CHAPTER 2
RELIGION WISE EXPLANATION OF FOUR SECTS

This chapter deals with religion wise explanation of the four sects located in Gurdaspur district of Punjab. The four sects are The Ahmadiyya Sect, The Neeldhari sect, The Bawa Lal sect and The Salvation Army sect. The chapter sheds light on historical background, origin, growth, establishment, ideology, functioning etc. of the studied sects. The chapter is divided into four segments. First part deals with the Ahmadiyya sect, second with the Neeldhari sect, third with the Bawa Lal sect and fourth with The Salvation Army sect.

Part I: The Ahmadiyya Sect

The Ahmadiyya Movement arose towards the end of the nineteenth century, amidst the turmoil of the downfall of the old Islamic society and the advent of the new culture, with its new attitudes, its Christian missionary onslaught, and the new Aligarh Islam. It emerged as a protest against the Christianity and the success of Christian proselytisation; a protest also against Sir Sayyid Ahmad’s rationalism and westernization; and at the same time as a protest against the decadence of the prevailing Islam. It combined a purifying spirit of orthodox reform, a tinge of the new liberalism, a mystic irrationalism, and the authoritarianism of a new revelation (Smith, 1979:368).

The province of Punjab witnessed Sikh rule from 1799 (after the annexation of Lahore by Maharaja Ranjit Singh) to 1849 (the Second Anglo-Sikh War). During this period the religious belief and devotion of Muslims had weakened considerably because true Islamic education
had been almost non-existent for long. This situation had paved the
ground in the Punjab for the rise of a new religious movement based
on novel interpretations and esoteric doctrines (Nadwi, 1974:3).

In response to the crying needs of the Muslims, there arose numerous
personalities and movements in the Muslim world. Mirza Ghulam
Ahmad (1835-1908) totally disregarded some of the most important
problems which were confronting the Muslim world in his days and
focused all his attention on one question—the death of Messiah and
the claim on his own part to be the Promised Messiah (Nadwi,
1974:154). In a manifesto dated 4 November 1900, Ghulam Ahmad
explained that the name did not refer to himself but to Ahmad (an
Arabic elative form which means ‘highly praised’ and ‘comforter’),
the alternative name of the prophet Muhammad.

In this way the Ahmadiyya movement arose due to set of favourable
circumstances which accounts for the survival of Qadianism
(Ahmadiyyat – a belief that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was an improved
second reincarnation of Hazrat Muhammad) for several decades.
Qadianism owes a debt of gratitude to the encouragement and
patronage it received from the British rulers (Nadwi, 1974:155-156).
It provided its followers with a new prophet, a new focus of devotion
and loyalty, a new religious mission, a new spiritual centre, and new
set of holy places, new religious rituals, new leaders and new heroes.
It definitely tends to lay foundations of new ummah (the larger
community of Muslims) on the new religious teachings, and a new
mould of religious life (Nadwi, 1974:114). The Ahmadiyya faith
emerged from the Sunni tradition of Islam and its adherents believe in
all the five pillars and articles of faith required of Muslims. These
five basic acts are:
1. **Shahadah** (Testimony): Muhammad is God’s Messenger

2. **Salat** (Prayer): ritual prayer five times a day

3. **Zakat** (Support): giving one’s saving to the needy

4. **Sawm** (Fasting): fasting and self control during Ramadan (ninth month of Islamic calendar)

5. **Hajj** (Pilgrimage): pilgrimage to Mecca

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (the founder) was born in a small land-owning family in Qadian (a small town in present Indian Punjab) in 1835 (Ahmad, 1995:12). He preached extreme denunciation when he claimed that he had received revelations from God and declared that he was the Messiah, the Mahdi, a reincarnate of Krishna and Muhammad. Ghulam Ahmad was an important religious figure who claimed to have fulfilled the prophecies about the world reformer of the end times, who was to herald the Eschaton (death and final destiny) as predicted in the traditions of various world religions and bring about the final triumph of Islam as per Islamic prophecy. He claimed that he was the Mujaddid (divine reformer) of the 14th Islamic century, the promised Messiah and Mahdi awaited by Muslims (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmadiyya, retrieved on 28-09-2010).

Ahmadiyyat lays emphasis on the belief that Islam is the final law for humanity as revealed to Muhammad and the necessity of restoring to it its true essence and pristine form, which had been lost through the centuries. Thus, Ahmadis view themselves as leading the revival and peaceful propagation of Islam (http://www.timesonline.co.uk, retrieved on 27-05-2008). Due to the congenial atmosphere, Qadianism won many converts and developed into an independent sect.
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed that his ancestors were said to have been members of a highly placed family in the Central Asian city of Samarqand. According to Ghulam Ahmad’s own account, the family had to leave its ancestral city and migrate to India in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Here they approached the Mughul emperor Babar, expressed their wish to enter into his service, and were able to acquire considerable wealth in the Punjab. The family is said to have been prosperous while the Mughul Empire retained effective control of the area. When it began to lose its grip, the family was able to make itself independent of the central government, and its wealth even increased. With the rise of the Sikh power in the Punjab, the Sikhs succeeded in uprooting Ghulam Ahmad’s ancestors. During Ranjit Singh’s reign an improvement took place. Ghulam Ahmad’s father, Mirza Ghulam Murtaza, was allowed to return to Qadian, was entrusted with a high military position, and participated in numerous battles on the side of the Sikhs (Field Study: As told by the respondents)

Ghulam Ahmad’s claim to a special standing was first announced in the Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya in 1880. Soon after the publication of the Barahin, a gradual change in Ghulam Ahmad’s way of life began to take place. On December 1, 1888, Ghulam Ahmad published Ishtihar (announcement) in which he writes, ‘[I] have been commanded that those who are desirous of the truth, they in order to learn true Iman (belief), true righteousness, true love of God Almighty...should do Bai‘at (Initiation) at my hands...I will try to relieve their burden. ...this is a commandment of God which I have conveyed to you today.’ (Zirvi, 2011, 216) On March 4, 1989 Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad issued a leaflet in Ludhiana in which he writes, ‘[G]od desires to found a community of the faithful to manifest His Glory and Power.
He will make the Community grow and prosper... This shall be a group of persons devoted to God.... The members thereof shall serve as models of Islamic blessings. My true followers shall excel every other people. There shall always rise among them, till the Judgement Day, personages who will be the Chosen Ones of God in every respect. So has the Almighty decreed? He Does as He Wills.' (Khan, 1978: 41) So, Ghulam Ahman started *Bai’at* (oath of allegiance) formally from March 23, 1889. He invited “people who are seekers of truth to pledge allegiance (*bai’at*) to him in order to learn true belief, real purity of faith, the way to love God” and in order to abandon their indolent and treacherous ways of life (Friedmann, 2003:5). To those who came to him, he promised to be sympathetic to their sorrows, to alleviate their burdens, and to bestow divine blessings upon them. This way, the Ahmadiyya as an organization was established. Later on, he named it as Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at (community).

After that he started appearing in public and participated in a number of debates with members of the Arya Samaj, Christian missionaries, and leading ‘*Ulamas*’(the learned persons of religion). Such public controversies between the members of different communities (or between different factions of the same community) were a regular feature in the religious life of India in the nineteenth century (Metcalf, 1982: 215-234). The first of them took place in March 1886 in the city of Hoshiarpur, were Lala Murli Dhar, a local teacher and member of Arya Samaj movement, challenged Ghulam Ahmad to a public debate (Friedmann, 2003:4).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad published many books in Urdu, Arabic and Persian. A recent bibliography of his works lists eighty-eight books. The works of the Mirza can be divided into two phases. The first
phase consists of those works in which he seeks merely to prove the validity of Islam and repudiate other religions. In these works there is no claim of being the Messiah. In the second phase, he did make that claim, and went on making several other claims about himself. It shows that the main subjects of his study were different religions, particularly Christianity, Sanatan Dharma and Arya Samaj. His voluminous works *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyah* on the one hand focuses on the Divine origin of the Quran, and the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah by rational arguments, and on the other hand to refute Christianity, Sanatan Dharma, Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj etc. In this work, he announced for the first time in 1879 that he had been appointed by the God to demonstrate the truth of Islam.

His another work was written in 1899 (and published in 1908) entitled *Masih Hindustan Mein* which flamed the Christian society (Webster, 1976:115-116). The book expounded about Jesus’ deliverance from death on the cross. The fact of the matter is that he died at the age of 120 years. Ghulam Ahmad proves his thesis by quoting testimonies from the Gospels, the Quran, the Ahadith, medical literature, historical records, logical arguments etc. He says that after crucifixion, Jesus was actually in a coma. He was healed with compound ointment (containing olive oil, myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, cassia, etc.) by the disciples. Within three days, Jesus recovered sufficiently and went to Galilee –185 kilometers from Jerusalem (Ahmad, 2009: 14-66). He met his disciples secretly during his stay in Palestine. To preach to the lost ten tribes of Israel, he went to Nasibin (Iraq). He, then, moved to Persia (Iran), then to Afghanistan, then through the Punjab reached Kashmir. Jesus’ tomb (discovered by Ghulam Ahmad) is now recognized as *Qabr Nabi Isa* (the tomb of
Jesus) which is located at Khan Yar Street of Srinagar (Shams, 2010: 81-109).

With advancing age, Ghulam Ahmad began to devote some of his attention to the ways in which the movement should be organized after his death. In 1905 he published a short book entitled The Will (al-Wasiyya). He mentioned that to ensure the continuous growth of the community, any person agreed by forty Ahmadis would be entitled to accept pledges of allegiance on the founder’s behalf. This way, the spiritual leadership of the community would rest with the one person who would be recipient of divine revelation.

Mirza declared in 1891 that he was the Promised Messiah, later on in 1910, that he was a prophet of God. The muslim ulama began to refute and oppose him. Among those prominent in opposing him, was Maulana Sanaullah Amritsari, the editor of Ahl-i-Hadith. On April 5, 1907, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad issued an announcement that if he (Mirza) is a liar then will die in his (Maulana) life time by fatal disease like plague and cholera and vice-a-versa. One year after the publication of the announcement, on 25 May 1908 the Mirza fell ill, being afflicted with diarrhea at Lahore. The next day, Ghulam Ahmad died in Lahore on May 26, 1908 (Review of Religion, 1908:222). The dead body was taken to Qadian for burial which took place on May 27, 1908 (Nadwi, 1974:11-13). It would be interesting to note that Maulana Amritsari died at the age of eighty on 18 March 1948 some forty years after the death of the Mirza.

Hakeem Maulvi Nooruddin (at the age of 67 years) became the successor of Ahmadiyya community on May 27, 1908. He was a learned scholar of Quranic studies, languages and natural medicine.
Nooruddin wrote a book supporting Mirza’s *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyah* in 1885. His admiration for the Mirza increased so much so that he took an oath of allegiance at his hands and accepted him as his spiritual guide. He was the most favorite companion of Ghulam Ahmad due to acceptance of *Bai’at* in the first batch of March 23, 1889 (Foundation Day of the Ahmadiyya community). He was close confident of Delhi darbar of Lord Lytton, Munishi Jamaluddin Khan –Chief Minister of Bhopal and Maharaja of Jammu, Poonchh and Kashmir due to dint of his ability as a physician, and his eloquence, knowledge and wit. Nooruddin remained the *Khalifahh* of the Qadiani movement for six years. During his tenure (*Khilafat*), he established various institutions like treasury, schools and publications, foreign mission in England (Zirvi, 2011: 304-5). In 1914, he fell from a horse and died on March 13, 1914 (Ali, 1914:143-148).

Due to disappearance of Ghulam Ahmad’s authoritative personality and demise of Hakeem Nooruddin, the Ahmadiyya community was splited in two factions in 1914 popularly known as Qadiani and Lahori groups. The Lahori faction was led by Maulana Muhammad Ali. The Qadiyani considered Ghulam Ahmad a prophet, while the Lahoris see him only as a *mujaddid* (reformer). The issue in question was not whether Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet, but rather what type of prophet he was, how he was to be described, and what was the meaning of the various adjectives used for the purpose (Friedmann, 2003:151). Maulvi Muhammad Ali and other dissidents opposed the system of *Khilafat* and wanted the *Jama’at* (community) to be headed by an *Anjuman* (Association) rather than a *Khalifahh*. These dissidents founded their own organization as *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha’at Islam*. They are also called Lahori Ahmadis and differ with Qadianis on two points (Zirvi, 2011: 307-8):
1. The Lahori Ahmadis regard the Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as only a *Mujaddid* (reformer) and not a Prophet.
2. The successors of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad should not be called *Khalifahh*.

Regardless of emergence of Lahori group, the *Khailafat* in Qadian branch continues. Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad was elected as second *Khalifah* (spiritual successor) on March 14, 1914 at the age of 25 years. He founded *Anjuman Ansarullah* (main administrative body of Ahmadiyya community under which different directorates and departments were working). He started the publication of the newspaper, *Al-Fadl*. He established foreign missions around the world, including the USA. For the success of missionary work (preaching), he established the *Tehrik-i-Jadid* (to supervise the collection of funds and to use them judiciously for foreign missions) in 1934 and *Waqf-i-Jadid* (to create a group of young persons who devote their lives for missionary work) in 1957. For this, he established *Jamia Ahmadiyya* (a missionary teaching institute) to train missionaries. He organized the administrative bodies into various departments/ organizations for men, women and children. At the time of Partition in 1947, millions of followers had to migrate from India to Pakistan. To settle these migrated people in Pakistan, a new Center at Rabwah (near river Chenab in district Jhang) was established (Zirvi, 2011: 306-9).

Third *Khalifahh* Mirza Nasir Ahmad was elected on November 8, 1965. He gave popular Ahmadiyya motto, ‘Love for all, hatred for none’. He established numerous educational institutions, administrative buildings and mosques in India and abroad. He
launched two major schemes: the Fadl-i-Umar Foundation for funding the earlier projects and Nusrat Jahan scheme to organize long term humanitarian efforts in West Africa such as establishment of schools and hospitals.

Mirza Tahir Ahmad was elected as forth Khalifahh on june 10, 1982. Mirza Tahir Ahmd was in Rabwah (Pakistan) when elected as Khalifahh. However, the anti-Ahmadiyya ordinance imposed on April 26, 1984 by General Zia-ul-Haq (then Military Dictator cum President of Pakistan who launched Islamisation Programme). The ordinance declared Ahmadis as criminal if they call themselves as Muslims, refer or propagate their faith as Islam. The Ahmadi could be sentenced to death if such offence is regarded as blasphemy. Earlier under the pressure of Islamic clerics, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Prime Minister of Pakistan) amended the Constitution in September 7, 1974 to declare Ahmadis as non-Muslim. This way Pakistan became the first country in the world to officially declare Ahmadis as a non-Muslim minority. The changed circumstances forced Mirza Tahir Ahmad to leave Pakistan and settled in London. During his tenure, he started the transmission of the Muslim Television Ahmadiyya (MTA) in 1992. He also started International Bai’at (initiation) in 1993. In the International Bai‘at, the new converts from all over the world join Ahmadiyya community by pledging their allegiance to the Khalifah through satellite.

The present (fifth) Khalifah Mirza Masroor Ahmad was elected on April 22, 2003. He visits many countries for attending celebrations but never visited India (due to security reasons as claimed). Under his guidance, National Peace Symposium is being held annually at London since 2004 in which many serving ministers, parliamentarians,
politicians, religious leaders and other dignitaries participate (www.alislam.org/khailafat/fifth retrieved on June 5, 2015). He delivers Friday Sermon which is transmitted worldwide through MTA.

There is a process of selecting the Khalifah (spiritual successor) through voting by the members of the Majlis Intikhab (Electoral College) consists of the secretaries of various departments of the Supreme Council, heads of the movement’s central educational institutions, all the companions of Ghulam Ahmad and their eldest sons, Amirs (Chiefs) of the various Pakistani provinces, and missionaries who had been engaged in their work for at least one year. Ordinary members of the community have no role to play in the process (Review of Religions, 1965:458-459). The elections should be held not later than twenty-four hours after the khilafa fell vacant. This speedy procedure was felt to be necessary to prevent any interference from the opponents of the khilafa (Review of Religions, 1957:144-150). Since the election process, one cannot avoid the impression that a pattern of keeping the khilafa within the family (blood relation) of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (the founder) began to emerge (Friedmann, 2003:34). When a Khalifah (spiritual successor) has been elected, every man, woman and child of the community must render complete and utter obedience to him and reaffirm their Bai’at to him. Bai’at means handing over one’s life to almighty Allah (Ahmad, 2009: 4). In other word, it is an oath of allegiance to a religious leader or initiation at the hands of Khalifah. The Khalifah becomes supreme spiritual leader of every Ahmadi towards which every member looks for guidance (Zirvi, 2011: 301-3).

The Qadianis introduced a new calendar of their own which has special names of the months. The twelve months of Qadiani calendar
are: *Sulh, Tabligh, Aman, Shahadat, Hijrat, Ihsan, Wafa, Zuhur, Tabuk, Ikha, Nubuwat, Fath*. Following are the tenets (belief system) of Ahmadiyya Community (Ahmad, 1974:23-28):

1) God exists and it is essential to believe in the existence of God.
2) God is one without an equal/associate.
3) God is Holy and perfect.
4) Angels are part of God’s creation to carry out certain duties.
5) God communicates His purpose to the chosen servants through revelation.
6) In the darkness of sin and evil, God chooses His own loving servants to guide the world.
7) Among the divine messengers, Prophet Muhammad is the greatest due to which others would have had to obey him.
8) God hears prayers of supplicants.
9) God determines and designs the course of events. The laws of nature have little effect. God manifests his might, interest and purpose through special laws.
10) Death is not the end of everything. The power of God guarantees human survival.
11) Unless forgiven out of His infinite mercy, unbelievers go to Hell.
12) Those who believe in God, the Prophets, the angels and the books, will all go to Heaven.

To widen the scope of its missionary activity and to propagate the Ahmadi version of Islam further, the movement established its first periodicals – the Urdu weekly *Al-Hakam* in 1897, to be followed by *Al-Badr* in 1902. The monthly periodical in English *The Review of Religions* has been published regularly since its inception in 1902, and has become the tool for the propagation of the Ahmadi version of
Islam in the English-speaking world. In February 1911, Mahmud Ahmad established a new organization called Ansar Allah (Helpers of Allah). Its professed aim was to enliven the missionary activity of the Ahmadiyya. In mid-1913, Mahmud Ahmad established the weekly Al-Fazl (The virtue) in Qadian (Lavan, 1975: 101-102).

As far as the organizational structure of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (community) is concerned, Khalifa is the Supreme Head who directs and guides all activities, institutions and associations. Under the Khalifa, there is a Majlis-i-Shura / Majlis-i-Mushawarat which is a consultative body to advice (the Khalifa is empowered to overrule its recommendations) on important matters like finance, budget, education, missionary projects etc. It is of two types – *International Majlis-i-Shura* (having representatives all over the world) and *National Majlis-i-Shura* (consists of Amir – National Head, national office bearers and local representatives etc.).

Presently, the official international headquarter is based in London (England) whereas Qadian is declared as spiritual (national) headquarter. *Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya* is the administrative body which is given charge of the cemetery, obligatory *Chanda* system (bequest), education, moral training, preaching, social work, supervision of local / district / provincial offices. *Wakf-i-Jadid* is another structure responsible for training and coordination of religious teachers in rural areas. The sect established a system of associations so as to include all men and women in different activities. For men, the organizations are *Majlis Ansarullah* (age group of 40 years and above), *Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya* (age group of 15 to 40 years) and *Majlis Atfalul Ahmadiyya* (age group of 7 to 15 years) for imparting moral training to do social work and preaching among non-
Ahmadis. *Lajna Ima'ilah* (every woman of the age 15 and above) and *Nasiratul Ahmadiyya* (girls younger than the age of 15 years) are the women organizations aims at educational and moral training of its members along with social work and preaching among non-Ahmadis (Field Study).

Among holy buildings at Qadian headquarter, there is a white minaret which is a symbol of peace and proclaims the advent of the Prince of Peace. *Bahishti Maqbarah* is a graveyard where Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was buried as per *Al-Wasiyyat* (the will). It is also said that the sincere and righteous people of the sect can be laid down in this graveyard. Presently, every Ahmadi contribute donations so as to bury him/her in this ‘Heavenly Graveyard’ (Zirvi, 2011:325-328). The community also established well equipped rich central library for scholarly readings and research. Among contemporary periodicals, *Al-Hakam*, *Al-Badr*, *Al-Fadl* are the newspapers whereas *Review of Religion* and *Tash-Hidhul Adh-han* are the magazines. The sect propagates the teachings of Islam, message of peace and tolerance through 24 hour satellite television channel (MTA), the Internet (alislam.org), print (Islam International Publications) and charitable organization –Humanity First (www.alislam.org/introduction/index.html, June 15, 2015).

To strengthen the activities of the community, finance is needed. To meet this requirement, there is a system of *Chanda* –monetary donations that every Ahmadi is obliged to pay. To ensure the smooth functioning of the movement in the future, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad established the “celestial cemetery” (*Bahishti Maqbarah* –the heavenly graveyard) and directed that Ahmadis who wanted to be buried there would have to bequeath at least one-tenth of their
property/income to the community. Besides this, there is a system of obligatory chandas (Zakat, Fitrana, Chada ‘Am, Chanda Jalsa Salana, Tehrik-i-jadid, Waqf-i-jadid and Auxiliaries’ chanda) along with the voluntary chandas (Sadqa, Mosque Fund, Satellite Fund, Africa-India Fund, Darul Yatama Fund, Centenary Jubilee Fund etc.). This practice gave the head-quarter at Qadian a permanent and large source of income.

The Ahmadiyya community meets annually in a large gathering at Qadian, during December (generally the last week) since 1891. A visit to Qadian is considered even higher than the pilgrimages to the Mecca (Saudi Arabia). People from all walks of life (especially the politicians) love to attend the function.

The general atmosphere of the Ahmadiyya sect is traditional. The movement strictly enforces pardah. The community disapproves cinemas. There is a prohibition of pork, alcohol, gambling, interest on lending etc. The community maintains exclusiveness. Its members refuse to pray in a non-Ahmadi mosque, to attend a non-Ahmadi funeral, to take part in non-Ahmadi political aspirations. Another area of conflict is their cutting themselves off from the general problems of Muslim community. Our field observations show that they are in touch with the people of other religions in their locality. They participate in religious places and celebrations of other religions.

There is an extreme corporate enthusiasm. The Qadiyanis devote themselves cheerfully to the service of their community, and feel that community also is serving and supporting them. And they feel that they are taking part in a glorious creative task. Their ideas are
obsolete. They are living life with a hope that they shall be raised to heaven after death.

On political perspective, Ahmadiyya sect maintained since its origin that the government of the day must be obeyed. The adherents of Ahmadiyya sect insisted loyalty to the British because they knew that they had to protect themselves against the potential violence of opponents (Lavan, 1989:130). In the year of 1907, there was great political agitation all over the Punjab. His followers freely lend their services to the British regime for the suppression of disorders (Ahmad, 1995: 55). 1914, Mahmud Ahmad (second successor) urged members of the community to contribute to the Imperial Relief Fund against the wishes of the mainstream Indian Muslim community. Even in the third and fourth volumes of Barahin-i-Ahmadiyah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad openly praised the British government. The result was that he and his followers were able to extol Islam and even to publish books critical of the Christian faith.

After the second war, Ahmadi pronouncements became more outspoken in favor of Indian independence, but Ahmadi’s confidence in the Congress was not greater before 1947 because of Mahatma Gandhi’s refusal to give assurance that independent India would allow missionary activity and conversion. In Ahmadi thought, prohibition against spreading the faith is identical with lack of religious liberty. Just as the British earned Ahamdi sympathy by allowing the movement to engage in missionary activity, the Congress lost it (Friedmann, 2003:35-38) by its unwillingness to follow their example. After 1947, Ahmadiyya sect supported the Congress Party whole heartedly. For the last decade, the community succeeded in maintaining good relations with all major (possible power seekers) political parties.
Part II: The Neeldhari Sect

Neeldhari sect is an offshoot of Naamdharis sect within the Sikh religion. Based on the faith of living guru, the sect gives importance to the role that saints play in our daily life. The adherents of Neeldhari sect hold that Sant Maharaj Harnam Singh Kile Wale, who dedicated his life in recitation of wahe guru, was the leading and prominent saint in the recent times. The word ‘Neela’ in Punjabi means ‘Blue’ and the word ‘dhari’ means ‘to wear or adorn’. So ‘Neeldhari’ means ‘wearer of blue garment’. Neeldhari men wear a free flowing blue turban called a ‘Chakuta’ and a blue ‘Kamarkassa’ (cummerbund /waist band) around their waist. Women wear only ‘Kamarkassa’. They believe in strict vegetarianism and the preservation of their hair. In addition, they follow the ‘Maryada’ (rules) as set out by the founder of the sect.

The Neeldhari sect was founded by Harnam Singh who was born on 17 January 1877 AD (Sunday) at Kila Suba Singh, district Sialkot (now in Pakistan) in Palwande Khatri family (Nandni, 2000: 1). He was son of Radha Krishan (father) and Lachhmi Devi (mother) and was born with the bliss of Sant Jumeet Singh – an associate of Satguru Ram Singh (12th Guru of Naamdharis). Radha Krishan was a money lender, after whose death grandfather Manne Shah took care of Harnam Singh. Harnam Singh became clothier and utensil shopkeeper later on. After the attainment of young age, he became a member of the Naamdhari sect (Field Study: Interview with the respondents).

Meantime he was married with Tej Kaur daughter of Vadhawa Singh Bhandari of Village Budhwantpura, district Gujranwala (now in Pakistan). Due to apathetic attitude of married life and more over
interest in asceticism, he preferred to meditate, regardless of day and night, near ponds, bushes, wells, forests etc.

Not only in Naamdhari community but also in whole Sikh community, the meditation and asceticism of Sant Harnam Singh got popularity. It was said that Kile Wale Sant did un-matching meditation in the company of Satguru Ram Singh. After Ram Singh, Maharaj Hari Singh said to Sant Harnam Singh in 1906 at Bhaini Sahib, “Kile walia! aa giyan taan apni vastu sambhal” (Kile Wale should take care of his thing i.e. gaddi / throne). After a short term, Hari Singh passed away in 1906. Sant Kesar Singh Mahavewale also said to Harnam Singh, “Kile walia! apni vastu aa ke lai lai” (Kile wale should come to take his ‘thing’). But, Harnam Singh did not respond on the ground that if ‘it’ is ours, then it shall be provided. Our belonging can’t be transferred to others (www.neelabann.a.weekly.com, 12 January 2011).

After getting enlightenment he returned to his village where he saw that his parents had loaned money to the people in exchange for their gold ornaments or by making them sign legal likhatnamas. Sant Harnam Singh tore up the likhatnamas and returned the gold ornaments to their owners without demanding the repayment of their debts (Bedi, 2005: 3).

Different communities of the surrounding villages were attracted towards him and most of the families became his followers. Besides, he welcomed many aspirants who come for naam simran, worldly demands and for darshan. He himself wandered in many villages to meet the quench of aspirants. He delivered gurumantar to them and made them Namdharis. However, these people treated him as their guru and ignored the naamdharis’ main leader at Bhaini Sahib. This
was one of the causes of division between the Bhaini Sahib and Kila Suba Singh groups.

Sant Harnam Singh started attending the followers at Kila Suba Singh. He pronounced that Satguru Partap Singh was our ancestral master. Satguru Ram Singh and I were incarnation of Lord Rama and his son Kush respectively. Many followers approached Kila Suba Singh for mental peace. It was in this way that Kila Suba Singh was renowned for Kila of Saint (Field Study: As told by the followers).

When the India was on verge to be liberated, there was also possibility of the partition. Harnam Singh the leader of the sect while anticipating partition of the country on religious lines asked his followers to leave the place. On 14 August 1947, the partition of India and Pakistan took place. He ordered the sangat to be ready for vacating their homes. No person shall try to carry money or costly things. They all took shelter in refugee camp at dera Kalaaswala. All persons reached Attari from Pasroor by train. British officers and some Muslims helped Harnam Singh and his followers during evacuation and all reached Dera Baba Nank safely. After a few days, all moved towards Naushera Majjha Singh. It was a place where Jamna –the sister of Harnam Singh was living along with her daughter (Ram Piyari) and her son in law Daulat Singh Chopra –the station master of nearby Railway Station in village Chhina.

These relatives persuaded Harnam Singh to settle at Naushera Majjha Singh. He upgraded the existing Gurdwara with the help of the villagers. A water tank was built and Harnam Singh claimed that it was part of sarovar (tank) of Golden Temple. Gurbani recitation, kirtan became part of religious practices twice a day. This way, the
dera of Sant Harnam Singh was established. Practice of offering enough *karaḥ parshad* after recitation of *varni, path, kirtan, katha* became a routine. Another practice started by Harnam Singh was to stand by all congregations in the *dera* for respect to the *deg* (cauldron) of *karaḥ parshad* which was prepared with butter and flour having 2/3 ratio. The *langar* (food for community kitchen) has been prepared with butter as key ingredient till date (Field Study: As told by the followers). The identical techniques in the sect had increased its credibility. Harnam Singh was given honour to lay foundation stone of *Kandh Sahib gurdwara* (a Sikh shrine near an earthen wall where Guru Nanak Dev solemnized his marriage with Sulakhni) at Batala on 27 August 1952.

Though Harnam Singh was follower of *Naamdheri* lineage, but he could not keep cordial relations with the contemporary leaders of the sect. The seeds of conflict with *Naamdhari* were sown when in 1920 Harnam Singh, firstly, stopped chaur (whisk) practice. Secondly, he stopped recitation of eleventh twelfth incarnation in prayer. Consequently, Maharaj Pratap Singh directed all Naamdhari followers to boycott the congregations of Kila Suba Singh. The followers who did not comply with the commandment of Maharaj Partap Singh were expelled from Naamdhari community. This move was unacceptable to Harnam Singh because Satguru Ram Singh boycotted (non-cooperation) the British strategies. This way, the move of non-cooperation was for noble cause. But, on the other hand, *mahants* of Gurdwaras had declared Naamdharis as payment offenders. Maharaj Partap Singh knew very well about the supremacy of Harnam Singh but was running the throne on whose ownership rights were not given even to his father Maharaj Hari Singh.
In 1959, Harnam Singh did not like the move to handover throne of Naamdhari darbar to Jagjit Singh and came back from the congregation along with his followers. It was also alleged that discrimination with low caste followers had been often practice at Bhaini Sahib (headquarter of Namdhari sect in Ludhiana district). They were considered ineligible to take part in community kitchen (The Tribune, 2015: 2). These people were assigned only menial services. On the other hand, Harnam Singh treated all as equals at Kila Suba Singh. That’s why he allowed Mool Singh, a Mazahbi outcaste, to cook food for community kitchen. Another outcaste Christian Mehar Singh was helped in installation of grain grinder and also took his services for community kitchen. All these practices were not liked by Bhaini Darbaar and many times Jathedars came to Kila Suba Singh for purification but Harnam Singh did not agree and the participation of outcastes in different services continued.

Harnam Singh told his followers that Guru Gobind Singh used to wear blue turban and all the ten gurus of Sikhs’ wore Kamarkassa (waist band). On 23 October 1966 (Sunday) –Dussehra Day, Harnam Singh ordered the congregation that all the followers must have to wear Neela (blue) Kamarkassa and Neela Chakuta. The blue color signifies the belief in Peace and Non-violence. The Chakuta (head dress) signifies a child asking forgiveness from his Father, the Almighty Lord (http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/neeldhari_panth, retrieved on 15 November 2015). He directed for strict vegetarianism and unshorn hair, as do all the Neel-dhari Sikhs even today. Everyone has to follow ‘maryada’ (restrictions). The followers were also directed to give proper respect for Gurubaani, Kirtan and Punjabi language. The Neeldharis claim that Sat Yugh has started since 19 September 1977.
Sant Harsharan Singh Baijnath (Kathakaar –narrator/ storyteller), in an interview (May 26, 2009) with the researcher, told that Sat Yugh is the *pehra* of 12th Guru Ram Singh. So Harnam Singh started prayer of twelve gurus. By giving reference from *Sau Sakhi* (book of hundred anecdotes which professes on the sayings and doings of Guru Gobind Singh is held in high estimation by the *Namdhari* and *Neeldhari* sect, www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Sau_Sakhi, 2 June 2016) written by Ram Kaur, he explained that Khalsa Panth (established in 1699) was premature/ before appropriate time because of the peak of atrocities of Mughal ruler Aurangzeb. Harnam Singh claimed that he was incarnation of Udai Singh –an associate of Guru Gobind Singh who was given blue clothes of Guru Gobind Singh during evacuation of Anandpur fort. Udai Singh was blessed for enjoying some part of guruship. 1966 was considered as the right time for the establishment of new *panth*. It also claimed that when Harnam Singh will re-incarnate in near future, he would continue the mission of Guru Gobind Singh as his disciple. It is also claimed that Harnam Singh and Har ji (whose gender was supposed to be changed by the God is a daughter of Jagdev Singh –present Vice-President of the sect) will appear at the same time in future (Field Study: as per meeting with Har ji and Jagdev Singh).

Sant Harnam Singh has substituted a blue piece of cloth tied in a particular styles for the white turban and has added a blue *kamarkasa* (waist-band) to the uniform. The use of a *lathi* (long stick) has been discontinued. *Sela* (a kind of hook to dig the ground before one eases oneself) and *Garhwa* (brass pot) are also prescribed. Sant Harnam Singh also advocated the use of *mala* (a chain of small diamond shaped stones) for the purpose of meditation. The followers are not
allowed to eat meat, drink wine and take drugs. They are prohibited to eat food cooked by the non-followers.

Sant Harnam Singh advocated that the followers should just wear these. The person who will see the dress does not need of recitation of other things. With the adoption of blue dress, the followers were named as Neel-dhari. Though the main Naamdhari darbar preached against Neel-dhari but it did not work because Harnam Singh had ordered the sangat to ‘bear every abuse. Kalyug is of offenders, we should seek bliss from Satguru Ram Singh. We were disciple of Guru Gobind Singh. Twelfth guru is God of the Present. We should have eagerness for to seek darshan of him. We should keep in mind the time’. In 1972, Harnam Singh wore a hat on Chakuta (free flowing blue turban) to vindicate the prediction of ninth Sikh Guru Teg Bahadur that a Sikh wearing hat would come. This act again instigated the opponents (Nandni, 1996: 618).

Harnam Singh preached during sermons that the human form of life is given to you after 84 lakh births in different forms. Once you are born as a Neel-dhari Sikh, it is sure that you would be Neel-dhari Sikh for your next seven births. That means you are getting opportunities for seven times to make your life worth it, if you can. And the only thing that can help you get through these 84 lakh births in naam simran (recitation) of Vaho Vaho and obeying Maharaji’s words. We should adopt ideal way of life by not only recitation but comprehending the gurbani, speaking truth, restricting our mind from worldly temptations etc.

Harnam Singh passed away on 11 October 1980 at Kathu Nangal while on his way to Amritsar. This was named as saang (changing form) day
which took place having 104 years of age (Bedi, 2005: 16). The followers were in unrest due to absence of successor. After 4 days, the body was lamented at a place where present Gurdwara Bhaura Sahib is raised. Before this incident, the followers were told that they should take shelter of shabad of the Guru Granth Sahib. He will also re-incarnate later on. It was discoursed that the worldly people will face curse and the followers having rehat (do’s and don’ts) would get bliss of God. This way the Neel-dhars are still waiting Sant Harnam Singh. In another prediction it is said that when doom day will come, one will not get meals anywhere. But, the people following maryada will only get meals in Baijnath (Himachal Pradesh). The meals for these people will come from sky.

Apart from being an avid lover of Classic Indian Music, Sant Harnam Singh was highly acclaimed and accomplished musician. He was extremely meticulous about the Raagas and Taalas (rhythm) that were played in front of him. He was also very particular about the correct pronunciation of Gurubaani (http://neelabanna.weekly.com/deras.html, 12 January 2011).

Sant Harnam Singh has established a number of branches at different places; the important of which are at Baijnath and Mandi (Himachal Pradesh), Sahibpura (Tilak Nagar, Delhi), Laxmi Nagar (Jheel, Delhi), Pipli (Kurukshetra, Haryana), Atari and Jalaalpur Dhang Nangal (Amritsar), Dhakansu Kallan (Rajpura, Patiala), Sanjha and Gausgarh (Ludhiana), Preet Nagar (Jalandhar), Bilaspur (Chhatisgarh), Prem Nagar (Dehradun) (Bedi, 2005: 13). There are also small units in Bombay, Singapore and even in Bangkok. Gurumantar is given to those desiring it by some favourite followers appointed for the purpose.
Harnam Singh himself was instrument of resolving many ancestral enmities in Naushehra village—the headquarter of Neel-dhari sect. In addition to it, he was instrument to establish libraries, primary health centre, veterinary hospital, banks water supply, drainage schemes, bus stand, schools, post office, roads, bazaars, grain market, sub- tehsil etc. The people belonging to Neel-dhari Sampradaya celebrate many fairs and festivals. Hola, Amawas (the night of complete darkness), Puranmashi (the night of full moon), Sangrandh (the first day of each Bikrami month), Hola Mahalla (birthday of Sikh panth), Gurpurbs (birthdays of the Gurus), Besant Panchimi (the birthday of Baba Ram Singh) etc. are prominent ones which are celebrated with great fan fare. They have day-long kirtans on all festival days. The followers get together, sing extracts from the Guru Granth Sahib and other scriptures, clap their hands and dance (Bajwa, 1974: 36-39). There is a practice of not to take salt in any form for whole day on Puranmashi (full moon).

As far as the management of dera was concerned, Sant Bhagwan—a close confident and trusted one, was assigned overall control by Sant Harnam Singh. Sant Bhagwan had close relations with officers of different departments and with the help of these people different tasks related to the development of dera were accomplished for the flourishment of the sect. The other managers also have had close relations with ministers and other officials (Bedi, 2005: 31-42). Sant Bhagwan got registered the trust named Gurdwara Dera Sant Maharaj Harnam Singh Ji (Registered) for proper management of the dera. After Harnam Singh, he worked as dera chief. Presently, Sant Kirpal Singh and Sant Jagdev Singh are working as the president and vice-president of the trust. This trust has control over three gurdwaras.
which are related to Neel-dhari panth – Gurdwara with sarovar (the old one which was already exited in 1947 and Harnam Singh upgraded it), Gurdwara Neh Kalank (Harnam Singh himself laid its foundation) and Gurdwara Bhora Sahib (where the body of Harnam Singh was lamented). Though the town is small, four other gurdwaras i.e. Gurdwara Randhawa Patti, Gurdwara Ramgarihya, Gurdwara Dudipur (of Mazahbi and backwords castes) and Gurdwara Colon (of Mazahbi and other Harizans) are also there.

Parallel to the above management, there are two more persons claiming the successors of Sant Harnam Singh. One is Sant Harpreet Singh resident of village Sambhi (Haryana) who claims the jot / saroop (soul/ incarnation) of Harnam Singh. It is said that Harnam Singh told before going from this world that he would come back as child of age 12 at Sambhi. It is also said that when the followers approached there, he uttered all bachans (words) that Harnam Singh has said (www.vaaho.weebly.com/history-and-truth.html, 26 November 2015). The managers of the main sect do not recognize Sant Harpreet Singh as incarnation of Sant Harnam Singh. In this situation, he established his base at Randhawa Farm House (1 km away from Naushehra Majjha Singh) where congregations are often held. He launched a new trust known as Nehkalank Namdhari Trust for proper management.

Another power centre in Neel-dhari sect is Satnam Singh (born in village Jor Majra, Karnal, Haryana) who established his dera at Pipli (Kurkshetra, Haryana) in 1968. It said that Sant Harnam Singh bestowed the knowledge of rehat maryada to Satnam Singh who oftern accompany him from his young age. Satnam Singh is known for proficient in passionate singing Kirtan (www.neeldhartv.com/?p=55,
26 November 2015). Lots of followers entitle him as Param Sant (Raja Jogi) Baba Satnam Singh ji Pipli Wale. Under the influence of various Sikh Takhat Chiefs, he declared Neel-dhari Samparda as united with Sikh community on 15 December 2011 and directed the followers to become baptized Sikhs and wear kirpan (sword which was forbidden by Sant Harnam Singh) along with the other Neel-dhari sect symbols. For this practice of amrit (nectar) and kirpan, Satnam Singh was honoured at Takhat Sri Patna Sahib (31 December 2011), Akal Takhat Sahib, Takhat Sri Hazoor Sahib (19 November 2012), Sri Harimandir Sahib (22 December 2012), Takhat Sri Kesgar Sahib (14 April 2012).

The Neel-dhari community is in doldrums. The triangular affection pushes them in ambiguity as whom to approach for to have real peace. It is often practice that same followers attend celebrations organized by the distant groups of Neel-dhari sect. All the three groups motivate the followers to organize events in their locality. Though Guru Granth Sahib remains the centre in almost all events but surprisingly, the followers are waiting the re-incarnation of Sant Harnam Singh.

**Part III: The Bawa Lal Sect**

Hinduism is the only religion in the world that has not been started by a single prophet. It developed gradually. Being thus people’s religion, it naturally exhibit different forms ranging from high philosophical speculations to the lowest forms of superstitions. Different gods were endowed with different attributes. The deities were worshiped for different purposes with strictly laid down formulae requiring right pronunciation and right accent. So, with particular object in view a particular god was to be propitiated. The gods were divided into three classes as follows:
1. Heavenly gods: Surya, Sabita, Pusa, Mitra, Varuna, Dyauspita, Vishnu, the two Asvins and usa etc.

2. Atmospheric gods: Indra, Aja, Vayu, Parjanya, Rudra and Maruts etc.

3. Earthly gods: Agni, Brhaspati, Soma, Sarasvati etc.

Though the Vedic gods are divided into three different categories, there were three chief deities presiding over the three regions, viz., the Sun over the heaven, Indra or Vayu over the atmosphere and Agni over the earth. These three deities became the supreme objection of devotion. They were worshipped by the worshippers with devotion and concentration. Every deity was considered by the group of worshippers as all powerful. This was the first step taken towards sectarianism. Hindu sectarianism was further accentuated by:

1. The gradual development of the theory of bhakti divided the people into groups each following its own gods.

2. The Yoga school of thought insisted on the fixing of the mind on a particular object and each of the group now made its own god the only object of meditation.

3. The theory of Japa or uttering of the name of the god further crystallized group around fixed and particular deities.

Hindu Sectarianism prescribes that the guru or preceptor will initiate his disciple in the mantra while the whole process is considered as a secret one not to be known through any scripture but handed down through the acharya (religious teacher having training of two more years after Shastri which takes seven years of religious training after secondary education). The evidence of the early Classical writings like Panini’s Astadhyayi written in 400 B.C. and the available archaeological records indicate that in the closing centuries of the pre-Christian epoch the sect had been living mainly in the Punjab, South
Bihar and the Western part of the Maharashtra (Chattopadhyaya, 1970: 1-15).

Vaishnavism developed out of the old Bhagvatism. This name now is given to that form of religion of the Hindus, which by the practice of bhakti and faith, worship Vishnu. Vishnu is considered as the protector of the universe of creation and a highly soft-natured god. He is recognised as the Supreme God, which creates in the minds of its followers a belief that they by the practice of bhakti and faith in him will ultimately be relieved from rebirth by securing a permanent place in that part of the celestial heavens known as Vaikuntha (Vishnu’s heaven) over which He presides (Pai, 1987: 25).

Vaishnavas adored Lord Vishnu as Narayana (God). They wore a special mark on forehead. They promise the followers a sort of sensual paradise after death – in Vaikuntha (Vishnu’s heaven) (Wilson, 1964:3). Actually, Vaishnav sect was a reaction to the Saiva sect due to offensive and aggressive activities of the Saivite ascetic organization (Gross, 2001:59). All Ramanujas or Ramanandis are distinguished by two perpendicular lines passing from the roots of the hair to the eyebrows, and a transverse line across the top of the nose connecting the other two. In the centre is a transverse streak of red (Bettany, n.d.: 244). In other words, they bear on their foreheads the distinguishing U-like sectarian mark of Khara Tilak or the Trifala, which consists of three upright lines – the centre one red, and the side ones white. The central red line is said to typify Vishnu, the line of the left and right respectively Brahma and Shiva. They also wear necklaces of tulsi (basil) and rosaries of tulsi beads (Oman, 1973: 188-9) or seeds of the lotus. As emblem of Vishnu they mark their body with Chakra (discus), Padma (lotus), Shankha (conch), Gonda
(mace) etc. These marks are made with *Gopichandan* (a white earth), which should be brought from Dwarika, being said to be the soil of a pool at that place, in which the Gopis drowned themselves when they heard of Krishna’s death. The common Gopichandana, however, is nothing but a magnesium or calcareous clay (Wilson, 1987: 41).

There are three big *Sampradaya* (religious systems/traditions as per Hindu religion) of the Hindu ascetic order namely, the Vaishnava, Shaiva and Shakta orders. Shaivism is the original faith of India. Dravidians, the original inhabitants of this land conceived Shiva as their chief deity and worshiped him. A section of Shaivites began to worship his consort Parwati instead of Shiva and gradually developed certain esoteric practices. These worshippers of female energy came to form a distinct sub-fold i.e. Shakta. When the Aryans came to India from middle Asia, they brought with them their own tutelary deity Vishnu. They had their own rituals of worship and other religious acts. This resulted into a clash between the followers of Vishnu and Shiva which continued for many centuries. Tulsi Das’s *Ram Charit Manas* paved the way for a workable synthesis of the beliefs of the two rival groups. He emphasised on the equality of Vishnu and Shiva (Tripathy, 1978: 21).

It was noticed that Vishnu occupied a subordinate position in the Rig Veda, Bhagwat religion and Panch Ratra. A movement that started in the 5th century B.C., gave prominence to Vishnu. The sect was gradually combined with the Narayan sect and Abhirs. In the 8th century A.D., Shankaracharya (738-770 A.D.) brought about a change in the stream of Vaishnavism. He expounded the doctrine of spiritual monism—the Advaita (monism) system of philosophy which holds that the world is an illusion and that Brahman (oversoul) is the only
reality. In the 2\textsuperscript{nd} quarter of the 11\textsuperscript{th} century, Ramanuja (1037-1137 A.D.) gave a new interpretation of the Brahm Sutra. He refuted Shankaracharya and established his own views. He systematised \textit{visishtadvaita} (qualified monism), held that the supreme soul is not impersonal. The individual soul is related to the absolute and has no separate existence. \textit{Moksha} (salvation) is to be obtained by surrender to a personal God (Chopra, 1982: 20). The worship of the followers of Ramanuja is addressed to Vishnu and Lakshmi and their respective incarnations either singly or conjointly (Wilson, 1987: 38).

Ramananda — a follower of Ramanuja carried on reforms in Vaishnavism. He substantially differed from the original sect in the matters of ritualism and other orthodox religious practices (Tripathi, 1978: 24-5). Evidently, Ramanand’s sectarian movement was one opposed to, and no doubt intended to be subversive of, the established, rigid and immemorial caste system (Oman, 1973:189). He did not favour discrimination in the matter of caste and sex. Before Ramanand, the doors of asceticism were virtually closed to Shudras. It was Ramanand who inaugurated a new era in the history of Hindu asceticism by initiating several \textit{Shudras} as his ascetic disciples. He was followed by a distinguished array of reformist saints who brought about major changes in the methods of recruiting \textit{Sadhus}. They openly pleaded for \textit{Shudras} and actually entertained them in their folds. That’s why, he accepted the disciples from all castes. He extended the privilege of Sadhuism to all Hindus irrespective of their varnas (Tripathi, 1978: 24-84). The twelve chief disciples of Ramananda are named as Asanand, Kabir (the Weaver), Ravidas (the Chamar or currier), Pipa (the Rajput), Sursuranand, Sukhanand, Bhavanand, Dhanna (the Jat), Sen, Parmanand, Srianand and Mahanand (the Barber). As per tenets of the Ramanandis, every one of those may become a Vairagi, and rise to be a Guru or \textit{Mahant}(eminent) (Wilson,
1987: 56-7). The Ramanandi Vaishnava sect has 36 Dwaras. The dwaras are also known as gaddis (monastic centres).

There are ten features of Vaishnav Sadhu (ascetic) which distinguish them from other ascetics. These features play a prominent role in their ritual life and sectarian ideology. They are (Gross, 2001:60-61):

1. Conch and chakra (wheel, disc) brands burned into the upper arms.
2. Shaved head and face or matted hair and beard.
3. Tilak
4. Tulasi bead necklace
5. The top knot or tuft of hair on the upper back of the head.
6. Yagyopavitra (sacred thread popularly known as Janeu).
7. White or yellow clothes.
8. Gurumantra (containing the name of either Lord Rama or Krishna).
10. The guru’s teachings.

There are two Vaishnav gaddis (abodes or seats of power) in Punjab i.e. at Dhianpur and Pindori; and both are in Gurdaspur district of Punjab. Gaddi means a pillow or seat of the primitive teacher; his spiritual throne to which his disciples are successively elevated (Wilson, 1987: 37). There are fifty-two Vaishnava dvaras (propylaeums) into which the Bhairagi establishments are organised (Goswamy, 1969: 1). As far as Dhianpur gaddi is concerned, it was founded by Bawa Lal. That’s why; it is also named as ‘Lal dvara’ or gaddi of Bawa Lal.
As per record available in the sect headquarter, Bawa Lal was born in Khatri (Dhawan) family of Bhola Mal (Patwari) and Krishna Devi in January 1355 AD at Kasur (district Lahore, Pakistan) during the regime of Firuz Shah Tughlaq (reigned during 1351-1388 AD). It is said that Krishna Devi and Tripta Devi (mother of Sikh Guru Nanak Dev) were sisters but the difference between the birth dates of Bawa Lal (1355) and Nanak Dev(1469) is 114 years which indicates that this is not possible having such huge difference between the age of two sisters. According to H. H. Wilson, Bawa Lal was born in the reign of Jahangir –the Mughal emperor of India during 17th century.

Bawa Lal was influenced by Advaitism and Sufism. Apart from Vendanta and Sufism, Bawa Lal, was influenced by Kabir, Dadu and other saints of this category (Tripathi, 1978: 50-51). He was baptised by Chetan Swami in Shahdra (Lahore) at the bank of the river Ravi. The guru of Chetan Swami was Krishan Dass Payahari (Sharma, 2006: 13) who established math at Damtal (Kangra, Himachal Pradesh) and Galta (Jaipur, Rajasthan). He also baptised Bhagwan (contemporary of the emperor Jahangir) who was born in Kahnuwan, Gurdaspur (Ziyai, 1968: 12-19) and established another Gaddi of Vaishnavism at Pindori (Gurdaspur). Krishan Dass Payahari subsisted only on milk and water. Though he gave gurumantra to both Chetan Swami and Bhagwan Das but Chetan Swami did not establish centre of Vaishnavism. However, Dhianpur and Pindori were established as Vaishnav centres by Bawa Lal and Bhagwan respectively. There is a practice of prefixing 1008 with the name of mahants of Dhianpur (e.g. Shri 1008 Yogiraj Bawa Lal Dayal ji) and prefixing 1108 with the name of mahants of Pindori (e.g. Shri 1108 Swami Vaishnavacharya Bhagwan ji).
Table 4.1

Genealogical Table of the Dhianpur and Pindori Gaddis *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaddi of Dhianpur</th>
<th>Gaddi of Pindori</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ramanuja</td>
<td>Bhagwan 1493-1622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramananda</td>
<td>Narain 1621-1659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantananda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krishan Das Payohari</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chetan</td>
<td>Anandghan 1659-1676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawa Lal 1355-1655</td>
<td>Hari Ram 1676-1708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurmukh Lal 1655-1685</td>
<td>Sukh Nidhan 1708-1727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daya Ram 1685-1719</td>
<td>Ram Das 1727-1761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurjan Das 1719-1737</td>
<td>Krishan Das 1761-1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram Sahai 1737-1753</td>
<td>Keshav Das 1778-1807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lal Das 1753-1786</td>
<td>Narotam Das 1807-1843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheetal Das 1786-1805</td>
<td>Ganga Das 1843-1861</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haribhajan Das 1805-1835</td>
<td>Radhika Das 1861-1887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balram Das 1835-1847</td>
<td>Brahm Das 1887-1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raghav Das 1847-1875</td>
<td>Ram Das 1908-1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harinam Das 1875-1935</td>
<td>Govind Das 1980-2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudarshan Das 1935-1948</td>
<td>Raghubir Das 2004 onward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwaraka Das 1948-1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narain Das 1978-2001</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramsundar Das 2001 onward</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* As per Field Study and available records of Dhianpur and Pindori (centres of Vaishnavism)

Philosophically, Bawa Lal was a pure monist. He regarded the deities of all Hindu sects in the form of Ram or Hari. To him Ram, Hari or Bhagwan meant nothing other than the one Supreme God whom all sects ought to worship. He says, “Through tranquillity, self-restraint, purity, kindness, service, simplicity, true vision, and by obliterating the limitation of ego, one can attain the path of bhakti and prema, which leads to the attainment of God. Love of God fills up one’s being and the joy of this love-union with God cannot be expressed in words.” God was to him an ocean of joy and an individual a drop from it (Sen, 1974:140-1).
The Bawa Lal sect has historical building built in Mughal architecture style. It is believed that after leaving the Saharanpur, Bawa Lal came to Punjab in 1494 AD. He got settled for some time near river Kiran in Kalanaur—a small town where Mughal emperor Akbar was declared as emperor of India. Actually, river Kiran was not a river in real sense. It was a drain which flowed at the time of rainy season especially when floods came. Later on he directed his disciple Dhian Das to find a place for permanent settlement. Dhian Das found an old fort on hillock. The fort belonged to king Rev (somewhere it is Puru) of Mahabharata period. Dhian Das made a beautiful cottage there. Bawa Lal shifted with twenty two disciples from Kalanaur to the new place in 1495. Then, Bawa Lal named this place as Dhianpur (Bhasin, n.d.:17-19).

Adopting Ramanand Sampradaya Bawa Lal, under the direction of Chetan Swami (Guru) and the help of 22 prominent disciples (Bhagwadacharya, 1967: 10), preached from Kabul to Delhi. He made Dhianpur as headquarter. Bawa Lal directed his 22 disciples to disperse and establish Lal Dvaras in various parts of the country and abroad. These Dvaras are at Kalanaur, Peshawar, Hafizabad, Amritsar, Datarpur, Kashi, Ujjain, Ayodhya, Lahore, Sheikhupur, Multan, Gazani, Surat, Chanyot, Kabul, Bera, Sunkatar, Babari, Mirpur, Chumukhm Dumali and Girnar (Sharma, 1965: 50). These can be further illustrated as:
Table 4.2

**Twenty two Mahants and Gaddis of Bawa Lal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Founders</th>
<th>Gaddis (abodes)</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gurmukh Lal</td>
<td>Dhianpur</td>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sewa Dass</td>
<td>Kalanour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ram Dass</td>
<td>Santokhsar</td>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tapa Dass</td>
<td>Datarpur</td>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kushal Kalyan</td>
<td>Chomukh</td>
<td>Jammu</td>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bhagat Mukhi</td>
<td>Domeli</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Surtma Nand</td>
<td>Baadri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Bithal Dass</td>
<td>Ayodhiya</td>
<td>Lakhnow</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rangi Ram</td>
<td>Kashi</td>
<td>Benaras</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Jagdish Dass</td>
<td>Ujjain</td>
<td>Ujjain</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Murari Dass</td>
<td>Girinar</td>
<td>Junagarh</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Jiwan Dass</td>
<td>Surat</td>
<td>Surat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kirpa Ram</td>
<td>Hafizabed</td>
<td>Gujranwala</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Jai Ram</td>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Balmik</td>
<td>Multan</td>
<td>Multan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Parmanand</td>
<td>Chanaut</td>
<td>Jhang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Puran Dass</td>
<td>Bhera</td>
<td>Sargodha</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Premanand</td>
<td>Sankhatra</td>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Parhlad</td>
<td>Bhikhi</td>
<td>Sheikhupura</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Kanshi Ram</td>
<td>Peshawar</td>
<td>Peshawar</td>
<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Yado Ram</td>
<td>Ghazni</td>
<td>Ghazni</td>
<td></td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Maluk Dass</td>
<td>Kabul</td>
<td>Kabul</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (Field Study: as told by the sect leaders)

Bawa Lal, having suffi ideas, also had deep relations with Shah Jahan and his son Dara Shikoh (eldest son) who had frequent *gostian* (discussions) with Bawa Lal. Bawa Lal approached to Dara Shikoh (Ram, n.d.: 26) and through discussions made impression on him. The doctrine of monotheism was the favourite topic of discussion. A total
of seven discussions (Lahore-5, Noor Mehal-1 and Kahnuwan-1) were held in 1648 –the 21st year of Shah Jahan in office (Sharma, 2006: 41). The discussions between Bawa Lal and Dara Shikoh on spiritual matters have been recorded by Chandar Bhanu in the Persian work named, the *Nadir-un-Nukat* (translated in Hindi as *Prashnotra Prakash* by Bhagvadicharya). Bawa Lal also met other Sufi saints. To meet his favourite Sufi saint Mian Mir (who laid foundation stone of Golden Temple, Amritsar), he used to stay in his cottage in Kaifipura (Lahore). He also met Mullah Shah Badkhashani (disciple of Mian Mir) and Shah Balawal for different discussions (Mohan, 2006: 24).

Bawa Lal became favourite of Dara Shikoh and the later laid down foundation stone to build the temple of Bawa Lal but it could not be completed because Aurangzeb took over the throne and powers from Shah Jahan and assassinated Dara Shikoh. Bawa Lal expired in 1655 AD. About Bawa Lal, it is presented that he lived for 300 years.

Aurangzeb also visited Dhianpur in his reign during the period of Gurmukh Lal (the first successor of Dhianpur Gaddi). Later on, the other Gaddi bearers established good relations with Sikh chiefs of Punjab. With the effort of Haribhajan Das (the 8th mahant) Maharaja Ranjit Singh donated 650 acres (Mohan, 2006: 57) of land in charity.

Presently, Ramsunder Das is working as 15th mahant of Vaishnav Headquarter at Dhianpur since 1 November 2001. A Sanskrit college affiliated with Panjab University, Chandigarh is working under his guidance in which free of cost education up to Shashtri (Graduation in Sanskrit language) is provided. A relief is often sent to the Hindu migrants of Kashmir. Besides this, donations are also sent to different orphanages.
The followers in the sect offer money, sweets, fruits, etc on different occasions according to their capacities. Some of them donate wheat and rice for community kitchen. During congregations, the followers are provided Darshan of current Mahant. There is a practice of tying Paggu. Originally, Paggu was just like siropa (saffron malmal cloth having size of 1.13×0.45 meters) to honour someone. To symbolise this practice, presently, a bandage patterned with saffron colour is tied to the followers. The visitors are also offered fruits, dry fruits etc.

In the quest of baby boy, a special bath is taken in the Baoli (well). This occasion is held on the first Saturday after Amavasya every month. The ladies stay on Saturday night and take bath at late night. The mahants at the sect help the followers for the dip. The main Mahant give them a jantar (script) on early morning of Sunday. The jantar is fixed in tawit (small amulet) and after prayer they are told to have faith on this ritual and bear some other norms. Many times, the followers who are blessed with male child pay visit to the temple after forty days of his birth. The child is provided new clothes (chagi / chola). Mundan (removal of hair) ceremony is also performed there by the followers. On request of the followers, name is also assigned to the new born child by the mahant. There is also a samadhi (grave) of Jagdish Das (earlier disciple of Dadu and later on of Bawa Lal) near Lal Sarovar (pool), which is beaten (or painted) with mud and cow dung by the faith dwellers on every Sunday so as to fulfil their wishes.

The newly wedded couples also visit the temple to seek blessings for prosperous and happy married life. There is tradition, the followers of the sect give first invitation of any family occasion to the Mahant which shows faith of the adherents. In other cases, the followers feel getting blessed after getting with a brick from the dera head for the
foundation of any construction work at their homes of other places. The followers also get blessings on purchase of new vehicle or initialisation of new business.

The birthday of Bawa Lal (generally in the month of January) is celebrated with high esteem. Some of the local residents also celebrate the birthday on second day of every month. All the sacred days of Hindu mythology are celebrated with hustle and bustle. Along with this, Vaisakhi, Navratras, Holi, Ram Navmi, Janamashtmi, Dussehra, Diwali, and Jayanti (birthday) of past mahants are celebrated with fan fare. On Guru Puja/Purnima (in the month of July), followers having gurmantra offer money, gold and other article to the sect head. Followers also seek blessings on every Sankranti (beginning of a new month).

To spread the teachings of the sect, audio/ video aids are sold at Dhianpur –headquarter of the sect. These aids are based on life and history of the sect leaders along with hymns, bhajans, celebrations etc. Published material is also circulated. Publication of literature includes booklets, pamphlets, sticker, portraits, calendar etc.

Present Vaishnavacharya Ram Sunder Das resides at Dhianpur along with the chelas (disciples). Some armed men keep vigil to protect the belongings of the sect. Headquarter of the sect falls in the Gurdaspur Lok Sabha constituency and Fatehgarh Churian Legislative Assembly constituency. So, visiting by political leaders of different constituencies is often practice. There is a reference that during installation of Narain Das as Chief of Dhianpur sect in 1978, a large number of important persons were present during the ceremony. The prominent among them were Lala Jagat Narayan ( the Editor of Punjab Kesri and Hind Samachar), Natha Singh Dalam (MLA), Varyam Singh
(ex.MLA), Khushhal Behl (ex.MLA), Vishwa Mittar Sekhri (ex.MLA) etc. (Bhasin, n.d.: 117 Punjabi edition). Another reference shows that visiting by political leaders like Vinod Khana (MP), Sukhbans Kaur Bhinder (ex.MP), Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa (MLA), Ashwani Sekhari (MLA), Jugal Kishore Sharma (ex.MLA), , Nirmal Singh Kahlon (ex.MLA), Jagdish Sahni (ex.MLA), etc. (Thakur, 2003: 78) is often practice. Kushhal Behl (MLA), Santokh Singh Randhawa (MLA), Natha Singh Dalam (MLA) generally sought the blessings in their times. Different respondents also told to the researcher that visit by the political leaders is a routine work. High officials and different local leaders also come to pay offerings and seek ‘blessings’. The sect managers welcome them with happy mood.

Many people belonging to lower strata of society have settled around the temple. The town dwellers are enjoying many facilities provided by the sect headquarter. In return they must show their subjugation to the gaddi and act according to their directions. Actually, the entire land of Dhianpur town belongs to Bawa Lal gaddi. So this gaddi of vaishnavism has social, political, economic and cultural influence in the region.

Part IV: The Salvation Army Sect

The Salvation Army sect is organized along quasi-military lines to provide spiritual heal and social service especially to the marginal section of society. The sect has used certain soldiery features such as uniform, flags and ranks to identify, inspire and regulate its endeavors. Soldiers (including officers of all ranks) are urged from time to time to re-read the solemn undertakings to which they have set their hand and to re-affirm before God their dedication to him and to His Army, so that their life and service may always be in keeping with
The Salvation Army sect is an offshoot Christianity which is based on the life and teachings of the Jesus Christ having life span of 6 BC – AD 30 (Kapoor and Gupta, 1998: 59). The religion evolved in Palestine in the rule of Caesar Augustus (27 BC – AD 14). In AD 29, some of Jesus’ disciples launched a missionary journey to spread the message of Jesus to different parts of the world. In other words, it was inauguration of the missionary work throughout the world in the result of which Christianity became the most practiced religion in the world.

**Growth of Missionary Societies in England**

Excessive indulgence in vice and laxity in moral and religious standards along with excessive coarseness and immorality were the main features of English society during 18th century. The gradual industrialization of England was changing the living conditions of the upper and middle classes. On the other hand, the lower class was living in wretched conditions in the slums of London. No effort was made by the Church of England for the improvement (religious, education) of these people. In 1727 AD, “The Moravians” came into existence. The Moravians were the first Protestant Church to recognize world evangelization as part of the Church’s duty. They inaugurated the modern missionary movement among the Protestant churches in 1732. Moravians became a model for all missionaries. They led a life after primitive model, fugal, quite, industrious, shunning temptation and avoiding controversy. Their community life was based on the principle of self support. They lived in daily personal touch with the people. They taught them to be honest, obedient, industrious and loyal to the government. They opened
schools, taught reading and writing, and instructed the girls in sewing and needle work. In 1729, four young men at Oxford made a group known as “Methodist”. This group began to preach to the people and proclaimed that salvation is possible by simple faith. The religious revival movement regenerated among the people a spirit of enthusiasm and intense religious sentiment. This charity took various forms – building churches, establishing schools, erecting hospitals and distributing religious tracts. This concern for the salvation of the neglected people in England later grew into a concern for the salvation of non-Christian in other countries (Gupta, 1971: 1-13).

**Origin of The Salvation Army**

One extremely significant sect, the influence of which has been felt throughout the world, emerged in England at least partly as a result of the influence of holiness ideas. This was The Salvation Army – the creation of William Booth (1829-1912), a great evangelist of England and a former minister of the schismatic Methodist group known as the New Connexion. Striking out of his own, Booth settled in the east end of London in the mid-1860s, seeking by revival methods to persuade the slum-dwellers to go to church (Wilson, 1970:60). William Booth’s original aim was to send converts to established churches of the day, but soon he realized that the poor did not feel comfortable or welcome in the pews of most of the churches and chapels of Victorian England. Regular church goers were appalled when these shabbily dressed, unwashed people came to join them in worship. Booth decided to found a church especially for them – the East London Christian Mission. The mission grew slowly, but Booth’s faith in God remained undiminished (http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq%5cwww_as.NSF, retrieved on 24-02-2006). Its main converts were at first alcoholics,
morphine addicts, prostitutes and other undesirables. This move helped the Booth to start a new church.

The Salvation Army sect began with street meetings in 1865 and afterward to tent meetings. Originally, there was no plan for a separate organization; rather it was to be supplementary to the work of the churches. The East London Mission was a first-fruit of the work; then other sections of London and later to population centers of Great Britain. The Salvation Army sect, after 1875, took its final form (Clark, 1962: 189).

In May of 1878, Booth summoned his son, Bramwell, and his good friend George Railton to read a proof of the Christian Mission's annual report. At the top it read: THE CHRISTIAN MISSION is A VOLUNTEER ARMY. Bramwell strongly objected to this wording. He was not a volunteer: he was compelled to do God's work. So, in a flash of inspiration, Booth crossed out "Volunteer" and wrote "Salvation". The Salvation Army was born (http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq%5cwww_as.nsf, retrieved on 24-02-2006).

Booth became General (Superintendent) as he was the head of The Christian Mission. Following military methods (British), the name taken was a symbol of war upon the forces of evil. The spiritual regeneration of man is the primary object. Missionaries became captains and members as soldiers. The United States was the first foreign country to start missionary work in 1880 (Ferm, 1964: 232). Writing in The Salvationist in 1879, Booth summed up the purpose of the Army, “We are a Salvation people – this is our specialty – getting saved and keeping saved, and then getting somebody else saved, and then getting saved ourselves more and more until full salvation on
earth makes the heaven within which is finally perfected by the full salvation without, on the other side of the river.”

The people were organised through congregations. In the mass gatherings men were in majority. The emotionalism of such occasions, as well as their colourfulness and vigour, were most attractive to the least educated and poorest members of western society, and from them the sect drew their recruits. A person feels satisfaction and advantage of receiving spiritual instructions from highly educated and sympathetic clergymen. He can receive education and follow better pursuits than his degraded hereditary calling.

Booth was an energetic preacher, who used styles of oratory that were new in religion. His vivid metaphors and trick effects met with thorough disapproval from most ministers, but he had rapid success with the poorest classes. The military styles like officers and other ranks, barracks, bullets, knee-drill, enemy, and many other terms were an extended and colorful metaphor which captured the imagination of the working classes. By 1881 the movement had grown from little more than 4,000 to over 72,000 in 1887. The General had set his face against forming a sect, but in the event, The Salvation Army became as distinctive and separate organization (Wilson, 1970:60-61). It very quickly spread to other countries of the English-speaking world, and beyond.

In France, Booth’s daughter Catherine led the movement. In Switzerland, hostile crowds attacked the first meeting held by Catherine Booth, and in 1883 in the cantons of Geneva and Neuchatel, the movement was proscribed: to wear its uniform became an offence. Part of the hostility was occasioned by prominence of women among the Salvationist leaders. In America, too, the army met with hostility.
despite the diversity of sects there and the long acquaintance of Americans with revivalists (Wilson, 1970: 63-64). During the 1930s, the apparent success of the Salvationists in the Congo (then Belgian) was phenomenal. The letter ‘S’ on the lapels of the Salvationists’ uniforms was Simon Kimbangu who had gained a rapid reputation as a healer in 1921, and who was martyred by the Belgian authorities.

The Salvation Army in India

The Salvation Army arrived in a group of four members in 19 September 1882 at Apollo Blunder of Bombay (Peter, 2003: 10) under the leadership of Frederick St George de Lautour (Booth) Tucker (along with Henry Bullard, Arthur Norman and Mary Ann Thompson). Frederick Tucker (21 March 1853 to 17 July 1929) was born in Monghyr (Bihar, India), completed Laws. He joined the Indian Civil Service and served in Amritsar (Punjab, India) as Assistant Commissioner in 1876 (Plessis, 2004: 5). He was influenced of the Moody and Sankey (American revivalists) Campaigns in London during 1875 and later on joined The Salvation Army in 1881. After due training and because of his competence, he got the rank of Major. In 1882, he led a group of pioneer officers (Henry Bullard, Arthur Norman and Mary Ann Thompson) to India. He adopted Indian food, dress, customs and of course name as ‘Fakir Singh’ (Masih, 2003: 5). After getting his second marriage with Emma Booth (daughter of William Booth -the founder) in 1888, he adopted the name Booth Tucker. Emma also took the Indian name Rehiman (Pulimugathu, 2003: 10).

The East India Company was not cordial with such missionaries in India. The missionaries agitated against the ban in England (Chopra, 1982: 242). On the other hand, Christian headmen were lobbying the
Parliament of England for permission of preaching. As a result of which, East India Company Act, 1813 was passed. It permitted the Christian missionaries to propagate English and preach their religion (Sharpe, 1989: 224).

The Salvation Army started a campaign in Mumbai in which people of different social backgrounds (Hindu, Muslim, Indian Massey, Europeans) had participated. The campaign expanded to Kolkata and later on in Lahore during 1893 but the success was very low in those places due to which the missionaries were withdrawn from Lahore. The reports from Mumbai, Kolkata, Madras, Puna, Kalambo indicated that more than 2000 people were converted during the first 18 months of the arrival of The Salvation Army in India (Singh, nd: 9). There is also a reference that William Booth – the founder visited India in 1891 and again during December 1895 to January 1896 (www.salvationarmy.org/india/pioneers, retrieved on 18-6-2015).

Indian Christianity was built on social action in a way that the Christians were disdained, disapproved and ingrained the stigma of otherness by the general masses. Being economically a deprived class viz. landless, they lack even bare necessities of life (Kalladayil, 2011: 135). Booth Tucker knew very well that India is a peculiar place which collects all sorts of social groups, divided by different religions, thoughts, practices and understandings. But broadly they can be categorized into two – the majority low castes that have been devoid of humanity for centuries and a handful who take their pleasure call themselves superior and live at the cost of the majority. The untouchables and low caste people have lived in many ways to improve their social status. Conversion has brought about a certain metamorphosis. It helped them in their education, better placement,
organized their family in a better way. It has granted them a new status—the status of Christian (Pulimugathu, 2003: 9-10).

The work of The Salvation Army in North India, apart from special rehabilitation work among the criminal tribes undertaken at the request of the Government, was in the mass movement areas among the low castes. In 1908 The Salvation Army was invited by Commissioner Tweedy of Rohilkhand to work among the criminal tribes. They began by setting up a colony for 300 Dooms (out caste people) near Gorakhpur (Mackenzie, 1930:218-220). Booth-Tucker and his allies adopted Indian clothes and at times wandered through the Punjab as faqirs, which shows that a strongly evangelical Christianity need not be culturally alien to India. They took initiatives in preaching, education and various forms of social services in order to preach the Christian gospel and win converts. Initially spokesmen of these communities appealed to the government to take such action as would effectively reduce or remove the threat from others and it did in right direction to facilitate their activities. So it had a fairly well developed infrastructure and communication network, some shared beliefs and values and a functional interdependence, which was more task-oriented and political than economic (Webster, 1976: 241).

During 1893, the campaign was expanded to Lahore but the success was very low due to which the missionaries were withdrawn from Lahore. Later on, for the success in Punjab, Arnolis Weerasooriya (the first Sri Lankan who became Salvationist in 1883, given the rank of Colonel and later on became Chief Secretary of India and Sri Lanka) was given the task of preaching. He was directed to wear clothes like ordinary people, eat the food made by them and live like them because Frederick Tucker already knew the Punjab region, its language and
rituals. In 1895, Boom March (a strategy of dramatic preaching for gaining many converts at once) was started. 61 centres of The Salvation Army were opened in Punjab. Later on, Musa Bai (A Muslim born in Sri Lanka who spoke Arabic fluently was given the rank of Colonel) was transferred from Maharashtra to Punjab so as to contribute in the progress of The Salvation Army. Divisional Headquarters were established at Amritsar, Dera Baba Nanak and Sialkot. Gurdaspur was made headquarter which was later on shifted to Lahore as it was the capital city of undivided Punjab (Singh, n.d.: 5-26).

In Punjab there were 1,63,994 Indian Christian recorded in 1911, of whom 18,007 belonged to The Salvation Army (Kaul, 1912: 444-451). The means by which they came into the church was by mass movements. There was a response among the Mazhabi Sikhs who had previously accepted the Sikh religion but were not admitted into the social structure of that religion. Most of them subsequently became Christians. There was also a great interest on the part of the sweepers, to be followed by the Chamars –traditional leather-workers. This way the mass movement followed the natural social organization of the people –along caste lines (Mathews, 1955: 88-9). The mass movements of the Churas, Meghs and Chamars brought to the church numbers, a very high (and to others, frightening) growth rate, a very different caste status than it had enjoyed earlier, and for the first time a genuinely rural base. The Churas, it should be pointed out, worked as sweepers and scavengers in the cities, but in the villages were predominantly landless agricultural labourers. They occupied the lowest position in the social and economic hierarchy for that reason (McMullen, Webster and Caleb, 1973: 8-14).
Since independence, The Salvation Army sect succeeded in establishment of divisions at Amritsar, Batala, Beas, Dera Baba Nanak, Gurdaspur and Mukerian along with extension work in Ferozepur, Patiala and Tarn Taran (Robert, 2012: 124-5). As far as the Gurdaspur district is concerned, it has three Divisional Headquarters (DHQs) namely Batala, Dera Baba Nanak and Gurdaspur which are part of India Northern Territory\(^1\). These DHQs work according to yearly, monthly and as well as weekly calendars and submit their periodical ‘reports’ (progress) to the territorial headquarter (New Delhi).

As far as institutions run by these DHQs are concerned, there is a MacRobert Hospital, Dhariwal (Gurdaspur DHQ). In the education field, there is a Senior Secondary School and College under Batala DHQ. Another school in supervised by the Gurdaspur DHQ. A few Tailoring Units for ladies are managed by the Batala and Dera Baba Nanak DHQs. Dera Baba Nanak DHQ also supervises Skill Training Centre in carpentry for men. Homes for the Aged at MacRobert Hospital, Dhariwal is functioning successfully under the control of Gurdaspur DHQ. A few Homes for Girls and Boys are also managed by Batala and Gurdaspur DHQs respectively. (Robert, 2012: 123-6).

The popular periodicals published by The Salvation Army include *War Cry* (English), *Mukti Samachar* (Hindi and Punjabi), *Home League Yearly* (Hindi and English), *The Officer* (Hindi), *Yuva Sipai* (Hindi). Different methods are adopted to mobilize men and women. Much emphasis is given on training the youth for achieving better results in their ‘goals’ (conversions). Lectures, quiz, music, sports, cultural programmes (Nayak, 2004:16) are held regularly. Rallies, marches of
witness, demonstrations etc. (sometimes with the coordination of other Churches) are organised on different occasions.

**Teachings of The Salvation Army**

A major difference between The Salvation Army and other religious denominations is that it does not include the use of sacraments (mainly holly communion and baptism) in its form of worship. The Army believes that it is possible to live a holly life and receive the grace of God without the use of physical sacraments and that they should not be regarded as an essential part of becoming a Christian. Salvationists see the sacraments as an outward sign of an inward experience, and it is the inward experience that is the most important thing. The sect founder’s attitude to baptism was similar to that of Communion. So, he decided that the Army would not practice adult baptism. To become a Salvation Army soldier a person must first and foremost acknowledge that they have asked God for forgiveness for their wrongdoing and that Jesus Christ is their saviour from sin. Recruits (those who wish to become Salvation Army soldiers) study the Army’s doctrines and practice of a Salvationist lifestyle before swearing-in ceremony takes place, usually in a Sunday meeting. During this, recruits stand under the Army flag and publicly acknowledge their salvation from sin, state their belief in the Army’s doctrines and promise to live by the standards laid out in the Articles of War. They then sign a copy of these Articles of War and a prayer is arranged for asking God’s help in keeping those promises. The new soldier is warmly greeted by the congregation and by individual fellow-Salvationists (http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk, retrieved on 24-02-2006).
The Doctrines of The Salvation Army

There are eleven doctrines throughout the world as set out in The Salvation Army Act 1980 (Roberts, 2012: 10):

1. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God; and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

2. We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserved, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.

3. We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead - the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost - undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

4. We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

5. We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity, and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

6. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world so that whatsoever will may be saved.
7. We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.

8. We believe that we are justified by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.

9. We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

10. We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

11. We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

**Role of symbols in The Salvation Army**

Religious symbols provide a distinctive identity to a sect. Symbols used by The Salvation Army include uniform, the flag, the crest, shield and salute. They are visible representations of fundamental truths. Wearing uniform and other symbols are compulsory for the preachers only and not for other adherents.

**Uniform:** The Salvation Army soldiers started wearing uniform for adopting a military character since its origin. Wearing uniform while in Salvation Army service tells the onlooker that the person wearing
uniform is a professing Christian. The uniform can be white, grey, navy blue, fawn and are even styled like a sari. In Punjab, grey and white is popular among men and white is liked by women.

Flag: The Salvationists believe that they belong to two nations, one to this world and the other is God’s Kingdom i.e. Heaven (Zachariah, 2003: 4). The flag is a symbol (since 1878) of The Salvation Army’s war against sin and social evils. The flag consists of a blue border surrounding a red background in the centre of which is a yellow star. The Army’s motto ‘Blood & Fire’ is also inscribed on the flag together with the name of the corps, centre or section to which the flag belongs. The flag precedes outdoor activities such as a march of witness. It is used in ceremonies such as the dedication of children (Pal, 2011: 11) and the swearing-in of soldiers. It is sometimes placed on the coffin at the funeral of a Salvationist (to denote that the deceased being ‘promoted to glory’).

Crest: The official emblem of The Salvation Army is the crest (adopted in 1879). It contains cross, ‘S’, two swords, roundels, crown, rays and ‘Blood and Fire’.

Shield: The Red Shield has its origin (1886) in Salvation Army work during wartime especially serving refreshment to troops in the trenches. They also provided first aid stations, ambulances, chaplaincy, social clubs, Christian worship and other frontline services. During the First World War, a shield symbol was used on Salvation Army huts for service (www.sacollectables.com, retrieved on 12-3-2006).
Salute: The Salvation Army salute consists of raising the right hand above the shoulder, with the first (index) finder pointing upward. Sometimes, it is accompanied by a joyous ‘Hallelujah!’ (Booth, 1997: 72).

The formal organization of The Salvation Army appears to be a rational bureaucratic structure which viewed its objective as a form of spiritual warfare. As in a military system, every member has a rank. Husbands and wives are imparted same course of preparatory training, rank and assignments (www.salvationarmy.org.au/who-we-are/about-us/organisation-structure, retrieved on 18-6-2015). The members of the sect feel that they are functioning at the time (when need arises) as an integral part of the organization under an effective leadership (Form and Nosow, 1958: 176-8).

These type of religious movements, though primarily concerned with the social and religious questions, had a political significance in so far as they affect the thinking process of large section of the people. These movements indicate a tendency on the part of Indian leaders to refashion religion and society on new lines. It is significant that these ideas did not emerge in India as a result of the evolution of Indian society, but were received by Indians as a result of Western impact through such agencies as the new administration, education and missionary efforts (Karunakaran, 1969: 49-72).

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For the purpose of preaching, The Salvation Army sect has divided India into six territories having national secretariat in Kolkata (West Bengal):

- **India Northern Territory**: Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Harayana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Orissa, Punjab, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, (part of ) West Bengal, the Union Territories of Delhi, Chandigarh and the Andaman and Nikobar Islands.
- **India Central Territory**: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, (Part of ) Tamil Nadu.
- **India Eastern Territory**: Arunachal Pradesh, assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, (part of ) West Bengal.