

**Socio-Political Protest: A Comparative Study of Selected Plays (*Har
ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye* and *Savere di Lo*) of
Gursharan Singh and Selected Poems of Sant Ram Udasi**

A Dissertation submitted to the Central University of Punjab

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Master of Philosophy

in

Comparative Literature

by

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CERTIFICATE

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ABSTRACT

Title : Socio-Political Protest: A Comparative Study of Selected Plays (Har ik Nu Jion da Haq Chaidaye and Svere di Lo) of Gursharan Singh and Selected Poems of Sant Ram Udasi

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The present research is based on the comparative study of two Punjabi writers Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi. If one is famous for his poetry the other is equally famous for his plays. There are similarities in the themes of both the writers. The theme of protest by the labour class especially women is shown in one and in other it is the farmer class which fights for its rights. The writers belong to Punjab and based their writing upon the socio-political conditions prevailing in this part of the country which led to the suppression of one class in the hands of another class. The compared writings belong to the field of political writing and the language and tone of both the authors is revolutionary. It deals with the problems of marginalised sections of society who have to suffer a lot in the capitalist world. The writers do not take any stand based on their religion rather their writing is for the people, to the people and by the people. The study would be across genre but the themes are the main focus. For this examples are given from the respective texts starting from the history of this kind of writing in Punjabi language before these writers came up.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

There occurred a rapid change in Punjabi literature after 1960's which witnessed rebellious overtones. After independence, the quarrels between the leaders of Communist Party increased, and the problems of workers and peasants postponed instead of being solved. After the Indo-China war of 1962, Communist Party came into existence, but it also favored the feudal lords instead of peasant or workers. Consequently, the peasants protested against the capitalist lords, Guriqbal Singh writes:

The party workers of Siligudi-Sub-Divison of Darjeeling district of West Bengal on their own level decided to start a terrorist struggle. During the months of March-July 1967 in the Siligudi-Sub-Divison of Naxalite area there was a strike of workers of tea-estate and the peasants refused to give the land owners the part in the Rabi crops. At some places, the peasants acquired the land with the help of arms. The prominent leaders of this movement were Kanu Sanyal, Jungle Santhal and Charu Majumdar. Later this movement was named as Naxalite Movement. (13)

The armed struggle of peasant/workers was influenced by the ideology of Mao-Tse-Tung, which brought revolution in China: "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" (224). There were some slogans which were accomplished for the success of this movement. They were:

1. To empower the peasant committees in the villages.
2. To make all the peasants armed and collective and use the traditional arms.
3. To consolidate the land.
4. To kill those enemies which divide others on the basis of class.
5. To prepare Gurrila army for the establishment of public freedom. (qtd. in Kattu 55)

The movement of armed revolution which began in the Naxawadi village of West Bengal also spread into other states. The movement started in Punjab in 1968 Rajinder Pal writes “On 12 April, 1968, posters were pasted in Punjabi on very large scale, on which it was written that, the way of Naxalite is the way of liberation of people is not election, the revolutionary terrorist struggles. Thus the Naxalite Movement in Punjabi blasts” (171).

In Punjab, the movement influenced the pen and the sword both. Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi wrote literature of protest in this time Both of them came among the common people. Gursharan Singh used to perform his plays and Sant Ram Udasi used to sing among the common people. Both of them inspired and awakened the rural people for armed revolution to change their social and political condition, as revolution could be brought only by making common people conscious. Mao-Tse-Tung writes: “For the revolution war is a war of masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relaying on them” (147).

The protest literature is known by different names in Punjabi Literature. In the Punjabi poetry, Karamjeet Singh in his book Adhunik Punjabi Kav-Dharavan de Vichardharai Adhar named it Protest Poetry (Jujhar Vidrohi), Keser Singh Kesar in his book Pragtivadi Vichardhara te Panjabi Kavita calls it Neo-Progressive Poetry, Ravinder Singh Ravi in his book Virsa te Vartman, calls it Historically Conscious Poetry (Itihasq-Chetnamukhi), Guriqbal Singh in his book Naxali Punjabi Kavita calls it Naxalite Punjabi Poetry.

The protest literature protests against those aspects which suppress the man and is in favour of his freedom. According to Karamjeet Singh “The protestant consciousness, the political objective of revolution in the context of dialogic tension, swears the change in authority and the ideal of freedom of man in the international context” (222).

After independence due to the rising prices, unemployment, corruption, political dictatorship, the difference between the rich and the poor widened as the income of capitalists increased very rapidly. There were only a handful of families which controlled all the means of production. Due to which the poverty,

unemployment kept on increasing. The democratic system remained a system to rule not by people but on people. Mahinder Singh Advocate reveals the reality of the democratic system “The election system is controlled by the bourgeoisie, capitalist class, the big traders and the corrupt millionaire industrialists. Approx. 25-30 per cent people are in stark poverty and their votes are sold. A poor person wants to make his both ends meet and does not relate it to democracy. Therefore, the modern political leaders will not eradicate poverty and unemployment as they win due to the poverty of these people” (6). Due to this structure of democracy, the rich are becoming richer and the poor are getting poorer and they are compelled to live their lives under poverty-line. The income of the capitalist class as noted by Samta Magazine is as “From 1967 to 1977, the ten upper-class capitalists raised their capital from 1753 crores to 3717 crores. During this time, these capitalists raised their capital from 2335 crores to 5111 crores. The Tata family raised its capital from 418 crores to 975 crores. Birla family raised its capital from 418 crores to 1065 crores” (5).

Thus the rapidly increasing difference between the rich and the poor was opposed by the writers in their literature. As Ravinder Singh quotes “The crisis of capitalism, for the first time the expansion of coins, rise in prices and unemployment, the rising of black money, jkirebazi, corruption, failure of fifth five year plan, strength of upper-class of bureaucratic dictatorship, resulted into explosion in the last years of second decade after independence”(115).

The political power uses politics, culture, religion, communication, as means to endorse their decisions on people. As Althusser calls them “. . . ideological structures or State ideological apparatuses. These are such groupings as political parties, schools, the media, churches, the family, and art (including literature) which foster an ideology – a set of ideas and attitudes – which is sympathetic to the aims of the state and the political status quo. Thus, each of us feels that we are freely choosing what is in fact being imposed upon us” (157).

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi oppose such means and pose a protest against the diverse forms of social and political systems which suppress humanity. Ravinder Singh Ravi opines “Protest is the unique aspect of historical

consciousness of the whole poetry and its real achievement in perhaps the anger, frustration and fear with the help of which, the economic, political, administrative, legal, educational, religious, democratic, aesthetic values and concepts are exploded in this poetry” (121).

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi both raise voice to oppose the social, cultural and economic factors which lead to subjugation of woman in man centered society. In a patriarchal society like India, the position of woman is inferior in comparison to man. She is always considered subordinate to man. She is brought up in such a way that she is always trained and internalized to live in subordination to her father, husband or son. In the Vedic age, the position of woman was respectable. She was free to choose a husband of her choice. S.P.Sabharwal writes “In Rigvedic age, the position of woman was respectable and devoted. Her presence was considered compulsory in society. She used to have some liberty in society. In the Syamwar system, she can choose a husband of her choice, a wife was respected in her home, she was called Ardhangini” (23).

After the Rigvedic Age, the position of woman changed as the time changed. In the Medieval age, the woman becomes subordinated to the man completely, when she has been considered a property of man. She has no choice of hers. She becomes subordinated to her father, brother, husband and sons. Husband becomes a God-like figure for her “The medieval Indian society was patriarchal society in which woman’s position was inferior to man. Woman had to live in subordination to man from birth to her death. In adolescence, she had to live in the vigilance of her parents and brothers. After marriage, she lived under her husband; and after the death of her husband, she had to live under her eldest son. The four walls of the house was her only world” (Khanna 69).

The social reformers protested against the social evils like the child-marriage, widow-remarriage and sati system. There was some improvement in their condition but it was not their emancipation. Raja Ram Mohan Roy raised his voice against the social evil like sati system which was abolished legally in 1829 (Mahajan 661). In the Western countries, feminist movement was launched to liberate women from the shackles of patriarchy. Balwinder Kaur Brar in her book

Naarivad: Sidhanta, Chintan ate Vichar and Charnjit Kaur in her book *Aurat: Dasha ate Disha* portrayed the condition and problems of women. Balwinder Kaur Brar writes about women "The man gets salary for his outside works, the feminist consciousness encourages women that their domestic works should also be paid in some way" (20). Charnjit Kaur brings about the problems faced by women like: childlessness, widowhood, kidnapping, rape, prostitution, dowry system, marriage by choice, extra-marital affairs of husband (88-94). These are the problems faced by women which make them neurotic. As is also the ideology of Mao-Tse-Tung, the real equality between both the sexes can be obtained only by practicing the socialist change in the whole society (137).

Features of literature of protest can also be seen in medieval Punjabi literature. In Gurmat Literature, Sufi Literature and Heroic Literature of medieval age, a voice of protest can be heard against the evils prevalent in society, against religious formalities, against religious communalism, against the tyranny of the then government, against the feudal system and providing equality to women in society.

In Gurmat Literature, the Sikh Gurus inspired the man to be an ideal person having human qualities. With the institution of Sangat and Pangat, integrity among the people of all castes and religions was established. Guru Nanak Dev raised his voice against the social evils and the tyranny of the Kings of the time. Kirpal Singh Kasel writes about the approach of Guru Nanak "A new age begins in Punjabi Literature with Guru Nanak. For the first time, the literature was considered a mean of social welfare and considered as important for National progress. . . It is the first example of the history of all literature that the perspective of common people is expressed in a brave and radical way" (77-78). In Babur Bani, Guru Nanak Dev criticized the oppression of the common people by Babur, and felt the pain of common people. He raised his voice against the criticism of woman, who is the mother of humanity, and for providing her equality with man.

Kabir rejected the caste system and formalities in the religious system. Jagbir Singh writes about Kabir's thinking about Brahma "He was a propounder of Nirguna Nirakar philosophy of Brahma. That is why the formalities of religion are

negated in his writing. From this view point, he presents the ironic and sarcastic dialogue with Mullah and Pandit (Priest of Temple)” (105). According to Kabir, the God has created us equal. The differences on the basis of caste, religion are not created by God but man himself, against which he raised his voice:

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਾ ਨੂਰ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ।।

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗ ਉਪਜਿਆ, ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਦੇ ।। (qtd. in Kirpal Singh Kasel 53)

All the people are the creation nature.

They are by the same God, so none is good or bad.

The poets of Sufi Literature also protested against the communalism, red tapism and casteism. Bulleh Shah rejected the communal Muslim religious formalities like going to Mosque for five times, to read the Namaz etc. Bulleh Shah inspired the people to acquire God’s love by eliminating all evils from inside his heart instead of practicing religious formalities:

ਫੂਕ ਮਸੱਲਾ ਭੰਨ ਸੁੱਟ ਲੋਟਾ, ਨ ਫੜ ਤਸਬੀ ਕਾਸਾ ਸੋਟਾ

ਆਲਮ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਦੇ ਦੇ ਹੋਕਾ, ਤਰਕ ਹਲਾਲੋ ਖਾਹ ਮੁਰਦਾਰ।

ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦੀ ਨਵੀਓ ਨਵੀਂ ਬਹਾਰ।(15)

Burn the prayer mat and smash the prayer urn

Leave the rosary and the staff

The gods proclaim and say give up Halal and eat murdaar

Ever new is the spring of love.

It is the need of time to raise weapons to acquire one’s own rights. In the medieval age, the Heroic Literature used to excite the fighters to fight in the war. Jeet Singh Joshi writes about the Heroic Literature “To excite the heroic rasas in the hearts of people by telling them the incidents of brave warriors and make them inspire to fight and die against the tyranny” (335). In the medieval age, Guru

Gobind Singh fought for the common people against the Moghul empire. He wrote Chandi di War, which is the example of the victory of good over evil. It excites the man to uproot evil everywhere. According to Satinder Singh Noor “The war is not only between the giants and Durga, but in the armies of the Guru and the Moghuls also. Thus the myth of Chandi or Durga transforms into the historical dialectics of that time, on the one side and the war of the positive and negative values in the heart of man in society on the other. This transformation appears to be portraying it in a possible comprehensive way” (62).

Shah Mohammad has presented the political upheaval of Punjab in his Jungnama Singhan te Firangian. The annexation of Punjab by the British after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh has been presented in it:

ਰਾਜੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਹਿੰਦੂ,
ਸਿਰ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਵੀਂ ਆਫ਼ਤ ਆਈ
ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਜੀ,
ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਤੀਸਰੀ ਜ਼ਾਤ ਆਈ।(150)

The Muslim- Hindu people used to live happily.

There came a problem for the both, Shah Muhammad says

Never came any third caste ever, in Punjab.

When the British government seized the Indian economy and made it a market for the products prepared in Britain, the Indian people realized that they are slaves and they struggled for their freedom. Peasant Movement, Gadhar Movement, Babbar Akali Movement and Naujwan Bharat Sabha etc. produced literature of protest for the freedom of India. The Peasant Movement was started in response to the acquisition of land by the moneylenders when the peasants were not able to return the money borrowed from them. As Rajinder Pal Singh writes “This Movement was also indirectly a protest of the British Law because the law of that time gives the moneylender the right to acquire the land of the peasant in debt. At that time the working peasants were raising their voice and they

considered the British Government the cause of their oppression” (56-7). The conscious people wrote the literature, to aware the people against the oppression of the British.

Gadhar Movement was the movement for the struggle for the freedom of India. The people who were gone abroad and were oppressed by the tyrannical behavior of the British, started a movement for the freedom of the country from the British Rule. As Avinash Arora writes “Several peasants and their sons, gone to Canada and America to earn a living, started working as labourers or workers on farms, but they were not treated well because of the difference due to the creed, colour or religion. . . The feeling of making their country independent arises in their minds to get a respectable place in a foreign country” (285). Due to the malignant behaviour faced by them in a foreign country, they wrote literature of protest, challenging the self-respect of the Punjabi people.

Akali Movement was launched to improve the execution of the gurudwaras, freeing it from the corruption, as Avinash Arora writes “In the 19th century the executive system Gurudwaras was not satisfactory, which dissolved the piousness and routine of the Gurudwaras. So the Sikhs started a struggle for the improvement in the system of Gurudwaras” (294).

The Sikhs had to struggle with the British to end the dictatorship of corrupted priests of Gurudwaras as they were favoured by the British Government. As Rajinder Pal Singh writes: “The Akali Movement protested the British Government directly as the British favoured the priests of the Gurudwaras” (70). The Movement struggled for the liberation of the country the British rule. Some writers, who supported this movement, wrote literature of protest.

Babbar Akali Movement was launched against the corruption in the Gurudwaras. These Babbar Akalis raised arms for the independence of the country. Avinash Arora writes: “The main aim of Babbar Akalis was not only to free the Gurudwaras from the corrupted priests, but also to liberate the country from the foreign yokes. They used to believe on violence for the achievement of their aims” (301). Some literature of Babbar Akali Movement is also available:

ਪਾਣੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਦੋਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਲਹੂ ਵਗਾਉਣਗੇ , ਹਿੰਦ ਨੂੰ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਬੱਬਰ ਕਰੋਣਗੇ ।
ਬੱਬਰਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਸਬਕ ਸਿਖੋ ਪਿਆਰਿਓ । ਕਦੇ ਬੱਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਲੋਂ ਨਾ ਵਿਸਾਰਿਓ ।

(qtd. in Kesar Singh Novelkar 323)

They will pour the blood as water, The Babbars will liberate the Hind,
O! Let us learn a lesson from them, Never forget the Babbars from
heart.

The writers like Hira Singh Dard and Gurmukh Singh Musafir were
conscious writers. Hira Singh Dard (1887-1965) presents the massacre of
Jallianwala Bagh which became a challenge for the British government:

ਗੁੱਸੇ ਨਾਲ ਮਸ਼ੀਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾੜ ਝਾੜੀ ,
ਉਲਟੀ ਬਾਗ ਦੀ ਦੁੱਗਣੀ ਬਹਾਰ ਬਣ ਗਈ ।
ਨਾਲ ਕਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਅੰਗ ਦੇ ਸਾੜਿਆ ਸੂ ,
ਐਪਰ ਖਾਕ ਥੀਂ ਨਵੀਂ ਗੁਲਜ਼ਾਰ ਬਣ ਗਈ । (qtd. in Rajinder Pal 93)

They burn us with the fire of anger,
There became a new flower spot,
They thought they have destroyed me,
But that became a new remembrance.

The anger for the British government in the poetry of Gurmukh Singh Musafir
(1899-1976) is apparent in these lines:

ਪੱਟ ਸੁੱਟਿਆ ਤੇਰਿਆਂ ਲਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੇ, ਬਹੁਤ ਹੋਰ ਨਾ ਚੱਟ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਸਾਡਾ
ਤੇਰੀਆਂ ਲੋਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਹੁਣ ਸੌਂਦਦਾ ਨਾ, ਪੰਥ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪਿਆ ਈ ਜਾਗ ਸਾਡਾ। (qtd. In
Rajinder Pal 100)

Your promises have made us weary, do not torture us more

I'll not sleep by your lullaby as the whole Khalsa Panth is awaken

Deewan Singh Kalapani (1897-1944), who was martyred on the islands of Andemaaan and Nichobars, presented the life of poverty as experienced by himself, the hopes for a prosperous life free from the slavery and for the freedom of country, in his writings. Kesar Singh Kesar writes about the thematic relevance of his poetry "The feeling of national freedom, inspired by the contemporary freedom struggle, the silent pain of enslaved India, curses for his creator, anger for slavery and poverty, a desire to go to any distant place away from the society and the interest to die for a high ideal" (123). There are hopes to leave this world to get rid of the life of poverty in his writings:

ਐਥੇ ਦੁੱਖ ਭੁੱਖ ਬੜੀ

ਜਾਨ ਅਜ਼ਾਬਾਂ ਨੇ ਫੜੀ

ਫੰਧੇ ਨੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਬੜੇ

ਸੰਗਲ ਨੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਬੜੇ

ਹਰ ਦਿਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਗ਼ਮ-ਕੰਡਾ

ਹਰ ਸਿਰ ਤੇ ਦੁੱਖ ਡੰਡਾ

ਟੁਰ ਚਲੀਏ ਓਸ ਜਗ੍ਹਾ

ਜਿਥੇ ਰਹੇ ਕੁਸ਼ਲ ਸਦਾ। (qtd. in Kesar Singh Kesar 124)

Here is much suffering and hunger

The life is caught by many shackles

Every person is unhappy

Let us go to a place

Where there is happiness.

The writings of Mohan Singh (1905-1978) are in protest of communalism and anti-human values. They are in favour of creation of a sociological state. They

raise the voice against communalism, the formation of rich and poor classes and class-struggle and in favour of liberation of women. Jit Singh Joshi opines: "He is the poet of conscious era who introduced the socio-realism in the Punjabi poetry" (387). His writings present the class-conflict and the exploitation of one class by another:

ਦੇ ਟੋਟਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੌਂ ਟੁੱਟੀ,
ਇਕ ਮਹਿਲਾ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਢੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ,
ਦੇ ਧੜਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਲਕਤ ਵੰਡੀ,
ਇਕ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਜੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ।(143)

The land is divided into two parts

One for the palaces and the other for slums

The world is divided into two groups

One is of people and other is of parasites.

His poem Jayedad presents the position of women in a capitalist society. Kirpal Singh Kasel writes: "In Jayedad, the woman is called a stone, who is considered a property by her husband" (455).

Bawa Balwant (1915-1972) was a revolutionary poet. His poetry is a satire on the socio-political conditions of the society. He was in favour of complete freedom of man. Therefore, he revolts against the socio-political values of that time, which he presents in one of his writings:

ਮੈਂ ਇਕ ਇਲਕਲਾਬੀ ਖੁਦਾ ਹਾਂ, ਖੁਦਾ ਹਾਂ
ਮੈਂ ਹਰ ਗਦਰ ਦੇ ਭੜਕਵੇਂ ਦਿਲ ਦਾ ਚਾਅ ਹਾਂ
ਮੈਂ ਨੱਚਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਪਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਤਾਲਾਂ ਤੇ ਹਰਦਮ
ਮੈਂ ਨਿਰਭੈ, ਮੈਂ ਬੇਧੌਫ, ਨਿਸ਼ਚਿੰਤ, ਬੇਗਮ
ਮੇਰਾ ਕੰਮ ਹਰ ਦਿਲ ਨੂੰ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਕਰਨਾ

ਤੇ ਹਰ ਆਸ ਦਾ ਬਾਗ ਆਬਾਦ ਕਰਨਾ।(73)

I'm a revolutionary God, the self

I'm the happiness of the dancing heart of a revolutionary

Every moment, I dance, but on my own beats

My duty is to liberate every heart

And flourish the garden of hope.

Similarly, in another poem:

ਮੈਂ ਬਦਲੀ ਦਾ ਅਵਤਾਰ, ਬਦਲੀ ਦਾ ਰਾਗੀ

ਮੈਂ ਆਕੀ, ਮੈਂ ਆਕੀ, ਮੈਂ ਬਾਗੀ, ਮੈਂ ਬਾਗੀ।(72)

I'm the son of a cloud, the religious singer of clouds

I'm the God, I'm the God, I'm revolutionary, I'm revolutionary.

Amrita Pritam (1919-2005) contributed to Punjabi literature with her many poetry collections like – Amrit Lehraan, O Geetan Waleya, Main Twareekh Han Hind di, Kaagaz te Canvas etc. She presented the problems faced by women in her works. She talks about the liberation, desires and sufferings faced by women in society in her works. She also commented upon the social, political and economic structure of the society. On the whole, her works present the protest of traditional values by a woman. Kirpal Singh Kasel writes: “Pr. Teja Singh called her the voice of Punjab, but it can be appropriate to call her the voice of unhappy and suffering women of Punjab” (457). The writings of Amrita Pritam present the plight of peasants suppressed by the capitalist system. Her writings portray the protest by women against the traditional norms and value system which suppress her and she feels sympathy for the victims of partition violence. She presents the consequences of the partition of India:

ਅੱਜ ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਤੋਂ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬੋਲ

ਤੇ ਅੱਜ ਕਿਤਾਬੇ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਅਗਲਾ ਵਰਕਾ ਫੋਲ

ਇਕ ਰੋਈ ਸੀ ਧੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ, ਤੂੰ ਲਿਖ ਲਿਖ ਮਾਰੇ ਵੈਣ
ਅੱਜ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਧੀਆਂ ਰੋਂਦੀਆਂ , ਤੈਨੂੰ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿਣ
ਉੱਠ ਦਰਦ ਮੰਦਾ ਦਿਆ ਦਰਦੀਆ, ਉਠ ਤਕ ਆਪਣਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ
ਅਜ ਬੋਲੇ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਛੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਲਹੂ ਦੀ ਭਰੀ ਚਨਾਬ (13)

Let me ask Waris shah today to speak up from his grave

And turn the page of book of love

A daughter of Punjab wept and you wrote mournful songs

A million daughters cry today and ask Waris Shah.

O sympathizers of the oppressed, wake up and look at your Punjab

There are corpses lying everywhere and Chenab is full of blood.

She presents the exploitation of the peasants and workers in her poems and remarks upon the corruption of religious institutions in her works.

Jagtar (1935), who published his poetry-collection *Lahoo de Naksh* in 1973. It is related to the Naxalite Movement, in which he raised his voice against the exploitation of the workers. Guriqbal Singh writes about him: "In his poetry, the exploitative and the exploited classes appear in front of each other in a tensed form. Jagtar creates a relationship of disbelief and hatred by portraying the restricted and exploitative policy by exploitative class in a protested form which is the consequence of this tension" (69).

Shiv Kumar Batalvi (1937-1973) wrote many poetry-collections like: *Peerhan da Paraga* (1960), *Laajwanti* (1961), *Luna* (1965), *Birhada* (1975), *Asa Tan Joban Rutte Marna* (1976) etc. Though Shiv Kumar is known as the poet of separation, but there are elements of progressive revolutionary poetry in his works. His epic *Luna* presents the sufferings and inner feelings of all women. He also satirizes upon the economic system of the society:

ਸ਼ਾਲਾ ਬਾਂਝ ਮਰੀਵਣ ਮਾਪੇ

ਢਿਡੋਂ ਭੁੱਖਣ ਭਾਣੇ

ਉਸ ਘਰ ਜੰਮੇ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ੀਸ਼ੇ

ਜਿਸ ਘਰ ਹੋਣ ਨਾ ਦਾਣੇ (146)

May the parents die childless

Who are hungry

May nobody be born in that house

Where there are no grains.

The poets of the Naxalite Movement were in favour of the establishment of a socialist society, by armed revolution because the bourgeoisie class dominated the country and they were in favour of workers/peasants. These poets wrote revolutionary literature through which they encouraged the people for public war, and these writers participated politically in this movement and got martyred. Except Sant Ram Udasi, Paash, Lal Singh Dil, Sant Sandhu, Jujhar Singh, Darshan Singh Khatkad, Amarjit Chandan and C. Markanda etc. are the prominent poets of this movement.

Lal Singh Dil (1943) was born in a Dalit family. Being a Dalit himself, Lal Singh Dil had faced the discrimination based on class since his childhood. So his poems are the portrayal of his real experience of hatred towards the class difference. He was not only a Naxalite writer but a worker also. Balbir Parwana opines "Lal Singh Dil's name is one of the top writers of protest poetry. With his poem Sham da Rang, protest poetry starts. He not only wrote, but thought, analysed and he also fought with a gun for his dreams. The name of Lal Singh Dil also comes in the leaders/workers of Naxalite Movement in Punjab" (76). Lal Singh Dil wrote the literature associated with Naxalite Movement and he also had to face the tortures of police. He wrote the poetry collections like Satluj di Hawa, Sathar and Nag Lok and an autobiography Daastan. The division of class also makes the man to sacrifice his love-affairs, as in his poetry:

ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ ਕਰਦੀਏ

ਪਰ-ਜਾਤ ਕੁੜੀਏ

ਸਾਡੇ ਸਕੇ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਵੀ

ਇਕ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਲਾਉਂਦੇ।(64)

O outcaste girl!

Who loves me

Our relatives do not cremate

The dead bodies at the same place.

Paash (1950-1988), His poetry-collections are: Loh Katha, Udadey Bajan Magar, Sade Sameyan Wich. Besides he also wrote the biography of the Flying Sikh. The letters written by Paash were published under the title Apne Aap Naal Gallan. Paash was known as a Naxalite poet and also a Punjabi poet. Rajinderpal Singh writes: "Paash was not only a poet of Naxalite Movement, but also a brilliant poet of modern Punjabi poetry. His brilliance was accepted and all the critics also agreed to it. Paash was such a poet that in his personality, all the merits of the Naxalite movement were imbibed in. He was poet of having an ideology of class-struggle. The poet presents himself as a speaker of the exploited class" (185). Paash writes his poetry that the most horrible condition is the deadening of the hopes of a living person. As in a communist society, no person is able to fulfill his dreams. Then the hope of living dies which becomes the most horrible situation in society for the mankind:

ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਖ਼ਤਰਨਾਕ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਮੁਰਦਾ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਨਾਲ਼ ਭਰ ਜਾਣਾ,

ਨਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਤੜਪਦਾ, ਸਭ ਸਹਿਣ ਕਰ ਜਾਣਾ

ਘਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਕਲਣਾ ਕੰਮ ਤੇ

ਤੇ ਕੰਮ ਤੋਂ ਘਰ ਜਾਣਾ

ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਖ਼ਤਰਨਾਕ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ

ਸਾਡੇ ਸੁਪਨਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਮਰ ਜਾਣਾ (13)

Most dangerous is

To be filled with dead peace

Not to feel agony and bear it all,

Leaving home for work

And from work return home

Most dangerous is the death of our dreams. (trans. by Sandhu)

Paash's creative power is attached with the workers and the peasants. The picture of hard work and the life of poverty led by a peasant is drawn in his poem Inkaar. Paash was a poet who was in favour of violent methods of Naxalite Movement. He inspires people for armed revolution in his poem Asi Larhangey Saathi. The poetry of Paash is able to create a socialist state by abolishing the classes through armed revolution, where all would be equal and would eat a great deal.

Surjit Patar (1945), he always beat the untrodden path. He wrote about political affairs but he was not related to any movement. He says in an interview with Balbir Parwana "I talk about freedom from any political affair. . . It is wrong to adopt any interest as a fashion" (59). He was influenced by the emergency of 1975, for which he writes against these time.

After the annexation of Punjab into the British Empire, there came a change in the Punjabi literature. Along with poetry, dramas, novel, short-story, autobiography, biography, travelogue and essays were started being written in Punjabi.

Ishwar Chander Nanda (1892-1966) is known as the father of Punjabi theatre. He raised his voice against the social evils in his plays. He wrote and protested about religious formalities, the factors suppressing women. Charan Das Sidhu writes about his plays "I.C.Nanda, who got the name of the father of modern theatre, revealed his society like the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen; he

attacked the duality of values of rural and urban middle-classes and revealed the superstitions, poverty, corruption. He gives voice to women due to his reforming spirit” (qtd. in Verma 50). I.C.Nanda wrote full plays like Subhadra, Var Ghar, Shamu Shah and Social Circle; and his one-act plays are like Jhalkarey, Lishkarey and Chamkarey. His play Dulhan (Suhaag) was his first play in which he protests against the marriage of a young girl to an old man. His other plays like Subhadra and Lilly da Vyah are also related to the problem of marriage of a girl. In Subhadra, he favours widow-remarriage and in Lilly da Vyah, he favours the love marriage of a girl according to her own choice. In one-act play Bebbe Ram Bhajni, he reveals the superstitions and religious formalities. There are also elements of radical protest against the then religious and social evils in his plays. As Satish Kumar Verma says “Taking into account the social conditions of I.C.Nanda’s times, it can be said that the subjects of plays of Nanda are, too much extent, radical” (51).

Harcharan Singh (1914-2006) has a unique place in the field of Punjabi theatre. After Nanda, he has been a successful playwright. He wrote his first play Kamla Kumari and after that he wrote plays like Raja Porus, Dur Duradey Shehron, Anjod, Khedan de Din Char, Ratta Salu, Tera Ghar So Mera Ghar, Sobha Shakti, Chamkaur di Garhi, Kanchan Mati, Kal-Ajj te Bhalak and Hind di Chaadar etc. The socio-political consciousness is seen in his plays. His play Anjod presents the problem of marriage. Kal-Ajj te Bhalak presents the religious superstitions and corruption. It is the story of dreams of a priest to become a minister. In the beginning of the play, Natak Bare do Gallan (Two words about the play), Harcharan Singh writes about his ideology “There is imprint of the time on each writing, a writer cannot close his eyes to the incidents happening around him. Only a fool or timid person can sleep soundly in a haphazard society. A thoughtful person is tensed of the knowledge of day and night. He is compelled to articulate his own voice” (9). In this play Harcharan Singh presented the dying values of society. With Harcharan Singh, there came a radical change in Punjabi drama. His wife started performing the role of women characters on the stage, about which he tells Satish Kumar Verma in an interview “In 1940-41, I presented my wife on the stage in Lahore for the play Anjod for the first time” (58). Before that the roles of

women characters were played by men. Thus, with Harcharan Singh, the trend of playing the role of women characters by women started.

Harsharan Singh (1929-1994) wrote plays like Jigra, Phull Kumla Gya, Apradhi, Udaas Lok and Lamme Samey da Narak etc. His play Lamme Samey da Narak is a play of political consciousness. It reveals the corrupt system of government in independent India.

Sant Singh Sekhon (1908-1997) is known as an intellectual playwright of Punjabi literature. He wrote plays like Kalakaar, Waris, Moyan Saar Na Kayi, Beda Bandh na Sakeyo, Damyanti, Mitar Pyara etc. He suggests solutions for the contemporary inhuman conditions in his plays. Kirpal Singh Kasel opines "Being an intellectual person, he does not let his story in a contracted form, but he weaves it with the economic, political and social problems that they become universal and multifaceted. He not only puts before the problem, but by throwing light on its all aspects, solves it" (371).

Balwant Gargi (1916-2003) wrote plays like Loha Kutt, Sail Pathar, Kanak di Balli, Dhuni di Agg, Gagan Mein Thal etc. In his play Loha Kutt, Gargi has rejected the bonds of social relations. In this play, the two women characters Bano and her mother break the social relations and marry according to their own choice. Balwant Gargi writes in the background of this play "I have respect for such women who act according to their hearts by fighting against the formalities and false traditions. Santi and Bano are such heroines" (17). Gargi also writes in the Preface, about the revolt of Santi and Bano

The heroine Santi is living with Kaku, the blacksmith, forgets about her own feelings. Her young daughter Bano, revolts against the strict environment by challenging her father and elopes with Sarvan. The mother roars like a Chandi on her daughter's act. But later she thinks seriously about her own life. . . the social formalities and traditions become false for her. . . she herself revolts against Kaku and elopes with Gajjan. (18)

Ajmer Singh Aulakh (1942) was born in a middle-class peasant family of Malwa region. He wrote plays like Arbad Narbad Dhundukara, Begane Bohar di Chhaan, Anne Nishanchi, Sukki Kukh, Tudi Wala Kotha, Bhath Kherian da Rehna, Ik Ramayan Hore, Sat Begane, Bhajjian Bahan, Jhanaa de Pani etc. Being born in a middle-class family, Aulakh has seen and experienced the problems and difficulties faced by peasants, which became the basis of his plays. Most of his plays are concerned with the problems of middle-class peasants. He tells in an interview with Balbir Parwana "In my opinion, every writer presents the childhood experiences of their lives. I have felt in my childhood life caught in financial problems. . . In many plays, there are my experiences of village life and those of my family. . . In many plays, my family and my village speak. I could not cross the borders of my village in my heart" (34). In the play Sat Begane, he has presented the problem of inter-caste marriage and the problem of remaining unmarried of a person having not enough land. His play Bhath Kherian da Rehna is related to the Naxalite Movement. Begane Bohar di Chhaan is also related to the peasant life.

With IPTA, there came a new change in the Punjabi Theatre. For the first time, the theatre concentrated on the problems of villagers instead of urban people. It was the theatre of protest against the exploitation of peasants, to bring about their sufferings in their own language, making them aware of the political conditions of the time. This theatre brought about change in Punjabi theatre. In the words of Satish Kumar Verma "For the first time, Punjabi theatre became politically conscious, reached the common people coming out of the academic institutions, approached villages instead of cities and contributed a lot through folk idioms" (31-32).

The playwrights like Joginder Bahrara, Jagdish Fariyadi and Tera Singh Chann played an important role in making IPTA popular. Joginder Bahrara, who was born in 1928, was a prominent playwright of this movement. He wrote plays like Dollar da Vanjara, Tax, Maa, Sahiban etc. He wrote plays and operas. His mother brought him up with the intention of making a brave army officer to fight with the enemy. He emerged as a revolutionary writer. He presented his plays by going to different villages. He was also politically participated in this movement,

being a revolution writer. He protested the corrupt political system in his plays. He wrote operas like Kaal, Ghar-Ghar Eho Agg and Mirza-Sahiban etc.

Safdar Hashmi (1954-1989) was also a playwright of street theatre. He was a supporter of Marxist ideology. He established Jan Natya Manch in 1973. He wrote plays like Raja da Baja, Apahran Bhaicharey da, Hateyarey, Machine, Police Ikhlakam, Aurat, Mehangayee di Maar, Pind ton Shehar Tak, Halla Bol etc. He raised issues like the demands of factory workers, protest of contract system, to give equal wages to women and the arrangement of their children during the working-hours etc. in his play Halla Bol which is translated in to Punjabi.

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CHAPTER TWO

Socio-Political Protest in the Selected Plays (*Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye* and *Savere di Lo*) of Gursharan Singh

Born on 16th September, 1929 in Multan (Pakistan) in the family of Gyan Singh and Kartar Kaur, Gursharan Singh was a multi-faceted personality. Kewal Dhaliwal writes, “. . . an engineer, class one officer, a playwright, an actor, director, publisher, editor and a manager, at the same time” (7). Gursharan Singh studied engineering and became a class one officer. He wrote around 200 plays. He used to act in his own plays. He also worked as a publisher of books which he used to sell to his audience while presenting his plays. He was an editor of magazine named “Samta” and “Sardal”. He was also a founder of Balraj Sahni Yadgari Prakashan. He was founder of theatrical institutes like Amritsar Art Centre (Amritsar Kala Kender) and Pulse Theatre (Pulse Munch). He talks about Pulse Theatre, in an interview with Satish Kumar Verma:

When Pulse Theatre was founded in 1984, its only aim was to aware people about radical transformation in society through the help of plays, songs and literature. (81)

Pulse Theatre brought IPTA into existence once again. Through it Gursharan Singh used the culture and literature to oppose pornographic music and to bring about radical transformation in society. Gursharan Singh joined theatre in 1957. Firstly, he presented the plays of prominent playwrights on stage. Then he started writing plays to bring about his own ideology of radical transformation and social equality among people. With his play *Jin Sach Palle Hoye*, which is based on Gurdial Singh Phull's play, on the centenary celebrations of birth of Guru Nanak Dev, he turned to villages. In 1970s the Naxalite Movement influenced Gursharan Singh. The revolutionary elements got prominence in his ideology. Gursharan Singh was a revolutionary writer of Marxist ideology at very young age, about which he talks with Satish Kumar Verma in an interview “I was studying in school that I related to the Marxist ideology entirely. During 1943-44, when studying in class 9th class, I had become a card holder member of

Communist Party” (100). Gursharan Singh encouraged the common people to acquire their deserved demands during his lifetime.

Gursharan Singh was awarded by many institutions as Best Director Awarded in Sarav Bharti Naat Competition by Nataya Sangh Alahabad, Sahit Trust Dhudike Award, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award from Central government, Shiromani Natakkaar (Street Theatre) from Bharat Bhawan Bhopal, Manjeet Memorial Award from Punjabi Literary Trust, Canada, All India Harmony Award (New Delhi), Kartar Singh Dhaliwal Award from Punjabi Sahit Akademi, First Dr. Phull Memorial Manchan Award from Manchan Arts and Research Centre, Punjabi Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (2002) (Verma 141-42).

Gursharan Singh wrote many plays about the social, economic and political problems of Punjab – Baba Bolda Hai, Kulaj Tera Naa Punjab, Chandigarh – Puareh di Jadh, Planning, Comrede, Mitti da Mull, Nawa Janam, Iko Mitti de Putt, Natak Munshi Khan da, Garib Lok, Tunda Houldar, Kurfiw, Main Ugarwadi Nahi, Vidroh de Rah te, Dhamak Nagare di, Laare, Kursi te Hawa Wich Latakde Lok, Khambha Vali Kurhi, Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye, Savere di Lo etc.

In his plays like Savere di Lo and Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye, he presented problems of independent India – inequality based on gender, unemployment, class-struggle, poverty, rising prices, dictatorship and communalism. Gursharan Slingh always protested against the inhuman behaviour faced by the suppressed people. Anup writes “Bhaa ji was always worried about the suppressed, down-trodden people; he always dreamt and planned individually and collectively about making their lives better. His worries were – people not be looted, befooled and cheated and they become aware” (14). Gursharan Singh struggled for the people who lived their lives in poverty and for the establishment of society providing equality and revolting against the people looted and cheated by one another.

In the present plays Gursharan Singh has brought about the theme of evils like dowry system in Punjab which takes away the life of many innocence girls when they are unable to bring desired amount of wealth in the name of dowry. He also shows how common people become the victim of religious politics and fight with their close ones on the name of religion. When the time of justice comes

again politics takes over the scene in the delaying of decisions, red tapism and corruption leads to the exploitation of already exploited sections of society. His plays raise such issues in order to bring justice to the common people. In the play *Savere di Lo* in this play he gives representation to the marginalised sections of society who are not listened to at any place or time.

Gursharan Singh always raised his voice in his works about the women problems and providing them equality in society. He raised his voice for giving them respect and against the inhuman behaviour faced by them. In his plays *Savere di Lo* and *Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye*, he has presented the problems faced by women in society. His other plays are also related to the women's problems like – *Khambhan Vali Kurhi*, *Begamo di Dhee*, *Rakhrhi*, *Aurat* etc. Gursharan Singh has presented the problems faced by women in society in his plays, as well as he also cared that there should be women in his audience. He used to start his plays only when there are equal number of men and women in his audience. Kewal Dhaliwal writes about the high thinking that he used to announce on his stage before presenting his plays “My daughters, sisters should not sit locked in their homes, they should come and see the plays” (11). Thus Gursharan Singh used to present his plays to the women inviting them from their houses, so that they may be aware of their rights, as the main aim of Gursharan Singh's plays was to aware people of their rights.

He protested against the inferior position of woman in the patriarchal Indian society. He also wrote about different aspects of women's lives like their position of not taking the decision regarding their lives in their homes and in society, about which his daughter Navsharan writes “He criticized the most popular way of abusing others in the name of woman, the woman being considered as the property of man, beating and the inhuman behaviour towards women, sex determination and female foeticide and called them as indication of shameful acts of our culture” (65). Thus Gursharan Singh protested the inhuman behaviour towards women, women being beaten as beasts by their husbands, female foeticide and other woman-opposing aspects in his plays.

In the play *Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye*, in an incident, a woman is burnt alive. The dowry seeking people burn their daughter-in-law. Women have to

face many difficulties only due to their inferior position as women in society, about which Balwinder Kaur Brar in her book Naarivaad, Sidhant, Chintan ate Vichar writes “The woman has to face problems only due to her position as woman like – sati system, widowhood, prostitution, dowry, child-marriage, rape, kidnapping, divorce etc. – are formed by man himself” (5). In Indian society, women are always suppressed by the rules made by man. All institutions give man superior position and woman inferior.

The dogmatic tradition like dowry is a blemish on the image of women since ages. The girl’s parents are compelled to give bulky gifts, ornaments, cloths etc. to her in-laws despite their pathetic financial conditions, at the time of marriage. In case, a girl fails to come up to greedy monetary expectations of her in-laws, she becomes the victim of their torture. She is expelled from the house or sometimes subject to physical violence or even killed. In the play, Har Ik nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye, Gursharan Singh has presented such an inhuman attitude:

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: ਇਹ ਚੀਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਸੁਣ ਰਹੇ ਹੋ? ਇਹ ਦੌੜੀ ਹੋਈ ਘਰ ਦੀ ਨੂੰਹ ਆਈ ਏ । ਉਹਦੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਉਹਦਾ ਪਤੀ ਏ, ਉਹਦਾ ਦਿਉਰ ਏ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਫੜ ਲਿਆ ਏ- ਉਹ ਡਿੱਗ ਪਈ ਏ। ਇਹ ਬੁੱਢੀ ਬੋਤਲ ਫੜ ਕੇ ਆਈ। ਇਹ ਸੱਸ ਏ। ਦੇਖੋ ਤੇਲ ਛਿੜਕ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਪਤੀ ਨੇ ਤੀਲੀ ਲਗਾਈ ਏ। ਕੁੜੀ ਦੇ ਕੱਪੜੇ ਸੜ ਰਹੇ ਨੇ। ਕੁੜੀ ਸੜ ਰਹੀ ਏ।
(29)

Impresario (Sutardhar): Do you hear these cries? The bride of the house is coming running. Her husband is behind her, her brother-in-law too. They have caught her and she has fallen down. An old woman comes with a bottle in her hand. She is the mother-in-law. She has sprinkled oil on her. The husband lights fire. Her clothes are burning! The girl is burning.

In this way, a girl is killed by burning alive in her in-laws house. Her right to live is violated by this insatiable world. Her parents who are already suppressed with the challenges of inflation and incapability to fulfill the never-ending demands of her in-laws, due to which she is murdered by setting on fire. The humanitarian values in the society are on the verge of extinction as none turns up to help her out

in spite of her screams for help. The neighbours just keep on watching the game. So Gursharan Singh has depicted the deteriorated picture of the society.

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: ਇੱਕ ਕੁੜੀ ਕੇ ਮਰ ਗਈ, ਇੱਕ ਬਾਬਲ ਦੀ ਧੀ ਮਰ ਗਈ, ਸਭ ਨੇ ਵੇਖਦਿਆਂ ਵੇਖਦਿਆਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੇਖਿਆ, ਸਭ ਨੇ ਸੁਣਦਿਆਂ ਹੋਇਆ ਕੁੱਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੁਣਿਆ...(31-32)

Impresario (Sutardhar): A girl. A daughter of her father died. Everybody saw everything, yet did not see anything. Everybody heard, yet did not hear anything. .

The people avoid from appearing in the court even as witnesses as they take the legal processes as trouble making and put them in undue hassles and visits to the courts. They prefer to continue their so called relations with their neighbours rather than showing any concern towards the victim.

1. ਗਵਾਂਢ ਮੱਥਾ ਏ ਲੜਾਈ ਥੋੜ੍ਹੀ ਲੈ ਸਕਦੇ ਆਂ।
2. ਹੁਣ ਤਾਂ ਘਰ ਘਰ ਇਹੋ ਅੱਗ ਏ।
3. ਕੋਈ ਸਟੋਵ ਨਾਲ ਸੜ ਰਹੀ ਏ।
4. ਕੋਈ ਗੈਸ ਨਾਲ ਸੜ ਰਹੀ ਏ।(30)

1. How can we quarrel with the neighbours.
2. It is the course of the day in every house.
3. Someone is burning with the stove.
4. Someone is burning with the gas.

It shows that the people prefer social relations over human beings. They do not want to get involved in any kind of violent action and ignore such inhuman instances of killing the girls. Therefore, they prefer to ignore such instances occurring in day to day life where the innocent girls are killed. Even the law gives more importance to evidences instead of dealing with the murderers in accordance with due process of law. Many times, the murderers are acquitted due to non-availability of witnesses. Gursharan Singh has presented the mean character of law, judge, police and lawyer through the following instance:

ਜੱਜ: ਆਰਡਰ, ਆਰਡਰ। ਕੋਈ ਚਸ਼ਮਦੀਦ ਗਵਾਹ?

ਵਕੀਲ: ਮੀ-ਲਾਰਡ, ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ।

ਜੱਜ: ਮਰਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਕੁੜੀ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਬਿਆਨ?

ਵਕੀਲ: ਮੀ ਲਾਰਡ, ਪੁਲਿਸ ਦੇ ਪਹੁੰਚਣ 'ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਉਹ ਮਰ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਸੀ।

ਜੱਜ: ਮੁਕੱਦਮੇ ਦੀ ਬੁਨਿਆਦ।

ਵਕੀਲ: ਮੀ ਲਾਰਡ, ਮਾਂ ਬਾਪ ਦਾ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੁੜੀ ਦੇ ਸਹੁਰੇ ਘਰ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਆਮ ਤੰਗ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਮਾਪਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਘਰੋਂ ਪੈਸੇ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ।

ਜੱਜ : ਕੋਈ ਠੋਸ ਸਬੂਤ?

ਵਕੀਲ :ਮੀ ਲਾਰਡ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ।(32)

Judge: Order, order, is there any eye-witness?

Lawyer: None, My lord!

Judge: Any statement by the deceased girl?

Lawyer: My lord, she died before the police have arrived.

Judge: What is the basis of the case?

Lawyer: My lord, the father's statement that the girl was tormented in her bridal home and she was forced to bring money from her parental home.

Judge: Any other proof?

Lawyer: None, My lord!

In this way, the case of murder of a victim is disposed of on account of unavailability of proper evidences:

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: ਹਿੰਦੋਸਤਾਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਸਬੂਤਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਖਲੋਤਾ ਹੈ। ਸਬੂਤ ਹੈ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਸ ਲਈ ਕਾਤਲ ਬਰੀ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ।(32)

Impresario (Sutardhar): Indian Law stands on proofs. There were no proofs, so the murderers were acquitted. (32)

No substantial step is taken in the society to curb such evils which ultimately lead to a rapid increase in similar incidents. Gursharan Singh was a revolutionary writer who urged to raise voice against such shameful mockeries of justice and humanity.

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: 2. ਕੋਈ ਧੀ ਦਾਜ ਦੇ ਲਾਲਚੀਆ ਹੱਥੋਂ ਸਾੜੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਏ ਤਾਂ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਨਾ ਬਣੀਏ
। (40)

Impresario (Sutardhar): 2. If a daughter is being burned by dowry-seekers, we should not be silent-witnesses.

Gursharan Singh was interested in bringing about a social change to improve the existing condition of women. Therefore, he encouraged women to join mass revolutionary movements and leave their traditional role. His main focus was on the empowerment of women and bring them on the equal footing with the men in the society. Gursharan Singh writes "It will become a mass-power when these sisters and daughters of mine will stand equal to men" (60). The women would have to take a step forward by joining revolutionary movements to have equal status like men. The revolution in the society can be brought about by the whole power of the public with the involvement and participation of both- men and women. In the play, *Savere di Lo*, Reshmo is daughter of the person belonging to the category of slum dwellers and rag-pickers. She is brutally exploited in the feudalistic society by the rich class. Reshmo shares her experience of eve-teasing and stalking by rich people like Inderjit who is the owner of the land where Reshmo lives with her family.

ਰੇਸ਼ਮੋਂ: ਮੈਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਆਈ ਤੇ ਜਿੰਨਾ ਚਿਰ ਖੜ੍ਹੀ ਰਹੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਵੱਲ ਵੀ ਬੇਸ਼ਰਮੀ ਦੀਆ ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਵੇਖਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ। ਉਹਨੇ ਕੋਈ ਨਵੀਂ ਗੱਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਬਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੋਜ਼ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਕੁੱਝ ਸਹਿਣਾ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਏ। ਹੱਟੀਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਬੈਠੇ ਸੋਠ ਵੀ ਬੇਸ਼ਰਮੀ ਨਾਲ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਨੇ ਤੇ ਰਾਲਾਂ ਸੁੱਟਦੇ ਨੇ।(26)

Reshmo: When I came, he kept looking at me brazenly till I kept standing there. He did not do anything new. I have to undergo this

everything in the bazaars. Seths sitting at the shops stare at me and lust for me.

She is a progressive girl and agreement with Raju, a hard core supporter of naxalite movement. Reshmo joins naxalite movement due to the suppressions of her class, as she says,

ਰੇਸ਼ਮੋਂ: ਗ਼ਰੀਬ ਬੰਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਕਦੀਰ ਬਦਲਣ ਲਈ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਚੁੱਕਣੇ ਪੈਣਗੇ ਤੇ ਗੱਲ ਸੁਣ ਜਦੋਂ ਲੋੜ ਪਈ ਮੈਂ ਦਾਤਰਾ ਬੋਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਿਆ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੇਣਾ।(27)

Reshmo: The poor will have to use weapons to change their destiny. And listen! I will not let the sickle remain in the sack when the need arises.

Gursharan Singh has picturised the revolt of a lady to save her honour against the molestation by the elite class.

ਰੇਸ਼ਮੋਂ: ਕਿਉਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਥੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ? ਤੂੰ ਸੋਚਿਆ ਕਿ ਬਸਤੀ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਢਾਹੁਣ ਗਏ ਹੋਣਗੇ। ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਗੁੰਡਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਰੇਸ਼ਮੋ ਨੂੰ ਚੁੱਕ ਲਿਆਓ ਪਰ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਪਤਾ ਕਿ ਲੀਰਾਂ ਚੁੱਕਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਰੇਸ਼ਮੋ ਆਪਣੇ ਬੋਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਾਤਰਾ ਵੀ ਰੱਖਦੀ ਏ।(29)

Reshmo: Why shouldn't I be here? You thought that the town-people will have gone to demolish the shops. You told your hench-man to abduct Reshmo, the rag-picker, keeps a sickle in a sack at her place.

In this way, Reshmo faces the goons of Inderjit with sickle and saves herself against attempt of molestation. Similarly, Gursharan Singh has presented the big gap between the rich and the poor class by pointing out the excessive use of money at the time of marriage of daughter by the rich class while on the other hand, the poor people who are unable to tie the knots due to lack of money in his play Har Ik nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye.

ਗ਼ਰੀਬੜਾ: ਮੈਂ ਹਾਲੀਂ ਤੱਕ ਆਪਣੀ ਧੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਪੀਲੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਿਆ।

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: ਕਿਉਂ ਬਾਬਾ?

ਗ਼ਰੀਬੜਾ: ਕਾਰਜ ਲਈ ਜੋ ਪੈਸੇ ਜੋੜੇ ਸਨ, ਉਹ ਬਿਮਾਰੀ ਨੇ ਖਾ ਲਏ।(35)

Poor man: I could not marry off my daughter yet.

Impresario (Sutardhar); Why Baba?

Poor man: The money I had saved for her dowry was all spent in my illness.

Gursharan Singh, in addition to these plays, has dealt with the adherence to naxalite route in life due to excesses inflicted against women in his other plays like Begmo di Dhee:

ਮਾਸਟਰਨੀ: (ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ)...ਬੰਗਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀ ਲਹਿਰ ਉੱਠੀ ਤੇ ਉਹ ਕੁੜੀ ਛੋਟੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਸੀ। ਬੇਗਮੋ ਨੇ ਇੱਕ ਦਿਨ ਸਾਰੀ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਉਸ ਧੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਣਾਈ ਤੇ ਨਿੱਕੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਧੀ ਨੇ ਇਰਾਦਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਕਿ ਇੱਕ ਨਾ ਇੱਕ ਦਿਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਨਕੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਜਾਏਗੀ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਜ਼ੁਲਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਬਦਲਾ ਲਏਗੀ।(18)

Masterni (to herself): . . .When revolutionary wave started Bengal, she was a little girl. Begmo told her the whole story one day and the little girl decided to go to her maternal village one day and to avenge the tortures pupekated on her mother.

Masterni, take the revenge of molestation of her mother Begamo from Palla by killing him. Gursharan Singh raised voice for social equality for women in his play Aurat. With the passage of time, this concept has been strengthened. This play introduces with the background of women through the character Aurat and informs about their claim for dignity and equality in modern times.

ਔਰਤ: ਔਰਤ ਗੁਨਾਹ ਦਾ ਪੁਤਲਾ ਏ। ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੋ ਦੁੱਖ ਏ ਉਹਦੀ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਔਰਤ ਏ, ਢੋਲ, ਡੰਗਰ, ਕਣਕ ਤੇ ਔਰਤ ਜਿੰਨਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੁੱਟਿਆ ਜਾਏ, ਓਨਾ ਹੀ ਠੀਕ ਏ। ਔਰਤ ਮਰਦ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ। ਅੱਜ ਇਹ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਬੂਲ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ।(31)

Woman: A woman is a statue of crime. Whatever misery there is in the world, woman is at the root of that misery. Drums, Animals, wheat grains and women deserve to be beaten. A woman can never be equal to a man. Such things are unacceptable today.

Gursharan Singh has remarked in context of social references of religion which are not in favour of equal status of women in the society. He wrote, in this

regard, in June 1986 Samta “Conservative values are just opposite to the modern humanitarian affirmations. In this regard, it is indispensable to discuss about the human rights of Muslim women. The laws of Shariyat made during 6th century reflect the negative approach towards the rights of women. Therefore, transformation is unavoidable in modern context so far as these values are concerned” (5). Gursharan Singh has advocated for equality and dignified life of women to bring them on equal pedestal by bringing them out of the conflict of conservative and religious approaches. He argued for the liberties of women for enabling them to stand for themselves and create their own identity in life. Due to such ideas, it has become possible that the name of mother is written in the certificates of matriculation and senior higher secondary along with the name of father. (Anoop Singh, 84)

Gursharan Singh has covered the revolt through class-struggle in his plays *Savere di Lo* and *Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye*. According to Marxist ideology, there are two types of classes in a society – capitalist and proletariat. One of these classes is exploited one and the other is exploiter which believes in suppressing the former class. Marx and Engles have put forward “The aim of Marxism is to bring about a classless society, based on common ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange” (150). India is such a country there the gap between the rich and poor is widening day by day. Gursharan Singh wanted to abolish this class struggle and visualized for establishment of egalitarian society. He wrote in this regard in Magazine Samta in September 1986 “India is a state belonging not to the farmers or labourers. It means it is a State rather of elite class. Therefore, the crores of the people cannot be made free without abolishing this elite class” (12).

In order to abolish this class conflict, Gursharan Singh opted for a revolutionary tone. Gursharan Singh has shown the struggle of these classes in his play *Savere di Lo*. There is one class which is the exploited one living in slums and other belongs to so called elite class like Inderjit which favours exploitation. The poor people like Raghu who live on the land of landlords like Inderjit situated on the bank of drains are bound to sustain their life in such in-dignified and unhygienic circumstances because they do not have their own property. Therefore, Inderjit considers them as their subject or, in other words, property. He

used to get his illegal task e.g., dispossessing, performed by this downtrodden class in lieu of payment of little money. So they have to contend with the goons of opponents and then bear the blows of police. In this way, the people like Inderjit remain the owner of their estate spreading in lakhs while individuals like Raghu remain poor in spite of doing many things in life. Nonetheless, they do not earn much to suffice even their livelihood or for the study of their children. Their wards are compelled to start picking rags instead of going to the school. The drastic situation of poor class has been reflected by Gursharan Singh in this play:

ਰਾਜੂ: ਹਾਂ ਇਹੋ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਏ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਉਹਦੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ 'ਤੇ ਬੈਠੇ ਹਾਂ, ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਏ ਕਿ ਉਹਦਾ ਸਾਡੇ 'ਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਏ, ਅਸੀਂ ਉਹਦੇ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਹਾਂ, ਉਹ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ਼ ਜੋ ਸਿਆਹ ਸਫ਼ੈਦ ਕਰੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਬੋਲ ਸਕਦੇ।(26)

Raju: Yes, he is the same Sardar. We are residing on his land. Therefore, he thinks that he owns us. We are his slaves. He can do anything: right or wrong and we will not protest.

A character named Raju wants to acquire the land tells the poor the price of that land and the money given to them for the acquisition of that land:

ਰਾਜੂ: ਕੀਮਤ ਦੇਣੀ ਏ 50 ਰੁਪਏ ਬੰਦਾ ਤੇ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ 'ਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਏ, ਉਹ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।(25)

Raju: The amount has been fixed at fifty rupees per person. But the property acquired will amount to Lakhs of Rupees.

Raju informs about the behaviour of police regarding beating of Raghu:

ਰਾਜੂ : ...ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਉਹ ਕੁਟਾਖਾ ਚੜ੍ਹੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਫੇਰ 15 ਦਿਨ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉੱਠ ਨਾ ਸਕੋ...(25)

Raju: ...You will be beaten so badly that you won't be able to get up for at least fifteen days...

The lower classes are subjected to the suppression of elite class due to their basic requirements of Food, Clothes and Shelter (Roti, Kapra te Makaan).

Raju said about the situation of poor people in this play:

ਰਾਜੂ: ਬਾਪੂ ਕਦੀ ਸੋਚਿਆ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਈ ਲੜਨ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹੋ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਸ਼ੂਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਘਰ ਵੀ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਚੰਗੇ ਹੋਣਗੇ। ਸਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਬਿਜਲੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਪਾਣੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਹਰ ਪਾਸੇ ਚਿੱਕੜ, ਮੱਛਰ, ਗੰਦਗੀ...ਏਥੇ ਹੈ ਕੋਈ ਹਸਪਤਾਲ, ਲਾਗੇ ਹੈ ਕੋਈ ਸਕੂਲ? ਕਦੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਚਾਹਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਵੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਵਾਕੁਨ ਸਕੂਲ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ।(28-29)

Raju: Babu, have you ever thought? The people for whom you are fighting for have better stables than our houses. We don't have electricity, water; there is mud everywhere, mosquitoes, garbage...is there a hospital? Is there a school? Have they ever thought that our children too should go to schools like theirs.

Poor people are bound to live their life like slaves without modern facilities. Gursharan Singh wanted to bring about the transformation in the lives of poor people. He abandoned his luxurious life by adopting the way of struggle with the purpose to remove the gap between the rich and the poor. He motivated the lower class by creating awareness among them regarding their equal status and liberties. Gursharan Singh was influenced by many incidents happened during his childhood such as his friend Budhua left his study in between due to compulsions and poor family background, even he had to take up the groom for employment. It affected the psychology of the author. In fact, this fact was told by Gursharan Singh, himself in his meeting with Balbir Parvana

One day when I was going to the college, someone called me by saying Kakaji. Budhua was in front me, wearing the clothes of a sweeper, taking a broom in his hand. I asked, "Why have you changed so much? And why have you left study? His reply was, "What do we poor people study!" This became the most important incident of my life, which influenced my thinking. I started thinking about the difference between the rich and the poor, and also about the injustices done by such differences, due to which the intellectual persons like Budhua could not study. (11)

Gursharan Singh tried to motivate the poor people for asserting their equal status in socio-economic aspects of life and to remove disparity among the classes through revolutions. He opposed the social values prevailing in the society

leading to exploitation. During his service as an engineer at Bhakhra Dam, he realized if water can be stored by making the dams, then why flow of public power cannot be restrained. This realization led him to be the supporter of public welfare oriented attitude in his theatre (Verma 73). Class struggle was picked up by him as protest in his various serials. His play Savere di Lo is story about ending the class struggle and transforming socio-economic aspects of life by establishing equality. The character of Raju, encouraged the people to join him on the path of naxalite movement against elite class for asserting their equality and prosperity. He favours the use of force in revolutionary movements by saying:

ਰਾਜੂ: ਹਾਂ ਹਥਿਆਰਬੰਦ ਇਨਕਲਾਬ। ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ਼ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਚੁੱਕਣਾ। ਹੁਣ ਇਹ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ। ਬਾਪੂ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿ ਗਿਆ ਏ ਕੁਝ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਖ਼ਾਲੀ ਕਰਵਾਉਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ, ਉਹ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਏ ਕਿ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਜੋ ਬੈਠੇ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਖ਼ਾਲੀ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ। ਉਹ ਢਾਹੁਣੀਆਂ ਪੈਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ। ਜ਼ੋਰ ਨਾਲ ਖ਼ਾਲੀ ਕਰਵਾਉਣੀਆਂ ਪੈਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੱਡੇ ਲੋਕ ਜੋ ਇਸ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਦਾਤਾਂ ਸਾਂਝੀ ਬੈਠੇ ਨੇ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਗ਼ਰੀਬਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਵੰਡ ਦੇਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ। ਉਹ ਖੋਹਣੀਆਂ ਪੈਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ। (27)

Raju: Yes, armed revolution. To lift arms in order to bring about change. Sardar had just come. He told Bapu to get the shops vacated. He knows that the tenants will not go of their own will. The shops will have to be demolished or vacated forcefully. Similarly those privileges once who have all the comforts in the society, will not give away their wealth to the poor. We will have to snatch it.

Poor people have to strive for equality in the society. They are bound to come in conflict with the elite class for recovering their share in the social material. As Raju said in this play:

ਰਾਜੂ: ਜੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਇਸ਼ਾਰੇ 'ਤੇ ਕੁਹਾੜੀਆਂ, ਗੈਂਤੀਆਂ, ਸਰੀਏ, ਲਾਠੀਆਂ ਚੁੱਕ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਕੁਹਾੜੀਆਂ ਲਾਠੀਆਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਕਦੀਰ ਬਦਲਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਚੁੱਕ ਸਕਦੇ?... (27)

Raju: If we can pick up cudgels, sickles, hammers and sticks on other's commands, why can we use them to build our destin?...

In this way, Gursharan Singh made an appeal to the poor class to live the life of liberty for transforming their luck and life on the line of prosperity. They

should prefer to live with courage and bravery instead of depending upon the wealthy class. Gursharan Singh has adopted the revolutionary approach in his play *Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye*. The rich class in the society believes in show-off their rich and lavish life-style by spending more on social occasions while the poor people are bound to live their daily life in dark houses even without light. This travesty has been dealt with in this play: Poor people's condition:

1. ਉਹਦੀ ਝੁੱਗੀ ਹਨੇਰੀ ਏ।
2. ਉਹਦੀ ਬਸਤੀ ਹਨੇਰੀ ਏ।
3. ਉਹਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਹਨੇਰੀ ਏ।
4. ਉਹਦੀ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਹਨੇਰੀ ਏ।(34)

1. His hut is darkness.
2. His locality is darkness.
3. His life is darkness.
4. His world is darkness.

Condition of rich people:

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: ਤੇ ਇਹ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਅੰਨ੍ਹੀ ਜਗਮਗ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਅਮੀਰੀ ਦਾ ਵਿਖਾਵਾ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਨੇ।

1. ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੌਸ਼ਨੀ 'ਤੇ ਡਾਕਾ ਮਾਰ ਰਹੇ ਨੇ।(34)

Impresario (Sutardhar): And these who show off their wealth in blinding splendour.

1. They are snatching other people's lights.

Besides these plays, Gursharan Singh has presented the class struggle in his satire style in his play *Kammian da Vehrha*. This play deals with the problem of exploited class in getting illegal works done from them in lieu of a little amount for their livelihood. The labourers worked in the farms of the landlords to extract 'local wine' (desi sharab). When they are caught by the police – they are brought before the Panchyat and insulted before all the villagers. Even in police station, they

suffer inhuman treatment by the police. This tragedy has been covered in this play in the form of resentment. There is a character namely Jagga in this play who is a labourer working in the farms of Sucha Singh. In the last part of the play, he settled the scores with Sucha Singh for every incident he faced while working for Sucha Singh. He recovers monetary compensation against his thrashing and insult by the police.

ਬਾਪੂ ਜੀ: ਜੱਗਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਖਾਧੀ ਹੋਈ ਜੁੱਤੀ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਲ 10 ਰੁਪਏ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ ਜੇਕਰ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਰੀ ਸੱਥ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਸ ਜੁੱਤੀਆਂ ਖਾ ਲਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਤੂੰ 100- ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਏ।

ਜੱਗਾ: ਹਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਹਾਂ-ਇਹ ਦਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਿਰਫ 5 ਖਾ ਲਏ-ਵੱਡਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਏ, ਮੈਂ ਇਹਨੂੰ ਵੱਜੀ ਜੁੱਤੀ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਲ ਵੀਹ ਰੁਪਏ ਪਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਹਾਂ। (47)

Bapu (father): Jagga! You have valued the blow taken by you at Rs. Ten. If Sucha Singh is ready to take ten blows in the whole assembly, will you pay him hundred rupees.

Jagga: Yes I am ready to pay. If he accepts five blows instead of ten, I will consider him a great man. I will pay him Rs. twenty for each blow.

Gursharan Singh, in the play, remarks that rich people can realize the predicament and pain of the unprivileged classes only by making the rich class realize that if the rich people step in the shoes of lower and down-trodden, only then they can realize the pain and insult of slavery and to do illegal acts.

Later on, Gursharan Singh raised his voice against the ruling class against inequalities inflicted by the society. He revolted against the use of force by ruling class during the period of emergency and riots of 84 with the urge to create a new social order based on equality and liberty. He made a strong attack upon the use of force and dividing the people on the name of religion by the ruling class. Regarding his concern towards political scenario, he shares his beginning this area with Satish Kumar Verma

First instance of conflict with the government arose in 1975. When emergency was imposed, it was very painful for me. We were never of the opinion that there should be any kind of deterioration of value

in the masses. Therefore, I performed a play on December 13, 1975 in spite of the fact that there was emergency and restriction on every kind of activity. It led to deprive me of my job. (101)

Gursharan Singh used to express his resentment against the imposition of emergency by the government to represent the interests of ordinary people. This was the main reason of losing the job and even he had to go to prison. The ruling elite, in order to suppress the voice of people, implicated them in false police cases against the supporters and communists of Marxist ideology. This inhuman treatment with communists has been covered comprehensively by Jaswant Kanwal in his novel *Lahoo di Lo*. Gursharan Singh retaliated against unfair political forces. He created the plays based on history of Sikh religion on the theme of protest against establishment to encourage the communists. He wrote *Tatti Tawi*, *Guru Ladhore Rey*, *Niotia di Oat*, *Chandani Choank*, *Parakh*, *Kiv Kurhe Tuat Paal*, *Surme di Sirjana*, *Purja Purja Kaat Marey*, *Tabbey Rosh Jaago*, *Eh Lahu Kis da Hai*, *Bhagauti di Shakti* etc. Kewal Dhaliwal opines regarding these plays of Gursharan Singh "...though it was in view the sacrifice of lives by younger sons (Chotte Sahibjade) of Guru Gobind Singh Ji that the play *Kiv Kurhe Tuat Paal* was written in 1975 yet it struck hard blows at the foundations of ruling power..."(9). These plays depicted the ultimate way of making attempts to raise voice and weapons against the suppressions of human values in the Sikh history. These also exposed the realities of ruling class as in the play *Surme di Sirjana*:

ਸਿੰਘ: ਤੇ ਹਰ ਇੱਕ ਹਕੂਮਤ, ਇਹ ਸਮਝਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਡੰਡੇ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਨਾਲ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਲਾਗੂ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਤੇ ਉਪਕਾਰ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਜਦ ਕਿ ਅਸਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਹ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਕਾਂ 'ਤੇ, ਇੱਜ਼ਤ 'ਤੇ, ਡਾਕਾ ਮਾਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।(97)

Singh: Every administration thinks that they are obliging people by enforcing strict laws. Whereas the truth is that they are stealing people's rights.

The ruling class forcibly applies its laws to suppress the factual problems of unemployment, inequalities and other forms of exploitations. Gursharan Singh has selected the character of Dulla in *Dhamak Nagare di* who emerges as the protagonist of people and opposed the atrocities of ruling class. Gursharan Singh

also opposed to the idea of communalism and blood revolution in past few decades which was basically ignited by Khalistan Movement. The dictatorial attitude of rulers was given hard blows by Gursharan Singh. His plays on the problem of Punjab are: Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye, Baba Bolda Hai, Curfew, Chandigarh-Puarhe di Jarh, Sadharan Lok, Kursi Morcha te Hawa Wich Latak de Lok, Kulaaj Tera Naa Punjab etc. Gursharan Singh diagnosed the reasons of communalism, dictatorship, exploitation of common man and murder of the aspirations of masses in these plays. He adopted satire in his play Har Ik nu Jion da haq Chahidaye to strike at the roots of unreasonable demands of conservative Sikh leaders and killing by them on the name of religion.

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: (ਤਨਜ਼ ਨਾਲ) ਫੇਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਣ ਨੇ?

1. ਜੋ ਬੇਗੁਨਾਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਤਲ ਕਰਨ?
2. ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਗਰੀਬ ਦਾ ਗਾਟਾ ਲਾਹੁਣ?
3. ਬੱਸਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਫ਼ਰ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਖੂਨ ਕਰਨ?
4. ਮੰਦਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੂਰਤੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਗ ਲਾਉਣ? (37)

Impresario (Sutardhar): Who are Sikhs then?

1. Those who kill innocents?
2. Those who exploit some poor man?
3. Those who murder travellers?
4. Those who raze idols in temples?

Sikh conservative leaders used to adhere to the tactics of riots, affray and kept on disturbing law and order in order to build their pressure upon the government. The ultimate effect of such like incidents was on the life of innocent people. Sikh conservative leaders started to consider Hindu as their main enemies. Therefore they used to attack the temples and idols and put them on fire. Gursharan Singh was the author who stood for progressive values. He reacted to the atrocities against innocents without having regard of their religion whether Sikh or Hindu. He was opponent of every kind of murder. He was against the inhuman treatment and supported this idea in his play Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye. He wrote in Samta "Right to self respect is a right of every individual in modern

world. It is also a right of Sikhs in India. It is also a right of Hindus in Punjab. There has been a struggle on the issue of assertion of this right throughout the world. I tried to involve myself in this struggle” (2).

Gursharan Singh was in fact committed to work against the problem of communal tensions regarding which the government as well as revolutionary and religious conservative forces used to ignore. This aspect of communal strains has been covered by him in his play *Kursi Morcha te HawaVich Latak de Lok*. Ordinary people used to find themselves in between the air due to movements of government as well as conservative people. The situation of ordinary people gets worse day by day. Their issues like poverty, unemployment, value of the crop products of farmers remain far away from their finality. Gursharan Singh's play *Har Ik nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye* further covers the problem of robbery even by the police during the phase of terrorism:

3. ਰੀਪੋਰਟਾਂ ਮਿਲੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਤਲ ਵੇਲੇ ਤਾਂ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਲੱਭਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਮੌਕੇ ਤੋਂ ਘੰਟੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਪੁੱਜਦੀ ਏ।
4. ਪਰ ਚੌਕ 'ਤੇ ਸਕੂਟਰ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਕੇ 10 ਰੁਪਏ ਝਾੜ ਸਕਦੀ ਏ।
1. ਮੋਟਰ ਸਾਈਕਲ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਅਤਿਵਾਦੀ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ 100 ਰੁਪਏ ਆਪਣੇ ਬੋਝੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਏ। (39)
3. There are reports that the police do not find anywhere, but reaches the spot after one hour essentially.
4. But can grab 10 Rupees by parking scooter in a square.
1. Can grab 100 Rupees by calling a motorcyclist a terrorist.

During this phase, the police used to exploit the people by addressing them terrorist or to be associated with terrorist instead of protecting the life of the people. Gursharan Singh has adopted the technique of satire to explain the government approach towards the Punjab issue.

3. ...ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਮਸਲਾ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਹੱਲ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ?
ਸਰਕਾਰ : ਹੌਲੇ ਹੌਲੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਏਗਾ। (38)

3. Why can't Punjab Matter be Resolved?

Govt: Nothing can be hastily resolved in governance.

In the same play:

3. ਪਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਮਸਲੇ ਦਾ ਫਸਤਾ ਕਿਉਂ ਨੀਂ ਵੱਢਦੇ?

ਸਰਕਾਰ: ਸਿਆਸਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਗੱਲ ਦਾ ਫਸਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੱਢਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ।

4. (ਤਨਜ਼ ਨਾਲ) ਸਗੋਂ ਗਲ ਨੂੰ ਲਮਕਾਇਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

1. ਤਾਂ ਜੋ ਲੋਕ ਉਲਝੇ ਰਹਿਣ।

2. ਇੱਕ ਦੂਜੇ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਰਹਿਣ।

3. ਵਾਦਵਿਵਾਦ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਰਹੇ।

4. ਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਦੁਕਾਨ ਚੱਲਦੀ ਰਹੇ।(39)

3. But why don't you solve the issue through mutual understanding.

Govt.: Nothing can be hastily resolved in governance.

Rather it is delayed.

1. So that people remain tangled.

2. Speak against each other.

3. Debates continue.

4. And your business prospers.

Gursharan Singh, raises his objection as to the working of government from time to time as the government instead of adjudicating upon the issues keep them pending. It further leads to anarchy in the society the people indulged in enmity with each other. They move further to take law into their hands and create a chaos in the society. Gursharan Singh expressed his concern over the role of religious conservative leadership and government policies to sustain disputes between various communities in his play *Kulaj Tera Naa Punjab*. He criticized the humanitarian approach on the part of the government and communal leaders as:

ਨੌਜੁਆਨ: ਮੈਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਭਿੰਡਰਾਂਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਗਲਤ ਆਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ 'ਚ ਫੌਜੀ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਗਲਤ ਆਖਿਆ ਹੈ।(28)

Young man: I have read your writings. You have criticised Bhindrawala. And you have also criticised the military proceedings held in Darbar Sahib.

Gursharan Singh was always concerned about laymen's interest as their interests were always suppressed and affected in the fight of government and communal leaders. He expressed his anguish over the murder of Hindus by Sikhs and murder of Sikhs by police by registering false cases against them:

ਦੂਜੀ ਖ਼ਬਰ: ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੋ ਕੇਸਧਾਰੀ ਅਤਿਵਾਦੀ ਮਾਰੇ ਗਏ।

ਸਿੱਖ: ਪੁਲਿਸ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ, ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਗਿਆ।(10)

Second News: Two kesdhari militants were killed in police encounter yesterday.

Sikh: They were not killed in encounter but in custody.

Thus the Sikhs were used to be killed by the police on the name of terrorism. Ultimate investigation reveals that the police used to tease innocent people instead of proceeding against real culprits. The play Chandigarh Puarhe di Jarh, raises the veracity of approach and movements of government leadership towards communal tension between Hindu and Sikhs. His play Sadharan Lok also reflected his pain over the communal issues between Hindu and Sikhs:

ਹਿੰਦੂ: ਹਾਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੋਚਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਕਿਹੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਸਮਾਜ ਏ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੋ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ, ਉਹ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਿਆਮਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਂਝੇ ਕਿਉਂ ਨੇ? ਪਰ ਇਹਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਇੱਕ ਗੱਲ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਸੋਚਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਏ ਯਾਰਾ।

ਸਿੱਖ: ਉਹ ਕੀ?

ਹਿੰਦੂ: ਅਸੀਂ ਮੂਰਖ ਹੈਗੇ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਾਨੂੰ ਮੂਰਖ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਏ।(48)

Hindu: So, we should think, what kind of society is this where those who work the hardest are deprived of life's comforts. But there is another matter we should ponder upon.

Sikh: Which is that?

Hindu: We are not fools but we are fooled.

Befooling common man on the name of religion, community by the politicians through their mean policies lead to the distraction of people from their real life problems and the ultimate result is that in spite of working hard sincerely, they remain backward and confined only to these issues. They cannot reap the benefit of their hard work and sincerity in true terms as their energy is wasted by the political ruling class in such like tussles. The sentiments of people are exploited on the name of religion, they are conned by self-interested political leaders. Pali Bhupinder writes "Gursharan Singh is of the view that Marxist paradigms and rules are needed to save Punjab from these problems...He inspires the Sikhs and Hindus of Punjab to get along under the flag of the party against the political corruption inspite of fighting with each other"(81). Therefore, Gursharan Singh attempted to create awareness among the common masses to have a look at the realities. He urged the people to look at the value of their hard work, therefore, his main object in his play *Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye* is to create sensitise the people and be aware of the inherent flaws in political policies which divide them on various grounds:

ਸੂਤਰਧਾਰ: ਇਹ ਨਫ਼ਰਤ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਅੱਗ ਫੈਲਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ, ਇਹ ਦੰਭ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ, ਇਹ ਪੰਥੀਏ, ਇਹ ਸਰਕਾਰੀਏ, ਇਹ ਦਰਬਾਰੀਏ, ਇਹ ਸਭ ਡੱਬੂ ਨੇ ਅੱਗ ਲਾ ਕੇ ਆਪ ਕੰਧ 'ਤੇ ਜਾ ਚੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਾਲੇ।

1. ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਰਕਾਰੀਏ।
2. ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਟਕਾਰੀਏ।
3. ਟੰਬੇ ਮਾਰ ਦੁੜਾਈਏ।
4. ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੂੰਹ ਨਾ ਲਾਈਏ।(40-41)

Impresario (Sutardhar): Those who achieve power by spreading hatred, and thrive on deception, these Panthis, the govt, the Durbar people. They are all cowards. They flee after starting a fire.

1. We should curse them.
2. We should boycott them.
3. We should make them run.
4. We should not entertain them.

In this way, the dictatorial attitude of rulers, mean tactics of political leaders, dogmatism of religion were the main areas where Gursharan Singh wrote with the purpose to enlighten the readers. He ventured to communicate a message that if the common man gets united and oppose these methods to rule on the name of division, it would certainly lead the society on the path of peace and prosperity.

Gursharan Singh has also focused the issue of unemployment in Indian society. He is of the opinion that everyone is entitled to livelihood. He raised his voice against several problems including unemployment in his play Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye. He found the solution of all problems like strike, agitation, dharnas in employment. Gursharan Singh presented the pathetic situation of the country in an ironical manner:

ਸੁਤਰਧਾਰ: ਜਿਸ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਹਾਲਤ ਹੋਵੇ-

4. ਕਰੋੜਾਂ ਸੜਕਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ ਫਿਰਦੇ ਹੋਣ। (35)

Impresario (Sutardhar): A country in such a bad condition.

4. Crores of people unemployed.

India is such a nation where the rich people believe in show off and the common man is facing difficulties even in sustaining their livelihood and fulfilling the basic necessities of life. It further results into the deterioration of the situation in the country as the gap between the rich and the poor is widening by leaps and bounds. A major section of the society is bound to live their life below poverty line. He expressed his resentment against the problem of unemployment in the plays Berujgari and Main Ugarvadi Nahi and its far reaching consequences in terms of law and order apart from his earlier approach to deal with terrorism and unemployment. He attacked upon the corrupt political behavior when he

highlighted the root-cause of many problems in unemployment. The play began with the scenic background of unemployment in the play Berujgari.

ਗਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਹਨ ਫਿਰਦੇ - ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ

ਸੜਕ ਸੜਕ ਹਨ ਫਿਰਦੇ -ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ

ਡਿਗਰੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ -ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ

ਬਿਨਾਂ ਡਿਗਰੀਆਂ -ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ

ਸਨਅਤੀ ਕਾਮੇ -ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ

ਪੇਂਡੂ ਕਿਰਤੀ -ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ

ਸੜਕਾਂ ਤੇ ਆਏ -ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ

ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ, ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ, ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ (53)

Chorus: Everywhere we find: the Unemployed

In every nook and corner: Unemployed

With degrees: Unemployed

Urban workers: Unemployed

Rural labourers: Unemployed

All on streets: Unemployed

Unemployed people are visible in every street of the country. Literate or illiterate – all are spared of livelihood. In literate, most have fake degrees of qualification. The government does not manage for their jobs therefore, they remain unemployed. The government does not take substantive steps to curb the problem which makes their life worst. The play also uncovered corrupt administrative system:

ਅਫ਼ਸਰ :...ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਟੈਲੀਫ਼ੂਨ ਖੜਕਾਇਆ ਹੈ, ਬੰਦਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਇੱਕ ਭਿਜਵਾਇਆ ਹੈ।(57)

Officer: ...The Minister has telephoned. He has sent his lackey to them.

The candidates for interview are called for interview. However, the selection of the candidate has already taken place. The government leaders have made arrangement of selection of their relative by charging a huge amount of money. They made fun of legal and procedural requirements which deprive of the eligible candidates of their legitimate chance of job. The qualified people remain without job as they do not have their nexus with political leaders. In this way, quality is rejected due to interference of political leaders. The life of an educated man has been presented in play Main Ugarvadi Nahi. He could not get a job in spite of his qualification of M.A. The people laugh at him,

ਇੱਕ: ਲੈ ਬਈ ਪਾੜਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਏ, ਸੋਲ੍ਹਾਂ ਜਮਾਤਾਂ ਪਾਸ।

ਦੂਜਾ: ਬਾਪੂ ਇਹਦਾ ਸੋਚਦਾ ਹੋਣੈ, ਸੋਲ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੜ ਕੇ ਪੁੱਤ ਡਿਪਟੀ ਲੱਗੇਗਾ,

ਪਰ ਅਗਲੇ ਚਪੜਾਸੀ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਰਾਜ਼ੀ ਨਹੀਂ।(32)

One: Here goes the Scholar, passed 16 classes.

Two: His father must have thought, his son will be an officer after so much study, but he is not even a peon.

The sarcastic comment of the people regarding the education of Sukhdev upsets him. Even, the speeches of political leaders and religious conservative during his childhood indicating Hindus as their enemies have still an impact upon his psychology. He realized that the reason of his rejection for a job may be that Board of Interview consists of Hindu officers:

ਨਾਟਕਕਾਰ: ...ਉਹਦੇ ਦਿਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੈਠ ਗਈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਦੀ ਵੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਜੁਬਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਗੇ। ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਗੁੱਸਾ ਸੀ, ਉਹ ਇਹ ਨਾ ਦੇਖ ਸਕਿਆ ਕਿ ਰੱਦ ਕੀਤੇ ਉਮੀਦਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਵੀ ਸਨ। ਕਈਆਂ ਦੇ ਨੰਬਰ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਸਨ। ਅਖੀਰ ਚੁਣੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਉਮੀਦਵਾਰ ਇੱਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੀ ਸੀ...(28)

Dramatist: ...He had come to believe that the Hindus would never love the Punjabi tongue. He was angry. He could not see that most of the

candidates selected were Hindus. Some had more works than him.
Finally the candidate, who was selected, was a Sikh... (28)

In this way, the young guy became an extremist due to unemployment and left his village for Amritsar. Unemployment has been taken as a serious problem in India. The government should make its policies to curb this problem of unemployment. The people are distracted from the right path due to being without work and later become a curse on law and order in the society.

Gursharan Singh has exposed in an ironical way on the paradox of social problems in his play *Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye*. Inflation is a regular problem. The adverse effect of inflation is usually can be seen on middle and lower middle class. Poor people are deprived of the basic necessities of life. The people are not capable to approach even their eatables.

2. ਮਹਿੰਗਾਈ ਲੱਕ ਤੋੜ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ।

3. ਪਿਆਜ਼ ਦੇਖੋ ਤਿੰਨ ਰੁਪਏ ਕਿਲੋ।

4. ਆਟਾ ਢਾਈ ਰੁਪਏ ਕਿਲੋ।

1. ਦੁੱਧ ਸਾਢੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਰੁਪਏ ਕਿਲੋ।

2. ਹੋਰ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਚਾਹ ਦਾ ਕੱਪ ਸੱਤ ਪੈਸੇ।

3. ਕੋਈ ਖਾਏ ਤਾਂ ਕੀ ਖਾਏ? (27)

2. Inflation is exorbitant.

3. Onions at 3 Rupees per kilo.

4. Wheat flour at 2 and half per kilo.

1. Milk at 3 and half per kilo.

2. Above all, a cup of tea at 60 paise.

3. How does one eat?

In this way, a vast section of people is far away from their access to regular food. Besides the people are not capable enough to fulfill the demands of in-laws

of their daughter at the time of marriage which further results into burning of bride after marriage, in other words, the problem of dowry deaths:

4. ਸੁਣਿਐ ਪਿਓ ਨੇ 20 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਨਕਦ ਦਿੱਤੈ।

1. 20 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕੌਣ ਜਾਣਦੈ?

2. ਮਹਿੰਗਾਈ ਹੀ ਬੜੀ ਏ।

3. ਸਕੂਟਰ 15 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਦਾ ਅਉਂਦਾ ਏ।

4. ਫਰਿਜ 5 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਦਾ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਏ।

1. 20 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਤੇ ਇਥੇ ਹੀ ਲੱਗ ਗਿਐ।

2. ਫੇਰ ਟੀ.ਵੀ. ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਏ। (29)

4. They say that father has given 20000 Rs. in cash.

1. What is a mere 20000?

2. Inflation is exorbitant.

3. A scooter costs 15000.

4. A fridge costs 5000.

1. 20000 is spent in this much.

2. A TV is also required.

The above scene reflects that the parents of a bride are not in position to fulfill the greed of her in-laws. They cannot provide her even the things necessary for daily life which ultimately leads to the end of life of daughters. The government should realize their responsibility in managing the affairs and frame their policies to deal with the problem of unemployment, inflation and peace and order. Gursharan Singh wrapped the social issues and pathetic approach of the government mechanism in his plays. He urged people to lodge their united protest and explore the alternative of revolt, if required. In Berojgari,

ਲੀਡਰ: ...ਕਿਵੇਂ ਮਿਲੇ ਸਭ ਨੂੰ ਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ?

ਬਾਕੀ: ਰਲਕੇ ਬਦਲੀਏ ਇਹ ਸਰਕਾਰ, ਸਿੱਧਾ ਜਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਇਹ ਜਵਾਬ।

ਹੋਵੇ ਇੱਥੇ ਇਨਕਲਾਬ।

ਇਕੱਠੇ: ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਰਵੇ ਬੇਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ। (64)

Leader: How does everyone get employment?

Rest: Let's all get together and change the govt.

This is as simple as that.

Together: There should be Revolution.

No one should be unemployed.

Gursharan Singh inspires masses to assert their liberties and employment. His main urge is to lead them for an atmosphere where people can live their life in dignified way. He has covered many instances of attacks upon the dignity of individuals like a police officer beaten up a rickshaw-puller, migrant worker and others alike. Nonetheless the people keep on watching the affairs as passive spectators. Gursharan Singh attempted to sensitize the people that they should not confine themselves to their domestic problems rather they should protest against injustice and chaos. They should not wait for the moment when the fire would catch their house if it has already caught neighbour's house. Therefore, Gursharan Singh reminds the people,

4. ਜੋ ਉਹਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਅੱਜ ਹੋ ਰਿਹੈ, ਕੱਲ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੈ।

1. ਇਹਨੂੰ ਜੀਣ ਦਾ ਹੱਕ ਚਾਹੀਦੈ। (29)

4. What is happening to him may happen to any of us.

1. He needs the right to live.

In this way, Gursharan Singh is the writer of 'poor people or lower class' as he picked up these issues in his plays. He is a writer who believes in egalitarian social order. In view of this, he uncovered various aspects of political, religious and economic sphere of individual's life at the grass root level. He adopted the medium of theatre to convey his thoughts to the public. His theatre became the subject of

criticism by various authors, critics and literary scholars. Satish Kumar Verma while making his observation in this regard, said

His theatre was usually deemed as purely propaganda but what I feel is that the medium of theatre is far better than making posters, rallies, slogans or agitations for propagating and communication of ideas because it also contains the strength of theatre and spread the ideas directly to the stakeholders. This is the reason which compelled Gursharan Singh to encourage people to change their taste from songs to dramas. (75)

Gursharan Singh's theatre was public oriented theatre which was highly appreciated by the people. His theatre was committed to social equality.

Gursharan Singh's theatre was a different theatre. He wrote his plays to cover and share his pain for poor, labour, illiterate and suppressed people. His purpose was to create awareness among downtrodden, ignorant and illiterate. Therefore, he took his plays to the streets to catch hold of grass-root level. In this regard, Pali Bhupinder wrote in his work, Punjabi Natak and Nat-Chintan "The people who do not come to theatre, take them to theatre" (105).

Gursharan Singh conveyed his ideas to the labour class and poor people by using his vernacular language and local dialect through his plays. As stated earlier, he was committed to social cause and cause of humanity. Therefore, he played his plays in every street of each village. Regarding the presentation of Gursharan Singh before the spectators, Kewal Dhaliwal wrote:

More than 12000 presentations of his plays from villages to foreign countries contributed a lot in the development of Punjabi social theatre. He developed his own style of writing, direction, artistic skill and way of presentation. While performing the character of his plays, he used to forget himself and performed the role of characters as of his own. His presentations were usually full of emotions, energy, and concern to sensitize the viewers in a matchless way. He added new dimension to Tharha theatre, Street Theatre, Rural theatre in modern times. (9)

He started his journey of theatre in urban background but did not confine himself to the same and performed at rural, urban, national and international level. Most of his plays were centered on rural culture and he, himself, performed role of a character in almost each of his plays.

His theatre was less expensive and simple. It required a little amount of investment and human resources. He shared his techniques of theatre in his meeting with Satish Kumar Verma “I performed several plays in a simple way. The use of Impresario (Sutardhar), folk songs, proverbs and culture adhered in accordance with the circumstances” (104).

In order to communicate his ideology to the illiterate masses, Gursharan Singh used the folk oriented facts. He used folk songs and proverbs extensively. It becomes easy for play writer to clarify and make things understandable to the people through cultural supports as the people are usually aware about their culture inspite of being illiterate. Therefore, Gursharan Singh used simple and rural style to convey his ideas to the rural masses. He also made poetic references in a effective way and used couplets. It can be seen in his play Khambha Vali Kurhi:

ਪਿੱਪਲ ਦੇ ਪੱਤਿਆ ਵੇ, ਕੀ ਖੜ ਖੜ ਲਾਈ ਆ

ਪੱਤੜੜ ਹੋਏ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ, ਰੁੱਤ ਨਵਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਆਈ ਆ

ਪੰਛੀ ਜਾਗਣ ਖੰਭ ਹਿਲਾਉਣ, ਰੁੱਤ ਨਵਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਆਈ ਆ।(20)

O leaf of Banyan tree, what a ruckus

The old leaves have fallen, it's the season of the new

Birds are waking up and flapping their wings, it's the season of the new.

These lines clearly reflect the need to change their thinking towards the girls and building a new society where the girls have studied. Now they are educated and capable of living their life in their own style. Therefore, they are entitled for living their life in their own way. He used the works of other writers in the original to raise the influence of his writings. His play Kammian da Vehra is based on the poem of Sant Ram Udasi where he wrote:

ਮਾਂ ਧਰਤੀਏ ਤੇਰੀ ਗੋਦ ਨੂੰ, ਚੰਨ ਹੋਰ ਬਥੇਰੇ ਤੂੰ ਮਘਦਾ ਰਹੀਂ ਵੇ ਸੂਰਜਾ ਕੰਮੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਹੜੇ।(37)

Mother earth, several sons to your lap let the keep shining on the courtyard of the worker.

The playwright uses certain techniques in his play to change the scene to make it more effective for example the use of chorus, impresario (Sutardhar) sometimes narrating the incidents himself. The plays in which these types of techniques are used are Chandighar Puarhe di Jarrh and Har Ik nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye etc.

Gursharan Singh has made abundant use of impresario in his play. Gurdial Singh Phool writes about the role of impresario (Sutardhar) in his book Punjabi Natak: Sarup, Sidhant te Vikas "Impresario (Sutardhar) presents that part of the story which cannot be acted upon the stage" (307). Impresario's (Sutardhar) role is to connect those episodes which are impossible to present on the stage.

Gursharan Singh makes a very good use of this technique in his plays. By writing his plays and enacting them on the stage, the writer's main aim is to change the public opinion and to spread his message in the society. About the use of this technique by Gursharan Singh, Supandeep Kaur writes in the book Punjabi Pendhu Rangmanch te Gursharan Singh "In the plays of Gursharan Singh, the impresario (Sutardhar), now and then uses the sarcastic manner to speak about social, political and religious evils and courtesies" (47). Gursharan Singh's impresario (Sutardhar) speaks in an ironical way against the social evils which clears the sole meaning of the play.

Gursharan Singh has used the skill of oratory in his plays which has been proved to be a very effective tool to convey his message. Sometimes, he himself gives speech in his play. However, his skill has been criticized by some of the critics. They feel that he merges the plays in his speeches. While replying to such questions, he says in his meeting with Shabdeesh that he plays for the welfare of downtrodden sections of the society' (94). But this has been mistaken as oratory. He has used this particular skill in the beginning of his play Butt Jag Paiya:

ਇਹ ਨਾਟਕ ਇੱਕ ਸੱਚੀ ਘਟਨਾ ਦੀ ਦੇਣ ਹੈ। 23 ਮਾਰਚ 1993, ਮੈਂ ਖਟਕੜ ਕਲਾਂ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ
ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰਧਾਂਜਲੀ ਦੇਣ ਖਟਕੜ ਕਲਾਂ ਪੁੱਜਾ ... ਵਕਤ ਦੇ ਹਾਕਮ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਅੱਜ

ਦੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ, ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਵਾਰਿਸ ਉਹ ਗੀਤ ਨਾ ਗਾਉਣ ਜੋ ਇਨਕਲਾਬ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਨ ...
(30-31)

Their play is based on real life incident on 23 Mar, 1993, I went to Khatkar Kalan to pay homage to Shahid Bhagat Singh...The Rulers of the time did not want the youth, the inheritors of Bhagat Singh legacy, should not sing the songs that reeked of revolution.

In this play, Gursharan Singh satirizes on the current political government. He says that the government does not want that the people should become aware and follow the revolutionary ideas of Bhaghat Singh. Gursharan Singh has used communication skill in his plays. Sometimes, his act as directly addresses the audience as just as in the play Butt Jag Paiya:

ਕੁੜੀ- ਮੇਰੇ ਲੋਕੋ, ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਕਿ ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਹੋਣ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਲ ਕੇ ਨਾਅਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਉੱਚਾ ਕਰੋ- ਇਨਕਲਾਬ...

ਦਰਸ਼ਕ -ਜ਼ਿੰਦਾਬਾਦ।(33)

Girl- My people! If you want to fulfil the dreams of Bhagat Singh, say with me: Revolution...

Viewer: May live.

Through this technique, Gursharan Singh urges the people to bring revolution and to understand the demand of martyrs. He makes a direct appeal to the people to change their mindset and to be aware about the realities. He brings the actors and viewers closer to each other. In this way, the audience starts thinking themselves a part of the play.

Gursharan Singh has used the folk literary forms of in his plays like mimicry, jest, show (Tamasha), bhand etc. He has also used the folk instruments like dholki, chimta, chainna, khadtala etc (Adiab158). These forms are used to satire the then exploitation of the common people and situation of anarchy. Such an example can be found in his play Bhand Caneda Aye:

ਮੁੰਡਾ: ਬਾਪੂ ਤੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ?

ਬਾਪੂ: ਬਣ ਗਿਆ...(ਦੋ ਤਿੰਨ ਵਾਰ)

ਮੁੰਡਾ: ਹੁਣ ਤੂੰ ਮਰ ਜਾ।

ਬਾਪੂ; ਦੁਰ ਫਿਟੇ ਮੂੰਹ, ਪਿਉ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਏ ਮਰ ਜਾ।

ਮੁੰਡਾ: ਬਾਪੂ ਤੂੰ ਮਰੇਂਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਬਣਾਂਗਾ।(61)

Boy: Father, you have become the PM?

Father: Yes I have... (twice-twice)

Boy: Die now.

Father: Fie on you! Telling your father to die.

Boy: If you die, only then i can become the PM.

A certain kind of rhythm can be found in his plays. His dialogues never get disconnected and flow of communication of ideas with particular rhythm. This technique entertains the viewers as well as helps the writer to give his message to the target group. Rhythm is a part of folk plays (Ravinder 90). He has made a full use of his technique. He spell-bounds the viewers with his rhythmic techniques. His plays start with a particular tone and continuously flow moving towards the end with the desired effect. Gursharan Singh has Punjabi rural dialect in his plays so that the rural people can understand his ideology properly in the play Saver di Lo:

ਰਘੂ: ਓਏ ਕੰਜਰਾ ਤੂੰ ਬੋਲਣੋ ਬਾਜ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦਾ।

ਤੈਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਏ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਟੱਕਰ ਲੈ ਰਿਹਾ ਏ? (24)

Raju: O Rascal, you can't stop talking.

Do you know who your opponent is?

He has used very simple and easy to understand language. He never used loudspeaker on the stage. Instead, he uses bombastic words loudly to attract the passerby towards his shows. Such use of common language can be same in his play Saver di Lo, Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye Gursharan Singh has also

used certain English words in his plays for example he uses some English words of that time like order, model town. Gursharan Singh has also used some violent words in his plays like Savere di Lo like Kuhari, Gantiyan, Sariya, Lathiyan etc.

His language is candid clear which can be easily understood by the ordinary people. Even the actors do not find any kind of problem to understand the language. They can understand and speak it very easily. Language is the most effective tool of communication in a play. Gursharan Singh has used the language of common masses which help him to convey the real motive of writing the plays.

Gursharan Singh's theatre is very simple and reality based in itself. Even the make-up and stage setting etc. are very simple. He used to enact the play with a few actors. He developed new theatrical techniques for the setting of stage in his plays. He speaks during his meeting with Satish Kumar Verma "Rural people like to watch the plays with very simple setting that touches their real life. So it developed a technique of stage-setting, without taking much use of electronic techniques" (77).

So far his own writing content is concerned, his pen was known for social concerns. He lodged his individual protest against suppression of humanitarian values in his several plays. He stood for the cause of equality, equal status and liberties of women and ideal social values. His ideal world consists of government with fair policies, society without classes and social evils, treatment of people without consideration of race, religion, caste or creed. Every human being should have the opportunity to enjoy his life in a dignified way and there should be a sense of brotherhood in the society. No one should be allowed to intrude in the life of others. Each individual should have access to food, clothes and shelter (Roti, kapra aur makaan).

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CHAPTER THREE

Socio-Political Protest in Selected Poems of

Sant Ram Udasi

Sant Ram Udasi was born in a Dalit family on 20 April, 1939 at Raisar village of Sangrur district. Due to the lack of financial resources he worked hard to become a government teacher. He penned down four poetic collections- Lahu bhijje bole (1971), Saintan (1916), Chau Nukrian Sikhan (1978), Lahu to Lohe tak (1979) in addition to them Rajinder Rahi compiled Sant Ram Udasi: Jivan te Samuchi Rachna (2011). His poetry comprises of various poetic genres like Gazal, Rubai, Bolian, Songs etc.

Sant Ram Udasi was honored with Bawa Balwant Award and he got the opportunity to go abroad on IPANA's (Indian People Association in North America) invitation. His poetry is based upon social, political, economic and psychological problems of rural masses about which Kesar Singh Kesar asserts, "He wrote for the people, to the people and by the people" (190). Beginning with spiritualism, he took to Marxist writing for the demolition of class inequality. In an interview with C. Markanda Udasi discusses about the content of his poetry:

I started writing in 1961. First of all I brought spiritualism in my poetry. . . After that I analysed Marxism and later on again approached spiritualism from Marxist stand and realised that the songs written about spiritualism could not help in the demolition of labour class exploitation. (277)

He started his poetic career with spiritual themes as he devoted his poems to Nirankari Satgur Partap and also wrote poetry related to Sikh religion. During youth he created Romantic poetry. When Naxalite movement raised head in Punjab, he actively joined this movement ideologically. The reflection of such ideology can be seen in the violent language used in his poetry where sword, gun

and knife etc. repeatedly occur as violent symbols. With the decline in this movement such symbols started disappearing from his poetry.

He not only wrote poetry regarding this political movement but also played significant role in it as he had close association with the Naxalite communists. About which Rajinder Rahi writes “He became politically active in this movement. His friendship was with armed naxalites. He used to wander on his cycle with Baba Boojha Singh in the silent lanes of Bhotne, Raisar, Chananwal. Shaheed Beant Mammu, Piara Dadhahoor, Gurdial Sherpuri were the people he was closely associated with” (7).

Due to his associations with this group during the time of emergency, his family had to face insult from Police and he was withdrawn from his job. This led the family’s economic condition from bad to worst. He shares such experience in an interview with Markanda “Especially my head and private parts were tortured. Beating with roller, chair and chains as well as battering the joints were common. They had beaten my head to such an extent that it could not get recovered at All India Institute of Medical Sciences. When cold winds blow all the marks of those times become visible. Second time again they spotted my head whereas third time an effort to inflict mental torture was made. It was due to being in the hospital that I survived fourth time” (279).

In this way due to interrogation he became mentally and physically weak. His expulsion from job took away his financial support, at the same time he had to suffer due to the loss of his communist friends. He felt internal loss. The communal riots of 1984 left a deep impression on his mind about which his daughter Iqbal Kaur Udasi opines “After the riots of Nov. 1984 when he was invited on Red Fort at 26 January 1985, he witnessed tragic events, burnt houses, and homeless brothers. This influenced him so deeply that he started behaving like mad people” (44). Mentally upset Udasi died in chaos at Hazoor Sahib on 6th Nov. 1986. Even after his death nobody cared about his dead body.

Sant Ram Udasi used to go and sing among the rural folks to make the suppressed sections of society aware of their exploitation which makes Kesar

Singh Kesar call Udasi 'a poet of people' (190). The language used by him truly represents the masses. He has presented the fate of rural labour and farmers by satirizing the established social structure in the poem Var jan Saraap. An example from it:

ਮੇਰੇ ਰੱਬਾ ਜੇ ਮੇਰੇ 'ਤੇ ਮਿਹਰ ਕਰਦਾ,
ਘਰੇ ਕਿਰਤੀ ਦੇ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਨਾ ਜਨਮ ਮੈਨੂੰ।
ਇਹ ਵੀ ਗਲਤੀ ਜੇ ਭੁਲਕੇ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਸੀ,
ਕਾਹਨੂੰ ਦਿਤੀ ਸੀ ਕਵਿਤਾ ਤੇ ਕਲਮ ਮੈਨੂੰ,
ਕੱਲੀ ਕਲਮ ਜੇ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ,
(ਪਰ) ਮੱਲੋ ਮੱਲੀ ਤੂੰ ਅਣਖ ਤੇ ਲਾਜ ਦਿੱਤੀ।
ਤੈਨੂੰ ਕਾਵਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਹੋਣੈ,
ਖ਼ਬਰੇ ਕੋਇਲ ਦੀ ਤਾਂਹੀਓਂ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਦਿੱਤੀ, (270)

My god! If you had blessed me
I would not have been born in a worker's home
Even if this mistake was done
Why did you give me a poem and pen
If it had been the pen only, I would make do
But you put a challenge on my honour too
The crows must have appealed to you
That is why you gave me the voice of a nightingale.

Sant Ram Udasi presented the pain of women especially labour class women whose psychological, physical, and economic subjugation resulted from Bourgeois structure, in a revolutionary mode. In modern Punjabi literature, Shiv

Kumar Batalwi attacked the treatment given to women in society in his epic Loona who favoured women by satirizing the contemporary society:

ਪਿਤਾ ਜੇ ਧੀ ਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਹੰਢਾਵੇ

ਤਾਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਜ ਨਾ ਆਵੇ

ਜੇ ਲੂਣਾ ਪੂਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਚਾਹਵੇ,

ਚਲਿੱਤਰ ਹੀਣ ਕਹੇ ਕਿਉਂ,

ਜੀਭ ਜਹਾਨ ਦੀ (188)

If a father lays eyes on a daughter

It does not shame the people

But if Loona desires Pooran

She is labeled character less

By the tongue of the world.

Shiv depicted the pain of Loona. In the same manner, San Ram Udasi presented woman's suppressed desires in the Capitalist system, her subjugation due to social traditions and practices. There is search for equality, identity and dignity in the female characters of marginalised class in his poetry. He wrote many poems ranging from the exploitation of her labour to the exploitation of her honor which are- Mavan Thandian Chavan, Chit Na Dulain Babla, Wangan, Kali Kurhi da Geet, Kaidi di Patni da Geet, Mazdoor Kurhi di Pehli raat, Amrhi nu Tarla, Vietkangi Kurhi da Pyar, Doli, Maa Vargi Bharjai, Choorhian da Hoka, Aman di Hook, Vidaigi, Pakka Ghar Tohlin Babla etc. He presented variety of problems woman has to face in the bourgeois society about which Rajinder Pal Singh asserts in his book Adhunik Punjabi Kavita da Itihaas, "Udasi depicts the problems faced by women in his poems like dowry, sexual exploitation, inferiority complex, dual slavery etc." (178). He depicts the dowry system as an evil which influence woman right from her birth. In the poem Amrhi nu Tarla, a girl wishes from her

mother as to not to give her birth in a country where the devil of dowry attacks girls:

ਜੰਮੀ ਨਾ ਨੀ ਮਾਏ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਇਹੋ ਜਿਹੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਸੱਧਰਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਸੰਗਲ ਰਵੇ।

ਜਿੱਥੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਵੀਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਤੱਤੀਆਂ ਤਰੇਲੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਚੱਪਾ ਟੁੱਕ ਮੁੱਲ ਨਾ ਪਵੇ।

ਜਿਹੜੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਲਾਵਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਖੀਆਂ 'ਚ ਅੱਥਰੂ,

ਤੇ ਸਿਹਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅੱਗ ਨੀ ।

ਜੰਮਦੀਆਂ ਕੁੜੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਗ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਦਾਜ ਦਾ ਹੈ,

ਜਾਂਦਾ ਅਠਰਾਹੇ ਵਾਂਗੂੰ ਲੱਗ ਨੀ।(118)

O mother! Do not bear me at a place where desire should be in chains.

Where my brother's head earned labour should go waste.

Where weddings bring tears in bride's eyes

And fire in groom's eyes.

Where newly born girls are diseased with dowry.

In Punjabi society dowry is such an ill-mark which the parents of a girl get from her birth into this world and it goes on growing with her as Balwinder Kaur Brar in the book *Narivaad: Sidhant, Chintan ate Vichar* writes "The things which are given at the time of girl's marriage to her in-laws become a problem right from her birth. This social problem has led to the inferior status of woman in society. Girls get discrimination from the first breath because girl and dowry grow parallel like severe problems. A girl growing young in her paternal home equalizes a growing debt" (39). In capitalist world, it is only due to dowry that girls are considered as burden on the family as well as society. Such a condition of girls can be seen in the poem *Doli*:

ਪ੍ਰੀਤਪਤੀ ਜੁੱਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਹੌਲੀ ਕੁੜੀ,

ਜਾਪਦੀ ਏ ਗੱਡੇ ਜਿੰਨਾ ਭਾਰ (158)

In this Capitalist age, a daughter lighter

Than a flower, too seems heavy like a stone.

In such a society where money is preferred over human being, a girl who brings less or nothing in dowry is deprived of her rights in the family she goes after marriage. Even the holiness of husband-wife relation becomes problematic for being based on the question of wealth. About this Sant Ram Udasi:

ਪ੍ਰੀਤੀਪਤੀ ਯੁੱਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੂੰਹ 'ਚ ਹੱਡ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ,

ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਨੀ ਡਕਾਰ ਵੇ,

ਦਾਜ ਦੀ ਹੀ ਭੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਵੇ ਸ਼ਗਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ,

ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਬਿਰਹਾ ਸੁਆਇਆ।

ਰੂਪ ਮੇਰਾ ਰੰਗ ਦਾ ਤਿਹਾਇਆ।(115)

In this capitalist world,

The world can't survive without scavenging on humans.

The lust for dowry made me choose

Loneliness as companion on my wedding nights.

My beauty yearns for you.

Sant Ram Udasi was a conscious poet of such situation where labour class women are used as the tools for sexual gratification by capitalist people. His poems Mazdoor Kurhi di Pehli raat, Doli, Maa Vargi Bharjai clearly brings about the tradition of labour class women's body being used for upper class man's sexual gratification. Darshan Singh Khatkar writes: "For the exploited and subjugated sections, the protection of their women becomes a vital problem. Udasi is aware of the physical and sexual harassment faced by labour class particularly the women of landless labourers" (300). In the poem Mazdoor Kurhi di Pehli Raat,

Udasi presents the mental, physical and economic suffering of a working class woman. In the bourgeois world women's labour and honour are equally exploited:

ਇਕ ਸੜਕਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਲੁੱਕ ਪੰਘਰਦੀ, ਦੂਜੇ ਜਿੰਦ ਅਸਾਡੀ,
ਤੀਜੇ ਡਾਲਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਿਗਾਹਾਂ, ਹਨ ਲਾਟਾਂ ਬਰਸਾਈਆਂ।
ਮੇਰਾ ਚੁਟਕੀ ਚੁਟਕੀ ਵਿਕਿਆ, ਮਾਸ ਕਿਰਤ ਦੀ ਮੰਡੀ,
ਹੁਣ ਬਾਲਣ 'ਚੋਂ ਕੀ ਟੋਲੇਂਗਾ, ਮੇਰੀ ਅੱਗ ਦਿਆ ਸਾਈਆਂ (117)

Our lives dissolve on the roads like tarmac

Like Dollars gaze at us with blazing eyes.

I have sold my flesh pinch by pinch

In the labour market

What will you find in the ash now,

The lord of my fire.

The abodes of capitalist class as the center of female sexual exploitation are portrayed in Sant Ram Udasi's poem Amrhi nu Tarla to show how the women working in the houses of their capitalist masters are mistreated:

ਰਾਠਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਵੇਲੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਖੁੱਸਿਆ ਸਰੀਰ ਲੈ ਕੇ,
ਮੁੜੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਵੀਰ ਦੀ ਬਹੂ। (118)

My brother's bride returned from the

Rich house with a torn body.

His other poem Maa Vargi Bharjai presents the dual tricks of capitalist class which outwardly shows friendship and inwardly presents sexual gratification from same relation:

ਨਿੱਤ ਵੀਰ ਨਾਲ ਪੀਵੇ, ਜ਼ੈਲਦਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਜੋ ਲੱਖਾ।

ਉਂ ਤਾਂ ਵੀਰ ਦਾ ਹੈ 'ਪਾਗੀ' ਤੈਨੂੰ ਵੇਖਦਾ ਕੁਨੱਖਾ।

ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਝੇਪ ਕਾਹਦੀ, ਵੀਰਾ ਸਮਝੇ ਨਾ ਚਾਲ। (160)

The one who drinks daily with my brother

The Lakha of the Jaidars

Although he is like my brother, yet he looks desirously at me.

I do not understand why my brother

Cannot see his wickedness.

This Kind of physical exploitation of woman becomes the cause of concern of a girl's family when she grows up of age. In the poem Doli he presents:

ਸੁੱਤੇ ਸੁੱਤੇ ਪਏ ਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਨੀਂਦ ਤੇਰੀ ਟੁੱਟ ਜਾਂਦੀ,

ਹੋਈ ਸੀ ਮੈਂ ਜਿੱਦੋਂ ਦੀ ਜੁਆਨ।

ਕਿਉਂ ਜੋ ਸਰਮਾਏਦਾਰੀ ਦੌਰ ਵਿਚ ਬੜਾ ਔਖਾ,

ਸਾਂਭਣਾ ਵੇ ਧੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਈਮਾਨ। (158)

You used to lie awake in your bed, when I grew young.

It is difficult for daughters to keep their

honour in this age of capitalism.

Sant Ram Udasi presents female pride, self respect and equality of human beings in poems. Indian society is male dominated society where women are considered as unable to do certain jobs but the women in Sant Ram Udasi's poems are ready to stand by their male counterpart in any sphere of life and willing to do any job man can do as in Chit na Dulain Babla

ਪੁੱਤ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਕਮਾਉਂ ਘਰ ਤੇਰੇ

ਚਿੱਤ ਨਾ ਡੁਲਾਈਂ ਬਾਬਲਾ

ਮੇਰੇ ਬੰਦਿਆ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਵੇਖੀਂ ਜੇਰੇ

ਚਿੱਤ ਨਾ ਡੁਲਾਈਂ ਬਾਬਲਾ (103)

I will earn like a son in your house

Don't lose heart father.

I have a heart bigger than men

Don't lose heart father.

Sant Ram Udasi was against the dominance of man over woman. He fought against the social values which subjugate woman. To make the woman free from the subjugation of patriarchy, he made use of political as well as social and cultural tools in his poetry. About such dominating authorities Mao write: "The political authority of the landlords is the backbone of all the other systems of authority. With that overturned, the clan authority, the religious authority and the authority of the husband all begin to totter" (44). Sant Ram Udasi satirizes the patriarchal society, in the poem Kali Kurhi da Geet, a girl chooses the path of revolutionary fight against patriarchy. In Indian society, a less beautiful girl is not accepted by her husband but in case of man beauty is no such parameter because man is master in the patriarchal social system:

ਛੇਤੀ ਛੇਤੀ ਉੱਗ, ਲਾਲ ਸਰਘੀ ਦੇ ਸੂਰਜਾ ਵੇ,

ਰੂਪ ਮੇਰਾ ਰੰਗ ਦਾ ਤਿਹਾਇਆ।

ਅਸੀਂ ਢੋਲਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਲ ਪਾੜ ਕੇ ਵਿਖਾਇਆ,

ਉਹਨੂੰ ਅਜੇ ਨਾ ਪਿਆਰ ਸਾਡਾ ਆਇਆ।

ਸੁਹਣਾ ਜਾਂ ਕਸੁਹਣਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਜੱਗ ਦੀ ਕਚਹਿਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ,

ਰਿਹਾ ਏ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਵੇ।(115)

The red sun of dawn, rise quickly

My beauty yearns for you.

I showed my heart to my beloved.

But he doesn't recognise my love.

The world may label him as pretty or ugly

But he is great among men.

As a writer of Naxalite movement, Sant Ram Udasi presents an armed protest against capitalist world which subjugates woman especially working class women physically as well as economically. The tools which were previously used by man to suppress her become equally valid in the hands of woman to take revenge of such exploitation:

ਜਿਸ ਰੋੜੀ ਨੇ ਸੜਕ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਵੰਗ ਮੇਰੀ ਹੈ ਤੋੜੀ

ਉਸ ਰੋੜੀ 'ਚੋਂ ਅੱਜ ਹਥੋੜੇ, ਕੱਢਣੀਆਂ ਮਨ ਆਈਆਂ।

ਫੇਰ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਪੁੱਤ ਲੰਬੜਾਂ ਦਾ, ਰੂਪ ਕਿਰਤ ਦਾ ਚੂਸੇ,

ਬੱਲੀਆਂ ਚੁਗਣ ਵਾਲੀਆ ਬੱਲੀਆਂ, ਬਿਫਰ ਬਰਾਨੇ ਆਈਆਂ (117)

The stones that broke my bangles on the roadside

I have learnt to sculpt hammers out of that stone now

No rich brat should suck the blood of labour

The reapers of the crop have come to barrenlands in rage.

In the poem Doli Udasi presents the female protest against set norms like giving dowry at the time of her marriage. In this poem a girl asks for a sword instead of dowry from her brother in order to fight with set conventions:

ਇਕ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਮੇਰੀ ਡੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੱਖ ਦਿਓ, ਹੋਰ ਵੀਰੋ ਦਿਉ ਨਾ ਵੇ ਦਾਜ।

ਸਾਡੇ ਵੱਲ ਕੈਰੀ ਅੱਖ ਝਾਕ ਨਾ ਵੇ ਸਕੇ, ਸਾਡਾ ਰਸਮੀ ਤੇ ਵਹਿਮੀ ਇਹ ਸਮਾਜ।(158)

Just put a sword in my wedding palanquin.

No other dowry I require, brothers.

Lest our tradition-swept society should

Dream of endangering us.

In the poem Choorhian da Hoka Udasi presents a revolt against fake laws which are unable to provide equal status to all as human beings in society. The revolutionary tone which girl reinforces while asking the bangle-seller to bring a knife along with bangle shows such an example:

ਫੇਰ ਸਾਡੇ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ 'ਚੋਂ ਨਿਰਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਾ ਤੂੰ ਜਾਏਂਗਾ।

ਚੂੜੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਨਾਲ ਜਦੋਂ ਚਾਕੂ ਵੀ ਲਿਆਏਂਗਾ।

ਅਸੀਂ ਪਾੜਨਾ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਦਾ ਵੇ ਖੋਖਾ।

ਖੋਖਾ-ਵੇ ਵੀਰਾ ਵਣਜਾਰਿਆ।(170)

You won't go back distressed from our villages

if you bring knives along with bangles to sell.

We wish to tear away the mantle of law.

O dear bangles seller!

For the establishment of socialist society class war becomes necessary where men and women equally struggle for equality. In Sant Ram Udasi's poetry woman is shown as very enthusiastic to build a socialist society by equally struggling like their male counterparts:

ਮੇਰੇ ਦਿਉਰਾਂ, ਭਾਈਆਂ ਲਈ ਵੈਰ ਤੂੰ ਸਹੇੜੇ ਵੇ,

ਜਿੱਤ ਮੰਨੂੰ ਤੇਰੀ ਜੇ , ਜਮਾਤੀ-ਯੁੱਧ ਛੇੜੋਂ ਵੇ

ਮੋਢਾ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਖੜੋਵਾਂ (225)

You wage a war for the sake of my brother and my kin

I want you to win if you start a war, O colleague!

I promise to stand by you if the army of Basra faces defeat!

Sant Ram Udasi was a poet who wrote for class struggle. He found such class inequality from his childhood whereas his birth in a Dalit class family enabled him to experience such harsh reality. Darshan Singh Makkar writes “Born in an awfully poor family, Udasi’s bare soft feet got in inheritance the journey on the path of hot pan like earth and icy cold nights.”(321) Sant Ram Udasi made use of Naxalite wave’s violent ways to change the social, economic and psychological pain and their tragic reality. About this Rajinder Rahi writes “These social conditions questioned Udasi’s creative personality. The social experience earned from childhood helped him analyse the scientific understanding of class division. This scientific approach was the medium through which he internalized the Dalit liberation by class liberation” (24).

Sant Ram Udasi created many poems related to the theme of class inequality. Such instances are: Khooh Hakan wale nu Asis, Bourjua Taane Baane, Aje, Harhian de Hanio, Halian Palian da Geet, Poonjipati Rakhshan di Dhaar, Naven Ahedname, Mazdoor di Desh Seva, Lalkaar Mazdoor de Naa, Dunian Bhar de kameon, Mardane nu Mardanan da Khat, Uthan da Vela, Jatt te Seeri di Vithia de Naa, Mazdoor di Kali, Vehlra te Irkha, Asi Taras nahi Karna, Jadon Barkha Hundi hai, Kamian da Vehra, Maa Dhartie, Samajvadi Jang etc. poems by Udasi depict the way class inequality exist between different sections of society, subjugation of one class in the hands of other, and the way of war, violence and protest chosen by the marginalised class for the assertion of identity. Udasi makes use of revolutionary tone to shatter class structure and replace it with classless

socialist society. Rajinder Pal Singh writes “Instead of using any veil he gives direct expression to his ideas. While talking against idle benefactors, feuds, capitalist groupism, he posed his figure upon class struggle and the exploitation of labor class” (177). For the working class people to earn a living is like war for survival. Even after working too hard these people are always worried about making both ends meet. He was aware of the reality of such people and highlights issues related to such class struggle in his poetry as:

ਸਾਡੇ ਭਾਅ ਦੀ ਹਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਲੱਗੀ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਲਾਮ ਹੋ

ਐਵੇਂ ਸਰਹੱਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਨਾਂ ਹੀ ਬਦਨਾਮ ਹੋ। (167)

We seem to be at war at all times

The borders are unjustly infamous for battles.

Workers and farmers struggle for the growth of their son-like crops irrespective of any season or situation. They labour for it in summer and winter and when it gets reap and reaches to market for sale, instead of fulfilling the dreams of workers it becomes a kind of tool of exploitation in the hands of bourgeois class. The value of farmer’s hard work is taken away by the capitalist class and Udasi depicts such a situation:

ਗਲ ਲੱਗ ਕੇ ਸੀਰੀ ਦੇ ਜੱਟ ਰੋਵੇ, ਬੋਹਲ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਨੀਰ ਵਗਿਆ।

ਲਿਆ ਤੰਗਲੀ ਨਸੀਬਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਫਰੋਲੀਏ, ਤੂੜੀ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਪੁੱਤ ‘ਜੱਗਿਆ’।

ਸਾਡੇ ਪਿੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੇਰੇ ਗਲ ਚੀਥੜੇ ਨੀ ਮੇਰੀਏ ਜੁਆਨ ਕਣਕੇ,

ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਸ਼ਾਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੁਦਾਮਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲੋਂ,

ਤੂੰ ਸੋਨੇ ਦਾ ਪਟੋਲਾ ਬਣ ਕੇ।(174)

A former cries hugging the labour worker

and water mashed forth from winnowed grain.

Let us sift through our destiny with a pitchfork.

The son rises from among the staws.

The young grains have rags to cover

themselves in our threshing floor.

But when the salve grain emerges

out of the godowns of Shahs, it is adorned in gold.

But when the salve grain emerges out of the godowns of Shahs,

it is adorned in gold.

The picture of labour class suffering in the capitalist world is depicted by Udasi in the poem Kamiada Vihra. In this he presents how the debt goes on increasing which passes from one generation to another and such a realistic presentation in his poetry can be seen:

ਜਿੱਥੇ ਬੰਦਾ ਜੰਮਦਾ ਸੀਰੀ ਹੈ

ਟਕਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਮੀਰੀ ਪੀਰੀ ਹੈ

ਜਿੱਥੇ ਕਰਜ਼ੇ ਹੇਠ ਪੰਜੀਰੀ ਹੈ

ਬਾਪੂ ਦੇ ਕਰਜ਼ ਦਾ ਸੂਦ ਨੇ ਪੁੱਤ ਜੰਮਦੇ ਜੇਹੜੇ,

ਤੂੰ ਮੱਘਦਾ ਰਈਂ ਵੇ ਸੂਰਜਾ ਕੰਮੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਹੜੇ। (215)

Where a man is born a labourer

And shaves a close relationship with coins

Where desire are buried under debts

The sons are the interest of the father's debt.

The sun keep shining on the courtyard of the workers!

Farmers become slaves of moneylenders due to their poverty. They are unable to get rid of this burden of debt even by doing hard labour and their life becomes worse than animals. In Halian-Palian da Geet Udasi presents such truth:

‘ਪਸ਼ੂ’ ਅਤੇ ‘ਕਿਰਤੀ’ ਦਾ ਇਕੋ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ
ਜੀਹਨੂੰ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਆਇਆ ਏ ‘ਕਰਾੜ’ ਨੀ।
ਜੀਹਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਵੇਚ ਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਭੈਣਾਂ ਤੇਰੀ ਜੋੜੀਏ ਨੀ,
ਸਕਿਆ ਵਿਆਜ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਤਾਰ। (119)

Labourers and cattle share the same history
All written down by the money lender.
I sold the pair of cattle to him but
Could not even raise the interest, Sister.

Similar depiction in poem Burjua Taane-Baane:

ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੀ ਬਲੀ ਬਾਝੋਂ, ਤੇਰਿਆਂ ਪੈਗੰਬਰਾਂ ਦਾ,
ਸਕੇ ਨਾ ਉਧਾਰ ਕੋਈ ਮੋੜ। (107)

No one can return the favour of your prophets
Without sacrificing their lives.

Big buildings and other luxury facilities are the outcome of labour class's hard work which provided comfort to rich people. On one hand these luxuries have provided better life to rich people on the other, the condition of working class people has deteriorated. The creators of big buildings are forced to live in slums and their means of earning start declining. In the poem Mazdoor di Desh Seva:

ਮੇਰੇ ਤੇਸੇ ਅਤੇ ਹਥੋੜੇ ਨੇ, ਲੱਖ ਮੰਦਰ ਮਹਿਲ ਉਸਾਰੇ ਹੋ।
ਪਰ ਮੇਰੀ ਨੀਂਦ ਉਤਾਰਨ ਨੂੰ, ਕੱਖ ਕਾਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਹਨ ਢਾਰੇ ਹੋ।

ਅੱਜ ਮੇਰੀ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਦਾ ਸਦਕਾ, ਕਾਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਕਾਰਾਂ ਆ ਗਈਆਂ।

ਕਰ ਕਤਲ ਬਸੰਤ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਨੂੰ, ਕਈ ਮਸਤ ਬਹਾਰਾਂ ਆ ਗਈਆਂ।

ਹੈ ਦੂਣਾ ਠਾਠ ਅਮੀਰਾਂ ਦਾ, ਵਧਿਆ ਚੌਣਾ ਸਰਮਾਇਆ ਏ।

ਪਰ ਮੇਰੀ ਰੋਟੀ ਦਾ ਟੁਕੜਾ, ਹੁਣ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਹੋਣ 'ਤੇ ਆਇਆ ਏ। (125)

My axe and hammer have raised many a

Palace and temple.

But all I have to sleep on is a mattress made of straw.

Due to my labour, cars upon cars have been made

Joyous times have set in killing our sweet spring.

The rich have double the wealth, large families

And much capital.

But the small piece of bread that I have is about to end.

India is such a country where the worker and farmer has the right to work, to grow crops, reap and thresh them but they don't possess the right to get the real value of their crop in market. In the poem Guru Gobind Singh ji Walon Madho Das Bairagi nu Banda Bahadur Bana ke Punjab val Bhejna:

ਬੀਜ ਬੀਜਣ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਟੀ ਦੇ ਸਫਰ ਤਾਈਂ,

ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਪੂਰਾ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਜਿਥੇ ।

ਰੋਟੀ ਹੱਥ 'ਤੇ ਟਿਕੇ ਜਾ ਕਾਮਿਆਂ ਦੇ,

ਗਿਰਝਾਂ ਲੈਂਦੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਝਪਟ ਮਾਰ ਜਿਥੇ। (248)

From sowing of seeds to enjoying the rewards.

Where right to labour is manifested

When bread stays in hands of the workers.

Eagles snatch it away from them.

Sant Ram Udasi was a poet of international awareness. He compares the tragic condition of the workers in his own country with the happy fate of other country's (Lenin's) workers. Such treatment given to human being can be seen in the poem Lenin de na:

ਤੇਰੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੁੱਖੀ ਮਰਦੀ ਨਾ ਵੇਖੀ ਵੇ ਮੈਂ,

ਕਿਸੇ ਬੱਚੜੂ ਦੀ ਅੰਨ੍ਹੀ ਮਾਂ।

ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੋਈ ਕਾਮਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ,

ਆਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਲਹੂ ਪੂੰਝੇ ਨਾ। (114)

I haven't seen in your country

A blind mother dying of hunger

In my village, no one wipes

The blood from the bodies of workers.

He directly satirises the social position of moneylenders:

ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਦੇ ਬੀਜ ਕੇ ਤੇ ਵੱਢ ਕੇ ਨਾ ਵੇਖੀ,

ਮੌਜਾਂ ਬੋਹਲਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਲੁੱਟਦੇ ਕਰਾੜ ਕਿਉਂ? (164)

Those who have never sown or reaped,

Enjoy the wealth of the harvest!

Sant Ram Udasi was well aware of the declining condition of workers who grows crops; take care of them in market. About this Paash wrote "No Punjabi poet ever depicted the inner world of a worker sleeping in between bundles of crop. Thank god it started" (325). Sant Ram Udasi was a revolutionary of Naxalite movement who fought for the betterment of workers and farmers. He follows the

path of violent revolution as Mao Tse Tung said “A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another” (28). The believer of classless society for the foundation of socialism, Sant Ram Udasi equates the demand of socialism with worker’s daily earning. In poem Samajvadi Yang he writes:

ਜੰਗ ਵੇ! ਜੰਗ ਵੇ!! ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਕਾਮਿਆਂ ਲਈ, ਤੂੰ ਰੋਟੀ ਜਿੰਨੀ ਮੰਗ ਵੇ। (227)

O war! O war! You are as much desirable as bread for the workers of the world.

Whereas Sant Ram Udasi himself directly protests against bourgeois class to bring equality in society, he advises working class people and farmers to join hands and struggle against such exploitation. T. R. Vinod asserts: “The most important aspect of Udasi’s songs is that there is a moral to do one’s work oneself. These songs do not make people depressed about life. Neither do they let people believe in any outer power nor do they make people dwarf. Rather they assure people about the strength of their shoulders . . . these songs are not power in themselves rather they enlighten the power lying inside people” (324). Sant Ram Udasi boost the working class and farmers to live a comfortable life by getting the best of their effort and fighting against that idle bourgeois class which becomes an obstacle on the ways. As he writes:

ਗੱਜਣਗੇ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਜਦੋਂ, ਭੱਜਣਗੇ ਕਾਇਰ ਸਭੇ

ਰੱਜਣਗੇ ਕਿਰਤੀ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਮੁੜ ਕੇ।

ਜ਼ਰਾ ਹੱਲਾ ਮਾਰੋ,

ਜ਼ਰਾ ਹੱਲਾ ਮਾਰੋ, ਕਿਰਤੀ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਜੁੜ ਕੇ। (111)

When the lions roar, cowards will run

And working peasants will prosper again.

Make an effort

Make an effort, all you working peasants together.

Sant Ram Udasi was such a poet who demonstrates the belief in bloody revolution for the upliftment of working class. He prevents people from using such means as asking blessings and praying to gods. As follows:

ਅੱਡੋ ਨਾ ਝੋਲੀਆਂ ਵੇ, ਰਿਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਮੂਹਰੇ ਜਾ ਕੇ

ਹਾਸੇ ਨਹੀਓਂ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਉਧਾਰ (110)

Do not beg before saints and prophets

Happiness cannot be borrowed.

Sant Ram Udasi asks the working farmers to read the pulse of time and take their materialistic rights and value of labour with the help of violent means. Such appeal for awareness can be seen in the poem Utthan da Vela:

ਉੱਠ ਕਿਰਤੀਆ ਉੱਠ ਵੇ ਉਠਣ ਦਾ ਵੇਲਾ।

ਜੜ੍ਹ ਵੈਰੀ ਦੀ ਪੁੱਟ ਵੇ ਪੁੱਟਣ ਦਾ ਵੇਲ।

--- -

ਜੇ ਰੋਟੀ ਦੀ ਅੱਗ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਸਾਂਭ ਬਰੂਦ ਨਾ ਰੱਖੀਂ।

ਜੇ ਕੁੱਝ ਮੁੜ੍ਹਕੇ ਦਾ ਮੋਹ ਹੈਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਨੱਪ ਖਰੂਦ ਨਾ ਰੱਖੀਂ।

ਤੂੰ ਐਟਮ ਦੀ ਧੂੜ ਵਿਚਾਲੇ ਸੁੱਟ ਚਾਨਣ ਦੀ ਮੁੱਠ ਵੇ। (166)

Rise, workers, rise, its time to arise

Its time now to eradicate the enemy.

....

If you need the five of bread, don't keep your explosives unused

If you love the sweat of your brow,

Don't keep your agitation in check.

You throw a fistful of light

Amidst the dust of the atom.

Sant Ram Udasi appealed the marginalized people to join hands and change their destiny by themselves because revolution can be brought with unity and it can be possible only with the joint effort of whole marginalized section of society. About this Mao Tse Tung wrote the capital of society is produced by workers, farmers and intellectuals. If they take their destiny in their own hands, start following Marxist- Leninist line and make efforts instead of ignoring the problems there would remain no problems unsolved in society (90). Such factors like changing one's destiny, enthusiasm to change one's fate, start the revolt against contemporary society and favour for the foundation of new world can be seen in Sant Ram Udasi's poetic creativity.

Sant Ram Udasi based his poetry on the aspects of Sikh religion to favor revolutionary communists and make the down trodden sections enthusiastic about change. Such aspects are driven from the people who fought for their religion, to get their rights and not bearing the atrocities of the ruler. Rajinder Pal comments: "He took the heroes of Sikh history as guiding spirit for his contemporary struggle" (178). He wrote some poems about the heroic aspects of Sikh religion like-Guru Gobind Singh ji da Lokan de naa Antam Suneha, Aurangzed de Khat da Dashmesh da Javab, Dilie Diala Vekh, Chamkaur di Garhi vich Singhan da Jera, Guru Gobind Singh ji de na, Joravar Singh te Fateh Singh di Dadi ton Vidaaygi de naa etc. For the battle against cruelty by common people as well as communists who fight for their rights, Udasi appeals them to follow the heroic aspects like enthusiasm from Chandi di Vaar etc. as he wrote in the poem Guru Gobind Singh de naa:

ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਖਾਇਆ ਤੇਰੀ ਕਵਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਹੇਕ ਨੇ।

‘ਚਿੜੀ’ ਕਿਵੇਂ ‘ਬਾਜਾਂ’ ਦੇ ਕਲੇਜੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਛੇਕ ਨੇ।

ਚੰਡੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨਾ ਰੱਖ ਦਿਲ ਵਿੱਚ,

‘ਇਕੋ’ ਸਵਾ ਲੱਖ ਨਾ ਲੜੇ। (173)

The chant of your poem taught the people

How a sparrow can win over eagles.

Keep your heart aflame with money of the battle of Chandi

Lot not one man fight one and a quarter lakhs.

In the manner Guru Gobind Singh challenged Mughal regime against Aurangzeb's atrocities, Sant Ram Udasi challenges contemporary ruler (Govt.) which exploits the masses:

ਤੂੰ ਅਮੀਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਹਿਨਸ਼ਾਹ ਏਂ ਗ਼ਰੀਬਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ,

ਤੇ ਗ਼ਰੀਬਾ ਨਾਲ ਖਾ ਕੇ ਖ਼ਾਰ ਤੂੰ ਪਛਤਾਏਂਗਾ।

ਲਹੂ ਬੇਦੋਸ਼ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਪਾਕ ਹੱਥਾਂ 'ਤੇ,

ਯਾਦ ਰੱਖ ! ਤੂੰ ਏਸ ਦੇ ਸੇਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੜ ਜਾਏਂਗਾ। (154)

You are the king of the rich, not the poor.

And you will repent hating the poor.

The blood of innocents is on your hands.

Remember! You will burn in its fire.

In the poem Chamkaur di Garhi vich Singhan da Jera he presents a hope of contemporary government's failure before the struggle of common people who fight passionately against it:

ਏਸ ਕੱਚੀ ਚਮਕੌਰ ਦੀ ਗੜ੍ਹੀ ਮੁਹਰੇ,

ਕਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਝੁਕਾ ਦਿਆਂਗੇ।

ਝੋਰਾ ਕਰੀਂ ਨਾ ਕਿਲ੍ਹੇ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਦਾ,

ਕੁੱਲੀ ਕੁੱਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਬਣਾ ਦਿਆਂਗੇ।

...

(ਪਰ) ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੰਧ ਸਰਹੰਦ ਦੀ ਤੋੜਨੀ ਏ,

ਅਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਉਹ ਸਾਡੇ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਜਿਉਂਦੇ।

ਗੂਠਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬੇਦਾਵਿਆਂ ਤੇ,

ਸਿੰਘ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਲੱਖ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਜਿਉਂਦੇ। (172)

We will make the fort of Delhi bow

before this infirm fortress of Chamkaur

Do not grieve the fort of Anandpur

We will make a fort of each house and abode.

....

Our arms that will break the wall of Sirhind

Are still alive with vigour

A thousand Singhs are still alive

Who did not sign the letter of abdication

Sant Ram Udasi presents the struggle of Indian people for national freedom, their dreams for an independent India, the dismantling of working class people's dreams for better life in a free country, the shifting of power from Britishers to political elite and the slavery of working class in their hands etc. After the freedom of the country the struggle of working class people for their rights, to get rid of slavery from man, the search for freedom after national freedom in the working class people is presented by Udasi in the poems like Bharat di Azadi, Pandran August de naa, Azadi, Lok Rang, Shugal, Azadi da Din, Ik Tahna(Azadi

de naa) etc. In the poem Bharat di Azadi Udasi presents the joint struggle of Indians to get the country free from British slavery as:

ਸੁਣੋ ਸੁਣਾਵਾਂ ਹਾਲ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੀ ਬਰਬਾਦੀ ਦਾ।

ਘੁੰਡ ਉਠਾ ਕੇ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਮੁਖੜਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਦਾ।

ਜਦੋਂ ਜੁਲਮ ਦੀ ਹਵਾ ਸੂਕਦੀ, ਸਾਡੀ ਲੁੱਟ ਬਹਾਰ ਗਈ।

ਲੱਖਾਂ ਹੀ ਮਨਸੂਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਉਹ ਅਣਖ ਤਾਈ ਵੰਗਾਰ ਗਈ।

ਸੰਗਰਾਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੂਰਜ ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆਂ ਦੇਸ਼ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਕਰਾਵਣ ਨੂੰ।

ਕਿਰਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਜਰਿਆ ਮੋੜ ਬਹਾਰਾਂ ਲਿਆਵਣ ਨੂੰ।

ਦੇਸ਼ ਬਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਜਾਗੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਾਏ ਸੀ।

ਫਿਰ ਬਜ-ਬਜ ਦੇ ਘਾਟ ਜਾਗ ਕੇ ਗ਼ਦਰੀ ਵੀਰ ਜਗਾਏ ਸੀ।

ਕਣ-ਕਣ ਅੰਦਰ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਦਾ ਗੂੰਜ ਪਿਆ ਇਕ ਨਾਅਰਾ ਸੀ। (101)

Listen! I am telling the tale of India's ruin.

How we saw the beautiful face of independence lifting its veil.

When the wind of torture lashes, our spring was stolen.

It challenged the honour of several Victorious fighters;

Several wars rose like the sun to make the country independent.

The workers and farmers awoke to bring back the spring.

The sons of mother India rose here and abroad.

Gadri brothers were woken at the ghat of Baj-Baj

The slogan of independent rose in every bit of earth.

After the hard struggle by Indian people, the joy of freedom was earned. But the dreams of comfortable life were shattered after national freedom because the

country went into the hands of bourgeois class and the common people became slaves to them. Udasi presents it in the poem Ik Tahna(Azadi de naa):

ਹਾਏ ਨੀ ! ਹੀਰ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀਏ ਬਹਿਲ, ਰੰਨੇ,
ਸਾਨੂੰ ਖੰਧੇ ਚਰਾਇਆ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਫਾਇਦਾ।
ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਖੇੜੇ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਦੀ ਸੇਜ ਸੌਣਾ,
ਸਾਨੂੰ ਕੰਨ ਪੜਵਾਇਆਂ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਫਾਇਦਾ। (229)

O dear beloved sweet freedom.

What use is grazing herds to us.

If you must rush into the arms of Khera

What use is having our ears pierced to us.

Sant Ram Udasi's poetry is about the slavery left behind by independence of the nation. After independence, the exploitation of public treasure by bourgeois class and their political schemes are attacked in the poem Azadi:

ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ ਜਨਮ ਇਹਨੇ ਚੋਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਬਲੈਕੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ,
ਰਾਜੇ ਜਰਵਾਣੇ ਇਹਦੇ ਘਰ ਦੇ।
ਇਹ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਦਿਆਂ ਡਾਲਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਜ ਸੁੱਤੀ,
ਲਾ ਕੇ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਖੱਦਰ ਦੇ ਪਰਦੇ।
ਏਸ ਦੀ ਗਦਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਚਾਲ ਸਰਮਾਏਦਾਰੀ,
ਔਖੀ ਹੁਣ ਰਹੀ ਨਾ ਪਛਾਨਣੀ... (134)

It has given birth to thieves and blacklisters.

And tyrant rulers are its products.

It has slept on the bed of American dollars.

And used Gandhi's cotton as curtains
Its traitorship and capitalism friends
is not difficult to recognize now...

Sant Ram Udasi protested against post-independence capitalist society where humanity is exploited, the working farmers do not get the value of their labour. He revolts against idle capitalist class as:

ਵਿਹਲੜਾਂ ਨੇ ਮਾਣਿਆਂ ਸਵਾਦ ਹੈ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਦਾ,
ਕਾਮਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਜਾਨ ਲੀਰੋ ਲੀਰ ਹੋਈ ਏ।
ਤੇਰੇ ਜੁਲਮਾਂ ਦੀ,
ਤੇਰੇ ਜੁਲਮਾਂ ਦੀ, ਜ਼ਾਲਮਾਂ ਅਖੀਰ ਹੋਈ ਏ। (111)

Idlers have reaped the harvest of freedom
The lives of workers have suffered.
Your exploitation
Your exploitation has finally come to an end.

Sant Ram Udasi encourages working class farmers to get their share of capital from the national capital, to get value of their work and to fight for their right of freedom. About this Kesar Singh Kesar writes: "People are neither helpless, nor sleeping. They are well aware of their existence. Udasi is the one who recognized this hope to the best (181). Sant Ram Udasi as a humanist encourages the working class people of his country to become human and get their rights back from capitalist class as:

ਉੱਚੀ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਮਜ਼ਦੂਰ ਨੇ ਹੈ ਕਹਿਣਾ।
ਹਿੱਸਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੀ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਲੈਣਾ।
ਅੱਜ ਸਾਡੇ ਰਾਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੋਈ ਠੋਸ ਨਾ ਧਰੇ।

ਆਖਣਾ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਉਹ ਗਹਿਣੇ ਸਾਡਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਨਾ ਧਰੇ। (113)

The worker will raise his voice and say

We need a share in country's independence.

No one dare put on obstacle in our way.

Tell the rulers of the time

Not to mortgage our country.

Similarly, in the poem Lok Rang:

ਅਸੀਂ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਨਾ ਜੁਲਮ ਦੀ ਛੱਡਣੀ ਸਾਡੀ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਨਾ ਰਹੇ।

ਲੋਕ ਵੇ ! ਅੱਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿੰਦੜੀ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਣਾ ਝੋਕ ਵੇ।

...

ਜਿਹੜੀ ਖੂਨ ਹੈ ਕਿਰਤ ਦਾ ਪੀਂਦੀ, ਤੋੜ ਦੇਣੀ ਤਨ ਦੇ ਉਤੋਂ।

ਜੋਕ ਵੇ ! ਲੋਕੀਂ ਅੱਜ ਨਿਕਲ ਪਏ ਹਿੱਕਾਂ ਠੋਕ ਵੇ। (139)

We will eradicate oppression, although our lives may be in danger

Peole! We will pledge our lives to tris task .

...

We will knock off the leech that sick

The blood of workers.

All people have now arisen and stand aware.

In the poem Khooh Hakan wale nu Asis Sant Ram Udasi makes the working class aware of his destiny and his efforts to change it through the realization of struggle for independence. He presents the working class struggle for freedom and the dream for a comfortable life:

ਓ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਨ ਦਾਤੇ, ਜੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪ ਪਛਾਣੋਂ ਤੂੰ।

ਇਹ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਉੱਚੀਆਂ ਸੁੱਚੀਆਂ, ਕਦਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੇ ਜਾਣੇ ਤੂੰ।

...

ਇੱਕ ਹੰਭਲਾ ਹੋਰ ਜੇ ਮਾਰੋਂ, ਸੰਨ ਸੰਤਾਲੀ ਭੁਲੇਂਗਾ।

ਫੇਰ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਲਿਖ ਦੇਵੇ, ਤੂੰ ਲਵੇਂ ਸਵਰਗ ਨੂੰ ਛੁਹ ਮਿੱਤਰਾ (98)

O the provider of the world!

If you realize your worth

If you understand the higher and truthful

Meanings of life!

...

If you try once more

You will forget the year 1947.

Udasi writes that you will touch the heaven then.

Sant Ram Udasi was a politically conscious poet. He brought to light the exploitation of the country at the hands of leaders and make people aware of the politics of these leaders:

ਲੋਕੋ ਬਾਜ਼ ਆ ਜਾਓ! ਝੂਠੇ ਲੀਡਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ,

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਲੇ ਲਾ ਛੱਡਣੈਂ।

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦਾ ਕੁੱਝ ਵੀ ਛੱਡਿਆ ਨੀ,

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਥੋਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਵੇਚ ਕੇ ਖਾ ਛੱਡਣੈਂ। (128)

People awake! Beware of those fake leaders.

They will sell and eat off the country.

They have razed the whole nation

And they will exploit you too.

The fertile land of India which produces heaps of wheat and cotton with the hard labour of farmers is called barren by Sant Ram Udasi because the government becomes the owners of the treasure and the real producers do not get the value of his work. At the same time, he calls those people barren who instead of struggling to get their rights start cursing their own misfortune. In the poem Parvasi nu he writes:

ਧਰਤੀ ਬਾਂਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਆਪਣੀ, ਬਾਂਝਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਰਕਾਰਾਂ।

ਜਾਂ ਉਹ ਬਾਂਝ ਲੋਕ ਜੋ ਪਾਉਂਦੇ, ਕਿਸਮਤ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਟਕਾਰਾਂ। (238)

Our earth is not barren, but our governments are

Or those people are barren, who curse their fortune.

The main focus of his poetic creation is the establishment of socialist society by abolishing classes. The success story of this ideal is vividly presented by him in the poem Asi Taras nahi Karna. He is so much annoyed with bourgeois society that after the labour class revolution, he appeals the workers not to feel pity on the elites while giving them punishments. To give severe punishments to the enemy by remembering the atrocities faced by communists during interrogation as well as reminding those who died for the foundation of socialist society gives him contention of a communist. In a stanza of this poem:

ਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਸਾਡੀ ਜਿੱਤ ਦਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਦਿਨ ਆਇਆ ਮੇਰੇ ਸੂਰਮੇ ਲੋਕੋ !

ਤਾਂ ਜਮਾਤੀ-ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਦੇਣ ਲੱਗਿਆਂ

ਅੱਖਾਂ 'ਚੋਂ ਲਾਹ ਕੇ ਰੱਖ ਦੇਣਾ ਤਰਸ ਦੀ ਨਿਗਾਹ

ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੁੜਕੇ ਦੁਹਰਾ ਲੈਣਾ

ਇੰਟੈਰੋਗੇਸ਼ਨ ਸੈਂਟਰਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਵਾਤਾਵਰਨ (192)

My brave people!

When the big day of our triumph comes!

Strip your eyes of pity

While punishing fellow enemies

And revisit the air of interrogation centres in your heart

We would not be left with an ounce of pity by then.

Britishers followed the policy of divide and rule on the basis of religion. At the end, when Indians forced them to leave India, they followed the path of communal divide. It became the reason for India's partition into two parts India and Pakistan on the basis of religion. The conscious writers condemned this partition and appealed people to remain unified. There is criticism of Hindu- Muslim divide in Sant Ram Udasi's poetry as well. He encouraged people of diverse faiths like Hindu, Sikh and Muslims to live together even after partition as in the poem Bharat di Azadi:

ਜਦ ਜੁਲਮ ਦੀ ਅੱਤ ਹੋ ਗਈ, ਜ਼ਾਲਮ ਜੁਲਮੋਂ ਅੱਕ ਗਿਆ।

ਫਿਰਕੇਦਾਰੀ ਦਾਬੀ ਪਾ ਕੇ, ਜ਼ਾਲਮ ਇੱਥੋਂ ਨੱਸ ਗਿਆ।

ਭਾਰਤ ਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਲ ਦੇ ਟੋਟੇ ਭਾਰਤ, ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਬਣੇ।

ਅਕਲ ਵਾਲਿਓ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਬਣੇ।

ਲਈ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਿਰਾਂ ਦੇ, ਐਵੇਂ ਨਾ ਹੱਥ ਆਈ ਹੋ।

ਇਹਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੱਖੜੀ ਬਣੀਏ, ਇਹ ਸਾਡੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਹੋ।(101)

When torture crossed its limits, the torturer tired of it.

The tyrant ran away leaving behind command wars

Mother India's Heart broke in to two: India and Pakistan.

O wise people: how can these two be joined to wake a common
Hidustan

We have gained independence with sacrifices

Let us celebrate and preserve it, it is our honour.

As a representative of Naxalite thought, Sant Ram Udasi's poetry purely talks about working class rights. It asks about giving every human being equal rights. That is the reason why his poetry seems to be a revolt against all those factors which suppress humanity like male domination, religion, capitalism etc.:

ਅੱਜ ਫ਼ਿਰਕੇਦਾਰੀ ਮਾਣਸ ਖਾਣੀ, ਪਾੜੇ ਵੀਰੋ ਵੀਰ।

ਕਿਹੜਾ ਲਛਮਣ ਮਾਰੇ ਆ ਕੇ, ਸਰੂਪਨਖਾ ਦੇ ਤੀਰ।

ਧਰਮ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਮਾਇਆ ਇੱਕੋ, ਸੁਣ ਲੋ ! ਸ਼ਰਧਾ ਵਾਲਿਓ !

ਓ ਖੇਤਾਂ ਵਾਲਿਓ ! (136)

Today communalism like a cannibal

Draws lives between brothers.

No Lakshman comes and saves it by striking at Sarupnakha.

Religion and capital are one, listen o faithfals, o peasants!

Sant Ram Udasi's poetry appeals to Hindu, Muslim and Sikhs equally to make joint effort for bringing change in society by finishing off the exploiter's class:

ਜਿਹੜੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਪੈਣ ਗਿਰਝਾਂ,

ਮੇਰੇ ਲੋਕ ਉਹ ਮੇਰਾ ਖੁਆਬ ਹੈਗਾ।

ਮੇਰੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ, ਸਿੱਖਾਂ, ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੇ,

ਕਰਨਾ ਸਰਬਹਾਰਾ ਇਨਕਲਾਬ ਹੈਗਾ। (250)

Those whose labour is snatched away by eagles

Those people are mine, my dreams.

My Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus.

Would unite and bring about revolution.

After partition, during the time of Khalistan movement many people died or become homeless due to the anti-democratic policies of Government the pain of such loss find reflection in Sant Ram Udasi's poetry as in the poem Kis Nu Vatan Kahan till this time violent factors start disappearing from his poetry. During this time his poetry remained people oriented but the tone of violence declined.

Sant Ram Udasi presents in his writing how rising prices makes the working class people unable to buy things of daily needs, where as rich people live a luxurious life. The poor become poorer and the rich becomes richer in the wake of such price rise. His poetry mocks at the Govt make fake excuses to give subsidies to poor people:

ਸਰਸਾ ਦੇ ਰੋੜ੍ਹ ਵਾਂਗੂੰ ਭੂਤਰੀ ਮਹਿੰਗਾਈ ਏ।

ਜੁਲਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੰਧ ਸਾਡੇ ਗਲਾਂ ਤੀਕ ਆਈ ਏ।

ਵਿਹਲੜਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੂੰਹਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਲਾਲੀ ਰੋਜ਼ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਏ,

ਲਹੂ ਜਦੋਂ ਕਾਮੇ ਦਾ ਸੜੇ। (173)

The inflation has gone high like the waters of Sarsa.

The wall of oppression has reached our necks

The idlers enjoy the rewards of and comforts

while workers burn their blood in toil

In the same way:

ਸਾਨੂੰ ਮਹਿੰਗਾ ਉਬਾਲਿਆ ਦੁੱਧ ਵਾਂਗੂ,

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਛੱਟਾ ਵੀ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਨਾ।

ਇਹ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੀ ਪੂੰਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਗ ਬਣ ਕੇ,

ਆਪੂੰ ਸਾਂਭ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਆਪੂੰ ਖੱਟ ਜਾਂਦੇ।

ਵਾਅਦੇ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ ਕੱਚੇ ਮਹਿਬੂਬ ਵਾਂਗੂ,

ਆਪੇ ਖੁੱਕ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਆਪੇ ਚੱਟ ਜਾਂਦੇ। (128)

Inflation has boiled us like milk

And no water sprinklers relieve us.

They have curled over the capital of the

Nation like a snake

They exploit it and live in comfort.

They make promises like a false lover

They first say and then go back on it.

On the whole Sant Ram Udasi's poetry touches different aspects of life like the slavery of working class women, her sexual exploitation; to enlighten the working class people about their rights and to earn the value of their work by struggling for the establishment of socialist society after the demolition of class inequality. He was poet of people in the truest sense who fight through the medium of his writing against all the powers which suppress humanity in any sense.

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Chapter Four

Comparative Analysis and Conclusion

Literature of protest raises voice against the suppressing regimes and contemporary social norms that tie the ordinary people to the dead-wood past. A literary artist can contribute in the betterment of society by speaking for the individual freedom, the equal distribution of power and resources. The ignition of this literature of protest can be found in the earliest literary or religious treatises: Sikh Gurus in the medieval Punjabi literature have spoken against the tyrannical rulers of the contemporary times. This theme of protest changed according to socio-political conditions over time and space and its presentation in literary works also changed constantly. There are many traditions in field of Punjabi literature which took this theme to make humanity aware of social evils. Sufi poets have also raised voice against the religious fanaticism and intolerance of the Middle-East invaders. Heroic Literature also encourages the valour and sacrificial attitude in the wars fought for the survival.

The modern Punjabi literature encompasses many movements that tried to raise public awareness about freedom and liberty. They created a mass awakening ripple in the silent conscience of Indian people which was finding it difficult to arise from its slumber due to the centuries' domination of the English rulers. The history of the nation paved background for such themes because the land remained under various rulers from times gone. The Gadhar Movement, Akali Movement and Babbar Akali Movement contributed a lot for the freedom struggle for independence. The English rulers adopted the policy of divide and rule in the name of religion and caste that resulted in the bifurcation of the country. The division of the country ushered a new black era of rivalry between different communities, the situation was further worsened when the hopes and aspirations of the free nation failed to come into fruit amidst the postcolonial dismay and dissolution. This kind of situation gave birth to many writers and dissent voices that effectively criticize the social political condition, the poets like Mohan Singh, Bawa Balwant, Amrita Pritam and the dramatist Ishwar Chander Nanda, Harcharan Singh, Sant Singh Shekhon and Ajmer Singh Aulakh have contributed to the literature of protest.

The Punjabi literature after independence speaks for the downtrodden, working, labour classes, farmer communities and their exploitation by the corrupt politicians, in their vernacular languages. The main motive of literature of this era is to shake the conscience of the people to take arms against their oppressive conditions and perpetrators of social repression. Except Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi, Lal Singh Dil and Paash are famous poets of this movement. The theme of protest found reflection not only in one particular genre but almost all the genres like poetry, drama and novels based on the theme of protest were written in Punjabi language. In the present comparative study the prominent works written by two famous Punjabi writers from different genres.

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi are among the prominent writers of this era, the dramatist Gursharan Singh has penned down a great many dramas, he brought the drama out of urban closets to the village streets and written about the village people and their problems by breaking the set up rules and traditions of the classical literature and criticism. Although Gursharan belonged to a well to do family he was well aware of the difficulties faced by the working class people. Due to excessive poverty one of his best friends was forced to leave his studies and work as a garbage collector. This incidence had a great toll on the psyche of Gursharan Singh. He played a significant role in the foundation of theatrical organization like Pulse Theatre (Manch). He used to give speech before the play start. Through this medium he used to give expression to his ideology which was aimed at giving equal status to all human beings. He wrote many plays against emergency and Punjab problem which emerged in the late 80's.

Sant Ram Udasi was a poet. He was born in a Dalit family, so he had experienced the life of poverty. That was why he used to sing his songs going among the common people to make them get rid of the life of poverty and slavery. His personal experiences enforced him to write poetry based on the question related to inequality among human beings, among genders as well as economic inequality leading to class conflicts. This writer like many above mentioned other socially marginalized poets was a politically conscious one. He wrote various forms of poetry and published many works during his lifetime and his works were compiled into book form by people like Rajinder Rahi.

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi both have opposed the political power which suppress, the inhuman social values which snatch the right to live from the people and that power which endorse their laws on them by force through their literature. Both of them raised their voice in their works so that man should be treated as man and the society should be based on equality. Both the writers were related to the Marxist ideology. Sant Ram Udasi started writing in a spiritual mode and joined Naxalite Movement when it emerged in Punjab. Gursharan Singh was already a Marxist writer; he was influenced by this movement and joined it. In the writings of both the writers there is immense use of violent words.

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi both were eminent writers who were influenced by Naxalite Movement. They wrote literature with the intention that people should get awaken and revolt against the injustice and inequality they face in society. Both of them were revolutionary writers. Both of these writers have to face physical violence while participating in the Naxalite Movement. Both of them have to go to jail during the emergency. Sant Ram Udasi was even tortured in jail. Both of them were suspended from the government service. Thus Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi both had to face mental and economic crises. Both of them had to leave their homes, but they struggled for the creation of society which is based on equality.

The ideology of both of them was to make people realize the reality of their lives and inspire them to rebel against the practices which suppress them. They considered literature as a tool to bring change in society. They employed realistic approaches towards presenting the vices of society in the form of dowry, female subjugation, inequality, caste discrimination, class struggle and exploitation of people as well as the nation in the elite hands. One belong to elite class (Gursharan Singh), other belong to margin class (Sant Ram Udasi) but their writings share similar theme. Their works are works written from the point of view of common people who actually suffer.

Both of these writers used the language of common people and used the rural idiomatic language used by these people. The characters in their works make use of rural language which suits the theme of their works. They used simple techniques to present their ideology before the common people. Sant Ram

Udasi used to sing his poetry among the common people and Gursharan Singh presented his plays among the common people using the style of street-theatre, Tharha theatre. There is usage of violent words and names of weapons like dagger, sword, gun, axes, spears etc.

After independence, Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi both realized and inspired the people about their condition in society through their writings. The proletariat class which is suppressed by the capitalist class, could not get the three basic needs of the life – bread, clothes and house (Roti, Kaprha or Makaan). The people belonging to this class are compelled to live like beasts, due to the debt. They do not get the price of their hard work. Gursharan Singh apart from other socially relevant matters has also written about how the poor people are forced to do the illegal works like the extracting of 'local wine' (desi sharab) and illegal acquisitions. They made the common people realize about their plight, to know about their own self, and to change their condition in society. They inspired the people to bring about armed revolution against the capitalist class.

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi opposed the social evils like dowry system through their writings. It is a threat for society. A girl becomes a burden for the parents, due to this evil. If the girl's parents do not provide sufficient dowry, the in-laws burn their daughter-in-law to death. Such a protest is shown in Har Ik Nu Jion da Haq Chahidaye by Gursharan Singh. Some girls are not got married due to lack of dowry; this problem is also shown by Gursharan Singh in his plays.

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi both inspired the people to give equality to women in a patriarchal society. In their writings, they opposed all those traditional values which suppress women. Both of them opposed the object-like treatment given to women. The women and girls of workers are looked down upon by the capitalist class and they are exploited physically. Both these writers opposed the women being seen as a mere object of gratification. Gursharan Singh opposed the suppression of women by religion, especially the Muslim women, and raised their voice for their liberation. They also favoured the women for their equal participation in the war of individual freedom.

Gursharan Singh and Sant Ram Udasi, both favoured the ways adopted by Communists for the protest of government. They were against killing of Communists by police by posing false encounters. Both of these writers made the revolutionary elements of historical inheritance of Sikh religion the basis of their writings to aware and encourage the people and the Communists to protest against the injustice of the government. Religion was criticized by them not as condemning any particular value system as Sikhism or Hinduism rather as an institution which is used by politicians to make people fool and use them for their own political benefits. Both the writers make people aware of such politics of religion which leads to the killing of one person in the hands of other.

They raised their voice against the communalism based upon religion. In Sant Ram Udasi's writings, there is protest against the division of the country on the basis of religion. There are elements of protest and suffering in his poetry about the bloodshed caused due to Khalistan Movement. There are no elements of violence in his poetry. But there are elements of hatred for communalism in Gursharan Singh's writings. He raised his voice against killing the people in the name of religion and killing of people by posing false encounters.

Both the writers raised their voice against the rising prices. The rise in prices affects common people the most, and their lives become worse. Gursharan Singh raised his voice against unemployment of educated people. The unemployed people, when do not get employment, become terrorists and become a threat to the country. The protest for such conditions is apparent in the writings of Gursharan Singh.

Gursharan Singh used poetry-stanzas to make his plays impressive. He used simple, straight-forward and strong words. He used the folk dialect as well as English words in his plays. He used to present his plays using simple techniques without any innovations. He used impresario (Sutardhar) and chorus to comment upon the corrupt socio-political system. There is a certain kind of rhythm in his plays. The dialogues in his plays are not disconnected; they are continued in a certain rhythm. There is immense use of English words in his plays. The stage-technique is simple and in an innovated style. He used the skill of oratory to air his ideology to the common people. He used speech-style and direct addressing to

the audience in his plays. His medium of giving speech before the beginning of any play brought him more close to the common people to teach them about the reality of life, to make them aware of power politics, to make them conscious about their social condition and search for equal rights in society.

To conclude, both the writers inspired and encouraged the common people to be awakened and bring about the armed revolution to change the existing socio-political system of the country. The themes of both the writers find close affinity. The writers might have been criticized for their political ideology of Naxalite movement but the writers penned down the reality of their times. After analysing the works of both the politically conscious writers one can conclude that their writing are the true representative of those feeling which a person, a class, a caste should have to shatter the socio-political evils like corruption, unemployment, inequality, sex discrimination, tradition like dowry system, female foeticide as well as exploitation of working class sections of society in the hands of elite class masters. Their works are a tool for change in society to give voice to exploited class.

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