

INTACH

JALANDHAR CHAPTER

Jang-e-Azadi Memorial

Q2 2019

Volume 1 Issue 2

Jang-e-Azadi Memorial

-Kartarpur, Jalandhar

The concept of the Jang-e-Azadi memorial and museum is based on a circular enclosure which houses the focal centre of the memorial and integrates it with a harmonious ensemble of galleries amplifying the struggle and sacrifice for freedom around a ceremonial path. Jang-e-Azadi Memorial is a memorial and museum built in Kartarpur (town near the city of Jalandhar) of Punjab, India, in memory of contribution and sacrifices made by the Punjabi community in Indian independence movement. The memorial is built over an area of 25 acres at the cost of Rs 200 crore. A place worth visiting.



Bloodbath on Baisakhi, Jallianwalabagh

EVOLUTION OF INDIAN CULTURE : PUNJAB'S CONTRIBUTION

-by Dr. S. K. Mehra, Historian

The

e scattered on Punjab, Sindh and Gujarat, peaked around 2500-2000 BCE. As it must have taken terms 'Civilization' and 'Culture', though often used synonymously, are the two faces of the same coin, namely the human society. In Civilization, which covers a wide range of human development, men employ their mental faculties to live and adjust with the environment, in which they live in. The manner in which the basic needs of the society, namely food, clothing and housing, are fulfilled and the level of organisation of society and government are achieved, at a specific place or time, is called civilization.

On the other hand 'Culture' deals largely with the manner in which a group of people employ their intellect – 'mind and spirit' to uplift the life of their society. Education and advancement of scientific knowledge, religious and religious practices, literature, music, dances, festivals and various rites and rituals, legal system etc, all constitute 'Culture'.

The evolution and growth of 'Civilization' and 'Culture' is a continuous process. It is always in a state of flux, like the flow of a perennial river, where the new and the old is not identifiable. However, slowly and imperceptibly changes occur, which over a period of time become harbingers of a new age or era.

The Cultural History of Punjab can be divided into the following 'Eras' or stages of development:-

- (a) The Age of Indus valley civilization.
- (b) The Vedic Age.
- (c) The Period of Early Invasions.
- (d) The Emergence of Islam in Punjab.
- upto Babar's Invasion.
- (e) The Foundation and Growth of Sikhism
- upto Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
- (f) The advent of the British rule and its impact on Punjab.
- (g) The 'Tragedy of Partition' and the Post- Partition Era.

It must be recognized at the outset that the political boundaries of Punjab have always been changing. However, the core area, i.e. the lands through which flow the 'PANCH – NDA', or 'PANJ- AAB' has remained unaltered, till the Partition of India in 1947, that changed the entire scenario. Yet, the appellation 'Punjab' which came into prevalence in the 16th century, continues to be in vogue, on either side of the border.

Punjab can claim, without fear of contradiction, that it has been the cradle of Indian Civilization and culture. Bonded by

the mighty Himalayas, in the north and north East and the Hindukush Mountain to the west, the 'Satposhindhu' or the land of seven rivers, namely Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej and the mythical Saraswati, gave birth to one of the oldest civilizations of the world. i.e. The Indus Valley Civilization. This civilization, whose remains b n considerable time to reach its pinnacle, requiring a high level of socio-economic development and a form of governance to sustain it, the beginnings of the Indus Valley Civilization can safely be estimated to 5000 BCE.

Unfortunately, the true extent of the Indus Valley Civilization, the people who built it and the causes of its destruction are all a matter of conjecture. Till date, the script found on the 'seals' has not been deciphered. However, no civilization or culture can be totally erased and its vestiges do get embedded in the civilization that supplants it. Through a process of absorption, adjustment and assimilation the preceding civilization which are not difficult to trace. Punjab, thus became the epicenter of the next civilization, namely the Aryan Civilization.

Without getting involved in the controversy whether the Aryans were indigenous people or had migrated from their 'Original' home, it is worthwhile to mention that evolution is always progressive and never regressive. The Indus

Valley people did not know much about iron and they had neither domesticated the horse about its use as a mode of transport.

Further, the Aryan civilization was basically rural and migratory in nature whereas the Indus Valley people were used to a much more sophisticated and well developed urban lifestyle. Lastly, the Aryans used Sanskrit for conversation the Indus Valley people employed hieroglyphic for communication.

The Aryan Civilization and culture has been divided into two distinct periods. The first, when the Aryans were largely confined to Punjab, is called the Rig-Vedic era and the second, when the Aryans gradually spread out into the Gangetic plains is termed as the Later Vedic Age.

When the Aryans arrived in Punjab – the 'PANCH NAD' area, the Indus Valley civilization was perhaps on the decline. The Aryans with their superior knowledge of metallurgy and a better mode of transport, namely the horse ;were successful in displacing the Indus Valley people and in establishing their own settlements. It was also during this period that the first Veda, the 'Rig Veda' was compiled by collective memory (SHRUTI). The Rig Veda, apart from religious significance also provides us with a glimpse of the contemporary Aryan Society and its culture.

The Rig-Vedic Aryan Society was primarily rural. A number of families, mostly belonging to the same tribe established a settlement, which was called a 'GRAM' or a village. Decedents from a common ancestor lived together in a joint family with the senior most male member being the head of this family. Women in the family had equal rights and were free to get education, knowledge to participate in war and freedom to choose their husband.

The Society was divided, on the basis of their vocations, into four 'VARNAS', namely Brahmin, Khatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. Similarly, the life span of a man, being estimated as hundred years was divided into four stages or 'ASHRAMAS' namely Brahmcharya (Celibacy), Grahastha (family life), Van-prastha (Preparatory of Sanyas) and Sanyas (Remunication). Each member of the Societies again had four objectives in his life namely DHARMA (To live religiously), ARTHA (To earn a living), KAAM (To procreate) and MOKSHA (To seek salvation).

In the Rig-Vedic period the Aryans worshipped primarily the five elements of nature, namely, AGNI (Fire), PRITHVI (Earth), VAYU (Air), JAL (Water) and AAKASH (Sky). Their mode of worship was to make offerings to the Gods Governing these elements through the YAGNA. On the highest pedestal was 'INDRA' who ruled

the heaven. Ancestor worship was also practiced.

The basic unit of administration was the village. The villages were also self-sustaining, economically with barter being the mode of exchange of goods and services.

The Rig-Vedic Aryans always had a singular problem to face with. It was that of the remnants of the previous civilization. On being deprived of their habitat and on being addressed to most deprecatingly, as ASURS, DAITYA, RAKSHAS (Various names for the Demons), on account of their dark colour and differences in religious practices they continued to indulge in incessant warfare (often referred to as 'DEVASUR SANGRAMA') with the Aryans.

On the foundations laid by the Rig Vedic Aryans the grand edifice of the Later-Vedic civilization and culture was raised. During this period the Aryans spread out into the Ganga Basin. They also produced such a vast amount of literature that we have no difficulty in describing the extent to which the Aryan Society was transformed. The principal works were the three Vedas, namely, Sam Veda, Yajur Veda and the AtharvaVed; Vedangs, Upanishads; Smrities; Puranas and the two Epics Ramayana and Mahabharata.

However, it was in matters concerning religion that the Aryan Society

underwent a total metamorphosis. The Gods and Goddesses, whom they had worshipped earlier, were gradually eclipsed and replaced by entirely new objects of worship. To a great extent it was the outcome of the twin stages of relationship namely 'contact' and 'conflict', with the votaries of the religious; prevalent prior to the Aryans arrival and prevalent prior to the Aryans arrival and settlement in the Punjab.

The Vedic religion continued to flourish till the 6th Century B.C., when its Supremacy was challenged by two schools of thought which eventually ushered in a new era in India's Cultural History.

(C). THE PERIOD OF EARLY INVASIONS

Punjab, apart from being the cradle of Indian civilization and culture, has also the distinction of being the melting pot of innumerable other civilizations and cultures.

Alexander's invasion in 326 BCE, not only exposed the Vulnerability of India but also opened the floodgates for several other tribes to establish their hegemony over parts of the Country. During this period, the Persians, The Greeks, The Sythians, the Kushans, The Sakas and the Huns after crossing the Indus, made their appearance

first in Punjab before making efforts to expand into the hinterland.

Unfortunately, for this period of early invasions which lasted approximately a thousand years (326 BCE to 712 AD), not much reliable sources of study are available. Our knowledge, based on secondary sources, is scanty. Moreover, almost all invading tribes were absorbed in the Indian Society and thus their individual identities were lost for ever. However, it can safely be assumed that every tribe and community, keeping in with the Indian tradition, enriched the Indian Society and culture with their individual contribution. The most enduring and the most conspicuous being as under :

(a) The Indian art and architecture were the biggest gainers. The 'GANDHAR SCHOOL' lay the foundations of Indian sculpture, in which the head of the Buddha was most meticulously sculpted. Later, with the contribution from the 'MATHURA SCHOOL' the most beautiful temples and statues were made. Most of them were either defaced or destroyed by the Muslim invaders yet a few, like in Khajuraho, bear the Unmistakable imprint of their earlier greatness.

(b) The exchange of knowledge, particularly Greek knowledge with the Oriental Indian knowledge of science, literature, medicine, mathematics, benefitted both the cultures.

(c) Trade and commerce across Asia to Europe proved beneficial to all parties. Indian silks, spices, perfumes soon captured the imagination of the Roman elite & their ever growing demand added to Indian wealth and economy.

(d) The Kushans, whose empire was partly in India and partly in Central Asia, proved extremely helpful in the spread of Buddhism across Asia. The Buddhist monks travelled overland and preached the Buddhist religion and philosophy and with their sustained efforts succeeded in making it a world religion.

(e) The coins of some of these invading rulers were beautifully crafted and were of a standard and uniform weight. Hereafter, Indian numismatics were not to remain as of the old.

(f) One fact, that can hardly be overlooked is that all through these turbulent years Punjab remained in the centre stage. As every army on the line of march lived off the land, to sustain it, the devastation that the peasantry and the tradesmen of Punjab must have suffered would make any man to shudder. That the people of Punjab bore it speaks volumes about their strength of character and will to survive against all odds.

(g) A word about the rulers of the country. Undoubtedly the Mauryan and the Gupta rulers did make efforts to stem the

tide. But, their efforts were like a knee jerk reaction rather than a part of well conceived, well executed defensive plan. The very fact that their capital lay far in the East at Patliputra. While the danger always lurked in the west explains the ineptitude of the Indian rulers to conceive and execute a well defined defence policy.

Keeping in with the saying that every dark cloud has a silver lining, these tempestuous years were also witness to the best in human endeavour, in Indian History. Chandragupta Maurya, inspired by Alexendra's invasion and guided by Kautilya defeated the Nanda rulers of Magadha and created the first trans-Indians Empire. This empire, ideally governed according to the guidelines provide in the 'Arthashastra', established bench marks in Civil and military administration. His grandson, Ashoka, a war monger, had a change of heart and his religiosity, piety and care for his subjects made him a ruler worth emulation.

Centuries later, another dynasty, the Guptas, gave India its Golden Age. Samudragupta, it re-established political Unity in India. The Gupta rulers, fostered intellectual creativity that fructified in the creation of the finest of Sanskrit literature, development of science and technology, mathematics, metallurgy, art and architecture.

This period also witnessed the rise and decline of Buddhism in India. The Brahmanic revival, re-established the primacy of the Vedic religion with one conspicuous change, that the sacrifices of animals and man were abandoned.

THE EMERGENCE OF ISLAM IN PUNJAB

The Arab invasion of Sindh led to the establishment of the first Muslim state in India. As the Arabs made no further attempts, it was left to the Turks to expand the area under muslim rule. They first occupied Afghanistan, after a bitter struggle and thereafter used it as a springboard to invade India. Their attempts, which initially were in the form of plundering and raids, brought them to Punjab, since it lay in the line of march. Nibbling at first they soon occupied it.

With the passage to India firmly secured, the occupation of Delhi was foregone conclusion. Their task was further made easy by the Indian rulers, who not only totally neglected to safeguard the natural borders of the country and also by their senseless internecine warfare which eroded their capabilities even to defend themselves.

The Muslim occupation of Punjab was fraught with far reaching consequences:-

Firstly, the ruler and the ruled belonged to two diametrically opposite

religious systems and social organizations. The schism between the two could hardly be concealed. Accentuated by the Muslim rulers, the crack eventually developed into a deep crevice, which could neither be filled nor papered. The muslim rulers, encouraged by the clerics, pursued a state sponsored policy of social discrimination, financial exploitation and of desecration or destruction of places of worship. The intention was to make the life of the 'Kafirs' increasingly unbearable. Naturally, to escape from their miseries and to gain access to the muslim elite, quite a few did embrace Islam. Some, to this day, carry the name of their class.

Secondly, the followers of the Vedic religion were initially complacent that like the previous invaders, who had subsumed their own beliefs and practices into the Vedic religion, the muslim invaders would probably act likewise. They, therefore, were shocked to observe that the Islamists would not merge their identity or beliefs into the prevailing system. As all attempts to 'Syncretise' the two religions failed, the Vedic religionists not only closed their doors to Islam but also gave up all attempts to reform and rejuvenate the prevalent religious. Deprived of its freedom, vibrancy, the votaries of the Vedic religion became despondent and disillusioned. As a consequence, the Vedic religion turned into a cesspool of stagnant waters.

Lastly, the Punjabis had always been a witness to the depredations of the invading armies. Once the invasion was over. They reverted to their original vocations to eke out a living. But in this instance, the invader firmly established himself and began to extract his pound of flesh regularly and most mercilessly. The conquered people were also denied any share in the civil and judicial administration. As a consequence, some Punjabi communities gave up their ancestral vocations and began pursuing new professions. Some, bereft of all resources, even joined the muslim armies and eventually settled down outside Punjab.

THE FOUNDATION OF SIKHISM AND ITS GROWTH

As Punjab lay groveling under the heels of the foreign rulers, one more oppressive and tyrannical than the other, it appeared as if its ordeal would never end., The Punjabis had suffered the loss of political freedom quite often and they could bear it with equanimity. But, the loss of their soul was too galling – an unmitigated and interminable curse. However, as the saying goes, there is always a ray of light at the end of the tunnel, Guru Nanak Dev appeared on the centre stage both to soothe the frayed nerves of the Punjabis and to uplift them from the morass in which they had lately sunk.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was neither an ascetic nor from the priestly community. He was born in a Khatri family with modest means. However, he had an inquisitive mind, was very pious and extremely compassionate. He travelled across India and central Asia to have a first hand view of the various Holy places. Based on these experiences and a deep study of the 'Upanishads', he started sermonizing those who gathered around him. His utterances, called 'SHABADS' were later incorporated in the Guru Granth Saheb.

Guru Nanak never claimed that he was a Prophet or Messiah. To his disciples he was always the 'GURU', the teacher. He was rather a reformer, who wanted his 'SHISHYAS', pronounced as 'SIKHS', to break the fetters of ignorance, superstition and social discrimination.

Guru Nanak believed in monotheism 'EK ONKARA' and a God who was eternal, formless 'NIRANKARA', omnipresent and omnipotent. He could be propitiated by recitation of his name alone and did not require either the services of an intermediary or adherence to formal rites and rituals. The philosophy was entirely in consonance with the sermon given by Lord Krishna to Arjun in the Mahabharata, who said that the out of the three modes of worship, namely 'GYAN MARG' (Path of knowledge), 'KARMA MARG' (action taken without thinking about reward or

punishment) and 'BHAKTI MARG' (Path of Devotion to the Supreme being), BHAKTI, involving 'BHAJAN', KIRTAN' and JAP', was the ideal one.

Guru Nanak also believed in a casteless social system and in women's empowerment. He also started the twin practices, unique to Sikhism, of 'SANGAT' (Congregation) and 'PANGAT' (community feeding). The word "LANGAR" was later substituted for 'PANGAT'.

The tradition of the 'GURUS' continued uninterrupted till the 'DASHMESH', Guru Govind Singh Ji, terminated it.

The contribution of Sikhism and its followers not only to Punjabi but to the entire Indian culture will remain unmatched in the entire humanity. .

(a) It marked the beginning of a Renaissance, in Punjab. With the removal of the cobwebs of ignorance, superstition and the tentacles of a caste based society., there was an upsurge of faith. The sacrifices made by the Gurus and their offspring's, made such an impact on the people of Punjab, that they soon became ardent followers of the Gurus.

(b) The Muslim rulers of Punjab and even some of the Mughal Emperors tried to crush the movement in its nascent stage but it only served to stiffen the resolve of the Sikhs to face the onslaughts of the oppressor. They withstood unspeakable

tortures with nonchalance and were always prepared to give their head rather than their faith. This resistance paved the way for the militarization of the Sikhs.

(c) The compilation of the Guru-Granth Sahib in Gurumukhi script marked the beginning of the evolution of that script, though Persian continued to be official language.

Following the death of the Emperor Aurangzeb, in 1707, the Mughal Empire began to totter. The bigotry of the Emperor had involved him in incessant wars. For twenty five years he stayed in the South, to personally supervise the campaign against the Marathas but could not achieve his objective. Taking advantage of his absence, the Rajputs, the Bundelas, the Jats and the Sikhs revolted against the Empire. As the Emperor was bereft of able army commanders and had little resources left at his disposal, the widespread conflagration could not be doused. At last, realizing that he had totally wasted his life, he died in disillusionment.

To inherit the legacy of the Mughal Empire, the Marathas made the most serious attempts. But, due to their lack of foresight, statesmanship along with an insatiable lust for money, led them stray to make no distinction between a friend and a foe. Soon, they became so obnoxious to be termed as 'GHANIM'. Waiting in the wings, the Persians under Nadir Shah first

occupied Punjab and then attack the Mughal armies near Delhi. However, it soon became apparent that Nadir Shah was more keen to acquire the crown Jewels rather than ruling the country. He, therefore, returned back to his country. The Maratha ambitious were finally laid at Panipat in 1761, when they were totally vanquished by Ahmed Shah Abdali. He too was forced to return to Afghanistan.

These invasions, within a 'short spell of time, created almost anarchical conditions in Punjab, However, this time the Sikhs first expelled the invaders and then made an earnest effort to form a Sikh state. Fortunately, Punjab found a Heavenly-born leader in Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who first brought the warring factions of the Sikhs under his leadership and then with great insight, resolve and statesmanship, laid the foundation of the Sikh Empire.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh first established the framework of an efficient civil administration. Next, taking a lesson from the military organization of the English army, he invited a number of French officers, of the Napoleon Army, to train the newly raised Sikh infantry battalions. As most of the Sikhs disliked being drilled, irregular Cavalry units comprising the Sikhs, were also raised. Since the European armies excelled in the use of artillery, special

attention was paid to raise and train artillery units.

The results of all these changes were quite spectacular. The Afghans, who had always tormented the people of Punjab, were systematically driven out from their strong holds and even their own territories were raided and captured. Maharaja Ranjit Singh also tried to expand his empire across the Satluj states but he was checkmated in this attempt, by the British Govt.

Gradually, it became quite evident that a clash of arms between the Sikhs and the British Government in India was inevitable. The British were keen to expand their empire, till it attained to natural borders. Aware of their military prowess, Ranjit Singh throughout his lifetime tried to stop it. However, his death provided the British the opportunity that they had long waited for.

The Sikh armies fought most gallantly during the two Anglo Sikh wars and on certain occasions almost carried the day. But, they were betrayed by some of their own leaders. Sikhs brave efforts left an indelible stamp on the victors.

The dream of a Sikh Empire was shattered but it continues to haunt some of the brave hearts.

THE ADVENT OF THE BRITISH RULE IN PUNJAB

If the rise of the Sikh Empire was meteoric, its fall was equally tumultuous. The edifice that he had raised so meticulously collapsed into a heap of rubble. Punjab reverted back to its anarchical days. Therefore, following its annexation, the primary objective before the British Government was to restore peace and order and to reconcile. The Sikhs, who had felt deep mortification at the loss of their freedom. It is a measure of the success of the British officials, who were appointed by the Governor General as administrators, that when the first war of Independence broke out in 1857, the Sikhs, who should have been in the Vanguard to seek retribution, took the cudgels on behalf of the British Government.

This change of heart can be attributed to the following reasons :

Firstly, the British. Officials were immensely successful in establishing the rule of law in Punjab, which largely led to its pacification. Punjab, henceforth, enjoyed freedom from terror and turmoil.

Secondly, the British brought about several administrative reforms, and implemented development projects in Punjab. The creation of an extensive irrigation system, construction of roads and bridges, introduction of post and telegraph System, railway network entirely transformed Punjab.

Thirdly, the creation of a modern educational system, which introduced Punjabis to the western ideas of thought and culture, was perhaps the most significant reform. It also gave impetus to indigenous educational efforts, in the form of DAV schools.

The British efforts to uplift the life of the people in Punjab were reciprocated by its population to serve the British interests with the core of their heart.

Prior to the revolt of the Bengal Army, in 1857, it largely comprised of upper caste soldiers from Eastern U.P. As their loyalty could no longer be taken for granted, The British laid their faith on the Gorkhas and the Sikhs, who had remained steadfast in their support to the British Government. Further, the Sikhs had no inhibitions in going abroad. Consequently, the British encouraged the Sikhs to join the Indian Army in large numbers, to earn the epithet "Sword of the British Army", During the campaign in China, Egypt, Afghanistan and the frontier region the Sikhs served with utmost devotion. However, it was in the course of the two World Wars that they proved their mettle, by participating in almost all theatres of the war and laying down their lives most ungrudgingly, to defined the British Empire and its Allies.

It was only natural for the Indians to expect that in return for their unstinted support the British Govt. would grant them some

constitutional reforms. What they actually got was nothing short of betrayal of that trust. In pursuance of a policy of 'Repression and Reform', the British Govt. first enacted the infamous Rowlett Act (March 1919) and when people assembled in the JalianwalaBagh to peacefully protest against it. Regional Commander Dyer fired upon them (13 April 1919), killing around 2000 men and women. The reverberations of this unwarranted and totally indefensible massacre resounded throughout the country. As the entire British community came out in support of Dyer, it put a question mark on the British people being fair minded.

In December 1919, Royal Assent was accorded to the Montague – Chelmsford Reforms, but it proved to be a half hearted measure. It established a system, called 'Diarchy' besides reaffirming the principle of religious and class divide.

Eventually, the Punjabias were inexorably drawn into a position..... of such hostility that several young souls took up arms to express to the British. Most notable of them were Bhagat Singh, UdhamSingh, MDhingra, who became icons of armed resistance.

Political developments in India, took place at a very fast pace, after the arrival of the Simon Commission in 1928, to evaluate the progress of the constitutional reforms. LalaLajpatRai, who was leading a peaceful procession at Lahore, to express the

disappointment of the Indians at its composition, was hit mercilessly on his head by a British police officer. LalaLajpatRai died, in Nov. 1928, as a result of the injuries sustained by him. But, his prophecy that every blow received by him will prove to be a nail in the coffin of the British Empire did come out to be true.

In March 1930, Mahatma Gandhi started the Civil Disobedience Movement. The 'Salt Satyagraha' gained widespread support from the people who boycotted the British goods, courts, schools and colleges and burnt western clothes. The British Government reacted by arresting Mahatma Gandhi and imprisoning him, only to be released for participation in the Round Table conference, in London.

More than the Civil Disobedience Movement, the martyrdom of SardarBhagat Singh, ShivramRajguru and Sukhdev, in March 1931 fire the imagination of the people in India. There was widespread condemnation all over the country, prompting even RavindraNath Tagore to surrender his knighthood.

In January 1933, ChoudharyRehmat Ali, came out with his famous pamphlet, on 'PAKISTAN'. This was the precursor to the two Nation Theory, adopted by the Muslim League, in support for the creation of a separate muslim state, named 'PAKISTAN'.

The Muslims had grieved the loss of the Mughal Empire and their personal preeminence. They also had to face to ire of the British Government, as they were suspected to have been in the vanguard of the revolt of 1857. Consequently, Muslims were hanged in large numbers and their properties sequestrated to avenge the loss of British lives and property.

Naturally, the Muslims suffered from loss of prestige and economic impoverishment. They also did not allow their children to adopt western education, thus denying them the opportunity to gain useful employment in Government services. Since the Hindus willingly accepted western education they proved to be the ultimate gainers.

While the economic disparity between the two communities was the principle driving force in creating the demand for a separate Union Nation, the wide differences in their religious beliefs and practices, social organization and historical traditions were no less responsible for the propagation of the Two Nation Theory. The British Government, which in previous years had a favourable opinion about the Hindus, found them increasingly in opposition to the Government. Hence, in pursuance of the time tested policy of 'Divide and Rule', they veered round to favour the Muslims. Consequently, in all measures of constitutional development, they not only

conceded the demand for separate representation but at each step only enlarged it.

In 1935, when the Govt. Of India Act was passed by the British Govt. granting quasi-autonomy to the provincial governments and extending the principle of diarchy in the Centre, the divide between the Hindus and Muslims was further accentuated to make it still more divisive. The ultimate partition of the country was almost a foregone conclusion.

The new provincial assemblies, constituted in accordance with the provisions of the Act of 1935, had barely started functioning, when the Second World War broke out. The Government of India, without taking cognizance of the opinion of the elected representatives, declared India at war against the Axis powers. As a mark of protest the Governments led by the Congress party resigned. In August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi launched the Quite India Movement, asking the people 'to do or die'. As a result, the entire Congress leadership was imprisoned.' The partisans to the Quite India Call were equally severely dealt with by imprisonment, transportation to the cellular Jail or by sending them to the gallows. The British Government, led by Winston Churchill, was determined not to let the brightest jewel in the diadem of the empire, to slip out of its hands.

The reverses sustained by the British Army, at the hands of the Japanese, caused immense loss of prestige. The aura of invincibility was lost and the confidence of the Indian troops was badly shaken. Therefore, when Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose asked the Indian Soldiers, held captive by the Japanese to join the Indian National Army, they readily rallied under its flag. Unfortunately, their efforts to reach India, fizzled out in Imphal and Kohima.

The Second World War ultimately came to an end when the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were almost obliterated by Atom Bombs. The Allied Power did come out victorious but it was a pyrrhic victory, gained at too great a cost. Millions of soldiers lay dead, cities were turned into rubble and financial resources totally exhausted. The British Government realised the truth that it could no longer hold its colonies under undisputed control, least of all, India.

The proverbial faith in the loyalty of the Indian troops had been shaken by the creation of the INA. The Naval Mutiny, in Bombay eroded it still further. In the general elections, held at the end of the War, Churchill, who had led the nation to victory was voted out and the Labour Party came into power. The new government finally decided to grant freedom to India, which Tilak had claimed was their birthright.

However, when negotiations started for the transfer of power, the Muslim League adopted a most intransigent attitude, remaining almost adamant for the acceptance of their demands. In the meanwhile the British Government declared that they would not stay in India beyond 15th August 1947. The Congress, thus, was left with no other recourse, except acceding to the Muslim League's demand for partition of the country. The League had always held the threat of a bloodbath which soon came out to be true in Punjab.

THE 'TRAGEDY OF PARTITION' AND THE POST PARTITION ERA.

On 15th August 1947, when India made its 'Tryst with Destiny', there were millions of people who were staring at a complete disaster, largely man made. Inveigled by political leaders to believe that the partition of the country would not necessarily involve mass exchange of population, they were caught totally unprepared when widespread riots broke out. The announcement of the Redcliff Award, partitioning Punjab and Bengal on the basis of Hindu or Muslim majority areas, aggravated things still further.

These riots were a direct outcome of the 'Direct Action Day' (16 August 1946), called by the Muslim League to force the acceptance of their demand for the partition of the country, on the basis of the

Two Nation Theory. Starting from Kolkata (Calcutta), the communal riots spread first to Noakhali (East Bengal). Naturally, the news of the atrocities perpetrated on the Hindu minority lit the fires of revenge in other parts of the country. Efforts to douse it proved ineffective and the Conflagration soon engulfed large parts of the country. It was most severe in Punjab and its adjoining areas.

In an event, unprecedented in human history, families from areas the borders were forcibly uprooted from their hearths and homes and to face the ordeal of mass migration. People carrying only as much as they could personally carry, started making desperate efforts to seek safety on the other side of the border. Not many were able to survive and those who did were scared for life. Roving bands of rioters, motivated by lust and avarice under the cloak of devotion to their respective religions pounced upon the defenseless convoys to systematically carry out murders, abductions and rape besides depriving them of all their possessions. The scenes, reminiscent of the holocaust, were repeated over and over again, by remorseless people, putting humanity to shame.

These migrants were termed as refugees or Mohajirs, in their own county and had to face an uphill task of resettlement. Families had disintegrated with number of people

lost or dead. Men of substance had become paupers and with no resource to fall back upon, their future looked quite bleak. It appeared as if it will take ages to come out of their gloom and despair. But, it goes to the credit of the Punjabi people that with fortitude and an indomitable spirit, they were able to resurrect their lives. Like the mythical bird, 'Phoenix', the Punjabis rose anew from the ashes, in a most exemplary fashion.

However, in a brush with and event of immense magnitude, the Punjabi society could not remain totally unaffected and several significant changes did take place in the Post – Partition Era.

The first, was the emigration of the Punjabis to the western countries. As a consequence of the World Wars. Western nations had lost millions of lives, in the prime of their youth. As a result they were facing an acute shortage of manpower. England, in particular, urgently needed work force to put its economy on an even keel. Therefore, it opened its doors to Asians to migrate to their country. This trickle gradually assumed the form of a flood with a large number of Punjabis immigrating to England. Since then Punjabis have migrated to almost all the countries of the world. Unfortunately, this resulted in the shortage of manpower in the Punjab itself.

The second is the all-pervasive role of corruption in the lives of the Punjabis. Soon

after gaining independence, the Governments, both in the Centre and the State, initiated a policy of 'License Permit Raj', primarily because there was an acute shortage of essential commodities. Unfortunately, the system was extended to every sphere of economic activity. This provided an opportunity to unscrupulous political leaders, bureaucrats, traders and industrialists to extract their pound of flesh from the people whom they held in their clutches. The malaise soon assumed the form of a pandemic, since everyone was vying with the other person to get his share of the pie. As a result corruption has seeped into every walk of life and has totally debased the Punjabi character.

The third, still more sinister, is the mixing of religion with politics. The Muslim League had shown the way of mixing the two, to gain political mileage. Unfortunately, in Punjab some spiritual leaders thought likewise. First the issue of the creation of a 'Punjabi Suba' was raised and later the creation of a separate Sikh State – 'Khalistan'. As an outcome, Punjab was first truncated by the creation of Himachal Pradesh and later of Haryana. The demand for Khalistan caused widespread loss of innocent lives in terrorist activities and in 'Operation Blue Star' intended to suppress it.

The fourth, which is sapping the youth and vigour of the Punjabis, is the growing use of

alcohol and drugs. Easy availability of the drugs, clandestinely brought into Punjab from Pakistan, has damaged the lives of the young generation and they not only face economic ruination but also irreparable health issues. The trauma to which their families are subjected hardly needs any elaboration.

However, everything is not as gloomy and dismal, as the foregoing description seems to indicate. Punjab has had its share of glory when the 'Temples' of modern science and technology were erected at Bhakra and Nangal, when Punjab pioneered the Green and the White Revolutions, to free the nation from eternal food deficits, when the Agriculture Universities in Punjab gave to the nation new breeds of wheat and rice, when new industries were established in Punjab to give employment to its youth. Better knowledge, higher productivity and a new zest for life, have impacted the financial condition of its citizens. 'Consumerism' has gained fresh lease of life, with the Punjabis enjoying one of the best standards of living in the entire nation.

ACTIVITIES

Jalandhar celebrates World Heritage Day

VirsaVihar and Indian National Trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage(INTACH) celebrated

World Heritage Day at Apeejay College Jalandhar. MrVarinder Sharma chairman VirsaVihar and DC Jalandhar send a congratulatory message to all and said that we need to preserve our rich heritage .Heritage is the legacy of the past and is what we live with today. No need to say that it should be preserved and passed on to future generations. Our cultural heritage and natural heritage are both rare sources of life. Places and monuments which are unique in their characteristics and possess historical values make up our world's heritage.

Maj Gen BalwinderSingh , Convener of INTACH Doaba region and member Governing council of India said World Heritage is the shared wealth of humankind and hence heritage sites need to be protected and preserved. Protecting and preserving this valuable assets of civilization demands the collective efforts .World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located and this factor makes World Heritage exceptional.

Heritage sites may be classified as natural and manmade. These sites have gained global importance because they stand to represent the art, culture and civilization of the past. The determination, skill and architectural capability of our ancestors are reflected by manmade heritage sites and monuments and some of them could give us a clear picture of their imagination too.

Every year, different themes related to the world heritage are chosen and debates, seminars etc are organized to mark the day. This time the theme was Intangible culture of Punjab . Various Colleges gave mesmerising performances .Apeejayorganised the event and their fine arts students gave performance on Folk orchestra, Vaar and Gidha . Cheering students gave testimony of its popularity. Kavishrimesmerising performance was given by HMV Students .Luddi dance was beautifully performed by KMV College students. Individual performances is Flute by Gurdeep Singh, Algoze by Naresh Kumar and Sarangi kept the audience held their breath . The star of the day was Bhangra by DAV College students.

Apart from serving as a mirror of our past glory, heritage silently serves as the basis for the socio economic development of our communities. Next generation is in young hands and our identities are built on where we have come from. Let us strive to instill a sense of responsibility in young minds

towards the World Heritage and teach them to see the World Heritage Day not just as any day but as a special day for the recognition of their identity.

INTACH conducts Heritage Walk on the history of Jalandhar Cantonment

Indian National trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage(INTACH) conducted a Heritage walk on the history of Jalandhar Cantonment on 20 mar 2019.Maj Gen BalwinderSingh,VSM(Retd) ,Convener jalandhar Chapter INTACH and Member of Governing council of India initially briefed the participants the purpose of Heritage walk.

The jalandharCantt came into being in 01 May 1849 with Brig H M wheeler as Cdr of jalandhar G arrison . During the visit , participants were taken to Headquarter Sub area which was constructed in 1865 at the cost of Rs 9000 only. Initially it was used for staging and transiting of troops towards North west Frontier Province.

During World War 1 , Jalandhar Brigade sailed from Karachi and Bombay for Egypt ,for defence of Suez Canal. Mid sea they were diverted to France where they fought for seven months in fierce battle at Ypres, neuvechappelle, festubert and the loos. In the winter of 1915 they moved to

mesopotamia(now Iraq) and took part in various campaigns culminating to Ottoman empire collapse

Col MandipGrewal, life Member INTACH.briefed the participants on Jalandhar Club which was established in Oct 1909, It had one of the oldest and best Cricket ground of North India. Annual General meeting of board of cricket in India was for the first time held at Jalandhar Cantt Cricket ground in 1958.

The walk was taken to the church which was construted during bitish time and then to the house where Brig Gen Dyer .

INTACH CONDUCTS ENVIRONMENT DAY

Intach celebrated environmental day at the Salempur village. They planted 350 trees in and around their village.



With a Master's Degree in Sustainable Architecture, Ar. Antony Kumar Boity has more than 17 years of work experience in Architectural field and academics in India and abroad. He strongly believes in conservation of heritage buildings as one of the way to achieve sustainability of our natural resources around us. LPU has taken a great initiative in this direction by collaborating with INTACH to list the heritage buildings in the state of Punjab starting from Jalandhar region. Prof. Antony Kumar Boity and team of faculties have led and guided the fourth year students of Architecture in identifying more than 200 heritage buildings

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

Ar. Antony Kumar Boity



INTACH

[JALANDHAR CHAPTER]

INTACH Jalandhar Executive Committee:

Maj Gen Balwinder Singh (Convenor)

Varun Kumar (Technical Coordinator)

Newsletter designed by webdox.in