

A Cultural Materialist Critique of ‘Punjabiyaat’: Haryana Perspective

Divyajyoti Singh

Professor of English, Department of Literature and Languages,
Faculty of Liberal arts and Media Studies,
JC Bose University of Science and Technology, Faridabad, Haryana, India.

&

Virender Pal Singh

Associate Professor of English, IIHS,
Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Haryana, India.

Abstract

‘Punjabiyaat’ connotes a common approach, a shared perspective, and a co-inherited value system that can deliver the two striving nations, India and Pakistan, out of the clutches of divisive politics. Punjabiyaat could be the key to building a stronger regional partnership that could eventually empower SAARC and create a balance of interests in favour of South Asia. By corollary, Punjabiyaat, associated with the Punjab region of South Asia, could serve as a bulwark against neo-imperialism and ward-off Western hegemony. In fact, the foundations of a stronger South Asia can be based on the principles of Punjabiyaat that rise above religious and communal divides upholding egalitarianism, brotherhood, democracy, syncretism, grassroots spirituality combined with scientific approach that are remarkable characteristics of Undivided Punjab found still extant and demonstrated in residual forms wherever people of Punjab reside in their region or as diaspora. For the purpose of the paper, the social structure of the Undivided Punjab is investigated and juxtaposed with the socio-political scenarios emerging in contemporary times, especially on the Indian side and viewed from the perspective of Haryana, a

state on the Indian side. The article makes use of the anthropological concept of cultural materialism reflected in the literary approach of critics including Raymond Williams, Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault and Louis Montrose.

Keywords: Undivided Punjab, Punjabinyat, cultural materialism, critique, Haryana, SAARC.

Introduction

The partition of India was the loss of *Punjabinyat* to colonial agenda and divisive forces. Partition turned numerous Punjabis into ‘refugees’ and ‘muhajirs’ but a probe to assess if the fate of Punjabinyat has been sealed forever, may still be worthwhile to guide the policy-making of the two concerned nations.

The present study is driven by the hypothesis that Punjabinyat is a set of defining characteristics of Undivided Punjab which can one day bring two nations severed in a political operation, India and Pakistan, closer. Punjabinyat is the distinctive approach of the Undivided Punjab that is still visible in its syncretic traditions wherever these survive. However, though found in residual forms, it is evolving and dynamic.

Punjabinyat has been affected by the material realities including political and economic conditions prevailing and demographic changes occurring in the Punjab region, including the state of Haryana, that have contributed to its cultural dynamism. It may be ultimately established that Punjabinyat can flourish perennially through regional cooperation but shall wither if the nations on both sides of political territory cannot foster it to maintain independence from neo-imperialist regimes and internal politics of schism.

Presently, fresh attempts to counter the core values of Punjabinyat can be witnessed and therefore, the value-system demands renewed attention to assess the extent to which the counterforces have altered the value-system and ethical code that drives ‘Punjabinyat.’ The research adopts cultural materialism to present a critique of Punjabinyat while parallelly conveying the extent to which the ‘history’ of the region may be a ‘construct’. Punjabinyat in its

ur-form will resolve not only issues between brother nations, India and Pakistan but also those skirmishes that might separate brother states, Haryana and Punjab. It is Punjabilityat that brought farmers across Haryana and Punjab together to voice concerns regarding Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020. The spirit of Punjabilityat fuelled the bonhomie that was maintained throughout the tough years of the agitation. The same spirit of Punjabilityat holds the key to resolving the SYL issue between Punjab and Haryana which is perhaps a boggy issue created in local politics. Nation-States that have had less water have been able to optimise their resource use and sharing can even avert flood- like situations as rivers run their course downstream without considerably affecting the riparian rights. The present article is propelled by subjective rather than objective, an involved rather than dispassionate attempt to delineate the concept of 'Punjabilityat,' refracted through the prism of Haryana, a state carved out of Punjab on the Indian side of the border in 1966.

Discussion

Nation-states with non-secular, pro-religious status evidently find it hard to reciprocate diplomatic gestures and appeals for mutuality due to the stated and clearly exclusionary basis of their identity formation. As a solution, they can adopt, affirm, articulate and emphasise a shared regional identity that is not subject to principles other than of justice and commonweal. Punjabilityat, a cultural concept pervading Punjab unites its people, even if other ideologies unhinge the harmony. In the long duration of history, Punjabilityat will show that the recalcitrant Punjab is also the resilient Punjab that that learns from the crucial experiences that history has forced upon it.

Punjabilityat can ward off outside aggression, raise respect for Pakistan and India on the international level, help cut down defence costs and even contribute substantially towards the economic prosperity of the two nations that are already leading the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) nations. As members of some powerful science and technology clubs of the

world, possessing enviable capabilities that two nations can actually make Asia a formidable power, but with the only important proviso that they substitute 'Punjabiyaat' for religious politics. Both Pakistan and India are part of bodies like the Commonwealth of Nations (1947), SAARC (1985) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (2017). The interests of these two nations are in no way at loggerheads with each other, though political pretensions may project it so. In fact, the two countries gain more through collaboration rather than antagonism, which can benefit only extraneous, outside powers and shall be at the cost of the well-being and development goals of the two nations. In fact, 'religion' as a premise for dividing the nations is a frivolous pretext since India does not identify itself as a religious state, and there is no cause of feud or skirmish apart from historical wounds incurred towards the end of imperial sway over India. Moreover, Pakistan, despite basing its identity on religious premises, has been able to forge strong alliances with nations with large atheistic populations, populations from other religious sects, communist affiliations and exercising non-religious politics like China or the US. In fact, Western, Eurasian and South East Asian powers that are non-co-religionists of Pakistan have stayed as its allies despite executing controversial operations against many neighbouring nations in the Middle-East that have jeopardised the survival of a majority of co-religionists. Since 1961, India, as a NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) nation, has been able to maintain its sovereignty related to decision-making in the face of hegemonic powers like Russia and the US. However, this independence seems to have been curtailed through claims following the abrupt settlement of the 2025 India-Pakistan conflict. To both Pakistan and India, Punjabiyaat can serve as an antidote to their ailing diplomacy, reflected briefly and sporadically in gestures where bus services, train services and such exchanges were used to build metaphoric bridges.

Thus, Punjabiyaat is a precious reality in its residual form, the vestiges of which are worth saving; it is a seed to be nurtured. Political demagoguery, on the other hand, banks on logical fallacies, empty rhetoric and delusional propaganda that suits only the vested interests of certain hegemonic groups operating and growing on both sides of the border. Much can be learnt by the eight SAARC

nations, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka from ASEAN, a platform of South-East Asian countries. Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN), founded in 1967, is a regional bloc of ten (10) countries, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam that have furnished an example worth emulating by pivoting their cooperation on what is common rather than focussing on dissonances and dissimilarities. Of course, diversity is a strength rather than a weakness as Indian leadership on many international platforms and its role as a balancing power in the South Asia well illustrates. In fact, healthy rivalries between adjoining nations can boost development.

‘Punjabiya’ Bridging Borders

The rubric of this discussion points to the indigenous appellant ‘Punjabiya’ that gives primacy to the understanding of the indigenous person regarding his/her identity, where the native belongs to Punjab on both sides of the border between India and Pakistan. This border can be intriguingly defined in physical, psychological, temporal, geographical, and political terms, as Punjab can be navigated as a space that has been inhabited before the arrival of the British, during the colonial regime, and afterwards. ‘Punjabiya’ is a regional identity that spans two important nations that seem to be at loggerheads today. It mainly indicates the prevalence of a folk tradition engendered in an agricultural ecosystem surrounding and created by five rivers irrigating the plains of Punjab. This folk tradition depicts the shared roots of the indigenous people regardless of their religion and specific customs dictated by religion.

Polysemy of ‘Punjabiya’

In Undivided Punjab, the religious customs came secondary to folk customs determined by the regional ecology, economy and ethos. This paper then intensively explores the meaning of Punjabiya, a legacy of the Undivided

Punjab that may be extant and palpable in the invisible bonds of brotherhood that bring the people of these nations together, at times overriding the political discourses and schisms that divide them. Further, this paper investigates how the concept of 'Punjabiyaat' can serve as a force that cements the bond between India and Pakistan.

First and foremost, Punjabiyaat was engendered in Punjab, the fertile land in South Asia inundated by five rivers. Linguistically, it is relatively easy to disambiguate the word 'Punjab', but it is challenging to explicate upon 'Punjabiyaat,' a set of characteristics related to ethnicity and religion yet not limited or subject to these identities but defining an attitude, a set of manners and clutch of attitudes, a patent behavioural approach that was engendered in Punjab, the territory to which it refers.

Etymologically, 'Punjab' is the anglicised version of 'Panjab,' a word referring to the 'land of five rivers' and tracing its linguistic roots to Persian where 'Panj' means 'five' and 'ab' stands for 'water'. However, Punjabiyaat is polyphonic and polysemic, it is subject to much variegated narrativizing propelled by diverse discourses. For instance, 'Punjabi' to which 'Punjabiyaat' is imputed is itself a dynamic and loaded term. It can refer to a 'person' and to a 'language' that belongs to Undivided Punjab.

Furthermore, with the crisis precipitated by the partition of India, the term became more ambiguous. Certain groups adopted the term as an appellation, and others did not, so as to create or mark a distinction.

Moreover, the term is problematised by the associated epithet 'Punjabi' that could refer to the whole demos of Punjab region and apply to the whole populace of the region from India to Pakistan, but which has been appropriated in the Indian context to designate a specific community of Hindus who are now identified as Indian Hindus due to the subscription to the lamentable colonial intervention calling for the formation of Pakistan, carved out of the original colony. So, contemporary Punjabi Hindus re-settled in Haryana were historically Hindus belonging to a region considered beyond the aegis of India.

The associated word 'Punjabi' is, then, a misnomer when applied to a community, since it is not appropriated by everyone from Punjab and is even avoided in reference to the Sikh community of Punjab.

Ironically, however, 'Punjabi' is an acceptable label in regard to its use as the name of a language even when the language 'Punjabi' is expressly, pronouncedly and specifically, linked to the distinctively Sikh ethos that originated in this region.

It is likely and evident that the term 'Punjabiyaat' has undergone many transformations over the period of a century. The diverse definitions may be linked to socio-historical movements that precipitated in the form of displaced populations, but also correspond to misrecognitions that attend upon migrations and schisms.

In the pre-partition times, 'Punjabi' was less a religious identity and more a folk identity. Yet in post-partition India and in the contemporary right-wing politics of India, there have been attempts to redefine and limit how Punjabiyaat is understood. This includes flawed conceptions and, often, a misconception, misrecognition, and misapprehension of the word 'Punjabi' and the identity linked to it. This may be because, in volatile times, identity becomes fluid so as to aid survival, or to create a sense of dominance, assimilation and affiliation.

Punjabiyaat has several explanations that have been more or less adequate to their purpose for the reason of being first, parochial, second, used by outsiders who lack a clear frame of reference (and confuse Punjabiyaat by attaching it to a select community known to them), and third, used by some displaced groups as an adopted label to easily assimilate themselves into a new settlement in the aftermath of a volatile period. Most references to Punjabi and Punjabiyaat are erroneous and limited.

The stigma associated with 'displacement' and its attendant vulnerabilities attached pejorative meanings to the term 'Punjabi' in Haryana, where the migrant population was resettled and allocated proportionate or equivalent

land, which is a factor in understanding the fracture and weakening of Punjabiya.

The average person recognised as a 'Punjabi' in India is actually a person migrated from the Punjab of Pakistan's Lahore and even Bannawal not a person belonging to Amritsar or Ludhiana. Now, according to Wikipedia, the term "Bannawal region" likely refers to 'Bannu,' a city and division in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Bannu is located on the Kurram River and was previously part of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) as Frontier Region Bannu.

Since, during the partition, there was massive population swapping from West to East and East to West Punjab based on religion, the Hindus that came from the Eastern side of Undivided-Greater Punjab to the Indian side were treated as migrants by the locals. Though in the Indian side of Punjab, the Jatt Sikh community dominates, this community is identified as 'Sardar.' On the other hand, in India, 'Punjabi' is an appellation claimed by and bestowed, with greater readiness, upon the large group of displaced Hindus. Many who were displaced and lost their original homes, made some parts of Punjab and large parts of Haryana their new home after the allocation of land in these areas.

The Punjabi community in India, which is concentrated mainly in Haryana and Punjab, is a group that practises Hinduism and, in contemporary Indian politics, favours the right-wing politics of Hindutva, especially due to its exposure to the human crisis precipitated by the partition. Years later, the secular ethos of Haryana also succumbs to religious discourse, and politics is dominated by the historical past of severance and partition, Haryanvi too is no more the indigenous Haryanvi but an identity usurped by the Punjabis of Pakistan who came in various waves and settled down majorly in Haryana during partition of India and later before 1984 when the pro-religionist Sikh movements took over Punjab.

The Heirloom of ‘Punjabiyaat’ in Haryana

Haryana’s syncretic ethos has helped assimilate migrants from all over the country as it has accommodated waves after waves of migrants who have been displaced forcibly, as well as immigrants streaming in voluntarily.

However, lately, the migrant populations have become so significant that it is affecting the socio-cultural environment of the state. The increasing upper-crust Hindu majority that has had a bitter experience of persecution in their native states, with its collective memory and narrative of violence and discursive hatred of the communal other, have started to dominate the otherwise secular agrarian consciousness of the state.

Critical Trajectory: Narrative and Discursive Focus

Be it fiction or non-fiction related to the partition of India, Jinnah, Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi appear on the fictitious scene, bringing authenticity and creating a believable space-time for characters in the narrative, but the farmer leaders of Punjab are absent.

Consequently, due to omission of these stories from the mainstream narrative, the whole secular discourse of ‘Punjabiyaat’ remains unavailable to the reader who is fed on and feels satiated only with stories of trauma, violence and aggression that reaffirm the ‘two-nation theory’ or need for ghettos. Here, one may refer to Louis A Montrose’s 1989 essay ‘Professing the Renaissance’ that evokes the concept of the ‘textuality of history’ where historical ‘facts’ are found to be as much a product of ‘construction’ as of ‘reality’ (Montrose, 1994, p 35).

Punjabiyaat Succumbs in History: Refugees and ‘Muhajirs’

As times verified, the idea of ‘mass exchange of population’ suggested by Congress and grabbed by its ace rivals, the Muslim League and the Hindu Maha Sabha, could only be part of a dystopian scheme. It gave birth to traumatized people displaced forever, rootless: in India, ‘refugees’ seeking refuge and in Pakistan called ‘muhajirs,’ identified primarily by their displaced status rather

than the shared values of Punjabyat that lay supine, battered, brutally by bigotry. This odd 'othering' and exclusion of that which was formerly included in a group usually precipitates in times of scarcity, deprivation and competition that follows a fanatical upsurge.

The discourse in the country never really could overcome the mammoth currency that the Two-Nation theory had gained by its very realization and practice after the 'Punjabyat' forces were crushed through a collusion of colonialism with schismatic powers. Discourse supporting communal divisions rests on perceived differences rather than similarities. While people of one region often share characteristic similarity in lifestyle, culture and response to the surroundings, the tendency of organized religion is to exhort its followers to adopt signs that distinguish them and demonstrate signs that highlight the disparity. The points of divergence are usually not innate or prompted by the nature or climate of a particular place, but rather ritualistic and significant for a limited sect, sometimes to the point of making routine inconvenient rather than convenient. Religious indulgence in realpolitik creates prejudice and affects a bias in approach towards people who do not belong to a specific community. If aggravated, these differences erupt as violence, persecution, massacres and genocides. Many times, people forget that their interests are aligned and succumb to discourse that enhances myopia.

'Hasty generalization' is a prominent fallacy where any isolated happening, incident, occurrence or person is considered to be normative and representative of a particular group. The conclusion regarding the traits and characteristics of this community is hastily drawn, and no benefit of the doubt is given. The correlation is made without systematic observation over a period of time. Thus, this logical fallacy is practised in response to alienated communities quite often, as a single act is found to corroborate a host of acts imputed to a specific, often estranged, community or a completely unknown community, from xenophobia to apartheid; from religious persecution to discrimination against ethnic minorities- these foster hasty generalisations endorsing stereotypes. Such categories being watertight determine relationships between communities on a hierarchical rather than an equitable

basis. For instance, an action that is censurable in a particular scenario will often be considered as indicating the usual behaviour of the 'other' sect, becoming a pretext to question the ethics of the whole community to which this person belongs. On the other hand, any objectionable behaviour demonstrated by a person from one's own sect will be perceived as a trait of that specific individual, casting no reflection or shadow over the community as such.

It is noticeable in the politics of this representation that the real aspirations of Indian people, their faith in development goals of the government of Undivided Punjab, were ignored by the political leadership in the decisive phase just before the partition and that the narratives have continued to indulge in the neglect. The discourse and narrative that kept the Hindus and Muslims together in the villages of Greater Punjab have been sacrificed to the altar of the leadership of those who agreed to the Mountbatten plan. These were only 'representative' of Indian people in the narrow terms of British recognition. These select ones never had a majority mandate for them. The real leader of Punjab was a regional party that worked in tune with the ethos of the people of Punjab, who mainly resided in the villages. Truly, religion is a luxury and religious disputes are guided by the elite who have leisure enough to broach up non-issues. When India was partitioned, some sixty million of her ninety-five million Muslims (one in four Indians) became Pakistanis; some thirty-five million stayed back in India, the largest number of Muslims in a non-Muslim state' (Menon et al., 1998, p. 4). For the leaders on the table, perhaps, it was a conflict-negotiation situation much as in the corporate boardrooms, but for people, it was an undeclared civil war, and since then we have had disputed borders in every country of South Asia (Menon et al., 1998, p. 21).

History as well as the present are documented selectively to marginalise the viewpoint of the masses. While many discuss the scientific method and objective approach of historians, Hayden White in *Metahistory* (1973) stresses the 'art' involved in historical writing. The chronicle is open-ended but there is a tendency to 'narrativize' the past through 'selection' and 'arrangement', to tell it like a story with a beginning, middle and end. This precludes omissions and inclusions so that a cohesive and convincing tale is told. At the same time,

however, every historian seeks to achieve what White calls diverse kinds of “explanatory affect” (p.5).

In his essay “Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture” Montrose observes: ‘By the textuality of history, I mean to suggest, firstly, that we can have no access to a full and authentic past, a lived material existence unmediated by the surviving textual traces of the society in question...’ (1994, p. 16). Montrose is concerned with human societies that have existing written records. It has been observed that history is dictated by the establishment and the incumbent powers. What is found valuable and what is superfluous, is determined by the authorities prevailing at the time. This idea is affirmed by Hayden White who observes that ‘the very claim to have discerned some kind of formal coherence in the historic record brings with it theories of the nature of the historical world and of historical knowledge itself which have ideological implications for attempts to understand “the present”, however, this “present” is presented through processes of chronicling, story, emplotment, rhetoric and ideological filtering (1973, p.5).

According to Sreedharan, Michel Foucault too perceives statements as representations of events (2004, p.289) and all these events as forming a reality that was selective. Therefore, it was power that determined what was 'truth' and 'knowledge'(2004, p.290). In this way, even history is 'fiction' (2004, p.290). This whole scenario, thus, could be understood through the concept of 'hegemony' and related idea of 'episteme'. E Sreedharan discusses Antonio Gramsci's perception of 'the capacity of a dominant class to articulate its interests'(2004, p. 279) so that these appear to be the common interests of the larger society. This is done by assuming 'political, intellectual and moral leadership'(2004, p.279). This leadership is being assumed by groups in Haryana with severe caste and religious biases.

As Michel Foucault notes in *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, what is important and what is not is decided by the élite and the powerful of any point in time in history. So, language recognition opens the doors to cultural recognition tied to ultimate survival. With Haryanvi being

neglected, the narratives-historic or literary-in the language remain inaccessible and uncirculated. They lack currency and recognition on both national and international platforms. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin claim, 'Language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated and the medium through which conceptions of 'truth,' 'order,' and 'reality' become established' (1989, p.7). The undermining of dialects for languages is a small but noteworthy part of the problem. Terry Eagleton in *Literary Theory: An Introduction* notes that 'the so-called 'literary canon,' the unquestioned 'great tradition' is in fact a 'construct, fashioned by particular people for particular reasons at a certain time' (1983, p.10). He also observes that value-judgements are 'historically variable' and have 'a close relation to social ideologies' (1983, p.14).

The need of the hour is to end a cultural contest that favours perspectives from 'without' immediately and empathise with the perspective of the native Haryanvi population to control rampant rivalry and further hostilities. Both the administrative machinery and media- 'ideological state apparatus' and 'repressive state apparatus' have been harnessed to undermine the identity of native or indigenous communities in favour of a homogenising Brahmanical discourse. The paper is a bid to assert that the government must review and revise its recent turns of policy, if it is really concerned about ethnic harmony and economic prosperity in the state.

A Short Historical Trajectory Traced

The study to decipher 'Punjabiyaat' takes its exploratory course charting the periods from 1947 leading to partition of Undivided Punjab (movement of Hindus from West Pakistan into Southern Punjab, now Haryana), leaping towards a right-wing upsurge and beginning of caste polarisation in Haryana in 2016 undermining the harmonious relationships shared by most indigenous communities with this dominant local agrarian community of the state, the Jats. The academic probe rests at the farmers' agitation hinged on the spirit of

brotherhood fostered by ‘Punjabiyaat’ and points favourably towards the potency of punjabiyaat as a possible SAARC premise.

Subjectivity, Perspective and Cognitive Bias

Admittedly, this academic ‘essay’ (as Foucault would deliberately spell it) offers a limited but substantial understanding of Punjabiyaat from a certain viewpoint with its attending biases- a point of view shared by the indigenous community of Haryana.

Haryana, a small but by no means insignificant state has uncannily turned into an epicentre for identity politics and politics of representation over the last decade, propelling an incisive inquiry into the dynamism of ‘Punjabiyaat,’ that it inherited and that informs its stable core values and its parochial versions. The acceptance and assimilation of migrants in mainstream Haryana, which made it possible in the first place, is under ideological attack today. The paper endeavours to decode the myth and reality of current state slogan ‘Haryana 1 and Haryanvi 1’ and recommends an antidote to caste schisms/communal clashes and cultural contests in revival of Haryanvi-Punjabiyaat ethos as exemplified in the socio-political and economic programme envisaged through a largely rural cross-community alliance forged by farmer leaders of pre-partition Punjab including Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, Deenbandhu Sir Chhotu Ram, Sir Sikandar Hyatt Khan and Khizr Hyatt Tiwana that had consonance with the needs of original inhabitants. To explain and justify his non-communal and united Punjabi stand, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan used to say, “I am Punjabi first, then a Muslim,” and indeed, this was his essential conviction.

That such a secular agrarian consciousness actually existed is noticeable in the heirloom of ideals of popular leadership of pre-partition Punjab surviving in the post-independence politics of agrarian leaders of Haryana. Modern Haryana leaders like Tau Devi Lal, and Bansi Lal endorsed cross-community alliances to further the interests of farmers. Even Chaudhary Charan Singh had a great influence on the affairs of UP and Haryana, where similar native communities

and cultural ethos reign. While these early leaders called for a Hindu-Muslim-Sikh peasant alliance, AJGAR (Ahir-Jat-Rajput peasant network), and based their political approach on the Urban-Rural Divide, the current-day discourse is based on communal divide and primarily religious bigotry or caste polarisation. The weakening of links and fragmentation of the Punjabi ethos can be registered in the next line of leadership in Haryana, who resorted to politics of dominant castes rather than politics of shared values, unlike their political predecessors.

The social and political relegation of rural Haryana to the margins has been achieved through a marginalization of native/folk narrative and sacrifice of rare discourse of religious harmony (reigning in the region most of the time) to a hegemonizing religious and caste-ist discourse. This is being executed through a demographic shift that is in consonance with religious homogenization, so that ultimately, the interests of the upper crust in the Hindu caste hierarchy may be dubbed as common interests. The evidence to support the proposition comes from administrative records like census reports and revenue department statistics, but also news items. There is simultaneously a steady attempt in narrative and discourse to relegate the concerns of the 'folk.'

The research paper offers a counterfoil to the normative propensity to represent the 'local' population of Haryana through the lens of urban Hindus, despite the fact that sixty-six (66) per cent of the Haryanvi population is rural.

Demographic Twist to Haryana's Punjability

Haryana was formed out of Punjab in 1966 with linguistic reorganisation as a pretext but perhaps the reason could be to carve out a more manageable region especially when this part was facing skewed development due to lack of resources.

The Census Report issued by the Government of India for the state of Haryana in 2011 highlights that about 62.15 % of people live in rural areas, while only 34.79% of people live in urban areas. A decadal growth rate of 10 per cent has

been recorded in rural Haryana but the urban areas have shown an astronomical decadal rise of 44.25 per cent. The Gurgaon district has registered the highest urban decadal growth rate of 236.45 per cent, indicating an alarming trend where urbanisation is taking over the rural way of life. Though these migrations earmark Haryana as a progressive state, there is a lack of acknowledgement of the many merits that make Haryana a chosen place of settlement by people across the country. This also indicates both rural to urban migrations and migrations across states in which people are migrating to Haryana (Gurgaon is part of Haryana that fall under NCR) rather than from Haryana to other states. Migrations from rural to urban areas are usually due to a lack of amenities, facilities and opportunities which must be provided since neglect of the hinterland is directly related to lack of attention to native communities. Also, the growth of the urban population puts great pressure on the resources of a state, as space, water, and air are put to the disposal of immigrants. To draw out an effective and balanced plan of development and understand the needs of people in the state, a demographic profiling with the socio-cultural history of the subjects is important. The lack of migratory profiling in the state is proof of its relative neglect in this area. There is a definite need for migratory profiling, as the diverse needs of an increasingly heterogeneous population must be understood, alongside the concerns of the largely rural native population, which has little representation in the state's or central government's development plans. The most worrisome factor is that the migrations to Haryana, despite being considerably larger than in other states, have largely been assumed and not overtly acknowledged, despite figures and statistics revealing an ingress. This was, of course, to facilitate seamless resettlement and absorption in the mainstream Haryanvi life. However, this persistent silence over migrations has today led to the emergence of the vicious politics that seek to isolate the native ethnic community of the state. The endeavour and its proper study, however, are outside the scope of the present paper.

Why rethinking migrations in the context of Haryana is important is to create a proper credit statement for the state to counter rampant negative publicity

fanned by emergent social order, and also to salvage the position of the native ethnic groups. The local populations of Haryana accommodated the new settlements and refugee colonies in the aftermath of Partition, the Punjabi Suba Movement and the Khalistan movements- all historical times of crisis in Punjab, lending a safe sanctuary to affiliates in disturbed parts of the region.

The indigenous population of Haryana escaped much of the partition distress being on the deeper Indian side, but the migrant populations from the freshly-formed Pakistan side who were re-settled here had a traumatic past experience that fuelled a different kind of politics alien to the ethos of this land where the likes of the stalwart secular leader Deenbandhu Sir Chhotu Ram were born, had lived, and worked.

In the last seven decades, with growing demographic participation and increasing political clout, however, the term 'Punjabi' in Haryana has gained other connotations, such as that of resourcefulness, urbanity and entrepreneurial spirit. Many of those who initially identified as 'Punjabi' have now adopted the term 'Haryanvi', which can confuse outsiders about the extent of indigeneity of these populations. Again, the indigenous rural Hindu Jat community had never adopted the term 'Haryanvi,' nor was it popular with them.

A Retrospective on Partition

Mushirul Hasan is close to the truth when he observes that the 'decade preceding Partition frequently escapes historical scrutiny (2001, p. 3). Actually, this period belongs to a unique politics of peace that does not belong to either the Congress or the Muslim League. The decades belonged to the Unionist Party. And to look back and concede that these two 'national' level parties had completely messed up in the province so much that it changed the geographic contours of the land as well as the people must be undoubtedly difficult. Even at present, when the authors and readers look back at Greater Punjab, the basic premise of religious division seems to colour the whole approach. However,

this frame bearing a picture of Punjab torn asunder by religious hatred is unlike the Punjab viewed from the socio-economic angle. Greater Punjab, advocated by Akali Dal, a regional political party of Indian Punjab, indulging in regressive and parochial politics, is not to be confused with Undivided Punjab. The advocates of 'Greater Punjab' propose reunification within Indian Punjab by merging back Haryana, Himachal and two districts of Rajasthan. This is definitely not a beneficial proposition as de-centralisation and division of territories that are unmanageable and underdeveloped, due to distance from the centre in extensive administrative areas, is preferred.

Undivided Punjab, on the other hand, refers to 'The Punjab Province, officially the Province of the Punjab, was a province of British India, with its capital in Lahore and summer capitals in Murree and Simla. At its greatest extent, it stretched from the Khyber Pass to Delhi; and from the Babusar Pass and the borders of Tibet to the borders of Sind. Established in 1849 following Punjab's annexation, the province was partitioned in 1947 into West and East Punjab; and incorporated into Pakistan and India, respectively' (Wikipedia). Its ethos is definitely worth preserving albeit the most threatened.

The Way Forward: Global Cues for Local Context

In many ways, Punjabyat lost when Punjab's people were turned to refugees and muhajirs but Punjabyat wins when they unite. Sadly, this happens more often in foreign lands than in India or Pakistan. When we learn to unite with our old neighbours or young brothers, Asia would prosper like Europe, which has learn to live together after its devastating wars. Perhaps, Punjabyat could be better understood in a global context when the word is taken out of its postcolonial bearings and retrenched into its context unadulterated by modern colonial experience. But ironically and somewhat paradoxically, even better would be a consideration of the term in the contemporary world, where one is not situated in India or Pakistan but abroad.

Conclusion

'Punjabiyaat' can indeed be understood in the wider global context where Indians and Pakistani citizens meet outside India. In a foreign land, their common roots and affiliation to the Indian mainland take primacy, and 'Punjabiyaat' as a holistic ethos that is beyond religion, manifest as an original cultural tie. The Punjabi ceases to be a word that divides but turns into a set of shared values that unite folk regardless of their religion and political affiliations. It is no more a word 'adopted' by a migrant Hindu of Arora-Khatri origin, 'avoided' by a Jatt Sikh from Punjab or 'marginalised' by religion for a Muslim from Punjab region but a word that embodies the spirit of an ancient land ravaged by invasions, colonisations and displacements yet transcending the violent history through the secular thread of human compassion and brotherhood found more in its rural landscape with its tradition of local 'dargahs' dedicated to native 'peers' rather than in mosques, gurudwaras or temples; its spiritual sites rather than pilgrim centres; its simple holy sites than canonised places of worship; its Sufi tradition rather than its religious bhajans; its leaders looking inwards for emancipation of agriculture and evolution of the society. However, even the best ethos can be severely compromised and overcast by clouds of communal tensions which was visible when the social fabric of Punjab was rent apart 1945 with the death of Sir Chhotu Ram who has been described as 'the Rock of Gibraltar standing guard against communal rift' amongst Hindus and Muslims of Punjab, reaching its acme on the independence of the two nations. The people should then turn into the sentinels of 'Punjabiyaat' to ensure the survival of this valuable and vibrant ethos of Panjab, transcending historical boundaries and straddling political boundaries. In 2014, India revoked the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan, which is mandated by Article 1 of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), 1994, mandated by the World Trade Organisation to ensure non-discriminatory trade practices. This move marked the end of continual Indian attempts at an outreach towards its estranged neighbour. Punjabiyaat could be the proverbial but also practicable balm to heal even festering wounds and avoid tragic precipitations in future.

Future Research

The vast expanse and myriad hues of the landscape as it took on waves of settlements and invasions would be gratifying but arduous to encompass. Future articles can focus on select texts, co-texts and some key figures and events that may illustrate the culture and society of Punjab whose 'residual', 'dominant' and 'emergent' phases, to use Raymond Williams' terms, can be made visible in modern times and which have been subject to mainstream academic and political discourse. This planned study can use the writings of Sir Chhotu Ram, a stalwart farmers' leader and a key political figure of Undivided, Greater Pre-partition Punjab that ran from Peshawar to Palwal to provide a credible context for analysis of some key developments surrounding partition evoked in fiction surrounding partition or to throw sidelights on fictional renderings of certain characters created in popular texts that are supposed reflect the realities of the critical times that were decisive of the fortune of the leaders and masses of Punjab.

The co-texts can be derived from letters, speeches made in legislative bodies and newspaper clips of the period, while the literary texts are provided by authors as diverse as Rudyard Kipling, Bapsi Sidhwa, Bhisham Sahni, Khushwant Singh, Amrita Pritam and Salman Rushdie. While texts like Khushwant Singh's *A Train to Pakistan*, Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar*, Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas* engage squarely and head-on with the partition of Punjab or India, others like Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* give a touch-and-go reflection of what Punjab might be turning it into a magical landscape or the exotic place, a fetish for the erstwhile coloniser and an equal fetish for the erstwhile colonised reader who is identified now as the 'postcolonial' reader as s/he has the tools to read 'against the grain'. There are also set off by quasi-historical, anecdotal, testimonial accounts as recorded and rendered by authors and investigators like Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin. There is an understanding lent by New Historicist critics like Stephen Greenblatt, Louis Montrose and Hayden White about the caution to be observed in approaching both literature and history as both are forms of narrative impacted by political, social and economic forces.

This paper can have the following objectives: Investigating the phenomenon of how migrants from Pakistan to Haryana first successfully dubbed themselves as 'Punjabi' and now have adopted the identity of 'Haryanvi.' How does this create confusion and how does it undermine the indigenous inhabitants or locals comprising mainly of agriculturists of the region; Contemporary social, cultural and political upheaval that has deepened schisms and isolated the indigenous dominant group that sits oddly within the Hindu fold; to investigate the meaning and nature of the term 'subaltern' as first used by Antonio Gramsci, in 1947 in reference to 'subaltern classes' in his Prison Notebooks and later modified and limited by Gayatri Spivak in her essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' Thereby, suggesting a prospective exploration of possibilities of academic agency of the subaltern and indigenous to carve out a niche space in reference to Haryana; to reflect on colonial and postcolonial understanding of Punjab; to concentrate on specifically, erring descriptions of Punjab and its affiliates; to touch upon areas of conflict and dissonance within history; to enumerate reasons for effacement of records and subaltern historiography.

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