Diversity, Pluralist Practices and Religious Identities in 19th Century Punjab

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Religion is one of the most authoritative, prominent and universal forces in human society. It shapes how people behave and how they think about the sphere and their own place in it. There was immense religious diversity in the nineteenth century Punjab, which was marked by a rich variety of religious beliefs and practice in Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. Religious values influenced people's achievements, which in turn helped them to interpret their own experiences. The dominant forms of religious beliefs and practices, however, were those of the Hindus. The authority of the Vedas was recognized by the priests of nearly all Hindu sects: Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism. The most important forms of Muslim religious life were embodied in the beliefs and practices of the Sunnis, Shias and Sufis. Similarly, a large number of diverse religious identities were found among the Sikhs, some from an earlier period such as the *Udasis* and *Minas* and others from the modern era such as *Nirankaris* and *Namdharis* who flourished during the colonial period. This paper deals with the historical antecedents of the diverse religious identities found in the social landscape of 19th century Punjab. Understanding the status and space of these sectarian developments that emerged during 19th century and position of major sects has been examined in terms of their doctrinal or spiritual ideas and concepts, beliefs and practices as well as their socio-historical standing.

Introduction

The Punjab in the 19th century was marked by a rich variety of religious beliefs and practices in Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, the three major religions of the time. The presence of some relatively new forms of belief was adding to the richness of that variety which, at any rate, had antecedents in a near or distant past. Religion, always a complex subject in Punjab, was made more complex by the mutual influence of Islam on some indigenous forms of belief and of the Indian environment on Islam. Thus, the Punjab has an inheritance of merged religions and cultures. Religion is one of the most authoritative, prominent and universal forces in the human society.[1] It is such a difficult and indescribable area that most researchers of religion are seriously questioning whether it can be studied or not.

An attempt to define a religion is a challenge for all religions of the world, past and present. Most introductions to the study of religion stress the difficulty of defining religion. In fact, there is little agreement among the scholars, whose definitions reflect their particular interests. A definition of religion that specifies it as 'a representation of social relation' is obviously rooted in the social sciences. One may define it as 'a symbolic representation of mental or unconscious reality' or as 'a representation of the sacred'.[2] However, a

definition that has received reasonable acceptance among scholars is that religion is a system of communal beliefs and practices relative to superhuman beings. In fact, a religion has never been simply a set of beliefs and practices. It has always involved prescribed ritual practices and definite institutional forms. There is no religion which does not have a place of worship, although the form which this assumes varies widely.[3]

According to Emile Durkheim, 'a religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things; that is to say, things that set apart forbidden beliefs and practices, which unite into a single moral community called a church and all those who adhere to them'.[4] It is also understood as 'a belief in existence of a God or gods and the activities that are connected with their worship'.[5] As an ultimate concern, religion means that it encompasses that to which people are most devoted or that from which they expect to get the most fundamental satisfaction in life.[6] Religion, thus, is at the very basis of human being and it effects every human action and behavior and so it disturbs the actual activity of human life. There is no denying the fact that there is a difference in sentiments about the 'ingredients of religion'.

According to the *Encyclopedia Americana*, religion is the pattern of beliefs and practices through which men communicate with or hope to gain experience of that which lies behind the world of their ordinary experience. Typically, it focuses on an ultimate or absolute thought of some believers of God.[7] These diverse identities may be helpful in understanding the phenomenon of religious diversity within the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh traditions.

Diverse Identities in Hinduism

Since ancient times, Hindu Society has been divided into four *varnas* orCastes*:* the *brahman*, the *kshatriya*, the *vaishya*, and the *shudra*. Ganesh Das noted that they founded the Hindu social order in the 19th century.[8]Each *varna* was also divided into 'sub castes' and specific duties were assigned to them. The *brahman* was to study and instruct religious scriptures, the *Vedas*. The *kashtriya* was to rule and to defend the subject people, to read but not to teach the *Vedas* and act according to the rules of the *Puranas*. The *Vaishya* was to cultivate the land, to tend the cattle and to relieve the *brahman* of his material needs. The duty of *shudra* was to serve the *brahman*.[9] Considerably, the *varna* system was not accepted by all members of society. In the 19th century, Ganesh Das noticed enthusiasm on the part of the orthodox Hindus to discard the concept of *varna* as the ideal social norm, or even as a broad description of the Hindu social order from time to time.[10] On the whole, the dominant forms of religious belief and practice in the 19th century Punjab were the Hindus and authority of the *Vedas* was recognized by the priests of nearly all the Hindu sects.

Shaivism

The three major 'sects' of medieval Hinduism were Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism. Even in the 19th century, Ganesh Das found the men of piety, or the

faqirs of all religions. From his numerous references to the places of worship, it appears that, though Vaishnava cults had become popular by the nineteenth century, Shaivism and Shaktism had not lost much of their older hold.[11]At many places Ganesh Das refers to Shivdwaras and temples dedicated to Mahadeva[12]. For instance, in 1845, Diwan Kishan Kaur, son of Diwan Hakim Rai, built a new temple of Shiva in Rawalpindi. In 1838, Raja Gulab Singh constructed a *shivala* at Bewal in the Sind Sagar Doab. A Chhibbar brahman, Amrik Rai, built a temple to Mahadeva in Gujrat in 1840. Raja Gulab Singh also built in 1839 a new *shivdwara* in Gujrat in place of an old temple. In Sailkot, Diwan Harbhaj Rai Puri had built a temple to Shiva before Raja Tej Singh constructed Temple to Mahadeva in 1848. On the bank of the stream called Pikhu, a temple to Mahadeva was built in 1830 to mark the place where the widow of Ram Kaur Kohli had become *sati.* Ratan Chand Duggal repaired a temple of Mahadeva in wazirabad in 1839. It was looked after by Gosain Shambhu Nath and Mathra Nath.[13] In Lahore, many temples dedicated to Shiva were built during the reign of Ranjit Singh. Achal near Batala, an old place of worship, was associated with the son of Shiva. Fateh Singh Ahluwalia built a temple to Shiva in Kapurthala. It is obvious from the information supplied by Ganesh Das that the worship of Shiva was quite widespread in the Punjab in the early 19th century.[14]

Towards the close of the 19th century, a British administrator, H. A. Rose noted that Shaivism had started coming to the forefront after 17th century in Northern India, and the Punjab was not an exception to this growth. Shiva was the most popular brahmanical deity in the Punjab.[15] The Shaiva *brahmans* looked after the *shivalas* and cultivated Shaiva literature, the *Agamas*. The *Sannyasis* were quite numerous; all of them were extremely ascetical in their practices. Ganesh Das also made references to many *sannyasis* and *jogis,* who were the worshippers of the Shiva. The *sannyasis* usually wore ochre coloured clothes and some of them went naked. They could be well-known by the *tilak*-mark on their foreheads. Some of the *sannyasis* carried a tiger's skin on their shoulders. Almost all of them used ash for the *tilak*-mark which generally consisted of three horizontal lines representing the *'tridanta'* of Shiva or his third eye. The ash with which the sect mark was made was known as *'Vibhuti'* (mighty power).[16] The wearing of the *tilak*-mark was regarded as an important ritual.[17] G.S. Ghurye observed that the *sannyasis* frequently established the *maths* or the *sthanas* and the head of the establishment was either appointed by the founder himself or elected by his *sannyasi* disciples.[18]

Distinct from the *sannyasis,* but strongly associated with Shaivism were the *Jogis*, who were divided into two major categories i.e the Aghorapanthis and the Nathapanthis. The Nathapanthis were the followers of Gorakhnath and admitted members from all castes and also females. Only those of the Jogis who went through the last stage of initiation were called *kanphatas*. The others were known as *aughars*.[19] The last stage of initiation consisted in having the ear-lobe pierced with *bhairavi* knife and large rings worn by the *jogi.* These rings were generally called *mundri.* The *kanphata* jogis used the suffix *natha* to their names, greeted one another with epithet *adesa* and used a kind of blowing horn, *singi.* The Nathapanthis were believed to have established important monastic

centres in which the chief deity was Bhairava (incarnation or *avatar* of Shiva). The *dhuni* or a continuous fire was an important feature of the Nathapanthis centres. In due course, the Nathapanthi Order came to have twelve sections with a central organization called the Bhek-Bara.[20]

The most significant establishment of the jogis in the 19th century was Jakhbar in the Upper Bari Doab.[21] The only jogi establishment of importance, not mentioned by Ganesh Das, was the *tilla* of Gorakhnath in the Chaj Doab, which indeed, was their earliest *math* in the Punjab. They were holding on to some of their former popularity. Many jogis used to come annually at the time of Shivratri to the tilla of Bal Nath at a distance of about three Kos (1 kos =3 km approximately) from Rohtas.[22] At *tilla* of Gorakhnath, regular succession of the gurus or the *mahants* had taken place for several centuries. Gorakhnath was the first reformer to emphasize practical guidance from the Guru.

The movement initiated by Gorakhnath in the Punjab had its origins in the concept of *yoga* as the means of attaining liberation, of rebirth to a non-conditional mode of being, through effectual techniques. The concept of *yoga* was as important as the concepts of Karma, Maya and Nirvana in the history of Hindu religion. In the *Yoga-tattva* Upanishad four kinds of *yoga* are distinguished: *mantra, laya, hatha* and *raja.* In Hathayoga, great importance was attached to preliminary purification, which as the texts repeatedly emphasized, were of great value for the yogi's health: *dhauti, basti, neti, nauli, trataka,* and *kapala bhati.* Nothing could be obtained without *abhyasa* (practice), and *pranayama* was absolutely essential for purifying the *nadis*; the most important of these *nadis* being *ida, pingala* and *susumna*. Thus, it was not simply the adoption of Hatha yogic practices but also their assimilation to a particular theological system that distinguished the Order of the Jogis from some other 'sects'.[23]

In theory, all Gorakhnathis could and some actually did, marry. Woman is depicted in Natha literature as 'the tigress of the night', to be regarded as the greatest danger in the Jogi's path. Towards men, however, the jogis were more considerate. They tended to minimize the differences of caste and creed in accepting disciples. They were not reluctant to serve as *pujaris* in the temples of Shiva, Shakti and Bhairon.[24]

A few of the basic ideas of the Gorakhnath may also be noted. The inner *bhava* was more important than external acts, whether one was a hermit or a householder. In the *sahaja* state or *smadhi,* there is 'perfect equilibrium which transcends all our perceptual knowledge with positive and negative attributes.'[25] In this state, Jogi becomes one with the whole universe:' He himself is the goddess, himself the God, himself the disciple, himself the preceptor; he is at once the meditation, the mediator and the divinity.[26] In this state the Jogi hears the divine music *(nad, anhata)* of immortality and the divine word *(sabd)* of ultimate truth. This state is of everlasting bliss *(ananda, mahasukha).* For Gorakhnath, very closely connected with these were ideas such as *sat-guru* (the true guide), *jivan-mukta* (the liberated-in-life), *alakhkh* (unseeable), *agama*(unknowable), *amurta* (formless), *nirakar* (unformed), *ami* (undying), *nada* (harmony), *para* (transcendent) and *sunya* (contentless) for instance.[27]

Vaishnavism

Existence of Vaishnavism in the 19th century is clearly evident from the literary sources, primarily texts. Moreover, the existence of temples dedicated to Vaishnava deities also proves the influence of Vaishnavism that had continued over a period of time.[28] Perhaps, it was due to the impact of the bhakti cult that Vaishnavism had become more and more popular in Punjab as elsewhere in India. However, the introduction of some new elements and certain differences of emphasis distinguished the new cult from the older form of Vaishnavism. The *Maths* of the respective Orders and spiritual guides of the worldly votaries reflected endless varieties both of doctrines and practices among them. Those who were collected in *maths* had more fixed principles than their vagrant brethren.[29]

Ganesh Das's references to the Vaishnavas are more numerous than any other form of Hindu beliefs and practices. There is little reference to the old form of Vaishnavism. For example, a sacred place called Narsingh Pohar in the Upper Sindh Sagar Doab was connected obviously with the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu. However, references to *bairagis* are rather numerous. For example, Baba Pohlo Ram Bairagi's *samadh* was in Bahlopur. Baba Lachhman Das Bairagi was well known in Gujrat. The place of Baba Lahar Bairagi in Norowal was a place of worship. Close to Amritsar was a Bairagi establishment at Ram Tirath. More important than these was the establishment of Baba Lal at Dhianpur. There was another *gaddi* of Baba Lal at Wazirabad. Perhaps more important than even these was the Vaishnava establishment at Pindori in the Gurdaspur district, which was established in the 17th century, when Vaishnavism had started penetrating even in the Punjab hills. In older Vaishnavism, the worship of Vishnu as the supreme deity (as Narain, Hari or Gobind) and of his incarnations in temples dedicated to them may be taken for granted. Probably, the most important aspect of this worship was the believer's ritualistic round of visits to a temple.[30]

Among the other Vaishnava places was Panj Tirathi, a place of worship in the Rawalpindi area. In Zafarwal, Mayya Das was a famous *bhagat* of Krishna. There were two *thakurdwaras* in Wazirabad which were dedicated to Krishna by the Jai-Krishna *sadhs* who regarded themselves as the worshippers of 'Sri Krishan Avtar'. On the whole, Ganesh Das had left the impression that the worship of Rama and Krishna was more popular than the worship of Vishnu.[31] Towards the end of Sikh Rule, the number of Vaishnava establishments were known variously as *Math*, *Dwara*, *Thakurdwara*, *Dera*, *Asthan* and *Dharamsala* exceeded sixty.[32] They were found scattered in almost all the doabs of the Punjab. However, they were located in larger numbers in the districts of Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Lahore and Hoshiarpur, particularly in the districts of the upper and middle portions of the Bari and Bis Jalandhar Doabs.[33] Some important centres could be found also in the districts of Sialkot, Shaikhupura and Gujranwala. It is a fact of considerable significance that the centres which were founded before the establishment of Sikh rule flourished more during this

period. Many more centres came up in the late 18th and early 19th century as a result of patronage of Sikh rulers. These centres were founded mostly in the countryside. By the mid-19th century the total number of patronized institution rose to about 25.

About a dozen of the old Vaishnava centres had received revenue-free grants from the Mughal rulers before the establishment of Sikh rule. Among the topmost Vishnava establishments was the Pindori Dham which had become the most venerated institution under Sikh rule. It flourished more during this period as it continued to receive a considerable number of fresh grants, besides the old ones being regularly confirmed. The total amount received by this centre was 14,500 rupee a year towards the end of the Sikh rule.[34]

Alienation of land revenue for religious patronage and institutions by way of charity (*dharmarth*) was an important aspect of Sikh rule.[35] The Sikh rulers alienated revenues from land in favour of individuals and institutions belonging to various Sikh and non-Sikh religious groups.[36] The Vaishnavas received considerable grants from the Sikh rulers. It was in the early 19th century that the Vaishnavas and the majority of their establishments came into prominence, largely because of the extensive patronage of Sikh rulers. Towards the end of Sikh rule, the grants of the patronized institutions amounted to about 40,000 rupees a year, out of which fifteen new *Bairagi* establishments enjoyed about 10,772 rupees a year.[37]

Ranjit Singh too confirmed the old grants and gave new ones of his own. In 1815, a grant of one hundred and twenty five *ghumaos* to Mahant Narotam Das was confirmed by Ranjit Singh and a village was granted to him in the following year.[38] In 1842, Sher Singh granted a village to Mahant Narotam Das and Five *ghumaos* to Mahant Ganga Das in 1845.[39] Two villages had been made revenue-free to Mahant Narotam Das by Prince Kharak Singh in 1818. In the previous year he had confirmed a grant of seventy *ghumaos* in three villages in the Jammu area.[40] The consideration shown by the Sikh rulers to the Mahants of Pindori comes out clearly in some of their orders to '*amils'* village *zaamindars, kardars* and *jagirdars*. Sada Kaur orders the *amils* of the Ta'alluqa of Bianpur in 1808 not to allow interference with *ghumaons* of revenue-land given earlier by the late Jai Singh Kanhiya to the Mahant of Pindori. Through another order, Sada Kaur directed the *Zamindars* of the village to hand over the grain from the piece of land granted to the Mahant of Pindori with areas.[41] Through yet another order, the *amil* of Pathankot was similarly instructed not to interfere with the collection of revenue by the Mahants of Pindori from the villages originally granted by the Mughal Emperors and confirmed by the succeeding Sikh rulers.[42] An order of Ranjit Singh issued in 1815 to the then incumbent and future *amils,* contained instructions against interference with the old *dharmarths* of Baba Narotam Das in the village Kiri Kalan near Pathankot. It may be safely stated that the Pindori establishment was more affluent in the Sikh times than ever before or after. In the 1850s, Major Lake also reported that the Pindori establishment was a shrine of great repute, annually visited by a large number of pilgrims where *Sadabart*was established, and food was being gratuitously distributed to indigent travelers and the poor of all classes.[43]

Dhianpur, Damtal and Datarpur, too, received considerable grants from the Sikh rulers. By the end of the Sikh rule, Dhianpur was receiving about 5,500 rupees a year. Ranjit Singh had given a large grant in Dhianpur and Sangtuwal in Batala to Mahant Harbhajan Das. In 1849 Dalip Singh confirmed all the old grants to Mahant Seetal Dass and gave fresh grants in other villages.[44]Similarly Damtal and Datarpur received about 3,000 and 1967 rupees, respectively. Ranjit Singh had confirmed all the earlier grants made by the Emperors and gave a grant of 2,007 rupees in Maira Mahantan and other villages to Mahant Gopal Das of Damtal.[45] Similarly Datarpur establishment received fresh grants from Jai Singh Kanhiya and Ranjit Singh, while the old ones made by Aurangzeb and other Mughal rulers and the Hill Rajas were confirmed.[46]

Most of the Vaishnava establishments had a Thakurdwara, the Smadh of the founder of the establishment, and a Dharmsala or a building for the accommodation of Bairagis and visitors. By and large, every Vaishnava establishment existed independently of the other under a Mahant who had his disciples (*chelas*). Succession to the *gaddi* was decided by the Mahant. It was his duty to impart religious education to the devotees and *sewaks* of the shrine. He was entitled to spend income of the establishment on its maintenance and improvement.

At Pindori and Damtal, a *Seli* or black woolen thread and a *topi* or cap, were received from the *Jogi* establishment of Jakhbar to be placed upon the person of the new Mahant.[47] This ritual is of such importance that without it the ceremony is deemed to be incomplete. A *topi* which could be taken to be the symbol of the precedence of the Jogi establishment, together with a *chola* or overgarment, is still draped over the Smadhs of the Mahant of Pindori.[48]

The Vaishnava establishments provided clothes, shelter and food to the resident *sadhs* and attendants; gave shelter and food to travellers or pilgrims, and food to the needy people. To some of these establishments were attached *langars* or *sadabarts* which remained open on all days for two meals for the poor as well as the *sadhs* and visitors to the shrine. *Goshalas* formed an integral part of these establishments. *Pathshalas* for imparting religious education in Sanskrit language and in the vernacular were attached to some of the establishments.[49] The Vaishnava establishments under Sikh rule, thus, played an important role in the cultural life of the people.

The beliefs and practices of the devotees of Shiva, Vishnu and Krishna may overlap, but the basic distinction is perceptible. The actual distinction between the followers of Shiva and Vishnu recorded by prominent British administrators and scholars like Denzil Ibbetson, E.D. Maclagan and H.A. Rose during the decade (1883 to 1892) was found relevant even in those times, 'it is known that whoever abstains from meat and hurting animals is esteemed a Vaishnava without regard to the doctrine'.[50] The Shaiva may worship Vishnu, and the Vaishnava Shiva, but the Vaishnava will not taste meat, while the Shaiva may partake of meat and drink spirits.[51] On the whole, Shiva was most popular of brahmanical deities in the 19th Century. Of antagonism between the Vaishnavas and the Shaivas we hear very little in Punjab.The main dissimilarity lays in the forehead marks (*tilak*), those of the Vaishnavas being generally speaking

upright, while those of the Shaivas are horizontal. The rosaries of the one sect will be of *tulsi* bead and those of the other of the *rudraksh* plant. The *Vaishnavas* worship in the Thakurdwaras where Ram or Sita or Lachman is enthroned and the Shaivas in Shivalvas or Shivdwalas where the *ling* is the central object of Worship.

Shaktism

The Shaktas not only created a separate religious group, but were also next to the Shivas and Vaishnavas in term of their significance. The worship of the Goddess was surely not unknown in the early 19th century Punjab. The worship of the Goddess in her various forms and manifestations was, among other things, a token of the primacy given to *shakti*, the active principle which sustained the universe and the various manifestations of gods. The Shaktism was divided into two main categories: the 'cults of the right hand' and the 'cults of the left hand'. In the former, except for insistence on animal sacrifice in honour of Durga, Kali and other terrible forms of the great goddess, the general usage of Shaivism were observed. It was among the left-handed that some 'disreputable' form of worship appeared under the influence of *tantrism.* The *Samkhya* doctrine of *prakrti* and *purusha* formed the basis of *tantric* philosophy, its aim being the identification of the individual soul with the supreme soul. The profounder of *tantrism* regarded the Vedas and the brahmanical tradition in general as inadequate for 'modern times' *(kaliyuga).*The Tantra was meant for all men, of whatever caste, and for all women. The *tantric* worship was characterized by 'initiation' irrespective of caste or sex, and by *mantras*, *yantras* and 'black rites'. *Tantrism* was both anti-speculative and anti- ascetical. Nevertheless, human body was the most reliable and effective instrument of salvation.[52]

Tantrism was not an 'easy road'. The tantric worship presupposed a long and difficult *sadhana*. The *dharanis* and *mantras* were raised to the dignity of a vehicle of salvation and one was supposed to mutter the prescribed *mantras* even while conducting the ordinary daily business. The *yantra*, drawn on a piece of cloth, was conceived as a miniature temple: the *Sriyantra*, the finest of the series, had four openings, flights of steps, and a sanctuary where the chosen divinity dwells. At the same time, the disposition of triangles in the *yantra* represented the male and female sexual organs, the instruments of the *unio mystica*.The penances and austerities (*tapas*) and the recitation of *mantras (japas)* were to precede the use of the *mandala* as well as *yantra.* The 'black rites', in theory, were meant only for the adept.[53] In Gujarat there were two temples dedicated to the Devi. In Sodhara also there were two temples of the Devi: one was dedicated to Sitala and it was outside the town; the other was dedicated to Kalka and within the town. In and near Lahore, there were temples of Devi: one of Sitala, another of Kalka and the third of Bhaddar Kali. The temple of Kalka and Turt Phuri were there in the city of Jalandhar. In Garhdiwala in the Jalandhar Doab there was place of worship dedicated to the Devi.[54]

Diverse Identities in Islam

The history of Islam in the Punjab begins with the conquest of Multan by Muhammad bin Qasim in A.D.712. The Muslim society in Punjab, as in some other parts of India, was as well marked by sectarian or vertical divisions as by racial differences. The sectarian differences were important to the contemporaries to whom it mattered much whether one was a *sunni*, a *shia*, an *ismaili*, a *mulhid*, a *batini*, an *ibahati* or a *mahdavi*. However, a broad social stratification based on horizontal divisions, was also easily noticeable in the Punjab i.e. Upper, Middle and Lower strata.

The *aqtadars* in the Punjab, as elsewhere in the Lodi Sultanate were the highest nobles. The other nobles differed from the *aqtadars*, but only in degree. 'They all lived a life of luxury. The nobles expressed their piety in raising mosques, patronizing the *ulama* and paying homage to the holy men'.[55] The *Ulama* tried to perform the prodigious task of guarding the *shariat*, which lent the appearance of uniformity forced through public congregations and through the traditional system of education. *Madrasa* or *maktabs* were attached to large or small mosques in cities and towns; the main subjects taught in the *madrasas* were *tafsir*, *hadis* and *fiqh*. Many of the *ulama* acted as *qazis* and *muftis* in the service of state; they were the recognized guardians of the traditional Sunni Muslim community.[56] But perhaps a greater, and a more genuine, veneration was shown by an average Muslim to the *Sufi pirs*, and *shaikhs* and to *pirzadahs* and *shaikhzadahs*. *Shaikhzadah* appeared to occupy the same status among the Muslims as a *brahman* among the Hindus.

The *Sunnis* (orthodox), like the bulk of the Muslims, believed in the uniqueness of Allah and in Muhammad as the last of His prophets; they believed also in the *Qur'an* as the word of God revealed to His prophet Muhammad through the Angel Gabriel. The ultimate authority in the religions life of the *sunnis* was the *Quran.* The Qur'an was always a potential source of individual inspiration for emotionally religious life but the general conception of piety among the orthodox was as much ritualistic as their theology was formalistic. The chief 'pillars of religious practice were five daily prayers (*salat*), the daily fast (*rozah*) during the month of Ramzan, the pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*) and the charity to brother Muslims (*zakat*). As a form of worship, the first was obviously the most important; but the daily prayer was not an effort to achieve personal communication with Allah; it was rather 'a set of ceremonies expressing the Muslim's obedience, worship and devotion.[57]

The most important of the 'unorthodox' sects in the Punjab, as elsewhere in the Muslim World, was that of the *Shia.* The majority of them recognized twelve *imams* in the line from Fatima and Ali. The last *imam*, Muhammad al-Mahdi had disappeared from the world in A.D.880 and he was expected to reappear to restore justice and righteousness. According to *Shia* belief, the *imam* is an infallible and sinless being, possessing the Divine Light handed down from God to Ali and descendants through Muhammad. The 'twelver'*shias* recognized the authority of the Quran and the *sunna* and the finality of Muhammad's prophethood; but the authority of the *imam* tended to overshadow them.[58]

Much more 'unorthodox' than the 'twelvers' were the Ismailis and Qarmatians. The laws of the *shariat*, according to Ismaili belief, were not meant for those who possessed mysterious knowledge and the Quran itself had an 'inner meaning'. The Qarmatians believed that it was quite legitimate to shed the blood of the orthodox.[59] The majority of the *shia* had little sympathy with the Qarmatians or the Ismailis who appeared to compromise the unity of God and disregarded Muhammad as the seal of the prophets. Some of them regarded the *imam* as an incarnation of God.

However, the most important forms of Muslim religious life in the Punjab, as elsewhere, were embodied in the beliefs and practices of the *Sufis*, the mystics of Islam. Mysticism is such a vital element in Islam'according to R.A. Nicholson.[60] Several Sufi orders had come to flourish in India in the early 16th century. In Punjab, the disciples of the Chishti, Qadiria, Suharwardia and Naqshbandia Order were found but the adherents of others were very few in number.[61] The most important Sufi orders in the 19th century were the *Naqshbandi* and the *Chishti* Orders. The seat of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shankar in Pakpatan, was by far most popular in Punjab. Most of the Chisti saints were liberal in outlook and laid stress on service of mankind.[62] Several other places in the Punjab were also associated with the Chishti *shaikh*.[63] The Sufis in general however adopted the relationship of the lover and the beloved.[64]

All the basic ideas of Sufism were derived from Qur'an. The importance given to the Sheikh had very interesting implications. The Sufis believed that theirs were the true ethics of Islam.[65]

In the 19th century, Ganesh Das generally refers to the *khanqahs* and the *mazars*: the *khanqah* of Jani Darvesh at Jani Sang; the *khanqah* of Pir Mohammad Sachiar in Gujarat; the *mazar* of Shaikh Farid, the *khanqahs* of Imam Nasiruddin and Sikandar Shah. People mostly visited these centres of pilgrimage. He was also aware of the existence of mosques, *mullas*, *qazis*, the *shariat*, the *fiqh*, but he paid more attention to the practices involving large numbers of the Muslims.[66] In Islam, *Sufi* form was not yet the sect of the majority of people in the Punjab. The indigenous forms of religious beliefs and practice were not only older but, were also richer in variety and more complex.

Diverse Identities in Sikhism

The emergence of Sikh sects resulted into the formation of diverse religious identities in the Sikh faith since its inception. The Udasis, the Minas, the Dhirmalias and the Ramraias, who contested for the *gurgaddi* were the earliest known Sikh sects. The Sikh Gurus never approved their claims. They were able to maintain their distinct identities in one way or another. However, due to their descent from the families of Sikh Gurus, they commanded great respect. In the 19th century they performed a number of rituals and practices. Significantly, the Udasis acted as custodians of several Sikh shrines, and attracted following from among the Hindus and Muslims peasantry of the Punjab.[67]

Guru Ram Das had appointed his younger son, Arjan, to succeed him as guru. His elder son, Prithi Chand, offended by what he considered an unjust

confiscation of his right, declared himself as the rightful Guru and established a separate sect, called by the mainstream Sikhs, as *Minas*.[68] Thus, the descendants of Guru Arjan came to be called Sodhi Sahibzade of *vaddemel* and those of Prithi Chand Sodhi Sahibzade of *chhotemel*. The principal seat of the Sodhis of *vaddemel* are at Anandpur sahib in Ropar district and Kartarpur in Jalandhar district and those of *chhotemel* at Guru Har Sahai, Kotha Guru, Dhilwan and Muktsar, all in the Malwa region.[69] The Sodhis of Guru Hari Sahai in Ferozepur district manage a shrine called *Pothimala*, so named because according to Sikh tradition it contained a *Pothi* or sacred scripture and a *Mala* or rosary belonging to Guru Nanak.[70] According to one estimate, the Bedis and Sodhis together enjoyed over forty percent of the revenues alienated in *dharmarth* by the Lahore Darbar.[71] The Sodhis of Kartarpur, descended from Dhirmal, possessed a manuscript of the Adi Granth (which was considered as first copy dictated by Guru Arjan to Bhai Gurdas). The *Bedis*, the descendents of Guru Nanak, were not far behind the *Sodhis* in receiving patronage. The well-known family among them was that of Sahib Singh of Una who had risen to prominence in the first half of 19th century.[72]

Close in rank to the Guru lineages were various holy men- the Bhais, the Sants and the Babas. The former inherited their holiness and later earned it in the life time. For example, Bhai Bir Singh, Bai Maharaj Singh, and Bhai Ram Singh deserve special mention in this context. In the 19th century, the term Bhai was used for men who read Adi Granth or acted as professional Granthis.[73]The most imaginative and institutionalized among these groups, who were interpreting and transmitting Sikh tradition, were the traditional intellectuals. This category included the Udasis, the Nirmalas, the Gianis, the Granthis, and the Ardasias. The other half of the traditional intellectuals included the Granthis or Sikh Scripture readers, the *Pujaris*, those responsible for ritual service in the shrines, the *Dhadhis*, the *Rababis* and the *Ragis*.[74]

Both the British and the Sikh rulers had recognized the religious diversity among the Sikhs and they had put the Sikhs into two categories- the *Singhs* and the *Sehajdharis*. Macauliffe, an acknowledged interpreter of the Guru Granth Sahib by contemporary Sikh rulers, institutions and organizations, observed that the Sikhs were baptized Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh, whereas the Sehajdharis comprised of the Udasis, the Sevapanthis and the Nirmalas. However, the diversity of Sikh religion was more reflected when the Census officials enumerated the Sikhs for the Census reports.[75] The census of 1901 talked about the various Sikh sects of the time.[76] There are a number of reasons that caused multiple religious identities in the 19th Century.

Earliest of the Sikh sects were the Udasis, who traced their descent to Baba Sri Chand, eldest of the two sons of Guru Nanak. Gradually, they grew into four *dhuans* and various *bakhshishes*.[77] They flourished more during the period of Sikh rule. However, the celibate ascetic Orders of the Udasis, nearly over a dozen towards the end of Sikh rule, traced their common spiritual descent from Baba Sri Chand. Moreover, they also used the common label of an Udasi, due to the fact, that they all strictly followed the idea of renunciation (*udas*) and the practice of celibacy in the pre-colonial Punjab. They had their own line of divine

succession.[78] They believed in idol-worship and introduced some Hindu rites and rituals which were denounced and renounced by the Sikh Gurus who were clearly opposed to general Sikh belief.[79] Considerably, the Udasis and their centres underwent a serious hindrance in terms of patronage after the fall of the Lahore Kingdom in 1849. But, on the other hand, they were compensated by the new rulers by conferring upon the Udasi Mahants certain proprietary rights over the lands under their jurisdiction. It was partly the mismanagement of these institutions by the Mahants and other vested interests that roused the religious sentiments of the Akalis in the 1920's.[80] On the whole, the Udasis's understanding of Sikhism was Vedantic, though they, however, were not averse to the idea of the Guru-Granth, which helped the ruling class more than the idea of the Guru-Panth and the vice- *versa*. In support of their theological position, the Udasis had their own *Matras* i.e. their secret principles.[81]

The historic origin of the Nirmalasis highly controversial. References to them began to appear in the Sikh literature only towards the close of the 18th century. In the view of many contemporary Sikh scholars and historians, they were founded by Guru Gobind Singh, who is said to have sent five of his devout Sikhs to Banaras to learn Sanskrit.[82] But notably, the late 19th and early 20th century Nirmala view of their origin opposes this. H.A. Rose and Denzil Ibbetson have clearly stated that the Nirmalas were founded by Guru Gobind Singh.[83]

Teja Singh, however, does not treat the Nirmalas as a separate sect of the Sikhs. He has understood them as an integral part of the mainstream of Sikhism.[84] According to Khushwant Singh, they were the followers of Guru Gobind Singh and yet they followed the traditional pattern of life of the Hindu Brahmacharya.[85] Giani Gian Singh in his *Panth Parkash*[86] has emphatically stated that Nirmala Panth was founded by Guru Nanak himself. In order to reinforce his views about Nirmalas, he wrote *Nirmal Panth Pradipika*[87] in A.D. 1819. However, the Nirmala tradition gradually began to flourish during the period of Sikh rule in terms of its religious centres called deras or Akharas. They also wrote various expositions or commentaries on the *bani* of the Sikh Gurus recorded in the Adi-Granth, which are highly Vedanticised.[88] The Nirmalas during the 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed some change in their socio-religious and economic position under the new rulers.

The Sewapanthis were also known as the Addanshahis. Giani Gian Singh traces the origin of the Sewapanthis from Bhai Kanhaiya. He became a Sikh of the ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, who instructed Bhai Khahaiya to go out and serve humanity. After the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Bhai Kanhaiya remained in Guru Gobind Singh's service and was with him at the siege of Anandpur. Bhai Sewa Ram and Addan Shah were the disciples of Bhai Kanhaiya.[89] The Sewapanthis, thus, constitute an honourable sect who lived by honest labour. They consisted of both the Singhs and the Sahajdhari Sikhs. They do not have any separate scripture of their own, and they venerated the Guru Granth Sahib like any other devout Sikhs. Besides the Sikh scriptures, other important works studied by the Sewapanthis were *Katha of Paras Bhag, Masnavi of Maulana Rumi* and *Yoga Vashisth*. They venerated and followed the

ten Sikh Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib.[90] The Sewapanthis tradition still continues among the Sikhs with distinct identity as a separate sect.

The modern Sikh sects, the Nirankaris and the Namdharis or the Kukas, which are termed as socio-religious reform movements by some scholars.[91] The Nirankari Sikh tradition was founded by Dyal Das, a Khatri Sikh of Malhotra sub-caste of Peshawar, who, later on, shifted to Rawalpindi and lived there till his death in A.D.1855. His followers, who were largely drawn from the Khatri Arora or Bania castes, came to be known as 'Nirankaris' or the believers in the worship of only the formless One (*Nirankar*).[92] Besides this, they too had been directed to reject Idolatry and to discard all Brahmanical rituals, rites and ceremonies. Social-religious and historical position of the Nirankaris compared to the broader Sikh historical perspective, the nature, structure, and identity of their religious ideas and institutions, beliefs and practices needs to be looked into demonstrably or in a dispassionate manner. Looking back to the Nirankaris's socio-religious way of life in contrast to the standardised Sikh pattern of living, their position, functioning at the edge of the mainstream, becomes somewhat clear.[93] The Nirankaris have never been able to wield a noticeable position in the mainstream of Sikh history as a distinct identity.

The Namdharis or the Kukas were founded by Baba Balak Singh (1797-1862), an Arora of the Batra sub-caste of village Hazro, in the same geographical region (north-west frontier) during the 19th century.[94] He advocated simple living and the doctrine of *nam-simran* of God, like that of Baba Dyal's insistence on the worship of only the formless one (*nirankar*). Although the Namdharis claim their loyality to Guru Gobind Singh and his militant ideas by showing their reverence to his *Dasam Granth* and by including his *Chadi Di Var* in their daily *nitnem* routine,[95] yet their belief in the necessity of a living personal Guru and the line of succession of their own Gurus, which still goes on in extreme contradiction to the dual-Sikh doctrine of Guru-Granth and Guru-Panth.

Other minor Sikh denominations such as the Niranjanis, the Gangushahis, Bhai Behlo, the Satkartaris, the Gulabdasis and the Hiradasis also emerged in the Punjab during the 19th century. The Niranjanis also known as the Handalis, were, in fact, founded by Baba Handal, who was a devoted follower of Guru Amar Das. They had their own rites and customs. They condemned all the Hindu rites and ceremonies. They believed in monotheist God (*Kartar*). They did not believe in the sacred scripture of the Sikhs, Guru Granth Sahib, which clearly differentiated them from the orthodox Sikhs. Also, the Gangushahis owe their origin to one Gangu Shah, who was the contemporary of Guru Amar Das. Similarly, the followers of Bhai Behlo and the Satkartaris, had their association with Guru Arjan Dev.[96] Towards the end of the 19th century, all of these minor denominations had started losing their influence as well as their numerical strength.

The Gulabdasis were founded by Gulab Das, who started his sect in the 19th century. They were not very strict in their religious life. They lived a very luxurious life. They enjoyed all sensuous pleasures. They had lore for wine, meat and women. The Gulabdasis were not uniform in their attitude toward dress. They did not believe in the existence of God. They all had condemnation

for the Hindu, the Muslim and the Sikh religious rites and ceremonies. They did not believe in pilgrimages because for them the religious places did not possess any religious merit.[97] However, they claimed themselves to be Sikhs and showed their reverence for the Guru Granth Sahib. Some minor Sikh religious denominations had cropped up during the time of Giani Gian Singh, such as the Gulabdasis and Hiradasis. The position of each of these religious denominations has been studied *vis-a-vis* the mainstream Sikhism by me.[98]

Conclusion

Religion, not only represented the sacred but also the social relations and diverse system of communal beliefs and practices. This was clearly represented by numerous sects and cults among the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs; which clearly reflected social, religious and cultural diversities in the 19th century Punjab. There was always considerable ambiguity and fluidity, when it came to the question of religious identities. The Punjab in the 19th century Punjab, was marked by a rich variety of religious belief and practice in Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. This was clearly represented by the origin of numerous sects and cults among the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. The religious values influenced people's achievements, which helped them to interpret their experiences. A significant proportion of the people followed the Hindus religious belief and practices in the 19th century Punjab. The authority of the *Vedas* was recognized by the priestly class of all the Hindu sects, Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism. However, Shiva was the most popular brahmanical deity, clearly distinct from the *sannyasis*, but strongly associated with the *Jogis* of the Shaivism. The Muslim social order in the Punjab was also well marked by the sectarian or vertical divisions as by racial differences. The sectarian differences were important to the contemporaries to whom it mattered much whether one was a *sunni*, a *shia*, an *ismaili*, a *mulhid*, a *batini*, an *ibahati* or a *mahdavi*. The most important of the 'unorthodox' sects, as elsewhere in the Muslim World, was that of the *Shia*. However, the most important forms of Muslim religious life were embodied in the beliefs and practices of the *Sufis*, the mystics of Islam.

Similarly, a very large number of diverse religious identities were found among the Sikhs. Historically speaking, earliest of these were the Udasis, the Minas, the Dhirmalias and the Ram Raias. The Sodhis and the Bedis, strictly speaking, did not constitute religious orders. Besides these early or traditional Sikh sectarian developments, there were the modern Sikh Sects like the Nirankaris and the Namdharis or the Kukas, which flourished more in the colonial period. Thus, in the absence of a centralized church and an attendant religious organized body, heterogeneity in religious beliefs, plurality of the ritual and diversity of lifestyles were freely accepted. To conclude, the sectarian developments of the 19th century Punjab indirectly increased the number of Sikh followers, but in the long run it definitely derailed the Sikh followers from the mainstream religion and distinct religious identity. The Udasis followed the concept of the celibacy and the Kukas believe in the living guru which was

forbidden by the Sikh Gurus. So, with the passage of time many sectarian developments weakened the true teaching of the Sikh Gurus.

Notes

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12 *Mahadev* may refer to Shiva, a primary Hindu deity.

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15 H. A. Rose, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, Vol.1, Language Department Punjab, 1970, p. 259.

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[23] J. S. Grewal and Indu Banga (eds.), *Early Nineteenth Century Punjab*, pp.148-158; also see J. S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, pp. 111-113.

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[25] Shashibhushan Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults: As Background of Bengali Literature*, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1946, p. 90.

[26] Shashibhushan Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults: As Background of Bengali Literature*, pp. 90 and 196.

[27] J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, pp. 115-116.

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[29] H. H. Wilson, *The Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, The Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1861, pp.116-117. (First Published 1832).

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[31] J.S. Grewal and Indu Banga (eds.), *Early Nineteenth Century Punjab*, pp. 205, 211, 252 and 301.

[32] This reference is based on the unpublished early British Records of the Foreign and Revenue Departments containing information on the Vaishnava Establishments and the *dharmarth* grants enjoyed by them. They mostly belong to the first decade of British Rule in Punjab; *Khalsa Darbar Records*, Bundle V Vol.VI, Punjab State Archives Patiala. This volume of the Sikh Records contains numerous references to the Vaishnava Establishments and the *dharmarth* grants and of individual Mahants as well: J.S. Grewal and Indu Banga (tr&ed), *Early Nineteenth Century Panjab,* pp. 21, 72, 96, 106, 132 &134-135; E.D. Maclagan, *Census Report 1891*, pp.125-127; E.A. Prinsep, *Report on the Revised Settlement of Sailkot District in Amritsar District*, Lahore, 1865, p. 27. C.A. Roe, *Report on the Revision of the Settlement of Una'h Pargana of Hoshiarpur District*, 1876; Louis W. Dane, *Final Report of the Revised Settlement of the Gurdaspur District in the Panjab*, 1892, p. 60; *Gazetteer of Montgomery District 1898-99*: *Gazetteer of Hoshiarpur 1883-84*; *Gazetteer of Jullundur District and Kapurthala State, 1904*; *Gazetteer of Gurdaspur 1914*; *Gazetteer of Sialkot District 1894-95*; and *Gazetteer of Phulkian State, 1904*.

[33] 60% of the total establishments were covered by these parts of the doabs: Amritsar-8, Lahore-7, Gurdaspur-7, Jullundur-3, Hoshiarpur-10, total No. 35.

[34] *Foreign/ Political Proceedings,* 14 April, 1852, No. 60.

[35] The institution of *dharmarth* or revenue- free grants however was not an innovation of the Sikh rule. The medieval rulers did extend their patronage to individuals and Institutions as an act of charity: see, for example, B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal (tr&ed), *The Mughal and The Jogis of Jakhbar,* Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1967, pp. 19 &24.

36 For the state patronage of Sikh and non-Sikh religious personages and institutions under Sikh rule. See, Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, pp.148-67 & nn ; Indu Banga, 'Religious Land Grants under the Sikh Rule', *Punjab History Conference*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1971,p.144; Ashvini Aggarwal, 'Sikh Patronage of Hindu Shrines', *Punjab History Conference*, Punjabi University, Patiala,1979; See also Sulakhan Singh, 'State Patronage to the Udasis under Maharaja Ranjit Singh' in *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and His Times* (ed J. S. Grewal & Indu Banga), Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980, pp.103-115.

37 *Foreign/Political Consultation*, 27 May 1853, No. 207.

38 *Pindori Documents*, XXXV; *Khalsa Darbar Record*, Bundle V, Vol.VI, No. 255.

39 *Pindori Documents*, XLVI &XLVII; *Khalsa Darbar Record*, Bundle V, Vol.VI, Nos. 251 & 252.

40 *Pindori Documents*, XL&XXVIII; *Khalsa Darbar Record,* Bundle V, Vol.VI, No. 261.

41 *Ibid*, XXXVI.

42 *Ibid*, XXXI& XXXIII in which the *amil* of the talluqa of Talibpur is asked not to interfere with the revenue free land to the Mahant in Talibpur.

43 *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 April, 1852, No. 60.

44 *Khalsa Darbar Records*, Bundle V, VOl.VI, 219; *Dhianpur Documents*, 1-17; *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 10 September, 1856, No. 226; *Ibid*, 1 May 1857, No.67; *Ibid*, 3 July 1853, No. 1369.

45 *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 14 April, 1852, No. 60.

46 *Foreign/ Political Proceedings*, 13 February, 1851, No. 301.

47 B. N. Goswamy and J. S. Grewal, (tr&ed), *The Mughal and The Jogis of Jakhbar*, p. 15.

48 The succession to the Damtal gaddi by Shri Lal Das, the Mahant, claimed that Jakhbar gaddi by the customary law of that time. A representative was compel to perform the installation ceremony by bestowing upon him the *seli* and *topi*.

49 For instance, establishments like Pindori Damtal, Dhianpur and Datarpur were important in this connection. Even today, these establishments are engaged in these activities which have become an essential part of these.

50 H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Caste of the Punjab*, p. 259

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53 *Ibid.*, p.136.

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55 K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, Munashiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1967, p.32.

[56] Titus T Murray, *Islam in India and Pakistan, A Religious History of Islam in India and Pakistan*, Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, Calcutta, 1959, pp. 87-114.

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[58] G. E. Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1946, pp. 186-197; Also see, Reuben Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1957, pp. 284-286.

[59] J. S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, pp.64-69; Titus Murray, *Islam in India and Pakistan*, *A Religious History of Islam in India and Pakistan*, pp. 101-103; Reuben Levy, *The Social structure of Islam,* Cambridge, 1962, pp. 287-289.

[60] J. S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 71.

[61] H.A. Rose, A *Glossary of the Tribes and Caste of the Punjab*, p. 528.

[62] P. N. Chopra (ed.), B. N. Puri, M. N. Das, A. C. Pradhan, *A Comprehensive History of Medieval India*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 2003, p. 236.

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[67] *Khalsa Akhbar Lahore*, 17 July, 1886, p.6; Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, p. 109.

[68] Sukhdeep Kaur,'Social Background of Followers of Sodhis of Guru Har Sahai in the Punjab,' *International Journal of Arts, Humanities, Management Studies*, Vol.3, No.11, November 2017, pp. 1-5.

[69] Sukhdeep Kaur, *The Sodhis of Guru Har Sahai*, M.Phil Dissertation, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 2007, p.10.

[70] *Ibid*., pp. 92-99.

[71] Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p.158.

[72] Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, pp.114-115.

[73] *Ibid*., pp.116-122.

[74] *Ibid*., p.131.

[75] Max Arthur Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion: It's Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors*, Vol. IV, Oxford Clarendon Press, London, 1909, pp. 202-216.

[76] The District Census Report of Rawalpindi naively but truly describes the position of the Sikh sects thus:- In Sikhism there are three classes(a) Followers of Sir Khem Singh Bedi, (b) Nirankaris, (c) the Singh Sabha. *Census of India 1901*, Report, Punjab and North-West Frontier Provinces, vol.17, Part-1, p.125.

[77] Harbans Singh (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism* (S-Z), Vol. IV, p.

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82 Giani Balwant Singh Kotha Guru, *Nirmal Panth DiGaurav Gatha* Sriman Mahant Balwant Singh Secretary Kankhal (Haridwar), pp. 24-25; Giani Gian Singh, *Nirmal Panth Pradipika* (ed. Sant Inder Singh Chakarvarti) Nirmal Panchayati Akhara, Kankhal 1962 (first Published in A.D.1891). The litho copy of this work is available in the Rare Book Section of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, p. 7.

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