

Analyzing Mysticism in Bulleh Shah's Works

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Abstract: Bulleh Shah is considered as one of the celebrated Sufi Punjabi versifier whose work has drawn inspiration from savagery and also the idealism derived from his guru, Hazrat Inayat Shah Qadri. Bulleh Shah raised rebellion against all types of spiritual, academic, and communal conservativeness, bigotry and sectarianism. He regarded all individuals like a family as all are created by the One- The Creator. He opposed any disunion and discernment between persons. Traditionalists tried to make dispute concerning his common opinions by depicting his verses as against spiritual rites. He lived his life in the blustery eras of dogmatic changeover from Mughals to Sikhs. Punjab was in radical as well as communal disorder at that time. The portrayal of these societal complications is moderately obvious in the poetry of Bulleh Shah. He was well conversant in Arabic and Persian.

Keywords: Sufi, mysticism, guru, kafi

Introduction: Sufism or tasawwuf accentuates contemplation and mystical nearness with God by refuting the materialistic and worldly things and seeking divine learning or the tariqa. Sufis mainly deliberated about societal stratification and frazzled the perception of equivalence among masses and the only distinctive thing amongst them was their eventual association with spirituality. Challenging ashrafya or dominant leaders on their unmerited insolence and oppressions, contrary to which they fashioned their own creation in the form of khanqahs where there was no exclusion of access for any race, religion, age etc.

The construction of lexis linguistically corroborates the treatise development of Sufi referring to the teachings of Koranic and 'interior mystical experience' by 8th century ending. Linguistically, blending of Islam in a native set, to some degree, believes to be tapping self into the conversational course and scrutinizing the development through oneself. Sufism enunciated self-doctrines amongst the commonalities through conversational manner through their verses and sacred sermons.

The present study attempts to capture the core of a Sufi poet, Baba Bulleh Shah from Punjab and to see the poetic accounts and fundamental discourse rooted in his work.

As per Lajwanti Rama Krishna, Baba Bulleh Shah is considered as 'one of the greatest Sufis of the world and his thought equals that of Jalal ud din Rumi and Shams Tabrez of Persia'¹. He was born in Pandoke Village in Pakistan and is amongst the notable sufi saints and Punjabi poets embracing spirituality and intellectualism. Being a follower of, he is indebted to Hazrat Inayat Shah Qadri.

Bulleh Shah and his works: Bulleh Shah's poems are highly influenced from his guru and from the historic view point Qadiri Sufis can be traced back to Baghdad's Sufi Saint Abdul Qadri Jilani (1077/78 to 1166). Jilani also called Pir Dastgir or Piran-i-Pir. Bulleh Shah expresses in his verses that his guru hails from Baghdad but his own guru is from Lahore:

*'My Master of Masters hailed from Bagdad, But my Master belongs to the throne of Lahore. It is all the same.
For he himself is the kite and he himself is the string'*

He says he had been consecrated with the light of Realization. He had the idea of the God which is his guru and nothing is significant to him than his God. In the book *The Spirit of Oriental Poetry* by Puran Singh, it is described

¹ Ahsan Jan Qaisar, Som Prakash Verma, Mohammad Habib (1996) *Art and Culture: Endeavors in Interpretation*. Abhinav Publications. Page 28.

that the powerful yearning to meet his guru produced a sort of fire inside him, to quench which he started to contemplate some plans. He was aware of the fact that his guru was a music lover and it is said that Bulleh put on the attire of a lady, got embrace of a sarangi and went to a dancing women to learn dance and eventually became skilled. He then along with his timpanist and a harmonium performer went to an annual function organized in the memory of a holy man at his tomb. Shah Inayat was also there. Bulleh Shah, in passion, danced unrelentingly while all others stopped. His voice was tremendously woeful and tear-jerking and sang many kafis that even Inayat Shah's emotions smelted. With an empathetic voice he said, " *Are you Bullah ?*" *Bullah ran and fell at his Master's feet and replied with his eyes full of tears, "Sir, I am not Bullah put Bhulla. "*

When Inayat understood that the passion of regret and separation had cleansed Bulleh and curved him into pure gold, he forgave him. The purpose why he put him to such a firm test -the agony of scorching in the fire of parting and yearning ~ was to make him apt to obtain the priceless affluence of God. This will not make him rich but will be able to make others also wealthy.

There is an emancipating soul within Bulleh Shah that catechizes official resolutions of all kinds. In his "*Bullah ki jaana main kaun*" he analytically discards spiritual cliques and associations to innumerable groups and philosophies. He tests the agreements of social assorted relations finding authorization through marriage when he chairs love above solemn unifications, despite the fact that it might bring him disrepute: *Nach nach ke yaar manavan de, bhaven kanjari banana pai jave*

When the spout of Inayat's charm started flowing, the parched arenas of Bulleh started to recuperate, and the scent of the floras of ecstasy spread all over. Bulleh's ambiance got colored in the shade of his guru's soul, so that no discrepancy persisted between the two.

*Repeating the name of Ranjha
I have become Ranjha myself.
O call me ye all "Dhido-Ranjha,"
let no one call me Heer .
Ranjha is in me, I am in Ranjha,
no other thought exists in my mind.
I am not, He alone is.
He alone is amusing himself.*

His writings, as also his life, manifest transcendence of physical love to divine love. Indeed, this is the path of all true mystics, all true lovers of god. Whosoever has attained union with the lord has done so by travelling on this path, and whosoever will attain this union, will do so by becoming a traveler on this path of love. Bulleh Shah's life and writings are brimming with appropriate mysteries of the path. They do not only support the love of a real devotee but also inspire him to experience the plainest sufferings for attaining the mystical goal. The life and configurations are age-old to true searchers of divine realization.

*'Mullah 'n te mashaalchi, doha 'n iko chit,
Loka 'n karde chaanana, aap hanerey vich'
Not a believer inside the mosque, am I
Nor a pagan disciple of false rites
Not the pure among the impure 'Neither Moses, nor the Pharoah
Bulleh! To me, I am not known.
Not an Arab, nor Lahori
Neither Hindi, nor Nagauri
Hindu, turk (Muslim), nor Peshawari
Nor do I live in Nadaun
Bulleh! To me I am not known (Bulleh Shah, 1680-1757)*

Bulleh Shah's almost all verses are written for singing in a kafi form 'Na k'har dittha na k'harwaala dittha...' and are commonly sung during Quwwaals. They are written in Maanjhi, or the standard Punjabi, with words belonging to all the dialects. Kafi means where the first line or the second one act as the catchphrase and is mostly recited like a song. At the end of a verse the catchphrase is repeatedly sung to build a specific disposition or atmosphere.

Bulleh Shah's kafi upholds the discourse amid music and poetry. The expression of mystic thought is not allowed to become as intricate as to daunt an eavesdropping listeners nor the verses at the same time weaken from the mind after the spectators has acknowledged the oral communication. Partially, this is because of the fact that Bulleh Shah usually uses kafi form. But in kernel it is of course the continuing implication that he conveyed to his verse: every kafi, every dohra, every siharfi, and every other kind of poem he wrote has an authoritative inevitability about it.

His poetry seems to be an ostensive representation of less rigidity towards spiritual opinions and practices, his emphasis rests more on cleaning the soul inside rather than the physical form and worldly needs. Constancy of emphasis upon the exclusion of pessimism and removal of immorality within one's own self firmly posits Bulleh's style towards socio-religious phenomena peculiarly. As he suggests in his poetry; *Surrender to the love of Allah He is not just found in mosques*

Bulleh Shah's popularity is because of the fact that he uses modern vocabulary. His lines are essentially non-poetic in terms of rhythm. A non-rhythmic quality, with a vocative usage of the proper noun, Bullah makes for precise assimilation in common speech.

*Bulla! ki jaana mai kaun
 Na mai momin vich maseet aan
 Na mai vich kufar diyan reet aan
 Na mai paakaan vich paleet aan
 Na mai andar ved kitaab aan,
 Na mai renda bhang sharaab aan
 Na mai renda masat kharaab aan
 Na mai shaadi na ghamnaaki
 Na mai vich paleeti paaki
 Na mai aabi na mai khaki
 Na mai aatish na mai paun*

His usage of Punjabi language is quite modern. From the time of Bulleh Shah and Waris Shah, a distinct Punjabi literary diction, in essence of the soil, seems to have evolved which today is described as Maanjhi or the standard Punjabi.

Bulleh Shah's era marked the collapse of the Mughals kingdom after Aurangzeb, when anarchism triumphed everywhere. Sikhs were expanding in Punjab to power and there was total chaos. Some government officials supporting Mughals were not happy to which Bulley Shah says:

The People wearing rough blankets are becoming rulers and the Mughals the real kings are obliged to quaff cups of poison².

² R. P. Malhotra, Kuldeep Arora (2003). Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Punjabi Literature: A-L. Global vision Pub House.

Conclusion: A distinguished poet and mystic, Baba Bulleh Shah is the archetypal Sufi, dowsing drowning and trailing himself in deific passion, strong love and desire for the lord. Once an intellectual, a sage who only discerned parched words, but not their true spirit, it was the life- transmuting happenstance with his master, Hazrat Inayat Shah Qadri which made the well spring of heavenly love explode in Bulley Shah's heart. And it was only then that the internal blossoming, the blooming of divine joy transpired, capping in the deepest, powerful expression of ecstatic poetry and heavenly dance. His work is sadly not documented and is passed on from geneartions orally. Bulleh Shah's work mainly include *Kafis*, rhymed cantos unruffled in modest syllabic meters with consistently dispersed stresses.

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