottery, *Kushāṇa* Coins, and bricks.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, remains of the *Kushāṇa* pottery, coins, and other relics have also been found near the *stūpa* at Asandh.<sup>50</sup>

Another best-preserved Gandhāra image has been recovered from Jhajjar in Haryana.<sup>51</sup> This beautiful sculpture shows Buddha seated in *padmāsana* (a posture in religious meditation) on a lotus seat with his knees projecting beyond it.<sup>52</sup> Buddha is shown wearing a bejeweled turban, ear ornaments, a necklace, sacred thread, *valayas*, *uttarīya* (upper garments), a heavy lower garment, etc. On either side of the lotus seat, one donor couple is depicted donating to attain religious merit.<sup>53</sup> One of the human figures found in Sirsa has been identified as Buddha or Bodhisattva. This identification possibly gets further strengthened when we find that Sirsa was an important town in ancient times which is mentioned in the *Divyāvadāna* and various other texts.<sup>54</sup>

However, the sites of Sugh, Asandh, and Sirsa reveal little about Buddhist funerary structures. On the other hand, Adi Badri in Yamuna Nagar Buddhist site which has been subjected to extensive excavation, has provided evidence for various types of funerary structures. The burials on the northwest of the monastery, i.e. Samadhi I are reminiscent of similar structures that are encountered at the site of Sujatagarh. K.M. Srivastava undertook excavation at the ancient site of Bakraur, located on the right bank of the Niranjana. The site situated just north of the village is traditionally known by various names like Sujata Kutī, Sujatagarh, and Sujata Quila, named after the maiden Sujata, daughter of the village chief, who offered milk-rice to Buddha after he had undergone severe austerities for six years to gain

enlightenment. Archaeological investigation at the site yielded remains of a *stūpa*. The *stūpa* is supposed to have been constructed to perpetuate the memory of the maiden Sujata. It commemorates the young woman, Sujata, who had fed Gautama. This is probably the first recorded instance of the dedication of a *stūpa* to a female lay devotee from the early Buddhist period in the sub-continent.<sup>55</sup> It is made up of flat grey sandstone. Within this stone receptacle are found some teeth, bones, and beads. Additionally, the other finds from outside the stone receptacle, but within the central chamber of *stūpa* include bones, cowry shells and some pottery (red ware of small indistinguishable shapes).<sup>56</sup> One another broken Buddha head was recovered from Adi-Badri (dateable to circa 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> century CE) and this indicates that Buddhism survived a long time in the Haryana region. Xuanzang saw the grand ceremonial processions in Peshāwar, where ‘three hundred umbrellas of rich material were carried in the Processions’.<sup>57</sup> Just 35 km from Adi Badri remains of another brick *stūpa* are found which are similar to the specimen from Chānēti.<sup>58</sup> The *kushāṇa* coins, pottery and other relics also have been recovered from near the *stūpa* site. Similar type of these antiquities are also reported from the *stūpa* of Dhamek and Sarnath. Like others Buddhist *stūpa* of modern Haryana, two others brick *stūpas* are reported from Kurukshetra and Bhuna (District Fatehabad), both dateable to the *Kushāṇa* period and these are very dilapidated. The exact nature and architectural features of these cannot be ascertained.<sup>59</sup>

In addition, the Bodhisattva head was discovered from Mahmudpur which is in spotted red sandstone, and it shows a small incised circle representing the Ūṛṇā (a circle of hair between the eyebrows). A broken Buddha figure (dating *Kushāṇa* period) was recovered from Agroha and is now preserved in the Gurukula Jhajjar.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, one more Bodhisattva head of Gandhāra style was recovered from Mustafabaad in district Ambala.<sup>61</sup>

A few images of Buddha/Bodhisattva of *Kushāṇa* period have been recovered from Haryana but unfortunately, they are generally broken or have suffered mutilation through the process of urbanization or other activities.<sup>62</sup> For example, one half-broken figure recovered from village Brahman in Rohtak district shows only the folded legs in *vajraparyankāsana* (a typical posture of sitting) in mottled Mathura sandstone. It is identifiable only because of the Brāhamī inscription in early *Kushāṇa* characters which reads as follows: *buddhakanaka-muni....* Padma and Chakra have been carved on the seals of Buddha Kanakamuni.<sup>63</sup>

### **Some other Minor Antiquities related to Buddhism from Haryana**

Early Buddhism had assimilated various classes of people having varied faiths and beliefs. Naturally, therefore, those faiths and beliefs found someplace in Buddhism. Tree and serpent worship in the form of the worship of the *yakṣa* (Pali Jakkhas) and *nāgas*, which symbolized the power of the populace, was thus



amalgamated into Buddhism. The abode of *yakṣa* is often mentioned as Chaitya (a place of worship in Buddhist monasteries) or *āyatana* (house, abode) which was generally located outside a city, in a grove, on a mountain, by a tank, or even a city or a place or at the gates of a city.<sup>64</sup> The sculptures of *yakṣa* and *yakṣī*, formed an integral part of Buddhism. They were regarded as demigods, originally ‘partly helping, partly hurting’. However, under the impact of Buddhism, they became kinder and humane. It is well known that the images of *yakṣa* and *yakṣī*, are often depicted on railing pillars of the Buddhist *stūpas*.<sup>65</sup> The head and bust of a colossal *yakṣ* of red sandstone, now preserved in the state museum, Lucknow was discovered from Palwal. According to its structure, the image may be assigned to the early *Śuṅga* Period (about the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE).<sup>66</sup> Two red sandstone pillars discovered by D. B. Spooner from Amin (a place 8 kilometers south of Kurukshetra) indicate that a *Śuṅga* period *stūpa* may have once existed at this place.<sup>67</sup> On the sandstone pillars is carved a *yakṣa* and *yakṣī* couple (*Śuṅga* style), who is shown standing in an amorous pose.<sup>68</sup>

Another railing pillar has been discovered from Hathin, located 16 km. southwest of Palwal in the district of Faridabad. An ancient mound was located here, which was nearly 30 feet high and spread over 30 acres of land. The railing post found from Hathin shows on its front face a *yakṣa* standing in *sampāda-sthānaka- mudrā* (contrapposto) on a pedestal supported by a fabulous figure having human face and animal horns and ears.<sup>69</sup> Another spotted red sandstone post (probably circa the second-century BCE.) has been identified at Hathin. The worn-out lower part of this post indicates that it had once been buried in the ground, pointing to the actual use of this post in the railing with a plain back around a *stūpa*.<sup>70</sup>

Moreover, two pillars have been dated to the second first century BCE on stylistic and paleographic grounds and bear close affinity with contemporary pillars from Sanchi, Bharhut, etc.<sup>71</sup> The second pillar contains several small and somewhat blurred letters in Brāhmī script and records the names of the donors while the first is inscribed with bold and legible fifteen letters, which furnished evidence of the Buddhist nature of these pillars. R. C. Agarwala has read the inscription as ‘*bhinkhuikapotasapiasmitramātudānam*’. The gift of the mother of (a person named) Rasi (Rishi or Rāsi) Mitra, the grandson of *bhikuni* (Bhikṣuṇikā, a female Buddhist mendicant). Agarwala has rightly observed that these pillar fragments from Amin are, ‘very important relics in the realm of early Indian art’. The richness of motifs on both of them is quite evident and they have an important bearing on the ancient art of the Kurukshetra region.<sup>72</sup>

## Conclusion

As discussed above, the region of Haryana; i.e., South-East Punjab, was traversed by the major trade route, *uttrāpatha* that connected it to Gandhāra in the

North-West and Bay of Bengal via Mathura in the South-East. Owing to its strategic geographical location, present Haryana appears to have witnessed the construction of several *stūpas* and monasteries at sites such as Sugh, Asnadh, Ad-Badri and several others places. The demand of various items of construction as well as worship and rituals would have been fulfilled by traders at these monasteries and *stūpas* in Haryana. As we know from the several studies from the others parts of India, Buddhist monasteries tend to provide lodging to traders, who in turn patronized these sites and made donations for merit. Similar would have been the situations at Buddhist monasteries in Haryana in ancient times. Due to several invasions in medieval times and construction activities in modern times, most of the Buddhist sites have been destroyed. Thus, we do not find sufficient archaeological remains in Haryana, likewise the Takṣaśilān Buddhist sites. Yet, based on the measure of archeological remains that are discussed in the paper, we can underline the firm presence of Buddhist monasticism in Haryana in ancient times.

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### Abstract

*Written in 1797, Sukha Singh's Gurbilas is a comprehensive account of the eventful life of Guru Gobind Singh. It is based on the Bachittar Natak, Sainapat's Gursobha, Koer Singh's Gurbilas Patshahi 10 in addition to oral tradition and the author's visits to the places associated with the tenth Guru. This paper analyses his work as a whole and compares it with Koer Singh's Gurbilas. Sukha Singh, like Koer Singh, emphasizes that Guruship was vested in the Panth. However, unlike Koer Singh, he does not say explicitly about vesting of Guruship in the Granth. He brings in the Goddess in his description of the institution of the Khalsa but assigns a limited role to her. Sukha Singh gives more dates in his work and most of his dates are acceptable than is the case of Koer Singh. Sukha Singh's primary concern is to celebrate Guru Gobind Singh's 'wondrous acts' which ultimately led to the establishment of the Khalsa Raj whereas Koer Singh's primary purpose is to inspire the Khalsa for political struggle.*

**Keywords:** *Gurbilas*, Patna, Guru Gobind Singh, Sukha Singh, Koer Singh, Khalsa, *rahit*, Anandpur, Abchalnagar (Nander)

The *Gurbilas* is a poetical work written in praise of a Guru. As a literary form, the *Gurbilas* emerged in the early eighteenth century to celebrate the life and mission of Guru Gobind Singh. It narrates events in the life of the tenth Guru in a broad chronological order. The *Bachittar Natak* (1698) inspired Sainapat's *Gursobha* (c.1711), the first work in this genre. Covering the same ground briefly, Sainapat's work may be regarded as an extension of the *Bachittar Natak*. Koer Singh's *Gurbilas* written in mid-eighteenth century, uses the *Bachittar Natak* and the *Gursobha*. Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas Patshahi 10* follows the pattern of Koer Singh's work in many ways. This paper analyses the *Gurbilas* by Sukha Singh, a much-travelled man and a *mahant* of Kesgarh in Anandpur.

### Dating, Sources, and Scope

The *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*, written in Braj language in Gurmukhi script, was composed in 1797 by Sukha Singh. No question has been raised about its date or authorship. The two *Gurbilases*, respectively by Koer Singh and Sukha Singh, have many similarities because the *Bachittar Natak* and Sainapat's *Gur Sobha* served as their sources. However, there are differences in the sequence of events and also in the detail. Sukha Singh seems to have made a more judicious

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use of his new sources. Writing at a time when Sikh rule was firmly established, Sukha Singh does not talk of the struggle for political power, a theme that was all-important for Koer Singh whose *Gurbilas* is placed in 1751. Indeed, the contents of Koer Singh's work make better sense in a context earlier than the declaration of Sikh rule in 1765. Sukha Singh, on the other hand, states that he composed the *Gurbilas Patsahi 10* in love (*prem*) and loving devotion (*bhagti- bhao*); it is a work of piety meant to generate piety, and he who reads it and listens to it, has all his wishes fulfilled.

Edited by Gursharan Kaur Jaggi, the *Gurbilas* of Sukha Singh has been published by the Punjab Languages Department, Patiala. The text is based on the lithograph edition published in 1912 by Lala Ram Chand Manaktala and corrected by the editor through comparison with manuscripts of the work in the Punjab Languages Department and the Punjab State Archives.<sup>1</sup> Dr Jaggi points out that Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas* was based on three categories of sources: historical, Puranic, and oral. Among the written sources the editor mentions the *Bachittar Natak (Apni Katha)* and the *Gursobha*. He also used Ani Rai's *Jangnama Guru Gobind Singh*, Sarup Das Bhalla's *Mahima Prakash*, and some other works. Sukha Singh himself says that for writing his *Gurbilas* he read *granth*s and heard *granth*s being read out.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, during his stay at Patna and Anandpur, Sukha Singh had the opportunity to collect oral evidence. We also know that Sukha Singh was familiar with the *Gurbilas* of Koer Singh. I have analysed the latter work separately.<sup>3</sup>

The scope of Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas*, which consists of 31 chapters, covers the birth of the tenth Guru at Patna; his departure for Anandpur on the basis of a message from Guru Tegh Bahadur; the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Delhi; Guru Gobind Singh's accession to the *gaddi* and his marriage; the battles of Bhangani and Nadaun; institution of the Khalsa; removal of the *masands*; siege of Anandpur by the Mughal officials of Sarhind and Lahore allied with the hill chiefs; shortage of food and water leading to the evacuation of Anandpur by the tenth Guru; the battle of Chamkaur; the martyrdom of the elder *sahibzadas*; martyrdom of the younger *sahibzadas* at Sarhind; Guru Gobind Singh's arrival in Machhiwara; sending Daya Singh with the *Zafarnama* to Aurangzeb from Kangar; battle of Khidrana; stay at Damdama; death of Aurangzeb; war of succession among his sons; victory of Bahadur Shah with the help of Guru Gobind Singh; the Guru's travel to the south through Rajasthan in the company of Bahadur Shah; stay at Nander; Guru Gobind Singh being attacked by a Pathan and receiving a wound; and his departure from the world.<sup>4</sup> The introduction by the editor is useful. However, it is written from a literary point of view. An analysis of this work from a historical perspective is bound to yield a different picture.

For Sukha Singh, none but Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh are the removers of sin, misery, and ignorance in the world. He invokes Ad Purkh Kartar and mentions His attributes as the creator of the universe who is present everywhere and in everything. For Sukha Singh, there is no difference between God and the sword (*kharag*). The ten Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh represent the same light. The *sangat* and the Guru stand equated.<sup>5</sup>

In Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas*, the purpose of Guru Tegh Bahadur when he visited centres of pilgrimage in his travels to the east was not to earn merit but to redeem the world, particularly to give the message of fearlessness to the people. At Patna, when a Sikh asked Guru Tegh Bahadur about the history of the place, the ninth Guru narrated the story of Raja Hari Chand (Harish Chandra) who was from the *surajvanshi* lineage. Guru Tegh Bahadur is stated to be a descendant of Raja Hari Chand. According to Sukha Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur did not accompany Raja Man Singh (read Ram Singh); and he was already in the East when Raja Man Singh [*sic.*] went on his campaign in Assam. On his travel back to the Punjab, the Brahmins of Kasi (Benaras) are said to be so impressed by Guru Tegh Bahadur that they requested him to admit them into the Sikh faith. Guru Tegh Bahadur told the Sikhs present to prepare *charanpakhar* (*charanamrit*). Significantly, the dust of the feet of the *sangat* and not of the Guru is mentioned in the statement for preparing *amrit*.<sup>6</sup>

### **Early Life of Gobind Das (1666 to 1675)**

Sukha Singh gives 1666 as the date of Gobind Das' birth at Patna,<sup>7</sup> and refers to the horoscope (*janampatri*) prepared by Brahmins after his birth. The author states that Gobind Das used to go to the bank of the river Ganga for sport and rewarded the boatmen generously. The Sikhs brought small weapons for Gobind Das such as arrows and quivers, guns, daggers, swords, matchlocks, and cannon. Gobind Das used to worship the weapons by offering incense, bowing his head to them, and going around them. Sukha Singh mentions incidents of blessing of male children by Gobind Das, a son in one case and five sons in the other.<sup>8</sup> Gobind Das was fond of pellet bow (*gulel*). An incident is given in this connection.<sup>9</sup> Sukha Singh underlines that the cradle of Gobind Das was there in the Harmandar at Patna and the Sikhs used to worship it.<sup>10</sup>

Sukha Singh talks about the journey of Gobind Das from Patna to Makhwal, halting on the way at sacred places like Benaras, Prayag, Kashi, Haridwar, and Kiratpur.<sup>11</sup> The delegation of Hindu Kashmiris met Guru Tegh Bahadur. They communicated to the ninth Guru that Hindus were forcibly being converted to Islam in Kashmir by the 'Turks'. They told Guru Tegh Bahadur that it is difficult to find a Kshatriya who is ready to sacrifice his life for this cause.<sup>12</sup> They further stated that who is better than the Guru! Guru Tegh Bahadur became ready to lay down his life.<sup>13</sup>

### The Pre- Khalsa Events (1676-98)<sup>14</sup>

Gobind Das came to Damdama in Makhowal to be installed as the Guru. When the family *purohit* brought the sacred thread for the young Guru Gobind Singh, who was barely eleven years old, he told the *purohit* that the sword was his *janju* (sacred thread); his God is not Brahma, Vishnu, or Rudra (Shiva), but Mahakal who is his protector; the sword is received from Him in place of the sacred thread. Sukha Singh goes on to add that Mahakal is the same entity as Akal. He is the creator of gods, men, and demons, Krishan (Krishna) and Bishan (Vishnu), and the whole universe, and that Guru Gobind Singh is His devotee.<sup>14</sup> Mata Gujri intercedes to suggest that the sacred thread might be replaced by the sword at the time of creating the Khalsa.<sup>15</sup>

From the accession of Guru Gobind Singh to his departure from Makhowal to Sirmaur, both Koer Singh and Sukha Singh lay stress on two aspects: his martial activity and assumption of symbols of royalty. Consequently, there was a mounting tension between the tenth Guru and Bhim Chand, the Raja of Kahlur (Bilaspur), because Anandpur was located in his territory. Bhim Chand used all kinds of diplomatic methods and threats to get an elephant that was in the possession of Guru Gobind Singh, but the Guru did not yield. He insisted that his purpose in life was to use force for the protection of the good and destruction of the evil. On the intercession of Mata Gujri, however, Guru Gobind Singh agreed to accept an invitation from the Raja of Sirmaur (Nahan) to reside in his territory. Sukha Singh's account in this connection is more detailed than that of Koer Singh.<sup>16</sup>

In the *Bachittar Natak*, there is no reference to Bhim Chand in connection with the battle of Bhangani, but both Koer Singh and Sukha Singh state that Bhim Chand played a crucial role in this situation. Guru Gobind Singh was well received by the Raja of Sirmaur and on his suggestion, the Guru built a fort at Paonta on the right bank of the river Jamuna. He resumed his martial exercises and increased his strength. Bhim Chand, whose son was betrothed to the daughter of Fateh Shah, the chief of Garhwal, wanted to cross the river near Paonta with his armies. Guru Gobind Singh did not allow the army to cross the river but he allowed the bridegroom to cross. Bhim Chand resented this and subsequently instigated Fateh Shah and other hill chiefs to attack Paonta. In both the works the account of the battle fought at Bhangani remains close to the account given in the *Bachittar Natak*. Sukha Singh mentions the year 1689 for the battle, but Koer Singh does not mention any date. The context in which the latter places the battle implies that it could not have taken place before 1685. Moreover, Sukha Singh ends his account of the battle with emphatic elation among the victorious Sikhs who were prepared to conquer the world if so ordered by the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh told them to be patient and wait, and that a time would come when they would become rulers.<sup>17</sup>



For the battle of Nadaun, Koer Singh's account is much shorter than that of Sukha Singh, though both appear to be based primarily on the account given in the *Bachittar Natak*. As in the *Bachittar Natak* so in Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas*, the last incident mentioned in connection with this battle is the plundering of village Alsun by the Sikhs, but Koer Singh makes no mention of this significant incident. It expressed the Guru's disapproval of Bhim Chand's readiness to pay tribute to the Mughal *faujdars* despite his success in the battle in which the Guru had played a crucial role.<sup>18</sup>

### **Episode of the Goddess**

According to Sukha Singh, Guru Gobind Singh invoked the aid of Goddess Kalika for the institution of the Khalsa. Historians and Sikh scholars have taken notice of the episode of the Goddess appearing in both the works, and regard it as factually incorrect and superfluous. They also point out that worship of the Goddess does not fit into the ideology of Guru Gobind Singh as known from his compositions.<sup>19</sup> Sukha Singh gives three chapters to the Goddess. The story goes that one day at Anandpur Guru Gobind Singh thought of instituting the Panth to fulfil the purpose for which he had been sent by God. He invited Brahmans from different parts of the country, like Mathura, Kashi, Prayag, and Kashmir and asked them to invoke the Goddess. They expressed their inability and named Datta Nand of Ujjain as the Brahman who could make the Goddess appear. By God's grace, the Brahman from Ujjain came to Anandpur. He suggested that the bank of the river Sutlej, which was as beautiful as the Ganga, was appropriate for the worship of Adi Bhavani Chandi. All the necessary arrangements were made to perform the rite but the Goddess did not appear. Guru Gobind Singh called the Brahman to the court to know the reason for this delay. The Brahman said that he needed four years and a secluded place for the rite. Naina Devi hill top was then chosen on this account, and all the necessary arrangements were made. The Goddess appeared and asked Guru Gobind Singh to say what he wanted to have. He asked for the gift of the sword so that he should be victorious and destroy the *mlechh*; the *sants* and the whole world should remain in peace; no enemy should ever defeat them; *deg*, *teg*, and *bijay* (bounty, sword, and victory) should always be their lot. The Goddess gave the boon and vanished. There was all praise for the Guru. The narrative closes with the statement that Guru Gobind Singh had the distinction of being the only one to invoke the Goddess with success. That was why this story was being sung in the world, says Sukha Singh.<sup>20</sup>

### **Creation of the Khalsa Panth**

It is clearly stated that the institution of the Khalsa Panth was the purpose for which the Guru had been sent into the world. Sukha Singh remains rather close to Koer Singh also in his description of the creation of the Khalsa as the third Panth and his account of the Khalsa *rahit*. The Guru ordained that the Khalsa should

believe only in the 'Wielder of the Sword'. They should appropriate nothing but the *shabad*, and they should go to the *sadh-sangat* day and night. They should bear arms to fight for the sake of *dharam* to establish everlasting *raj*. They should never associate with the 'Turks', instead they should face them in the field of battle. The status given to the Khalsa was not enjoyed by other men. The light of *dharam* transformed men into gods. They were given the boon of all four *padaraths* (*dharm*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*). The term used by Sukha Singh for the position of the Khalsa is *raj-jog*, symbolic of the combination of spiritual and temporal activity. Their superiority over Hindus and 'Turks' was made manifest to the world. The *kachh* and the *kesh* constituted the essential part of their *rahit*. Through the initiation of the double-edged sword, all the four castes became one. Anyone could join the Khalsa. The Brahman, the Khatri, the Vaish, and the Shudar ate together as Sikhs irrespective of their earlier castes. They discarded the common beliefs of the people, the Brahmanical scriptures, and the praises of Ram and Krishan. They did not observe *bhaddan* (tonsure), *shraddh*, or *jathere* (pacification of ancestors).<sup>21</sup>

Sukha Singh dramatically brings in the context in which the *pahul* or the *amrit* (baptismal water) was prepared for instituting the Khalsa. He refers to the call for volunteers at Kesgarh to sacrifice their heads for the Guru. After the third call, a follower (*sewak*) stood up. He was taken into a tent, given a sword, and asked to slaughter a male goat with one stroke. Blood flowed from the tent. With the sword in his hand, Guru Gobind Singh asked for another head. Another *sewak* stood up after the third call. He too was taken into the tent and asked to slaughter a goat. There was a strong adverse reaction among the Sikhs who thought that this was the evil effect of invoking the Goddess (Bhawani). The Guru came out of the tent with the five beloved (*panjpiaras*) who had offered to give their head. He began to prepare the *pahul* with fresh water brought from the stream into which Mata ji put *patashas* (soluble sweets). The *pahul* was meant to rekindle the dead spirit. When it was ready, the Guru performed *ardas* and gave this *amrit* to the *panjpiaras* asking them to exclaim '*Vaheguru*'. The Khalsa were instructed to discard the false thread in favour of the sword, and not to associate with the dissenting groups called the Minas, the Masandias, the Dhir Malias, and the Ram Raiyas. Sukha Singh does not mention the fifth category, apparently consisting of those who shaved their head, saying that it was not concealed from anyone. The *deg* and *teg* would triumph in the end. No one else among gods and human beings had the same status as the Khalsa. Immersed in the divine light they had become superior to gods; this was the secret of ever-lasting rule. A Sikh of the Guru should bow at the feet of the Khalsa and serve the *sants*. In this way, Guru Gobind Singh is said to have created the third (*teesar*) Panth, distinct from, and superior to Hindus and 'Turks'.<sup>22</sup>

It may be noted that Koer Singh does not talk of the removal of the *masands* and their destruction by the Guru except in one case. Sukha Singh, however, states that some of the *masands* were killed, and some others submitted to the Guru or left the Punjab. Sukha Singh also gives an incident of a *Udasisadh* which implies DhirMal's hostility towards Guru Gobind Singh. Koer Singh talks emphatically of Guru Granth but Sukha Singh does not refer explicitly to the Granth as the Guru, though both of them emphasize that Guruship was vested in the Panth.<sup>23</sup>

### Post-Khalsa Phase

Sukha Singh covers the post-Khalsa phase in nineteen chapters.<sup>24</sup> Four of these 19 chapters do not relate to any significant event in the life of Guru Gobind Singh. There is no event of historical significance in chapter 13. Those who were hostile to the Sikhs were punished by the Guru and their villages were plundered. A Sikh who had a firm faith in the Guru was rewarded.<sup>25</sup> Chapter 16 in Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas* relates to the arrival of Prince Mu'azzam and the *ahadis* to the Punjab which actually belonged to the pre-Khalsa phase.<sup>26</sup> In chapter 17 too, there is no event of historical significance. In one incident Roshan Singh was shown that stealing anything was bad. In another, Ram Kuir, son of Baba Ram Das Budha, was given *pahul*, and important duties were entrusted to him. In the third incident, Asa Singh, a *mutasaddi* (accountant), was forgiven when he admitted that he had cheated a Sikh who came to get financial help to get his daughter married. Elsewhere, Guru Gobind Singh did not listen to the complaint of a Jat because it was false. The story of Joga Singh carried the import that going to a prostitute was regarded by the Guru as a grave default. Finally, an incident depicts Guru Gobind Singh's appreciation for the *bazigars* who could perform better *kirtan* than the *ragis*.<sup>27</sup> In chapter 19, 'Sakhi Charitar Char' there is no event of historical significance. As its title suggests, four incidents are mentioned as Guru Gobind Singh's 'wondrous acts', pointing to his supernatural powers. In another incident, a Brahman's wife forcibly taken away by a Pathan was brought back by Sahibzada Ajit Singh to be returned to the Brahman.<sup>28</sup>

In chapter 31, after his passing away, the tenth Guru comes to the help of Bal Rai and his brother Rustam Rai of village Janwara in the Bidar country who were imprisoned by the Marathas in the fort of Satara. They had prayed in vain to all sorts of gods and *pirs* for help to escape. On hearing Gurbani being recited by a Sikh in the fort they wanted to know who was his Guru. He replied that his Guru was Gobind Singh who helped all those who prayed to him sincerely. Both Bal Rai and the Sikh prayed to the Guru and the Guru appeared at midnight and rescued Bal Rai and his brother. Guru Gobind Singh also told him that his abode (*dham*) was at Abchalnagar (Nander) where he always remained present in the Sikh *sangat*, and that he came to the help of all those who were sincerely dedicated to him.<sup>29</sup>

Four chapters relate to the battles of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa till they evacuate Anandpur.<sup>30</sup> Four other chapters cover the events before the war of succession after the death of Aurangzeb.<sup>31</sup> The remaining six chapters relate to the war of succession, Guru Gobind Singh's travel from Delhi to Nander through Agra, and the final days of Guru Gobind Singh at Nander.<sup>32</sup>

The account of the early battles of Anandpur given by Sukha Singh has several variations from the account given by Koer Singh, but the outline of the battles is broadly similar. The account of the later battles of Anandpur is identical in both works but Sukha Singh adds the *amritsarovarsakhi*, underlining Guru Gobind Singh's indifference to riches. The major difference, however, is that whereas Koer Singh makes no mention of the battle of Nirmoh, Sukha Singh gives a whole chapter to it and his account is similar to that given by Sainapat in his *Gursobha*.<sup>33</sup>

Even when Sukha Singh's account of the events from the evacuation of Anandpur to the death of Aurangzeb on the whole remains nearer to that of Koer Singh, nine points of difference can be mentioned. In Sukha Singh's account of the battle of Chamkaur, the *zamindar* of Chamkaur does not betray the Guru to the Mughals. Referring to the two *sahibzadas* who attained martyrdom in the battle of Chamkaur, Sukha Singh mentions Zorawar Singh instead of Jujhar Singh. The Sikh who was left behind in Chamkaur is a Bengali Sikh named Sant Singh and not Sangat Singh as in Koer Singh's account. Sukha Singh's version of the martyrdom of the younger *sahibzadas* is substantially different from what is given by Koer Singh. In Sukha Singh's account, Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan were given a *hukamnama* by Guru Gobind Singh for the Sikhs but there was no mention of the establishment of Sikh rule in the future (it had been established by then). In Sukha Singh's narration of the situation in which Bhai Daya Singh presented the *Zafarnama* to Aurangzeb, there is no reference to Aurangzeb's dream in which Guru Gobind Singh told him how to receive the *Zafarnama*. Moreover, according to Sukha Singh, during the tenth Guru's stay in Bathinda, the Guru did not meet Bhai Bhagtu and Bhai Bahlo, and during his stay at Talwandi Sabo, there is no mention of Bhai Batha being sent to Pattan Farid. At the time of his departure from Talwandi Sabo towards Marwar, Guru Gobind Singh asked Dalla to accompany him so that he could be given the *rāj* of a large territory but he declined to go. In Koer Singh's account, there is no reference to Guru Gobind Singh's visit to Dadu Dwar in Rajasthan, but Sukha Singh says that the Guru had conversations with Dadu's successor in which the use of force for righteousness was justified by the tenth Guru.<sup>34</sup>

The accounts of events given by Koer Singh and Sukha Singh about the battle between Prince Azam and Bahadur Shah and Guru Gobind Singh's meeting with Bahadur Shah also have some differences. Sukha Singh ascribes an important

role to Bhai Nand Lal in encouraging Bahadur Shah to approach Guru Gobind Singh for help whereas Bhai Nand Lal is not even mentioned by Koer Singh. Similarly, Sukha Singh alone talks of the meeting of the Jogis from Balgudai with the Khan-i-Khanan (Munim Khan) and their offer of the gifts of the philosopher's stone, supernatural powers and sexual potency which the Khan rejected with disdain. Sukha Singh does not talk of the personal meeting of Guru Gobind Singh with Bahadur Shah at Agra when the latter offered costly gifts to the Guru. However, during his stay at Agra for the rainy season Guru Gobind Singh is said to have conversations with Bahadur Shah's Pir and his Qazi.<sup>35</sup> Sukha Singh says that Guru Gobind Singh joined the camp of Bahadur Shah in Rajasthan where Sahibzada Zorawar Singh (an adopted son of Guru Gobind Singh) arrived to join the Guru's camp. Mata Sundari talked to Guru Gobind Singh about her son Ajit Singh whom she was missing. These incidents do not figure in Koer Singh's account of Guru Gobind Singh's travels in Rajasthan. Sukha Singh also gives an account of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh's death in a fight with the guards of the fort of Chittor. Furthermore, in Koer Singh's account, Guru Gobind Singh left Rajasthan for Patna, stayed there for over four years, and then went to Nander through Burhanpur. In Sukha Singh's account, on the other hand, Guru Gobind Singh went directly to Burhanpur and stayed there for some time before he left for Nander. Sukha Singh places the tenth Guru's meeting with Bahadur Shah in Burhanpur.<sup>36</sup>

### **Stay at Nander**

Sukha Singh's account of Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Nander is less detailed than that of Koer Singh.<sup>37</sup> However, the former talks about a graveyard taken over by the Khalsa, and on protest from Muslims, Guru Gobind Singh demonstrated that the place belonged to non-Muslims before it was turned into a graveyard. Sukha Singh does not mention Mata Sahib Devi in connection with Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Nander. Sukha Singh is emphatic that Guru Gobind Singh deliberately incited two descendants of Painde Khan to attack him. This work refers to Banda Singh being sent to the Punjab but says nothing more about him. Sukha Singh emphasizes that the *sangat* is equated with the Guru and suggests that the Guru is always present in the Khalsa *sangat*. A *sakhi* highlights the importance of 'AbchalnagarNander' where the tenth Guru continues to reside and can be seen in the *sangat*, there being no difference between the Guru and the *sangat*, and that he comes to the aid of those who pray to him. At the same time, Sukha Singh says that the *darbar* at Abchalnagar was constructed at the spot where Guru Gobind Singh had gone to the other world. The writer gives 1708 as its date and says that by visiting this place, a Sikh becomes pure, like a base metal touched by the philosopher's stone. At this door of the Guru, Sikhs and *sadhs* receive four gifts: *budh*, *bibek*, *suridhi*, and *siddhi* (intellect, wisdom, prosperity, and spiritual

powers). Here, the praises of God are sung day and night, and *arati* is performed. Sukha Singh goes on to add that some of the Khalsa left Abchalnagar after some time to perform services at the Harmandar in Sri Patna. He makes it a point to mention that he too had visited the *darbar* at Patna before coming to Anandpur.

Significantly, the writer brings in the Guru's injunctions regarding death. At the time of his passing away, Guru Gobind Singh reportedly told his followers that as his end was ordained by God it was a matter of rejoicing for him; none should wail and cry after him; they should sing the praises of God, and give exposition (*katha*) in accordance with the Guru's teachings. They should hold the *diwan* in this way for forty days and the lowest of the low should not be debarred from it. All varieties of food should be prepared and distributed among all the four castes without any distinction. The Khalsa should organize *chauki-shabad* to celebrate the event.<sup>38</sup>

### **In Retrospect**

Sukha Singh uses Koer Singh's *Gurbilas* as an important source besides the *Bachittar Natak* and the *Gursobha*. A comparison between the contents of Koer Singh's *Gurbilas* with that of Sukha Singh's shows that Sukha Singh omits some factually incorrect statements in Koer Singh's work. In place of the wrong dates given by Koer Singh, Sukha Singh gives acceptable dates. Some of the events omitted by Koer Singh are included by Sukha Singh who has also added some new episodes. Consequently, the volume of Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas* is much larger than the volume of Koer Singh's work.

Regarding the episode of the Goddess, Sukha Singh says in all modesty that he was not a learned *pandit*; he related the episode as it was current in the world. It appears that this episode had become current in the oral tradition by the 1740s. The episode given by Sukha Singh is very close to what we find in Koer Singh's work. In Sukha Singh's work too the Goddess is absent from the doctrines and conduct of the Khalsa, playing a limited role and appearing only in one episode that does not integrate with the rest of his *Gurbilas*.

Sukha Singh underlines that the *sangats* everywhere became the Khalsa. The same *rahit* was meant for the entire body of the Khalsa. He mentions that the relics of Guru Gobind Singh were cherished by the Sikhs in the Harmandar at Patna. Sukha Singh refers to the Gurdwara Sisganj which commemorated the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. We also know from other sources that many Gurdwaras associated with the Gurus were constructed during the late eighteenth century when Sikhs acquired power. Sukha Singh underlines the sanctity of the three most important places associated with Guru Gobind Singh: Anandpur, Nander, and Patna. Writing at a time when Sikh rule was firmly established, Sukha Singh does not talk of the struggle for political power.

## Endnotes

1. Bhai Sukha Singh, *GurbilasPatsahi 10*, ed. Gursharan Kaur Jaggi, Patiala: Punjab Language Department, 1989(henceforth, Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*), Introduction, p. xxxvi.
2. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, Introduction, pp. xvi-xviii.
3. Karamjit K. Malhotra, 'Koer Singh's *GurbilasPatshahi 10*', in *Panjab Journal of Sikh Studies*, Volume IX, 2022, pp.66-81.
4. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, Introduction pp. xv-xvi.
5. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp.5-7.
6. Ibid, pp.17-29.
7. The generally accepted date for the birth of Guru Gobind Singh is 22 December 1666. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, p.34.
8. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 38-39. The two episodes of tenth Guru's blessings for a son are not there in Koer Singh's *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*, ed. Shamsheer Singh Ashok, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1968.
9. There was a well to which women used to come with their pitchers for carrying the water home. One day, a Muslim woman came to the well. Gobind Das aimed at the pitcher, but the pellet hit the woman's forehead and it began to bleed. She complained to Mata Gujri who prayed for the water of the well to become saltish. Immediately it became saltish. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, 39-40.
10. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, p.41.
11. Ibid, pp.43-56.
12. Ibid, pp. 57-58.
13. The account of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom is more or less the same in both works, but the account given by Sukha Singh is shorter than that of Koer Singh. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp.63-65; Koer Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 57-60.
14. Koer Singh and Sukha Singh cover the pre-Khalsa events of Guru Gobind Singh's life in seven chapters with the difference that Koer Singh starts the episode of the Goddess after the battle of Nadaun in chapter 7 itself and Sukha Singh takes his account up to the campaign of the Khanzada in chapter 7 and talks of the Goddess in a new chapter. There are variations in the account of events given by Koer Singh and Sukha Singh but only a few of them are significant. Koer Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp.17-109; Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 1-125.
15. Both Koer Singh and Sukha Singh state that Guru Gobind Singh refused to put on the sacred thread at the time of his accession and insisted that it was to be replaced by the sword. Koer Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp.63-67; Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp.68-71.
16. Koer Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 66-108; Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 70-125.
17. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 91-117; Koer Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 82-117.
18. Koer Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp.100-102; Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp.118-125.
19. See for example, Gurtej Singh, 'Compromising the Khalsa Tradition: Koer Singh's *Gurbilas*', in *The Khalsa: Sikh and Non-Sikh Perspectives*, ed. J.S. Grewal, New Delhi: Manohar, 2004, pp.54-55. For a discussion, see Karamjit K. Malhotra, 'Appendix: The Goddess in Eighteenth Century Sikh Literature', in *The Eighteenth Century in Sikh History: Political Resurgence, Religious and Social Life, and Cultural Articulation*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 290-300. Also see, J.S. Grewal, *Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708): The Master of White Hawk*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2019, pp.127, 141 n 1.
20. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 136-40;146-58.
21. Ibid, pp.171-85.
22. Ibid, pp. 171-74, 177, 179-80, 182.
23. Ibid, pp.160-70.

24. For events of the post-Khalsa phase of Guru Gobind Singh's life, Koer Singh gives 12 chapters. In Koer Singh's work, the account of the campaign of Husain Khan and the arrival of Prince Mu'azzam in Punjab are given in chapters 12 and 13 which actually belonged to the pre-Khalsa phase. Thus, there are only 10 chapters that relate to the post-Khalsa phase in Koer Singh's *Gurbilas*.
25. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas*, pp. 186-96.
26. Ibid, pp. 235-49.
27. Ibid, pp. 250-64.
28. Ibid, pp.273-86.
29. Ibid, pp. 448-51.
30. Ibid, pp. 197-234, 265-72, 287-308.
31. Ibid, pp. 309-82.
32. Ibid, pp.383-447.
33. Ibid, pp.197-234, 265-308.
34. Ibid, pp. 309-82.
35. Ibid,pp.383-412.
36. Ibid, pp.413-26.
37. Ibid, pp.427-35, 443-47.
38. Ibid, pp.436-42.



## Representation of Sikh Gurus on the Murals of Darbar Jhanda Sahib, Dehradun

\*Gauri Singh

### Abstract

*The three-centuries long rule of the Mughals in the Indian subcontinent laid robust foundations for the growth of art and architecture by blending Persian and indigenous Hindu styles. Subsequently, in British India, the subject matter and painting styles underwent a change. This ability of Indian architecture and art to absorb foreign elements and adapt to circumstantial changes gave birth to new forms that were a brilliant amalgamation of native and new features combined. These pivotal characteristics of Indian architecture and art seamlessly integrated into the overall construction of Darbar Jhanda Sahib. The mural paintings at Jhanda Sahib saw an influence, and blending of popular artistic styles of the time – Mughal, Rajasthan, and Kangra. Progressing from the oldest to the most recent, these paintings undergo a notable transformation on various fronts. Despite originating in a conservative milieu, the mural paintings at Jhanda Sahib evolve to embody a more liberal character by transcending barriers along the way.*

**Keywords** – Darbar Jhanda Sahib, Guru Ram Rai, Murals, Sikh Guru, Mughal, Dehradun, Garhwal, Persian, Hindu, art, architecture, Janam Sakhi.

Ram Rai was one of the two sons of the seventh Sikh Guru – Guru Har Rai.<sup>1</sup> At a time when there were intense political disputes going on between Sikhs and Mughals, Ram Rai, aged fourteen befriended Aurangzeb. Disappointed with this, he was disqualified from the line of *Guru Gaddi* by his father. However, soon, he gained widespread followers by displaying his mystical powers and came to be known as ‘Guru’ of an independent sect of *Udaseens* in Delhi, that followed the teachings of Guru Nanak.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, a *firman* was issued by the Raja of Garhwal – Fateh Shah and following it Ram Rai took up his abode in the Dun Valley in 1675 A.D.,<sup>3</sup> where he established his ‘*dera*’ in the valley near a perennial pond. This ‘*dera*’ became the nucleus of the town that gradually expanded around it and attracted people from Punjab and interiors of Garhwal as Ram Rai’s followers<sup>4</sup> and thus was laid the foundation of the city of Dehradun.

After Guru’s demise in 1687, the spiritual and political affairs within the sect were handled by one of his four wives – Mata Panjab Kaur between 1687 and 1742

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A.D.<sup>5</sup> Deeply saddened over his friend's death, Aurangzeb sent resources and artisans to build a monument in 1699<sup>6</sup> – the Darbar.<sup>7</sup> Its construction was looked over by Mata Panjab Kaur. She was assisted by an agent Har Prasad for twenty-five years<sup>8</sup> and he was eventually elected as the first *Mahant*<sup>9</sup> of the sect.

### The Artists

Guru Ram Rai stayed in Delhi for fifteen years and most likely developed an interest in art there.<sup>10</sup> There are Miniature Paintings of Sikh Gurus in the Darbar's collection that are believed to have been painted by the Mughal School artists in 1685 A.D.<sup>11</sup> Artists came from Kiratpur to the Doon valley with Guru<sup>12</sup> and one of these artist's descendants, Tulsi Ram,<sup>13</sup> later became the chief artist of murals in the Darbar. Kallu Mistri<sup>14</sup> and Chandra Bhan<sup>15</sup> were *gurus* of Tulsi Ram and they had also worked on the murals of the Darbar in the late nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

### Paintings

The central chamber of the Darbar had plain white walls devoid of any decoration, symbolizing the simplicity of the *Udaseen* sect. However, the verandah and arches outside have beautifully gilded walls and ceiling that follow the patterns of mosaic work – geometrical and floral designs, popularly seen in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Mughal monuments. The absence of figural designs indicates that this portion was painted during Aurangzeb's lifetime. The four cenotaphs, each dedicated to Guru's four wives, were built after a gap of thirty-one years<sup>17</sup> and only two have been embellished. Unlike the paintings on the main shrine, the walls here showcase a wide variety of flora and fauna, which uncages the '*dera*' from the orthodox Islamic influence on art.

### The Bhai Bahlo Darwaza



Fig. 1: Guru Nanak singing hymns under a tree with five others; Right panel in the verandah of Bhai Bahlo Darwaza.

In the south of the Darbar, along the Fortress wall is the Bhai Bahlo Darwaza. The ceiling features an intricate carpet-like flora and fauna pattern in vibrant colours, while the inner side of the arcades on the front-facing portico showcase six portraits of Sikh

gurus. Above the entrance door is a marble tablet on the wall. It has *Qasida* in Persian, written in praise of Guru Ram Rai. It was written by a Persian poet and sent on behalf of Aurangzeb to be installed on the present site after the demise of Guru.<sup>18</sup> These murals were painted in continuation of the ones on the walls of the Main Shrine in 1699.

The painting on the right wall's semicircular panel depicts Guru Nanak (1469 A.D.-1539 A.D.) who appears to be singing hymns under a tree (Fig. 1).<sup>19</sup> Guru Nanak sits on a square *kaleen* wearing a white *jama* and *pyjama*; his white beard indicates old age and he is adorned with a Mughal turban. Holding a book which symbolizes the Granth Sahib, he is shown reciting verses. Bala and Mardana, with a rabab and sarangi respectively, sit in front, each dressed in pastel pink and white tunics with pleats and *pugris*. Mardana's leaning torso adds movement as he plays along with Guru Nanak's hymns. Behind Guru Nanak sits Guru Ram Rai on the *kaleen*. A common practice at the time was to depict the chief figure with gods or great saints, thus symbolizing their close association to the divine and thus a general superiority over the rest. Ram Rai wears a red attire - a red *jama* and *pyjama* with a yellow waistcloth and a red *pugri*. His raised left hand shows devotion to Guru Nanak's hymns, while his sincere expression reflects joy in the devotional musical atmosphere.

Behind him are two men, likely to be Sri Chand and Lachmi Chand who were Guru Nanak's sons. They are dressed differently, wearing white *dhotis*, simple *pugris*, and a cloth covering their left shoulder. Both wear a thread around their necks and hold a *bhala* in their hands as they sit and listen attentively. Their attire

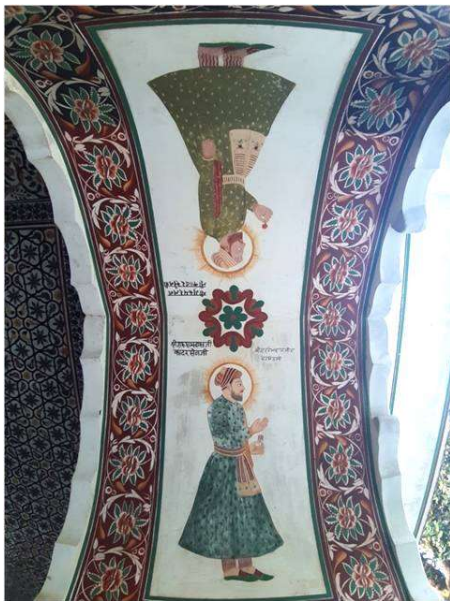


Fig. 2: Guru Angad (1539 A.D.-1552 A.D.) and Guru Amar Das (1552 A.D.-1574 A.D.); Left panel in the verandah of Bhai Bahlo Darwaza.

contrasts with Mughal fashion, emphasizing their non-adherence to their father's sect. The tree behind them spreads its branches and foliage, to offer shade to those seated under it and its branches and foliage seem to be

swaying with the wind. Music fills the air, complemented by the rhythmic movement of the tree's branches. In the background, a green hill and a blue sky form the horizon. While white colour dominates the picture it is balanced by pastel-pink tones in Bala's coat and the surroundings, Guru Ram Rai's red attire contrasts yet blends well. The painting's title is written in *Gurmukhi* below the tree line.

The artwork on the left wall's semicircular panel depicts the second and third Sikh Gurus i.e. Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das who are engaged in a deep conversation (Fig. 2).<sup>20</sup> Following the similar colour scheme as the right panel, they are identified by their names in *Gurmukhi* written by the artist above them. Guru Angad, the senior, is distinguished by his white beard, while Guru Amar Das has a black beard. They sit opposite each other on a *chauki* covered with a yellow frilled bedsheet, against a bolster which is common in Rajasthani miniatures. Their attire consists of white robes and turbans. Attendants behind them whisk *morpankhi*, adding formality. One attendant wears a red *jama* with a patterned *pugri*, the other one is shown in green *jama* with yellow polka dots *pugri*. The scene is set on a terrace with a white cloudy sky, balanced by the reddish-ochre painted boundary. Inspired by Mughal paintings, it reflects the Mughal court's sitting posture and etiquette. The simplicity of each figure's colour scheme, coupled with the conversational theme, imbues the scene with dynamism while highlighting its charming and informal character.



**Fig. 3:** Portraits of Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev; Left arch, Bhai Bahlo Darwaza

On the left arch are portraits of Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev (Fig. 3).<sup>21</sup> On the central arch are portraits of Guru Har Gobind and Baba Gurditta (Fig. 4)<sup>22</sup> in a green oval background with vermillion and yellow outline. And on the right arch are portraits of Guru Har Rai and Guru Ram Rai (Fig. 5).<sup>23</sup> All the figures are shown dressed in typical Mughal outfits – long *jama* almost reaching ankle, striped *churidar pyjama*, a *patka* tightly wrapped around the waist with frontal pleats, *pugri*, and matching *jutti*.

Guru Ram Das, dressed in a printed dark-green tunic with a red and gold matching turban, waist tie, and *pyjama*, has his right hand raised in a graceful gesture. Guru Arjan Dev is wearing a printed olive-green tunic, an embroidered golden waist tie, golden *pugri*, and *pyjama*. Both adorn dark green and red



*juttis*, complementing their outfits perfectly, while holding a flower in one hand.

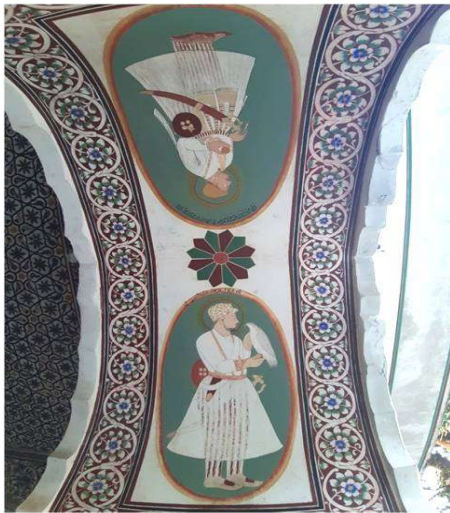


Fig. 4: Portraits of Guru Har Gobind and Baba Gurditta Ji; Central arch, Bhai Bahlo Darwaza

Guru Har Gobind and Baba Gurditta Ji are dressed in a white transparent *jama*, revealing their red and white striped *pyjamas* underneath. Their strength has been emphasized through a *kripan*, *talwar* and *bhala* which are tucked in their waist tie. They sport a more casual turban style, with Guru Har Gobind's turban featuring realistic fold pattern. Baba Gurditta Ji is holding a ball in his left hand. He has a rosary around his neck and has pearl loops in ear. Guru Har Gobind is caressing the falcon perched on his right hand

Guru Har Rai's portrait is relatively simple and natural. The broad pleats

of his brick-red tunic gradually merges in the dress folds and a crimson *patka* runs over his right shoulder. Two pearl-string neckpieces adorn his neck and he holds a pink flower bud in his left hand. Guru Ram Rai is donning a green polka dot tunic, green striped *pugri*, and a grey waist tie. A falcon is perched on his right hand. Their depiction seems to be based on direct observation since the artist witnessed them while they were still alive during their time in Delhi.

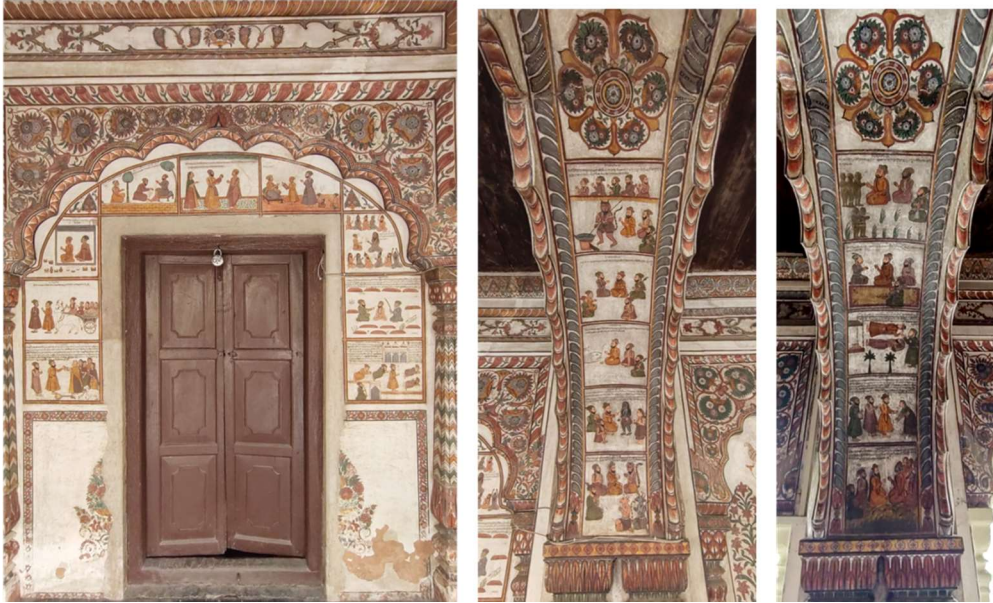
The figures are predominantly flat, with a subtle colour blending in the folds of their cloth. Colours add depth in faces, particularly accentuating almond-shaped eyes, arched brows, and blended beards. The rendering of grey feathers of the falcons has been done with Chiaroscuro. These paintings of Sikh gurus are the oldest specimens of wall paintings of Sikh Gurus that exist anywhere in India.<sup>24</sup>



Fig. 5: Portraits of Guru Har Rai and Guru Ram Rai; Right arch, Bhai Bahlo Darwaza

### ***Janam Sakhi* Paintings**

At the Mahant's Residence, the verandah of the ground floor is completely covered with paintings – walls, arches, and columns. Murals here have variegated themes – *Janam Sakhi* or the episodes from Guru Nanak's life (Fig. 6)<sup>25</sup>, Hindu gods and goddesses, and secular subjects like *sadhus*, fairies, etc can be seen in small panels.



**Fig. 6: *Janam Sakhi* Paintings; Ground floor verandah of the Mahant's Residence**



**Fig. 7: Nanak in *Kamrupa Desa* with Temptresses**

Eleven panels surround the left section of the door, of which nine depict *Janam Sakhi* scenes. Ten panels painted on the inner side of the semi-circular archway that divides the left and central section narrate the miracles of Guru Nanak. The accompanying inscription in *Gurmukhi* helps in identifying scenes and characters in the paintings.

'Nanak in *Kamrupa Desa* with Temptresses' (Fig. 7)<sup>26</sup> depicts a witch handing over the magic thread to Guru to cast a spell on him. Once, while passing through the *Kamrupa* region, Nanak encountered witches. Ignoring Nanak's advice, Mardana entered the

prohibited area and was turned into a lamb. Bala went looking for him but he too met with same fate. When Nanak began looking for his disciples, the witches appeared again and attempted to put a magic thread on his neck but Nanak converted them into bitches. Convinced of Nanak's powers they became his disciples<sup>27</sup> and were restored to human forms.<sup>28</sup> Here, the witches, depicted as ordinary women, have red *tilak* on their forehead symbolizing their possible affiliation with the Shaivite cult. A white lamb in the picture is Mardana, identified by *rabab* on the ground.



**Fig. 8: Pandit Hardayal visits the Bedi family to bless baby Nanak**



**Fig. 9: Nanak and Demon-King *Devlut* at *Sumer Parbat***

The painting '*Pandit Hardayal visits the Bedi family to bless baby Nanak*' (Fig. 8)<sup>29</sup> portrays baby Nanak held in his father – Mehta Kalu's hands, wrapped in a cloth and his daughter, Nanki standing behind him. The *purohit* Pandit Hardayal is watching the blessed child with folded hands.

Pandit Hardayal, the family *purohit* of Bedi's, was asked to see Nanak's horoscope upon his birth.<sup>30</sup> Before looking at his astrological charts, Pandit Hardayal first wanted to have a glimpse of baby Nanak.<sup>31</sup> The floor of the house is peculiarly ornamental, like mosaic, befitting the status of Bedi family.

The painting '*Nanak and Demon-King Devlut at Sumer Parbat*' (Fig. 9)<sup>32</sup> illustrates the scene of King Devlut and demons seated in front of Nanak to seek blessings.

Once Nanak travelled to Gandhar with Bala and Mardana. There they stumbled upon cannibal king *Devlut* of *Sumer Parbat*. Before fulfilling his desire to eat them, he became blind. Realizing the powers of Nanak, he apologized. Nanak forgave him and restored his sight. Thus, *Devlut* and his followers became Nanak's disciples.<sup>33</sup> The demons have mixed human and animal features – tail, horns, antelope head,



and long canines and they are shown seated in front of Mardana with folded hands in reverence in the mural. Whereas King *Devlut* distinctively has more human features – face and upper body to emphasize his superiority and he is seated in front of Nanak. He has horns and disproportionately large eyes. Behind Nanak, Bala is seated. All three demons have tails of tigers. The King is shown wearing a gold girdle while the escorts wear a silver girdle.



**Fig. 10: Nanak in Mecca-Sharif**

Another painting '*Nanak in Mecca-Sharif*' (Fig. 10)<sup>34</sup> depicts Nanak and Bala resting on the ground with their feet towards a shrine – a simple structure resembling a grave under a cloth roof. A *Mullah*, clad in green attire and turban with staff is shown standing next to Guru Nanak and Bala. We learn from a legend that during his visit to Mecca and Medina, Nanak slept in a courtyard with his feet pointing towards a shrine. *Mulla* Jeevan, the shrine sweeper, was offended and asked Nanak to reposition his feet.

When Nanak complied, even Mecca shifted along with his feet. This incident conveyed the message that God is omnipresent and not just confined to shrines. Two small palm trees in the foreground indicate the Arab setting.<sup>35</sup>

In '*Nanak appears before Nanki*' (Fig. 11)<sup>36</sup> painting Nanki is bending down to touch her brother's feet in reverence and Nanak is shown trying to stop her. Bala and Mardana stand behind and watch the scene with folded hands.



**Fig. 11: Nanak appears before Nanki**

While in Medina, Nanak sensed his sister Nanki's longing for him despite the distance. Through his spiritual powers, Nanak, along with Bala and Mardana, manifested before Nanki at her husband Jairam's house in Sultanpur.<sup>37</sup> This simple depiction profoundly conveys the emotions of love and respect between siblings through subtle gestures.

The original paintings have undergone reconstruction during the conservation process due to the damage from the smoke of *challahs* used to cook food for the *langar* during the annual



Jhanda fair in March-April. It is difficult to set an exact date as to when the Janam Sakhi was painted here.<sup>38</sup> These paintings lack refinement, maturity, and quality that is visible on the *Bhai Bahlo Darwaza*, the first floor of *Mahant's* Residence, and Jhanda Gate. Also, unlike the fine, intricate, and variety of woven patterns of Cenotaph and Central shrine, bold lines, broad and fancy floral motifs cover the space above the arch on either side of doors and archways.

These paintings exhibit an original style and theme, distinct from traditional miniature art. Their compositions are simple, with minimal white spaces, and the figures are arranged thoughtfully to look interactive. The rendering of figures demonstrates the artist's understanding of ratios and proportions, with bold outlines and attention to detail, particularly in the eyes. Although some arrangements appear more refined than others, it suggests the skill of the mason-artists in spatial principles. The reconstructed images resemble book illustrations, each scene accompanied by text to narrate the story to laymen. The Janam Sakhi theme highlights the close connection between Guru Ram Rai's *Udaseen* sect and the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak.

## Conclusion

Under the leadership and management of their progressive 'chosen' Mahants, Jhanda Sahib embraced contemporary fashions to accommodate its diverse follower base from various religions, while still strongly preserving beliefs in the mystical powers of the Darbar even in the twenty-first century. Darbar Sahib is one of the primordial buildings of Dehradun which makes it distinct in terms of its religious orientation, socio culture setting and architectural layout.<sup>39</sup> It stands as a remarkable example of a sect with a controversy-filled origin, blending different architectural styles into one and representing diverse themes in its mural art. Therefore, this revered spiritual site of Darbar Jhanda Sahib is an extraordinary component of Dehradun's multi-dimensional living heritage.

## Endnotes

1. H.G. Walton, *Gazetteer of Dehradun*, Dehradun, Natraj Publishers, 1995 Edition, p.171.
2. B.P. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 2003, p.22.
3. G.R.C. Williams, *Memoirs of Dehradun*, Dehradun: Natraj Publishers, 1998, p.90.
4. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.27.
5. Ibid, p.27.
6. Walton, *Gazetteer of Dehradun*, p.214.
7. At the place where the original temple was built by the saint, it was constructed with the royal grant given by Aurangzeb. It resembles Jahangir's Tomb in Lahore. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.27.
8. Walton, *Gazetteer of Dehradun*, p.173.
9. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.27.
10. Ibid, p.117.

11. M.S. Randhawa, *Paintings of Sikh Gurus*, New Delhi: Roop-Lekha, Vol. 39, no. 1, 1971, pp.14-19.
12. Chandu Lal *Mistri*, the nephew of Tulsi who was the master painter of Jhanda Gate murals, revealed the information to the author during an interview on 21st April 1979 that their ancestors came to Dehradun from Kiratpur with Guru Ram Rai when the guru deserted Aurangzeb's court and migrated to this part of Garhwal with some of his followers. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.116.
13. His self-portrait exists on the exterior wall of the Jhanda Gate among other paintings. It bears an inscription in Devanagari and Urdu, reading '*Tulsi Ram Mistri tasveer banane wala*'. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.118.
14. Chandu Lal, Tulsi's nephew revealed to the author in an interview on 21st April 1979 that Tulsi was a pupil of Kallu Mistri, who might have been working on the Jhanda Gate and Mahant's Residence murals. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.120.
15. Vide Dal Chand, Tulsi's pupil revealed to the author in an interview on 22nd April 1979 that Chandra Bhan hailed from Punjab, was a barber by caste, and had painted some murals on the inner side of the Jhanda Gate. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.120.
16. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.121.
17. Their dates of completion have been inscribed at their entrance.
18. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.36.
19. Gauri Singh, *Guru Nanak singing hymns under a tree*, photograph, October 16, 2020.
20. Gauri Singh, *Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das*, photograph, October 16, 2020.
21. Gauri Singh, *Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev*, photograph, October 16, 2020.
22. Gauri Singh, *Guru Har Gobind and Baba Gurditta*, photograph, October 16, 2020.
23. Gauri Singh, *Guru Har Rai and Guru Ram Rai*, photograph, October 16, 2020.
24. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p. 35.
25. Gauri Singh, *Janam Sakhi Paintings, Mahant's Residence*, photograph, July 05, 2021.
26. Gauri Singh, *Nanak in Kamrupa Desa with Temptresses, Darbar Jhanda Sahib*, photograph, July 05, 2021.
27. Kartar Singh, *Life Story of Guru Nanak*, New Delhi: Hemkunt Press, 2003, p.60.
28. Kirpal Singh. *Janam Sakhi Traditions*, Patiala: Panjabi University, 1990, pp.61-63.
29. Gauri Singh, *Pandit Hardayal visits the Bedi family to bless baby Nanak*. photograph, July 04, 2021.
30. Harish Dhillon, *Spiritual Masters- Guru Nanak*, Mumbai: Indus Source Books, 2005, p. 21.
31. Singh, *Life Story of Guru Nanak*, p.5.
32. Gauri Singh, *Nanak and Demon-King Devlut at Sumer Parbat*, photograph, July 04, 2021.
33. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.62.
34. Gauri Singh, *Nanak in Mecca-Sharif*, photograph, July 04, 2021.
35. Singh. *Janam Sakhi Traditions*, p.126.
36. Gauri Singh, *Nanak appears before Nanki*, photograph, July 04, 2021.
37. Kamboj, *Early Wall Painting of Garhwal*, p.65.
38. Lokesh Ohri et al. *Walking with Laata*, Dehradun: Book World, 2019, p.63.
39. Prof S.Y.K. Kulkarni, Ramajot Srivastava, and Dr. Prabhjot Kaur, 'An Empirical Study on GuruRam Rai Durbar: A Living Heritage' *International Journal of Engineering Applied Sciences and Technology*, Volume 4, Issue 8, 2019. <https://www.ijeast.com/papers/109-118,Tesma> 408,IJEAST.pdf

# Unraveling the ‘Heroic’ Complexities: Exploring Socio-Cultural Dynamics in Punjabi Folktales through the Legend of *Raja Rasalu*

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## Abstract

*Punjabi folktales have long been repositories of cultural heritage and societal norms, serving as mirrors reflecting the ethos and values of the region. Among these, the legend of Raja Rasalu stands out as a timeless narrative that encapsulates a myriad of socio-cultural concerns prevalent in Punjabi society. The familial relations to notions of honor and heroism are unfolded in the themes of it. The journey of King Rasalu, a legendary hero whose exploits challenge societal conventions and norms. Through his adventures, the narrative navigates the complexities of caste dynamics, power struggles, and the quest for justice in a hierarchical society. The legend explores the intricate interplay between power and morality, as Rasalu grapples with ethical dilemmas and confronts tyrannical rulers. His embodiment of virtuous traits such as courage, compassion, and wisdom elevate him as a symbol of righteous leadership, inspiring admiration and emulation among the masses. The present paper aims to delve into the intricate dynamics of socio-cultural themes embedded within the legend, shedding light on its significance as a cultural artifact and its relevance in contemporary discourse. It will elevate the future researchers by engaging with such timeless narratives from Punjab, and glean valuable insights into the complexities of human experience and the enduring relevance of folklore in shaping collective consciousness.*

**Keywords:** legend, Raja Rasalu, Punjab, culture, society, folktales

*Raja Rasalu* is a very interesting insight into the world view of the people where it has been penned down. It is of sincere interest that holds its oral and traditional tales of *pauranic* nature which are woven deeply into the social fabric of Punjab. “Part oral, part documented, part fact, and part fiction, as is the case with most world folklore, no one knows for sure when and where the story of Raja Rasalu came into being for the first time”(Shuaib, 2022) and how many narrators contributed to it, as it passed from generation to generation. What is known for sure is that Raja Rasalu was born in the region that today forms Sialkot.

The Punjabi culture inhibits the traditions, cultural symbols, cuisine, language, dance, festivals, hospitality, presence of mind, and literature of courage

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and strength. The society and culture of Punjab are seen in Punjabi folktales which are full of tradition and cultural heritage. Among these tales, Raja Rasalu's legend is unique as a timeless story that entertains and gives deep insight into Punjabi society's peculiarities. Rasalu embodies the traditional setup of a legend as he passes through a supernatural world where he encounters ancient gods, magical creatures, and fantastic scenery, and he struggles with Punjab's changing face as traditional values clash with modernity and progress. He leaves the cave due to his courage and valour:

“I must go and see where the voices come from! he said; and when his nurses told him he must not go for one year more, he only laughed aloud, saying, 'Nay! I stay no longer here for any man!’”  
(Steel, 2015)

The gender relations and societal norms are visibly handed down through this legend in Punjab. While this story seems to celebrate the heroism of King Rasalu, it also demonstrates the courage and endurance of Rani Loonan and Rani Sundran, who have significant impacts on the outcome. These are women who defy their societies' expectations about gender roles. The other cultural importance of this legend is that it provides a compass for moral directions among human beings concerning ethics, justice, and human values. Some events that transpired between this character called Rasalu and his partners who turned out dishonest as well as his ignorance point towards a path, we must follow all our lives when we think about good living. Such elements make such stories relevant even to children. Rasalu's journey is in its way a universal allegory, that speaks across generations and cultures.

Raja Rasalu is a legendary tale that demonstrates the sustained influence of Punjabi folklore in retaining, commemorating, and questioning socio-cultural issues within the region. This epic still has relevance for modern times with its symbolism, deep meaning, and undying storyline which it uses to hold readers captive while at the same time inspiring more research into intricate aspects of Punjabi society. Here it is mentioned in the tale:

But when Prince Rasalu saw the women returning to the well with pitchers of iron and brass, he laughed to himself and drew his mighty bow till the sharp-pointed arrows pierced the metal vessels as though they had been clay:

“I came to greet thee, King, and not to harm thee! What have I done that thou shouldst turn away? Sceptre and empire have no power to charm me I go to seek a worthier prize than they!” (Steel, 2015)

Being a traditional story, that has existed in the oral memory of people till now, and sung by many singers, it has been kept alive through many generations because of which it shows differently in various aspects like culture, language, and

historical contexts. It dates back to the medieval period, which is the period of its finding and the beginning of the tradition of its transformation into a cherished story first in Sindhi and then in Punjabi regions. With time this story of Raja Rasalu not only interacted with the culture and the spiritual belief of the region but also started incorporating certain aspects of the mythology of Hindus, Sufis, and the local folklore. The arrival of the saint when Pooran expresses the said aspect of the tale. It has paved his way to be a Jogi by the end of his lifetime:

“I am fair Lona's son; my father's name is Great Salbahan, who  
reigns at Sialkot. I am Rasalu; for thy beauty's fame These ashes,  
and the Jogi's begging note, To see if thou wert fair as all men say;  
Lo! I have seen it, and I go my way!”(Steel, 2015)

One of the very earliest pieces of evidence of the story of Raja Rasalu is contained in the "Rasalu" which is a written work of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, a well-known Sufi poet and Sage from district Sindh. Humanizing Bachchu Shah Bhittai's poetic version of the story, the narrator delves into the themes of love, devotion, and spirituality in Raja Rasalu and his lover, Marui. Rasalo book is a classic of Sindhi literature, which tells about the lasting prestige and cultural identity of the Rasalu story for the descendants in the region. This mythological character has been elaborated in numerous versions and orally and in the written literature. This diversity is attributed to cultural influences and linguistic traditions in the Punjab region. All the interpretations of the story have specific community characteristics, ideological nuances, and the constants among them. Each tale has a unique perspective into the socio-cultural dynamics of its period and also maintains the core of the story. One of the loved styles of "Raja Rasalu" is the folk song or the ballad which will be described as 'dastan' or 'qissa' and is sung by traditional bards and minstrels who are known as 'dhadis' or 'qissago'. Such Raja Rasalu ballads would usually cover his deeds, encounters with mythical creatures, and pursuits of justice and righteousness.

The story of Raja Rasalu is one of those occasions when it has been adapted for the stage, with theatre productions popularly known as 'natak' or 'drama' employing human actors, music, and dance to bring the story to the fore. Shows are usually made of the original Punjabi stage play, comprising of *bhangra* or *giddha*, and adding such things in the drama to make it more effective and intriguing. Theatrical adaptations of the Raja Rasalu legend have retained their position on the rural stage of both rural and urban areas and continue to attract a large number of active viewers, especially during seasonal festivals and cultural events. Whether it is epic poems and novels, short stories or essays, writers from time to time have dealt with the themes and motifs of the Rasalu legend in different ways, opening new avenues of interpretations, and deepening our understanding and preservation of this myth even more.

Adding a visual dimension to Raja Rasalu's legend is a set of paintings, sculptures, and embroidery that recreate the events of the legend and combine them with the artistic skills of the people. Artists and artisans delight different groups by taking inspiration from the vivid real characters and legendary scenes of the Rasalu legend which they portray very elaborately and in so many colors. This visual representation of the story is not only for aesthetic purposes but also makes it a source of cultural memory of the Punjab region as well.

The historic Raja Rasalu tale, with all the heroism, love, and justice it portrays is an evergreen story that will always keep its audience entertained with its themes. This fate of the Rasalu story remains a memorized part of popular culture in this respective land. As the tale of Raja Rasalu is being told and retold and starts to move away from its original location, it turns into a global phenomenon. The tale can be seen as evidence of the universal force of storytelling which has no boundaries of time, space, and culture.

“Then all the giants turned and fled to their astrologer brother, and bade him look in his books to see if Raja Rasalu were really born into the world. And when they heard that he was, they prepared to fly east and west; but even as they turned, Raja Rasalu rode up on Bhaunr Iraqi, and challenged them to fight, saying, ' Come forth, for I am Rasalu, son of Raja Salbahan, and born enemy of the giants!’”(Steel, 2015)

As the son of a king, Rasalu, a young man, fulfills his duty by soon becoming a beacon of hope and justice, of whom people are expecting a lot despite the risks on him. The author, in his narrative, explores the challenges faced by various other characters, like Sayed, who profoundly influenced the fate of Punjab. Raja Rasalu, the brave and extraordinary hero, possesses the character traits of courage and compassion; in addition, he is resilient. He lets a prince feel down and evolve into an emblem of the people's hope and fights a series of tempestuous affairs that lead to the revealing of luminous traits and characters. Often his immovability in the pursuit of justice and what is truthful evokes both awe and admiration among common folk and noble lords. Along the way, Rasalu is surrounded by fantastic meetings, sly enemies, and ethical conflicts, all of which have a great influence on his loyalty and insightfulness about his environment.

Raja Rasalu was able to find the wisdom and guidance that enabled him to pass all the difficulties on his journey and attain enlightenment due to the guidance and teachings of the sage. Through Kulswami's guidance, Rasalu discovers himself spiritually and this spiritual fulfillment can be a moral compass for him. Bulle Shah infuses his spiritual depth and faith in the story in a way that conveys the central message that is like an inspiration on overcoming hurdles of life. As time goes on, the story of Raja Rasalu takes its reader to meet a plethora of supernatural beings like demons, witches, and fairy-tale characters, they are symbols of either

challenges facing Rasalu or the obstacles he overcomes. These characters may be either the antagonists or the tests of strength and resolve for the protagonist, the hero, Rasalu, who is forced to his limits, and thus, battles his inner fear, sadness, and weakness. He may now be facing the formidable beasts in the battle or the wily foes in his traps, but the encounters with the supernatural beings display Rasalu's courage, intelligence, and inventiveness proving him to be a champion and a leader. In the end, Raja Rasalu comes out in power having fought down a thousand plus ways and enemies to defend his kingdom and by this, he has kept his values of justice, compassion, and righteousness in check. His legend still shows us the fact that the power of bravery, intelligence, and love endures forever when the whole world is in the struggle for survival. Thus, it can be an example of the bright victory over the dark. Raja Rasalu legend has so many interesting incidents that came out after the victory and the victims are its main characters. This custom suddenly appears and reveals its qualities of bravery, faithfulness, and always trying to succeed in everything even in the most difficult problems.

Many figures, from supernatural beings and mythical creatures, are metaphors for human beings' internal conflicts and external obstacles in journeys of self-recognition and spiritual enlightenment. This is embodied in Rasalu's battles against heroic monsters or deceptive beings, which show not only personal conflicts but also external obstacles that stress him out and at the same time build his character. However, Rasalu's experiences help him to gain important knowledge about courage, perseverance, and the moving power of faith in endeavors leading to victory against the odds and the enchanted world of the unknown.

Besides, the journey of Raja Rasalu comes about as an adventure, and the green woods, rivers, and lands in Punjab serve as the background settings that would infuse the tale with a sense of life and attachment to the habitable. The natural world is quite an inventory packed with life, energy and the supernatural where the realm of the seen gets intermixed with the world of the unseen and nature appears in human lives as a facilitator. Via lyrical depictions of the organic ambiance Raja Rasalu the legend, the magnificence, unity, and interrelations of all living things are celebrated. This ancient tale is reflected in the spiritual principle of nature worship and conservation, which is characteristic of Punjabi culture.

Raja Rasalu's legend is full of symbolic and metaphorical aspects that remain both greatly pertinent to the present and the mirrors of our soul and eternity itself. Through such images and the symbolic characters, the work stirs us and speaks to the deepest sources of our humanity, and thus invites us to meditate not only on ourselves but also to ponder on the human condition as such. Raja Rasalu's legend as a cultural object and a spiritual metaphor still lifts and enlightens the audience through its emblem of hope, the play of roles, and the eternal search for the truth and justice to overcome challenges in the process of life.

## **Socio-cultural insights from the legend Raja Rasalu**

### **a. Gender roles and relations**

The story of Raja Rasalu unveils the hidden facet of gender roles and relationships in Punjabi society while the dominant theme of patriarchy seemingly becomes evident amidst the unfolding social climate and shifting traditions. The Rani Loonan and Rani Sundran characters, however, are light-hearted, energetic, and full of persistence. They helped to portray the female characters in a very nuanced view in terms of the Punjab culture.

Usually, men were considered to be above in terms of the social hierarchy than women which was reflected in their daily life by, for instance, only a man was eligible to be the head of the family or the government. As a counter-narrative to this traditional social structure, the ruin of the Raja Rasalu legend reintroduces female characters to the society who challenge these societal arbitrary expectations and assert their autonomy and agency. As for Rani Loonan, she shows power to resist and to cope with any bad things that might happen in their life and she doesn't stay old as she's too independent and active to allow anyone to control their life completely. Loyalty and devotion to Raja Rasaludespote everything are the allegory of women's feminism and their capacity to possess an advantage in matters of love:

“Then Rasalu was moved to pity, and said ' Fond, foolish mother! cease these tears Keep thou thy son. I fear nor death nor life, Seeking my fortune everywhere in strife. My head for his I give! —so calm your fears.” (Steel, 2015)

On the other hand, Rani Sundran turns out to be a character stronger than the heroes of a classic nautical yarn, and, undoubtedly, she is not afraid to contradict her environment when it comes to her wittiness, intelligence, and independence. While the meek, obedient women of classic fairy tales don't interfere, Rani Sundran is an exception - a girl whose activeness and independence are not sacrificed in the fable. Instead, she fights by Rasalu's side, becoming his equal in courage and cleverness. The relationship between Moldu and Rasalu is based upon the mutual respect and equal status concept, which defeats the idea of males being the dominant dominant people and increases the importance of egalitarianism and partnership built upon mutual trust, sharing values, and reciprocity.

In addition to its mythical content, the legend of Raja Rasalu also probes the gender relationships within the society of Punjab, among those are the paradoxes and dilemmas associated with any patriarchal system and traditions. On one hand, women like Rani Loonan and Rani Sundran emerge as the exemplar of agency and resistance, but on the other, they still are under the gender disparity that remains as a proof of men's attempt to suppress women's independence. Their quests and endeavors for freedom and autonomy are typically faced with opposition



and backlash from those who want to sustain the age-old patriarchal system, which serves as a paradigm of the truth that women have to deal with such prejudices in their attempts to attain their liberties and rights within the old traditional social values system. Raja Rasalu also highlights the theme of sisterhood which is often characterized by constant struggles against gender inequality and exploitation by patriarchal forces and in a bid to bring about social transformation it is necessary for women to come together to assist and support one another. Despite the troubles and barriers, they have to face, female characters in this story have the inspiration and comfort in their fellowship which is demonstrated by the connections formed within the sisterhood that gives them the power to stay above social segregation and tribulations. The women in Raja Rasalu legend not only demonstrate their determination, but also defy the old Patriarchal traditions and establish themselves as gender equal individuals. Thus, they introduce a journey for women toward emancipation from the status of objects for men to characters that stand up for their rights and independent for themselves.

The tale of Raja Rasalu offers us a precious place to look for social behaviors - how the gender relations reflected their experience, molding and resold the social orders and finally the emergence of the women power and agency. The depiction of the characters as female Rani Loonan and Rani Sundran of the succeeding narration helps to grasp the intricacies of the gender problem and the struggle for equality and empowerment of the women in patriarchal societies. The folklore of King Rasalu is not merely a cultural artifact, but it also represents an assessment of society. The legacy of this story continues to evoke multiple lessons of ours, where gender justice and equality are at stake, not only in Punjab but everywhere in the world.

#### **b. Social hierarchy and power dynamics**

The Raja Rasalu legend possesses a tremendous socio-cultural value to the levels of social hierarchy and power relationships pertained in the Punjabi society, thus presenting the social fabric as a complicated mosaic that encompasses community identity, class, caste and privilege. The tale succeeds at its goal of showing how social class and power related to a person make some characters powerful and others weak, influencing the way the relationships work out and how the world acts out.

In the tale, we come across a mythical prince who is adorable as well as boastful of his noble position that is bestowed on him by the God. This elevated status in the society of Punjab gives him an authoritative position. Being the high-ranking member of his family that he is, Rasalu enjoys the highest rungs of the social ladder, thus is deserving of respect and esteem of the masses he governs. His acts and decisions make an account, either it is the other's fate or he himself, and

thus he reflects what is more visible— the deep-rooted power structure that dominates feudal life.

In contrast, some characters in the tale take up the middle or even lower position in the social and political hierarchies where they are usually subject to the domination of their superiors. This even evokes the portrayal of the poor and those marginalized and whose lives are often fixed by the narrow constraints of poverty, oppression, and social exclusion. Having been created in the image of God, however, such people are usually excluded from the mainstream and left whittled away practically, thus they cannot be similar to the chosen few who are born with wealth and power.

The episode of Rasalu also tells about the intersections of caste and social rank of the whole society of the Punjab region and that's how this sort of caste based system works in order to sustain these inequalities in the society. Rani Loonan and Rani Sundran, despite their high caste status and royal lineage, they have to face discrimination and prejudice among other castes on who can be a noble person. This is used to destroy that idea that they are different from each other who have castes as the firm mark of whether they are better than the others. The resistance of these women to be nicknamed and granted a position in society that is far below their deserving but rather that of people of a caste-oriented society bring into focus the long-standing inequalities that dominate the Punjab society which is the result of a caste-based system and a system of oppression.

Likewise, the story of Raja Rasalu demonstrates various types of relationship dynamics within family life and between people where power is concerned as the ability for people to control or exploit others. Characters like the stepparent of Raja Rasalu, and her side and relatives are good examples of perversion of power for personal gains, with them, in order to subjugate people around them, they tend to manipulate their social status, privilege and other forms of dominance. Their actions would be an example of the powerful effect that even by power if not checked it brings about deformity in human behavior and in the relationship created.

Similarly, the myth of Raja Rasalu gives us an inkling of the ideals of resisting injustices and struggling against the oppressive powers. In fact, these traits are manifested in the way individuals and communities challenge the forces and authority that are clearly dictatorial. Characters like Rani Loonan and Rani Sundran fight against individuals that discriminate and put them in danger through their rebellious nature, in spite of all their trouble. While they are oppressed, they do not just suffer, they revolt, and become free again. Being an example to those who seem powerless and senseless in such a world, the bravura and rebellion of slave leaders influence others to follow their examples and to fight for justice.

The myth of Raja Rasalu is a great reservoir of knowledge for social hierarchy and leadership in the society of Punjab, it shed the light on how privilege and oppression develop an integrated setting that leads to the human interaction and the projection of human experiences. The dialogue engages when the author describes the characters and their social lifestyle. It elucidates and analyzes the intricate aspects of caste, class, and power in this very process but at the same moment it promotes the same with its metaphors of bravery and strength.

#### **c. Values such as courage, honor, duty**

Raja Rasalu, the protagonist of this legend, is depicted by many sociocultural values of the Punjabis, their values like courage, honor and duty, which are very much embedded in them. The book shows the main characters act and make their choices that form a deep reflection about the significance of these virtues in an individual character and one can have a coherent community. In immortalizing the tales Raja Rasalu becomes the epitome of valor and daring do, mesmerizing his followers and nation with his heroic feats. From his very first encounters to his end game during which he defeats every last opponent in sight, Rasalu personifies the great merits of bravery and an unbreakable spirit, facing the hardest opponents and getting over the strongest of challenges with never once faltering. His irreducible principle for justice and revolution remains a ray of hope regulating population and restoring order in the turmoil for his people, building pride and allegiance.

Raja Rasalu's tale as well gives an indication of the value attached to discharge of duties, ranging from the family, community to the society in general. Being a prince, Rasalu is vowed by the same constrictions as everyone, to keep his people as the first concern, regardless of his own interests and desires. The main role model in the story was embodied in Rasalu who was an undying and indefatigable commander that was always ready to sacrifice his personal comfort and health for the sake of the kingdom and the values of justice and fairness.

By dealing with the brave heroes, honesty and responsibilities, the myth of Raja Rasalu provides age-old lessons and advice about what virtue the people of the Punjab highly. These virtues are therefore the inner values for which individuals and communities build their lives' characters on and sometimes determine the community behaviour in times of crisis and adversity. The tale is a cultural artifact and allegory on how social fabric changed over time. It is a befitting tale of hope, heroism, and fortitude all the way through the decision of life.

#### **d. Reflections of Punjabi history and identity**

The tale of Raja Rasalu is indeed a mirror that tells the world the thing that is often ignored: the land of Punjab and its supremacy, encompassing numerous cultures, Religions and the dress codes. Immersed in the oral tradition the story

resounds the complete diversity of communities in Punjab, the story interest people a lot and often provides a broader view of its history, its victories and values it holds on.

One of the most outstanding features of the Punjabi history and culture embodied in Raja Rasalu's folktale is its ability of merging and preserving different cultural and traditional aspects inherited from various sources. Through its characters, settings and theme, it portrays diverse aspects of Hindu mythology and Sufi mysticism and that of Folklore combined which reflect how Punjab is so syncretic in culture. Figures like Raja Rasalu and Sah Bulleh Shah from the literature of Punjabi who are symbols of cultural and spiritual exchange among the different religions and traditions of the region pointing towards its pluralistic and tolerant traditions.

In addition to that, the story of Raja Rasalu can shed light on the Punjab's war and freedom for independence which were passed from the forefathers to the present generation. In that way, the region of Punjab can be seen as a place of struggle to get back its freedom from any kind of external dominations. The spirits of the disobedience and courage that have defined Punjab's battle for independent against all odds are symbolized by the characters of Raja Rasalu and his companions. These characters portray such a spirit who were rebellious against oppression that becomes a great example for future Punjab generations of how to resist injustice. The essence of the story lies in the heroic principles of valor, courage and truth has strong peas and roots with liberation efforts of Punjab settlement. It has left on the struggle makers a trail for individuals fighting for justice and equality.

Furthermore, the legend of Raja Rasalu serves as a means of passing to the posterity of Punjab's wealth of culture, heritage and memory of collective memory from one generation into the other. This legendary story has a legendary uniqueness; it is unique as it not just is a verbal and a performer experience but it also exists as a family and community legacy. Every age keeps some part of the story alive, as it represents the history, culture and customs of Punjab.

## **Conclusion**

Folktales are not only instruments that contribute to the preservation and promotion of cultural values, but also mechanisms, which build a sense of belonging and cohesion within a community and develop relationships among people, providing them with a common identity and mission. People can also remember their bounding and the bonding to their cultural roots by recreating a story like the tale of Raja Rasalu. This story re-creates further the sharing of the same culture and value system. Throughout the experience of communal storytelling, people often reflect on their struggle in the past, question the future of

the community and try to protect their culture to pass on to their descendants down the line.

Folktales like Raja Rasaluhelp in preserving traditions and the social memory whereby they serve as strongholds in the community's creative or intellectual aspects. The oral transmission of the knowledge, wisdom, and culture by one generation to another help promote lasting the folklores of a particular community to the universal value because they both ensure the values and traditions of a people are held in high esteem even in the future. It is no wonder that folklorists often say that the most beautiful legacy they can leave behind is the precious gift of an ethnic heritage in which that particular folktale is most representative. Epitomizing the ancient themes of valor, love, justice, and endurance which are deeply engrained in Punjabi culture, this oral story reflects the youthful years of this zestful region. The mythic characters, magical scenery and the sweeping drama make Raja Rasalu legend come alive and touch your heart, inspiring you to follow the hero's road and to learn something on the way. The story has acted as a cultural artifact and literary treasure for centuries and continues to touch hearts and move minds across the globe. As the story offers deep philosophical lessons about life and the secrets of the universe, this timeless tale exerted its influence and gained a place in the mind of readers across generations. The legend of Raja Rasalu, with its depth and richness, has become a proof that the power of storytelling is able to transcend everything – time, space, and cultural distance – and can unite different people by the sweetness of the same beauty and by the strength of the communal pride.

## Endnotes

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**Urban Punjabi Hindus and Underachiever Rural Sikhs: Vinayak  
Dutt's *Punjab from the Perspective of a Punjabi Hindu*  
(Book Review)**

\*Ashish Kumar

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The book, *Punjab from the Perspective of a Punjabi Hindu* (White Falcon Publishing, 2023, pp. 408), attempts to historicize the political and economic crisis that Punjab is facing in present times by undertaking a comparative analysis of the contribution of two Punjabi communities, viz., Sikhs and the Hindus in the rise and fall of Punjab's economy and political stability in the colonial and post-colonial times. Both the communities are treated as two competing and distinct population blocks in this book, which tends to glorify the role of Punjabi Hindus to an extent that it ends up blaming the Sikh leadership entirely for all the ills that Punjab's society is facing now. The same is well indicated by the following statement of Vinayak Dutt that he makes in the prologue of his book:

‘...Panthic and British patronized scholars over-emphasized the narrative of “Sikhs liberating Hindu women from Afghans of Ghazni town” a bit too much which eventually injected a superiority complex in the community which started over-evaluating its strength and might.... This mindset eventually becomes a cause of difficulty because it masked the truth and on the other hand, after the partition of 1966, the Punjabi Hindu also became somewhat disappointed that he forgot whether it was the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh or the British or building Modern state post-1947 it was the Punjabi Hindus got things settled and running. It was the Punjabi Hindus who made the most valuable contribution to building and developing Punjab’ (p. v).

Having transformed the history of Punjab into a history of a conflict between the orthodox/radical Sikhs and the liberal Punjabi Hindus particularly in the post-1966 Punjab (pp. 94-95, 124-149), Dutt accuses the Akali leadership, having strong rural ties, for undermining not only the urban economy but also the urban Punjabi Hindus in Punjab's society and politics (pp. 87, 89-90). The dominance of agrarian (feudal) economy under successive state governments under the Sikh leadership, according to Dutt, has ‘largely served the interests of the feudal agricultural class primarily the Jatt Sikhs’ (p. 353) in the post-1966 Punjab, and owning of such a scenario, all Punjabis- particularly Punjabi Hindus, are argued to have been made ‘prisoners of this feudal Punjab’ (p. 354). After fixing the blame on the Sikh leadership of Punjab crisis, Dutt identifies the Punjabi Hindus as the potential saviour of Punjab in future. Dutt ends his book with a narration of a

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journey of Sunil Dutt - a famous Bollywood actor of Punjabi origin, along with his daughter Priya Dutt from Mumbai to Amritsar in 1987 to spread a message of peace and harmony in Punjab that was reeling under the pressure of terrorist violence at that time. Dutt is called a 'messiah', who embodied in author's view 'the spirit of Punjabiyat' in spite of living thousands of kilometres away from Punjab in Mumbai (p. 371). This episode is narrated by Vinayak Dutt with an aim to emphasise upon the need to hand over the reign of Punjab from the hands of 'rural underachieving folks' into the hands of the 'urban middle class achiever' Hindus like Sunil Dutt, without whose visionary leadership the political as well as economic crisis in Punjab that had emerged due to the feudal leadership of rural underachieving folks (i.e., Jat-Sikhs) in the post-colonial times, could not be resolved (pp. 370-371).

In fact, the Sikh politics in colonial and post-colonial Punjab is styled by Vinayak Dutt as a grand conspiracy against the Punjabi Hindus in general and Punjabi brahmins in particular:

'Being a Punjabi Saraswat Brahmin myself, I have witnessed that sectarian abyss and trust deficit among the communities, especially in recent years when religious hardliners who were fringe at one stage have come to the mainstream.... It is also a harsh reality that to stay against "Brahmanism" is part and parcel of the political correctness of progressive scholars in twenty-first-century India, much like being against Muslims is part of the message of their Hindutva colleagues...' (p. vii).

Moreover,

'After the division of Punjab in 1966, the Punjabi Hindu community in a sense has been pushed to a corner from the Political and governance sphere. The political capital got concentrated in the hand of a particular community ever since the Punjabi state got carved out in 1966. The particular community consists of just 18 to 20% of the population but owns a majority of land chunks and dominates both politically and economically.... Despite playing an important role in establishing and running empires and administration in the South Asian sub-continent for centuries, Punjabi Hindus were pushed to the corners and made marginal players in state politics. In fact, they were ridiculed for decades for promoting Brahmanism by the particular community that has the largest share in both political and economic power structures ever since 1966' (p. viii).

The expression 'particular community' in the above passage refers to Jatt-Sikhs, who according to Dutt, have floated 'the bogey of Brahmanism' to cover up their failures to facilitate economic growth, social justice and upliftment of

underprivileged communities in Punjab (p. viii). A proud Saraswatbrahmin, Dutt whereas cherishes his caste identity, he accuses almost everyone from British officials to Jatt-Sikhs for depriving the Punjabi Hindus (more precisely brahmins) from their rightful place in Punjab's politics, economy and society, and even those, who criticise 'Brahmanwad and Brahmanical approach' in Punjab and beyond, are branded by him as anti-brahmins (pp. vi-vii). Following Dutt's argument, it seems that the Jatt-Sikhs are anti-brahmin because they have floated the bogey of Brahmanism with an aim to snatch political power from the hands of urban Punjabi Hindus. Dutt makes sweeping statements without engaging with the studies of those scholars, who have criticized *Brahmanwad* because it promotes caste discrimination and *Brahmanical approach* because it justifies caste hierarchies. The expression Brahmanwad (or Brahmanism) has been used by scholars to denote a regressive ideology that places the Hindus in a graded hierarchy and rationalises the superior position of few, while majority of the population is relegated to impure and inferior positions.<sup>1</sup> The criticism of Brahmanwad is personalized by Dutt, who considers the attack on Brahmanwad as an attack on all Punjabi Hindus, and to defend his position, he goes on to distinguish Punjabi Hindus including brahmins from those living in Trans Yamuna planes by characterizing Punjabi Hindus 'far more as liberal, progressive, and courageous than any other Hindu sect of the country' (p. vi). He denies the presence of a crude and ruthless form of Brahmanism in Punjab because 'no major incident in recent history, when Dalits would have been banned from entering the temples in Punjab,' has occurred here (p. vi). Such a naive view on untouchability reduces the entire Dalit movement for social equality in Punjab and other parts of India to an issue of temple entry alone. In colonial and post-colonial Punjab, religious equality was one of the several demands that the Ad-dharm movement of Punjabi Dalits struggled to achieve along with political rights and social equality.<sup>2</sup> Intriguing is the ways the author, Vinayak Dutt, explains the Punjabi Hindu identity by making brahmins and khatri central to it (pp. vii-viii), and no attempt is made to explain the position of Dalits within the Punjabi Hindu society in this book. In Dutt's narrative, Punjabi Hindus of upper castes are prominently shown to have contributed in the building of modern Punjab (see chapter 2), and the discussion on Dalits (Sant Ram Udasi, Lal Singh Dil and Raj Kumar Hans) is merely confined to a few pages and its restricted to their contribution in Punjab's Cinema and literature alone (pp. 118-120) in the book.<sup>3</sup>

Commenting on the Gurudwara Reform Movement, Dutt argues that it was engineered by the British, who promoted the Sikhs 'to demolish the age-old structure and place their pawns in Sikh clergy... under the garb of democratization of Sikh institutions' (p. iii). Here Dutt fails to take into account the rampant caste discrimination that Dalit Sikhs faced at Gurudwaras, including Darbar Sahib and Nankana Sahib, under the Mahants and Granthis of the Udasi and Nirmala sects in the 18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> and early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and in stead of adhering to any



British agenda, Dalit Sikhs participated in the reform movement to claim religious equality in accordance with the teachings of the Sikh gurus.<sup>4</sup> Far from being an impartial analysis of Punjab's history from a Punjabi Hindu's perspective, this book carries forward a personalised agenda, and more than the facts, the personal beliefs of the author often speak through the polemical narrative of this book, which appears to be a Hindu (more precisely, brahmin) response to the Sikh-centric historiography of Punjab that had gained wider acceptance in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Punjabi academia. Following the partition of India, the colonial Punjab was divided into West and East Punjab, and owing to the migration of Sikhs from West to East Punjab, their population was concentrated in the area between Ravi and the Ghaggar. Even though in East Punjab, Sikhs constituted about 35 percent and the Hindus about 62 percent of the total population, the Sikhs were in majority in the Sikh princely states and the districts of Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Ferozpur.<sup>5</sup>

When the Akalis raised the demand for the creation of Punjabi language-based Sikh majority Punjab Suba, the Arya Samajis with the support of the Jan Sangh countered it and projected this Akali demand as a threat to India's unity. On the other hand, as the Sikhs were projected as Hindus by the Arya Samajis, the Sikhs considered it an attack on their existence and it strengthened 'the Sikh convictions to have Sikh-majority state.'<sup>6</sup> In this way, partition widened the gulf between the Sikhs and the Hindus and pushed some of them to take opposite stands on the questions related to the future of Punjab. With the creation of Punjabi Suba in 1966 after the separation of Hindu-majority Haryana and transfer of some Hindu-majority areas to Himachal Pradesh, the demand of Sikh-majority state - the Sikh Homeland in the words of Khushwant Singh<sup>7</sup>, was achieved, but by causing a deep distrust between some sections of the Sikhs and the Hindus. Within this historical context, a trend of history writing with a tacit political support in East Punjab gained popularity; it focused upon the Sikh-centric regional history of undivided Punjab<sup>8</sup> and held the caste system responsible for fracturing the Punjabi society<sup>9</sup>, and upper caste Hindus (particularly, kshatriyas and brahmins) were suggested to be orthodox, casteist and unmanly because of their failure to protect their homeland from foreign invaders.<sup>10</sup> Contrary to them, the Sikhs under the Sikh Gurus were styled as true Punjabis (unorthodox, liberal and virile), who had liberated Punjab from the foreign rule of the Mughals<sup>11</sup> and Sikh Gurus were credited with the creation of a caste-less Punjabi society.<sup>12</sup> This Sikh-centric Punjab's history aimed to achieve twin aims: first, to justify the demand of Punjabi Suba by fusing the history of Punjab with the history of the Sikhs, and second, to rationalise by historicizing a separate Sikh identity from the Hindus. To what extent this Sikh-centric history achieved its aims is not the focus of this review article, which here intends to draw the attention of readers to the ways Vinayak Dutt has responded to this Sikh-centric historiography of Punjab.

Vinayak Dutt's book challenges the conceptualization of upper caste Hindus as unmanly, orthodox and casteist in the Sikh writings and he describes Punjabi Hindus as 'far more liberal, progressive, and courageous than any other Hindu sect of the country' due to their affiliations with Sufism and Bhakti movement in medieval times (pp. v-vi). British-backed historians are criticised for distorting and rephrasing Punjab and the subcontinent's history by blowing out of proportion the stories of Sikh heroes and their struggle against the Mughals; in Dutt's view, more than the Sikhs, it were the Marathas, primarily a Hindu confederacy, who 'rigorously fought and brought down the mighty Mughal empire on its knees' (p. iv). Although Sikhs are blamed for falling prey to British propaganda that styled the Sikhs as martial race, Dutt too does not appear to have completely detached himself from the colonial world view, and he ends up embracing the colonial framework of Punjab's history in which Hindus, Muslims<sup>13</sup> and Sikhs have always constituted distinct and competing communal blocks. The treatment of Sikhs and Hindus as two competing communal blocks in this book is misleading as both of these are divided into several castes, which often compete with each-others for various social, political and religious agendas in Punjab<sup>14</sup>, and therefore, a common Hindu front against the Sikhs in Dutt's book is more an artificial idea than a historical reality. What appears from the book under review is that the distinct communal identities of Sikhs and Hindus that were first systematically conceptualised in the colonial writings<sup>15</sup> and continued to be used in the Sikh centric history of Punjab<sup>16</sup>, have guided the polemical narrative of Vinayak Dutt's book that puts the Punjabi Hindus in front of the Sikhs, and therefore, this book ends up characterising the history of colonial and post-colonial Punjab as a perennial conflict between the under-achiever rural (Jatt) Sikhs and the urban (upper caste) Hindu achievers.

## Endnotes

1. See for discussion, Gail Omvedt, *Understanding Caste: From Buddha to Ambedkar and Beyond*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2011; Uma Chakravarti, 'Caste, Class and Gender: The Historical Roots of Brahmanical Patriarchy', in *Gendering Caste: Through a Feminist Lens*, Uma Chakravarti. Calcutta: Stree, 2009 second reprint, pp. 37-65; Braj Ranjan Mani, *Debrahmanising History: Dominance and Resistance in Indian Society*. New Delhi: Manohar, 2024 revised edition.
2. See for discussion, Mark Juergensmeyer, *Religious Rebels in the Punjab: The Social Vision of Untouchables*. Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1988.
3. Among the few Punjabi Dalit entrepreneurs of colonial Punjab were included Seth Kishan Das and Sundar Das, both of Chamar castes, who played a key role in developing leather business in Boota Mandi of Jalandhar (Punjab) in the middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. See for details, Juergensmeyer, *Religious Rebels in the Punjab*, pp. 116-119.
4. Pritam Singh and Rajkumar Hans, 'Remembering the Centenary of the Re-Entry of Dalits into the Golden Temple of Amritsar', *The Wire*, 12 October 2020, Accessed online on 16 February

2024: <https://thewire.in/caste/celebrating-the-centenary-of-the-re-entry-of-dalits-into-the-golden-temple-of-amritsar>

5. J. S. Grewal, *The New Cambridge History of India. II. 3. The Sikhs of the Punjab*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 8, 182.
6. A. S. Narang, *Storm over the Sutlej: The Akali Politics*. New Delhi: Gitanjali Publishing House, 1983, pp. 96, 98. See also, Ganda Singh, 'The Origin of the Hindu-Sikh Tension in the Punjab', *The Journal of Indian History*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 1961, pp. 119-123.
7. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs, Vol. 1: 1469-1839*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2021 second edition, p. 3.
8. See for details, Robin Jaffrey, 'Grappling with History: Sikh Politicians and the Past', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 1, 1987, pp. 59-72.
9. '...the old social shackles of the Hindu community, such as caste system,... hindered the growth of a homogenous well-knit class of people inspired by a common national ideal.' Ganda Singh, *The Sikhs and Their Religion*. California, USA: The Sikh Foundation, 1974, pp. 12-13.
10. 'The Kshatriyas, whose dharma it was to defend the country and its people, adopted the ways and manners of their alien masters [in medieval times] ... In their own land, the temples of Brahmanical gods and goddesses were desecrated and demolished or heavy taxes were levied upon them. In their own homes they had neither the freedom of worship, nor of expression and action. With the loss of their political independence was also gone the freedom of their conscience and its voice and expression.... Why was the land of philosophers and great scholars reduced to this state of abject slavery?... It was because their house was divided into innumerable sections and sub-sections [i.e., castes]...' Ganda Singh, 'The Indian Society as Guru Nanak Found It.' *The Sikh Review*, Vol. 26, No. 299, 1978, p. 7.
11. Ganda Singh, *A Brief Account of the Sikhs*. Amritsar: Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, 1971 reprint, p. 20.
12. Singh, *The Sikhs and Their Religion*, pp. 12-13; Ganda Singh, *Guru Nanak's Impact on History*. Guru Nanak Dev Mission Series 332. Patiala: Guru Nanak Dev Mission, undated, pp. 10, 28.
13. See for a comment on the role of colonial scholars in creating the Hindu-Muslim binary in India's history: Romila Thapar, *The Penguin History of Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002, pp. 20-21.
14. The caste hierarchy is not only justified but also considered an integral part of the Hindu society in the Brahmanical literature. See for details: Vivekanand Jha, 'Caste, Untouchability and Social Justice: Early North Indian Perspective', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 25, No. 11/12, 1997, pp. 19-30. On the other hand, none of the Sikh Gurus endorsed caste hierarchy and an analysis of the Sikh scripture highlights the anti-caste attitude of the Sikh religion. See for details: Surinder Singh, *Medieval Punjab in Transition: Authority, Resistance and Spirituality c.1500-c.1700*. New Delhi: Manohar, 2022, pp. 291-337. Despite Sikh religion's anti-caste attitude, the Sikh community like the Hindus is divided into numerous competing caste groups in present times: See for details, Ronki Ram, 'Internal Caste Cleavages among Dalits in Punjab', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 52, No. 3, 2017, pp. 54-57; Ronki Ram, 'Social Exclusion, Resistance and Deras: Exploring the Myth of Casteless Sikh Society in Punjab', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 42, No. 40, 2007, pp. 4066-4074.
15. In the writings of colonial officials, Sikhism was identified as a religion different from Hinduism and Sikh community as a distinct nation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: See, George Forster,

‘Nanak the Founder of Sikh Nation’, *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. 3, Part. I & II, 1969, pp. 102-104; Sir John Malcolm, ‘Nanac Shah, Founder of Sikh Religion’, *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. 3, Part I & II, 1969, pp. 105-113. As Hinduism degenerated in the medieval times, Guru Nanak and his successors up to Guru Gobind Singh were suggested to have launched a reform movement and laid the foundation of Sikhism based on ‘the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest, in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes.’ See, J. D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs: From the Origin of the Nation to Battles of the Sutlej*, (edited by H.L.O. Garrett). London: Oxford University Press, 1918 new revised edition, pp. 1, 38. Such an understanding of Sikhism and Sikh community immensely influenced the Tat Khalsa reformers, who along with the British officials-cum-scholars, theorised through their writings the differences between Sikhism and Hinduism, and as a result, Sikhs were distinguished as a distinct religious community from the Hindus. See for details, Tony Ballantyne, ‘Resisting the ‘Boa Constrictor’ of Hinduism: the Khalsa and the Raj,’ *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1999, pp. 195-215.

16. See for a discussion on the historiography of Sikhism: Tony Ballantyne, ‘Looking Back, Looking Forward: The Historiography of Sikhism’, *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2002, pp. 5-29.

**Madness is not Mental Illness':**  
**A 'Nanakian' Reading of *Toba Tek Singh* through Swayam**  
**MOOC Lectures**  
**Unveiling Intellectual Disability Perspective**

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**Abstract**

*Invoking the humanistic and anti-fanatic visions and values of the radical teacher, Guru Nanak, coupled with insights of the intellectual disability studies perspective, this paper is an attempt to read Saadat Hasan Manto's short story "Toba Tek Singh" through Swayam MOOC lectures. The field of disability studies takes a critical move towards disability, rooted in disability rights and fore-fronting the experiences and perspectives of persons with disabilities, upholding that disability is political and cultural in character, not simply an individual plight, a personal medical condition. Even many psyche-related issues, such as love-sickness, low moods, fantasy, madness, delusions, trauma, and so on, are conventionally treated as exclusively biogenetic and medically curable and are very much embedded in the local fabrics of normalcy, cultural narratives, histories, and politics. The psychotic subjective experiences are context-dependent and intertwined with social-economic conditions, symbolic orders, and cultural significations. Critical disability studies draws attention towards disabling social barriers created by hostile social attitudes to people with cognitive impairment, signifying in loaded terms as inferior, appalling, and defective.*

*This write-up seeks to critique the prevailing problematic popular perception that the individuals who do not subscribe to and do not fit themselves in the dominant ideology of societal 'normalcy' and exist outside the matrix of the day in a non-pragmatic way are often labelled as 'mad' and are treated as sick, pathological, anti-social, having a very restricted participation, voice and independence at their access. As a practitioner of indigeneity and refusing to be abstracted from his history and location, Bishan Singh, the protagonist of Manto's magnum opus *Toba Tek Singh* questions the barbaric and arbitrary division of the Nation on communal lines and consequent traumatic displacement of the vulnerable masses, is pigeonholed as insane and has to languish in a mental asylum for so many years. The paper critiques the view of the medicalized understanding—a dominant paradigm of colonial modernity, the very culmination of the 18th-century European*

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*Enlightenment ideology— that considers madness as a mental illness, an individualized craze/deviance, to be located in the individual's psyche alone. This approach considers madness fully and finally pathological, and essentially biologically determined/driven. Manto's text is a compelling and progressive critique of this orthodox modernist/medicalized understanding of the mad matters. The short story instead subverts the conventional/established understanding of madness as an effect of chemical imbalances needing correction. It delineates the subject in a new frame by foregrounding the idea of scrutinizing effects from the outside as indispensable in making better sense of the human interior, including that of madness. The liberating acts and the very non-linear and lyrical being of Bishan Singh cannot be fathomed through the conventional and unhelpful assumptions (the same may treat the protagonist as abnormal and defective) regarding madness. The story, set against the backdrop of religious extremism and communal riots across Punjab at the time of Partition, builds a counter-discourse informing the mad politics and may be vital in reclaiming the psychic spaces of resistance for and by the people treated as mad. Deeply entrenched in the ironic insight, the chosen literary text deploys lunatic asylum—where the Sikh Bishan Singh and Hindu and Muslim inmates are imprisoned, living the space amicably sans insanity that prevails the outside spectacularly—as an insignia of the higher Nanakian wisdom, peace, empathy, and religious harmony in such times of mass schizophrenia.*

**Keywords:** Madness, Manto, MOOC, Guru Nanak, Partition, Modernity, Indigeneity, Dissent.

*“Jau tau prem khelan ka chau, Siru dhari tali gali meri au” -- Guru Nanak, Adi Granth*

(If you want to play the game of love, approach me with your head in the palm of your hand.)

“Man” signifies “thinker”: There lies the madness. Friedrich Nietzsche, cited in *Writing and Madness*

“What we call mental health, and what mental illness, is partly a decision rather than a discovery.” –Daniel Nettle, *Strong Imagination*

## 1. Manto's Magnum Opus *Toba Tek Singh*

Born in Ludhiana, British India, Saadat Hasan Manto was a playwright, author, and writer. He contributed around twenty-two collections of short stories, a book, five series of radio plays, three groups of essays, and two collections of autobiographical sketches. Even today, critics and authors praise his best short pieces. His writings mainly build a critique of the partition, gender repression, societal taboos and communal violence.

Manto has essentially given voice to the stark, unvarnished reality of the society that no one dared to discuss. He disagreed vehemently with the division of India. He was a progressive writer who served humanity and the humanities by writing in a heretical mode. He brought together the religion-soaked subcontinent culture close to the surface of **modernity** and exposed their inner connections and contradictions in his unique, inimitable style. He used the power of literature as public testimony and a social document.

*Toba Tek Singh* is Manto's masterpiece. It is even included in the *Vintage Book of Indian Writing (1947-1997)*, edited by Salman Rushdie<sup>1</sup>. The short story is an insightful and stirring narrative of moral conscience and heightened sensitivity. It was initially published in 1955 and was written in Urdu. The concept of partition and its emotional and psychological impact on people's psyches are threaded throughout.

Manto portrays the fragmentation of society into many sects following the partition in the name of religion in a very realistic manner. It describes the religiously motivated exodus of Hindus and Muslims to India and Pakistan after the split. Das states, "Manto portrays the ruptures, dislocations, and differences effected within families and communities".<sup>2</sup> By portraying the outcast and underprivileged, Manto repeatedly proved his credentials as a soldier of the marginalized who gave an unvarnished portrait of murky social realities. Not unlike Guru Nanak, he was not an aspirant of privileged values. He argued that the readers who find his stories dirty live in a dirty society, while his job is only to expose the truth. Daruwalla opines that Manto's 'strong art' derives from evoking 'strong feelings', while the obliteration of details makes him open to a wide readership.<sup>3</sup>

The plot takes place two to three years after the partition of the Continent into two nations in 1947, when the administrations of the two countries decided to swap select Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu lunatics. The story centres on the subjectivity of Bishan Singh, a Sikh asylum detainee from Toba Tek Singh, a village in undivided Punjab. *Toba Tek Singh* is a parody of cataclysmic Partition. Manto vividly captures in the narrative the sorrows and problems of the impacted families, the miserable situation, and the agonising experiences of those forcibly uprooted from their ancestral homes in the name of religion. The mental anguish of the

partition is depicted in the story exceptionally vividly. The result of the Partition is that there is still antagonism today, very much against the empathizing religious vehemence imbibed and advocated by Guru Nanak.

## **2. Content Analysis of *Toba Tek Singh* through Swayam MOOC Lectures**

A MOOC stands for a massive open online course. Platforms like Swayam, Coursera, and edX provide high-quality online courses which require no educational prerequisites. These fall under the rubric of MOOCs. Parui has made five videos on the short story as part of the Swayam MOOC *Trauma and Literature*, which can be consumed on the NPTEL (National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning) archive and by a broader audience on YouTube.<sup>4</sup> It indicates the commitment of the Indian academia towards the widest possible distribution of academic material in an accessible manner. YouTube is one of the ten most-visited websites in the world. Uploading on YouTube ensures the video can be embedded within other websites, like blogs, without hassle.

Avishek Parui has critically analyzed the short story as part of his Swayam MOOC Course *Trauma and Literature*. For Parui, madness often presents as psychological trauma caused by blunt force, i.e., an interrupted identity caused due to various pressures like an intolerable strain at work or impossible relationships at home. Manto's story works on two levels of trauma – collective geopolitical trauma and individual psychic trauma. The first kind is precipitated by the horror of Partition, which can be thought of collective identity crisis, mass schizophrenia leading to dislocated selves, distorted loyalties, and a dramatic de-familiarisation of reality. Such a rapid socio-political disjuncture inevitably leads to social unrest, political violence, and religious extremism.

The events in the Theatre of Partition, which resembles the Theatre of the Absurd, are mirrored by the anxieties of the lunatics imprisoned in Lahore. The larger geo-political re-mapping also leads to their cognitive re-mapping. Some prisoners appropriate the identities of religious leaders like Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the creator of Pakistan, and the Sikh leader Master Tara Singh, leading to abuses and brawls. All other identities, namely, regional, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic, had been reduced to the one determining religious identity. The grand narrative of nation-formation subsumed all other petit narratives of humanism and civility. Madness seems to be the only conceivable and rational response. The lunatic asylum became the microcosm of undivided India as the nation was engulfed in communal riots and anarchy.



The Nobel Prize winner Rabindranath Tagore has called aggressive nationalism a menace. In a nutshell, 'nation' for Tagore is an 'organization of politics and commerce'.<sup>5</sup> Tagore's aesthetic worldview and ethical sensibility stand against the aggressive and militant brand of nationalism imported from the West and mindlessly applied in Eastern lands. The Partition is witness to the rationalized irrationality of nations formed through bloodshed, tyranny, and high-handedness. The victims of national valorization are the hapless, marginalized folks.

"The truth is that the spirit of conflict and conquest is at the origin and in the centre of Western nationalism; its basis is not social co-operation. It has evolved a perfect organization of power, but not spiritual idealism. It is like the pack of predatory creatures that must have its victims".<sup>6</sup>

Through his short fiction, even Manto has critiqued Western nationalism and its attendant notions of modernization and progress. In order to glorify the myth of modern civilization, the holocaust of Partition is passed off as a historically-necessary singular episode for the victory of reason over passion<sup>7</sup>. Modernization may seem like an 'antithesis of craziness,' but just below its surface lies 'a culture of terror and bloodshed'.<sup>8</sup> Felman contends that literature is "an initiation not just into suffering, but into a heightened poetical perception" which destabilizes "the imperialism of reason (which excludes madness)".<sup>9</sup>

During the *Trauma and Literature* course, Parui argues that the second kind of trauma is depicted in the story through the protagonist Bishan Singh who apparently exhibits a few of the typical symptoms of mental unhealthy: delusions, hallucinations, and atypical speech. Manto has described him as a Sikh prisoner who has spent the previous fifteen years behind bars. Some incomprehension appears whenever he speaks, "Uper the gur gur the annexe the bay dhayana the mung the dal of the laltain." Das cites this gibberish as proof of the syncretic culture of Punjab, as it includes Punjabi, Urdu, and English words.<sup>10</sup> Bishan Singh thus represents an ethos of linguistic-cultural pluralism. Das has attributed profound geopolitical significance and topical references to Bishan Singh's gibberish as she is convinced that Manto's literary art is strictly no-nonsense. "Though this be madness, yet there is a method in it".<sup>11</sup> Bishan Singh utters different versions of the same statement as his concerns and anxieties regarding his return to his native village change. He curses the whole idea of the narrowly/ill-conceived religion-based partition/division. He ardently raises the Sikh religious slogan '*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh*' (Victory to the faith of the Gurus) to claim his geographical stake. There is inherent resistance and abhorrence to the idea of Partition in his various mutterings.

He had not slept for fifteen years, according to the guards. He might occasionally be seen leaning against a wall, but most of the time, he was usually standing. As a result, his legs were permanently swollen, but it did not bother him. The elderly man had almost no hair left, and what little there was had merged with the beard to give him a weird look. This unconventional look only endorses the stereotypical understanding that ‘madness is as madness looks.’ They function as “visible differences of appearance and behavior that demarcate a symbolic boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’”.<sup>12</sup> Palmer-Mehta notes that the disabled and the mentally ill continue to constitute the face of evil, often for the simple motives of profit, opportunism, and expedience.<sup>13</sup> She exposes this mischievous characterization through the Hollywood movies of M. Night Shyamalan, who portrays the mentally ill and the disabled as irredeemably violent and dangerous. The characters’ disability is foregrounded and acts deterministically in the plot of the movies. Since they are “exceedingly selfish and misguided,” their forcible confinement is considered “justifiable and necessary”.<sup>14</sup> Such media representations silence the unique experiences, perspectives, and legitimate needs of persons with mental illness.

However, Bishan Singh is in no way dangerous and has never been known to start fights. An older staff member at the asylum claims he was a prosperous landlord from Toba Tek Singh who had abruptly become disturbed. Bishan Singh reflects Manto’s reluctant compromise with the idea of a separate nation for Muslims. Bishan Singh’s attachment to his native village Toba Tek Singh is mirrored by Manto’s attachment to Bombay, the city of dreams.

Parui has even taken up this text as part of his Swayam MOOC course *Twentieth-Century Fiction* discussing how the short story opens up new narratorial possibilities in the Indian subcontinent.<sup>15</sup> Manto subverts literary conventions by writing of deep psychological fissures in a mock-serious newspaper-like fashion. With this technique, he accentuates the political satire and rewrites madness to open possibilities for alternative futures. It presents the irresolvable tension between the contradictory discursive tendencies of ‘hallucinatory inflation’ and ‘critical deflation’.<sup>16</sup>

Divya A, affiliated with IIT Madras, has lectured on the translational possibilities and incongruities of Manto’s story, which was originally written in Urdu, into the English language. She teaches the Swayam MOOC *Modern Indian Writing in Translation*, and the short story has been used in week four of the course.<sup>17</sup> She has provided three lectures on the short story, including a recorded office discussion and a special guest lecture.

Merin Simi Raj uses the text in her Swayam course *Introduction to World Literature* since it brilliantly captures a pivotal moment in the Indian

subcontinent.<sup>18</sup> Manto is the paramount chronicler of Partition. It is representative of the modernist vein in the literature of modern Indian languages. Also, the text has gained wide currency and readership across the world due to its various English language translations. It must also be remembered that Manto translated Russian, French, and English stories since his younger days. Not only does Raj provide a close reading, but she also gives an overview of the text's historical, biographical, socio-political, and literary contexts.

### **3. Nanakian Critique of 'Madness' in *Toba Tek Singh***

Guru Nanak's life exudes the message of religious harmony and peaceful co-existence. He was an indigenous thinker who shifted the moral paradigm of the Indian subcontinent and birthed an entirely new religion. Once, the Guru disappeared for three days to be consumed by the bliss of meditation. Upon his reappearance after enlightenment, his first words were, "There is no Hindu and no Musselman." He only preached what he practised. Unfortunately, the visions of Nanak were not considered valuable for proclaiming the invalidity of the two major religions of his time while opening up a third space, which is, as yet, unnamed. It is the same unnamed transcendent space Bishan Singh occupies at the end of Manto's short story.

"There, behind barbed wire, on one side, lay India, and behind more barbed wire, on the other side, lay Pakistan. In between, on a bit of earth which had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh".<sup>19</sup>

In other words, Bishan Singh rejects the absurdity of dividing the nation along religious lines. By giving up his life at the international border, a no man's land, a liminal space, he is inadvertently propagating the peace-loving teachings of Sikhism. The talk of ensuing Partition in the Lahore lunatic asylum amplifies Bishan Singh's precarious mental state as he cannot fathom the logic or significance of the ill-conceived decision taken by the political masters and so-called rational bureaucrats. He rues about the loss of his native village Toba Tek Singh with which he has become synonymous. "His real name was Bishan Singh, but everybody called him Toba Tek Singh".<sup>20</sup>

Like Guru Nanak, Bishan Singh also lived off the land until he was mis/recognized as a crazy person owing to his unconventional speech and behavior and got admitted to a mental asylum by his family. However, his family members only noticed the troubles caused by his unconventional behavior rather than deduct the development of any extraordinary capability or divergent thinking due to which he acted strangely. The popular notion of madness remains embroiled in the "realm of lurid imagination, Gothic fantasy, and horror".<sup>21</sup> A lunatic is assumed to be 'mad,

bad, and dangerous.’ Therefore, he deserves incarceration like other criminals, being a threat to himself and others. The prison for the lunatics “opens up a ‘significatory space’ in which our ‘normalcy’ is called into question”<sup>22</sup> and marks the “symbolic boundary between rationality and derangement; intelligible speech and sensible utterance”.<sup>23</sup>

In a typically modernist vein, Bishan Singh’s lack of conformity was stereotyped as madness. RD Laing writes in the book *Sanity, Madness and the Family* that nothing is intrinsically ‘wrong’ with the psychotic. There has, instead, been an impossible communication breakdown in the family, leading to the weakest member being labelled insane. The person with a different cognitive orientation is essentially a lonesome, almost heroic seer attacked by an impossibly hostile family.

Sometimes, such a discourse implies that modernist individualized self-centeredness and self-seeking as a whole is insane and riddled with contradictions and that madness is, in some way, the only sane reaction to it. Laing praises the non-normative person as more whole and genuine than the splintered rational individual. The modern consumerist culture expects submissive, one-dimensional brains with a rift between reason and experience and between the self and the other. The mad is someone who has thrown off these restraints and embarked on what Peter Sedgewick has called a ‘radical trip’ into personal growth.

‘Madness’ remains a tabooed category in dire need of a more capacious definition and critical interrogation. Divergent or unconventional thinking is typically a graded and relative term. Accordingly, people classified as having madness merely disagree with the prevalent ideas in their culture; they are not ill but non-conformists. Thomas Szasz, a psychiatrist, is credited with developing this viewpoint.

In his view, madness is not a medical issue but rather a social and legal one, and those who suffered from it were, in essence, no different than conscientious objectors or zealous separatists. Szasz is critical of organized psychiatry because he believed it was more of a totalitarian institution for branding and controlling people who decided to defy social standards than a legitimate field of medicine. He and other anti-psychiatry authors made much of the fact that people in the Soviet Union who disagreed with the dominant ideology were given psychiatric diagnoses and imprisoned for "treatment." Szasz also linked psychiatric diagnosis to the Inquisition, a dictatorial and solely political tool for suppressing social deviance in the late Middle Ages that dealt with so-called heretics.

In his book *Strong Imagination: Madness, Creativity and Human Nature*, Daniel Nettle contends that “madness is not so much mental malfunction as a state

of hyperfunction of certain mental characteristics".<sup>24</sup> Since madness is intimately related to creativity, a handy feature despite being inherently disadvantageous, it would continue to exist in our species. He goes so far as to say that the regular operation of the human mind is tied to the symptoms of madness. There are similarities between the elevation of the imagination in insanity and talents for eloquence, painting, and music, as well as extraordinary inventiveness in several arts.

Toba Tek Singh, the actual town, was so named after a kind-hearted Sikh, Tek Singh, who used to serve water from the *toba* (pond) to thirsty travellers. Having lost his short-term memory as usual in schizophrenic cases, Bishan Singh vividly remembers and feels an emotional attachment to the memories of his village, which were formed just before he went 'mad.' In that idyllic and ideal environment, Muslim and Sikh families lived as one unit. The fanatic frenzy created by Partition uprooted the traditional and informal relations that existed for centuries among members of various religions, sects, and castes.

A particularly poignant moment in the story depicts the visit of Bishan Singh's old friend Fazal Din from his village Toba Tek Singh after fifteen years. Despite being a Muslim, Fazal Din has come to inform and reassure Bishan Singh that his Sikh family has departed safely from Pakistan. He seems incredibly grateful that Bishan Singh's family has left the property and the buffaloes to his care and ownership. He even gifts homemade rice crispies to Bishan Singh. Even as Punjab is facing cataclysmic division, this amiable personal moment between two old friends transcends the barriers of religion, much like Nanak's partnership with Bala and Mardana.<sup>25</sup> More than just a territory, a 'homeland' is more about intermingling personal memories and stories. The village Toba Tek Singh is a civilizational space from where Bishan Singh gained 'imaginative strength'.<sup>26</sup>

The dominant narrative of the 'two-nation theory,' based on the toxic combination of religion and nationality, was advanced as a rational political settlement. Unfortunately, it managed to capture the people's imagination. Still, the protagonist of Manto's story, Bishan Singh, from a lunatic asylum, emerges as a conscientious objector to the facile exercise of geographical division. The rape, plunder, and violence of Partition stand testimony to the wise decision of Bishan Singh to die on the border rather than live in the two ill-gotten nations. To live without fundamental human values and emotions is a fate worse than death. The Scottish psychiatrist RD Laing wrote in the preface to the 1965 edition of *The Divided Self*:

"The statesmen of the world who boast and threaten that they have Doomsday weapons are far more dangerous, and far more estranged from 'reality' than many of the people on whom the label 'psychotic' is affixed".<sup>27</sup>

It is essential to look at the history of the insane asylum in British India as a modern institution providing a place of confinement to comprehend the space created by Manto. To control native populations and allay the conquerors' fears of the other, asylums were deployed. The purpose of the colonial Indian asylums, like the asylums that had developed in Europe, was to turn the sluggish, ineffective Indian vagrants, criminals, beggars, and murderers into productive laborers. A psychologically-based hegemonic relationship between the British and Indians was established by this ideology, which was presented as humanitarian for the welfare of the child-like locals.<sup>28</sup>

The asylum in Manto's text became a rallying point for fostering religious and ethnic unity as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Anglo-Indians came to share the same space. It became a den of anti-colonial revolutionaries who represented the resistance of the marginalized against the dominant.

Bishan Singh personifies the Sikh notion of *sarbat da bhala* (welfare of all). He is the only character in the theatre of Partition to rise above insecurity and hatred, i.e., he is *nirbhau* and *nirvair*. One of Nanak's core ideas is to share the food earned after honest duty. Bishan Singh's passion for *moong di dal* exhibits the exact sentiment of focusing on life's basic, simple, and fundamental truths. The larger geo-political machinations of egomaniacal rulers are beyond the understanding of the humble residents of the lunatic asylum. As in Shakespeare's works, the madman in literature often functions as a distinguished philosopher.<sup>29</sup>

It is only after large swaths of a diverse populace became convinced of Nanak's spiritual credentials that he was proclaimed as *Baba Nanak Shah Fakir*, *Hindu ka guru*, *Musalmaan ka pir* (Nanak is the king among saints, the guru of the Hindus and the seer of the Muslims). In modern times, Madness is primarily seen as a political ploy to label, marginalize or exclude any alternative values destabilizing or decentring the established supremacy. Manto's story amply indicates that though modernity is essential, it is inadequate without the integration of the liberating/dialogic spiritual/cosmopolitan 'eye' and 'I' of Baba Nanak, who said, "*Jau tau prem khelan ka chau, Siru dhari tali gali meri au.*" "If you want to play the game of love, approach me with your head in the palm of your hand".<sup>30</sup> Bishan Singh, too, is no less than a martyr who loses his life playing the extraordinary game of love in the highest traditions of *shahadat* (martyrdom).

Therefore, madness cannot be considered inherently flawed as it may have enabling and ennobling functions. Modernity casts madness as not having any benign resonances, inwardness, robustness, or wisdom. Disability Studies locates disability as not residing within the individual but within the culture/social environment as a whole. Madness is treated as a socio-cultural and not exclusively a medical category in disability studies. As an ethical and political challenge, disability studies, an interdisciplinary, emerging field within cultural studies,

performs a transformative revaluation of madness, which was otherwise recognized as pathological, sanctioning and sustaining a stark divide between the ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal/disordered’ In the paradigm of colonial/neoliberal modernity, hardly any liberating, empowering or meaningful impulse and elements are attributed to madness, which it treats as the domain of the embarrassment, irrational, beastly, wild and wilderness, urgently needed to be tamed and controlled. However, several strands of Indian modernity may reveal that the ‘mad’ sounding superficial behavior may mask a deepening awareness as corroborated by the deep Sufi/Bhakti configurations of Kabir, Meera, and Baba Nanak. Songs about going wild over the transcendental beloved that can be traced to such spiritual figures are still relevant and meaningful, and invoking them may redeem the people from the malaise of instrumental rationality and small-mindedness. Lyrics like *Yaar di kamli* (Crazy for my Beloved), *Meera ho gyi magan* (Meera was drowned in ecstasy), and *Mera mujhme kucch nahi* (Nothing in me is of me) typify the urge towards self-abnegation and surrender of the ego. Being possessed by their beloved Lord, like a wife by her husband, is considered the necessary pre-condition of achieving spiritual fulfilment in the Sufi and Bhakti traditions. In contrast, modern biomedical psychiatry would diagnose such experiences as symptoms of dissociative identity disorder wherein the patient exhibits possession by a foreign entity. Therefore, the socio-cultural understanding and approach to madness overcomes the limitations of the medical models.

Being awakened, revolutionary, and resolute, the gravity of the saints’ personage and epistemologies cannot be comprehended through medical, modernist, or calculative rational paradigms/lenses. Their non-conformist sense of selfhood opens up new ways of being and relating. They have a unique way of integrating experience, thought, and action while embracing non-duality between the personal and the political. While expounding a transformational framework of thinking, their philosophies may be differential but not discriminatory towards other sect, religion, gender, or class. Such expansive epistemic conceptions mandate a paradigm shift in the whole worldview of the readers.

The inherent resistance and distrust of anything different cause the people to ignore, ridicule, and fight, owing to their internalization of dominant normalcy. When profound saints like Kabir and Nanak are allowed their spaces, they may leave an indelible mark on the reifying categories of normal and abnormal. They may permanently change our attitudes and perceptions that inadvertently perpetuate certain forms of oppression and marginalization. Hence, the so-called insane perform the inexorable function of consciousness-raising in society.

#### **4. Towards a Conclusion: Unravelling Madness as the Political**

It may sound very bizarre to treat madness as a social-political issue/phenomenon; otherwise so obviously considered as a medical condition

alone. Disability studies scholars/academics have raised questions/issues of rights, citizenship, equality, freedom, and justice connected to people christened by the mainstream as mad, ‘lacking’ agential capacities of reason and communication. Highlighting the limits of the medical/psychiatric understanding of madness, disability studies finds a direct bearing of political disorders such as colonization, poverty, capitalist economic conditions, and many other hierarchical societal arrangements, totalitarian regimes, hostile/discriminatory settings, and the like, on mental breakdown and bad mental health of the people. Critical disabilities studies have drawn heavily upon the path-breaking writings of Frantz Fanon (documented the mortifying effects of the colonial disorders on the psyche of the colonized), Hannah Arendt (exposed the psycho-pathology of a totalitarian regime, producing the “mass-man”), and Michel Foucault (critiqued the asylum, Enlightenment/modernity that valorizes a binary between “reason and unreason,” and a hierarchical understanding of human faculties such as reason over emotion)—establishing a straight connection/co-relation between the mental disorders (not curable by pharmaceutical interventions) suffered by people and the stark crushing realities of political disorders.

Literature shoulders the responsibility of verbalizing madness by evoking pathos through the language of fiction<sup>31</sup>. Bishan Singh’s gibberish and Saadat Manto’s literary art can be understood through various academic interpretations and theoretical angles. Trauma theory, translation studies, world literature, and modern literature are conceptual categories that help the MOOC learner to navigate the dense and layered narrative of *Toba Tek Singh*. Such online courses simplify the rhetorical landscape and contextual underpinnings while expanding the hermeneutic circle.

The paper underscores the disability studies' standpoint that madness is not an inherent perversity or a natural/eternal trait that can be diagnosed and cured by invoking a universal medical paradigm. In this study, madness, to a great extent, is recognised as a social construct. Madness is configured differently in different historic-social junctures. The apparently mad subjectivity of Bishan Singh is inextricably connected to the historic-political disorder triggered by the partition, an effect of the power relations exercised/executed by the authoritarian state machinery. Certain dialectics can be discerned to be operative between Bishan Singh and the society he lived in. He represents a critique of the oppressive societal conditions that climaxed in the catastrophic partition. For Bishan Singh, the Partition is as troublesome and unbearable as his atypical personality is to his family and society. Bishan Singh's opposition to the “rational” project of Partition can be considered mad philosophically, as “madness is the doubt of reason”.<sup>32</sup> He finds fatal relief only when he has fallen within the cracks of the competing claims to civilization.



Though not sophisticated, looking slovenly and having a marginalized existence in worldly terms, Bishan Singh has an intense awareness of the disorder in the world around him and is committed to combating the same. He has a different way of seeing (the non-conforming one) and being in the world and does not see himself in terms of popular perceptions and expectations. Rebellious to the extent of self-annihilation but makes no compromises. The persona of Bishan Singh marks a rupture in episteme that endorsed and effected partition of the Nation along communal lines. The image of the protagonist may not reinforce the marginalization of mentally disabled people, who are often perceived in terms of pity or fear, deficit or disease. Bishan Singh, the fighting and resisting protagonist of the short story *Toba Tek Singh*, may have far-reaching consequences in challenging different negative stereotypes that continue to haunt people with mental disorders and are perceived and treated by majority in terms of the same. Enabling literary and cultural representations and images of/about the cognitively impaired people matter massively as these are inextricable from and for the disabled's political struggles.

The paper relooks at the hegemonic concept of madness, as to why madness is treated as mindlessness. It calls for an alternative mapping of mental health in the public sphere. Manto's representation of madness through the simpleton and conscientious Bishan Singh, who represents the world more genuinely, provides a powerful rationale for fresh modalities of perception and cultural renewal. His uncanny, lyrical and liminal individuality and a totalising passion (beyond the rigid constraints of discursive linear tropes of rationalisation seeking to regulate normalcy and containment) represents strikingly a questioning of the rigid semantic and semiotic boundaries associated with distorted perception of madness. Manto's text is a battlefield of the two wills, one that of the benighted official one, hell-bent on the partition of the nation and dislocation of the vulnerable populace; and the other is emancipatory one, represented by disconcerted Bishan Singh, vehemently countering the ideology and enactment of violence, religious divide, domination. The "enigmatic" madness embodied by Bishan Singh is not a mental illness to be treated in an asylum or a hospital by the dominant psychiatric practices. Bishan Singh's nonconformist public-spirited, and perceptive madness grounded in empathy, emotional comprehension and ethical action is very much Nanakian, emphasizing a distinctly 'social life of quality' and not just 'a high quality of life'. The Indian thread of modernity can be traced as far back as the cosmopolitan teachings of numerous Bhakti and Sufi saints. These seers represented rebellion, carried out a renewal of traditions, and imparted native wisdom in order to establish a fresh outlook among the masses.

## Endnotes

1. Author Salman Rushdie is a British-American of Indian descent. His stories frequently involve

- connections, clashes, and migrations between Eastern and Western cultures and are typically set on the Indian subcontinent.
2. Smita Das, 'Space of the Crazy in Saadat Hasan Manto's Toba Tek Singh', *South Asian Review*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2005, p. 202.
  3. Ibid., p. 204.
  4. Avishek Parui, *Trauma and Literature*. Swayam, NPTEL, archive.nptel.ac.in/courses/109/106/109106186/.
  5. Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism*. Panhwar, 1918, p. 4.
  6. Ibid., p. 8.
  7. Smita Das, 'Space of the Crazy in Saadat Hasan Manto's Toba Tek Singh', p. 208.
  8. Ibid., p. 213.
  9. Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness*. Translated by Martha Noel Evans, 2003, p. 4.
  10. Smita Das, 'Space of the Crazy in Saadat Hasan Manto's Toba Tek Singh', p. 209.
  11. Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness*. p. 106.
  12. Simon Cross, 'Visualising Madness: Mental Illness and Public Representation', *Television & New Media*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2004, p. 199.
  13. Valerie Palmer-Mehta, 'Refracting Mental Illness through Disability: Towards a New Politic of Cultural Locations', *The Journal of American Culture*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2013, p. 362.
  14. Ibid., 361.
  15. Avishek Parui, *Twentieth Century Fiction*. Swayam, swayam.gov.in/nd1\_noc20\_hs05. MOOC.
  16. Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness*. p. 67.
  17. Divya A., *Modern Indian Writing in Translation*. Swayam, swayam.gov.in/nd1\_noc20\_hs36. MOOC.
  18. Merin Simi Raj, *Introduction to World Literature*. Swayam, archive.nptel.ac.in/courses/109/106/109106147/. MOOC.
  19. Saadat Hasan Manto, 'Toba Tek Singh', *Kingdom's End and Other Stories*, translated by Khalid Hasan, Penguin, 1987, p. 18.
  20. Ibid., p. 15.
  21. Simon Cross, 'Visualising Madness: Mental Illness and Public Representation', p. 198.
  22. Ibid., p. 203.
  23. Ibid., p. 204.
  24. Daniel Nettle, *Strong Imagination: Madness, Creativity and Human Nature*. Oxford, 2002, p. 120.
  25. Bala, Mardana and Guru Nanak were childhood friends and lifelong companions. Bhai Bala was born as a Hindu in a Jat Sandhu family and Bhai Mardana was born into Islam in a Mirasi Muslim family.
  26. Smita Das, 'Space of the Crazy in Saadat Hasan Manto's Toba Tek Singh', p. 215.
  27. RD Laing, *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness*. Penguin, 1965, p. 12.
  28. Smita Das, 'Space of the Crazy in Saadat Hasan Manto's Toba Tek Singh', p. 206.
  29. Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness*. p. 37.
  30. Guru Nanak, *Adi Granth*. Sri Granth, p. 1412.
  31. Shoshana Felman, *Writing and Madness*. p. 47.
  32. Ibid., p. 85.

# Cultural Reorientation and Leadership: The Case of Brahmo Samaj in the Colonial Punjab

\*Sheena Pall, \*\*Parampreet Kaur

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## Abstract

*The Brahmo Samaj found fertile ground in colonial Punjab and evolved under able leaders like Navin Chandra Rai, Dyal Singh Majithia and Ruchi Ram Sahni. This focus of this paper is the contribution of these leaders in the evolution and progress of the Brahmo Samaj in the colonial Punjab. They redefined socio-religious ideas to suit the new colonial environment and influenced urban western educated Punjabis to adopt Brahmo Samaj. This work is based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources used are Census Reports, Gazetteers, Punjab Administrative Reports, Government Records of various Punjab Departments and other publications of the Government. Contemporary newspapers and Journals in English and Hindi too have been used. The literary works of Navin Chandra Rai and Ruchi Ram Sahni in English, Hindi and Urdu have also been examined. The methodology used is analytical, comparative and multi-disciplinary. The leadership of the Brahmo Samaj in colonial Punjab represented a powerful intellectual and moral challenge to religious orthodoxy. Through their institutions, writings and activities they not only extended the Brahmo ideology but also helped to lay the foundations for modern civil society in Punjab.*

## Introduction

The Brahmo Samaj movement was the first amongst the socio-religious reform movements that emerged in 19th-century British India. All these movements 'advocated modifications in social behaviour, justified such advocacy by one or another form of religious authority, and then built an organizational structure it maintained over time'.<sup>1</sup> Central to the success and spread of these movements were visionary leaders who guided communities through periods of social transition and challenge. Strong leadership played a critical role in articulating reformist ideas, organizing efforts, and mobilizing people toward progressive change.

Leaders of social movements inspire commitment, mobilize resources, devise strategies, influence movement organization and also links it to the larger society.<sup>2</sup>

Under the able leadership of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Debendranath Tagore

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and Keshav Chandra Sen, the Brahmo Samaj, founded in Bengal, marked a significant shift in the religious and social landscape of colonial India. Rooted in monotheistic principles and rationalist thought, the movement aimed to challenge orthodox Hindu practices, idolatry and caste discrimination. The Brahmo Samaj found fertile ground in colonial Punjab and evolved under the strong leaders like Babu Navin Chandra Rai (1830-1890), a Bengali, Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia (1848-1898), a Sikh and Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948), a Khatri Hindu. They emerged as prominent voices who adapted to a rapidly changing environment that 'demanded new social relations and lifestyles'.<sup>3</sup> Their leadership played a pivotal role in adapting the movement's core values to local realities, thereby ensuring its relevance and resonance among the urban western educated middle classes of the Punjab. They inspired and devised strategies for the success of the movement.

This paper is divided into three sections. The first traces the life and ideas of Babu Navin Chandra Rai, the founder of Brahmo Samaj in the colonial Punjab. The next section looks at the contribution of Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia and the last gives an account of Ruchi Ram Sahni's life and ideas, and the institutions established by him.

## I

The founder of the Brahmo Samaj in the Punjab was Navin Chandra Rai (1830-90). He was born in a Bengali Brahmin family on 20 February, 1838 in Meerat. His father Ram Mohan Roy died when he was a child and he had to leave school at a very early age to support his family. At the age of thirteen, he started working in Sardhana in the Meerat district, on a monthly salary of just Rs. 16. Despite not getting a formal education, he learnt Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali and English and also got some training in civil engineering at the Lahore School of Engineering.<sup>4</sup>

In 1863, Navin Chandra Rai secured a government job at Punjab Public Works Department in Lahore as assistant accountant in the Controller's Office. He was soon promoted to accountant.<sup>5</sup> Seven years later, he was appointed as a member of the Senate of the Punjab University College at Lahore. In 1871, he was selected as one of the three Indian members of a Committee which developed the scheme for the college examinations. Two years later, Rai became a member of the Punjab Textbook Committee comprising of ten prominent British and Indian citizens who were to examine and improve the textbooks.<sup>6</sup> In 1874, he got the job of paymaster of the North Western Railway at Agra. Next year, he went to Bombay where he became the temporary Deputy Controller of Public Works Accounts.<sup>7</sup> In 1876, Rai was transferred to the North Western Provinces, where he was appointed as a Hindi examiner by Punjab University College at Lahore.<sup>8</sup> In 1881, he was appointed as Joint Assistant Registrar of the Punjab University College at Lahore and also as the Superintendent of the Lahore Oriental College. Navin Chandra officiated as the

Principal of the Oriental College when its Principal G.W. Leitner was on leave for a year.<sup>9</sup> He was also the Superintendent of Studies and Translation, where he was responsible for the production of textbook material, including the translation of English as well as Bengali books into Hindi. He retired from public service and left Lahore after 1886 to spend his last years in Brahmo Gram in the Hoshangabad district of Central Provinces.<sup>10</sup> He died in Calcutta on 28 August 1890.<sup>11</sup>

As a Brahmo, Navin Chandra Rai revered all sacred scriptures that emphasized rationality and considered them as source of knowledge.<sup>12</sup> He did not support idol worship as God did not have a form (*murat*) and therefore had no reflection (*pratima*), which could be seen by human beings. Rai observed that the worship of created beings and idols was prohibited by the Vedas and the Shastras.<sup>13</sup> He did not support the practice of pilgrimages as he believed that spiritual knowledge (*gian*) was greater.<sup>14</sup> The caste system based on birth was rejected, as according to Shastras, qualities and actions determined an individual's place in the *varna* order rather than birth.<sup>15</sup> Rai stood for interdining (*priti bhojan*).<sup>16</sup> All the taboos associated with inter-caste marriage and widow remarriage were denounced. Rai underscored the equality of all religions.<sup>17</sup>

Navin Chandra Rai stood for the promotion of Hindi and Devnagari script and was of the view that Hindi should be the medium of instruction in schools. Along with, Shiv Narayan Agnihotri<sup>18</sup> and Mulraj, Rai started an agitation in 1882 to make Hindi the medium of instruction in the schools instead of Urdu.<sup>19</sup> However, he had no objection if English was used as a medium of instruction in higher educational institutions.<sup>20</sup> In addition, Navin Chandra Rai established a literary society for the propagation of Hindi. He was a prolific writer of Hindi school books. *Hindi Bhasha Ka Viyakran* (Hindi Grammar) was published in Lahore in 1883.<sup>21</sup> A few pamphlets advocating the use of Hindi were written by him as well.<sup>22</sup> Rai was a pioneer of female education in the Punjab and founded *Striksha Sabha* along with Pandit Manphul in the 1870s.<sup>23</sup> Two years later, the *Punjab Education Report* mentioned Navin Chandra as one of the native gentlemen 'whose exertions are worthy of distinct recognition'.<sup>24</sup>

Navin Chandra Rai promoted journalism and set up dailies and weeklies. He started a weekly *Paisa Akhbar* in Urdu at Lahore.<sup>25</sup> He was the editor of *Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab*, an Urdu weekly organ of Anjuman-i-Punjab.<sup>26</sup> He also edited of *The Punjab University Intelligencer* in English that was a supplement to the *Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab*.<sup>27</sup> The English edition of the *Journal of the Anjuman-i-Punjab* was also edited by him.<sup>28</sup>

The foundation of Brahmo Samaj in the colonial Punjab was laid in 1863 by Navin Chandra Rai. He along with six other Bengalis and a small group of Punjabi Hindus founded the first Brahmo Samaj of Punjab in Lahore. He was a visionary, influential speaker, prolific author and a well-known spokesperson of the Brahmo

Samaj in the Punjab.<sup>29</sup> In 1873, the Lahore Brahmo Samaj opened its first *mandir*, and Rai became its minister and also constructed a building.<sup>30</sup> Due to his efforts, the branches of the Brahmo Samaj were strengthened further in the Punjab. In 1874, Rai moved from Lahore to Agra and handed over his local house and a piece of land to the Brahmo Samaj at Lahore.<sup>31</sup> He was also associated with the Shimla hills Brahmo Samaj and visited it in 1875.<sup>32</sup> A major schism appeared in the Brahmo Samaj in 1879 because of the marriage of Keshav Chander Sen's not-yet fourteen-year-old daughter to the young Maharaja of Cooch Behar.<sup>33</sup> There were many who supported Keshav Chander Sen but many Brahmos joined Shivnath Shastri's Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. Navin Chandra Rai was counted among the eminent opponents of the marriage and became a member of the General Committee of the newly formed Sadharan Brahmo Samaj in 1880 in Punjab.<sup>34</sup>

As a Brahmo, Rai conducted many activities for the promotion of the ideology of Brahmo Samaj like *katha*, *kirtan*, *satsang*, meditation, *nagar sankirtan*, reading and singing of hymns from scriptures like the Hindu Shastras, the *Adi Granth*, the *Gita*, the *Bible* and the *Quran*. In 1883, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Brahmo Samaj at Brahmo Mandir, Lahore. Navin Chandra Rai recited from Hindu Shastras and the *Adi Granth*.<sup>35</sup> He delivered lectures on various religious and social themes like: 'Progress of the Soul'; 'True Piety'; 'Religion of the Aryans'; 'Lower and Higher Virtue' and 'Brahmanical thread'.<sup>36</sup>

Rai authored many books, tracts and pamphlets promoting the ideas of Brahmo Samaj in Hindi, English and Urdu.<sup>37</sup> Books in Hindi were : *Dharma Dipika* (Religious Light, 1863)<sup>38</sup>; *Brahma Dharmaks Prashnatta* (Questions and Answers concerning Brahmoism, 1863) *Shabda Charan*; *Hindi Bhasha Ka Viyakran* (Hindi Grammar, 1883),<sup>39</sup> *Lakshmi Sarasvati Samvad* (1869)<sup>40</sup>, *Bhajanbichar* (Considerations about Eating, 1874); *Tattwa Bodha* (Knowledge of Truth, 1874)<sup>41</sup> and *Upanishad Sar* (Essence of the Upanishads, 1876).<sup>42</sup> The *Indian Mirror* of May 14, 1876 pointed out that Rai had made an important contribution to Brahmo literature by publishing 'a selection of texts from the Vedas and Upanishads which establish faith in the One True God'. *Lower and Higher Virtue* was published from Lahore in 1873 in English.<sup>43</sup> Urdu works authored by Navin Chandra Rai were: *Dharma Raksha Satik* (Defence of True Religion, 1877)<sup>44</sup>; *Saddharam Sutram* (Philosophy of True Religion, 1878)<sup>45</sup> and *Sangit Mala* (Hymn Book).<sup>46</sup>

As pointed out earlier, Navin Chandra Rai was an advocate of widow remarriage and inter-caste marriages. He established the Widow Marriage Aiding Society in 1881. As its General Secretary, he held regular meetings in Brahmo Mandir at Lahore. Widow remarriages were conducted in his house.<sup>47</sup> For instance, in 1881, he performed the marriage of the widow, Nistarini Lahiri aged 21, with Sharada Prashad Chakravarti aged 24 in his house in Lahore.<sup>48</sup> He was responsible for arranging several inter-caste marriages. A marriage between a Bengali groom

and a Punjabi bride was performed with Brahmo rites at Lahore.<sup>49</sup>

Rai set up several educational institutions for girls in the colonial Punjab. In 1885, he set up the Anglo Vernacular Girls School at Lahore that was later known as Navin Chandra Anglo Vernacular Girls School.<sup>50</sup> The subjects taught were Hindi, Arithmetic and Geography and girls were also trained in tailoring and knitting.<sup>51</sup> No fee was charged from the students.<sup>52</sup> The school was supported financially by private Brahmo Samaj subscriptions.<sup>53</sup> Navin Chandra Rai also set up an orphanage in 1878 in Lahore with the efforts of the Lahore Brahmo Samaj.<sup>54</sup>

## II

A leading Punjabi Brahmo Samajist, Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia (1848-98) provided guidance and leadership to the Brahmo Samaj Movement. Dyal Singh Majithia was an aristocrat who belonged to one of the most illustrious Sikh families in the Punjab. His grandfather, Sardar Desa Singh was the Chief Administrator of the hill territories of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and was popularly known as *Pahar Badashah*.<sup>55</sup> His father, Sardar Lehna Singh was the head of the Khalsa Army and was also the Governor of Amritsar.<sup>56</sup> Lehna Singh travelled to various places like Haridwar, Mathura, Jaganath Puri and Calcutta and finally settled at Benares where Dyal Singh was born in 1849.<sup>57</sup> He was five-year-old when his father died and his family moved to Majithia village near Amritsar.<sup>58</sup> His mother died shortly leaving Dyal under the guardianship of Sardar Tej Singh.<sup>59</sup>

Dyal Singh received education, first at home from an English governess and then in the Christian Mission School at Amritsar. He learnt English, Arabic, Hindi and Persian. He was familiar with the *Bible* and participated in the church service on Sundays. Christianity had a deep influence on him.<sup>60</sup> He studied the *Gita* as well as the *Quran*. He began to take interest not only in social matters but also in religious questions. He wrote poetry under the pen name, '*Mashriq*', played the *sitar* and his knowledge of classical music was exceptional.<sup>61</sup>

When Dyal Singh came of age in 1870, the government allowed him to manage his vast property. He was installed as Chief of his family clan, Shergill. Dyal Singh was also appointed as an Honorary Magistrate of Amritsar by the Punjab Government.<sup>62</sup> He served as a member of the Managing Committee of the Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), Amritsar for nearly thirty years.<sup>63</sup> On 9<sup>th</sup> September 1898, he breathed his last at the age of 48.<sup>64</sup>

Dyal Singh's inclination towards the Brahmo Samaj began when he came in contact with Bengali teachers, lawyers and civil servants. He was closely associated with Brahmo Samajists like Partul Chandra Chatterji, Jogendra Chandra Bose, Navin Chandra Rai, Shivnath Shastri, Ruchi Ram Sahni and many others. He had made a deep study of the principles of Brahmo Samaj. He attended divine services at various branches of the Brahmo Samaj as well as lectures delivered by Shiv

Narayan Agnihotri in Amritsar. He took a deep interest in the writings of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Devendra Nath Tagore and Keshav Chander Sen.<sup>65</sup> In 1879, after the schism in the Brahmo Samaj, Dyal Singh Majithia joined Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. He was nominated as the trustee of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj Mandir in Calcutta and was also appointed as a member of the General Committee of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta.<sup>66</sup> He made regular financial contributions to the Brahmo Samaj.<sup>67</sup> Dyal Singh raised the subscription for the *mandir* of Sadharan Brahmo Samaj at Calcutta to Rs. 3000 and himself subscribed Rs.1000.<sup>68</sup> In the same year, he established a branch of the Brahmo Samaj in Amritsar.<sup>69</sup>

Dyal Singh Majithia believed in the Brahmo doctrines of the Unity of God, the worship of God in daily life, the immortality and responsibility of the soul and the rejection of idolatry. He strongly asserted that religion could not be judged solely on scriptural evidence, but it must be measured by reason. He questioned orthodox beliefs and rituals and wanted to eliminate erroneous customs, elaborate and useless rituals and polytheism. According to him, no special place or time, neither a temple nor an auspicious hour, was necessary for the worship of God. No material offerings or costly presents were needed for the worship of God. Dyal Singh rejected the caste system and the practice of untouchability. He stood for inter-caste marriages and wanted to create a social order which was egalitarian and protected the poorer sections of the community against exploitation. Dyal Singh opposed child marriage and enforced widowhood. He strongly urged the abolition of Sati, favored marriage reforms and opposed dowry.<sup>70</sup>

Dyal Singh Majithia delivered lectures promoting Brahmo Samaj at Lahore and Amritsar. The themes of the lectures were: 'True Happiness' and 'Rahat-i-Haqiqi'.<sup>71</sup> He wrote several excellent pamphlets on religion like, *Kashif-ul-Ilham* and *Khuda Mohabat Hai Ya Kher* in Urdu. The literature was published by the Lahore Brahmo Samaj. In 1871, he wrote a book entitled, *Nagma-i-Tamboori* in Urdu. In 1875, Dyal Singh Majithia translated the lectures, *Religion is Love, Incarnation, Inspiration and Essential Principles of Brahmoism* to Urdu.<sup>72</sup> He also translated the works of Raja Ram Mohan Roy into Urdu.<sup>73</sup>

Dyal Singh Majithia believed that a secular education for males and females was essential to end social and religious prejudices that caused dissension. He set up various educational institutions in the Punjab.<sup>74</sup> Most important was the Dyal Singh School established in 1896 in Lahore.<sup>75</sup> The influence of Brahmo Samaj was evident as the headmaster as well as teachers of the schools were Brahmo Samajists. Dyal Singh invited Nand Lal Sen, a cousin of Keshav Chander Sen to become the headmaster of the school. In 1910, a college in Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia's name was started by the trustees of the Dyal Singh Fund. Teachers from Bombay and Bengal were appointed.<sup>76</sup> The Board of Trustees of 9 members managed the Dyal Singh College.<sup>77</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni a well-known Brahmo Samajist, was appointed



Secretary of the Committee of Trustees.<sup>78</sup>

Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia founded *The Tribune* in 1881 at Lahore which remained largely influenced and dominated by Brahmo ideas.<sup>79</sup> It was the first Indian-owned English newspaper in Northern India.<sup>80</sup> Sitala Kanta Chatterjee a Brahmo, was its first editor, followed by Nagendranath Gupta who edited *The Tribune* for 16 years.<sup>81</sup> Sris Chandra, Kali Prasanna Chatterji, Ram Chand and Dwarka Das joined the editorial staff of *The Tribune*.<sup>82</sup> Its first issue was published on 9 February 1881, as a twelve-page weekly newspaper.<sup>83</sup> From 16 October 1886, *The Tribune* became a bi-weekly newspaper and by 1898, it was tri-weekly (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday).<sup>84</sup> *The Tribune* became a daily from 1 January 1906.<sup>85</sup> From 1915 to 1943, Kalinath Ray, a Brahmo served as the editor of *The Tribune*.<sup>86</sup>

### III

As a close associate of Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia, Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948) was yet another important Punjabi leader of the Brahmo Samaj. He was born on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1863 to Karam Chand and Gulab Devi in Dera Ismail Khan. His father was a merchant from Bhera in the Sargodha district of Punjab and his mother belonged to a banker's family in Pind Dadan Khan.<sup>87</sup> At the age of five, he started his schooling in a school run by a *pandah*,<sup>88</sup> where he studied tables as well as fractions. Two years later, he started working as an apprentice in a Marwari merchant's firm, applying his mathematical knowledge to actual business transactions. He also learnt to carry out negotiations, prepare financial instruments such as *hundis* and write business letters. After this training, he started helping his father in his firm.<sup>89</sup> At the age of nine, Ruchi Ram's formal education began when he was sent to Church Mission School<sup>90</sup> where he learnt English. Soon he moved to Dharm Prakash School and in 1878, Ruchi Ram passed the middle school examination, standing first in six districts. At the age of fifteen, he went to Government High School at Jhang. In 1879, he shifted to Lahore and continued his studies at Government High School.<sup>91</sup> Ruchi Ram graduated from Government College in Lahore and he was awarded the Arnold Silver Medal and Fuller Exhibition Scholarship of Rs 35 in 1884 for academic excellence. He did Masters in the subjects of Chemistry and Physics and came in contact with Professor J.C. Oman, an experimentalist who set up the Department of Science in Government College at Lahore.<sup>92</sup>

Ruchi Ram Sahni got his first job with the Meteorological Department in Shimla where he worked from 1885 to 1887.<sup>93</sup> In 1887, he was appointed Assistant Professor of Physics and Chemistry at Government College at Lahore where he remained till 1914.<sup>94</sup> He set up the Punjab Science Workshop in 1888 which produced high-quality equipment.<sup>95</sup> He remained a member of the Panjab University Senate and Syndicate for several years till 1921.<sup>96</sup> At the age of forty-

six, Ruchi Ram was conferred the title of 'Rai Sahib' by the British Government as an acknowledgement of his contribution to the Punjab Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition held in Lahore in 1909.<sup>97</sup> In 1910, he was nominated as a member of Dyal Singh College Trust. With the support of Raja Narendra Nath, Mr. Charles Golak Nath and Professor G.N. Chatterjee, Ruchi Ram opened the Dyal Singh College in 1910.<sup>98</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni retired from Government service in 1918 and was appointed as trustee of the newspaper, *The Tribune*.<sup>99</sup>

Ruchi Ram Sahni regularly contributed articles on society, politics, national movement and Brahmo Samaj to the *The Tribune*.<sup>100</sup> He also authored numerous books and research papers on various subjects in English and Urdu related to science, agriculture, social and Sikh politics.<sup>101</sup> Ruchi Ram wanted to improve education. He wrote articles propagating the ideal female education and advocating rights of the women. He along with his friend, Shiv Dayal organized a series of educational lectures especially for women in Punjabi in the Brahmo Mandir at Lahore.<sup>102</sup> He organized a Punjab Educational Conference at Lahore in 1918 to consider various questions relating to education in Punjab.<sup>103</sup> He believed that education alone could provide opportunities for women in professional as well as public life.<sup>104</sup>

Ruchi Ram took great interest in the national movement. He participated in the Swadeshi agitation at Lahore after the partition of Bengal in 1905.<sup>105</sup> After his retirement, he formally joined Indian National Congress and got elected to the Legislative Council and Lahore Municipal Committee. He was among the first to join the Non-Cooperation movement started by Mahatma Gandhi and gave up his title of 'Rai Sahib'.<sup>106</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni, Lajpat Rai and Harkrishan Lal were elected as delegates to the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress in 1920.<sup>107</sup> Ruchi Ram was the President of the Punjab Swaraj Party and organized its meetings in Lahore in 1923.<sup>108</sup> He won the elections in the same year and served as a member of the Punjab Legislative Council (PLC) from 1924 to 1926.<sup>109</sup>

Ruchi Ram Sahni was introduced to the Brahmo Samaj by Shiv Narayan Agnihotri and Navin Chandra Rai.<sup>110</sup> He accepted the rational, eclectic and reformist ideology of the Brahmo Samaj and was influenced by eminent Brahmos like Keshav Chander Sen and Protap Chunder Mozumdar.<sup>111</sup> During his stay in Calcutta, Sahni got a chance to meet and interact with Indian scientists like J.C. Bose<sup>112</sup> and P.C. Ray<sup>113</sup> who were Brahmo Samajists. Along with other Brahmo Samajists like Kashi Ram, Ruchi Ram established a Young Men's Religious Association which met weekly in the Brahmo Mandir at Lahore. He served as the Secretary of the Association as well as Secretary of the Brahmo Samaj at Lahore for several years and attracted several young men by his speeches and pamphlets.<sup>114</sup>

Ruchi Ram Sahni respected all scriptures like the *Vedas*, the *Puranas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Bible*, the *Quran* and the *Guru Granth Sahib*. He expressed his

distaste for rituals like idol worship, pilgrimages and fasts. The existing caste system and the practice of untouchability were rejected by him.<sup>115</sup> He had also discarded the sacred thread. Sahni opposed child marriage, expensive marriages, dowry and widow exploitation. He also supported inter caste marriages and widow remarriages. Ruchi Ram discouraged the seclusion of women and the traditional mourning rites.<sup>116</sup> He was opposed to smoking and the consumption of alcohol.<sup>117</sup> He was fully committed to rationalism and used scientific rationality as a tool to bring about change in society.<sup>118</sup>

To encourage widow remarriages in Punjab, Ruchi Ram frequently attended the weddings of the Brahmo Samajists.<sup>119</sup> He married his daughter according to Brahmo rituals in 1903. The age of the bride was 15 and the groom was 23.<sup>120</sup> Ruchi Ram Sahni's grand-daughter Miss Chandiok was married to Hari Nath, the younger son of Rai Bahadur Damodar Dass, a retired District Judge a Vaish Agarwal from Delhi.<sup>121</sup> He was an active member of organisations like Jat Pat Todak Mandal and Punjab Social Reform Association. He organized a Jat Pat Todak Conference in Brahmo Mandir at Lahore. Presiding over a session, he pointed out that he had, 'never thought of caste ever since he came in contact with the Brahmo Samaj at the age of 18'. For him, caste was 'Zulum on Humanity'.<sup>122</sup> For the promotion of education of women, Ruchi Ram organized a conference on women's education.<sup>123</sup>

Ruchi Ram Sahni continued to participate in functions organized by the Brahmo Samaj. The anniversary celebrations of the Sialkot Brahmo Samaj Mandir at Sialkot in 1926 were attended by him. The birth anniversary celebrations of Keshav Chander Sen at Brahmo Mandir in Lahore in 1929 and 1942 too saw him in attendance. Ruchi Ram celebrated Raja Ram Mohan Roy's birth anniversary at Brahmo Mandir in Lahore.<sup>124</sup>

For promotion of Brahmo ideals, Ruchi Ram delivered several lectures titled: 'Social Reform'; 'Social Reconstruction'; 'Influence of Science on Social Progress'; 'Restriction of facilities for Liquor'; 'Caste-a Great Curse'; 'Improvements of Backward Classes'; 'Juvenile Smoking' and 'Proliferation of Liquor Shops in Lahore'.<sup>125</sup> Some other talks and lectures were: 'Religion and Life'; 'Contribution of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar'; 'Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Universal Principles of Brahmo Dharm'; 'Be Earnest' and 'Guru Nanak and His Life'.<sup>126</sup>

#### IV

The Brahmo Samaj was the first model of 'acculturation',<sup>127</sup> that was adopted by urban western educated Punjabi Hindus and a few Sikhs in the colonial Punjab. Three well-known protagonists of Brahmo Samaj in the Punjab, Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia and Ruchi Ram Sahni represented continuity of socio-religious change. They were a part of the process of cultural

reorientation taking place in the new colonial context in Punjab. This orientation was more comprehensive taking into account other aspects like spread of modern western education for men and women, participation in politics and the national movement and emergence of secular literature and art.

A contemporary of these Brahmo leaders, Pandit Shardha Ram Phillauri (1840-1881) was a lone protagonist of the Sanatan Dharm movement in the colonial Punjab. He represented a conservative defense of orthodox Hindu beliefs. In contrast to the Brahmo Samajist leaders, Shardha Ram upheld the sanctity of the *Vedas* and the *Puranas* and regarded both as revealed. He stood for belief in incarnation, and the practice of idol worship, along with pilgrimage and fasts. The caste system and the dominant position of the Brahman was defended along with preservation of the sacred thread. Understandably, Shardha Ram clashed and debated with Navin Chandra Rai on the above mentioned issues in Lahore. Significantly, in consonance with the Brahmo ideology, Shardha Ram stood for widow remarriage and promotion of Hindi in the Devnagri script.<sup>128</sup> Thus, it can be said that all Punjabi Hindus whether aligned with radical or orthodox movements did not maintain status quo.

## Endnotes

1. Kenneth W. Jones, *The New Cambridge History of India: Socio-religious Reform Movements in British India*, India: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.2.
2. Aldon D. Morris and Suzanne Staggenborg, 'Leadership in Social Movements', David A.Snow, Sarah A. Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi, (Eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
3. Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Punjab*, New Delhi: Manohar, Reprint, 1989, p.314.
4. *The Tribune*, 10 September 1890, p.2.; P.V. Kanai, *Bhagwan Dev Atma*, Moga: Dev Samaj, 1942, p.157.; Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', *Gurus and their Followers: New Religious Reform Movements in Colonial India*, (Ed.), Antony Copley, India: Oxford University Press, 2000, p.34.
5. Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000, p.34.
6. Nazer Singh, 'Notes on the Anjuman-i-Punjab, Aligarh Movement, Brahmo Samaj, Indian Association, Arya Samaj and Singh Sabha Movement in the Context of Colonial Education in the Punjab, 1865-1885', *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol.XXVI-I, Serial No.51, April 1992, pp.35-69.
7. After the early death of his first wife, Navin Chandra married again in 1875. At the age of 37, he married the fourteen-year-old Hemlata Chaudhuri, daughter of Bireswar Chaudhuri, a head clerk of a military pay office. *Indian Mirror*, 23 January 1876, p.3.; *The Tribune*, 10 September 1890, p.2.; Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000, p.35.
8. *Indian Mirror*, 23 January 1876, p.3.

9. *The Tribune*, 7 December 1883, p.3; 10 September 1890, p.2; 13 September 1890, p.3; Kenneth W. Jones, 'The Bengali Elite in Post Annexation Punjab: An Example of Inter-Regional Influence in Nineteenth-Century India', *The Panjab Past and Present Essays in Honour of Dr. Ganda Singh*, (Ed.), Harbans Singh and N. Gerald Barrier, 1976, p.238.; Bob Van Der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab: The Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyahs*, 2008, pp.91-92.; Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, Calcutta: R. Chatterjee, 1932, p.88.
10. He was given a village by the Government, and he named it 'Brahmo Gram' village. It became a colony of Brahmo Samajists. Sophia Dobson Collet, (Ed.), *The Brahmo Year Book*, 1879, London: William and Norgate 1879, pp.90-91.; Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000, p. 35
11. On Navin Chandra Rai's death, a public meeting was held at Brahmo Mandir, Lahore. The Mandir was filled with the Lahore's native community. The proceedings commenced with *bhajans* suited to the occasion and divine service was performed by Ralla Ram Bhimbhat. *The Tribune*, 6 September 1890, p.4; Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, 1932, p.89; Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000, p.36.
12. Sheena Pall, 'The Sanatan Dharm Movement in the Colonial Punjab: Religious, Social and Political Dimensions', Ph.D. Thesis, Chandigarh: Panjab University, 2008, pp.81, 288.
13. Ibid., pp.70-72.
14. Ibid., pp.73, 76.
15. Ibid., pp.77-80
16. Priti Bhojan (love feast); every Sunday and on special occasions pure vegetarian food was served according to religious rituals in Brahmo Mandirs. Sophia Dobson Collet, (Ed.), *The Brahmo Year Book*, 1883, p.96.
17. Sheena Pall, 'The Sanatan Dharm Movement in the Colonial Punjab: Religious, Social and Political Dimensions', 2008, pp.77-80.
18. Shiv Narayan Agnihotri (1850-1923) was an ardent Brahmo, enthusiastic social reformer and a very good Urdu speaker. In 1876 he was elected as a member of the managing committee of the Lahore Brahmo Samaj and Secretary of the society for the diffusion of theism i.e. propagation of Brahma Dharma. He broke away from Brahmo Samaj and founded Dev Samaj movement on 16 February 1887. Ganda Singh, 'Socio Religious Movements in the Punjab in the 19th and 20th Centuries', S.P. Sen, (Ed.), *Social and Religious Reform Movements in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Calcutta: Institute of Historical Studies, 1979, p.149.
19. Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, 1932, p.90.; Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000, p.39.
20. *The Tribune*, 3 April 1886, pp.9-10.; 6 September 1890, p.4.; 13 September 1890, p.3.; 1 November 1912, p.1.; Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, 1932, pp.90-91.; Kenneth W. Jones, 'The Bengali Elite in Post Annexation Punjab: An Example of Inter-Regional Influence In Nineteenth Century India', 1976, pp.241, 242.; Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab: Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948)*, India: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 230.
21. *Indian Mirror*, 14 May 1876, p.3.
22. *The Tribune*, 29 August 1954, pp.2-4.; Bob Van Der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab: The Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyahs*, 2008, pp.91-92.

23. *The Tribune*, 1 November 1912, p.1
24. Ibid., Kenneth.W.Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19<sup>th</sup> –Century Punjab*,1989, p.24.;Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi SaraswatiSamvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000,pp.40-41.
25. *The Tribune*, 1 November 1912, p.1.
26. Anjuman-i Punjab was formed by G. W. Leitner, Principal of the Government College, Lahore in January 1865. It was an educational and literary society. *The Tribune*, 1 November 1912,p.1.;Nazer Singh, 'Notes on the Anjuman-i-Punjab, Aligarh Movement, Brahmo Samaj, Indian Association, Arya Samaj and Singh Sabha Movement in the Context of Colonial Education in the Punjab, 1865-1885', 1992,pp.35-38.
27. *The Tribune*, 1 November 1912, p.1;Bob Van Der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab: The Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyahs*, 2008,pp.91-92.; Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, 1932, pp.88-89.
28. The objective of *Journal of the Anjuman-i-Punjab* was to criticize *The Tribune* and to persuade people to support Dr. Leitner in all his measures regarding the Punjab University Movement. Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*,1932, pp.88-89.
29. *The Tribune*, 1 November 1912, p.1; Madan Gopal, 'The Rise and Decline of Brahmo Samaj in Punjab', *Occasional Papers on History and Society*, New Delhi: Centre For Contemporary Studies Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Second Series1991,p.4.; Ganda Singh, (Ed.), *Bhagat Lakshman Singh Autobiography*, Calcutta: The Sikh Cultural Centre, 1965, p.46.; Nazer Singh, 'Notes on the Anjuman-i-Punjab, Aligarh Movement, Brahmo Samaj, Indian Association, Arya Samaj and Singh Sabha Movement in the Context of Colonial Education in the Punjab, 1865-1885',1992,p.48.; Feroz Chand, *Lajpat Rai:Life and Work*, India: Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 2010,pp.25-26,65.
30. *The Tribune*, 10 September 1890,p.2.; 13 September 1890,p.3; 29 August 1954,p.2; Sophia Dobson Collet, (Ed.), *The Brahmo Year Book*, 1876,p.35.; Bob Van Der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab: The Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyahs*, 2008,p.91; Frans L. Damen, *Crisis and Religious Renewal in the Brahmo Samaj (1860-1884)*, Belgium: Katholieke Universiteit, 1983,p.100; David Kopf, *The Brahmo Samaj and the Shaping of the Modern Indian Mind*,1979, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979,p.320.;*The Theistic Annual*, 1879, pp.76-77.; 1877,p.64;Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, 1932,pp. 88,97.
31. In Agra, he continued working for the cause of the samaj and revived the Agra Brahmo Samaj. *The Tribune*, 10 September 1890,p.2.; 13 September 1890,p.3;*Brahmo Public Opinion*, 4 April 1878,p.21.;Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000,pp.34- 35
32. *Indian Mirror*, 23 January 1876,p.3.
33. *The Theistic Annual*, 1878, p.68.
34. *Brahmo Public Opinion*, 13 June 1878, p.13; 4 April 1878, p.21;5 February 1880, p.66.
35. *The Tribune*, 20 October 1883, p.7.
36. Ibid.,21 June 1885,p.9.; 28 May 1881,p.8.; 4 June 1881,p.9.;1 November 1912,p.1.; *Indian Mirror*, 3 October 1875,p.2.; 28 May 1876,p.3.;5 December 1875,p.3; 6 August 1876,p.8; *The Theistic Annual*, 1877,p.66, 1978,p.77.; Madan Gopal, 'The Rise and Decline of Brahmo Samaj in Punjab',1991,p.4.; Ganda Singh (Ed.), *Bhagat Lakshman Singh Autobiography*,1965,p.46.; Nazer Singh, 'Notes on the Anjuman-i-Punjab, Aligarh Movement, Brahmo Samaj, Indian Association, Arya Samaj and Singh Sabha Movement in

- the Context of Colonial Education in the Punjab, 1865-1885', 1992, p.48.; Feroz Chand, *Lajpat Rai: Life and Work*, 2010, pp.25-26, 65.
37. *The Tribune*, 29 August 1954, pp. 2-4.; Bob Van Der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab: The Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyahs*, 2008, pp.91-92.
  38. *Dharma Dipika* has nine sections, viz., God; the human soul; religion; what is religion; repentance; the next world; heaven; hell; emancipation (*mukti*). Sophia Dobson Collet, (Ed.), *The Brahmo Year Book*, 1878, p.94.
  39. Ibid.
  40. Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000, pp.41-42.
  41. *The Theistic Annual*, 1878, p.77.
  42. Ibid.
  43. *The Theistic Annual*, 1878, p.48; Sophia D. Collet, (Ed.), *The Brahmo Year Book*, 1877, p.34.
  44. This is a large volume in Urdu and is a rejoinder to a lecture entitled *Dharma Raksha* (Defence of religion) by Pandit Shardha Ram, an orthodox Hindu. *The Theistic Annual*, 1878, p.77.
  45. Sophia Dobson Collet, (Ed.), *The Brahmo Year Book*, 1878, p.94.
  46. *The Theistic Annual*, 1878, p.77.
  47. *The Tribune*, 10 December 1881, p.10; 9 February 1884, p.9.
  48. Ibid, 8 October 1881, p.3.
  49. Ibid, 29 December 1883, p.8.
  50. Ibid, 14 May 1885, p.9.; 22 December 1886, p.5.; 13 September 1890, p.3.; 9 December 1916, p.2.; *Punjab District Gazetteer, Lahore*, 1894, p.92.; Upendra Nath Ball, *A Century of Service: A Survey of the Services Rendered by the Brahma Samaj in First Hundred Years (1828-1928)*, Lahore: Punjab Brahmo Samaj, 1928, p.71.; *Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies for 1889-90*, Lahore, 1890, p.cxlvi.; 1891, p. cxlvii.
  51. *Arya Patrika*, 28 December 1886, pp.5-6; *The Tribune*, 22 December 1886, p.5.; 20 June 1888, p.5.
  52. *Census of India, 1911, Punjab*, Part I, p.138.; *The Tribune*, 14 May 1885, p.9.; 9 December 1916, p.2.; Shivnath Sastri, *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, Calcutta: Brahmo Mission Press, 1912, p.405.
  53. *The Tribune*, 13 September 1890, p.3.
  54. *The Theistic Annual*, 1878, p.76.; Sophia Dobson Collet, (Ed.), *The Brahmo Year Book for 1879*, pp.90-91.; Ulrike Stark, 'Educating Women, Educating A Daughter: Babu Navin Chandra Rai, Lakshmi Saraswati Samvad (1869), and Hemant Kumari Chaudhurani', 2000, p. 35
  55. Ihsan H. Nadiem, (Ed.), *Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia: As Seen By His Contemporaries*, Lahore: Dyal Singh Research and Cultural Forum, 2011, pp.16-17.
  56. Ibid., pp.18-22; *The Tribune*, 9 September 1915, p.2; 9 September 1916, p.2; 9 September 1917, p.1; 9 September 1919, p.1; 8 September 1929, p.9; 10 September 1934, p.3; 9 September, 1935, p.3.; 9 September 1941, p.7.; Madan Gopal, 'The Rise and Decline of Brahmo Samaj in Punjab', 1991, p.7.
  57. *The Tribune*, 7 October 1927, p.3; 8 September 1929, p.9; 9 September 1935, p.3; 9 September 1941, p.7.; Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*, New Delhi: Uppal Publication House, 1998, p.9.; Shivnath Sastri, *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, 1912, pp.408-09.
  58. *The Tribune*, 14 September 1916, p.1; 8 September 1929, p. 9.; 4 February 1951, p.1.

59. Ibid., 9 September 1917,p.1;8 September 1929,p.9.;Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*,1998, p.ix.
60. *The Tribune*, 9 September 1919,p.18 September 1929,p. 9.
61. *Ibid*, 10 September 1934, p. 3.
62. *Ibid*.
63. Ihsan H. Nadiem, (Ed.), *Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia: As Seen By His Contemporaries*, 2011, p.24.
64. *The Tribune*, 9 September 1915, p.2;8 September 1929, p. 9.
65. *The Tribune*, 7 October 1927, p.3.; 26 January 1930, p.10; 10 September 1934, p.3; 4 February 1951,p.1.;F.M.Bhatti, Qalb-i-Abid and Massarrat Abid, *Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia: Buisnessman, Educationist and Philanthropist*,2011,p.208.
66. *Brahmo Public Opinion*, 5 February 1880, p.66; Madan Gopal, 'The Rise and Decline of Brahmo Samaj in Punjab', 1991, pp.9-24.
67. Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*, 1998, p.88.
68. He came forward with a large amount as his contribution to the construction of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj Mandir at Calcutta. *Brahmo Public Opinion*, 5 February 1880, p.66; 4 March 1880, p.115; 12 August 1880, p.391.; 15 August 1878, p.239.;Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*,1998, p. 92.
69. Its members included Dyal Singh Majithia, Ball Singh, and Kripa Sankar (Secretary). Acharya Sib Chandra Sen, Suraj Kumar Sen, and C.K Sein. *Annual Report of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj*, 1879, p.23.; *Brahmo Public Opinion*, 13 February 1879, p.526; 31 July 1879, p.221.; 11 December 1879, p.426; 15 January 1880, p.29.; Madan Gopal, 'The Rise and Decline of Brahmo Samaj in Punjab',1991,pp.7,15.
70. F.M.Bhatti, Qalb-i-Abid andMassarrat Abid, *Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia: Buisnessman, Educationist and Philanthropist*, 2011,pp. 215-217.
71. *Indian Mirror*, 14 November 1875, p.4.; Madan Gopal, *The Life and Times of Dyal Singh Majithia*,1999, p.38.
72. *The Tribune*, 10 September 1934, p.3; Madan Gopal, *The Life and Times of Dyal Singh Majithia*,1999, p.38.
73. He also translated Theodore Parker's books into Urdu. Madan Gopal, *The Life and Times of Dyal Singh Majithia*,1999, pp.34-35, 40.
74. Madan Gopal, *Life and Times of Dyal Singh Majithia*,1999, p.54.
75. *The Tribune*, 5 May 1910, p.2.; 2 February 1915, p.3.; 9 September 1915, p.2.; 9 September 1919, p.1.;10 September 1934, p.3.; 9 September 1935,p.3.; 8 August 1948,p.12.; *Report on Public Instruction in Punjab and its Dependencies for 1909-10*, Lahore, 1910, p.9.;*Census of India,1911, Punjab*, p.138.;*PunjabDistrict Gazetteer, Lahore*, Part A,1916,p.70.; Madan Gopal, *Life and Times of Dyal Singh Majithia*,1999,p.69.; Upendra Nath Ball, *A Century of Service: A Survey of the Services Rendered by the Brahma Samaj in First Hundred Years (1828-1928)*, 1928,p.68.
76. Shvinnath Sastri, *History of the Brahmo Samaj*,1912, pp.409-10.
77. They were Jogendra Chandra Bose, Pleader, Chief Court, Lahore; SasiBhusan Mukherjee, Professor, Government College, Lahore; Dewan Narindra Nath, District Magistrate, Montgomery; Mr. Charles Golok Nath, Barrister-at-Law, Lahore; Harkishan Lal, Barrister-at-Law, Lahore; Ruchi Ram Sahni, Assistant Professor, Government College, Lahore; Golok Nath Chatterjee, Assistant Professor, Government College, Lahore; Sundar Das Suri, Assistant Superintendent, Training College, Lahore and Abinash Chandra Mazumdar of the North-



- Western Railway Office, Lahore. *The Tribune*, 5 May 1910, p.2; Madan Gopal, 'Legacy of Dyal Singh Majithia', *The Panjab Past and Present*, 1992, pp.159-160.; *The Panjab University Calendar For the Year 1929-30*, Lahore, 1930, p.571.; 1936, p.718.; 1937, pp.714-715.
78. *The Tribune*, 5 May 1910, p.2.; *The Panjab University Calendar For the Year 1929-30*, p.571.; 1936, p.718.; 1937, pp.714-715.; Madan Gopal, 'Legacy of Dyal Singh Majithia', *The Panjab Past and Present*, 1992, pp.158-160
  79. *The Tribune*, 9 September 1916, p.2; 14 September 1916, p.1; 9 September 1919, p.1.; Kenneth W. Jones, 'The Bengali Elite in Post-Annexation Punjab: An Example of Inter-Regional Influence in Nineteenth-Century India', 1976, p. 242.
  80. Emmett Davis, *Press and Politics In British Western Punjab 1836-1948*, Delhi: Academic Publications, 1983, p.69; Kenneth W. Jones, 'The Bengali Elite In Post –Annexation Punjab: An Example of Inter-Regional Influence in Nineteenth-Century India', 1976, p.242.
  81. *The Tribune*, 9 September 1914, p.1.; 9 September 1927, p.1; 9 September 1929, p.8.; Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*, 1998, p.47.; Emmett Davis, *Press and Politics In British Western Punjab 1836-1948*, 1983, p.69; Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, 1932, p. 84.
  82. *The Tribune*, 27 January 1922, p.2.; Phanindranath Bose, *Life of Sris Chandra Basu*, 1932, pp. 84, 130.; Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*, 1998, p.47.
  83. The first issue of the newspaper came out with *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta and *The Hindu* of Madras, *The Tribune* was to become the third pillar of the nationalist press. *The Tribune*, 4 February 1951, p.1; Madan Gopal, *The Life and Times of Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia*, 1999, p.37.
  84. *The Tribune*, 16 October 1886, p.1.; 1 January 1890, p.3.; 28 March 1891, p.1; 1 January 1906, p.1; 4 February 1951, p.1.; 4 February 1951, p.1.; Madan Gopal, *The Life and Times of Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia*, 1999, p.40.; Madan Gopal, 'Legacy of Dyal Singh Majithia', *The Panjab Past and Present*, 1992, p.167.; Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*, 1998, p.47.
  85. *The Tribune*, 1 June, 1901.
  86. After the death of Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia, the property of the Tribune Press and Newspaper in Anarkali at Lahore was controlled and managed by a Committee of Trustees consisting of Jogendra Chandra Bose, Charles Golok Nath and Harikishen Lal. In 1947, some assets of the newspaper were transferred to India. The newspaper was issued from Shimla, later from Ambala Cantonment and finally shifted to Chandigarh. *The Tribune*, 4 February 1951, p.1.; *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16 April 1943, p.1; Madan Gopal, 'Legacy of Dyal Singh Majithia', *The Panjab Past and Present*, 1992, p.162.; Madan Gopal, *Brahmo Samaj and Dyal Singh Majithia*, 1998, pp.103-109.
  87. Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948)*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017, p. x. ; Shivnath Sastri, *History of Brahmo Samaj*, 1912, p.404.
  88. Rajesh Kochhar, 'Professor Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948): A Scientific Biography', *Memoirs of Ruchi Ram Sahni*, (Ed.), Narender K. Sehgal and Subodh Mahanti, New Delhi: Vigyan Prasar, 1994, p.191.
  89. Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948)*, 2017, p. x.
  90. The school was established in 1862 by the Church Missionary Society which was committed to evangelicalism and was supported by the British. Rajesh Kochhar, 'Professor Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948): A Scientific Biography', 1994, p. 193.

91. Ibid., p. 194.
92. *The Tribune*, 8 August 1948, p.12.; H.L.O Garrett, (Ed.), *A History of Government College, Lahore (1864-1914)*, Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1914, pp.116,118.
93. H.L.O Garrett, (Ed.), *A History of Government College, Lahore (1864-1914)*, 1914, p.70.
94. *The Tribune*, 8 August 1948, p.12.
95. The University instituted Ruchi Ram Sahni Declamation Contest Prize in his honour. From then it was organized on regular basis in various colleges in Lahore. *The Tribune*, 12 December 1920, p.5.; 14 December 1923, p.5. 16 December 1924, p.4.; 16 December 1927, p.6.; 17 December 1930, p.7.; 27 November 1937, p.2; 24 November 1942, p.5; 25 November 1942, p.4.; 17 November 1941, p.5; 17 February 1941, p.5.; 10 November 1943, p.3.; 11 November 1942, p.6.
96. *The Tribune*, 24 November 1918, p.1.
97. H.L.O Garrett, (Ed.), *A History of Government College, Lahore (1864-1914)*, 1914, p.118.
98. *The Tribune*, 16 October 1930, p.7.; 19 December 1941, p.11.; 2 December 1941, p.3.; 5 May 1942, p.3.
99. Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948)*, 2017, p. xix.
100. Themes were of articles published in *The Tribune*: 'Reforms and Punjab'; 'The By-Paths of Popular Discontent and Distrust or Fake Imperialism'; 'Sir John Simon. This Is for You'; 'Non-Cooperation and Swaraj'; 'For My Moderate Friends, I'; 'Shimla Conference'; 'The State Faculty of Public Health Cooperation or Non-Cooperation?'; 'India's Destiny'; 'India and Ottawa: From Political Imperialism to Economic Imperialism'; 'India's place in the future world order'; 'Lok Tilak as a Scholar'; 'Anglo Vernacular Middle School Examination'; 'Raja Ram Mohan Roy-the, Universal Man'; 'Some Reminiscences of late Sir Surendra Nath; Bengal Ordinance and Punjab'; 'Communal Representation'; 'The Lucknow Compact'; 'The Guru-ka Bagh Affair'; 'Falsehood Nailed to The Counter and Brahmo Dharm'. *The Tribune*, 3 June 1904, p.4.; 18 April 1920, p.2.; 11 December 1920, p.4.; 9 November 1921, p.3.; 9 August 1922, p.3.; 9 September 1922, p.2.; 29 August 1923, p.5.; 28 June 1924, p.2.; 25 July 1924, p.2.; 5 November 1924, p.4.; 19 September 1924, p.2.; 19 August 1925, p.4.; 11 March 1928, p.5, 13 March 1928, p.5, 16 March 1928, p.5, 24 March 1928, p.5.; 12 February 1930, p.4.; 29 April 1932, p.2.; 30 March 1932, p.5.; 5 June 1945, p.5.; 18 May 1946, p.5.
101. Textbooks written in English on Science were: *Lessons in Mechanical Powers, with 44 Illustrations (1892)*, *Practical Physics and Laboratory Note-book for High Schools (1917)*, *Practical Physics and Laboratory Note Book (1918)* and *Practical Chemistry and Laboratory Note Book*. These were prescribed as textbooks for higher classes by the Education Department of Punjab. The textbook written in Urdu on Science was: *Tabiyat ki Pehli Kitab*. At the request of the Agricultural Department, he wrote three research papers on agriculture: *Kheti ki Pehli Kitab*, *Kheti ki Doosri Kitab* and *Kheti ki Teesri Kitab* in Gurmukhi. He wrote a book, *India and Ottawa* published in 1932 with 10 articles. Two important works reflecting his interest in the Gurdwara Reform Movement were *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines (1940)* and *The Gurudwara Reform Movement and The Sikh Awakening (1922)*. He also wrote another book, *The Awakening of Asia (1929)*. *The Tribune*, 4 May 1892, p.14.; 24 February 1917, p.3.; 30 December 1918, p.5.; 12 November 1918, p.6.; 13 April 1930, p.5.; Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, Amritsar: Sikh Itihas Research Board, 1940, p.i.; Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948)*, 2017, p. 98.
102. H.L.O. Garrett (Ed.), *A History of Government College, Lahore, 1864-1914*, 1994, p.72.; Rajesh Kochhar, 'Professor Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948): A Scientific Biography', *Memoirs of Ruchi Ram Sahni*, 1994, p. 211.

103. *The Tribune*, 20 November 1918, p.1.; 19 March 1921, p.5.
104. Ibid., 14 March 1903, p.5.
105. Ibid., 24 October 1905, p.4.; 5 December 1905, p.6
106. Ibid., 8 August 1948, p.12.
107. Ibid., 16 December 1920, p.4.
108. Ibid., 18 August 1923, p.4.; 19 August 1923, p.2.; 30 August 1923, p.6.; 12 September 1923, p.8.
109. 'Punjab Election Results: More Swarajist Victories', *The Tribune*, December 1923, p.6.
110. *The Tribune*, 8 August 1948, p.12.; Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948)*, 2017, p.xix.
111. Kenneth W. Jones, 'The Bengali Elite In Post –Annexation Punjab: An Example of Inter-Regional Influence in Nineteenth-Century India', 1976, p.242.; Rajesh Kochhar, 'Professor Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948): A Scientific Biography', 1994, p.192.
112. J.C.Bose (1858-1937) was a pioneer researcher in the fields of physical, electro-physical and plant physiological sciences in India. Narender K. Sehgal and Subodh Mahanti, (Eds.), *Memoirs of Ruchi Ram Sahni*, 1994, p.169.
113. P.C. Ray (1861-1944) popularly known as Acharya Prafulla Chandra, was a Chemist of international fame. He was a pioneer in setting up the chemical and pharmaceutical industries in Bengal. Arvind Gupta, *Bright Sparks Inspiring Indian Scientists From the Past*, New Delhi: Indian National Science Academy, 2012, p.13.
114. *The Tribune*, 8 August 1948, p.12.
115. Narender K. Sehgal and Subodh Mahanti, (Eds.), *Memoirs of Ruchi Ram Sahni*, 1994, p.194.
116. Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab: Ruchi Ram Sahni, 1863-1948*, 2017, p.220.
117. Ibid., pp.194,221.
118. Kamlesh Mohan, *Science and Technology in Colonial India*, London: Routledge, 2022, pp.107-123.
119. He attended the Brahmo wedding ceremony of Mulk Raj Bhalla (elder brother of Lala Hans Raj, the first principal of D.A.V. College and a prominent Arya Samaj leader) with the daughter of Lala Beni Prasad, an ardent Brahmo leader according to Brahmic rites in the hall of the Samaj. He also attended the wedding of the daughter Mrs Hemant Kanwari Gandhi of Navin Chandra Rai at his house with Mr Chandra of Shillong (Assam). Neera Burra, (Ed.), *A Memoir of Pre-Partition Punjab Ruchi Ram Sahni (1863-1948)*, 2017, p. 229.
120. *The Tribune*, 8 September 1903, p.5.; 17 September 1909, p.7.
121. Ibid., 26 November 1924, p.2.
122. Ibid., 24 October 1926, p.11.
123. Ibid., 25 January 1927, p.6.
124. Ibid., 21 October 1926, p.6.; 22 May 1942, p.3. 19 November 1929, p.7.; 20 November 1929, p.7.; 19 November 1942, p.3.
125. These lectures were held in 1909, 1913, 1917, 1919, 1928, 1940. Ibid., 17 September 1909, p.3; 27 October 1910, p.5.; 23 January 1913, p.4.; 22 February 1917, p.6; 7 December 1917, p.9.; 24 November 1918, p.1.; 4 December 1928, p.5. 22 January 1940, p.7.
126. These lectures were held in 1904, 1917, 1924, 1930. Ibid., 1 November 1904, p.5; 30 November 1917, p.1; 24 October 1924, p.4; 30 June 1930, p.9. 23 February 1930, p.6.
127. Kenneth.W.Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19<sup>th</sup> –Century Punjab*, 1989, p.15.
128. Sheena Pall, 'The Sanatan Dharm Movement in the Colonial Punjab: Religious, Social and Political Dimensions', 2008.

## ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ: ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ

\*ਡਾ. ਕਰਮਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਮਲਹੋਤਰਾ

\*\*ਡਾ. ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ

### ਭੂਮਿਕਾ

ਇਸ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਤੋਂ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਕਾਲ-ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਦਲ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੇਖਕ ਦੀ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਕ੍ਰਿਆ, ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਅਪਣਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਨਜ਼ਰੀਆ, ਉਸ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਵਰਤੇ ਗਏ ਸਰੋਤ, ਉਸਦਾ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਕਿਸ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ, ਨੂੰ ਗਹਿਰਾਈ ਤੋਂ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਧਿਆਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਦੋਨਾਂ ਸਦੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਰਸਪਰ ਤੁਲਨਾਤਮਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਲੰਕਣ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਕਿ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਰਿਵਰਤਨ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਤਾ ਬਰਕਰਾਰ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਤੁਲਨਾਤਮਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਦੇ ਯਤਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਿਸ ਲਿਖਤ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਕਿਸ ਪੱਖ ‘ਤੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਪਸੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਕਿੰਨੀ ਹੈ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਸਮਕਾਲੀਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਕਾਲੀਨ ਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਦੂਜੇ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਖੇੜ ਕੇ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਦਾ ਮੰਤਵ ਹੈ। ਲੇਖਕ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਪਰਿਪੇਖ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਮਝਣ ਦਾ ਯਤਨ ਵੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਦੀ ਖੋਜ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਲੱਗਭੱਗ 60 ਸਾਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਨਵਾਂ ਆਯਾਮ ਜਾਂ ਪੱਖ ਉੱਭਰ ਕੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਉਸ ‘ਤੇ ਸਮੱਗਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਲੇਸ਼ਣ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਖੋਜ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਨਿਵੇਕਲਾ ਰੂਪ ਡਾ. ਜੇ. ਐਸ. ਗਰੇਵਾਲ ਦੇ 1965 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰੋਮ ਸੁਮਾਰਗ ‘ਤੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਖੋਜ-ਕੰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਦੇਖਣ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਗਰੇਵਾਲ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਵਿਧੀ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿੱਚ *ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਿਆਂ*, *ਜ਼ਫ਼ਰਨਾਮਾ*, *ਬਚਿੱਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ* ਆਦਿ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਲੇਸ਼ਣ ਵੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ।

\*ਅਸਿਸਟੈਂਟ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ, ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ

\*\*ਅਸਿਸਟੈਂਟ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ, ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਕਾਲਜ ਲੜਕੀਆਂ, ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ

ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਬੜਾ ਹੀ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ‘ਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਤੱਕ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਖੋਜ ਪੱਤ੍ਰਿਕਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਛਪਵਾਏ ਹਨ। 300 ਸਾਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੁੱਖ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਕਈ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਗੋਸ਼ਟੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆਏ, ਜਿੰਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਵਰਣਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਭ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਕੁਝ ਚੁਣੇ ਹੋਏ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਫ਼ਰੇਮ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਵਾਬ ਲੱਭਣ ਲਈ ਇੱਕ ਲਿਖਤ ਦੇ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਪੜਤਾਲਣ ਦਾ ਯਤਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ।<sup>1</sup>

ਹੱਥਲੇ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਲਈ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ 11 ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਨਾਲ ਉਸਦੇ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਬਾਰੇ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਵਿਸ਼ਲੇਸ਼ਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਭਿੰਨ ਪੱਖਾਂ ‘ਤੇ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕਰਵਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

### ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ

ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ-ਰਾਜ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ *ਅਮਰਨਾਮਾ* (1708) ਵਿੱਚ ਅੱਖੀਂ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ, ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਦੇ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ (1740 ਵਿਆਂ) ਵਿੱਚ, ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ *ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ* 10 (1751) ਵਿੱਚ, ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ *ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਕਾ* (1769) ਵਿੱਚ, ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ *ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* (1776) ਵਿੱਚ ਤੇ ਸੁੱਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ *ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦਸਮੀ* (1797) ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ *ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ* (1790) ਵਿੱਚ ਭੱਟ ਵਹੀਆਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਲਿਖ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।<sup>2</sup> ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ 1708 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ ਦੇ ਅਮਰਨਾਮਾ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਗੋਦਾਵਰੀ ਨਦੀ ਦੇ ਕੰਢੇ ‘ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>3</sup> ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਰੀਖ਼ ਸਹਿਤ 3 ਅੱਸੂ, 1765 ਬਿਕਰਮੀ ਸੰਮਤ (3 ਸਤੰਬਰ, 1708 ਈ:) ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਨੇ 1790 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>4</sup> ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਅੰਤ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਪੱਖ ਉੱਭਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਦੀ *ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ* ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਾਲਕ੍ਰਮ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜ਼ਿਕਰਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ-ਰਾਜ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਿਲਾਫ਼ ਇੱਕ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਲੇਸ਼ਣ ਕਰਨ ‘ਤੇ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਨੇ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਦੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਸਪਰ ਵਰਤ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਾ

ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਬਾਬਤ ਕੁਝ ਵੇਰਵਿਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ, ਭਾਈ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ, ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ, ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਅਤੇ ਸੁੱਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਸੱਤ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ‘ਬੰਦਾ’ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਨੇ ‘ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ’ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>5</sup> ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਪੰਜ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ, ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ, ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਅਤੇ ਸੁੱਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਦਾ ਸਥਾਨ ਦੱਖਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ, ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕੋਈ ਸਥਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਨੇ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਦਾ ਸਥਾਨ ਤੂਰ ਜ਼ਮੀਂਦਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਠਾਕੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>6</sup> ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ, ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ, ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਅੱਗੇ ਆਤਮ ਸਮਰਪਣ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਧਿਆਨਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਲੇਖਕ ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ, ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਅਤੇ ਸੁੱਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ‘ਬਦਲਾ ਲੈਣ’ ਲਈ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੇਜਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ‘ਖੰਡੇ ਦਾ ਪਾਹੁਲ’ ਦੇ ਦੇਣ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਨੇ 1769 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ<sup>7</sup> ਅਤੇ ਉਸਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ 1790 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਤਿੰਨ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਭਾਈ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ‘ਬੈਰਾਗੀ’ ਸੀ। ਭਾਈ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਦੱਸੇ ਕੰਮ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ 9 ਮਹੀਨੇ ਅਤੇ 9 ਦਿਨ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਗੁਪਤ ਰੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜ਼ਿਕਰਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਹੀ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਸਨ। ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ<sup>8</sup> ਅਤੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ<sup>9</sup> ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜ ਦੀ ਸਥਾਪਨਾ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਹੋਰ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਹਨ। ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਪੂਰਬ ਵਿੱਚ ‘ਪਿਰੋਜਾ’ ਨਗਰ ਅਤੇ ਦੱਖਣ ਵਿੱਚ ‘ਹਰੀਪੁਰ’ ਪਿੰਡ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>10</sup> ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਨੇ ਔਘੜਨਾਥ ਅਤੇ ਲੂਣੀਆ ਸਿੱਧ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੱਸੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਰਿਸ਼ੀਕੇਸ਼ ਹਰਿਦੁਆਰ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨ ‘ਤੇ ਮਿਲ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਸੀ।<sup>11</sup> ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਏ ਸਨ, ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਇੱਕ ਮੱਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ ਅਤੇ ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਨੇ ਪੰਜ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ, ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਚਾਰ, ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਤੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਨੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਅਤੇ ਸੁੱਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਇੱਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਤੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਵਰਗਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਤੇ ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੌਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਅਨਾਜ ਦੇ ਲੁਭਾਣੇ ਵਪਾਰੀਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ

ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਾਰੀ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਹਦਾਇਤ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਣ<sup>12</sup> ਅਤੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਮਰਾਈਏ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੁਖਾਵਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>13</sup> ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਘਟਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਉਸਦਾ ‘ਹੰਕਾਰ’ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਦੱਸੀ ਮਰਿਆਦਾ ਉੱਪਰ ਕਾਇਮ ਨਾ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਸੀ,<sup>14</sup> ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>15</sup> ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਘਟਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਰਦਾਰਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਠੀਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾ ਚਲਾਏ ਜਾਣ ਨੂੰ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਨਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਇ ਜੁਲਮ ਵੱਲ ਵਧ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ।<sup>16</sup> ਉਸਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਵਰਤੇ ਗਏ ‘ਫਤਿਹ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ’ ਨਾਅਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਕੇ ਉੱਥੋਂ ਉਸਦਾ ‘ਭਿੱਬਰ’ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>17</sup>

ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਵਿਦਮਾਨ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਹਨ- ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਦੱਖਣ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਹੋਣਾ, ਉਸਦਾ ਨਾਮ ‘ਬੰਦਾ’, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਆਗੂ ਥਾਪਣਾ, ਮੁਗਲ ਰਾਜ ਤੋਂ ‘ਬਦਲਾ ਲੈਣ’ ਲਈ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਭੇਜਣਾ, ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਇ ਨਾਲ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ, ਔਘੜ ਨਾਥ ਤੇ ਲੂਣੀਆ ਸਿੱਧ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੋਣਾ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੁਝ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਉਣਾ, ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਾਰੀ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਧਾਰਨਾ, ਸਿੱਖ-ਰਾਜ ਦੀ ਸਥਾਪਨਾ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਲਾਗੂ ਕਰਨਾ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ‘ਫਤਿਹ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ’ ਨਾਅਰਾ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਜਾਣਾ, ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਦੱਸੀ ਮਰਿਆਦਾ ‘ਤੇ ਕਾਇਮ ਨਾ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ‘ਹੰਕਾਰ’ ਕਰਨ ਕਾਰਨ ਵਿਘਟਨ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਵਰਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਵਪਾਰੀਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਥ ਦੇਣਾ, ਰਾਮਰਾਈਏ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਦਾ ਮੇਲ ਨਾ ਹੋਣਾ, ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਇ ਭਿੱਬਰ (ਜੰਮੂ) ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਕਰਨਾ।

ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਮਿਲੇ ਹੋਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ਪਿੰਡ ‘ਪਿਰੋਜਾ’ ਤੇ ‘ਹਰੀਪੁਰ’ ਹੋਣਾ, ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਹ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਆਦਰ ਭਾਵ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨੂੰ ‘ਚਰਨਜੀਤ’ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਅਮਰ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਭੂਮਿਕਾ ਨਿਭਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਸਮਰੱਥ ਸੀ। ਇੱਥੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ‘ਬਦਲਾ’ ਲਏ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ੰਸਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਆਦੇਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨ ਕੇ ਉਸ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਨਿਆਂ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਸਲਾਘਾ ਵੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਧਿਆਨ ਦੇਣ ਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਲੇਖਕ ਇੱਕ ਹੀ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਸਨ। ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੜਿਆਲਾ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਜੇਹਲਮ ਦਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਕੜਿਆਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਜੰਮੂ ਦੋਨਾਂ ਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੀ। ਜੰਮੂ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਿੱਬਰ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨ ‘ਤੇ ਹੀ

ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਡੇਰਾ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ, ਸੋ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਜ਼ੁਬਾਨੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਰਧਾ ਸੀ। ਜਿਸਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਵੀ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਦੇ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਮਹੱਤਵ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਦੱਸੀ ਮਰਿਯਾਦਾ ਭੰਗ ਕਰਕੇ 'ਹੰਕਾਰ' ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗਾ ਸੀ, ਉਸਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ 'ਕਾਫ਼ਿਰ' ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਮਾਝਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਦਾ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰ ਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਵੰਸ਼ਜ ਸੀ। ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰ ਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਵੰਸ਼ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਵੰਸ਼ਜ ਤ੍ਰੇਹਨ ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਿਤਾ-ਪੁੱਤਰ ਗੋਇੰਦਵਾਲ (ਮਾਝਾ ਖੇਤਰ) ਦੇ ਨਿਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਜ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ੰਸਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਮੀਰਪੁਰ ਪੱਟੀ (ਮਾਝਾ ਖੇਤਰ) ਦਾ ਜੱਟ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੀ। ਸੋ ਇਹ ਤਿੰਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਾਝੇ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕ ਸਨ। ਇਸ 5 ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਅਤੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਦਾ ਆਧਾਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਸਨਮਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਅੰਤਰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

### ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ

ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਲੇਖਕ ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਨੇ 1841 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ 'ਤੇ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੁੱਲ 163 ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ 40 ਸਾਖੀਆਂ (26 ਤੋਂ 65 ਸਾਖੀਆਂ) ਅਤੇ 87 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ (69-155 ਸਫ਼ੇ) ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। 1843 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ *ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦਸਵੀਂ* ਨੂੰ ਵਰਤ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ *ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸੂਰਜ* ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਬਾਬਤ ਵੇਰਵਾ 121 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। 1880 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ 194 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਲਿਖਣ ਲਈ ਖਾਫ਼ੀ ਖਾਨ ਦੀ *ਮੁੰਤਖ਼ਬੂ-ਉਲ-ਲੁਬਾਬ* (1731 ਈ:), ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ ਦਾ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* (1841 ਈ:), ਬੂਟੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੌਲਵੀ (ਗੁਲਾਮ ਮੁਹੱਈ-ਉਦ-ਦੀਨ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼-ਇ-ਪੰਜਾਬ* 1848 ਈ:) ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ, ਬੰਦੇ ਦੀ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ ਤੇ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਸਰੋਤ ਵਰਤੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ 1892 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਲਈ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ *ਇਬਰਤਨਾਮਾ*, ਖ਼ੁਸ਼ਹਾਲ ਚੰਦ ਦੀ *ਤਾਰੀਖ਼-ਏ-ਮੁਹੰਮਦਸ਼ਾਹੀ*, ਲੈਪੇਲ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਿਨ ਦੀ *ਰਿਆਸਤ-ਏ-ਮੰਡੀ* ਆਦਿ ਸਰੋਤ ਵਰਤ ਕੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ 96 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ।



ਭੰਗੂ ਨੇ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਸਹਿਤ ਉਸਦਾ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਤੋਂ ਆਰੰਭ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦੀ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰੀ ਹੋਣ ਅਤੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੰਮੂ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨ ‘ਤੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਤੋਂ ਆਰੰਭ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਤੱਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਨਾ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਦਾ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਤੋਂ ਜੰਮੂ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਿੱਬਰ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨ ‘ਤੇ 1736 ਈ: ਤੱਕ ਜਿਉਂਦਾ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ। *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਆਰੰਭਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਦਾ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਪ, ਉਸਦੇ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ ਰਾਜ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਦੇ ਅੱਠ ਕੁ ਸਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਉਸਦਾ ਭਿੱਬਰ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨ ‘ਤੇ 1736 ਈ: ਜਾਂ 1741 ਈ: ਤੱਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਬਸਰ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਜਨਮ ਤਾਰੀਖ਼, ਉਸਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਦੇਵ ਅਤੇ ‘ਰਾਜੌਰੀ’ ਪਿੰਡ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>18</sup> ਇਹ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਨਾ ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ 18ਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ 19ਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ, ਫ਼ਾਰਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਯੂਰਪੀਅਨ ਲਿਖਤ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।

ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਿਲ ਰਹੇ ਵੇਰਵਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਕੁ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਚੱਲਿਤ ਸਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ‘ਬੰਦਾ’ ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਇਸਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ‘ਬੰਦਾ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ’,<sup>19</sup> ‘ਬਾਬਾ ਬੰਦਾ’,<sup>20</sup> ਅਤੇ ‘ਬਾਬਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ’<sup>21</sup> ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵੀ ਲਿਖ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਭੰਗੂ, ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਿੰਨੋਂ ਲੇਖਕ ਹੀ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਸੀ, ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ, ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ ਥਾਪਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ ਰਾਜ ਤੋਂ ‘ਬਦਲਾ ਲੈਣ’ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ-ਰਾਜ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਧਿਆਨ ਦੇਣ ਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਜਤੀ ਰਹਿਣ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪ ਨਾ ਜਤਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਨਿਰਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੱਲ ਭੇਜ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ<sup>22</sup> ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨਿਰਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੋਰ ਕਈ ਨਿਰਦੇਸ਼ ਵੀ ਜੋੜ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾ ਅਖਵਾਏ, ਆਪਣਾ ਵੱਖਰਾ ਪੰਥ ਨਾ ਚਲਾਵੇ, ਹੰਕਾਰ ਨਾ ਕਰੇ, ਗੁਰਗੱਦੀ ਦਾ ਦਾਅਵੇਦਾਰ ਨਾ ਬਣੇ ਆਦਿ।<sup>23</sup>

ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਭੇਜੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ, ਦੇ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਮੱਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਭੰਗੂ ਨੇ ਚਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ- ਬਾਜ਼ ਸਿੰਘ, ਰਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਾਂ ਰਣ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਿਆਮ ਸਿੰਘ। ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕਾਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਜ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ। ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਪੰਜ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ- ਬਿਨੋਦ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕਾਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਬਾਜ਼ ਸਿੰਘ, ਬਿਜੈ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ, ਇਸਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੱਚੀ ਕੁ ਹੋਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਸਨ। *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਪੱਚੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੱਲ ਆਏ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ। ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਤੋਂ ਚੱਲ ਕੇ ਖਰਖੋਡ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੇਹਰ ਖੰਡਾ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹੁੰਚਿਆ ਸੀ।<sup>24</sup> ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ<sup>25</sup> ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ<sup>26</sup> ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੁੱਢਲੀਆਂ ਜਿੱਤਾਂ ਸਮਾਣਾ, ਸਢੌਰਾ, ਸਰਹਿੰਦ ਆਦਿ ਬਾਰੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਦੱਸ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ।

ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਸਮੂਹਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਭੰਗੂ ਨੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਿੱਖ, ਬਣਜਾਰੇ, ਨੀਵੀਆਂ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ, ਖੱਤਰੀ-ਅਰੋੜੇ, ਆਲੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਮਾਲੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਮੁਲਾਜ਼ਮ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜ ਪਰਬਤੀ ਰਿਆਸਤਾਂ ਸੁਕੇਤ, ਨਾਦੌਣ, ਮੰਡੀ, ਜਸਵਾਨ ਤੇ ਚੰਬਾ ਦੇ ਰਾਜੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ।<sup>27</sup> *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਮਾਲਵਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਤੇ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ, ਰਾਮਾ ਤੇ ਤਿਲੋਕਾ (ਜ਼ਮੀਂਦਾਰ) ਵੱਲੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੇਵਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ‘ਬੰਦੇ’ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਲਈ ਭੇਜਣ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ<sup>28</sup> ਅਤੇ ਮਝੈਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਤੁਰਕ ਸੈਨਾ ਨੇ ਸਤਲੁਜ ਦਰਿਆ ‘ਤੇ ਘੇਰ ਲਏ ਸਨ। ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ 7 ਮਾਲਵੇ ਦੇ ਸਰਦਾਰਾਂ, ਮੁਖੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਚੌਧਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇਦਾਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੇਵਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਜਣ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਧਨ ਅਤੇ ਰਸਦ ਨਾਲ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕੀਤੀ।<sup>29</sup> ਇਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਲੁਭਾਣੇ ਸਿੱਖ (ਵਪਾਰੀ), ਅਰੋੜੇ ਵਪਾਰੀ, ਮਾਲਵੇ ਦੇ ਜੱਟ ਕਿਸਾਨ, ਸਰਹਿੰਦ ਦੇ ਸੂਬੇਦਾਰ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਖ਼ਾਨ ਕੋਲ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਮੁਲਾਜ਼ਮ, ਸਹਾਰਨਪੁਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਨਾਰਸਾ ਦੇ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ, ਅੰਬੇਟੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਨੌਤੇ ਦੇ ਗੁੱਜਰ,<sup>30</sup> ਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਫ਼ੌਜ ਦੇ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਹਰਦਿਆਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨਾਲ ਆ ਮਿਲੇ ਸਨ। ਭੰਗੂ, ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਰਾਮਰਾਈਏ ਮਸੰਦਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੇਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ।

ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ, ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੇ ‘ਫ਼ਤਿਹ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ’ ਨਾਅਰਾ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਸੀ। ਭੰਗੂ,<sup>31</sup> ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ<sup>32</sup> ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ<sup>33</sup> ਨੇ (*ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼*) ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਵਿਘਟਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਦੱਸੀ ਮਰਿਯਾਦਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਡੋਲ ਨਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੋਇਆ। *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ

ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਘਟਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਨਾ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ<sup>34</sup> ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੇ ਧਨ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਨਾ ਕਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ<sup>35</sup> ਅਤੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਨੈਣੇ ਦੇ ਕੋਟ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਜਿੱਤਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ‘ਹੰਕਾਰ’ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਨਾ<sup>36</sup> ਤੇ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਦੋ ਧੜਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੰਡ<sup>37</sup> ਨੂੰ ਪਤਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

ਧਿਆਨ ਦੇਣ ਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਭੰਗੂ ਨੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਫ਼ਰੂਖਸੀਅਰ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣ ‘ਤੇ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ ਰਾਜ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝੌਤਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ।<sup>38</sup> ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਅਪਣੱਤ ਭਰਿਆ ਇੱਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀਕੋਨ ਭੰਗੂ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਆ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ, ਉਹ ਬਦਲਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਹੁਣ ਭੰਗੂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਤੋਂ ਹਾਰ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਮਾਰਗ ਤੋਂ ਭਟਕ ਜਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਨੈਤਿਕ ਗਿਰਾਵਟ ਨੂੰ ਕਈ ਦਲੀਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਤਰਕਸੰਗਤ ਠਹਿਰਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਯਤਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੀ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਵਿਆਹ ਕਰਵਾ ਲੈਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਘਟਨ ਲਈ ਕਈ ਨੈਤਿਕ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਠਹਿਰਾਉਂਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵੇਰਵਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭੰਗੂ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਲਗਾਵ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸਦੀ ਬਜਾਇ ਇਹ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਲੇਖਕ ਮਾਝਾ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਰਾਹਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਭੰਗੂ ਮਝੈਲ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਤੇ ਬਾਜ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ, ਬਿਨੋਦ ਸਿੰਘ, ਕਾਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਬਾਜ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ੰਸਾ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਦੱਸਣਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭੰਗੂ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਮੀਰਾਂਕੋਟ ਦਾ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਰਨਤਾਰਨ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਨੂਰਦੀ ਸਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ। ਸੋ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਮਾਝੇ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ‘ਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ।

ਭੰਗੂ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਈ, ਸਗੋਂ ਉਹ ਭਿੰਬਰ (ਜੰਮੂ) ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਬਤੀਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ।<sup>39</sup> ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਸਵਰਗ ਸਿਧਾਰ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਤਾਰੀਖ 1736 ਈ: ਲਿਖੀ ਹੈ<sup>40</sup> ਅਤੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ 1736 ਈ: ਤੇ 1741 ਈ: ਦੇ ਤਾਰੀਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ।<sup>41</sup>

ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* ਅਤੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਕੁਝ ਵਿਭਿੰਨਤਾਵਾਂ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਵਿਭਿੰਨਤਾਵਾਂ ਹਨ- ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਾਫੀ ਖਾਨ ਦਾ *ਮੁੰਤਖਬ-ਉਲ-ਲੁਬਾਬ*, ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ ਦਾ *ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼*, ਬੂਟੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੌਲਵੀ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ, ਮੌਖਿਕ ਸਰੋਤ ਆਦਿ ਨੂੰ ਵਰਤ ਕੇ ਕਵਿਤਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਫ਼ਾਰਸੀ ਸਰੋਤ *ਇਬਰਤਨਾਮਾ*, ਖੁਸ਼ਹਾਲ ਚੰਦ ਦੀ *ਤਾਰੀਖ-ਏ-ਮੁਹੰਮਦਸ਼ਾਹੀ* ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਰੋਤ ਵਰਤ ਕੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਸੋਧ ਕੇ ਵਾਰਤਕ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਣ ਦਾ ਯਤਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ

ਦੇ ਕਰਾਮਾਤੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦੇ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਘੱਟ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹਨ। ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਫ਼ਰੁਖ਼ਸੀਅਰ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਵਿੱਚ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਮਾਤਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇਵੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।<sup>42</sup>

ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਉੱਭਰ ਰਹੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਹਨ— ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਢਲਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦਾ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਸਥਾਨ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੁਣਛ ਪਰਗਣੇ ਦੇ ‘ਰਾਜੌਰੀ’ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਣਾ। ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਆਰੰਭਿਕ ਜਿੱਤਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਦੱਸਣਾ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਰਾਮਾਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੜਾ ਵਧਾਅ-ਚੜ੍ਹਾਅ ਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨਾ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਗਿਆਰਵਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਦਵਾਉਣਾ। ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਫ਼ਰੁਖ਼ਸੀਅਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਹਮਲੇ ਰੁਕਵਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਅਪੀਲ ਕਰਨਾ, ਹਮਲੇ ਰੋਕਣ ਦੇ ਬਦਲੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਜਾਗੀਰ ਦੇਣ ਦੀ ਤਜਵੀਜ਼ ਰੱਖਣਾ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਪਤਨ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਦੱਸੀ ਮਰਿਯਾਦਾ ਨੂੰ ਭੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨੈਤਿਕ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੋੜਨਾ। ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਫ਼ਰੁਖ਼ਸੀਅਰ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਦੇ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਾਤਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇਵੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਵੀ ਜੁੜਨਾ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਧੜੇ ਦੱਸ ਕੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਮਜ਼ੋਰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਮੁਗ਼ਲ ਫ਼ੌਜ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਹਾਰ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣਾਉਣਾ।

## ਸਿੱਟਾ

ਇਹ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਪਰਸਪਰ ਤੁਲਨਾਤਮਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਲੰਕਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੁਗ਼ਲਰਾਜ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਿਲਾਫ਼ ਇੱਕ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਥਾਪਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਤਾ ਕਾਇਮ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੇ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੱਭਤ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ ਵਿਦਮਾਨ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ— ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਹੋਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਆਗੂ ਥਾਪਣਾ, ਆਦਿ। ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਰਿਵਰਤਨ ਦੇ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਲੌਕਿਕ ਸ਼ਕਤੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਉੱਭਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦਾ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਸਥਾਨ ‘ਪਿਰੋਜਾ ਪਿੰਡ’ ਤੇ ‘ਹਰੀਪੁਰ ਪਿੰਡ’ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨ ‘ਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਵਿੱਚ ‘ਰਾਜੌਰੀ ਪਿੰਡ’ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਲੱਭਤ ਵੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਲੇਖਕ ਦੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ

ਖਿੱਤੇ ਅਤੇ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਦਿਸਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ, ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਝਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਮਝੈਲ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ੰਸਾ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰ ਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਵੰਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਇ ਤ੍ਰੇਹਨ ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਦਿਸਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕ ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਜਿਹੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਅੰਤ ਤੱਕ ਇਸ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਾਧਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢਲੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਲਿਖਣ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਰੁਝਾਨ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਸੱਤਵੇਂ ਦਹਾਕੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਹਿਲਾ ਲੇਖਕ ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਨੇ 1769 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦਾ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਸਥਾਨ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਆਖਰੀ ਦਹਾਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦੇ ਆਰੰਭਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬਾਬਤ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਵੱਧਦਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਭੰਗੂ, ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਕਈ ਨਵੇਂ ਵੇਰਵਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ।

## ਹਵਾਲੇ ਤੇ ਟਿੱਪਣੀਆਂ

1. ਬਹੁਤ ਥੋੜ੍ਹੇ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਪੂਰਨ ਲਿਖਤ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਪੜਚੋਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੋਵੇ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਡਾ. ਕਰਮਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਮਲਹੋਤਰਾ ਦੇ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ *'Bansavalinama and Mahima Prakash: Two Independent Accounts of Banda Singh in the Eighteenth Century'* ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

2. ਢਾਡੀ ਨੱਥ ਮੱਲ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਭੇਂਟ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ ਥਾਪ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਭੇਜਣ ਤੱਕ 22 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ (ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਦਮ) ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ 24 ਸਤਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ *ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ* 10 ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੱਲ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਮੁਗਲ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਿਲਾਫ਼ ਹਮਲੇ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਆਦੇਸ਼ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਤੱਕ ਦੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ 11 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਦੀ *ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਕਾ* (ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਡਾ. ਰਾਏਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ) ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ 15 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੈ। ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਕਾਲਕ ਦਾਸ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਤ ਚਰਨਜੀਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵਾਕਿਫ਼ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਸੀ। ਇਸਤੋਂ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਸਰਹਿੰਦ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਤੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਤੱਕ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਛਿੱਬਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੀ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਸਵੀਕਾਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਦਾ ਭਿੱਬਰ (ਜੰਮੂ) ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਲਈ ਚਲੇ ਜਾਣਾ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਆਗੂ ਨਿਯੁਕਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੱਲ ਭੇਜਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਹਿੰਦ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੈਦ ਕਰਕੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਤੱਕ 5 ਸਫ਼ਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨਾਲ ਨੰਦੇੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੇਜਣ ਦੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ 76 ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ 3 ਸਾਖੀਆਂ

106, 110 ਅਤੇ 111 ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸੁੱਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦਸਮੀ* (ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਡਾ. ਮਨਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ) ਦੇ 30ਵੇਂ ਅਧਿਆਇ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਚਾਰ ਵਾਕ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ।

3. ਨਥ ਮੱਲ, *ਅਮਰਨਾਮਾ* (1708 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਅਤੇ ਅਨੁਵਾਦਕ, ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਿੱਖ ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਸੋਸਾਇਟੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, 1953, ਆਰੰਭਕ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸਫ਼ਾ 9.

4. ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼, *ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ* (1790 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਦਮ, ਸਿੰਘ ਬ੍ਰਦਰਜ਼, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, 2008. ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ 1986, ਸਫ਼ਾ 196-197.

5. ਉਹੀ, ਭੂਮਿਕਾ ਸਫ਼ਾ 16 ਅਤੇ ਸਫ਼ਾ 199.

6. ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ, *ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਕਾ* (1769 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਰਾਏਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, 2001, ਸਫ਼ਾ 116.

7. ਉਹੀ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 117.

8. ਉਹੀ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 131.

9. ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ, *ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* (1776 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਉੱਤਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਾਟੀਆ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 2003 (ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ 1971), ਸਫ਼ਾ 865.

10. ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ, *ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਕਾ* (1769 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਰਾਏਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 129.

11. ਸਵਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼, *ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ* (1790 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਦਮ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 197.

12. ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ, *ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* (1776 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਉੱਤਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਾਟੀਆ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 854.

13. ਉਹੀ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 866.

14. ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ* 10 (1751 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਸ਼ੋਕ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 1999। ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ 1968, ਸਫ਼ਾ 263.

15. ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ ਭੱਲਾ, *ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼* (1776 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਉੱਤਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਾਟੀਆ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 865.

16. ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿੱਬਰ, *ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਕਾ* (1769 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਰਾਏਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 131.

17. ਉਹੀ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 143.

ਮਿਰਜ਼ਾ ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ 9 ਜੂਨ, 1716 ਈ: ਨੂੰ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਹਜ਼ਰਤ ਖਵਾਜਾ ਕੁਤਬਦੀਨ ਬਖ਼ਤਿਆਰ (ਕਾਕੀ) ਦੀ ਮਜ਼ਾਰ ‘ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਉਸਦੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਫਿਰ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਉਸਦੇ ਦੋ ਹੋਰ ਸਿਰਕੱਢ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਟਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਦੇਖੋ ਮਿਰਜ਼ਾ ਮੁਹੰਮਦ, *ਇਬਰਤਨਾਮਾ* (1719 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਢਿੱਲੋਂ, ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਫ਼ਾਰਸੀ ਸਰੋਤ, ਸਿੰਘ ਬ੍ਰਦਰਜ਼, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, 2011, ਸਫ਼ਾ 78. ਇਹ ਤਾਰੀਖ਼ 20 ਜੂਨ, 1716 ਈ: ਪਤਾ ਚੱਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਦੇਖੋ ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਹਾਦੀ ਕਾਮਵਰ ਖ਼ਾਨ, *ਤਜ਼ਕਿਰਾਤ-ਉਸ-ਸਲਾਤੀਨ ਚਗ਼ਹਤਾ* (1724 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਗਰੇਵਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਇਰਫ਼ਾਨ ਹਬੀਬ, *Sikh History from Persian Sources: Translations of Major Texts*, ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ: ਤੁਲਿਕਾ, 2001, ਸਫ਼ਾ 154. 18. ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਭਾਗ-ਦੂਜਾ (1892 ਈ.), ਸੰਪਾਦਕ, ਕੇ. ਐੱਸ. ਰਾਜੂ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 1999, ਸਫ਼ਾ 1.

ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਹੈ ਕਿ 20ਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢਲੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਜਨਮ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ‘ਤੇ ਹੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਹੈ। ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੀ ਜਨਮ ਤਾਰੀਖ਼ 13 ਕੱਤਕ ਸੁਦੀ 1727 ਬਿਕਰਮੀ ਸੰਮਤ (ਅਕਤੂਬਰ, 1670 ਈ.), ਉਸਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਦੇਵ, ਉਸਦਾ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਘਰਾਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਸਥਾਨ ਜੰਮੂ ਦੇ ਪਰਗਣੇ ਪੁਣਛ ਵਿੱਚ ‘ਰਾਜੌਰੀ’ ਪਿੰਡ ਦਾ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* (1892) ਵਿੱਚ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਿਖਤ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਆਧਾਰ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ 20ਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਆਰੰਭ ਵਿੱਚ 1907 ਈ: ਨੂੰ ਕਰਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸਦਾ ਪਿੰਡ ‘ਰਾਜੌਰੀ’ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਭਾਰਦਵਾਜ਼ ਗੋਤ ਜੋੜ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। 1922 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਲੀਅਮ ਇਰਵਿਨ ਨੇ *ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ* ਦੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ 13 ਕੱਤਕ ਸੁਦੀ 1727 ਬਿਕਰਮੀ ਸੰਮਤ ਜਨਮ ਤਾਰੀਖ਼ ਅਤੇ ਪਿੰਡ ‘ਰਾਜੌਰੀ’ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। 1935 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਡਾ. ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ *Life of Banda Singh Bahadur* ਵਿੱਚ ਕਰਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਲੀਅਮ ਇਰਵਿਨ ਦੀ *Later Mughals* ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ‘ਤੇ ‘ਰਾਜੌਰੀ’ ਪਿੰਡ ਅਤੇ ਜਨਮ ਤਾਰੀਖ਼ 13 ਕੱਤਕ ਸੁਦੀ 1727 ਬਿਕਰਮੀ ਸੰਮਤ (27 ਅਕਤੂਬਰ, 1670 ਈ:) ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਦੇਖੋ ਕਰਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਿਸਟੋਰੀਅਨ, *ਬੰਦਾ ਬਹਾਦਰ* (1907), ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, 1998, ਸਫ਼ਾ 01; ਵਿਲੀਅਮ ਇਰਵਿਨ, *Later Mughals*, ਓਰੀਐਂਟਲ ਬੁੱਕਸ ਰੀਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਕਾਰਪੋਰੇਸ਼ਨ, ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ,

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21. ਉਹੀ, ਸਫ਼ਾ 3.

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## ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਰਕ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਸੰਤਾਪ

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ਦੇਸ਼ ਅਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਦੇ ਜਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਲੋਕ ਵਾਂਝੇ ਹੀ ਰਹਿ ਗਏ। ਆਮ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਤੱਕ ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਕਿਸ ਦੇਣਾ ਸੀ? ਕਿੰਨਾ ਚਿਰ ਆਮ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਹਿੰਸਕ ਭੂਚਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਕੰਬਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੇ ਸਥਿਰ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਭਰਮ ਪਾਲੀ ਰੱਖਿਆ। ਲੰਡਨ ਅਤੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸਮਤ ਬਦਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੇਤਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਾਵਾਕਿਫ਼ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਖੇਡ ਦਾ ਨਾਮਕਰਨ ‘ਉਜਾੜਾ’ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਇਹ ਵੰਡ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੱਚਮੁੱਚ ਉਜਾੜਾ ਹੀ ਸੀ। ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੇ ਮਰਦਮਸ਼ੁਮਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਅੰਕੜਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਵਿਧਾਨਿਕ ਕਾਨੂੰਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਵਿੱਥ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਕਦਰ ਵਧਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਮੁੜ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਮਿਲ ਬਹਿਣਾ ਅਸੰਭਵ ਸੀ। ਸਾਂਝੀਵਾਲਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਰਕੂ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਨਾਗ ਡੱਸ ਗਿਆ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ‘ਤੇ ਇਹ ਸੰਕਟ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਗਹਿਰਾ ਸੀ। ਹਿੰਦੂ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਦੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਇੱਥੇ ਤੀਜੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੀ। ਘੱਟ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਸ਼ਤਤਾ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸਥਾਨ ਸੀ। ਜਦਕਿ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਉਲਟ ਸੀ। ਬਹੁ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਰਾਖਵਾਂਕਰਨ ਸੀ।<sup>1</sup> ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਸਮੱਸਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਪਾੜੇ ਨੇ ਹੋਰ ਉਲਝਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਅਸਹਿਣਸ਼ੀਲਤਾ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਮਹੌਲ ਅੰਦਰ ‘ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ’ ਦੀ ਧੁਨ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਤੋਂ ਸੁਣਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਦਿੰਦੀ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ, ਮਰਦਾਨੇ ਦੇ ਸੰਗੀਤ ਤੋਂ ਸੱਖਣੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦੇ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ। ਉਰਸ ਦੇ ਮੇਲੇ ਇਕ ਧਾਗੇ ਵਿਚ ਪਰੋਣ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਏ ਫਿਰਕਾਪ੍ਰਸਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਾਉਣ ਫ਼ਤਵਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਦੌੜ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਆਚ ਗਏ ਸਨ। ਸੂਫ਼ੀ ਦਰਗਾਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਰੰਗ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪਰਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਫਿੱਕਾ ਪਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਨੱਚ ਕੇ ਮਨਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਘੁੰਗਰੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਬੋਲ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਦਾ ਰਾਗ ਅਲਾਪਣਾ ਭੁੱਲ ਗਏ ਸਨ। ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਰੰਗ ਤੇ ਪਵਿੱਤਰਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਕਰਤੂਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਦੂਸ਼ਿਤ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ: ‘ਕਈ ਦਿਨ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨਹਿਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਲਾਲ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ...। ਇਸ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਹੁਣ ਵਜੂ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ’।<sup>2</sup> ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਚਰੋਪਤੀਆਂ ਬੇਵੱਸ ਆਪਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਨਿਰਵਸਤਰ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ। ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਸਥਾਨ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਦਾ ਅਟੁੱਟ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਬਣ ਗਏ। ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੁਝ ਉਦਾਹਰਨਾਂ ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਦਾ ਸਬੂਤ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਦਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਰਹੀਆਂ। ਪਰ ਹੈਵਾਨੀਅਤ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਗੇ ਨਾਚ ਅੰਦਰ ਉਹ ਨਾ ਮਾਤਰ ਹੀ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਸਨ। ਹਨੇਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਦੀਵਾ ਬਲਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਪਰ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਲਾਟ ਲਮੇਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਨਵੀਂ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀ ਪਤਝੜ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਲੋਕਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਭੋਏ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਤੋੜ ਕੇ ਸੁੱਟ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਕਤਲੋਗਾਰਦ ਲਈ ਸਭ ਧਰਮੀ ਨੇਤਾ ਫੌਜਾਂ ਦਾ ਗਠਨ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਅਜ਼ਮਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਕੁੱਦ ਪਏ। ਹਲਾਕੂ, ਚੰਗੇਜ਼ ਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਖ਼ੁਨੀ ਹਰਫ਼ ਲਿਖ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਗਿਆ ਪੱਤਰਾਂ ‘ਤੇ ਸਹੁਆਂ ਖਾਧੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ। ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਦਾ ਇਹੋ ਜਿਹੇ ਕੌਲ ਕਰਾਰਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਤਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ: ‘ਯੇ ਦਾਗ਼-ਦਾਗ਼ ਉਜਾਲਾ, ਯੇ ਸ਼ਬਗ਼ਜ਼ੀਦਾ ਸਹਰ, ਵੇ ਇੰਤਜ਼ਾਰ ਥਾਂ ਜਿਸਕਾ, ਯੇ ਵੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ’ (ਫ਼ੈਜ਼ ਅਹਿਮਦ ਫ਼ੈਜ਼)।<sup>3</sup> ਭੁੱਖੇ ਬਘਿਆੜ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਰਾਤ ਬਰਾਤੇ ਦੂਰ ਦੁਰਾਡੇ ਨਿਕਲਦੇ। ਅਸਮਾਨੀ ਗਿਰਝਾਂ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ‘ਤੇ ਉੱਤਰਨ ਲੱਗੀਆਂ। ਇਸ ਮਹੌਲ ਅੰਦਰ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਲਗਭਗ 12 ਤੋਂ

\* ਸਹਾਇਕ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ, ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ।

\*\* ਸਹਾਇਕ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਜੀ.ਐਚ.ਜੀ. ਖਾਲਸਾ ਕਾਲਜ, ਗੁਰੂਸਰ ਸੁਧਾਰ।



14 ਮਿਲੀਅਨ ਆਬਾਦੀ ਨੇ ਚੁੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਚੌਂਕੇ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਹੱਦ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ।<sup>4</sup> ਪੰਜ ਲੱਖ ਦੇ ਤਕਰੀਬਨ ਲੋਕ ਬਟਵਾਰੇ ਦੀ ਭੇਂਟ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਗਏ।<sup>5</sup> ਹਿੰਦੂ, ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਰੌਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਮਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਹੀ ਸਨ। ਪੂਰੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਸੋਕ ਸਹਿਣਾ ਪਿਆ। ਪਰ ਇਸ ਦਰਦ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਹੰਢਾਇਆ। ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੀ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਰਦਾਉਪੁਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਧ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਅਣਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੱਸੇਦਾਰੀ ਪਾਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰੇਜ਼ ਨਾ ਕੀਤਾ।

ਧਰਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਲਹੂ ਵੱਸਿਆ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਪਈਆਂ ਚੋਣ  
ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਹਿਜ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਜ ਵਿਚ ਮਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਰੋਣ  
ਅੱਜ ਸੱਭੇ ਕੈਦੋ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਹੁਸਨ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦੇ ਚੋਰ  
ਅੱਜ ਕਿੱਥੋਂ ਲਿਆਈਏ ਲਭ ਕੇ ਵਾਰਿਸ਼ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ।

(ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ: ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਿਸ਼ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ)

ਬਟਵਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਦਰਦ ਦੀ ਦਾਸਤਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਸਾਹਿਤਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਬੜੀ ਗੰਭੀਰਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ। ਕਵਿਤਾਵਾਂ, ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ, ਨਾਟਕਾਂ, ਨਾਵਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਛੋਟੇ ਅਤੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਪੱਧਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਫ਼ਿਲਮਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਦੁਖਾਂਤ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਪਹਿਲੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਚਾਰਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ। ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਰਕ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਅਣਛੋਹੇ ਵਾਕਿਆਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਨਮੁੱਖ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਲੇਖਕ ਕੋਲ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਲੇਜ਼ਾਨ ਅਫ਼ਸਰ ਦਾ ਤਜਰਬਾ ਵੀ ਸੀ। ‘ਪੂਰਬੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਲਿਆਜ਼ੋ ਏਜੰਸੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਅਤਿ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਕੰਮ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਨਿਕਾਸ ਕਰਨਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਬਰਦਸਤੀ ਧਰਮ ਬਦਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ’।<sup>6</sup>

ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਰਕ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵੰਡ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਜੇ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ‘ਖੱਬਲ’<sup>7</sup> ਕਹਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਲੇਖਕ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਪਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਜੋ ਹਾੜ ਦੀ ਤਪਸ਼ ਤੇ ਪੋਹ ਦੀ ਸੀਤ ਵਿਚ ਬੇਜਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ। ਕਾਲੀ ਰਾਤ ਦਾ ਗੂੜ੍ਹਾ ਹਨੇਰ ਚਾਨਣ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਕਿਰਨ ਅੱਗੇ ਬੇਵੱਸ ਵਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬਲ ਦਾ ਇਸਤੇਮਾਲ ਕਰਕੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਟਾਇਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਦੀ ਲੋਕਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਣ ਸਵਾਏ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਵੱਲ ਹੋਵੇ। ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੀ ਗਰਦਸ਼ ਬਹੁਤ ਚਿਰ ਅਸਮਾਨੀ ਚੜ੍ਹੀ ਰਹੀ। ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਮੌਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਕੜਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਚੱਕਰ ‘ਚ ਪਸ਼ੂ ਧੰਨ ਦਾ ਹੋਰਵਾ ਕਿਸ ਨੇ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਸੀ?: ‘ਕਈਆਂ ਘਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਖੁਰਲੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਖੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਡੰਗਰ ਵੀ ਸਨ’।<sup>8</sup> ਘਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੈਂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਤੱਕਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਖੀਆਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਾਲਕੀ ਦੇ ਹੰਝੂ ਵਹਾਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਰਹੀਆਂ। ਬਟਵਾਰੇ ਨੇ ਬਰਾਦਰੀਆਂ, ਯਾਰ ਮਿੱਤਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਨੂੰ ਤੋੜ ਕੇ ਰੱਖ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਲਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ। ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਰੁਤਬਾ ਭਾਈਚਾਰਕ ਸਾਂਝ ਲਈ ਅੜਚਣ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ। ਪਰ ਕਈ ਗ਼ਰੀਬ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਸਮਤ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਅਮੀਰ ਘਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਰੋਸ਼ਨਾਈ। ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦਾ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ ਬੜਾ ਅਜੀਬ ਸੀ। ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਧੀ, ਭੈਣ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਖੋਹਣ ਦਾ ਸਦਮਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਕਈ ਬਗ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਘਰ ਵਸਾ ਭਵਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਸਿਰਜਣ ਲੱਗੇ: “ਵੇਖ ਲੈ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕਰਨੀ ... ਮੁਲਖ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਟੋਟੇ ਹੋਣੇ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਘਰ ਵੱਸਣਾ ਸੀ।”<sup>9</sup> ਦਸੰਬਰ 1947 ਤੋਂ ਐਪ੍ਰਲ 1948 ਤਕ 3912 ਬੱਚੇ ਤੇ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅਤੇ 7425 ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ।

1957 ਤਕ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਕ੍ਰਮਵਾਰ 10,007 ਅਤੇ 25,856 ਸੀ।<sup>10</sup> ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਨੇ 13.8 ਪ੍ਰਤੀਸ਼ਤ ਅਗਵਾ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਇਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਮਰ ਗਈਆਂ ਹਨ। ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ 3.3 ਪ੍ਰਤੀਸ਼ਤ ਸੀ।<sup>11</sup> ਇਹਨਾਂ ਫਾਈਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਸਾਏ ਅੰਕੜੇ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਤੋਂ ਕੋਹਾਂ ਦੂਰ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਰਕਾਰਾਂ ਵੀ ਬੇਗਾਨੀਆਂ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਘਰ ਵਸਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਘੱਟ ਯਤਨਸ਼ੀਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ। ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਅਫਸਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਗਵਾ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਇਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਾਮਦ ਕਰਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਫ਼ਿਰਕੇ ਦੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਵਿਚ ਪੱਖਪਾਤ ਤੋਂ ਕੰਮ ਲਿਆ।<sup>12</sup> ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਹੈਵਾਨੀਅਤ ਦੇ ਨੰਗੇ ਨਾਚ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਕਸਰ ਬਾਕੀ ਨਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਿੱਤੀ।<sup>13</sup>

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੀ ਖੱਬਲ ਵਾਂਗ ਤਿੜ ਫੁੱਟਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜ਼ਾਲਮ ਤੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਵਾਹ ਲਾ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੀ ਆਸ 'ਤੇ ਸੁਹਾਗਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਫੇਰ ਸਕੇ। ਬੇਗਾਨੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ, ਬੇਗਾਨੇ ਘਰ ਤੇ ਬੇਗਾਨੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਡੰਗੂਰ ਮਾਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਓਪਰੀ ਧਰਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਆਦਮੀ, ਉਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਨੇਤਾਗਿਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਪਸ਼ੂ ਮੁੜ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਗ੍ਹਾ ਮੱਲਣ ਲੱਗਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪਸ਼ੂਆਂ ਬੇਗਾਨੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੇ ਰੁੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਪਿੰਡੇ ਖੁਰਕਣੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ। ਉਧਾਲੀਆਂ ਇਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਨਾਵਾਂ, ਧਰਮ ਅਤੇ ਘਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਅਸਤ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਸਾਂਝ ਵਧਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਯਤਨਸ਼ੀਲ ਹੋਣ ਲੱਗੀਆਂ। ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਸਰਹੱਦ ਪਾਰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦੀ ਇੱਛਾ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਇਸ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਵਹਾਰਿਕ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲਾਓ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਵਿਭਿੰਨ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਆਪਣੇ ਮਰਦਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਸਮਰੱਥਾ ਨੇ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿ ਗਈਆਂ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਲੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਈ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ।<sup>14</sup> ਉਹਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਵਾਰ-ਵਾਰ ਟੁੱਟਣਾ ਤੇ ਜੁੜਨਾ ਐਨਾ ਆਸਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਵਾਰ-ਵਾਰ ਦਰ ਅਤੇ ਵਰ ਬਦਲਣ ਲਈ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਸਰੀਰਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਸਨ? “ਮੇਰਾ ਪਤੀ ਮਰ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਹੋਰ ਪਤੀ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਭਾਰਤ ਲਿਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੈਥੋਂ ਇਹ ਆਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਹਰ ਰੋਜ਼ ਪਤੀ ਬਦਲਦੀ ਰਹਾਂ।”<sup>15</sup> ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਇਹ ਬਦਕਿਸਮਤ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਤੋਂ ਭਲੀ ਭਾਂਤ ਜਾਣੂ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਸਿਰਫ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਪਵਿੱਤਰਤਾ 'ਤੇ ਹੀ ਮੁਨੱਸਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮੁੜ ਜੀਣ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਚਾਰਾ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਹੀ ਬਦਨਸੀਬ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਤੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਘਰ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਨਕਾਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਆਸ਼ਰਮਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਕੋਠਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਰਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ।<sup>16</sup> ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਇੱਜ਼ਤ, ਆਬਰੂ ਤੇ ਬੇਗਾਨੇਪਣ ਡਰੋਂ ਖੂਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਛਾਲਾਂ ਮਾਰ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦਾ ਅੰਤ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ। ਸਿਰਫ ਜਲਿਆਂਵਾਲਾ ਤੇ ਕਾਲਿਆਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੂਹ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਵੰਡ ਸਮੇਂ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਅਣਗਿਣਤ ਖੂਹਾਂ 'ਚ ਕਿੰਨੀਆਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀਆਂ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਬਣ ਗਈਆਂ। ਇਹ ਸਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਜੌਹਰ ਪ੍ਰਥਾ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਹੈ ਇਹ ਬੇਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਹੋਣ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਕੁਰਬਾਨ ਹੋ ਜਾਣਾ ਦਾ ਰਸਤਾ ਸੀ। ‘ਖੂਹ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਚੀਕਣ-ਚਲਾਉਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਵਾਜ਼ਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਕੁਰਲਾਹਟ ਸੁਣਾਈ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਰਹੀ। ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਜਗ੍ਹਾ-ਜਗ੍ਹਾ ਤੋਂ ‘ਅੱਲਾਹ-ਹੋ-ਅਕਬਰ’ ਅਤੇ ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਦੇ ਨਾਅਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਖੂਹ 'ਚ ਡੁੱਬਦੀਆਂ ਤੀਵੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਚੀਕਾਂ ਰਲ ਮਿਲ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ’।<sup>17</sup> ਅਫਸੋਸ! ਖੱਬਲ ਵਾਂਗ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਕਰੂੰਬਲੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਫੁੱਟਦੀ। ਜੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਰਹਿ ਗਈਆਂ, ਖੱਬਲ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਰੰਗ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਨੂੰ ਬਚਾ ਨਾ ਸਕੀਆਂ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਵਜੂਦ ਦੀ ਚਮਕ ਨਵੇਂ ਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਰਛਾਵੇਂ ਨੇ ਲੁਕੋ ਲਈ। ਰੇਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੱਢੀਆਂ ਮਿਲੀਆਂ ਛਾਤੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅੰਮਾ ਜਾਏ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਨੀਰ ਪੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਧਰਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੁੱਧ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਜ ਨਾ ਲਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਵਚਨ ਸਿਰਜਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਵਿਸਾਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ? ਬਜ਼ਾਰੀ

ਨਿਰਵਸਤਰ ਭੱਜਦੀਆਂ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਮੁੜ ਫੁੱਟਣ ਦੇ ਰਸ ਦੀ ਤਵੱਕੋ ਕਰਨੀ ਬੜੀ ਕਠਿਨ ਸੀ। ਲੇਖਕ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾਤਰ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਆਨਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਵਿਭਿੰਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ।<sup>18</sup>

ਇਸ ਸ਼ਾਮ ਵਿਚ ਸੂਰਜ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੇ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਵੀ ਢਲ ਗਏ। ਸੂਰਜ ਦੀ ਲਾਲੀ ਧਰਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਡੁੱਲੇ ਖੂਨ ਅੱਗੇ ਫਿੱਕੀ ਪੈ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਖੇਤ ਬੰਨੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੱਟ 'ਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਪੂ ਵਰਜਦਾ ਸੀ ਬੇਗਾਨਿਆਂ ਹਲ ਜੋਤ ਲਏ। ਮਰਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਝੁੰਡਾਂ ਇੱਜ਼ਤਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੀਢੀਆਂ ਖਿਲਾਰ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ। ਹਾਂ! ਮਰਦ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਤਾਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਤਾਂ ਬਾਪ ਨੇ ਧੀ ਦਾ ਗਲਾ ਦਬਾਇਆ। ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਕੁ ਬੇਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਬੰਦਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਸਮਾਜ ਨੇ ਬੂਹੇ ਢੋਹ ਲਏ ਸਨ? ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਦੁਖਾਂਤ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਚਿਰਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਜ਼ਖ਼ਮ ਨਾਸੂਰ ਵਾਂਗ ਰਿਸਦੇ ਰਹੇ। ਹਰਨਾਮ ਕੌਰ (ਫੱਜਾਂ) ਦੇ ਪੇਟ 'ਚੋਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਏ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਾਜ “ਮੁਸਲੀ ਦੇ” ਕਹਿ ਕਿ ਤਾਨ੍ਹੇ ਮਾਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਦਰਦ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਾ ਤੋਂ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਫਾਤਿਮਾ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਸੀ।<sup>19</sup>

ਖੱਬਲ ਦੇ ਚਿੰਨ੍ਹ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਲੇਖਕ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਭੰਨੀ ਔਰਤ ਦੇ ਮੁੜ ਨਵੇਂ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਯਤਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਖ਼ੂਬੀ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। “ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਥੀਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਲੜ ਲਾਂਗੀ। ਮੇਰੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਵਧੇਗੀ, ਮੇਰੀਆਂ ਬਾਹੀਂ ਬਣਨਗੀਆਂ। ਮੈਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਖਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਬਣਾਂਗੀ”।<sup>20</sup> ‘ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਕਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੀ’ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਨੂੰ ਭੁੱਲ ਉਹ ਇਕ ਨਵੇਂ ਰਾਹ 'ਤੇ ਕਦਮ ਪੁੱਟਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਫੋੜੇ ਦੇ ਰਿਸਣ ਨਾਲ ਦਰਦ ਤੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਰਾਹਤ ਮਿਲੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਸਿਰ ਭੱਜਿਆ ਪਰ ਟਾਹਣੀਆਂ ਫੁੱਟ ਆਈਆਂ। ਕੀ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਫੁਟਾਰਾ ਵੀ ਸਮਾਜ ਨੂੰ ਮੱਲ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ? ਹਿੰਸਾ ਦੀ ਅਮਰਵੇਲ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਸਾਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਪੱਤੀਆਂ ਝਾਤੀਆਂ ਮਾਰਨ ਲੱਗੀਆਂ। ਜਵਾਹਰਭਾਟੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸ਼ਾਂਤ ਹੋਈਆਂ। ਹਰੀ ਚੁੰਨੀ 'ਤੇ ਖੱਟਾ 'ਤੇ ਖੱਟੀ 'ਤੇ ਹਰਾ ਰੰਗ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਗਿਆ। ਲਲਾਰੀ ਐਵੇਂ ਝੂਠ ਬੋਲਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਗੂੜ੍ਹ ਰੰਗਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਮੁੜ ਰੰਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੇ।

‘ਓਪਰੀ ਧਰਤੀ’<sup>21</sup> ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਪਾਤਰ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਅਸਰ ਰਸੂਖ ਵਾਲੇ ਚੋਰ ਦੀ ਗਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਵਿਵਸਥਾ ਦਾਗੀ ਸੀ। ਤੋਤੇ ਅੰਬੀਆਂ ਟੁੱਕਦੇ ਹੀ ਆਏ ਹਨ। ਵਾੜ ਦਾ ਖੇਤ ਨੂੰ ਖਾਣ ਦਾ ਲਮੇਰਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਹੈ। ਸਰਕਾਰੇ ਦਰਬਾਰੇ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਰੱਖਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਪਰਾਧੀ ਜੇਲ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਵਾ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਕਤ ਸਨ। ਸਾਂਝੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅੰਦਰ ਕਈ ਥਾਈਂ ਚੋਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਨਰ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਵਡਿਆ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਕੁਝ ਕਬੀਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਖਾਸ ਮੁਹਾਰਤ ਹਾਸਲ ਸੀ। ਵਿਰਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਲੜਕੇ ਨੂੰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਪੱਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਦੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਉਹ ਚੋਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ। ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅੰਦਰ ਪਸ਼ੂ ਚੋਰੀ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਸੀ। ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਰਕ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਘਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਚੋਰੀ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਡੰਗਰ ਚੋਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਤਰਜੀਹ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਸੀ। ਘਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਚੋਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਪੈਸਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਡੰਗਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਚੋਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਆਦ।<sup>22</sup> ਚੋਰੀ ਦੇ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਤਿਰਾਸ਼ਿਆ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੌਰੇ ਵਾਂਗ ਫਲ ਤੇ ਫੁੱਲ 'ਚੋਂ ਰਸ ਚੂਸਣ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਹਿਰ ਸੀ। ਕਿਰਤ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਅਣਗਿਣਤ ਗਿਰਝਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਮਾਸ ਬਚਾਉਂਦੀ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਚੋਰੀ ਦੇ ਹਿਸਾਬ ਨਾਲ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਪਿਆਰ ਦੇ ਹਿਸਾਬ ਨਾਲ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਤੀ ਮਾਸੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੀ ਫਰਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ।<sup>23</sup> ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਉਹ 47 ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਖ਼ਬਰ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੰਡਿਆਲੀਆਂ ਤਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਫਸ ਕੇ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਮੁਹੱਬਤੀ ਜਾਮੇ ਲੀਰੋ ਲੀਰ ਹੋਣਗੇ। ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਘਰ ਨੂੰ ਨੀਂਹ ਤੋਂ ਲਾਈ ਸੰਨ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ ਬਾਣੇਦਾਰ ਵੀ ਵਾਹ ਕਰਨੋਂ ਨਾ ਰਹਿ ਸਕਿਆ, “ਕਹੀ ਵਿਉਂਤ ਕੱਢੀ ਸੂ ਤੇ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਕਿੰਨੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੂ। ਜੇ ਲੱਭ ਲਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਸ਼ਾਬਾਸ਼

ਉਹਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਦਿਆਂਗਾ”।<sup>24</sup> ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਇਸ ਧੰਦੇ ਤੇ ਮਾਣ ਸੀ ‘ਇਹ ਕੋਈ ਖੇਡ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਨਾ, ਚੋਰੀ ਕਰਨਾ’।<sup>25</sup> ਚੋਰੀ ਦੇ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਨੇ ਖੋਜੀ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਪ੍ਰਫੁੱਲਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ। ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਖੋਜੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਮਹੱਤਤਾ ਘਟੀ ਨਾ। ਪਰ ਵੰਡ ਨੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਕੱਖੋਂ ਹੌਲਾ ਕਰ ਛੱਡਿਆ। ਅਜਿਹੇ ‘ਚ ਇੱਕੋ ਹੀ ਉਮੀਦ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਆਦਮੀ ਦਾ ਹੁਨਰ ਹੀ ਮਹਿਫੂਜ਼ ਰਹਿ ਸਕੇਗਾ। ਪਰ ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਵਰੋਲਾ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਉਡਾ ਕੇ ਲੈ ਗਿਆ। ਆਪਣੇ ਹੁਨਰ ‘ਤੇ ਮਾਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਰਗਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡ ਨੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਅਪੰਗ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਇਹ ਹੱਥ ਕਿਸੇ ਘਰ ਸੰਨ ਲਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਬਲਦ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਣ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਗਵਾ ਆਏ ਸਨ। ਹਨੇਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਓਪਰੀ ਧਰਤੀ ‘ਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸਫ਼ਰ ‘ਤੇ ਨਿਕਲਣ ਲਈ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਰਕਤ ਗਵਾ ਬੈਠਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਦੁਖਾਂਤ ਦੀ ਵਾਛੜ ਤੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਬਨੇਰਾ ਸੁੱਕਾ ਨਾ ਰਹਿ ਸਕਿਆ, ‘ਦੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਤੇ ਭਰਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਈ ਏ ਨਾ, ਸੋਹਣਿਆਂ! ਮੈਂ ਵੱਖਰਾ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੋਇਆ’।<sup>26</sup> ਇਸ ਦੇ ਵਹਿਣ ਵਿਚ ਬੇਦੋਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਖੂਨ, ਇਸ ਦੀ ਹਵਾ ਵਿਚ ਚੀਕ ਪੁਕਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਧਰਾਤਲ ਦੀ ਲੋਕਾਈ ਦੇ ਦਿਲ ਉਦਾਸ ਸਨ। ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਕੀਆਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਆਪਣਾ ਹੁਨਰ ਗਵਾ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ: ‘ਏਸ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੈਰ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਠਦਾ, ਚੋਰੀ ਮੈਂ ਕੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਏ’।<sup>27</sup> ਓਪਰੀ ਧਰਤੀ ‘ਤੇ ਓਪਰਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਓਪਰੇ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਦੀ ਚੋਣ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਸੀ। ਚੋਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਾਂ ਬੇਗਾਨੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ? ਬੇਗਾਨਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਜਦ ਬੇਗਾਨਗੀ ਦਾ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ ਹੋਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਖੁਦ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਖੜਾਕ ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨੁਕਸਾ ਸਾਰਥਕ ਸਿੱਧ ਨਾ ਹੋਇਆ, ‘ਕੱਪੜਾ ਖੜਾਕ ਨੂੰ ਪੀ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਥੇ ਖੜਾਕ ਦਾ ਡਰ ਹੋਵੇ, ਖੜਾਕ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਚੀਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਕੱਪੜੇ ਵਿਚ ਲਪੇਟ ਲਵੇ’।<sup>28</sup> ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿੰਨੀਆਂ ਪੋਟਲੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪੀਡੀਆਂ ਗੰਡਾਂ ਚੁਰਸਤਿਆਂ ‘ਚ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹ ਗਈਆਂ। ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਭੋਏਂ ‘ਤੇ ਬੇਗਾਨੇ ਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਪਾਰ ਲੰਘੇ ਤਾਂ ਰਿਫ਼ਿਊਜ਼ੀ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਓਪਰੇ ਘਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਨ ਲਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਓਪਰੀ ਧਰਤੀ ‘ਤੇ ਉੱਗਣ ਦਾ ਵੱਲ ਨਾ ਆਇਆ। ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਪੂੰਏਂ ਨੇ ਬਨੇਰਿਆਂ ‘ਤੇ ਕਾਂ ਨਾ ਬਹਿਣ ਦਿੱਤੇ। ਸ਼ੇਖੂਪੁਰਾ ਕਰਨਾਲ ਦੇ ਮੇਚ ਨਾ ਆਇਆ। ਬੇਗਾਨੀ ਜੁੱਤੀ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਡੀਆਂ ‘ਤੇ ਛਾਲੇ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ।

ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕੱਟੜਤਾ ਦਾ ਜਾਦੂ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿਰ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਕਿ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਬੇਗਾਨੇ ਖੂਨ ਨਾਲ ਹੱਥ ਰੰਗਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਮੌਕਾ ਨਾ ਗਵਾਇਆ। ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਦੀ ਸਾਣ ‘ਤੇ ਤੇਜ਼ ਹੋ ਬੇਰਹਿਮੀ ਨਾਲ ਬੇਦੋਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਤਲ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗੀ। ਮਰਨ ਜਾਂ ਧਰਮ ਕਬੂਲਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਜਿੰਦ ਬਚਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਚਾਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ‘ਚਾਲੀ ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਉਮਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਧਰਮ ਬਦਲਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਸੁੰਨਤ ਕਰਾਉਣੀ ਪਈ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਨਤੀਜੇ ਵਜੋਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਬੇਹੱਦ ਖੂਨ ਡੁੱਲਿਆ’।<sup>29</sup> ਜਿਉਂ-ਜਿਉਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਨੀਂ ਦੂਜੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਉਹ ਵਹੀਰਾਂ ਘੱਤ ਮਾਨਵ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਲਈ ਨਿਕਲ ਪੈਂਦੇ। ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੇ ਅੰਕੜਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਨਿੱਤ ਵੱਧ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਇਕ ਨਵੀਂ ਰੂਹ ਫੂਕਦੀ। ਇਹ ਅੱਤਿਆਚਾਰ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਬਦਲੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਲਾਲਚ ਵੱਸ ਵੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ। ਗੁੱਟਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਟਰੇਨਾਂ ਵੱਢਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਹਾਸਲ ਹੋਏ ਧਨ ਦੇ ਆਪਸੀ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਪਾਏ। ਅਜੀਬ ਸਮਾਂ ਸੀ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਪੈਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਜਾਨ ਦੀ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣ ਬਣ ਗਈ। ‘ਮੁਰਦੇ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ’<sup>30</sup> ਕਹਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਲੇਖਕ ਨੇ ਇਕ ਬੇਪਹਿਚਾਣ, ਪਿਲ-ਪਿਲ ਕਰਦੀ ਲਾਸ਼ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਵਾਹਕ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਏ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਦੇ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੂਤਰ ਇਕ ਲਾਸ਼ ਬਣਦੀ ਹੈ। ਵੀ. ਬੀ. ਪਟੇਲ ਦੇ ਯਤਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾਤਰ ਰਿਆਸਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਮੂਲੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਦਾ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੈਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੇ ਯੁੱਧ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ। ਕੈਂਪਾਂ ਦੇ ਬਾਹਰੀ ਰਾਖੇ ਛਾਫ਼ੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਕੈਂਪਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰਲੇ ਰਾਖੇ ਗੜਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਵਿਚਲੀ ਖਿੱਚੋ ਤਾਣ ਛਾਫ਼ੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਰਾਸ਼ਾ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕੈਂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ

ਉਨ੍ਹੀਂ ਦਿਨੀਂ ਮਤਲਬ ਮੌਤ ਸੀ। ਡਾਰ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵਿੱਛੜੀ ਕੁੰਜ ਕੋਲ ਕੁਰਲਾਉਣ ਬਿਨ ਕੋਈ ਚਾਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਕਾਂਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਡਾਰ ਘੁੰਗੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਆਲ੍ਹਣਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਟੌਹਦੀ ਫਿਰ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ। ਆਲ੍ਹਣੇ 'ਚੋਂ ਡਿੱਗੇ ਬੇਟਾਂ ਮੁੜ ਕੀ ਪਰਤਣਾ ਸੀ। ਉਥਲ ਪੁਥਲ ਤੇ ਅਰਾਜਕਤਾ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਮਹੌਲ ਵਿਚ ਅਣਗਿਣਤ ਲਾਵਾਰਸ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਕੰਧੇ ਨਸੀਬ ਨਾ ਹੋਏ। ਪਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਫੁੱਲੀਆਂ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਹੱਥ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਂਝੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਰਹਿ ਗਈਆਂ। ਕੈਂਪਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੰਦੂਕਧਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਵੀ ਘੋੜਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਬਦਲਵੇਂ ਫਸਾਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਕਤਲਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਜਿੱਤਾਂ ਹਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਦਮੀ ਇੱਥੋਂ ਤਕ ਗਿਰ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਬੇਗਾਨੀ ਕੁੱਖ ਵਿਚ ਹਰਾਮ ਦਾ ਬੀਜ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਸਫਲਤਾ ਦਾ ਚਿੰਨ੍ਹ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ। ਹਿੰਦੂ, ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਜਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਦਾ ਕਾਤਲ ਕਤਲ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਹੱਕ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿਉਂ ਖੋ ਬੈਠਾ ਸੀ? ਹਰ ਕਤਲ ਦੂਜੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਵਿਜਈ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਰਕ ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਤੋਂ ਰੁੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਆਈ ਇਕ ਲਾਸ਼ ਦੀ ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮੁਰਦੇ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਜਦ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਬਾਹਰੀ ਰੂਪ ਤੋਂ ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰੂਨੀ ਅੰਗ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਬਿੰਦੂ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। “ਫੁਲੇ ਹੋਏ ਪਿਲ-ਪਿਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਵੀ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ”? ਬੜੀ ਅਜੀਬ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਗੁਪਤ ਅੰਗ ਜਨਤਕ ਹੋ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਆਧਾਰ ਬਣਨ ਲੱਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਨੇ ਬੇਜਾਨ ਛਾਛੀਆਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਆਸ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਨਵੀਂ ਕਿਰਨ ਜਗਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਖ਼ੇਮੋਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਖ਼ੁਸ਼ੀ ਦੀ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੌੜ ਪਈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਤਾੜੀਆਂ ਮਾਰ ਮੁੜ ਕੱਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਗਾਉਣ ਜੋਗੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ‘ਜੇ ਲੜਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਜਾਂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਸਨ ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਹਿਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੁੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਵੀ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਜਾਂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਸਨ’।<sup>31</sup> ਇਕਬਾਲ ਜ਼ਖ਼ਮੀ ਦੀ ਕਹਾਣੀ ‘ਬੁਰਕਾ’ ਵੀ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ‘ਲੋਕ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਤਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਕੱਚੇ ਲਹੂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਆਪਣੀ-ਆਪਣੀ ਖ਼ੁਸ਼ਬੂ ਲੱਭ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ’।<sup>32</sup> ਮੌਤ ਦੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਤਾਂਡਵ ਨੇ ਇਨਸਾਨੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰਮਸਾਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਕਮਾਲ ਹੈ! ਜਿਉਂਦੇ ਜਿਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਮੁਕਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਮਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਉਂਦਾ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਬਿਨ ਸਵਾਸਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਸਵਾਸਾਂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਚਿਹਰੇ ‘ਤੇ ਖ਼ੁਸ਼ੀ ਲਿਆ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ? ਸਵਾਸਾਂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਰ ਮਰ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਜਿਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਮੋਇਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਉਰਜਾ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕੱਪੜੇ ਉਤਾਰਨ ਲੱਗੀਆਂ। ਇਸ ਫ਼ਿਰਕੂ ਲੜਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਇਨਸਾਨੀਅਤ ਖੱਲ ਖੁੰਜੇ ਲੱਗ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੱਗ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਲੋਕਾਈ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਦੇ ਕਫ਼ਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਜੇਬਾਂ ਫਰੋਲ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਮੰਦਹਾਲੀ ਕੱਟਣ ਦੀ ਵਿਉਂਤਬੰਦੀ ਘੜ ਰਹੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜ਼ਿੰਦਾ ਲਾਸ਼ ਤਾਂ ਸੁਣੀ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਲਾਸ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਉਂਦਾ ਵੀ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ? ਹਾਂ ਸੱਚ, ਕੱਢਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਫਰੋਲ ਮੁਰਦਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੂੰਹੋਂ ਸਿੱਕੇ ਵੀ ਕੱਢ ਲਏ ਸਨ। ਐਵੇਂ ਹੀ ਲੋਕ ਮਾਨਸਿਕਤਾ ਨੇ ਘੜ ਲਿਆ: ਪਸ਼ੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਡ ਵਿਕਦੇ ਤੇਰਾ ਮਾਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਕੰਮ ਆਉਣਾ।

ਬਟਵਾਰੇ ਨੇ ਬਲਦਾਂ ਗਲੇ ਟੱਲੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਅਵਾਜ਼ ਖੋਹ ਲਈ, ਹਲ ਖਲੋ ਗਏ ਅਤੇ ਪੈਲੀ ਬੀਜਣੋਂ ਰਹਿ ਗਈ। ਲੇਖਕ ‘ਉਲਾਮਾਂ’<sup>33</sup> ਕਹਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਛੱਜ ਦੀ ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਸੁਹਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਮੋਟੇ ਅਤੇ ਬਰੀਕ ਅਨਾਜਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਜ ਪਾ ਛੱਟਦੀ ਹੈ, ਵੰਡ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਧਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਟ ਮਾਰਿਆ। ਪਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਏ ਤਿੰਨ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਨਾਜਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਛੱਜ ਵਿਚ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਆਸਾਨੀ ਨਾਲ ਛੱਟਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ। ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਇਹੀ ਵਜ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਖ਼ੂਨ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਡੁੱਲਿਆ। ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਂਝਾਂ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੱਜ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਛੱਟੀਆਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਨੇ? ਕਹਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਪਾਤਰ ਬਲਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਜ਼ਹਬੀ ਏਕਤਾ ਲਈ ਤਤਪਰ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਾ, ਸਾਦਗੀ ਪਸੰਦ, ਅਤੇ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਵੰਗਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਜ਼ਰੀ ‘ਚ ਇਕ ਸਤਿਕਾਰਤ, ਹਮਦਰਦ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਆਲੂ ਪਾਤਰ ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਕੈਂਪਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੈਦ ਨੇ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਦੀ ਸਰਦਾਰੀ, ਚੌਧਰੀ ਦਾ ਅਸਰ ਰਸੂਖ,

ਕਿਸਾਨ ਦੀ ਕਿਸਾਨੀ ਅਤੇ ਅਮਲੀ ਦੀ ਅਫ਼ੀਮ ਖੋਹ ਲਈ। ਕਿਸਾਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਥੀਂ ਬੀਜੇ ਗੋਂਗਲੂ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਰਮ ਪੱਤੀਆਂ ਤੋੜ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਸਕਦਾ। ਉਸ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੀ ਮੁਟਿਆਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਾਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਗੰਦਲਾਂ ਤੋੜਨ ਦਾ ਅਨੰਦ ਸੁਪਨਸਾਜ਼ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਰਹਿ ਗਿਆ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੀ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਗੁੜ ਦਾ ਸਵਾਦ ਲੈਣ ਆਏ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਫ਼ੌਜੀ ਦੇ ਡੰਡੇ ਵੱਜਦੇ ਹਨ। “ਸ਼ਾਹ ਆਖੈ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਆਇਆ” ਦੀ ਚੀਕ ਦਾ ਦਰਦ ਆਪਣਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਲੰਘਾ ਬੈਠਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਨਾਜ਼ੁਕ ਘੜੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਸਾਂਝ ਮਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਅਫ਼ਸੋਸ! ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਹਿਰੇਦਾਰਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰੇ ਨਾ ਚੜ੍ਹਨ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਨਤੀਜਨ ਜ਼ੈਲਦਾਰ ਲੱਧਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਂਪ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਮੱਝਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੁੱਧ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਚਿਰ ਕਾਮਯਾਬ ਨਾ ਰਿਹਾ। ਖਾਲੀ ਹੱਥ ਪਰਤੇ ਜ਼ੈਲਦਾਰ ਦਾ ਦੁੱਧ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਹੱਕ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਭਰਮ ਟੁੱਟ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਕਾਮਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ੈਲਦਾਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੱਝਾਂ ਵੀ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨੀ ਹੋ ਗਈਆਂ। ਇਹ ਬੇਜਾਨ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ ਪਰ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਹੁਨਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੋਏ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਖ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਦਰਦ ਦਾ ਕਿਤੇ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ। ਪਰ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪੁਰਾਣੀਆਂ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਤੰਦਾਂ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਟੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਨਾ। ਕੈਂਪ ਵਿਚ ਤੋਟ ਦੇ ਮਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਅਮਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਫ਼ੀਮ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਵਿਚਾਰਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਭਾਈਚਾਰਕ ਸਾਂਝ ਜਾ ਫਿਰ ਨਿਰੋਲ ਲਾਲਚ ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਅਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਪੰਨਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਝਰੀਟਿਆ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਅਜਿਹੇ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਧਰਮ ਹੀ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਦੀ ਵਿਰਾਸਤੀ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਨੂੰ ਬਚਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਜੇਕਰ ਉਹ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਜਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਮਾਲਕੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਲਈ ਕਾਟ ਦੇਣੀ ਪੈਣੀ ਸੀ। ਬੜਾ ਅਜੀਬ ਦੁਖਾਂਤ ਸੀ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਕੱਟੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਵੀ ਕੱਟੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਈ। ਕੈਂਪ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਨ ਕਟੀ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਬਲਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਸੀ। ਸੈਨਾ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਨਾਲ ਕੈਂਪ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵੇਖਣ ਗਿਆ ਬਲਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਵਾਲਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਜਵਾਬਹੀਣ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਿੰਡ ਦੀਆਂ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਔਖੀ ਘੜੀ ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਾਥ ਛੱਡਣ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਾਸਰ ਧੋਖਾ ਸਮਝ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਸਨ: ‘ਸਾਨੂੰ ਏਥੇ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਆਪ ਤੂੰ ਕੁੱਪ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਵੜਿਉਂ। ਸਾਡੀ ਬਾਂਹ ਕਿਨੂੰ ਫੜਾਈ ਆ। ਅਸੀਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਮੀ ਸਾਂ’।<sup>34</sup> ਪਰ ਬਲਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਸ ਉਲਾਮੇ ਦੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਬੇਬਸ ਸੀ। ਦੂਜਾ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਭੋਲੇ ਭਾਲੇ ਲੋਕ ਇਸ ਵੰਡ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਖ਼ਬਰ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਰਿਸ਼ਤਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਗੋਦ ਦੇ ਨਿੱਘ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ। ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਸਭ ਜਾਣਦੇ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਇਕ ਸਾਂਝ ਦੀ ਜੋਤ ਜਗਦੀ ਰਹੀ। ਮੇਰੇ ਬਾਪੂ ਜੀ ਖੁਦ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ ਕੇ ਉੱਜੜਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਰੋ ਪਏ ‘ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖੋ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਫਿਰ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਮਿਲਣਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ’। ਵੰਡ ਦੀ ਖੋਜ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਨੂੰ ਏਨੀ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਕਿ ਪਿਆਰ ਦੇ ਹੰਝੂਆਂ ਲਈ ਕਲਮਾਂ ਰੁਕ ਗਈਆਂ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਂਝਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਰਕੇ ਫਿਰਕੂ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਅੱਗੇ ਖਿੱਲਰ ਗਏ ਹੋਣ। ਪਰ ਇਹ ਫਿਰਕੂ ਰੰਗ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਹੀ ਹਰ ਕਲਮ ਦੀ ਦਵਾਤ ਦਾ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਨਾ ਬਣੀ। ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਇਸ ਪੀੜ੍ਹ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਆਨਣ ਲਈ ਵਾਰਿਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਵੱਲ ਤੱਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਮਰਦਾਨੇ ਦੀ ਵੰਸ਼ ਨੇ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਦੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਨਾ ਗਵਾਈ।

‘ਮੈਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਨੈ’<sup>35</sup> ਕਹਾਣੀ ‘ਚ ਬੇਗਾਨੀ ਧਰਤੀ ‘ਤੇ ਮਾਮੂਲੀ ਆਸਰਾ ਬੇਗਾਨਗੀ ਖਤਮ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਮੁੜ ਜੀਣ ਦੀ ਆਸ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬੇਸ਼ੱਕ ਵੰਡ ਨੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੂਲ ਕਿੱਤਿਆਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਤੋੜ ਕੇ ਬੇਕਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਲੈ ਆਂਦਾ। ਪਰ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਧੰਦੇ ਟੁੱਟੇ ਉੱਥੇ ਨਵੀਂ ਕਿਰਤ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਰ ਜੀਣ ਲਈ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਵੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਪਾਤਰ ਸਮੇਂ, ਤਕਨੀਕ, ਸਫਲਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਅਸਫਲਤਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਖੱਡੀ, ਬੱਕਰੀਆਂ, ਹੱਟੀ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਜਿਹੇ ਕਈ ਧੰਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਕ ਅਜਨਬੀ ਦੀ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਕਫੀਅਤ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਜ਼ੁਬਾਨ ਦੀ ਹਰਕਤ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ, “ਤੂੰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਨੈ”! ਬੇਜਾਨ

ਹੋਏ ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰ ਦਾ ਖੂਨ ਰਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦੌੜਨ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕੁੜਤੇ ਪਜਾਮੇ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਿਸੇ ਓਪਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝ ਅਤੇ ਮੁੜ ਪੈਰੀਂ ਖੜੇ ਹੋਣ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਉਂ ਲਗਦਾ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਢਹਿੰਦੀ ਛੱਤ ਥੱਲੇ ਥੰਮ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਹੋਣ। ਇਹ ਸਾਥ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਰਿਕਸ਼ਾ ਚਾਲਕ ਬਣਨ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਰਾਏ 'ਤੇ ਘਰ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਹੌਸਲਾ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਵਿਆਹ ਦੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਹੱਡ ਬੀਤੀ ਸੁਣਾਉਂਦਾ ਬੀਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਪਛਤਾਉਂਦਾ ਵੀ ਹੈ। “ਵਿਆਹ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਇਕ ਉਧਰ ਵੀ ਕਰਾਇਆ ਸੀ, ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਮੈਂ ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਦੋ ਚਪੇੜਾਂ ਮਾਰ ਬੈਠਾ, ਰੋਣ ਪਿੱਟਣ ਲੱਗ ਪਈ। ਆਂਢ ਗੁਆਂਢ ਨੂੰ ਰੋ ਰੋ ਸੁਣਾਏ। ਆਖੇ ਮੈਂ ਮੁਫਤ ਲੱਭੀਆਂ ਤਾਂਹੀਓਂ ਈ ਤੇ ਮਾਰਦਾ ਏ। ਜੇ ਪੈਸੇ ਖਰਚ ਕੇ ਲਿਆਂਦੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਹਤੇ ਮਾਰਦੇ, ਅਗਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਉਹ ਪੇਕਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਟੁਰ ਗਈ। ਬਸ ਫਿਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਈ।”<sup>36</sup> ਇਹ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਉਸ ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿਖਿਆਨ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਇਕ ਔਰਤ ਦੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਰੁਤਬੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਦਰਦ ਦੀ ਤਸਵੀਰ ਵੀ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਔਰਤ ਅੱਜ ਵੀ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਦਰਦਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਗੀਦਾਰ ਹੈ। ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੱਗ ਜਨਨੀ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਹਾਲ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਆਇ ਕਿੱਥੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਉਹ ਪੂਜਕ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਵਿਕਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਵਸਤ ਬਣ ਗਈ। ਕਦੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਲੈ ਗਏ ਅਤੇ ਕਦੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਪੈਸੇ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ 'ਤੇ। ‘ਵਿਆਹ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਕਰਾ ਲੈਣਾ ਬਸ ਪੈਸੇ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਡੇਰ ਏ’<sup>37</sup> ਇਹ ਲਾਈਨ ਔਰਤ ਦੀ ਹੈਸੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਵਸਤੂ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਬਿਆਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੀ। ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਆਦਮੀ ਦੇ ਜਾਣਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਜੀਣ ਦੀ ਸੁਰਤ ਆ ਗਈ। ਹਵਾ ਦੇ ਬੁੱਲੇ ਨੇ ਪਿੰਡੇ ਦਾ ਮੁੜ੍ਹਕਾ ਸੁਕਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਪੰਛੀ ਪਰ ਤੋਲਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਤੇਜ਼ ਝੱਖੜ 'ਚ ਬਰਬਾਦ ਆਲ੍ਹਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਮੁੜ ਤੀਲ੍ਹਾ-2 ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਬਸੇਰਾ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ।

‘ਮੁਕਤਸਰ’ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਵਿਰਕ ਨੇ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੋਂ ਆਏ ਇਕ ਅਸਰ ਰਸੂਖ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸਭ ਹੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਸੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਹੋਇਆਂ ਵੀ ਇੱਕ ਸ਼ਰਨਾਰਥੀ ਸੀ। ਜ਼ਮੀਨ 'ਤੇ ਮਕਾਨ ਦਾ ਖੁੱਸਣਾ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਤੇ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਪੀੜ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦਾ। ਆਪਣੇ ਸੁਭਾਉ ਤੇ ਬੇਅੱਲਾਦ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਸਭੈ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਵਾਧੂ ਸਨ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਵੰਡ ਦੇਖੀ ਪਰ ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਦਰਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੰਢਾਇਆ ਸੀ। ਇਉਂ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਵਾਲ ਧੁੱਪ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠਿਆਂ ਹੀ ਚਿੱਟੇ ਹੋਏ ਹੋਣ। ਉਹ ਗੁਜ਼ਰਦੇ ਕਾਫ਼ਲਿਆਂ 'ਚ ਹੋਏ ਛਵੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਨੇਜ਼ਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਖੜਾਕ ਤੋਂ ਅਣਜਾਣ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਿਗਾਹਾਂ ਲੋਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਜ਼ਖ਼ਮੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਤੱਕਿਆ। ਕੰਧਾੜੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਚੁੱਕ ਮੀਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਫ਼ਰ ਤਹਿ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਬਾਬਤ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਖ਼ਬਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਡਾਰਾਂ 'ਚੋਂ ਕੁੰਜਾਂ ਵਿੱਛੜਦੀਆਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਖੀਆਂ ਸਨ। ਉਸ ਕੋਲ ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਦਰਦ ਬਿਆਨਣ ਲਈ ਪੀੜ੍ਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਕਾਰ 'ਚ ਬੈਠ ਕਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਆਉਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਦੇ ਆਖ਼ਰੀ ਫਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਵਾਦ ਵੀ ਚੱਖ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ।<sup>38</sup> ਜਦਕਿ ਬਹੁਤਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਪੱਲੂਆਂ 'ਚੋਂ ਕੁੱਤਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਬਾਸੀਆਂ ਰੋਟੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਝਪਟ ਲਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਤਨ ਦਾ ਤਪਦਾ ਤੰਦੂਰ ਪੇਟ ਦੀ ਭੁੱਖ ਲਈ ਰੋਟੀਆਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਾੜ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ।

ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਰਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੈ ਅੱਗੇ ਫ਼ਸਾਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਸਿਰ ਨਾ ਚੁੱਕ ਸਕੇ।<sup>39</sup> ਲੇਖਕ ਲੇਜ਼ਾਨ ਅਫ਼ਸਰ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਪਾਟੇ ਖ਼ਾਨਾਦਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੋੜਨ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਤੇ ਹਵੇਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਣ ਦਾ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰਵਾ ਪੈਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਪੂਰਬੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਮੀਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਮਕਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਲਾਟਮੈਂਟ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਅੰਦਰ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਝੋਰਾ ਨਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਇਸ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਗਾਈਆਂ ਦੀ ਚੋਰੀ ਲਈ ਲੜਦਾ ਵਿਰਕ ਕਬੀਲਾ ਹੁਣ ਨਹਿਰੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਭੋਏਂ ਸਿੰਜਣ ਲੱਗਾ। ਪਰ ਲੇਖਕ ਇਸ ਖ਼ੁਸ਼ਹਾਲੀ ਪਿਛਲਾ ਸੱਚ ਬਿਆਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ 80 ਪ੍ਰਤੀਸ਼ਤ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਜ਼ਾਈ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਸ਼ਾਹੂਕਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਧੰਦਾ ਖੁੰਬਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਉੱਗਿਆ। ਬੇਈਮਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਝੁੰਡਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੱਕੀ ਦੇ ਟਾਂਡੇ ਭੰਨ ਸੁੱਟੇ ਸਨ।

ਮਾਲੀਏ ਤੇ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਦਾ ਭੰਨਿਆ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਬੇਜ਼ਮੀਨਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਵੋਟਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੁਹੱਬਤੀ ਸਾਂਝਾਂ ਝਗੜਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਤਬਦੀਲ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ।<sup>40</sup> ਇਹ ਝਗੜੇ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਚੌਧਰ ਤੱਕ ਹੀ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਨਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਗੋਂ ਸੰਪਰਦਾਇਕ ਚੋਣ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ ਨੇ ਭਾਈਚਾਰਕ ਤੰਦਾਂ ਵੀ ਤੋੜ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ। ਅੰਤ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਬੀਜ ਖੇਤਰੀ ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਨਿੱਸਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰਨਾਰਥੀ ਨਾ ਮੰਨਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ (ਵਿਰਕਾਂ) ਦੀ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਦੇ ਸੋਹਲੇ ਗਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ‘ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਜਿੰਨੇ ਕਤਲ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ’।<sup>41</sup> ਪਰ ਫ਼ਿਰੋਜ਼ਪੁਰੀਆਂ ਜੱਟ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਅਸਹਿਮਤੀ ਜਿਤਾਉਂਦਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਸਿਰ ਸੂਰਮਗਤੀ ਦਾ ਸਿਹਰਾ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਦਾ ਹੈ: ‘ਜਿੰਨੇ ਕਤਲ ਮੁਕਤਸਰ ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਸਾਰੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ’।<sup>42</sup> ਹੈਰਾਨੀਜਨਕ! ਕਤਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੱਲਿਆਂ ‘ਚ ਰੱਖ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਨਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਪੱਖੋਂ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹਥਿਆਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ ਅਸਰਦਾਰ ਤਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ? ਜ਼ਫ਼ਰਨਾਮੇ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦੀ ਵਾਰ ਅੱਗੇ ਔਰੰਗਜ਼ੇਬ ਥਿੜਕ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਤਲਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪੰਡਾਂ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਣ ਦਾ ਭਰਮ ਬੜਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਪਾਲਿਆ। ਪਰ ਨੇਜ਼ਿਆਂ ‘ਤੇ ਟੰਗੇ ਸਿਰ ਤਲੀਆਂ ‘ਤੇ ਉਂਗ ਆਏ। ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੀਸ ਦੇਣ ਨਿਕਲਿਆ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਸੀਸ ਗੰਜ ‘ਚੋਂ ਸੀਸ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਪਹੁੰਚਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਪਰ ਬਹਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਰੀ ਪਿਆ ਲੇਖਕ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਕੱਖੋਂ ਹੌਲਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਜ਼ਮੀਨ, ਜਾਇਦਾਦ, ਗੋਤ ਅਤੇ ਡਾਕ ਪਤਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਮੁਕਤਸਰ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ੇਖੂਪੁਰੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਅਧੂਰੀ ਸੀ। ਓਪਰੀ ਸਰਜ਼ਮੀਨ ‘ਤੇ ਉਂਗਣ ਲਈ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਸੁਖਾਵੇਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ। ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਧਰਾਤਲ ‘ਚ ਸਮੇਂ ਨਾ ਸਕਿਆ: ‘ਉਸ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਕੋਲ ਜ਼ਮੀਨਾਂ ਮਕਾਨ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਢੇਰ ਸਨ, ਪਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਘਰ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਆਪ ਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਮਾਨ, ਦੌਲਤ, ਹੁਨਰ, ਤਾਕਤ ਰੱਖਦਿਆਂ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਸ਼ਰਨਾਰਥੀ ਸੀ’।<sup>43</sup> ਓਪਰੀ ਧਰਤੀ ‘ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਓਪਰਾ ਨਾ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸ਼ਰਨਾਰਥੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਵਲਗਣ ‘ਚ ਵਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ।<sup>44</sup>

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਮਾਂ ‘ਧੀ ਦਾ ਦਾਜ’ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਗੱਡੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ। ਨਾਨੀ ਦੀ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀ ਬਿਨ ਦੇਹਤੀ ਦੀ ਡੋਲੀ ਤੋਰਨਾ ਅਸੰਭਵ ਸੀ। ਅੱਲਾ ਰੱਖਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਾਨ ਬਚਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਇਸਲਾਮ ਦੇ ਘਰਾਣੇ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਵੜਿਆ। ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਧਰਮੀ ਪਰਤ ਚੜ੍ਹਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਸਿਲਸਿਲਾ ਨਵਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ‘ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਅੱਲਾ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਜੋ ਅੱਲਾ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਮਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਾ ਸੀ’।<sup>45</sup> ਉਹ ਅੱਲਾ ਖਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮੂਲ ਵੱਲ ਪਰਤਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਕੱਚੇ ਰੰਗਾਂ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਣਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਕੱਚੇ ਅਕਸਰ ਖੁਰ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਲੇਜ਼ਾਨ ਅਫ਼ਸਰ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਮੁੜ ਭਾਰਤ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਸਥਾਨਿਕ ਲੋਕ ਕਚੀਚੀਆਂ ਵੱਟ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਚਿੜੀ ਖੇਤ ਚੁਗ ਗਈ ਜਾਪਦੀ ਸੀ। ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਕੰਬਲੀ ਨੇ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਦੇ ਪਾਲੇ ਤੋਂ ਠਰਨੇਂ ਬਚਾਈ ਰੱਖਿਆ। ਪਰ ਬਾਲ ਮਨ ਨਵੇਂ ਸੱਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਢਲ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਸੀ: ‘ਮੰਮੀ ਸਲਾਮ ਅਲੈਕਮ’, ‘ਨਾ ਪੁੱਤ ਹੁਣ ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਆਖ’।<sup>46</sup> ਸੁਰੱਖਿਅਤ ਹੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਹੀ ਮਾਂ ਨੇ ਜ਼ਬਰੀ ਬੋਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਧੀ ਦੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ‘ਚੋਂ ਸਾਫ਼ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਇੱਕ ਚੰਗੀ ਸੁਹਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਉੱਖੜੇ ਬਨੇਰੇ ਲਿਪ ਲਏ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੱਗ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕੋਇਲ ਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਲ੍ਹਣੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੋਲੀ ਸਿਖਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਗਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ‘ਚ ਫੜੀਆਂ ਬੰਦੂਕਾਂ ਆਲੇ ਦੁਆਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਭੈਦਾਇਕ ਬਣਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਸਨ। ਅੱਲਾ ਯਾਰ ਖਾਂ ਤੰਗ ਗਲੀ, ਤੰਗ ਸੋਚ ਤੇ ਤੰਗ ਦਿਲਾਂ ‘ਚ ਇਕੱਲਾ ਸਮਾਨ ਢੋਹ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਲੇਜ਼ਾਨ ਅਫ਼ਸਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਮਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਹੱਥ ਲਵਾਇਆ ਅਫ਼ਸਰੀ ਵਾਲੀ ਮੜ੍ਹਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਤੇ ਆਸੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਮਾਨ ਢੋਹ ਰਹੇ ਅੱਲਾ ਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਬਚ ਨਿਕਲਣ ‘ਤੇ ਝੂਰ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ: ‘ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਆਖਿਆ ਸੀ ਨਾ ਇਹਦਾ ਵੀ ਮੱਕੂ ਠੱਪ ਦਿਓ? ਹੁਣ ਸੁਣਾਓ!’<sup>47</sup>



ਟਰੱਕ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਜਾਨਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਬਚ ਗਈਆਂ ਪਰ ਗਾਗਰ ਤੇ ਵਲਟੋਹੀ ਬਿਨ ਜਾਨ ਵੀ ਕਿਸ ਕੰਮ ਸੀ। ਜਾਨ 'ਤੇ ਖੇਡ ਕੇ ਅੱਲਾ ਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਹੁਟੀ ਨੇ ਵਲਟੋਹੀ ਹੱਥ ਫੜ ਗਾਗਰ ਕੱਢੇ ਮਾਰ ਲਈ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਭਾਰ ਧੀ ਦੇ ਚਾਵਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਕੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ: '... ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੁੜੀ ਨੂੰ ਦਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਕੀ ਦਿਆਂਗੀ?'<sup>48</sup> ਟਰੱਕ ਵਿਚ ਕੁੱਛੜ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਕੁੜੀ ਦਾ ਭਾਰ ਹੋਲਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਸੀ।<sup>49</sup> ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਗ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਚੌਂਦੀ ਛੱਤ ਹੇਠ ਮੰਜੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਅਤ ਨੁੱਕਰੇ ਡਾਹ ਲਈ ਹੋਵੇ। ਮਾਰ ਧਾੜ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਮਾਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਧੀ ਦੇ ਡੋਲੇ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਨ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗ਼ਮਗੀਨ ਮਹੌਲ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਅ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਪੰਡ ਨੂੰ ਜੋਖਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਜਾਨ ਬਚਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਬਣਦੇ ਨੇ ਪਰ ਇਸ ਜਾਨ ਤੋਂ ਕੀਮਤੀ ਸਮਾਨ ਅੱਗੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਨ ਕੋਈ ਮਹਿਣੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖਦੀ: ਜਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਜਹਾਨ ਹੈ?

ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਰਕ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਲੇਖਣੀ ਅੰਦਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਅੱਥਰੂਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਨਵੇਂ ਰਾਹ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਅਜਿਹੀ ਦਾਸਤਾਨ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਹਨੇਰਾ ਘਟਣ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਪੰਛੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮਧੁਰ ਅਵਾਜ਼ਾਂ ਕੰਨੀ ਰਸ ਘੋਲਣ ਲੱਗ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਖੁੰਬ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਧਰਤੀ ਪਾੜ ਕੇ ਹੋਂਦ ਉਜਾਗਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਸਮਰੱਥਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਵਿਚ ਆਪ ਮੁਹਾਰੇ ਆ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਬਟਵਾਰੇ ਨੇ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਨੂੰ ਸਦਾ ਲਈ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਤੇ ਆਪਣਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਖੋਹਣ ਦੀ ਪੀੜ ਸਦਾ ਨੈਣੀਂ ਰੜਕਦੀ ਰਹੀ। ਨਵੀਂਆਂ ਥਾਵਾਂ, ਰਾਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਸਮਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਲੱਗਾ ਪਰ ਡੁੱਬਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਤੀਲੇ ਦੇ ਸਹਾਰੇ ਵਾਂਗ ਇਸ ਬੁਰੇ ਵਕਤ ਵੀ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਬੇਜਾਨ ਸਰੀਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਰਕਤ ਬਣੇ। ਸਰੀਰਕ ਅਤੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਿਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੁੱਟਿਆ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਖੜੇ ਹੋਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋਇਆ। ਕਿਸੇ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਜਾਣਨ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਉਸ ਅੰਦਰ ਓਪਰੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਦਾ ਡਰ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਕਰ ਖੱਬਲ ਵਾਂਗ ਹਰਾ ਭਰਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਭਰ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿੱਥੇ ਉਹ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੁੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਦਵਾ ਬਣ ਉਲੂਮਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸੇਕ ਨੂੰ ਬੀਤੇ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਤਕ ਹੀ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਹੋ ਤੁਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗਾਚਨੀ ਨਾਲ ਫੱਟੀ ਪੋਚ ਉਹ ਨਵੇਂ ਪੂਰਨੇ ਪਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ 75 ਸਾਲਾਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਵੀ ਵਾਹਗੇ ਦੀ ਲਕੀਰ ਲੋਕਾਈ ਦੇ ਦਿਲ 'ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਉੱਕਰ ਸਕੀ: 'ਕਰੀ ਕਿਤੇ ਮੇਲ ਰੱਬਾ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਤੇ ਲਹੌਰ ਦਾ'।

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## ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ‘ਖੜਗ’ ਦਾ ਸਥਾਨ ਤੇ ਮਹੱਤਵ

**\*ਡਾ. ਭਾਰਤਬੀਰ ਕੌਰ ਸੰਧੂ**

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਇਲਹਾਮੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਤੇ ਸੁਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਬੁਨਿਆਦ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਲਈ ਪਾਰਲੌਕਿਕ ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਹਾਈ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਉੱਥੇ ਇਸ ਦਿਸਦੇ ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਾਚ ਲਈ ਚਾਨਣ ਮੁਨਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀ ਮਜ਼ਲੂਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਢਾਲ ਬਣ ਕੇ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਵੀਂ ਰੂਹ ਫੂਕ ਕੇ ਹੱਕ ਸੱਚ ਲਈ ਲੜਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਨਾ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਵਰਗੀ ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤ ਨੇ ਬਾਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਾਬਰ ਕਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਕੀਤੀ। ਬਾਬਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਤਲੋਗਾਰਦ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹਮਲਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਅਰਾ ਬੁਲੰਦ ਕੀਤਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਉੱਚਤਾ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਬਾਣੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ:

ਗਿਆਨ ਖੜਗੁ ਲੈ ਮਨ ਸਿਉ ਲੂਝੈ ਮਨਸਾ ਮਨਹਿ ਸਮਾਈ ਹੇ॥<sup>1</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ‘ਖੜਗ’ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਇਕ ਤੋਂ ਵਧੀਕ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ‘ਖੜਗ’ ਨੂੰ ਮੌਤ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸੰਸਾਰਕ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਗ੍ਰਸਿਤ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਬੇਸਮਝ ਹੋ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਵਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਅਵੇਸਲਾ ਹੈ। ਜੀਵ ਹਉਮੈ ਦੇ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਵੈ ਆਪੇ ਤੋਂ ਅਣਜਾਣ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਕਾਲ ਦੀ ਲਪੇਟ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਆਤਮਿਕ ਕਲੇਸ਼ ਖੰਡਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਕੜੀਆਂ ਚੋਟਾਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਦੁੱਖ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਜਮ ਪੁਰਿ ਵਜਹਿ ਖੜਗੁ ਕਰਾਰੇ॥<sup>2</sup>

ਅਗਿਆਨੀ ਅੰਧੁ ਨ ਬੂਝਈ ਸਿਰ ਉਪਰਿ ਜਮ ਖੜਗੁ ਕਲਖਾ॥<sup>3</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੋੜਤਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਰੂਪੀ ਖੜਗ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਜ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਜ਼ਾਤ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਮੌਤ ਤੇ ਫਤਹਿ ਪਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਖੜਗੁ ਹਥਿ ਧਾਰਿਆ ਜਮੁ ਮਾਰਿਅਤਾ ਜਮਕਾਲਿ ॥<sup>4</sup>

ਗਿਆਨ ਖੜਗੁ ਪੰਚ ਦੂਤ ਸੰਘਾਰੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਜਾਗੈ ਸੋਇ॥<sup>5</sup>

ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਜੋਤ ਤਸੱਵਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਅਜਿਹਾ ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਉਤਰਾਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਚੋਣ ਕਰਤੀ ਕਸਵੱਟੀ ਤੇ ਪਰਖ ਕੇ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਸੱਤੇ ਬਲਵੰਡ ਦੀ ਵਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਜੋਤ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਸਿਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਦੇਵ ਨੂੰ ਸੌਂਪ ਦਿੱਤੀ:

ਨਾਨਕਿ ਰਾਜੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਟੁ ਸਤਾਣੀ ਨੀਵਦੈ॥

ਲਹਣੇ ਧਰਿਓਨੁ ਛਤੁ ਸਿਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਿਫਤੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪੀਵਦੈ॥

ਮਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਆਤਮ ਦੇਵ ਦੀ ਖੜਗਿ ਜੋਰਿ ਪਰਾਕੁਇ ਜੀਅਦੈ॥<sup>6</sup>

ਪਹਿਲੇ ਪੰਜ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਰੂਪੀ ਖੜਗ ਨਾਲ ਲੋਕਾਈ ਦਾ ਉਧਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਕਾਲੀਨ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਚਲਿਤ ਅਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਪਹਿਲੂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਬੁਲੰਦ ਕਰਕੇ, ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਸਮਾਜ ਸਿਰਜਨ ਦਾ ਉਪਰਾਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ। ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੀ ਇੰਤਹਾ ਦਾ ਸਬੂਤ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸਨੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਥਿਆਰਬੰਦ ਹੋਣ ਲਈ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰ ਕੀਤਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਰ ਗਏ ਸਨ।<sup>7</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਗੱਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਥਾਂ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮੇ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰ ਭੇਟ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਦਿੱਤਾ।<sup>8</sup> ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਭੇਟਾ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਸਤਰ

<sup>1</sup>ਸਹਾਇਕ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ।

ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਖੜਗ ਚੁੱਕਣ ਅਤੇ ਮੀਰੀ ਪੀਰੀ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਕੇ, ਸਮਕਾਲੀਨ ਮੁਗਲ ਹੁਕਮਰਾਨ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦਾ ਟਾਕਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਉਲੇਖ ਇੰਝ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ ;

ਫਿਰ ਅਰਜਨ ਗੁਰ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ॥  
ਖੜਗ ਚਕਯੋ ਜਿਨ ਮਾਰ ਪੈਇੰਦ ॥  
ਮੀਰੀ ਪੀਰੀ ਦੋਓ ਦਿਖਾਈ ॥  
ਸਾਹ ਜਹਾਂ ਕੋ ਹਾਰ ਸੁ ਦਈ ॥<sup>9</sup>

ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਮੀਰੀ ਪੀਰੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਲਵਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੀ ਧਾਰਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਪੀਰੀ ਦੀ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਮੀਰੀ ਦੀ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਜੰਗ-ਏ-ਮੈਦਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ 6 ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ:

ਮੀਰੀ ਪੀਰੀ ਦੋਓ ਧਾਰੋ ॥  
ਧਰਾ ਭਾਰ ਸਭ ਦੂਰ ਨਿਵਾਰੋ ॥  
ਅਸ ਕਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਭਏ ਅੰਤਰ ਧਿਆਨਾ ।  
ਤਬ ਸਭ ਮਨ ਮੇਂ ਬਿਸਮੇ ਠਾਨਾ ॥<sup>10</sup>

ਛੇਵੀਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਨੇ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਰਾਜਸੀ ਚਿਹਨ ਵੀ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰ ਲਏ। ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਕਾ ਵਿਚ ਹਵਾਲਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ:

ਤੇਗ ਸਿਪਰਿ ਗਹਿ ਉਰ ਮੇ ਧਾਰੀ ॥  
ਜੁਧ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਮਨਸਾ ਭਈ ਕਰਾਰੀ ॥<sup>11</sup>  
ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਕੜੀ ਤੇਗ ਰਖਨ ਲਗੇ ਚਾਕਰ ॥<sup>12</sup>

ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਸੂਰਮੇ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਪੰਜਿ ਪਿਆਲੇ ਪੰਜ ਪੀਰ ਛਠਮੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਬੈਠਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਭਾਰੀ ॥ ...  
ਦਲਭੰਜਨ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੂਰਮਾ ਵਡ ਯੋਧਾ ਬਹੁ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ॥<sup>13</sup>

ਸੰਤ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਰੀਤ ਨੂੰ ਅਗਲੇਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਵੀ ਨਿਭਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਨਵਾਂ ਪੰਨਾ ਜੁੜ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਦਸਮ ਪਿਤਾ ਨੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਦੀ ਦਾਤ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਜਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਚ ਸਦੀਵੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਾਜ ਕੇ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਫੌਜ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ :

ਇਮ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਪੰਥ ਭਯੋ ਉਤਪੰਨ। ਦੇਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਹੁ ਹੋਇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ।  
ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰ ਫੜਾਵੈਂ। ਭਾਂਤ ਭਾਂਤ ਪੁਸ਼ਾਕ ਪਹਿਰਾਵੈਂ ॥<sup>14</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਅਧੀਨ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪੰਥ ਨੇ ਖੜਗ ਧਾਰਨ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਦੁਸ਼ਟਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਬੀੜਾ ਚੁਕਿਆ ਹੈ। ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਕਤੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਸ੍ਰੋਤ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਨਕਰ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਰ ਹੀਲੇ ਮੁੜ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਨਾ ਹੈ, ਇਹੀ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦਾ ਮੰਤਵ ਹੈ।<sup>15</sup>

ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਸੋਂ ਗਹਿ ਖੜਗ ਦਿਖਾਨਾ।  
ਤਿਹ ਸਭ ਦੁਸਟਨ ਕਉ ਛੇਦਿ ਕੈ ਅਕਾਲ ਜਪਾਨਾ ॥<sup>16</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਸਤਰ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਤੇ ਘੋੜ ਸਵਾਰੀ ਨਾ ਸਿੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਦਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਤਨਖਾਹ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ਜੀ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਸ਼ਸਤਰ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਸਿਖੀ ਨਾ ਹੀ, ਨਾ ਤੁਰੰਗ ਦੀ ਅਸਵਾਰੀ ।  
ਸਿਖੀ ਦੀ ਨਾ ਰਹਿਤ ਕਮਾਈ, ਤਨਖਾਹੀਆ ਭਾਰੀ ॥

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ‘ਧਰਮ ਯੁੱਧ ਕਾ ਚਾਓ’, ਅਤੇ ‘ਅਤ ਹੀ ਰਣ ਮਹਿ ਤਬ ਜੂਝ ਮਰੇ’ ਦੀ ਹਾਮੀ ਭਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ‘ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ ਸੰਤ ਉਬਾਰਨ’ ਅਤੇ ‘ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਸਭ ਕੇ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਨ’ ਦਾ ਸੀ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ, ਕਾਲਿਕਾ ਜਾਂ ਦੁਰਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਵਰਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਸਮਕਾਲੀਨ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਅਨਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ੍ਰਿਤ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੀਰ ਰਸ ਭਰਨ ਲਈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਾਨਸਿਕਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਬਦਲਣ ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਚਿਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਮੁਹਾਵਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਵਾਬਸਤਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਬਚਿੱਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਦੀ ਇਕਰੂਪਤਾ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।

ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਖੜਗ ਕੇ ਕਰੋ ਸੁ ਹਿਤੁ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਇ॥

ਪੂਰਨ ਕਰੋ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਇਹ ਤੁਮ ਮੁਹਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਸਹਾਇ॥<sup>17</sup>

ਇੱਥੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਾਨ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਇਕ ਦੂਜੇ ਦੇ ਬਦਲ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਹੋਈ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ:

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮ ਭਗਉਤੀ ਸਿਮਰ ਕੇ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਧਿਆਏ॥<sup>18</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਿਰਪਾਨਧਾਰੀ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਅਰਾਧਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਧਾਰੀ ਯੋਧੇ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਚਾਅ ਲਈ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਉਪਾਓ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਣ ਪਾਣ ਜੇ ਜਪੈ॥ ਅਨੰਤ ਥਾਟ ਤੇ ਥਪੈ॥

ਜਿਤੋਕ ਕਾਲ ਧਿਆਏ ਹੈ॥ ਜਗਤਿ ਜੀਤ ਜਾਇ ਹੈ॥

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਦਿੱਤੇ ‘ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ’ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਤੇ ਪਹਿਰਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਅਸਤਿਤਵ ਦੀ ਅੰਦਰੂਨੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਖੰਡਿਤ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਤਾਕੀਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਹੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਇਕਾਗਰ ਤੇ ਇਕਸੁਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਇਸ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਉੱਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਰਗਰ ਸਾਬਿਤ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਜਿਹਾ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਖੁਦ ਭੈ ਭੀਤ ਹੋਣ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੈ ਭੀਤ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਿਰਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਜ਼ਾਤ ਪਾ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗਿਆਨ ਖੜਗ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀ ਪੱਦਵੀ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਵੈ ਆਪੇ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਹੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਰਕੂ ਭਾਵਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਵਿਚਰਨ ਦੀ ਦਿਸ਼ਾ ਨਿਰਦੇਸ਼ਿਤ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੋਤ੍ਯੁਤਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਦੁਨਿਆਵੀਂ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੇ ਸਤਾਏ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੈਵੀ ਹੁਕਮਰਾਨ ਦੀ ਓਟ ਦਾ ਆਸਰਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜਿਸ ਕੌਮ ਦਾ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਧਾਰੀ ਯੋਧਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਉਸ ਕੌਮ ਦੇ ਹੌਂਸਲੇ ਪਸਤ ਕਰਨੇ ਨਾਮੁਮਕਿਨ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਚਿਹਨੀਕਰਨ ਜੰਗ ਦੇ ਹਥਿਆਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਵੀ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਵਾਂਗ ਬਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦਾ ਨਾਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਰਗਰ ਸਿੱਧ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਦਾ ਸੁਮੇਲ ਆਪਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਕਰਕੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਨਿਆਂ, ਸ਼ੋਸ਼ਣ ਅਤੇ ਕੱਟੜਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਪਰਿਪੂਰਨ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਅਤਿਆਚਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਇਕ ਜੁਟ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਨਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚ ‘ਖੜਗਕੋਤ’, ‘ਅਸਿਧੁਜ’, ‘ਸਸਤ੍ਰਪਾਣੇ’, ‘ਅਸਤ੍ਰ ਮਾਣੇ’, ‘ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸ੍ਰੀ’, ‘ਖੜਗ ਪਾਣੇ’, ‘ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਸਪਾਨ’ ਆਦਿ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਧਾਰੀ ਯੋਧੇ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮੂਰਤੀਮਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਵਰਤਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਾਲ, ਮਹਾਕਾਲ, ਮਹਾਲੋਹ, ਸਰਬਲੋਹ, ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਬਾਣੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ:

ਧਨੁਰ ਬਾਨ ਧਾਰੇ॥ ਛਕੇ ਛੈਲ ਭਾਰੇ॥

ਲਏ ਖਗ ਐਸੇ॥ ਮਹਾਬੀਰ ਜੈਸੇ॥<sup>19</sup>

ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੁਸ਼ਟਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਆਸਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਸਰਾ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ।<sup>20</sup> ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਬਦੀ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਦਾ ਮੂਰਤ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ। ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਹੀ ਜਿੱਤ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਣ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਯੋਧੇ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਦਮਾਨ ਹੈ। ਸ਼ਸਤਰਨਾਮਾਲਾ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ:

ਕਾਲ ਤੁਹੀ ਕਾਲੀ ਤੁਹੀ ਤੇਗ ਔਰ ਤੀਰ।

ਤੁਹੀ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀ ਜੀਤ ਕੀ ਆਜੁ ਤੁਹੀ ਜਗਬੀਰ।<sup>21</sup>

ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਾਤਮਕ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਾਲ, ਪੁਲਾੜ ਦੇ ਸੰਸਾਰਕ ਮਾਇਆ ਜਾਲ ਦਾ ਵਿਨਾਸ਼ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸਦੀਵੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਵੱਲ ਲਿਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਅਗਿਆਨਤਾ ਦਾ ਵਿਨਾਸ਼ਕ ਹੈ। ਦੋ-ਧਾਰੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਭਾਵ ਖੰਡਾ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਹੈ ਜਿਸਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਦਿਸਦੇ ਜਗਤ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ :

ਖੰਡਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੈ ਸਾਜਕੈ ਜਿਨ ਸਭ ਸੈਸਾਰ ਉਪਾਇਆ ।<sup>22</sup>

ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸ ਸਾਜਿ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਦਾ ਖੇਲੁ ਰਚਾਇ ਬਣਾਇਆ..।

ਅਰਥਾਤ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਖੰਡੇ ਦੀ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਹੋਈ, ਇਸ ਮਹਾਂਮਾਇਆ ਰੂਪੀ ਖੰਡੇ ਨੇ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਉਤਪੰਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਨੂੰ ਜਨਮ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ, ਪਾਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਨਾਸ਼ਕ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਨੂੰ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਸਾਰੇ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਖੇਲ ਨੂੰ ਰਚਾਇਆ। “ਜੇ ਖੰਡ ਖੰਡ ਕਰਦਾ, ਅਦਵੈਤ ਨੂੰ ਦਵੈਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਸਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਅਖੰਡ ਨੂੰ ਖੰਡਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ -ਉਹ ਖੜਗ ਜਾਂ ਖੰਡਾ ਹੀ ਤਾਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜੇ ਖੰਡਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਣਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਕੇ ਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਤੀ ਸੂਖਮ ਅਣੂ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣੂ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਮੁੜ ਇਕ ਰਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਾਦ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਖੜਗ ਜਾਂ ਖੰਡਾ ਆਖਣਾ ਸਹੀ ਆਖਣਾ ਹੈ।<sup>23</sup>

ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਵਲੋਂ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਪਿਆਰ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ ਕੀਤੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਹੈ, ਖਿਆਲ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਵਰਗਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਅਤਿ ਸੰਵੇਦਨਸ਼ੀਲ ਜੀਵ ਆਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਦੀ ਧਾਰ ਵਾਂਗ ਮਨ ਵੀ ਪਲ ਖਿਣ ਵਿਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਕੁਝ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ, ਸਵੈ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਿਤ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਰੂਹ ਤੋਂ ਉਤਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਆਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਅੰਸ਼ ਹੈ। ਤਲਵਾਰ ਪਹਿਨਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਲਾਭ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੇ ਕਰ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ।<sup>24</sup>

ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਾਬਦਿਕ ਅਰਥ ਦਇਆ ਦਾ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਹੈ ।<sup>25</sup>... ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਸਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਪੂਰਬੀ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਮੁੱਖ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਕੱਟਣ ਵੱਢਣ ਲਈ ਇਸਤੇਮਾਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਯੂਰਪੀ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਮ ਵਰਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ, ਢਿੱਡ ਵਿਚ ਖੋਭਣ ਅਤੇ ਘੁਸੇੜਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਕਿਰਚ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਹੈ ।<sup>26</sup>

ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਖੁੱਲੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਨਾਲ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਨੈਤਿਕ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਦੂਸਰਾ ਸੰਕੇਤਕ ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਜੀਵਨ-ਸ਼ੈਲੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੈਤਿਕ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਇਕ ਪ੍ਰਾਧੀਨ, ਆਗਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਆਰਥੀ ਸਮਾਜਕ ਹੋਂਦ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਗੋਂ ਇਕ ਪ੍ਰਬੁੱਧ ਉੱਧਮਸ਼ੀਲ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਦੀ ਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਹਿਰੀਅਤ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ।<sup>27</sup>

ਸਿਰਦਾਰ ਕਪੂਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਾਕੀ ਮੁਸਤਆਦ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਮਰਾਟ ਔਰੰਗਜ਼ੇਬ ਨੇ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਪਹਿਨਣ ‘ਤੇ ਪਾਬੰਦੀ ਲਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਸੀ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਹਮਲਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਨਣਾ ਇਕ ਸਮਰੱਥ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂਤਵ ਵਾਲੇ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦਾ ਮੌਲਿਕ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਹੈ।<sup>28</sup> ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਦੀ ਮਹੱਤਤਾ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ:

ਕਾਛ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਨ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਤਿਆਗੇ।<sup>29</sup>

ਸੁਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ *ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦਸਵੀਂ* ਵਿਚ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਰਹਿਤ ਆਦਮੀ ਦੀ ਤੁਲਨਾ ਉਸ ਭੇਡ<sup>30</sup> ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਥਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਕੰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਕੜ ਲਿਆ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਤੇ ਹੱਥ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਤ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਅਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਕਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਬਚਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਸਵੈ ਨਿਰਭਰਤਾ, ਆਤਮ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਸਵੈ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਸਤਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਤੇ ਦੱਬੇ ਕੁਚਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਇਹ ਯਾਦ ਦਵਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਨਿਰਬਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਰੱਖਿਅਕ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਹਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਨਣ ਨਾਲ ਆਤਮਨਿਰਭਰ ਹੈ ਉੱਥੇ ਹੀ ਉਹ ਮਜ਼ਲੂਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਯੁਧ ਵਿਚ ਬੇਖੌਫ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਲੜਨ ਮਰਨ ਦਾ ਆਦੇਸ਼ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਜੋ ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆਵੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਾਲ ਯੁਧ ਕਰਨਾ।

ਲੜਨਾ ਮਰਨਾ ਜਰਾ ਨ ਡਰਨਾ।<sup>31</sup>

ਮੈਦਾਨ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਭੱਜਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਅਨਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਖੋਂ ਪਰੋਖੇ ਕਰਨਾ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਦੇਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਤੱਥ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ :

ਕਛ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਨ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਤਿਆਗੈ।

ਸਨਮੁਖ ਲਰੈ ਨ ਰਣ ਤੇ ਭਾਗੈ।<sup>32</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਨਾਜ਼ਰ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਰਮੀ ਹੋਈ ਸਮਝਣ ਦਾ ਆਦੇਸ਼ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਅਜਿਹਾ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਵਿਚ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਦਾ ਜਜ਼ਬਾ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰਾ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਦੇ ਸਹਾਈ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਆਸਰਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੀਰ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਸਨਮਾਨਿਆ ਹੈ

ਅਸ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਖੰਡੋ ਖੜਗ ਤੁਪਕ ਤਬਰ ਅਰੁ ਤੀਰ॥

ਸੈਫ ਸਰੋਹੀ ਸੈਰਬੀ ਯਹੈ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਪੀਰ॥<sup>33</sup>

ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਰਾਜ ਦੀ ਸਥਾਪਤੀ ਲਈ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਧਾਰੀ ਹੋਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ।

ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰਨਿ ਕੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ ਰਾਜ । ਜੋ ਨ ਸਰਹਿ ਤਿਸ ਬਿਗਣਤਿ ਕਾਜ।<sup>34</sup>

ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਮੂਖ ਭਣਿਓ ਗਰੀਬ ਨਿਵਾਜ, ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰਨ ਕੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ ਰਾਜ ।

ਰਾਜ ਬਿਨਾ ਨਹ ਧਰਮ ਚਲੈ ਹੈਂ, ਧਰਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਭ ਦਲੇ ਮਲੇ ਹੈਂ।<sup>35</sup>

ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੁਯੋਗ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਕਰਾਰ ਰੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਵਾਬਸਤਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਮੁਕਤ ਮਿਲਨ ਕੇ ਸਾਧਨ ਦੇਈ । ਭਗਤ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਕੈ ਤੇਗ ਗਹੋਈ।<sup>36</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਨੇ ਸ਼ਸਤਰ ਦਾ ਵਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਨੈਤਿਕਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਕਰਾਰ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਹਦਾਇਤ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਹੈ। ਤਲਵਾਰ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਜਾਇਜ਼ ਹੈ ਉੱਥੇ ਹੀ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਹਮਾਇਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਹਮਾਯੂੰ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਸ਼ੇਰਸ਼ਾਹ ਸੂਰੀ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਹਾਰ ਖਾ ਕੇ ਖਡੂਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਪਾਸ ਆਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਆਮਦ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਅਹਿਮੀਅਤ ਨਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਹਮਾਯੂੰ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਅਪਮਾਨ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਕ੍ਰੋਧਵਾਨ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਕੱਢ ਲਈ। ਇਸ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਫਰਮਾਇਆ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਕੱਢਣ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਸੀ ਉੱਥੋਂ ਤੂੰ ਕਾਇਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭੱਜ ਆਇਆ, ਇੱਥੇ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਕੱਢਣਾ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਸ ਤੇ ਹਮਾਯੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਸ਼ਰਮਿੰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਆਫੀ ਮੰਗੀ।<sup>37</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਆਤਮ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਨਾਲ ਦਸਤਪੰਜਾ ਲੈਣ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਰੀਆ ਹੈ। *ਜਫਰਨਾਮਾ* ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਔਰੰਗਜ਼ੇਬ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਕੀਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਨਿਰਦਈ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਖੂਨ ਕਰਨ



ਲਈ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਦਾ ਦੁਰ ਉਪਯੋਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰੇਜ਼ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੇ ਕਾਲ ਦੀ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਖੂਨ ਡੁੱਲੇਗਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ :

ਮਜ਼ਨ ਤੇਗ ਬਰ ਖੂਨ ਕਸ ਬੇਦਰੇਗ॥

ਤੁਰਾ ਨੀਜ਼ ਖੂਨ ਅਸਤ ਬਾ ਚਰਖ ਤੇਗ॥<sup>38</sup>

ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਨੀ ਲਾਜ਼ਮੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਇਸਤੇਮਾਲ ਉਸ ਵਕਤ ਹੀ ਜਾਇਜ਼ ਹੈ, ਜਦ ਬਾਕੀ ਸਾਰੇ ਹੀਲੇ ਵਸੀਲੇ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਜਾਣ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਰਚਿਤ *ਸਫ਼ਰਨਾਮਾ* ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਗਵਾਹੀ ਭਰਦਾ ਹੈ:

ਚੂ ਕਾਰ ਅਜ ਹਮਾ ਹੀਲਤੇ ਦਰ ਗੁਜ਼ਸਤ।

ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤ ਬੁਰਦਨ ਬ ਸਮਸ਼ੀਰ ਦਸਤ।<sup>39</sup>

ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਔਰਤ ਦੀ ਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਤੇ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਲਈ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਯਤਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਜਿੱਥੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਰੁਤਬੇ ਨੂੰ ਵਡਿਆਇਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਉੱਥੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਔਰਤ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਚੁਕਣ ਤੋਂ ਵਰਜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਡਿੱਗੇ ਪਏ, ਹਥਿਆਰਹੀਨ, ਬਾਲਕ, ਬ੍ਰਿਧ, ਰੋਗੀ, ਸ਼ਰਨਾਗਤ, ਤੇ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸੱਤਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਵਾਰ ਨਾ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਤਾਕੀਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ।<sup>40</sup> ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਤਾਕੀਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ:

ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰਧਾਰੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਰਿ ਉਪਰਿ ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰ ਨਾ ਉਠਾਵੈ ।<sup>41</sup>

ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਚਲਾਏ ਗਏ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਕ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਖਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੋਕਲ ਚੰਦ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਤੇਗ ਦਾ ਲੋਹਾ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਢਾਲਿਆ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਫੌਲਾਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>42</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ‘ਤਰਕਸ ਤੀਰ ਕਮਾਣ ਸਾਂਗ ਤੇਗਬੰਦ ਗੁਣ ਧਾਤੁ’<sup>43</sup> ਨੂੰ ਸਾਹਿਬ-ਏ-ਕਮਾਲ ‘ਅਸਿ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਖੰਡੋ ਖੜਗ ਸੈਫ ਤੇਗ ਤਰਵਾਰਿ। ਰਛ ਕਰੋ ਹਮਰੀ ਸਦਾ ਜਵਚਾਂਤਕਿ ਕਰਵਾਰਿ’।<sup>44</sup> ਰਾਹੀਂ ਨਿਵਾਜ਼ਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਮਕਾਲੀਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਧਰਮ, ਵਰਣ, ਜਾਤ ਤੇ ਲਿੰਗ ‘ਤੇ ਆਧਾਰਿਤ ਵਖਰੇਵਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ‘ਜਿਨ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਬਰਨ ਕੁਲ ਮਾਹੀ, ਸਰਦਾਰੀ ਨ ਭਈ ਕਦਾਹੀਂ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਕੋ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਨਾਊ, ਤਬੈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਕਹਾਊ’ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਵਚਨ ਸਿਰਜ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੋੜਤਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਕ ਪੱਧਰ ਤੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋਇਆ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ਸਤਰ ਤੱਕ ਦਾ ਸਫਰ ਤੈਅ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਵੀ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਕਾਰਜਸ਼ੀਲ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਿਰਜਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਖੰਡੇ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਜਾਪ ਇਸੇ ਤੱਥ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਕੋ ਬਾਟੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪਾਨ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੇਦ ਭਾਵ ਦਾ ਖਾਤਮਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਜੇ ਸ਼ਸਤਰ ਨਿਆਂ ਪਸੰਦ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਣਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਮਜ਼ਲੂਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਾਖੇ ਬਣਨਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਜੇਕਰ ਅਨਿਆਂਕਾਰੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਣਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ/ਜ਼ਬਰ ਵਧੇਗਾ। ਸ਼ਸਤਰ ਬਲਹੀਨ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸ਼ਸਤਰ ਚੁੱਕਣੇ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਯੁੱਧ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਨਹੀਂ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਗ ਇਖਲਾਕੀ ਕਦਰਾਂ ਕੀਮਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਧਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਭਲੇ ਲਈ ਸੋਚਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

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## ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦਾ ਨਿਊਰੋ-ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨਕ ਪਰਿਪੇਖ

**\*ਡਾ. ਹਰਪ੍ਰਵੀਨ ਕੌਰ**

ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਸੰਚਾਰ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਸ਼੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੇ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡ ਤੱਕ ਫੈਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਸਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਜਿੰਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਸਾਰਾ ਵਸਤੂਆਂ ਤੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੌਤਿਕੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਦਖਲ-ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੰਚਾਰ-ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਰੂਪਾਂਤਰਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਕੋਲ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਸਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਜੋੜ (sum total) ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦਾ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦਾ ਧੁਨੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ, ਵਾਕ- ਵਿਉਂਤ ਤੇ ਅਰਥ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਦੀ ਆਪਸੀ ਸਰਗਰਮੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਦੀ ਅਜਿਹੀ ਖੇਡ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਦਾ ਕਾਰਜ ਖੇਤਰ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਪੱਧਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਕੋਟੀਆਂ ਤੱਕ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਭਾਰਤੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਬੋਧ ਤੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨੂੰ “ਬ੍ਰਹਮ” ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ‘ਸ਼ਬਦ’ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਅ ਰੂਪ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਅਜਿਹੀ ਸੰਕਲਪਮਈ ਵਿਉਂਤ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਜੀਵ ਦੇ ਆਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਪਾਸਾਰੇ ਤੱਕ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਸਰਗਰਮ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਵੀ ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ “ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਜਗਜੀਵਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਰੰਗੁ ਮਾਣੀ।।” ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਰੂਪੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੇ ਮਾਧਿਅਮ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਹੀ ਜੀਵ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਦਾ ਆਨੰਦ ਮਾਣ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਜਾਂ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਤੱਕ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ ਰਾਹ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦੇ ਸਮਾਨਾਂਤਰ ਨਿਊਰੋ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਧਾਰਨਾ ਵਿਕਸਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਜਿੰਨੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਤਾਵਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਲੱਛਣ (Attributes) ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਸੁਭਾਅ ਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਇਸਦਾ ਅਸਲੀ ਸੰਚਾਲਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਹਿਸਾਬ ਨਾਲ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਰਥ ਧਰਮ, ਅਰਥ, ਕਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਇਕ ਲਿਹਾਜ਼ ਨਾਲ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਆਧੁਨਿਕ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਊਰੋ-ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਵਿਚ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਤੱਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਾਰਜਸ਼ੀਲਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਤੰਤੂ-ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਂਚਣ ਤੇ ਪਰਖਣ ਦੇ ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਨਾਲ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ।<sup>1</sup> ਭਾਰਤੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੁਝਾਏ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਵੀ ਜਿਸ ਦਾਰਸ਼ਨਿਕ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਦੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਵਿਉਂਤਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਸਰਗਰਮੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਰਥਿਕ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਮੁਕਤੀ, ਸਮੂਹਿਕ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਧਰਮ, ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਾਮ-ਵ੍ਰਿਤੀ ਆਦਿ ਸਭ ਵਰਤਾਰੇ ਪਰਤ ਦਰ ਪਰਤ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਨਵੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਰਥੀ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਲਈ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀ ਵੱਖਰੀ-ਵੱਖਰੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਤਵਿਆ ਹੈ। ਦੂਜੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਰਥਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਆਤਮਾ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਉਂਤੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਜੀਵ ਧਰਮ, ਆਰਥਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਮ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਗੀਕਾਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਦੀ ਲੰਘ ਕੇ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਣ ਦਾ ਭਾਸ਼ਕੀ, ਅਰਥਮੂਲਕ

<sup>1</sup>ਸਹਾਇਕ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ, ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਆਫ਼ ਈਵਨੀਂਗ ਸਟੱਡੀਜ਼, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ

ਤੇ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤਕ ਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜ ਸਕੇ। ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਜੀਵ ਦੇ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਰੂਪੀ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਅ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਕਾਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂਰਤੀ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਹੰਢਾਉਂਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਤੇ ਚੱਲ ਕੇ ਹੋਣੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ। ਕਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਅਰਥ (ਆਰਥਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਾਂ ਧਨ) ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਅੰਤਰਗਤ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣੇ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਮ, ਅਰਥ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੀ ਨਿਆਂਸ਼ੀਲ ਮਾਨਵੀ ਕਾਰਜ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਗਲੇਰੇ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਇਹ ਸਾਰਾ ਸਿਲਸਿਲਾ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੇ ਤੰਤੂ-ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਚਲ ਰਹੀ ਹਲਚਲ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਰਿਆ-ਕਲਪ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਹੈ। ਸੁਹਾਗਣ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਮਕਬੂਲ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੀਵ ਦੀ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਾਸੰਗਕਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਅਹਿਮੀਅਤ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸੁਹਾਗਣ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦਾ ਚਿੰਨ੍ਹ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੁਹਾਗਣ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ, ਉਸਨੂੰ ਚੇਤੇ ਕਰਨਾ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾਈ ਰੱਖਣਾ ਆਦਿ ਉਸਦੀਆਂ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਬਿਹਬਲਤਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਮਨਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਚਿਤਰਨ ਹੈ।

ਧਰਮ, ਅਰਥ, ਕਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਆਦਿ ਸਾਰੇ ਹੀ ਭਾਵ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਾਮਨਾਵਾਂ (desires) ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਜੈਵਿਕ (Biological) ਆਧਾਰਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਆਪਸੀ ਕਿਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਇੱਛਾਵਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੂਲ ਸੰਚਾਲਕ ਕਿਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੇ ਤੰਤੂ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਪਈਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਸੰਰਚਨਿਤ ਮੂਲ ਮਾਨਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਿਰਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਸੰਰਚਨਿਤ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਦਮਾਨ ਜੀਵ ਭਾਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਅ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਦੇ ਤੰਤੂ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਦੀਆਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਕਸਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਜੈਵਿਕ ਵਿਉਂਤਬੰਦੀ ਤੋਂ ਸੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਰਥੀ ਭਾਵ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਤੱਕ ਫੈਲਦੀਆਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜ ਕੇ ਇੱਕ ਸੁਹਾਗਣ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦਾ ਚਿੰਨ੍ਹ ਸਥਿਰ ਸੁਹਾਗ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ, ਰਸ-ਭਿੰਨੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ, ਵਿਛੜੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਬਾਨੀ ਬਿਰਹਾ ਦੀ ਕਸਕ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਜਨ ਦੇ ਮੇਲ ਦੀ ਖੁਮਾਰੀ ਆਦਿ ਵੱਖਰੇ-ਵੱਖਰੇ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਦੀ ਭੂਮਿਕਾ ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਧਰਮਾਰਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਉਨਵਿ ਘਨ ਛਾਏ ਬਰਸੁ ਸੁਭਾਏ ਮਨਿ: ਤਭਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਮੁ ਸੁਖਾਵੈ।।<sup>2</sup>

ਸੇਜ ਇਕੇਲੀ ਖਰੀ ਦੁਹੇਲੀ ਮਰਣੁ ਭਇਆ ਦੁਖੁ ਮਾਏ।।<sup>3</sup>

ਪ੍ਰਿਅ ਬਾਝੁ ਦੁਹੇਲੀ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਬੇਲੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਵਾਂ।।<sup>4</sup>

ਹਰਿ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ਜਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਭਾਣੀ ਸਾ ਸੋਹਾਹਾਣਿ ਨਾਰੇ।।<sup>5</sup>

ਤੂ ਸੁਣਿ ਹਰਿ ਰਸ ਭਿੰਨੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਆਪਣੇ।।

ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਰਵਤ ਰਵੰਨੇ ਘੜੀ ਨ ਬੀਸਰੈ।।<sup>6</sup>

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ, ਅਸੀਂ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਭਿੰਨ ਭਿੰਨ ਮਾਨਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਿਰਤੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਭਾਵ-ਵਿਉਂਤ ਧਰਮ, ਅਰਥ, ਕਾਮ, ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਦਾ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਸਮਾਨਾਂਤਰ ਚੱਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ

ਚਾਰੇ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਾਰਜ (Practice) ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਹੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਰੁੱਝੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ‘ਗਗਨ ਮੈਂ ਥਾਲ ਰਵੀ ਚੰਦ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਣੇ ਤਾਰਿਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੋਤੀ’ ਵਾਲੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਤੱਤ ਥਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਉਂਤੇ ਹੋਈ ਸਮੱਗਰੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਵੀ ਹਰ ਇਕ ਚੀਜ਼ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਤੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਦੀ ਕਾਮਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਬੱਝੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਤਾਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਉਸ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਅਰਾਧਨਾ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ ਧਰਮ, ਅਰਥ, ਕਾਮ, ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਦੀ ਅੰਤਰ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਦਾ ਭਾਗ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਚਾਹੇ ਇਹ ਅਲੱਗ-ਅਲੱਗ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਇਕ-ਦੂਜੇ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ। ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਤੇ ਚੱਲ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਧਨ-ਪੂੰਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਮਾਉਣਾ ਅਸਲ ਦੁਨਿਆਵੀ ਕਾਰਜ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਇੱਛਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਮਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂਰਤੀ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਤੇ ਚੱਲ ਕੇ ਜੀਵ ਪੂਰਿਆਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਉਸ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਸਦਕਾ ਹੀ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਉਸਦੀ ਰਚੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਹੈ। ‘ਰਚਨਾ ਰਾਚਿ ਰਹੇ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਨਿ ਕਰਮ ਸੁਕਰਮਾ।।’ ਦਾ ਖਿਆਲ ਇਸੇ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ ਦੀ ਹੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਪਰਮਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਵੱਖਰੇ-ਵੱਖਰੇ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਕਾਰ ਕਰਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਚੇਤੁ ਬਸੰਤੁ ਭਲਾ ਭਵਰ ਸੁਹਾਵੜੇ।।<sup>7</sup>

ਆਗੈ ਘਾਮ ਪਿਛੈ ਰੁਤਿ ਜਾਡਾ ਦੇਖ ਚਲਤ ਮਨੁ ਡੋਲੇ।

ਦਹ ਦਿਸਿ ਸਾਖ ਹਰੀਆਵਲ ਸਹਜਿ ਪਕੈ ਸੋ ਮੀਠਾ।।<sup>8</sup>

ਪੋਖਿ ਤੁਖਾਰੁ ਪੜੈ ਵਣੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਣੁ ਰਸੁ ਸੋਖੈ।।

ਆਵਤ ਕੀ ਨਾਹੀ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਵਸਹਿ ਮੁਖੈ।।<sup>9</sup>

ਮਾਘਿ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਭਈ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਜਾਨਿਆ।।<sup>10</sup>

ਫਲਗੁਨਿ ਮਨਿ ਰਹਸੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮੁ ਸੁਭਾਇਆ।।<sup>11</sup>

ਕੋਕਿਲ ਅੰਬਿ ਸੁਹਾਣੀ ਬੋਲੈ ਕਿਉ ਦੁਖੁ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਹੀਜੈ।।

ਭਵਰ ਭਵੰਤਾ ਫੂਲੀ ਡਾਲੀ ਕਿਉ ਜੀਵਾ ਮਰ ਮਾਏ।।<sup>12</sup>

ਵੈਸਾਖ ਭਲਾ ਸਾਖਾ ਵੇਸ ਕਰੇ।।

ਧਨ ਦੇਖੈ ਹਰਿ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਆਵਹੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਰੇ।।<sup>13</sup>

ਮਾਹੁ ਜੇਠੁ ਭਲਾ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਕਿਉ ਬਿਸਰੈ।।

ਥਲ ਤਾਪਹਿ ਸਰ ਭਾਰ ਸਾ ਧਨ ਬਿਨਉ ਕਰੈ।।<sup>14</sup>

ਆਸਾਤੁ ਭਲਾ ਸੂਰਜ ਗਗਨਿ ਤਪੈ।।

ਧਰਤੀ ਦੂਖ ਸਹੈ ਸੋਖੈ ਅਗਨਿ ਭਖੈ।।<sup>15</sup>

ਸਾਵਣਿ ਸਰਸ ਮਨਾ ਘਣ ਵਰਸਹਿ ਰੁਤਿ ਆਏ।।  
ਮੈ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਸਹੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਪਿਰ ਪਰਦੇਸਿ ਸਿਧਾਏ।।<sup>16</sup>

ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਪੂਜਾ ਪਰਮੇਸੁਰ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਤਾ।।  
ਨਾਨਕ ਮਾਘਿ ਮੋਹਾ ਰਸ ਹਰਿ ਜਪਿ ਅਠਸਤਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਨਾਤਾ।।<sup>17</sup>

ਬਹੁਤੇ ਵੇਸ ਕਰੀ ਪਿਰ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਮਹਲੀ ਲਹਾ ਨ ਥਾਓ  
ਹਾਰ ਡੋਰ ਰਸ ਪਾਟ ਪਟੰਬਰ ਪਿਰਿ ਲੋੜੀ ਸੀਗਾਰੀ।।<sup>18</sup>

ਬੇਦਸ ਮਾਹ ਰੁਤੀ ਖਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ਭਲੇ।।  
ਘੜੀ ਮੂਰਤ ਪਲ ਸਾਚੇ ਆਏ ਸਹਜਿ ਮਿਲੈ।।<sup>19</sup>

ਮਾਘਿ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਭਈ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਜਾਨਿਆ।।  
ਸਾਜਨ ਸਹਜਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਹਿ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਮਾਨਿਆ।।<sup>20</sup>

ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਰਥਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ, ਪਰਮਾਰਥੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਭੌਤਿਕੀ ਤੇ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਖੇਲ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ, ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣਾ, ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੋਣਾ, ਮਾਣਨਾ ਆਦਿ ਗੁਣ ਉਸਦੇ ਜੀਵ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਲੱਛਣ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਬਿੰਬ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਆਤਮਾ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਸੰਜੋਗ ਵਿਯੋਗ ਦਾ ਚਿਤਰਨ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਵਿਚ ਮੁੱਖ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਅਰਥ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਮ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਭਵਰ ਤੇ ਕੋਇਲ, ਵਰਖਾ ਤੇ ਬਿਜਲੀ, ਮੋਰ ਤੇ ਪਪੀਹੇ, ਆਦਿ ਸਭ ਉਸ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪਿਤਾ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਅਰਾਧਨਾ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਧਰਮ ਨਿਭਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਆਰਥਿਕ ਕੰਮਾਂ-ਕਾਜਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਫਸੇ ਪਰਦੇਸੀ ਪਤੀ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਸਿਰਜ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਧਨ (ਅਰਥ) ਦੀ ਮਹੱਤਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

ਬਿਰਹਨ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਪਰਦੇਸੀ ਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਯੋਗ ਵਿਚ ਤੜਪਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਾਮਨਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਇੱਛਾਵਾਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਉਤੇ ਜਿਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਪੈਂਦੀਆਂ ਕਸਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਵੱਖਰੀਆਂ-ਵੱਖਰੀਆਂ ਰੁੱਤਾਂ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਵਣ ਦਾ ਮੌਸਮ ਉਸਦੀ ਤੜਪ ਤੇ ਬਲਦੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਤੇਲ ਵਾਂਗ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸਨੂੰ ਮੋਕਸ਼ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਉਸ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪਿਤਾ ਜਾਂ ਪਰਦੇਸੀ ਮਾਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਕੇ ਹੀ ਮਿਲਣੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਫਰਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਾਉਣਾ ਅਠਾਹਠ ਤੀਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਰਗਾ ਧਰਮ ਹੈ।

ਬੇ ਦਸ ਮਾਹ ਰੁਤੀ ਖਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ਭਲੇ।।

ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਰਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਰਾਂ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਹੀਨੇਵਾਰ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਰਥ ਕਾਲ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਜਿਹੋ-ਜਿਹੇ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਹੋਣ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਬਦਲਦੀਆਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀ ਗਤੀ

ਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ ਅਤੇ ਰੰਗਲੇ ਮਾਹੌਲ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਜਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਪਿਆਰ ਦੀ ਬਿਹਬਲਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਤਵਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਰਾਂ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਚਾਰ ਰੁੱਤਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਕਿਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਰਨਣ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਰੁੱਤਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਭੰਵਰ ਤੇ ਕੋਇਲ, ਵਰਖਾ ਤੇ ਬਿਜਲੀ, ਮੋਰ ਤੇ ਪਪੀਹੇ ਦੀਪਕ ਤੇ ਤੇਲ, ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਹਾਰ ਸਿੰਗਾਰ ਦਾ ਵਾਤਾਵਰਨ ਚਿਤਰਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਪੱਖ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਰਚਨਾ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਨਿਧਤਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੋਈ, ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਿਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਕਿਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਨਿਧਤਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਸਮਕਾਲੀ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ, ਇਸਤਰੀ ਮਰਦ ਦੇ ਸੰਬੰਧਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਾਵਿਕ ਚਿਤਰਨ, ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੰਵੇਦਨਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਊਰੋ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਤੰਤੂਆਂ (ਨਿਊਰੋਨ) ਦੀ ਕਾਰਜਸ਼ੀਲਤਾ, ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਿਰਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਖ਼ੂਬੀ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਵਜੋਂ ਚੇਤ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਖਿੜੇ ਫੁੱਲ, ਬਨਸਪਤੀ, ਰੁੱਖ, ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਬੈਠੇ ਭੰਵਰ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਲਈ ਭਰੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਭਾਵਨਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਵੇਦਨਾਵਾਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਉਤੇਜਿਤ ਕਰ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮੌਸਮ ਦੇ ਸੁਹੱਪਣ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ, ਭੰਵਰ ਦਾ ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿਆਰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦੀ ਇੱਛਾ ਉਤੇਜਿਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਸਦੇ ਨਿਊਰੋਨ ਇਸ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਿਰਿਆ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਲੌਕਿਕਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦੇ ਹੋਏ, ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਨਿਊਰੋਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਿਰਿਆ ਦੀ ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਬੇਅਰਥ ਹਨ। ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੇਕਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਨਾ ਵੱਸੇ ਭਾਵ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਸੁਹੱਪਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਮੁੱਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਮਨਮੋਹਕ ਨਜ਼ਾਰੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਉਤੇਜਿਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਚੇਤ ਬਸੰਤੁ ਭਲਾ ਭਵਰ ਸੁਹਾਵੜੇ ।।  
ਬਨ ਫੁਲੇ ਮੰਝ ਬਾਰਿ ਮੈ ਪਿਰੁ ਘਰਿ ਬਾਹੁੜੈ ।।  
ਪਿਰ ਘਰਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਵੈ ਪਨ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਵੈ  
ਬਿਰਹਿ ਬਿਰੋਧ ਤਨ ਛੀਜੈ ।।

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ਨਾਨਕ ਚੇਤਿ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਜੇ ਹਰਿ ਵਰੁ ਘਰਿ  
ਧਨ ਪਾਏ ।।੫।।<sup>21</sup>

ਵਿਸਾਖ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਵੀਆਂ ਫੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਟਾਹਣੀਆਂ ਲਗਰਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਸਾਖਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਤੁਲਨਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਦੀਆਂ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਭਾਵਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਵਿਸਾਖ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਲਗਰਾਂ ਫੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਇੰਝ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਸੱਜ ਵਿਆਹੀ ਨੇ ਹਾਰ-ਸਿੰਗਾਰ ਲਗਾਇਆ ਹੋਵੇ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਲਗਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਹਾਰ-ਸਿੰਗਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਜਦੋਂ ਪਤਨੀ ਦੇਖਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਅੰਦਰ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦੀ ਧੂਹ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਰਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਹਾਰ ਸਿੰਗਾਰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਉਮਾਹ ਭਰੀ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਦੇ ਦਰ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਦੀ ਉਡੀਕ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਦੀ ਇੱਛਾ ਜਾਹਰ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਪਰ, ਫਿਰ ਉਸਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਵਾਬ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਵੈਸਾਖ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਸਲ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸਦੀ ਸੁਰਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਵੈਸਾਖੁ ਭਲਾ ਸਾਖਾ ਵੇਸ ਕਰੈ ।।  
ਧਨ ਦੇਖੈ ਹਰਿ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਆਵਹੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਰੇ ।।

ਨਾਨਕ ਵੈਸਾਖੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਵੈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਾ ।।੬।।<sup>22</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜੇਠ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਲੋਆਂ-ਪੈਣ ਨਾਲ ਭੱਠ ਵਾਂਗ ਥਲ ਤਪਣ ਲੱਗ ਪੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਿਰਿਆ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਿਰਿਆ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਮੁਕ ਭਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਅੱਗ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਤਪਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤਪਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨੂੰ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਤੂੰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਆਗਿਆ ਦੇਵੈ ਮੈਂ ਭੀ ਤੇਰੇ ਮਹਲ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਜਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਹਰਲੀ ਤਪਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਬਚ ਸਕਾਂ। ਹਾੜ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਵਿਚ ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਸੂਰਜ ਤਪਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਹੌਲੀ-ਹੌਲੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੀ ਨਮੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਕਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੁੱਖ ਸਹਾਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਅੱਗ ਵਾਂਗ ਤਪਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਮੌਸਮ ਪਤਨੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ੀ ਕਿਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਬਦਲ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਪਤਨੀ ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਸ ਮੌਸਮ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਉਡੀਕ ਵਿਚ ਤਪਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਤਤਪਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਅਸਾੜੁ ਭਲਾ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਗਹਾਨਿ ਤਪੈ ।।

ਧਰਤੀ ਦੁਖ ਸਹੈ ਸੋਖੈ ਅਗਨਿ ਭਖੈ ।।

ਅਵਗੁਣ ਬਾਧਿ ਚਲੀ ਦੁਖੁ ਆਗੈ

ਸੁਖੁ ਤਿਸੁ ਸਾਚੁ ਸਮਾਲੈ ।।<sup>23</sup>

ਹਾੜ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਤਪਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਸਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਲੀਆ ਘਟਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਉਤੇਜਿਤ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਸੁੱਕੇ ਘਾਹ ਦਾ ਹਰਾ ਹੋਣਾ, ਕਾਲੀਆ ਘਟਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਚੜ੍ਹ-ਚੜ੍ਹ ਆਉਣਾ, ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਰ੍ਹਨਾ ਆਦਿ ਪਤਨੀ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ੀ ਉਛਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ, ਉਹ ਉਸ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਨਣ ਦੀ ਇੱਛਾ ਜਗਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਪਤੀ ਦਾ ਸਾਥ ਲੱਭਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ :

ਮੈਂ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਸਹੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਪਿਰ ਪਰਦੇਸਿ ਸਿਪਾਈਸ਼

ਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਥ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੱਖਣੀ ਸੇਜ ਬਹੁਤ ਦੁਖਦਾਈ ਹੈ। ਭੁੱਖ, ਨੀਂਦ, ਕੱਪੜਾ ਅਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਸਰੀਰਕ ਸੁੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਧਨ ਉਸਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਧਰਵਾਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇ ਸਕਦੇ ਭਾਵ ਉਸਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ੀ ਉਛਾਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਾਂਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਪਤੀ ਦਾ ਪਿਆਰ ਹੀ ਠੰਢਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਭਾਵ ਜੀਵ-ਇਸਤਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਦੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਆਨੰਦ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਭਾਦੋਂ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਫਿਰ ਬਦਲਾਅ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦਾ, ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਚਾਰੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਮੀਂਹ ਪੈਣ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਟੋਏ-ਟਿੱਬੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਭਰੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ। ਪਪੀਹਾ ਪਿਊ-ਪਿਊ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਸੋਹਣੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਦਾ ਆਨੰਦ ਲੈ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਡੱਡੂ ਗੁੜ੍ਹੇ-ਗੁੜ੍ਹੇ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਕਿਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਇਸ ਮੌਸਮ ਦਾ



ਆਨੰਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਾਣ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਬਲਕਿ ਉਸਦੇ ਤੰਤੂ-ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ (Nervous system) ਵਿਚ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਕੇ ਇਹੀ ਭਾਵਨਾ ਜਾਗਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸੱਪ ਡੰਗ ਮਾਰਦੇ ਫਿਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਮੱਛਰ ਡੰਗ ਮਾਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਭਾਵ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਦੇ ਦਰਦ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ (Positive) ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਮੌਸਮ ਉਸ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ (NegAtive) ਵਿਚਾਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਹ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਜਵਾਨੀ ਤੋਂ ਬੁਢਾਪੇ ਵੱਲ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਡਰ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਅੱਸੂ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਕੰਢੇ ਉੱਚੀ ਹੋਈ ਪਿਲਛੀ ਤੇ ਕਾਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਬੂਰ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਿਲਛੀ ਤੇ ਕਾਹੀ ਦਾ ਫੁੱਲਣਾ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਵਿਚ ਬੁਢੇਪੇ ਦੇ ਡਰ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਲਿਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹ ਉਦਾਸ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਝੂਠਿ ਵਿਗੁਤੀ ਤਾ ਪਿਰ ਮੁਤੀ ਕੁਕਹ ਕਾਹ ਸਿ ਫੁਲੇ।।

ਆਗੈ ਘਾਮ ਪਿਛੈ ਰੁਤਿ ਜਾਡਾ ਦੇਖਿ ਚਲਤ ਮਨ ਡੋਲੇ।।<sup>24</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ ਔਰਤ ਦੀ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਿਲਛੀ ਦੇ ਕਾਹੀ ਦੇ ਸਫ਼ੈਦ ਬੂਰ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਫਿਰ ਅਧਿਆਤਮ ਵੱਲ ਲੈ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਕੋਕਿਲ ਅੰਬ ਦੇ ਦਰੱਖਤ ਤੇ ਮਿੱਠੇ ਬੋਲ ਬੋਲਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਵਿਜੋਗਣ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਮਿੱਠੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਲਕਿ ਚੋਭਵੇ ਤੇ ਦੁਖਦਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅਜਿਹਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਤੰਤੂ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਗਠਨ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਵਾਪਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਤੇ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਮਨਮੋਹਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ ਵੀ ਕੋਝੇ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ, ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਸਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ ਤੰਤੂ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਨਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ ਤੰਤੂ ਜਿਆਦਾ ਕਿਰਿਆਸ਼ੀਲ ਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਵਿਰਤੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਨਿਊਰੋ-ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਇਸ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ,

A two-dimensional Model of neurotransmitter functions in depression describes this disorder as a combination of increasing negative affect and decreasing positive affect, which correlates with sadness and mood swings.<sup>25</sup>

ਕੱਤਕ ਦਾ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਵਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਫਸਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਦੇ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਦੀ ਸੱਚਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਫਰਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਜਦੋਂ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਸਕੂਨ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਪੋਹ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਕੱਕਰ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਹਰੇਕ ਘਾਹ-ਬੂਟੇ ਦੇ ਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਕਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੋ, ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਇੱਕਲਾਪਨ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਜੀਵ ਰਸ ਸੁਕ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਪੋਹ ਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਜੋ ਖਿਆਲ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਪੋਹ ਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਦੀ ਸੁਕਾ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਠੰਢ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਖਿਆਲ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਉਸਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਰਸ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਪੋਖਿ ਤੁਖਾਰੁ ਪੜੈ ਵਣੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਣੁ ਰਸੁ ਸੋਖੈ।।

ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ, ਮਾਘ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਤੀਰਥ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਪਵਿੱਤਰਤਾ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਛਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਝੂਠੀ ਪਾਖੰਡਤਾ ਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਮਾੜੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਤੀਰਥ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਲਈ ਮਹੱਤਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਕੇ ਅਸਲੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਰੂਹ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸਿਆਲ ਦੀ ਰੁੱਤ ਦੀ ਕਰੜੀ ਸਰਦੀ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਬਹਾਰ ਫਿਰਨ ਤੇ ਫੱਛਾਣ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਲੋਕ ਹੋਲੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਰੰਗ-ਤਮਾਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਖੁਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਮਨਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਹੋਲੀਆਂ, ਰੰਗ-ਤਮਾਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦਾ ਪਿਆਰ ਮਿੱਠਾ ਲੱਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਮਨ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਅਸਲ ਆਨੰਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਵੱਖਰੇ-ਵੱਖਰੇ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਿਰਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਤਰਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਭਗਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਜਾਂ ਆਨੰਦ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਭਿੰਨ-ਭਿੰਨ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਲਕਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੇ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਹਾਸਲ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਵੱਖਰਾ-ਵੱਖਰਾ ਮੌਸਮ ਉਸਦੇ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦੀ ਤਾਂਘ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਉਤੇਜਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜੀਵ ਸਰੀਰਕ ਤੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਹਸਤੀ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਉਂਤ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਬੱਝਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।

ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਬਾਰਾਂ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਇਕ ਲਿਜਾਜ਼ ਨਾਲ ਬਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਪੁਰਸਾਰਥਾਂ ਦਾ ਪੁਨਰ-ਸੰਯੋਜਨ (Recompose) ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵ ਤੋਂ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡ ਤੱਕ ਲੈ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿਚ ਹਰ ਇਕ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਇਕ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਵੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਬਦਲਦਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਵੀ ਬਦਲਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਉਸਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਵੀ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ, ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨਕ ਇਕਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਕ ਇਕਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਮਾਗੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਚੇਤ ਦਾ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਤੇ ਭੰਵਰ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਜੰਗਲ, ਬਨਸਪਤੀ, ਰੁੱਖ-ਬਿਰਖ, ਵੇਲ ਬੂਟੇ ਸਭ ਦੇ ਖਿੜੇ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਉਜਾਗਰ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਵਿਸਾਖ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਬਦਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਕ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਖਾਂ, ਨਵੀਆਂ ਫੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਟਾਹਣੀਆਂ, ਲਗਰਾਂ ਮੁੱਖ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਸੱਜ ਵਿਆਹੀ ਮੁਟਿਆਰ ਦੇ ਕੂਲੇ-ਕੂਲੇ ਅੰਗਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਅਕਤ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਜੇਠ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਲੋਆਂ, ਭੱਠ ਵਾਂਗ ਤਪਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਸੱਜ ਵਿਆਹੀ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਤੀ ਤੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਭਾਵਨਾਂਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਖਰ ਤੇ ਪਹੁੰਚਣ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਦਾ ਹੈ। ਹਾੜ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਗਰਮੀ ਵਿਛੜੀ ਹੋਈ ਜੀਵ-ਆਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਤਪਸ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਵਧਾ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸੂਰਜ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੀ ਨਮੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਕਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਤੀ ਅੱਗ ਵਾਂਗ ਤਪਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਹਾੜ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਤਪਸ ਵਾਂਗ

ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਛੜੀ ਆਤਮਾ ਇਹ ਤਪਸ਼ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਉਣ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਠੰਢਕ ਵਾਂਗ ਇਸਦੇ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਠੰਢਕ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਦੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਸਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਹਾੜ ਦੀ ਤਪਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਭਰੇ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਤੋਂ ਮੀਂਹ ਦੀਆਂ ਫੁਹਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੈਣ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਮਨ ਦੇ ਆਨੰਦਤ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਾਲੀਆ ਘਟਾਵਾਂ, ਬੱਦਲ ਵਰੁਨਾ, ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਖੁਸ਼ਹਾਲੀ ਆਉਣਾ ਆਦਿ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਦੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਠੰਢ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਉਂਦੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਨਜ਼ਾਰੇ ਬੇ-ਅਰਥ ਲੱਗਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਸੁਹਾਵਣਾ ਮੌਸਮ ਵੀ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਮਨੋ-ਸਰੀਰਕ ਹੁਲਾਰਾ ਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਉਸਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਿਆ।

ਸਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਕਾਲੀਆ ਘਟਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਪਰਦੇਸ ਗਏ ਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਨਾਰ ਦੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਦੀ ਤੜਪ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਉਣ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸੁਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਸੱਖਣੀ ਸੇਜ ਦੁਖਦਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਪਿਰੁ ਘਰਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਵੈ ਮਰੀਐ  
ਹਾਵੈ ਦਾਮਨਿ ਚਮਕਿ ਡਰਾਏ।।  
ਸੇਜ ਇਕੋਲੀ ਖਰੀ ਦੁਹੇਲੀ  
ਮਰਣੁ ਭਇਆ ਦੁਖੁ ਮਾਏ।।<sup>26</sup>

ਇਹ ਹੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਭਾਏ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਬਾਕੀ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਵਾਤਾਵਰਨ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਛੜੀ ਬਿਰਹਨੀ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ-ਪੀੜਾ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵੱਲ ਲੈ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੀਵ-ਆਤਮਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਅਸਲੇ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਛੜ ਕੇ ਤੁੱਛ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਵਰਖਾ ਦੇ ਰੁੱਤ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਰੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਜਲ-ਥਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਪਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਟੋਏ-ਟਿੱਬੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਭਰੇ ਹਨ, ਡੱਡੂ ਅਤੇ ਮੋਰ ਕੁਹਕਦੇ ਹਨ, ਪਪੀਹਾ ਪਿਊ-ਪਿਊ ਦੀਆਂ ਆਵਾਜ਼ਾਂ ਕੱਢਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਬਿਰਹਨੀ ਨਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਸੁਹਜ-ਸੁਆਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ। ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਛੜੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਸੱਪ ਦੇ ਡੰਗ ਵਾਂਗ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦਾ ਚਿਤਰਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਨਜ਼ਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਆਨੰਦ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਰਹਨੀ ਲਈ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ ਵਾਂਗ ਲੱਗਣ ਮਨੋ-ਸਥਿਤੀ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਇਸੇ ਭਾਵ-ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਦੀ ਨਿਰਮਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਬਾਕੀ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅੱਸੂ ਦੀ ਮਿੱਠੀ ਰੁੱਤ ਬਿਰਹਨ ਦੇ ਦਿਲ ਵਿਚ ਪਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦੀ ਤਾਂਘ ਨੂੰ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕਾਹੀ ਪਿਲਛੀ ਦਾ ਚਿੱਟਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਬੁਢਾਪੇ ਦੇ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦੇ ਖੌਫ਼ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕੱਤਕ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਯੋਗ ਮੁੱਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਉਸਦੇ ਭਲੇ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਫਲਸਰੂਪ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ। ਮੱਘਰ, ਪੋਹ, ਮਾਘ, ਫੱਗਣ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵੀ ਠੰਢਕ ਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਆ ਜਾਣ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪੋਹ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦਾ ਕੱਕਰ ਵਣ ਦੇ ਘਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਕਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮਾਘ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਲੋਕ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਹੋਣ ਲਈ ਤੀਰਥ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕੁਝ ਚੰਗਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਦਾ। ਫੱਗਣ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਲੋਕ ਹੋਲੀ ਦੇ ਰੰਗ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਮਨਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ

ਪਰ ਇਹ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਦਾ ਵਾਤਾਵਰਨ ਵੀ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਉਨਸ ਪੈਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ-ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਬਾਰਹਮਾਹਾ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰ ਰਹੀ ਜੀਵ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਿਵੇਕਲੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵ ਦੀਆਂ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡੀ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਭਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਵੰਨ ਸੁਵੰਨੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਤਾਪ ਹੀ ਭੋਗਦਾ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਰੰਗਾਂ ਤੇ ਰੌਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਗਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਹਰ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਇਕ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਮਨੋ-ਸਥਿਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਵੇਕਲੇ ਰੰਗ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਜਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਅਗਲੇਰੇ ਪੱਧਰ 'ਤੇ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ, ਘਬਰਾਹਟ, ਡਰ, ਉਦਾਸੀ, ਪਿਆਰ ਅਤੇ ਬਿਹਬਲਤਾ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਭਿੰਨ ਭਿੰਨ ਭਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਜੀਵ ਆਤਮਾ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਮਨੋਭਾਵ ਵਿਅਰਥ ਤੇ ਤੁੱਛ ਹਨ। ਉਸ ਲਈ ਅਸਲੀ ਆਨੰਦ ਤਾਂ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ-ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਜੀਵ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡ ਤੱਕ ਫੈਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਬਾਰਾਮਾਹ ਤੁਖਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਕ ਇਕਾਈਆਂ ਤੇ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਜੀਵ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡੀ ਇਕਾਈਆਂ ਦੇ ਆਪਸੀ ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇ ਤੇ ਸਰਗਰਮੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

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