

Discovering Jalandher: A Study of Selected Historical Places

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Abstract

The present paper "Discovering Jalandhar: A study of selected historical places in Punjab" is a study focusing on the history and religion of the three sacred places namely Phillaur fort, Dera Baba Murad Shah and Devi Talab Mandir in Punjab. The paper will aim to provide explicit information on those three sacred places pertaining to the founder, symbol, religion etc. The paper also throws light on the history of Punjab and its cities and towns. Most importantly, the study highlights on the significance of these sacred places during colonial period and its significance in contemporary society and history.

Keywords: Historical Places, Devi Talab Mandir, Phillaur Fort and Dera Baba Murad Shah.

Introduction

Punjab is a very important state of India situated in north-western region of the subcontinent. It is surrounded by the Jammu and Kashmir in north, Himachal Pradesh in north east Haryana in the south and south east, Pakistan in west and Rajasthan in the south west. The formation of the Punjab was done on November 1, 1966. The Hindi speaking region was carved as Haryana. The Chandigarh became the joint capital of these two new states of the India. The name of Punjab is derived from two Persian words, *panj* (five) and *ab* (water) and hence it is known as the land of five rivers.

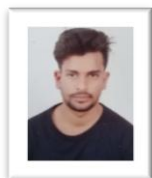
The word's origin can perhaps be traced to *panca nada*, Sanskrit for "five rivers" and the name of a region mentioned in the ancient epic the *Mahabharata*. As applied to the present Indian state of Punjab, however, it is a misnomer: since the partition of India in 1947, only two of those rivers, the Sutlej and the Beas, lie within Punjab's territory, while the Ravi flows only along part of its western border. Area 19,445 square miles (50,362 square km). Population (2011) 27,704,236.

History of Punjab

The history of the Punjab concerns the history of the Punjab region the Northern area of the Indian subcontinent that is split between the modern day countries of India and Pakistan. Historically now as *Sapta Sindhu*, or the land of seven rivers, only two rivers Sutlej and Beas flow through Punjab state in India. The third river Ravi flows partially in Punjab, mainly along the international boundary of India and Pakistan and then enters Pakistan. The other two rivers Chenab and Jhelum flow in the Punjab state in Pakistan. All these five rivers are tributaries of Indus River. Directly or indirectly and the Indus then terminates into Arabian Sea near Karachi city in Pakistan. Ancient Punjab region was the primary geographical extent of the Indus Valley civilization, which was notable for advanced technologies and amenities that the people of the region had used. The region was historically a Hindu-Buddhist region known for its high activity of Scholarship, technology, and arts. Intermittent wars between various kingdoms were characteristic of this time, except in times of temporary unification under centralized Indian empires or invading powers.

Jalandhar

Jalandhar is a city in the Indian state of Punjab Jalandhar lies alongside the Grand Trunk Road and is a well – connected rail and road junction Jalandhar is 144 KM northwest of Chandigarh the state capital of Punjab and Haryana it was spelled (Jullundur) during the british period. A must visit place in Jalandhar, Devi Talab Mandir is dedicated to Goddess Durga and is believed to be at least 200 years old. Mata Tripurmalini Mandir is situated within the temple premises and is among the 51 Shakti Peethas of India. Legends and history of this divine abode are



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associated with Maa Sati and how she sacrificed herself after her own father, Daksha had insulted Lord Shiva. It is said that her husband, Lord Shiva then opened his third eye in anguish and danced (performed tandav) with his wife's body in his arms. In fear of the Lord's anger and to save the Universe, Lord Vishnu dispatched his 'Sudarshan Chakra'. As a result, Sati's body was cut into pieces that scattered on earth and each of these portions of the earth that received these pieces were blessed and honoured and are known as Shakti Peethas.

Hindu period

The earliest history of Jalandhar occurs in the reign of Kanishka, the Kushan king of northern India in whose time a council of Buddhist teachers was held near Jalandhar about 100 A.D. to collect and arrange the sacred writings of Buddhism and to bring about reconciliation between its various sects. In the 7th century when the famous Chinese traveler and pilgrim Huen Tsiang visited India in the reign of Harsha vardhana, the kingdom of Jalandhara or Trigartta was under Raja Utito (whom Cunningham identified with the Rajput Raja Attar Chandra)

Muslim period

The Rajput Rajas lost Jalandhar to a Turkish chief, Ibrahim Shah of Ghazni sometime between 1179 to 1188 A.D. The territory was a part of the Delhi kingdom in the reign of Muizz-ud-Din Behram Shah (1240-1242). Thence forward the plains portion of the territory remained under the Muslim rule and the hills portion, called Kangra, continued under the rule of the former Rajput Rajas. Alla-Udd-Din Khilji sacked the fort of Kangra and desecrated the temple. Then came the sack of Delhi by Timur (1398) as a result of which the ruling house of Tughlak fell. The Sayyads succeeded and remained in power from 1414 to 1450.

Sikh period

Having matured his plans, Guru Gobind Singh commenced open opposition to the imperial power near about 1695 and for ten years was engaged in war with varying degrees of success with the governors of Lahore and Sirhind in the vicinity of the Jalandhar Doab. Ultimately he was defeated in 1705. His two younger sons were bricked alive and put to death at Sirhind by the governor of that place Wajir Khan. Guru Gobind Singh left for Deccan where he was killed by an Afghan fanatic in 1708 on the banks of Godawari, but he had inspired Banda Banjraangi to continue the struggle against the Mughal tyranny. Banda Banjraangi proceeded to Punjab, defeated Wazir Khan, sacked Sirhind and put to death the slayers of Guru Gobind Singh's sons. He marched through Jalandhar Doab showing no quarter to the religious persecutors. The imperial forces, however, pursued him and ultimately he was defeated, captured and tortured to death in 1716. This silenced the Sikhs for a while but as soon as Nadir Shah appeared on the scene and put Noormahal to ransom, they took up arms again but were defeated in 1743 by Adina Beg, the Mughal governor of Jalandhar Doaba.

After the Mutiny, nothing of importance occurred in the District, in 1858-59, the portion of the Grand Trunk Road between Sutluj and Beas, passing

through Phillaur, Phagwara and Jalandhar was realigned and metalled. A decade later, the railway line between Beas, Jalandhar and Phillaur was opened. The Doab was linked with the rest of the Punjab by great railway bridges over the Beas, and the Sutluj as also over the Bein. Except for minor adjustments here and there the boundaries of the District continued to remain the same as they were when it was first constituted. The District shared with the rest of the country, the benefits of settled regime and administration. It also took its due share in the various phases of the national struggle which finally brought the country its political emancipation from foreign rule in 1947.

Scope of study

1. This research shows us about the famous historical places in Jalandhar
2. To know about the culture of Jalandhar
3. To know about the historical nature of Jalandhar
4. Understanding the social and cultural importance associated with Jalandhar's historical sites.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the history of Shri Devi Talab Mandir.
2. To know the background of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Fort.
3. To examine the nature and history of Dera Baba Murad Shah.

Research Methodology

The framework of this paper is interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary in social science research methodology. The historical, descriptive, analytical and critical methodology will be used. The nature of this research work is qualitative. Literatures like books, archival research material, articles, newspaper, official websites etc were consulted in this paper. Apart from this, the information also gathered by the observation method which is also used to elaborate the theme.

Devitalab Temple: History, Religion and Belief

Devi Talab Mandir is a 200 years old Hindu temple located in Jalandhar, Punjab. It is in the heart of the city, which attracts thousands of people from all over the world. The main goddess is Durga and it is one of the 51 Shakti Peethas in India. In recent times, the temple was renovated and few changes have been made to the original structure. In addition to it, new construction has been made within the temple premises which resemble the Amarnath cave. This holy place of worship is believed to have been there for over 200 years and is one of the ancient temples in India. The tank within the temple, which is just as old as the temple is also a significant point of attraction as it is considered to be sacred. There is also a shrine for Lord Shiva which depicts a picture of him sitting on a tiger. Needless to say, it is a very beautiful and sacred place to visit especially for all the Hindu devotees.

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History of Temple

The temple got its significance because of the belief that the goddess sati sacrificed her life after her father insulted her husband , Lord Shiva. Out of that anger, it is believed that Lord Shiva danced (thandav) with his wife's body into pieces. Out of the 51 pieces she got cut into,her right breast is construction of Mata Tripurmalini Mandir when the temple

The temple has a pyramid – like tomb which is led to by a long passage.Attached to the temple is a pond where the devotees take a dip as a sigh of blessing and salvation .Also , several festivals take place in this temples .Notably, during December , a popular ritual called Harballabh Sangeet Sammelan is

conducted during which many children sing songs praising Lord Durga and also recite slokas.

The temple is about 3 kilometers from Jalandhar.Bus and auto facilities are available to reach the temple.As it is in the centre of the city , commute is nota major matter of concern.The nearest airport is 26 kilometers from Devi Talab Mandir and the nearest railway station is 4 kilometers away . Local transportations like bus and auto are available to the nearby places of visit.

Devi Tlab Mandir is located about one km from the railway station in Jalandhar . The old Devi tlab has been renovated and in its centre,a new temple has been built.Recently a modal of amaranthyatra has been built in the premises.An old temple of goddess kali also stand by the side of the Devi Talab.The mandir is famous for the 'Hariballabh Sangeet Sammelan'held every year in December at its precincts for the past 125 years.

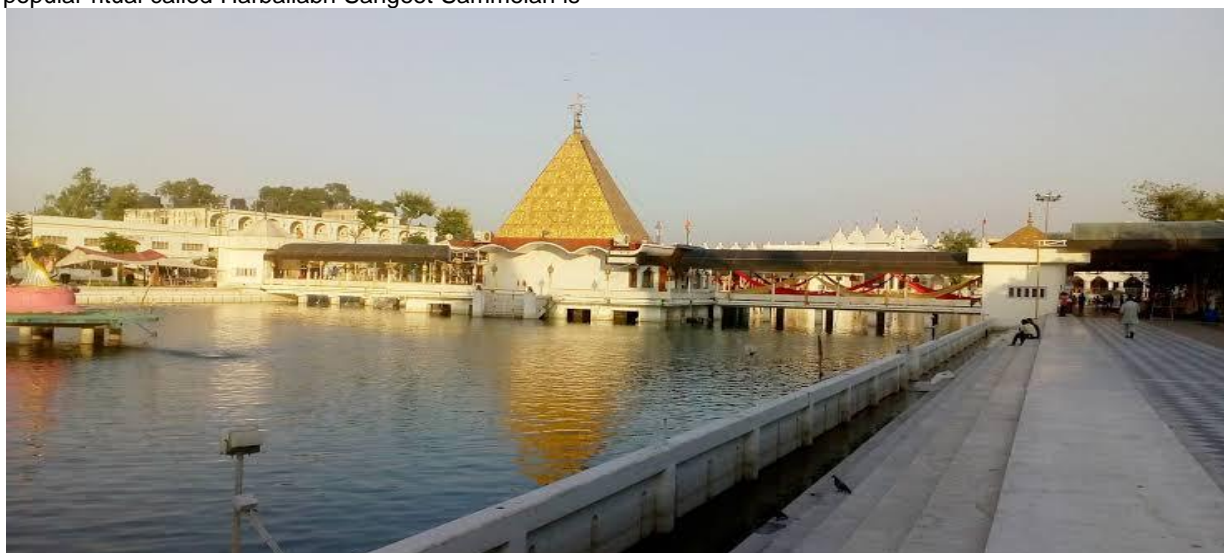


Photo: Collected by the researcher during field visit.

Fort of Maharaja Ranjit Singh: Symbol of Sikh identity and power

Maharaja Ranjit Singh (13 November 1780-27 June 1839) Was the Leader of the Sikh Empire, Which Ruled The northwest Subcontinent in the Early half of the 19th Century .He Survived Smallpox in Infancy but lost sight in his left eye. He Fought his first battle alongside his father at age 10. After his Father died. He fought several wars to expel the Afghans in his teenage years and was proclaimed as the “ Maharaja of the Punjab” at age 21.His empire grew in the Punjab region under the leadership through 1839.

Early Life

Ranjit Singh Was born on 13 November 1780,to Maha Singh Sukerchakia and Raj Kaur – Thedaughter of Raja Gajpat Singh Of Jind, in Gujranwala,in the Majha region of Punjab (now in Pakistan).Several different clans have claimed Ranjit Singh as their own. His grand-daughters-the daughter of his son Duleep Singh-believed that their true ancestors belonged to the Sandawaliya family of Raja Sansi .Ranjit Singh has been described as

“Sansi” in some records, which has led to claims that he belonged to the low-caste Sansi tribe However

Religious Policies

Ranjit Singh's policies were Based on respect for all communities, Hindu, Sikh and Muslims. A Devoted Sikh, Ranjit Singh restored and built historic Sikh Gurdwaras-most famously, The Harmandir sahib and used to celebrate his victories by thanks at the harmandir. He also joined the Hindus in their temples, Prohibited cow slaughter out of respect for Hindu Sentiments.

Khalsa Army

The army under Ranjit singh was not limited to the Sikh community.The soldiers and troop officers included Sikhs, But also included Hindus,Muslims and Europeans.Hindu Brahmins and people of all creeds and castes served his army.While the composition in his government also reflected a religious diversity. His army included polish, Russian, Spanish Prussian and French officers. In 1835,as his relationship with the British warmed up , he hired a british officer named Foulkes.

Family

Ranjit Singh had eight sons. Kharak Singh was the eldest from his second wife. His first gave birth to Ishar Singh, who died at the age of two, and after her separation from Ranjit Singh, to the twins Tara Singh and Sher Singh. The two widows he took under his protection and married gave birth to Multana Singh, Kashmira Singh and Pashaura Singh. Duleep Singh was from his last wife. Ranjit Singh acknowledged only Kharak Singh and Duleep Singh as his biological sons.

Death

In the 1830s, Ranjit Singh suffered from numerous health complications as well as a stroke, which some historical records attribute to alcoholism and a failing liver. He died in his sleep on 27 June 1839. Four of his wives, and seven concubines with royal titles committed sati by throwing themselves on his funeral pyre by their own desire.

Reforms

Ranjit Singh changed and improved the training and organization of his army. He reorganized responsibility and set performance standards in logistical efficiency in troop development, manoeuvre, and marksmanship. He reformed the staffing to emphasise steady fire over cavalry and guerrilla warfare, infantry and the artillery. He paid the member of the standing army from treasury, instead of the Mughal method of paying an army with local feudal levies.

Building of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Fort

Phillaur has an interesting history behind it. Arranged on the Grand Trunk Road, it has an incredible chronicled foundation. The town of Phillaur in which the post is found owes its inception to a Sanghera Jat, Phul who named it after himself as "Phulnagar". The Naru Rajputs of Mau, a close-by township, had looked long and hard at Phillaur and in the end under their Chief Rae Shahr they wrested it from the Jats. Rae Rattan Pal, the child of Rae Shahr, preferred it so much that he deserted Mau and settled in Phillaur. The Jats at that point left the place later, nonetheless, at some period obscure, the Rajput additionally abandoned it. Nothing is known from that point until the rule of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (1627-1658) when a majestic Sarai was worked at Phillaur.

Infrastructure investments

Ranjit Singh ensured that Punjab manufactured and was self-sufficient in all weapons, equipment and his army needed. His government invested in infrastructure in the 1800s and thereafter, established raw material mines, cannon foundries, gunpowder and arm factories. Some of these operations were owned by the state, others operated by private Sikh operatives.

However Ranjit Singh did not make major investments in other infrastructure such as irrigation canal to improve the productivity of land and roads. The prosperity in his Empire, in contrast to the Mughal-Sikh era, largely came from the improvement in the security situation, reduction in violence, reopened trade routes and greater freedom to conduct commerce.

Muslim Accounts

The mid 19th century Muslim historians, such as Shahamat Ali who experienced the Sikh empire first hand, presented a different view on Ranjit Singh's Empire and governance. According to Ali, Ranjit Singh's government was despotic, and he was a mean monarch in contrast to the Mughals. The initial momentum for the Empire building in the account is stated to be Ranjit Singh's Led Khalsa army's "Insatiable appetite for plunder", their desire for "Fresh city to pillage", and entirely eliminating the Mughal era "benevolent despot".

Legacy

Singh is remembered for uniting Sikhs founding the prosperous Sikh empire. He is also remembered for his conquests and building a well-trained, self-sufficient Khalsa army to protect the empire. He amassed considerable wealth, including gaining the possession of the Koh-i-Noor diamond from Shuja Shah Durrani of Afghanistan, which he left to Jagannath temple in Puri, Odisha in 1839.

Gurdwaras

Perhaps Singh's most lasting legacy was the restoration and expansion of the Harmandir Sahib, the most revered Gurdwara of the Sikhs, which is now known popularly as the "Golden Temple". Much of the present decoration at the Harmandir Sahib, in the form of gilding and marble work, was introduced under the patronage of Singh, who also sponsored protective walls and water supply system to strengthen security and operations related to the Temple. He also directed construction two of the most sacred Sikh temples, being the birth place and place of assassination of Guru Gobind Singh – Takhat Siri Hazur Sahib, respectively – whom he much admired. The Harmandir Sahib (also known as the Golden Temple) was completely renovated by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Memorials and museums

Samadhi of Ranjit Singh in Lahore, Pakistan, marks the place where Singh was cremated, and four of his queens and seven concubines committed sati. On 20 August 2003, a 22-foot-tall bronze statue of Singh was installed in the parliament of India. A museum at Ram Bagh in Amritsar contains objects related to Singh, including arms and armour, paintings, coins, manuscripts, and jewellery. Singh had spent much time at the place in which it is situated, where a garden was laid out in 1818.

On June 27, 2019 on Thursday evening, a life-size statue of the Sikh ruler Maharaja Ranjit Singh was unveiled at the Lahor Fort, Lahor, Pakistan at the Mai Jinds Haveli. The nine-foot-tall statue, made of cold bronze, shows the regal Sikh emperor sitting on a horse, sword in hand, complete in Sikh attire. The statue marks his 180th death anniversary.

Crafts

In 1783, Ranjit Singh established a craft colony of Thatheras near Amritsar and encouraged skilled metal crafters from Kashmir to settle in Jandiala Guru. In the year 2014, the traditional craft of making brass and copper products got enlisted on the list of intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO. The

government of Punjab is now working under project to revive this craft.

History of Dera Baba Murad Shah Ji

It is a Sufi paradise located in Jalandhar District in Nakodar and is only 24 km away from Jalandhar City and 16 km from Kala Sanghian 114 km away from Amritsar. This pilgrimage site is a Sufi paradise which is very peaceful. The tomb is built in a Muslim structural way and photographs of Baba Murad Shah Ji are displayed at a couple of places which look beautiful. The dargah of Baba Murad Shah Ji after the death of Sai Laddi Shah Ji was offered to the famous Punjabi singer, Mr. Gurdas Maan Ji who has remained as a *sewadaar*. Various singers perform at this powerful place and also there is a mela (fair) celebrated regularly in Memory of Baba Murad Shah Ji and Sai Ghulam (Laddi) Shah Ji. Gurdas Maan is an ardent follower of Sai Laddi Shah Ji and also a frequent visitor.

Baba Murad Shah Ji became a disciple of Baba Shere Shah Ji. He opted Fakeeri at the age of 24 years and returned to God at the age of 28 years. Baba Shere Shah Ji always used to stay in a lonely place and did not want people to come near him so that there would be no disturbance in his prayers. He used to be in prayers and read a book "Heer" written by Waris Shah. During the partition of India Baba Shere Shah Ji moved to Pakistan and gave his blessing to Baba Murad Shah Ji to look after the Darbar and to continue to spread the message of Sufism. Sai Ghulam Shah Ji also known as Sai Laddi Shah Ji became the head of the darbar after Baba Murad Shah Ji left this world. Sai Ji continued to look after the darbar and continue building the darbar.

Conclusion

This paper intended to enrich everyone's connectivity to history, subject or identity of cultural, religious or societal. Overall, it enables masses to know about the historical places of Jalandhar. It explored about the history of Punjab, Maharaja Ranajit's life history and fort construction at Phillaur.

Devalab temple is located about one km from the railway station in Jalandhar. The old Devi talab has been renovated and in its centre, a new temple has been built and it is a good place to visit. Recently a modal of amaranthyatra has been built in the premises and it is an important centre of pilgrimage. Baba Murad Shah Shrine is also a good Sufi religious place to visit. All these places in Jalandhar are having historic and religious importance. This enlightens the people to associate with their history, society and culture.

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