

The Ghadar Reading of Giani Hira Singh Dard

Jasbir Singh & Baljit Singh

*Punjab University, Chandigarh & GHG Khalsa College, Ludhiana,
Punjab*

History is a matter of perception. To understand a phenomenal event like the Ghadar movement, it is imperative to examine various and varying perceptions about it. Moreover, the narratives of the people who lived closer to the event, participated or were witness to it, though distantly, are vital sources of information and provide an alternative perception. Giani Hira Singh Dard was a perceptive poet, writer, political activist who rose to literary and journalistic pinnacles in the 1920's. This decade remains significant in the history of the Punjab in so many ways. Thus, it is important to explore perceptions of Giani Hira Singh Dard about colonialism, nationalism, history of Punjab in general and about the Ghadar Movement in particular. This paper is thus an attempt to understand the historical context, growth, nature, character and significance of the Ghadar Movement as perceived by Giani Hira Singh Dard.

The Punjab experienced a lot of political upheaval and literary manifestations in late the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Punjabi people accomplished many heroic exploits in the defense of their homeland, but no heroic tale is more appealing than the struggle of the Punjabis during the first three decades of the present century, and the works of the writers of this period speak of the feats of the Punjabi people to realise their dream for a better, free life, social justice and a radiant future.¹

Giani Hira Singh Dard: Early Life, Writing and Activism

Giani Hira Singh Dard entered life in an environment which was full of political potentialities and ripe for literary articulation. He was born on 30th September, 1889 in the village Ghaghrot, district Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan).² His father belonged to a Brahmin family of Poonch and moved to Rawalpindi and embraced Sikhism.³ Due to abject poverty, his early education suffered as he laments that "in my early age I was largely deprived of the opportunities of education and skill development".⁴ He received early education from a village *gurdwara* and the Mission School Rawalpindi.⁵ In his early youth, he began writing religious and patriotic poetry in Punjabi under the pseudonym of 'Dard' which later on he absorbed into his name.⁶ Progressive by nature, and "under the influence of a reformist father and the Singh Sabha he rejected the orthodox and reactionary values".⁷ Dard evokes himself that, "idealism and realism were best understood by him when he was able to understand scientific socialism".⁸ It is well observed that "one can discern different strands co-existing in Dard

consisting of his excited relationship with the Sikh lore; impact of radical nationalist ideas and his commitment to public causes".⁹

In his early writings, he preferred to write poems on Sikh historical personages and events, of which two collections *Upkaran di Vangi* and *Sikh Bacheyo Jago* were published in 1912 and 1913 respectively.¹⁰ He passed *Vidwan*, *Giani* and matriculation examinations in the year 1913, 1915 and 1917 respectively.¹¹ He entered the arena of socio-political struggle at the young age of sixteen.¹² Moreover, he started his career as an octroi clerk in the Municipal Committee, Rawalpindi. It was here that he experienced the first baptism of patriotism when he listened to the fiery speech of Sardar Ajit Singh on April 21, 1907.¹³ Ajit Singh was considered a "revolutionary spark and ignited the minds wherever he went".¹⁴ This encounter changed the world view of Hira Singh Dard who till then believed in adherence to just religious ideas. Afterwards, "his interests increased in political affairs and he began to read newspapers with more interest".¹⁵ It was a landmark change in the life of Hira Singh Dard. He resigned from his job and joined school teaching and jumped into the ongoing struggle of the nation. He preferred to "starve rather than be working in humiliating conditions".¹⁶ From 1908 to 1920, he worked at various schools at Lyallpur, Rawalpindi and Kaler. It was during this period that he met seasoned and mature leaders such as Master Tara Singh, Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Sundar Singh Lyallpuri, Sant Teja Singh Mastuana and Lal Singh 'Kamla' Akali.¹⁷ In 1910, Hira Singh Dard was arrested for the first time when he went to pay his obeisance at Golden Temple, Amritsar. According to him, the misdeeds and moral degeneration of the corrupt priests at Amritsar had surpassed the metaphorical surreptitious activities of the 'Thugs of Banares'. The priests' frivolous complaint against the pilgrims had landed him in prison for one night.¹⁸ Dard had visited the shrine "out of veneration but returned with a heart full of rebellion".¹⁹ Now, Hira Singh Dard had become 'Giani', a fearless Akali who was ready to take on cudgels against the mighty British Empire.²⁰ Of course, he chose to tread the path of peaceful and non-violent agitation. He had been able to understand the significance of Gandhian methods as he had later rightly observed that "there is a lot of debate about *charkha* and *khaddar* and laxative and compromising policy of Gandhi is not liked much but nonetheless, the majority of the masses waited for the call of Gandhi".²¹

Hira Singh Dard was well aware of the nexus between the state and religious leadership. He states that "before the emergence of economic theory, religion was the key of political and economic struggles. Masses take refuge in religion to escape from economic and political sufferings but at the same time, rulers use religion to enslave and exploit the masses. They use coercive power to keep the religious institutions, organisations and religious leaders in their favour".²² The British had complete control over the religious institutions and they did not 'allow anything to happen against the interests of the Empire'.²³ He was among those who were arrested for holding the *Akhand Path* and prayers for the passengers of *Komagata Maru* ship who had fallen martyrs to the British bullets at Budge Budge Ghat (Calcutta).²⁴ In those days, circulars were issued by the pro-government religious leaders asking the common people "neither to talk in

the public meetings nor to write in the newspapers about the happenings at Calcutta as these mislead *patit* Sikhs were waging a war against the British Raj. Similar *Hukamnama* was issued by the Akal Takht”.²⁵ People like Hira Singh Dard were disturbed at this degeneration of the Sikh leaders.²⁶ After witnessing this degeneration, Hira Singh Dard “was consciously striving to reinvent the Sikh spirit through an active engagement in the anti-colonial movement. Patriotism was to be the new benchmark for being a Sikh”.²⁷

The year 1920 was a turning point in the life of Hira Singh Dard. It had social and political context²⁸ and certainly was not accidental. The imposition of “martial law in the Punjab created a flood of movements which uprooted me from Rawalpindi and my desire of going to the universities for higher studies was abandoned and jail became a university for me”.²⁹ In this year, Mahatma Gandhi emerged as most powerful leader at the national political scene; the Sikh League held its first political session at Amritsar which pushed the Sikhs into political mobilization; in May 1920, the first political daily of the Sikhs *Akali* was launched which not only spearheaded the Akali Movement but also encouraged the Sikhs to participate in the freedom struggle; the Congress adopted a non-cooperation programme, in November and December representative organisations of the Sikhs, namely Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandik Committee (SGPC) were formed.³⁰ Thus, this year brought about a major upheaval in the socio-political domain in the province. For him, it was continuity as “anti-imperialist ideology was the core of Akali Movement. Independence and democratic values were inherited by the Sikh masses from the struggle against the Mughal state. But gradually feudal and capitalist lurings created a class of reactionaries”.³¹

Journalistic Activities

Hira Singh Dard also worked as a seasoned and mature journalist and contributed in the great social, religious and political movements of the country. His objective was to “achieve freedom through national integration and make his countrymen prosperous”.³² By now, he had matured a lot. He says, of course, “I was anti-imperialist, freedom loving and pro-democracy but my earlier views were vague and murkier”.³³ At this critical historical juncture, some enlightened Sikh leaders like Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri, S. Mangal Singh Tehsildar, Prof. Niranjan Singh, S. Harchand Singh, S. Teja Singh Samundari and others got together to refurbish the glory of the Sikh *qaum* which had been hijacked by the Sikh elite leadership, *mahants* and chiefs in the service of the British Government.³⁴ Hira Singh Dard was appointed as assistant when Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri started the Punjabi daily *Akali* in 1920 from Lahore which was primarily anti-government newspaper.³⁵ While underlying the need of this paper, Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri had said that “the Sikh leaders, *Gurdwara Mahants* and rulers have virtually defamed the Sikh religion throughout the world by remaining loyal to the British. Now we should jump into the field and do something”.³⁶ The paper was named *Akali* with an idea to infuse a new spirit

among the masses by invoking the sacrifice, fearlessness, bravery and chivalry of Akali Phula Singh.³⁷

The boldness with which this paper exposed the British atrocities, and vigorously preached for the national liberation was missing in other leading Urdu newspapers. Thus, *Akali* paper received tremendous response which is evident from the fact that a number of Hindus and Muslims learned Gurmukhi just to be able to read this paper.³⁸ The most important contribution of Giani Hira Singh Dard was the launch of the Punjabi monthly magazine *Phulwari* in 1924 as its chief editor. The magazine continued to be published from Amritsar up to 1930 and thereafter from Lahore till its cessation in 1942.³⁹ It was started after his separation from *Akali* as it had turned out to be dominated by purely religious ideology of the SGPC.⁴⁰ This magazine was started with the purpose to enlighten the audience about various contemporary issues. Moreover, this magazine not only provided a space for constructive debate in the Punjabi academic circles but also encouraged it.⁴¹

Later Writings

As a person of great literary and socio-political concerns, it was not possible for him to remain insulated from the contemporary tremors which were being felt across the country. He worked in varied capacities such as Secretary of Central Sikh League and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Member of provincial as well as national executive of Congress, President of Amritsar session of Congress in 1925, founder of Punjabi *Sahit Sabha* in 1926 and Secretary of Congress Sikh Party in 1937.⁴² His major poetry works include *Dard Sunehe* Part I, II, III (1920, 21, 22), *Phulwari Chitranwali* (1926), *Kisan Diyan Aheen* (1938), *Hor Agere* (1950), *Chonvein Dard Sunehe* (1951) whereas his major prose writings include *Jivan Tilakji* (1921), *Jiwan Baba Gurditta* (1921), *Socialism Ki Hai* (1942), *Fascism ki Hai* (1942), *Dharam te Rajniti* (1950), *Naveen Bharat de Rajsi Aagu* (1952), *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan* (1956), *Ghadar di Lahoo Rangi Kahani* (published posthumously). His other writings include *Aas di Tand te hor Kahaniyan* (short stories), *Punjabi Sadhran* (short stories), *Punjabi Sahit da Itihaas* (1953), *Karam Singh Historian di Khoj* (edited), *Itihaasik Lekh* (1954), *Brij Bhoomi te Malaya di Yatra* (1958).⁴³ Dard is also credited, along with Gurmukh Singh Musafir, for heralding the “arrival of what is termed in Punjabi as ‘bandi-kavya’ a native equivalent of prison poetry in the proper sense of the term”.⁴⁴

The Context

Almost every part of India experienced socio-religious and political movements but these were more prominent in the case of Punjab in the post 1857 period. The Kukas under the leadership of Baba Ram Singh continued the Sikh tradition of martyrdom and boldly faced canons. It has been rightly observed that from pre-independence to post-independence period “a series of protest movements have rocked the history of Punjab with such regularity that each such movement

can be taken as a stepping stone in the making of a rather chequered Punjabi identity".⁴⁵ On the whole, "many twentieth century movements such as Ghadar Movement, Akali Movement, Babbar Akali Movement, national freedom struggle, peasant movement and Naxalite movement could be seen as distinct phases of history of protest in Punjab".⁴⁶

It was not the first cry against exploitation, destruction, religious fundamentalism, injustice and tyranny. Perhaps this led the writers of Ghadar poetry and prose to invoke the heroic characters from historical past and they were presented as heroes through many literary genres. After the annexation of Punjab, the disarmament statistics provided some relief to the British authorities in Punjab. The heavy deployment of forces in Punjab led to the non-occurrence of any major event in the province. The various factors responsible for the failure have been relegated to the background and the Punjabis in general and Sikhs in particular were blamed for their non-participation in 'the war of independence'.⁴⁷ The Ghadarites too appeared to have accepted blame, and they were anxious to remove the blot".⁴⁸ According to Hira Singh Dard, the Punjabis had put a blot on their bravery.⁴⁹ The Ghadarites were remorseful of this charge and the pain is visited and revisited in their writings. The Ghadarites vowed to achieve the pledged goal of 1857.⁵⁰

The British had taken all the steps to regimentize Punjabi society but as chance would have it, it led to the emergence of a Punjabi identity, as an independent identity.⁵¹ Being people centric, these movements relied on horizontal affiliations⁵² which serves, according to Benedict Anderson, the basic purpose in the making of a nation and as he observes "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship".⁵³ The Ghadar movement was the best manifestation of this formulation. Whereas the Congress was dominated by educated elite and the rich, the Ghadar Party was represented by the peasants, labourers and ex-military men. Thus, led by these social groups and given its subaltern character, the Ghadar revolutionaries (as in the case of these other movements) tended to be extremely violent and militant, as they often resorted to guerilla warfare, banditry and acts of loot and terrorism.⁵⁴

Migration from Punjab

The Ghadar movement was a dream of independent India conceived at foreign soil by the people who "went abroad in sheer desperation as the domestic conditions were extremely harsh on account of three dreadful diseases - famine, plague and poverty - caused by the exploitative economic policies of the colonizers".⁵⁵ After the second half of nineteenth century, the Punjab remained worst hit by epidemics. "Its mortality rate was highest for the plague and average annual deaths from malaria, smallpox and cholera also remained comparatively high. Fifteen major epidemics of malaria broke out in the region during 1850-1947, claiming 5,177,407 lives".⁵⁶ Rigorous methods were used for the collection of taxes and no respite was given even in the event of crop failure. This resulted in the rise of land mortgages and borrowings that further increased

rural indebtedness.⁵⁷ Malcolm Lyall Darling estimated agricultural debt at a figure of Rs. 75 crores in 1919.⁵⁸ The average debt per cultivated acre was Rs. 31 per head of agriculturalist population, which amounts to 19 times the land revenue demand. In the 1920's, nearly 80 per cent of the peasants-proprietors were estimated to be in debt.⁵⁹ At the economic level, the enormous burden imposed by land revenue and other taxes, moneylenders' debt and the desperate urge to improve economic conditions pushed the peasants towards migration. Otherwise, the only available option was joining the army which was chosen by around 71.5 per cent poor peasants.⁶⁰ By choice, economic imperative, or force, Indian men left home to work as merchants, policemen, soldiers, plantation workers, or laborers, largely in other Crown colonies in Asia, South Africa, and Australia.⁶¹

As a result a numbers of Indians travelled to foreign countries in search of livelihood. Gradually, many of them journeyed to Canada and the United States where work was available in abundance and wages were high. Thus, by 1910 the number had swelled up to 30,000 in the New World.⁶² Among them 90 per cent were the Sikhs (80 per cent of them were ex-soldiers), 5 per cent were Hindus and 5 per cent Muslims.⁶³ Ultimately, some fifteen thousand to thirty thousand Hindustanis landed in North America and provided the elements for a historic mix of radical intellectuals and labourers that became so critical to Ghadar.⁶⁴ It was a unique combination which provided novelty to the ideology and programme of the Ghadar Movement.⁶⁵

The emigration which was a response to economic frustration and oppression at home resulted in further complication due to racial hostility, fear and a sense of alienation. But this journey was not an easy task. It required minimum five hundred to six hundred rupees. Thus, landless and marginal sections did not have the audacity to afford.⁶⁶ A person earning six rupees could only fulfill the dream of going abroad by selling or mortgaging the land. Many of them had mortgaged joint family lands at 10 or 12 per cent interest to raise the fare to Vancouver.⁶⁷ In 1863, the average price of an acre was 8 rupees, in 1899 the price of an acre was 47 rupees and by 1914 it had gone up to 144 rupees per acre. However, it varied significantly in the case of cultivated land. In 1914, the price of cultivated land was 249 rupees per acre.⁶⁸ In 1921, half of the cultivators farmed 5 acres or less.⁶⁹ In the fertile districts of the province, the average holding was about 5 to 6 acres, in the canal colonies it was 9.8 acres. Income of 5 acres of cultivated land was eleven rupees before the payment of land revenue in 1929.⁷⁰ By 1901, 4.13 *lac* acres of agricultural land was sold and from 1901 to 1909 more than 2.5 *lac* acres of agricultural land was mortgaged.⁷¹

In Punjab, whilst Indians were only able to earn a meager amount from their jobs, there existed a sharp difference between the wages of the Indians and Europeans. "This double jeopardy of oppression called for action and to that end an analysis and understanding of the fundamental reasons of their oppression on the one hand and political mobilization and organization on the other".⁷² The daily wager earned three to four *annas* per day and in army and police one was able to earn eight to ten rupees per month in the Punjab.⁷³ In America and Canada, the Indian workers were able to earn 1.5 to 2 dollar per day. At that

time, one dollar was equal to 3.5 rupees.⁷⁴ When he becomes Forman, the wage increased upto three Dollars per day. During fruit plucking and packaging season, this reached upto three to four Dollars. At that time, it was equal to nine to twelve rupees which were equal to one month's salary of an Indian soldier.⁷⁵ The poor financial conditions at home and better avenues abroad accelerated the process of immigration which reached unprecedented scale in the beginning of twentieth century.

Significance of Ghadar History

History serves as the life line of nations as it gives inspiration from the past and provides the direction to future generations. Humans try to shape their life as per the past daring acts and sacrifices.⁷⁶ History is collective memory, the storehouse of experience through which people develop a sense of their social identity and their future prospects.⁷⁷ In fact, history can be written only by those who find and accept 'a sense of direction' in history itself. The belief that we have come from somewhere is closely linked with the belief that we are going somewhere. History, therefore, acquires meaning and objectivity only when it establishes a coherent relation between the past and future.⁷⁸ Ghadar heroes and their heroic acts and the hardships they bore for the nation's independence have become a legacy to be inherited by the youth.⁷⁹ Ghadar ideology is revisited and metamorphosed by some of the post-independence movements. The successive movements virtually inherited and continued the Ghadar ideology which strived for an ideal society devoid of any form of exploitation.

For Giani Hira Singh Dard, the true historical relevance of the Ghadar revolution lies in the fact that "history of Indian independence cannot be complete without the history of Ghadar movement".⁸⁰ The British did not allow the revolutionary history of Ghadar Party to be written or published through its state coercion.⁸¹ Some scattered pieces of writings on Ghadar heroes and their biographies were written by some revolutionary writers and were published by *Kirti* and *Phulwari* magazines but a comprehensive history of Ghadar movement was not possible under the British rule heavily loaded with surveillance and tyranny.⁸²

History is a source of inspiration as it holds up to us the tradition and glory, the clashing passions and heroic exploits of past generations. In it, we find the 'drama of real life'.⁸³ Thus, underlying the importance of Ghadar history, Dard observes that "All history is important but the history of revolutionary movements is as indispensable as the eyes for human body. The sacrifices of the martyrs work as a catapult for the social dynamics and social advancement. Without such history, the objective of achieving social revolution by putting an end to human exploitation on class basis and the establishment of system of inclusive prosperity based on human equality, fraternity and a justice driven society is not possible".⁸⁴ But the Ghadar leaders cannot be blamed for this as they were wading through troubled waters while struggling against the empire. "Ghadarites were rather 'making history' and they did not get any

chance to venture into the process of history writing".⁸⁵ Waryam Sandhu, a Punjabi writer, while agreeing to it also admits that the Ghadarites were not trained in the historical tradition of writing and preserving history.⁸⁶

In a hostile terrain, this creative and cumbersome activity was not possible. Hira Singh believed that the real history of revolutions is written by revolutionaries themselves because they live and die for the 'ideals of social change'.⁸⁷ The outside writers do not hesitate to appropriate the potentialities of the revolutionaries' past. It is under this impulse that "the imperialists and their sympathizers have created so many illusions about the history of the Ghadar Party that even those who are interested in this domain fail to filter out the impurities and also fail to identify the revolutionary and democratic character of the movement because they do not put it in the right historical grid".⁸⁸ But at the same time, the author is also aware about the nuances and intricacies involved in the 'historian's craft' and he recognizes the value of professional historiography. On December 8, 1954, a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Baba Visakha Singh and he entrusted the task of writing the history of Ghadar party to comrade Gurcharan Singh Sehnsra. Hira Singh Dard, being member of that Committee, scribbled through the pages of the draft and reported that "My opinion is for an authentic history of the Ghadar Party but Comrade Sehnsra's book cannot be moulded according to that... One senior established historian should be in-charge of this project. Under his supervision, a synopsis should be drafted for the proposed research and some principled party fellow and historically conscious person should put his seal on this".⁸⁹

Misrepresentation of the Ghadar Past

A nation that forgets history will have no future. Hira Singh Dard was aware about the vulnerability of history and historical discipline and wary of state sponsored history. "If history of revolutionary movements goes into oblivion or it is distorted and it becomes impossible for common people to filter the impurities and find historical reality, it hampers the progress of society and leads to irreparable loss".⁹⁰ If the legendary past is disconnected it facilitates the control of the ruling classes to keep the masses in a state of misinformation and consequential exploitation of the nation never comes to a siege.⁹¹

Thucydides, the Greek historian, had rightly believed that history is only equal to its evidence.⁹² Hira Singh Dard doubted the intentions of the writers and publishers who were 'churning history' on the basis of mischievous and misleading government reports as the primary source of their findings. "Numerous leaders and writers were trapped into this web. Consciously or unconsciously they have maligned or minimized the political and historical relevance of the Ghadar Party. They have written or they will write the historical narrative of India's freedom struggle and Ghadar Party's contribution according to their political affiliations and personal advantages".⁹³ Similar attempt was made by V.D. Savarkar in 1946 when he tried to capture the greatness of the movement while

publishing the book on India's 'war of independence', with an introduction by P.C.Joshi.⁹⁴

But the stoic silence about the Ghadar contribution, on the part of those who wrote about India's freedom struggle, deeply disturbed Hira Singh Dard. As a matter of fact, the contribution of the Ghadar Movement has not been given proper space by the historians and bourgeois politicians.⁹⁵ At the same time, he feared that the revolutionary traditions and their pedestal will be lost in the festivities of the independence.⁹⁶ He believed that the Congress Party will get the history written from its own perspective and reduce the role of Ghadarites, because any acknowledgement to them will 'pollute their image of peace-lovers and practioners of non- violence'.⁹⁷ Dard refers to Pattabhai Sitaramaya's two volumes *History of Indian National Congress*, Sardul Singh Kaveshar's *Hindustan di Azadi Khatar Jang* and Sri Kumar Appa's *Azadi Khatir Hindi Ghol* and laments at the blind eye turned by the Congress leadership in their speeches and writings even in the post-independence period.⁹⁸ For him, Lala Lajpat Rai was no exception. "Due to the machinations of the ruling class and our own carelessness, this colourful and chequered history remained in oblivion. The great Punjabis are the creators of history but they always faltered in preserving this".⁹⁹ In the matter of history of India's struggle for freedom, very few if any, of the historians had seriously taken note of the movements other than those launched by Gandhi.¹⁰⁰

Hira Singh Dard also questions the process of the writing history of the Ghadar Party without consulting 'living sources' i.e the participants of the movement. He believes that "these elders had plentiful information about the structure, aims and programme of the Party in the form of their personal experiences. He states that many of them have passed away, while some are at the fag end of their life. If still we waste the time, we will lose an important historical repository of the Ghadar Movement".¹⁰¹ Hira Singh Dard believed that using simple language, the message of the great heroes can be spread through the masses.¹⁰² He tries to put the utterances of the Ghadar characters through a literary vocabulary to write a simplistic history.¹⁰³

Moreover, he underlines the need to remove all the distortions which were cast by the imperialists and their collaborators. As per government reports, commissions and conspiracy cases and statements of public prosecutors, a numbers of misinterpretations had been created by labeling the Ghadar Party as an anarchist party, terming the Ghadarites as the peasants mislead by Har Dayal, and his stooges. This poisonous propaganda was rather successful to some extent.¹⁰⁴ As per government orders, pro-British Sikh leaders, *Gurdwara Mahants* and some newspapers termed these patriots as *Patit* and mislead the Sikhs and declared that under the influence of non-believers, they indulged in ill-deeds.¹⁰⁵ The government sympathizers had issued a circular and the Akal Takht under the same impulse had issued a *Hukamnama* to keep away from their activities and not to support the Ghadarites.¹⁰⁶ This was quite disturbing and disheartening for the Ghadarites.¹⁰⁷ Similar attitude was shown by

these Sikh leaders when they had supported the British government at the time of demolition of the wall of Gurdwara Raqabganj.¹⁰⁸

The Ghadar Perceptions

Like the Ghadarites, Hira Singh Dard also considered 1857 as first war of independence and placed the Ghadar movement in continuum of the 1857 when he observed that they (Ghadarites) “begin to prepare for the second war of independence”.¹⁰⁹ Though, no political party was formed in 1857 and there was no democratic ideal but in the history of resistance to British rule the movement retains high importance. This war was waged to uproot the British rule and establish the old regime.¹¹⁰ Dard was also critical about the bourgeois character of the elite led national movement. “By exploring the reasons of the failure, certain lessons for the path of freedom can be learnt. Under the new dispensation, new classes emerged out of old social structure and began to flourish by becoming the partners of the imperial loot. To stop the revolutionary movements like Ghadar, this section was put to tread on the legal and constitutional path and the Congress Party was founded. When the political consciousness began to filter down to the level of the masses, the Congress changed its ideology and programme. But there was no change in its philosophy and always feared from the revolution. Whatever the concessions were received, those had nothing to do with the sufferings of the masses”.¹¹¹ Nonetheless, it was not able to kill the revolutionary zeal, and organizations were established in Punjab, Bengal and England. But these movements revolved around particular personalities. Their structure and organization was not democratic rather it was based on hero worship. Even they were not clear about state structure of independent India.¹¹²

According to Dard, the great preparation, phenomenal national unity and miraculous sacrifices of Ghadar Party can best be understood only after having complete grasp of its objectives and programme.¹¹³ The Ghadar poetry published in *Ghadar di Goonj* clearly stated that the Ghadarites did not expect much from the contemporary leaders in the war against religious fundamentalism, caste suppression and imperial plunder.¹¹⁴ This party had come from nowhere. For him, this Party emerged out of the socio-political context and the legacy of proletariat and liberation struggles of India and America.¹¹⁵ It was not a sudden development. Rather the events of seven or eight preceding years worked in the background of this development. Dard traces the development since the foundation of the *Gurdwara* at Vancouver in 1908 which became a centre of salvation for all the Hindus.¹¹⁶ Around seventy thousand rupees were spent on the construction of the *Gurdwara* in which the Punjabis contributed lavishly as some of them had made good fortunes by the sheer hard work.¹¹⁷ In 1914, the total Punjabi assets were somewhere around Rs.2.15 crore.¹¹⁸ Thus, these Punjabis excelled in the economic domain as well as attaining strength in the form of national unity.¹¹⁹ This *Gurdwara* provided a space to Indians to

ground themselves firmly as this became a centre of their religious as well as social and political activities.¹²⁰ The workers, who faced racial discrimination, now organized themselves and even retaliated.¹²¹ According to Hira Singh Dard, this was the beginning of revolutionary ideals and assertions which culminated in the formation of Ghadar Party.

Whereas the Congress was dominated by urban elite, the Ghadar Party was represented by the workers, peasants, ex-military men. Rather they led the Party from the front. Being subaltern in nature, this party continued to struggle till the last moment against British rule. "They believed that complete independence cannot be achieved through petitions and papers rather by armed rebellion."¹²² According to Dard, it was the first party to declare complete independence and establishment of democratic rule as its goal and objective.¹²³ Of course, Lala Har Dayal's role was instrumental in foundation of the Ghadar Party and the Ghadar newspaper.¹²⁴ Even, a recent and perceptive scholar like Rajmohan Gandhi gives credit to Lala Har Dayal when he states, "A revolutionary, an Arya Samajist and an academic at different stages in his life, Har Dayal founded the Ghadar Party in 1913, while exile in California".¹²⁵ The British believed that the situation will normalize after the departure of Lala Har Dayal. But, according to Dard, these patriots pursued their determined goal more rigorously.¹²⁶ The Party office was located in San Francisco which was the centre of revolutionaries from numerous countries of the world. It vindicates the universal character of the Ghadar Party. This goal was embodied in the basic objectives of the Ghadar Party.¹²⁷ Dard refers to Ghadar newspaper as a prophet who can fulfill the wishes of the masses. Thus, there began an inflow of huge money.¹²⁸

According to Hira Singh Dard, the Ghadarites were not expecting a world war before 1920 and they were preparing accordingly.¹²⁹ Though the Ghadarites were not prepared, the War provided them an opportunity. The Turkish participation in the War on the side of Germany ignited the Ghadarites' hope that the "Indian Muslims would support them".¹³⁰ Nine months of Ghadar propaganda had stirred the Indian migrants and they began to travel back *en masse* to India.¹³¹ It was a declaration of national war for liberation.¹³² He observes that "everybody was eager to come back but this led to a vacuum of leadership at the headquarters for which a heavy price was paid. Thus, it was imperative to leave some experienced, trained and trusted people to be left at the Centre".¹³³ The fiery propaganda carried on by the Ghadarites and the mistake of the declaration of war against the empire had alarmed the British government. But on the positive side, it had created a mass awakening and infused a new spirit.¹³⁴

For the purpose of strengthening the movement, the Bengali revolutionaries were contacted and consulted.¹³⁵ Due to paucity of funds, the advice of Bengal revolutionaries to carry on dacoities was accepted despite initial hesitations.¹³⁶ They feared that these dacoities would devoid the movement from public support. Secondly, it would provide an opportunity to the government machinery to defame them. Later every dacoity that took place was put in the name of Ghadarites.¹³⁷ But these dacoities were allowed as per specific rules i.e: "not to murder anyone, not to attack and defile the women, to tell the victims of

dacoities that this money is being taken as loan for the freedom of the country and it would be returned along with interest after achieving the goal".¹³⁸ These bandit actions were not part of the Ghadar programme at the time of leaving America. During the trials, the Ghadarites did not oppose anything as vehemently as they opposed the charge that the looting and dacoities were part of the original Ghadar programme.¹³⁹

Hira Singh Dard is also aware as well as a votary of the international aspect of the Ghadar Movement. He believes that the Singapore Ghadarites were not in touch with the central leadership and they were working without any political leadership. The rebellion in Singapore took place spontaneously. They had nerved the uneasiness stemming out of the Turkish participation in war and tried to make best out of the situation.¹⁴⁰ Without astute leadership, this military uprising was not possible thousand miles away from India. But it makes clear the impact of the Ghadar propaganda on the mind of soldiers. Had it been linked with political programme, the consequences would have been different and rewarding.¹⁴¹

The author does not fail to acknowledge the role of women like Srimati Satyadevi and Gulab Kaur in this revolution.¹⁴² Other women like Bibi Joginder Kaur, Mata Daya Kaur, Bibi Kartar Kaur, Bibi Amar Kaur also contributed in terms of propaganda, collection of weapons, funding and providing shelter to the Ghadarites.¹⁴³ Gulab Kaur was known as "*Ghadar di Mai Bhago*".¹⁴⁴

The Komagata Maru Tragedy

Hira Singh Dard wrote elaborately and extensively about the tragic *Komagata Maru* crisis. He terms his narrative as '*zulmi katha*' (narrative of tyranny) which reflects the influence of Baba Gurdit Singh on his writing after he met the latter. According to Dard, this meeting enhanced his understanding of the Ghadar Movement. Dard designated Baba Gurdit Singh as '*Zinda Shahid*' (living martyr).¹⁴⁵ If this ship reached safely back on Indian shores, that was due to sheer prudence of the Ghadarites. The author examines the episode more in terms of damage to life and property. The imperial power not only destroyed the first shipping enterprise (Guru Nanak Navigation Company) but also 360 Indians were subjected to physical hardships and tortures, and finally some ill-fated were killed at Budge Budge Ghat. This was a tale of woes of enslavement and immortal story scribed on the pages of history.¹⁴⁶ According to Dard "the *Komagata Maru* incident had become a question of national honour".¹⁴⁷ The ship was sent back in a disgraceful manner and the passengers were not allowed to enter the Indian territories at Budge Budge. Hira Singh Dard traces the answer to this national humiliation in the annals of Sikh history and equates the scene of these passengers being hunted down with that of what happened to the Sikhs during the period of Farrukhsiyar when prizes were declared for the heads of the Sikhs.¹⁴⁸ His sympathy with these innocent people also comes to the fore as he had held an *Akhand Path* for them despite the government's ban on this sort of activity. He daringly contributed money (30-32 rupees) collected at this congregation for the Ghadar Fund.¹⁴⁹ He sarcastically exposes imperial

surveillance and the general apathy of the masses and leaders towards this incident in the following words of *Ardaas* (concluding prayer) at this *Akhand Path*: “O Waheguru, we are hapless, slaves; we cannot shed our tears for our brethren, we cannot sympathize with them. You please give peace to these departed souls and empower and embolden us to sympathize with them”.¹⁵⁰ Of course, the *Komagata Maru* incident was not directly related to Ghadar Party but it contributed a lot in the Ghadar preparations.¹⁵¹ When these passengers were travelling back, they were given Ghadar literature and some weapons by Sohan Singh Bhakna. Moreover, people like Comrade Gurmukh Singh participated in the Ghadar movement only after the incident of *Komagata Maru*.¹⁵²

Reflections on the Failure

Hira Singh Dard does not question capabilities and sincerities of the Ghadarites in the event of the failure of the movement. Of course, some fundamental structural and circumstantial factors spoiled the plan. The army was supposed to play pivotal role in the Ghadar.¹⁵³ Referring to a reference given by Micheal O'Dwyer, he narrates that “at least in twelve cantonments, the Ghadarites tried to incite the soldiers”.¹⁵⁴ According to the author, the prevailing conditions were more conducive as compared to 1857. Some degree of consciousness was taking place among the masses. An organized revolutionary party was leading from the front which had a clear and manifested ideal of national freedom and democracy.¹⁵⁵ The Ghadarites had planned for guerilla action. The message spread far and farther but due to failure, even this chance missed its destined goal.¹⁵⁶ By November 1914, the Ghadar failed thrice due to incomplete preparations. The Ghadarites were working under the indomitable spirit of ‘do or die’ and anticipated events to turn in favour of them. Thus, they planned the Ghadar with limited preparations.¹⁵⁷ On the contrary, the majority of the masses were in deep slumber and there was limited national awakening. Rather some people helped the police in arresting these revolutionaries.¹⁵⁸ At this critical juncture, “the lack of leadership, non-existence of a working Centre and non-coordination was the most abysmal and apparent loss. Some of them ultimately became inactive out of this vacuum and frustration”.¹⁵⁹

Character and Significance of the Ghadar

Much has been written about the character of the Ghadar Movement particularly about the predominance of the Sikhs in the Party. Hira Singh Dard shows his disagreement with scholars who have confined this national movement only to the Sikhs and Sikhism.¹⁶⁰ The Ghadarites were working under the great ideals of Sikhism and they were drawing inspiration from peasant struggles against Mughal oppression under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh. But as it is suggested by the scrutiny of the movement and its character, the social and political context of American and French revolutions as well as twentieth century developments, and maturity attained out of these forces was working as

the pushing force in the Ghadar Movement.¹⁶¹ He terms the Party as the common revolutionary party of the Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims, whose composition was based on democratic ideals and whose objective was to uproot British colonial rule through armed rebellion and to establish a democratic republic on the lines of the American system.¹⁶² Actually, the Ghadarites were working under the “great Sikh traditions which talk about universal brotherhood and universal welfare (*Sarbat da Bhala*), which encompass the entire humanity into its fold, which did not want the humanity to be confined to religious boundaries”.¹⁶³ Rather astutely, the British had established a peculiar kind of Sikh leadership which did not allow the Sikhs to participate in contemporary politics. Furthermore, through this leadership, they were able to recruit Sikh soldiers to expand their empire overseas.¹⁶⁴

The Ghadarite patriots, in contrast, had pooled their entire income. Rather some of them had abandoned their luxurious lifestyles. They did not differentiate themselves on the basis of religion; they dined together and lived like brethren.¹⁶⁵ It was neither a reform movement, nor a terrorist outfit, nor a communal organization. Rather, it was a common revolutionary movement, the first joint revolutionary party of the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.¹⁶⁶ The Ghadarites had prepared their flag of three colours i.e red, yellow and green which represent three religions of India.¹⁶⁷ As a matter of fact, the Ghadarites, while leaving America unfurled the flag of yellow and blue colour. The flag of these three colours was also proposed on 12 February, 1915, which decided on the date of ‘Ghadar’.¹⁶⁸ When *Komagata Maru* reached Calcutta, it was carrying a flag with the words, *Sat Sri Akal, Allah-hoo-Akbar, Bande Matram*, written on it. It indicated that it was the joint business enterprise of the Indians and Hira Singh Dard often invoked Ghadar poetry to make this point.¹⁶⁹

For Hira Singh Dard, this unique unity which became a hallmark of this movement was visible at some places during the Akali and Congress movements during 1920s.¹⁷⁰ It was the Ghadar influence on the later movements in which the participants adhered to religion, raised themselves above narrow religious constraints and produced unparalleled instances of patriotism and sacrifice.¹⁷¹ The importance of the Ghadar Movement, according to Dard, lay in the fact that it was much ahead of its time in adopting a programme attacking caste and untouchability. They not only abandoned the ‘moderate reformist’ agenda of the Congress rather vehemently condemned it.¹⁷² Moreover, the Ghadarites looked at the revolution from the Indian as well as international perspective.¹⁷³ If the political ramifications are examined meticulously, this movement remained important for future movements as well despite its failure.¹⁷⁴

It became imperative for the colonial state to give some constitutional concessions to Indians primarily because of the pressure stemming out of the aftermath of this movement.¹⁷⁵ Non Co-operation and Akali Movements carried clear imprints of the Ghadar Party. The secret groups under the Ghadar influence resorted to participating in public organizations. The Congress also showed concern that if masses are not involved, then it might not lead towards revolutionary upsurge.¹⁷⁶ This movement created a feeling that in any national movement, freedom cannot be attained without mass mobilization. It created a

trend towards need for mass participation and reinforced the view that independence has to come down to the level of masses. Under this impulse, the Congress had to adopt the programme of complete independence in the late 1920s.¹⁷⁷ In many ways, “this movement was a light house for the new generation of India for a progressive life struggle”.¹⁷⁸ Afterwards, this party began to support labour issues, got influenced by the Russian Revolution and tried to use the Russian model of the proletariat for national integration. It paved the way for future movements. The Ghadarites did not give up after the failure of *Ghadar* but continued to participate in every anti-imperial struggle i.e Congress movement, Akali and Babbar Akali Movement, Kirti Kisan Party, Naujwan Bharat Sabha etc.¹⁷⁹ Thus, “the revolutionary *elan* and moral grandeur of the Ghadarite revolutionaries which expressed itself not only in their heroic defiance of the British rulers at the post-uprising trials, on the gallows and in the cells and cages of Andamans, but even more in life and conduct of those who survived and carried on their struggle to the end, even against the new rulers after India became free”.¹⁸⁰

Conclusion

Thus, a careful analysis of the writings of Giani Hira Singh Dard leads to many alternative and enriching formulations for better understanding of the Ghadar movement. Much before the rise of subaltern studies, he was writing about subaltern elements and their role in the ‘great historical movements’. Although written with a literary craft, his writings are fully informed of the contemporary historical reality and historical forces at play. He gives first-hand information with a critique, which is helpful for a nuanced study of the contested terrains of the Punjabi and national past. He looks at the historical phenomenon in the form of continuity and change. For him, masses, not the leaders are the fundamental forces in historical change. Here, he places the Ghadar movement in a proper historical perspective. He is able to do justice to the movement by linking it with the great historical traditions of the Sikhs but at the same time he is critical to the idea of limiting the revolutionary movement with its indomitable spirit to a particular religion and social section. For him, the revolution has ‘only one identity of being anti-exploitation’. He emphasizes the need for revisiting the ‘revolutionary past’ and Ghadar Party was the best available example to him. At the same time, he is also prudent enough to anticipate the pitfalls of historiography and the ‘ill conceived’ design to appropriate the legendary past. Like a trained professional historian, he is aware of the multiplicity of factors and covers almost every aspect of the movement. Thus, his expositions need to be probed in an interdisciplinary manner.

Notes

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- ¹ S.S. Narula, "Social Ideals and Patriotism in Punjabi Literature (1900-1930)", *Indian Literature*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (May-June 1977), p. 110.
 - ² *Giani Hira Singh Dard*, (Punjabi), (Patiala: Language Department, 1960), p. i. See also, Louis E. Fenech and W.H. Mcleod, *Historical Dictionary of Sikhism*, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014) (Third Edition), p. 151; Sumail Singh Sidhu, *Contesting Vision of Sikh Identity In Punjab: 1800-1930*, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2007), p. 172.
 - ³ Harbans Singh (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2001) (Second Edition), p. 274.
 - ⁴ *Dard Sunehe* cited in Jeet Singh Seetal, "Hira Singh Dard: Jeevan Te Rachna", *Giani Hira Singh Dard*, (Punjabi), (Patiala: Language Department, 1960), p. iv.
 - ⁵ Jeet Singh Seetal, "Hira Singh Dard: Jeevan te Rachna", *Giani Hira Singh Dard*, p. iv.
 - ⁶ Harbans Singh (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, p. 274.
 - ⁷ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, (Punjabi), (Jalandhar: Dhanpat Rai & Sons, 1955), p. 17.
 - ⁸ *Ibid.*, p.26.
 - ⁹ Sumail Singh Sidhu, *Contesting Vision of Sikh Identity In Punjab*, p. 173.
 - ¹⁰ Harbans Singh (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, p. 274.
 - ¹¹ "Introduction", *Giani Hira Singh Dard*, p. i.
 - ¹² Jeet Singh Seetal, "Hira Singh Dard: Jeevan Te Rachna", p. v.
 - ¹³ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, pp. 40-50.
 - ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.
 - ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 43.
 - ¹⁶ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 54.
 - ¹⁷ Jeet Singh Seetal, "Hira Singh Dard: Jeevan te Rachna", p. vi.

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- ¹⁸ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 58.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- ²⁰ Jeet Singh Seetal, "Hira Singh Dard: Jeevan te Rachna", p. vi.
- ²¹ Hira Singh Dard, "Azadi te Congress" (Editorial), *Phulwari*, January 1940, Lahore, p.26.
- ²² Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 71.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p.71.
- ²⁴ Harbans Singh (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, p. 274.
- ²⁵ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, pp.75, 76.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.76.
- ²⁷ Sumail Singh Sidhu, *Contesting Vision of Sikh Identity in Punjab*, p. 173.
- ²⁸ Jeet Singh Seetal, "Hira Singh Dard: Jeevan te Rachna", p. vi.
- ²⁹ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 117.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.120-21.
- ³¹ Hira Singh Dard, *Chonvein Dard Sunehe*, (Jalandhar: Punajbi Brothers Educational Publishers, 1954), p. 9.
- ³² Kapur Singh Ghuman, "Prabeen Patarkar", *Giani Hira Singh Dard*, (Punjabi), (Patiala: Language Department, 1960), p. 6.
- ³³ Hira Singh Dard, *Chonvein Dard Sunehe*, p. 9.
- ³⁴ Sumail Singh Sidhu, *Contesting Vision of Sikh Identity in Punjab*, p. 174.
- ³⁵ Harbans Singh (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol.II, p. 274. *Giani Hira Singh Dard*, p. i. See also, Louis E. Fenech and W.H. Mcleod, *Historical Dictionary of Sikhism*, p.151.
- ³⁶ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 126.

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- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.132. In the first number of the paper the Dard wrote a long poem eulogizing the virtues of Sikhs and their suffering and sacrifices in fighting for justice.
- ³⁸ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 136.
- ³⁹ Harbans Singh (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, p. 274.
- ⁴⁰ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 137. See also, Hira Singh Dard, *Chonvein Dard Sunehe*, p. 12.
- ⁴¹ Dharam Singh, *Punjabi Khoj da Itihaas*, (Delhi: Punjabi Academy, 2004), p.104. *Phulwari* and Central Punjabi Sabha were his twin efforts in Punjabi activism, which provided the requisite space for Bawa Budh Singh, Ishwar Chander Nanda, Maula Bakhsh Kushta, Dhani Ram Chatrik and others to articulate a secular Punjabi identity, built around the Punjabi language: Sumail Singh Sidhu, *Contesting Vision of Sikh Identity in Punjab*, p. 175.
- ⁴² “Introduction”, *Giani Hira Singh Dard*, p. i.
- ⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. i, ii.
- ⁴⁴ Akshay Kumar, *Poetry, Politics and Culture: Essays on Indian Texts and Contexts*, (New Delhi: Routledge, 2009), p. 217. At least three poems by Dard namely ‘Adhurian Sadhran’, ‘Bandiwan Kavi da Ik Geet’ and ‘Shreenh di Chhavein’ fall under this category. (*Ibid*).
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.213.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- ⁴⁷ But recent research has tried to explore the other side of the story. The suppression in Punjab has been taken as meaning silence on the part of the Punjabis. For this see, Harminder Kaur Sohal, *Relocating the Uprising of 1857 in Colonial Punjab*, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, (Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University, 2015; Shamsul Islam, *The Rebel Sikhs in 1857*, (New Delhi: Vani Parkashan, 2008); Dolores Domin, *India in 1857-59: A Study in the Role of the Sikhs in the Peoples Uprising*, (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1977).
- ⁴⁸ J.S. Grewal, H.K.Puri and Indu Banga (Eds.), *The Ghadar Movement: Background, Ideology, Action and Legacies*, (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2013), p.xxv.

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- ⁴⁹ He visited *Kalianwala Wala Khuh* at Ajnala in 1928 and gives a detailed account of the happening of 1857 at Ajnala. For details see, Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, pp. 190-99.
- ⁵⁰ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani* (Chandigarh: Lok Geet Parkashan, 2016), p. 8. (published posthumously with an introduction by Harjit Singh).
- ⁵¹ S.S. Narula, "Social Ideals and Patriotism in Punjabi Literature (1900-1930)", p. 106.
- ⁵² Akshay Kumar, *Poetry, Politics and Culture*, p. 213.
- ⁵³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 2006), First Published 1983, p. 7.
- ⁵⁴ Akshay Kumar, *Poetry, Politics and Culture*, p. 213.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 214.
- ⁵⁶ Sasha Tandon, "Epidemics in Colonial Punjab", *Journal of Punjab Studies*, Vol.20, 2013, p.217. In 1907, the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab wrote to the Governor General of India and lamented that 60,000 Punjabi were dying due to plague every week. Due to epidemics, the death toll had reached 20 *lacs*. Thus, between 1901 and 1911 population had declined by 2.2 per cent in the province: Harish K.Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organization, Strategy*, p. 16. During the late 19th century Punjab faced five famines - 1860-61, 1868-69, 1877-78, 1896-97 and 1899-1900. The famines led to decline in the total cultivated area. For example, the annual average cultivated area in Punjab from 1890-91 to 1899-1900 was 22 million acres while in the famine year of 1899-1900 it was only 15 million acres: Sukhwant Singh, *Technological Breakthrough and Peasant Enterprise*, (New Delhi: Manpreet Parkashan, 2002), pp. 113, 146. The famine of 1896-97 hit nine districts which had 18 per cent of the population of the province. Consequently, 90 per cent of the plough and well cattle disappeared: Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *Credit, Rural Debt and the Punjab Peasantry (1849-1947)*, (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 2012), p. 5. This echoed in the Ghadar poetry. For a good example see Amolak Singh (Ed.), *Chonvin Kavita: Ghadar di Goonj*, (Jalandhar: Desh Bhagat Yadgar Committee, 2013), p. 25.
- ⁵⁷ Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organization, Strategy*, (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 2013) First Published 1983, p.13.

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- ⁵⁸ M. L. Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, (Delhi: Manohar, 1977), pp. 16-17, 29.
- ⁵⁹ S. D. Gujrani, "Agrarian Structure and Economic Conditions of Peasantry in Punjab (1920-47)", *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, Patiala, March 15-17, 1991, p. 378. See also, Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *Credit, Rural Debt and the Punjab Peasantry (1849-1947)*, pp. 50-67.
- ⁶⁰ Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party Da Sankhep Itihaas*, (Ludhiana: Chetna Parkashan, 2013), p. 33.
- ⁶¹ Johanna Ogden "Ghadar, Historical Silences, and Notions of Belonging: Early 1900s Punjabis of the Columbia River", *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 113, No.2, 2012, p.167.
- ⁶² J. S. Bains, "The Ghadr Movement: A Golden Chapter of Indian Nationalism", *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 23, No. 1/4, 1962, pp. 48.
- ⁶³ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 87. Out of these, 75 per cent Punjabi were those who had either served in the army or travelled abroad even earlier: Raghbir Singh, *Ghadar Lehar Da Sankhep Itihaas*, (New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 2014), p. 19. Over 75 per cent of them were Sikhs and of these around fifty percent were ex-soldiers who had served terms in the British Indian army: Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, p. 18. The first reference of emigration in Canada dates to 1905 and total number of Punjabis over there stood at 45: Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party Da Sankhep Itihaas*, p. 36.
- ⁶⁴ Johanna Ogden "Ghadar, Historical Silences, and Notions of Belonging: Early 1900s Punjabis of the Columbia River", p.168.
- ⁶⁵ See for details, Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, pp. 16-21. Joan Jensen, *Passage from India: Asian Indian Immigrants in North America*, (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 22-23.
- ⁶⁶ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 3.
- ⁶⁷ Hugh J.M. Johnston, *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), p.11.

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- ⁶⁸ M.L. Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, p. 172-73. See also Karunamoy Mukherjee, "Land Prices in Punjab", M.K. Chaudhary (Ed.), *Trends of Socio-Economic Change in India 1871-1961*, (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 1973), p. 533.
- ⁶⁹ *The Tribune* 16 March 1935 cited in Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *Credit, Rural Debt and the Punjab Peasantry*, p.136. Royal Commission on Agriculture indicated that in the Punjab 22.5 per cent of the cultivators cultivate 1 acre or less 15 per cent cultivate between 1 and 2.5 acres, 17.9 between 2.5 acres and 5 acres and 20.5 per cent between 5 and 10 acres: A. R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, (Mumbai: Popular Prakashan, 2008), First Published 1948, p. 46.
- ⁷⁰ S. S. Sohal, *Credit, Rural Debt and the Punjab Peasantry*, p. 162.
- ⁷¹ Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 15.
- ⁷² Harish K. Puri, "Revolutionary Organization: A Study of the Ghadar Movement", *Social Scientist*, Vol. 9, No. 2/3, 1980, p. 54.
- ⁷³ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 3. See also, Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party Da Sankhep Itihaas*, p. 33. Even with this meager salary, the soldiers carried a sense of honour and distinction in the village society and many a village maiden dreamt of marrying a soldier: Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, p. 24.
- ⁷⁴ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 76. Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, p. 29.
- ⁷⁵ Malwinderjit Singh Waraich, *Jiwanian Ghadri Shaheed Pandit Sohan Lal Pathak, Babu Harnam Singh Sahri*, (Chandigarh: Unistar, 2016), p. 37; Gurcharan Singh Sehnsara, *Ghadar Party Da Itihaas*, (Jalandhar: Desh Bhagat Yadgar Committee, 2006), First Published 1954, p.19.
- ⁷⁶ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 66.
- ⁷⁷ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, (London: Longman 1984), p. 1.
- ⁷⁸ E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1987), pp. 123, 130, 132.
- ⁷⁹ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 66.

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- 80 *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- 81 *Ibid.*, p. xiii.
- 82 *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- 83 Robert V. Daniels, *Studying History: How and Why*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 6.
- 84 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 67. Ajmer Singh, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, (Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 2014), p. 14. To turn away for the memory of the Ghadarites means to turn the back towards the great spiritual and sacrificial heritage of the Sikhism: Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, p. 2.
- 85 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 68.
- 86 Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, (Samana: Sangam Publications, 2013), p.11.
- 87 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 67; Ajmer Singh, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 171. Ajmer Singh also agrees in principle that the scholars averse to revolutionary approach cannot put these movements in proper perspective: *Ibid.*, p. 172.
- 88 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, pp. 67-68.
- 89 *Ibid.*, p. ix.
- 90 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- 91 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- 92 Cited in G. R. Elton, *The Practice of History*, p. 24.
- 93 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 69.
- 94 *Ibid.*, p.71.
- 95 Sarabjit Singh (Ed.), *Itihaas, Rajniti ate Sahit*, (Jalandhar: Deepak Publishers, 2008), p. xii.
- 96 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 69.

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- 97 *Ibid.*, 70.
- 98 *Ibid.*, 70.
- 99 Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, pp. 7, 10.
- 100 Malwinderjit Singh Waraich, "Another Ghadar", *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. XXXIV: Part –I, (Patiala: Punjabi University, April 2013), p. 55.
- 101 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 69.
- 102 *Ibid.*, p. xv.
- 103 He claims to write a history without reference to serve a larger purpose but for the purpose of authenticity, he definitely uses a variety of sources including books by Jagjit Singh, Gurcharan Singh Sehnsara, Michael O'Dwyer, statements and interviews of the Ghadarites.
- 104 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 70.
- 105 *Dukh Nivaran*, (Ed. Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid), 1914 cited in Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 70; Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yadaan*, pp. 75, 76, 80.
- 106 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yadaan*, pp. 75-77. Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, pp. 59-61, Ajmer Singh, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 69.
- 107 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 21; Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yadaan*, p. 80.
- 108 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yadaan*, p. 76. Baba Gurdit Singh *Zulmi Katha* (Ed. Prithipal Singh Kapur and Darshan Singh Tatla), (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2014), p. 454. Baba Gurdit Singh writes about the Budge Budge Ghat incident that no Indian expressed condolence for these martyrs and its price was paid at the Jallianwala Bagh and the 'butcher' General Dyer was honoured with a robe (*siropa*) at the Golden Temple, Amritsar. Its ramifications were seen in the form of Nankana Sahib Tragedy: p. 454.
- 109 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 13. Ghadarites named their Party taking inspiration from the *Ghadar* of 1857. Literally, Ghadar means revolution. They never considered it mutiny or rebellion. Even they used the same term for French and Russian revolutions: Bhagat Singh Bilga, *Ghadar Lehar De Anfole Varke*, p.

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26. For a poetic rendering see, Kesar Singh Kesar (Ed.), *Ghadar Lehar Di Kavita*, (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1995), p. 97.
- 110 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 72.
- 111 *Ibid.*, p. 73.
- 112 *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
- 113 *Ibid.*, pp. xiv-xv.
- 114 *Ibid.*, p. xv.
- 115 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 1. Baba Bhagat Singh Bilga also opined that till the coming of Russian Revolution the Ghadrates used to get direction from the ideals of French revolution i.e freedom, equality and fraternity. See Bhagat Singh Bilga, *Ghadar Lehar De Anfole Varke*, p. 122.
- 116 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 4. Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 23.
- 117 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, p. 87. This Gurdwara was built with a cost of 25,000 dollars according to Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lehar*, p. 34.
- 118 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, p. 87. Raghbir Singh, while referring to Jawala Singh, writes that Punjabis had purchased one fourth of the total land in Vancouver: Raghbir Singh, *Ghadar Lehar Da Sankhep Itihaas*, p. 42. "Nand Singh Sihra reported in 1913 that there may not have been even a single Indian who did not own any landed property and possesses seven to eight thousand rupees", See Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, pp. 27, 28.
- 119 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 4; Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, p. 29.
- 120 Sohan Singh Pooni, *Canada de Ghadri Yodhe*, (Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 2011), First Published 2009, p. 25; Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, p. 88.
- 121 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 5.
- 122 *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p.75.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

¹²⁵ Rajmohan Gandhi, *Punjab: A History From Aurangzeb to Mountbatten*, (New Delhi: Alep Book Company, 2013), p. 275. He named the party mouthpiece as Ghadar which manifests his political inclinations: Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation & Strategy*, pp. 83, 84. Lala Hardy al proposed that the paper should be named Ghadar in the memory of 1857: Sohan Singh Josh, *Ghadar Party Da Sankhep Itihaas*, p. 108. Majority of the people believe that this national consciousness and stirring among the American Indians was created by Lala Hardy al but this is a wrong notion. Of course, he played vital role in the beginning, See Sohan Singh Bhakna, *Meri Ram Kahani* (Ed. Rajwinder Singh Rahi), pp. 116, 117.

¹²⁶ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 12. Jagjit Singh also questioned the role of Lala Hardy al. For details see, Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lehar*, (Delhi: Navyug Publishers, 1956), p. 61. "Till now Indian politicians have confined the Ghadar movement with the name of Lala Hardy al. But ironically, Lala Hardy al shunned politics at a time when Ghadarites were languishing in the jails and country was still under the control of the British": Bhagat Singh, *Ghadar Lehar De Unfole Varke*, p.143. After Hardy al's departure, the Party became more collective and democratic. Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party Da Itihaas*, p. 125. The Party workers worked with more enthusiasm. The Ghadar paper, instead of its closure became even more popular. Earlier it was published in Urdu and Punjabi, now it began to be published in other languages also i.e Hindi, Gujrati etc: Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, *Meri Ram Kahani, Diary Ghadri Baba Harjap Singh*, (Jalandhar: Desh Bhagat Yaadgar Committee, 1998), p. 22. It also establishes the fact that the movement cannot be confined to a person, leader does not make a movement rather the movements make the leaders": Gurcharan Singh Sehnsara, *Ghadar Party Da Itihaas*, p.110. See also, Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yaadan*, p. 89.

¹²⁷ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 10.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10. According to Bhai Bhagwan Singh Pritam, "As the Indian brethren came to know that a newspaper named Ghadar is being published, they began to send the money even without being asked for that": Gurdev Singh Sidhu and Surinderpal Singh, *Ghadri Baba Bhai Bhagwan Singh Pritam*, (Chandigarh: Unistar, 2013), p. 175.

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- ¹²⁹ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 14; Gurdev Singh Sidhu, Surinderpal Singh, *Ghadri Baba Bhai Bhagwan Singh Pritam*, p. 172.
- ¹³⁰ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 16. In Indian context, Ghadar movement was the first movement which contemplated on the question of appropriate time to attack and entangle the enemy. Even later movements could not adopt this strategy: Ajmer Singh, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p.174. "Had not we took the advantage of the situation, the opportunity would have dawned upon us some fifty years later": Gurdev Singh Sidhu, Surinderpal Singh, *Ghadri Baba Bhai Bhagwan Singh Pritam*, p. 175. For a poetic rendering of this view see Amolak Singh (Ed.), *Chonvin Kavita Ghadar di Goonj*, p. 43.
- ¹³¹ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 20.
- ¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ¹³³ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 16. Some of the Indians in Canada were so eager to come back to India, they put all efforts to get permission to board the ship. They wanted to participate in a war of liberation at home. The Budge Budge episode converted their anguish into the slogan of 'do or die': Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party Da Itihaas*, pp. 133-36. Due to the hurry and eagerness for freedom, Pandit Kanshi Ram left back thirty dollars which were deposited in an American Bank: *Diary Ghadri Baba Harjap Singh*, p. 29. Thirty workers left their jobs and moved to India: Sohan Singh Josh, *Saka Komagata Maru*, (Chandigarh: Lokgeet Parkashan, 2014), p. 81.
- ¹³⁴ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 20.
- ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- ¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29; Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 46; Ajmer Singh, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 231.
- ¹³⁷ Bhagat Singh Bilga, *Ghadar Lehar de Anfole Varke*, p. 66. The propaganda of the government and its stooges worked well and people began to consider them ordinary dacoits rather than patriots: Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party da Sankhep Itihaas*, pp. 141-42. One thing was clear if they had not committed dacoities, the general masses would have sympathized with the Ghadriles: Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, *Meri Ram Kahani*, (Ed. Rajwinder Singh Rahi), p. 152. Baba Nidhan Singh also opposed this strategy. It damaged the credibility of the Party as well as it entailed the danger of being arrested

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- and forced to divulge of secrets and details: Surjit Chandar, *Jiwani Baba Nidhan Singh Chunga*, (Amritsar: Ravi Sahit Parkashan, 1990), p. 61.
- 138 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 73. On the whole, the Ghadarites looted Rs. 1500 each from Malwa and Chabba, 9130 from Sheikhpura, 1400 from Alawalpur but could not fetch much from Gurdaspur: Gurcharan Singh Sehnsara, *Ghadar Party da Itihaas*, pp.198-99.
- 139 Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lehar*, p. 132.
- 140 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 51.
- 141 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- 142 *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- 143 Surjit Kaur, “Punjab Dian Ghadri Bibian”, Jai Teg Singh Anant (Ed.), *Ghadar Lehar Di Kahani*, (Surry D.C.: Hari Darshan Memorial International Trust, 2014), pp. 231-35. Bibi Jas Kaur, along with her husband, not only arranged the stay for the Ghadarites at Gurdwara Jhar Sahib but also encouraged her sons Baba Bogha Singh and Baba Jassa Singh for the active participation and sacrifices. Similarly, Bibi Satyawati lived with Ras Behari Bose as his wife for several months in a rented accommodation at Lahore: Bhagat Singh Bilga, *Ghdar Lehar De Anfole Varke*, p. 67; Shavinderpal Kaur, *Role of Punjabi Women in Indian Freedom Struggle*, (Chandigarh: Unistar, 2014), pp. 28-29.
- 144 Baba Bhagat Singh Bilga narrated a story how she was conveniently able to escape from the police raid at village Sangwal: Kesar Singh, *Ghdar Di Dhee Gulab Kaur*, (Chandigarh: Lokgeet Parkashan, 2014), pp. 6-7. The Ghadrites acknowledge in their writings the vital role played by the women in the foreign land. To infuse the spirit among the party members they continuously invoked the old maxim which reads “shame on our manliness if we cannot do to the equivalent to the women”. See Giani Kesar Singh (Ed.), *Ghadar Lehar Di Vartak*, (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2008), p. 101. The Ghadarites highlighted the role of women in foreign freedom struggles as well as reiterated the heroic acts of Rani Laxmi Bai: *Ibid*, p. 309.
- 145 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, p. 97. Dard gave an elaborate description of his meeting with Baba Gurdit Singh which was facilitated by Sardul Singh Kaveeshar. For details, See *Ibid*, pp. 82-114. The Budge Budge massacre was a ‘mini Jallianwala Bagh episode’ which the British enacted before the First World War: Sohan

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- Singh Josh, *Saka Komagata Maru*, (Chandigarh: Lokgeet Parkashan, 2014), p. 107.
- 146 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, p. 115.
- 147 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, p. 97. Neither Kamagatamaru passengers nor the Ghadar Party revolutionaries received any sort of Indian support: Hugh J.M. Johnston, *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar*, pp. 174-75.
- 148 Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, p. 74.
- 149 He was arrested for this 'crime': Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihasik Yaadan*, pp.78-79.
- 150 *Ibid.*, pp.78-79.
- 151 Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lehar*, pp. 96, 97.
- 152 Bhagat Singh Bilga, *Ghadar Lehar de Anfrole Warke*, p. 34; Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lehar*, p. 98.
- 153 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 32; Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party Da Itihaas*, p. 146. The Ghadarites had planned to rope in the Indian army especially the Sikh platoons for the purpose of Ghadar: Ajmer Singh, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p.173. But the Punjab of 1914 was very different from what the Ghadrates had expected - the Punjabis were in no mood to join their romantic adventure; Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1989), p. 154; Mridula Mukherjee, *Peasants in India's Non-Violent Revolution: Practice and Theory*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2004), p. 31. Ghadar Party was aware of the low level of consciousness and unity. It was aware of the fact that in the initial phase of the mass uprising in the feudal structure, the people think more on religious lines and flock together under a religious banner: Gurcharan Singh Sehnsara, *Ghadar Party Da Itihaas*, p. 178.
- 154 Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 33.
- 155 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- 156 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 157 *Ibid.*, p.27.

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- ¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22. The Chief Khalsa Diwan was the most loyal to the British, *Arya Samaj* decided not to side with any political party, Hindu Sabha did not have the courage to raise the voice; Muslim League was cowardice and feared to be clubbed with 'conspiring Muslims'. Thus, the Ghadarites were left alone to languish in jails and be hanged: Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party da Itihaas*, pp. 156-58. "If there was a singular reason for the failure of Ghadar Party, it was the mistake of the national leaders who could neither accommodate the patriots who had returned from abroad for a great cause nor did they support in financial terms: Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, *Meri Ram Kahani* (Ed. Rajwinder Singh Rahi), p. 106. Rather, leaders of the National Congress were sympathetic to the British cause. Mahatma Gandhi had volunteered for medical service, even radicals such as B.G. Tilk expressed strong disapproval against those who wished to exploit the situation...priests of several important Sikh shrines, denounced the Ghadrities as renegades or thugs: Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, (New Delhi: OUP, 2007), p. 183. The Ghadar activities would not have found receptive allies ready to return and fight against the British rule in India: Darshan Tatla, "The Komaghata Maru and Voyage and the Ghadar Uprising", J. S. Grewal, Harish K. Puri and Indu Banga (Eds.), *The Ghadar Movement: Background, Ideology and Legacies*, 2013, p. 218.
- ¹⁵⁹ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 26. The leadership was not able to be adaptive as per times to retain the revolutionary forces and coordinate them: Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party da Sankhep Itihaas*, pp. 178-79. The lack of an organized leadership and central command frustrated all the Ghadar's effort: Bipan Chandra et al, *India's Struggle for Independence*, 154. The spirit with which they had returned home, that had withered out of the majority. Large number of these people, out of six to seven thousand people who came back from America, were now busy with their domestic affairs: Sachinder Nath Sanyal, *Bandi Jiwan* (translated by Prem Parkash), (Chandigarh: Lokgeet Parkashan, 2006), pp. 11, 17.
- ¹⁶⁰ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 71.
- ¹⁶¹ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 71. Apart from being Sikh, they were Punjabis, Hindis or Hindustani. To limit the Ghadarites only to the Sikhism would be a grave injustice to their ideology and programme: Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, pp. 67, 75.
- ¹⁶² Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 1. The list which was issued as per Ghadar Directory, 1934 out of total 614 Ghadarites,

572 were Sikhs, 54 Hindus and 35 were Muslims. It was the first national organization of the Indians which adopted the Panchayati Raj System as its goal and objective: Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lehar*, p. 13. In an interview Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna wrote that “we were not Sikhs or Punjabis, our religion was patriotism”: Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement*, p.174. For the full poem see, Amolak Singh (Ed.), *Chonvi Kavita: Ghadar Di Goonj*, pp.78, 79.

- ¹⁶³ Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p.65. Every member was free to adhere by any religion but it was not allowed to discuss religious issues in Party meetings: Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party da Sankhep Itihaas*, p.128. Their source of inspiration, however, remained almost exclusively Sikh. Appeal to their religious sentiment was made in many an article or a poem in the Ghadar, though for a secular end: J.S. Grewal, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Sikhs of the Punjab*, (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 156.
- ¹⁶⁴ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyen Kujh Itihasik Yadaan*, p. 153; Bhagat Singh Bilga, *Ghadar Lehar De Anfole Warke*, pp. 12,13.
- ¹⁶⁵ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 10. There were some elder persons who had accumulated a lot of wealth which they handed over to others. There were some “jacks” whose only tasks were to earn and drink and did not save a single penny. Even they abandoned their habits and boarded the ‘ship of Ghadar’. Gurdit Singh and Rulia Singh, who were considered as ‘masters of the drunkards’ joined the high ideals of Ghadar and never drank again: Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lehar*, p. 189. See also, Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party da Sankhep Itihaas*, p. 128; Sohan Singh Bhakna, *Meri Ram Kahani* (Ed. Rajwinder Singh Rahi), pp. 113, 14.
- ¹⁶⁶ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. xv.
- ¹⁶⁷ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 34; Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p.65. The Sikh Ghadarites had asked to include the Saffron colour, which represents the Sikh ideology. It reflects that they were not secular in that sense in which they are being presented. Definitely as true Sikhs but they were not narrow-minded: Ajmer Singh, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 127.
- ¹⁶⁸ Raghubir Singh, *Ghadar Lehar Da Sankhep Itihaas*, p.178; Gurcharan Singh Sehnsara, *Ghadar Party da Itihaas*, p. 201; See also Amolak Singh (Ed.), *Chonvi Kavita: Ghadar Di Goonj*, p. 79.
- ¹⁶⁹ Baba Gurditt Singh, *Zulmi Katha*, p. 188.

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- ¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 10,11.
- ¹⁷¹ Waryam Sandhu, *Ghadri Babe Kaun San*, p. 93.
- ¹⁷² Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 77. On the question of national unity, they were much ahead of the mainstream national leadership. Mahatma Gandhi emerged on this horizon much later: Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Ghadar Party da Itihaas*, p. 128. Apart from various religious affiliations and sections, the Dalits also played important role: Balbir Madhopuri, "Ghadar Lehar Vich Dalitan da Yogdan: Gatha Mangu Ram Di", Joginder Singh (Ed.), *Reflections on Ghadar Movement*, Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University Press, 2014), p. 270. This was echoing in Ghadar poetry. For an example see Kesar Singh Kesar (Ed.), *Ghadar Lehar Di Kavita*, p. 117.
- ¹⁷³ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 77.
- ¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 78. Despite its apparent failure, the Ghadar movement was to have a powerful impact on Punjab politics and especially on the peasantry. It established a tradition of militant and secular anti-imperialism, enriched in subsequent years by social radicalism: Mridula Mukherjee, *Peasants in India's Non-Violent Revolution: Practice and Theory*, p. 32.
- ¹⁷⁵ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 79.
- ¹⁷⁶ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 80. The Gandhian methods were already being practiced by the Ghadarites: Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movements*, pp.175, 176.
- ¹⁷⁷ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 80.
- ¹⁷⁸ Hira Singh Dard, *Meriyan Kujh Itihaasik Yadaan*, p. 82.
- ¹⁷⁹ Hira Singh Dard, *Ghadar Di Lahoo Rangi Kahani*, p. 81. On the question of providing leadership to the Sikh masses, two groups came forward constituting the ex-soldiers and the Ghadarites who somehow escaped police action: Gurdev Singh Sidhu, "Akali Lehar Utte Ghadar Lehar da Parbhav", JaiTeg Singh Anant (ed.), *Ghadar Lehar Di Kahani*, pp. 175-86. Apart from other influences, the decision to launch the paper for the propaganda of Babbar Akali Lehar was the direct outcome of the Ghadar Party": Vasdev Singh Parhar, "Ghadar Lehar Da Babbar Akali Lehar te Parbhav", JaiTeg Singh Anant (ed.), *Ghadar Lehar Di Kahani*, p. 227. The Kirti was conceived by those Ghadrities who were either not arrested or released by 1920's. The Kisan Sabha's

were active in villages because of the hard work of the Ghadar Kirtis and communists: Amandeep Kaur, “Left Legacy of the Ghadar Movement: Kirti Kisan Mobilisation”, Joginder Singh (Ed.), *Reflections on Ghadar Movement*, pp. 14-28. Though rebellion was suppressed and submerged in the enthusiasm generated by the War, it continued with ferment and erupted a few years later during the Akali agitation. Akali terrorists known as the Babbars were largely recruited from the ranks of the Ghadar party: Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol.II, p. 190. See also, Kamlesh Mohan, *Militant Nationalism in the Punjab*, (New Delhi: Manohar, 1985), p. 41.

¹⁸⁰ Manoranjan Mohanty (Ed.), *Selected Writings of Randhir Singh*, (New Delhi: Aakar Books, 2017), p. 396.