CHAPTER-2

PAIN: A DEEP PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLORATION

Dreaming stage and waking stage are noteworthy attributes of psychology. These attributes are also constituted on pain. Living pain presents the psychology of mind where mind dispossesses the self of the self. An individual knows the transitory state of the world and delves deep into inwardness. He wakes up from dreamy condition of mind to have the ambrosia of internal bliss. Living pain paves track for this eternal rapture. In this way pain teaches an individual the realities of life. Henceforth, pain helps in giving life a meaning and understanding its significance.

In fact happiness and misery, pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, good and evil are the twin pillars upon which the world stands. The whole structure would collapses if any one of the two pillars is demolished. Pain is necessary as it puts a check on our wild passions; the reckless offspring of the proud ego. The spirit of egoism should be, uprooted if we wish to overcome evils and lead a happy life. Modern man suffers a sort of emotional sterility, and the world for him has become a wasteland, all dry, arid, meaningless and futile. Disintegration, decomposition and degeneration of life have so sadly demoralized modern man that he is similar to Prufrock: “I have measured my life with coffee spoons” (Eliot, T.S. 67).

Divorced from God, nature, religious passions and fervor, man is cursed with sterility in all his physical, emotional and spiritual aspects, where:

One can neither stand nor sit. There is not even silence
In the mountains, but dry sterile thunder without rain.
There is not even solitude in the mountains. But red sullen
Faces sneer and snarl. (Cleanth, Brooke 89)

Consequently, life becomes futile and meaningless. In the realm of living pain poet does not take pain as burden. He lives and enjoys every moment of his/her life fully. Tears and wails become precious pearls for a poet in this stage. The voyage is from without to within. The inner consciousness is out of rationality. Pain is the Divine attribute of human psyche. When pain exceeds its limits it becomes panacea as Mirza Ghalib gives voice to dard in Master Couplets of Urdu Poetry:
The joy of every raindrop is to
Merge in the sea, when pain passes
The limit, it becomes its own remedy (Trans. Kanda. K.C. 34).

Mirza Ghalib’s concept of pain is Divine. He boldly declares “dard ko dil mein jagah de Ghalib, ilam se shayari nhi aati.” (45) (Oh Ghalib give pain a place in your heart, experience does not teach poetry (translation mine). Mind blessed by this state hears the unheard melodies of Cosmos. John Keats in one of his poems says: “heard melodies are sweet/ but those unheard are sweeter/ ye sweet pipes play on” (Stone, Brian 24). A person who learns to dive deep in inner self can genuinely enjoy these unheard melodies. Mohan Singh in his poem “Pain” presents pretty ideas about pain. He observes his pain in maturity leveland affirms “hoi niani peer siani” (Noor, Satinder Singh 45) (childish pain become mature (translation mine).This concept of pain regulates in the poetry of Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi. The concept of pain is same in the poetry of Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi but they present it different ways in their poems.

In order to give life a meaning and purpose it is necessary to delve deep into human consciousness and explore the various factors which bind humanity and bring the humans closer to each other. A research into the human psyche shows that the common attitude of caring and sharing is more pronounced among human beings at the tragic turns of life. Therefore it is the inevitable pain which makes people enthusiastic connects support and bonding. Pain therefore bring transformation and realization of the oneness of all beings. It no more remains a burden but assumes the role of life support for the sufferers. A paradigm shift in attitudes is necessitated where instead of wailing, the despondent persons begin to live each other’s pain, thereby bringing a new meaning and purpose to life.

It is because of this that both the Western and the Indian Romantic poets are closely linked through the aforesaid aesthetics of pain, which propagates selflessness. This also furthers the tendency to look beyond, and the consequential negation of the self brings one closer to the ultimate reality- God. Therefore the likes of Baba Farid, Guru Nanak Dev, Surdas, Mirabai, Kabir, Tulsidas, Tuka Ram and many other precursors of the Bhakti Movement emphasize the negation of the self as the vortex of
inner experience through pain- an essential reality of the invisible myth through which the consciousness of soul of an individual becomes a part of the cosmic peace.

Sanskrit Acharyas admit that Shringaar Ras is Rasraaj. There are two parts of Sringaar Ras i.e. meeting and separation. They gave more importance to separation. According to Bhoj: “Without separation man cannot satisfy himself”(Bhatti, Prabhjot 56). It is true. If a man does not feel the pain of separation, the hope of meeting does not shine. The importance of Rasraaj Shringaar is in separation. One can realize the obeisance of love’s soul from viyog. In this condition soul merges with higher authority. Birha is the realization of deep love in the separation from beloved.

The concept of separation (birha) in pain is very prominent in the world. Without separation man cannot understand the meaning of life. To unravel life pain is a must. Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi give emphasis to separation in their poetry. Their ways of depicting pain may be different but their purpose is one i.e. immortalizing birha (separation) in their own way.

Baba Farid is as acknowledged Birha Da Sultan from spiritual point of view. If birha is the source of life and blesses life with warmth and heartbeat, then poetry cannot be without birha. Prominent poet of Hindi, Sumitranandan Pant thinks: “the fountain of poetry emerges from the emotion land of birha”. (quoted in Pandey, Sham Manohar56). In fact pain is considered very pleasurable for poetry. Most of the shayari and poetry of the world is the poetry of separation and pain (Hijar).

World renowned poet Tagore says: “there is a separated (birhani) woman sitting in my mind who teaches me the melody of pain.”(Lewis. M, John54). In this way pain is sweet emotion. It is not an ordinary thing. In deep pain man becomes compassionate, sympathetic and harmonious. In fact the decorum of love is vain without birha. Separation is the touchstone of love. All the dirt is cleansed from the heart of a person and what is left is sane and pure.

Gurbani lays emphasis on birha deeply. Pain is like ‘birha birha aakhiye birha tu sultan’ (birha, birha says everyone, birha is monarch) ‘laaye birha bhagwante sang’ (Separation is submerged with Almighty) ( quoted in Singh, Gopal 52). A lover (soul) always misses his beloved (God). Mind is aware that it will meet his beloved soon where birha is matchless. The spark of separation transforms a person from a stone to diamond. This transformation is not easy. One has to merge with it completely.
Separation is a glorious path. Professor Piara Singh Padam explains separation is “the distance before and after the condition of lover’s indifference to his beloved.” (quoted in Prof. Sahib Singh66). The intensity of the seriousness of love lies in pain. Birha is a fuel to love. Without it the spark of love is impossible.

Amrita Pritam states separation as a marvelous emotion in a poem Moli Te Mehndi: “the songs born to the emotion of birha are not only sweet but great. The beloved who will lit light from the spark of birha on her threshold and create songs will be great”( Trans. Gorowara from Nagmani 13). The emotion of birha is immortal. It is the meeting ground of soul with Cosmic Consciousness. A person’s life without the emotion of birha (separation) is futile and meaningless.

The conceptual transitory shade of pain in Shelley’s “Indian Serenade” wherein the poet seeks bath of life in his beloved, is reflected thus:

Oh, lift me from the grass!
I die! I faint! I fall!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
Oh, press it close to thine again
Where it will break at last!( quoted inWolin, R. 78).

But the illuminating face of pain is portrayed by Shiv Kumar Batalvi in his poem, Jithe Ittran de Wagne Ne Cho (Where Perfumed Rivers Flow):

Where perfumed rivers flow
Is the home of my beloved
Where passing breezes halt
Is the home of my beloved
Where dawn arrives on bare toes,
Where night paints henna-beams on feet
Where fragrance baths in moonlight,

Is the home of my beloved (Poemshunter.com 46).

It is illuminating because it is experiential even in absentia and the relationship thrives on the concept of the merger of the souls rather than those of the bodies, as can be seen from the Shelley’s point of view. The pain of separation is fostered on an eternal longing for union even after death. Therefore it is more gratifying.

Mohan Singh’s first collection *Sawe Pattar* (Green Leaves) was published in 1935, which included four poems, ‘Basant’, ‘Noorjahan’, ‘Anarkali’, and ‘Rab’. These poems celebrate the power of love and enthusiasm that leads to pangs of separation. In the poem ‘Basant’ (Mohan Singh’s dead wife), ‘Basant’ comes in Mohan Singh’s dream and questions him “How could you be a poet if I had not died”. (quoted in Saini, Pritam 67). Basant’s death produces a pain in poet’s heart and leads him to the peak of poetic career. Here separation becomes a motivation for the poet. In his pain he gets deep guidance and inspiration.

Amrita Pritam presents her pain as a perennial experience of life. At the early age of life she lost her brother and mother. She has personal experience of pain. She develops deep psychological relationship with pain. Amrita Pritam in her collection of poems, “Messages” (*Sunehre*) 1955, presents romantic longings and intense pain, which is a consummative experience for her as she writes:

“Pain: I inhaled it, quietly like a cigarette

Song: I flicked off, like ash from the cigarette”. (Trans. Singh, Khushwant 29)

Ik dard si

Jo cigarette di trah

main chup chap peeta hai

sirf kuch nazman han-----

jo cigarette de nalon main

raakh wangan jhadian (28)
The genesis of poetry in her is rooted in pain that the poet experiences incredibly every moment, as it inspires her to become a poet. Amrita Pritam recalls that it is this pain of ‘loneliness’, which has inspired her to write poetry: “I did not cherish it as a dream or an ambition. It came to me like a breeze of fresh air in a suffocating room” (Trans. Gorowara 28). Consequently, ‘living pain’ becomes her life force, and this cosmopolitan pain is reflected in her collection Lok Peer (Pain of the People). Here she seems to present poetry’s engagement with universal pain which soothes the soul with birha – the penultimate state of being of human consciousness to realize the cosmic consciousness, which the 10th Sikh Guru Shri Gobind Singh very fondly portrays as: ‘Mittar Pyare Nu Haal Muridan Da Kehna’ (Singh, Darshan 56), (Say to my beloved the goodbye of the devotees), the only way to experience the invisible through separation. Guru Gobind Singh here presents the genuine fact of human life where birha is supreme. Without separation man’s life is futile and vain. This is a stage in which man feels comfort and satisfaction in his/her tears.

Shiv Kumar’s first love Meenadies early and becomes the source of his poetry writing. He deeply wounded cries “The maina of my songs dies before travelling less”. (Trans. Malik, Malik from Shiv Kumar, Sampuran Kaav Sangreh 78). This deep pain was the first cause of his whole poetry like Mohan Singh and Amrita Pritam. He kept on writing poetry on the subject of pain, wailing, parting and birha. The entreaty of separation in the poetry of Shiv is intense. Amrita Pritam comments on Shiv Kumar Batalvi in the book Sampuran Kaav Sangreh:

When Heer of Jhang Sial was born, the midwife made her taste love as the first food instead of honey, and this is also equally true that when Shiv Kumar was born in Bada Pind Lothian, his mother administered water from the river of fire of pain to her son. This river Basanter flows through the waist of this village. Shiv experienced this fire during the years countable on fingertips. (Trans. Kelsey, Surjeet 9).

Shiv’s pain is like birha ki vedna i.e. longing for pain. For separation he is ready to sacrifice himself. His whole life may be regarded as book of deep separation where he lives and enjoys his life. He longs for everlasting joy in the lap of pain by celebrating his tears. This emotion, in the life of faith, thus, becomes a positive weapon for him to write poetry. Shiv proved in his poetry that lovelorn topics alone
do not provide delight to the reader; the poems related to birha can also create aesthetic taste.

Shiv Kumar Batalvi illuminates separation in his own way. He regards birha as the cause of the creation of the world. In his poetry the very life force is separation. Shiv embarked on immortalizing birha and wrote:

We are born in the house of separation
We are children of separation
Without separation every odor
Of life will perish
I must extract the very essence
Of fragrance,
For I have been given the
Gift of separation
For the sake of this separation
I would give up a hundred births (PoemHunter.com).
Assin sab birha de ghar jammde
Te birha di sartaan
Birha bina hrek khushbu
Zindagi di bekaar
Maine milea hai tohfa birha da
Is birha de utton mere koti
Janam kurbaan (PoemHunter.com)

This is the adulatory stage of separation where poet is ready to sacrifice hundred births for pain. This desire can lead a man to Brahman. In Sukhmani Sahib Brahman is related to Braham Gyani i.e. ‘Braham Gyani Braham ka beta’ (S.S. Kohli 78) (Braham Gyani is the son of Brahma). It is a living human wish that leads an individual to eternity. In this stage the sense of ‘I’ diminishes. An individual delves
deep into human consciousness to collect the pearls of wisdom. Separation teaches the finest lessons of life where *birha* is a gift for the aspirant.

It is said that poet and poetry are born after the pain of birth. In this way poetry is like a creation of the mind. To be a poet the sense of pain is must. Sumitranandan Pant, a Hindi poet speaks: “Viyogi hoga pehla kavi/aah se nikla hoga gaan/ umadkar aankhon se chupchap/ wahi hogi kavita anjaan”(abditionist.com) (enunciator will be the initial poet, wailing will have fructify melody, with silent tears poetry might have been produced) (translation mine).

Poet is *Viyogi* (enunciator) because he inhales pain. It is the very source of his life. Without *Viyog* every petal of his life will wither. Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi conveys different levels of pain in their respective poetry. The levels of pain may be different but purpose is one i.e. immortalizing *birha* (separation). The poetry of three poets shows a transition from ephemeral to permanence from *Ishq Majaji* to *Ishq Haqiqi*. The perennial stage of separation is *Ishq Haqiqi*, but one cannot ignore the initial stage i.e. *Ishq Majaji*. Sufis very modestly vocalize that “the Ishq majaji is the ladder to ishq haqiqi, an individual sacrifices his ego and becomes Almighty in this stage.” (quoted in Singh Sohan 56). Only advancing the phases of *Ishq Majaji* man is able to visit the stable and hidden stage i.e. *Ishq Haqiqi*. Second Sikh Guru Angad Dev says: “jis pinjar mein birha naahi, so pinjar lai jaye” (the skeleton that does not have the pang of separation, take away this skeleton).

According to Gurbani, a person whose body does not feel separation is skeleton, his existence is nothing because he has not tasted the ambrosia of immortal *birha*. It is similar to “Mann bairaag bya, darsan dekhan ka chao, dhan su tera thaav” (mind is in the kingdom of inclination of separation, I am very fond of your obeisance, your place is majestic (translation mine).

In this sovereign state of pain, poets do not take it as a burden; they espouse it and experience it in its fullest. The voyage towards pain, thus, becomes pious emotion, an emotion that has the forever validity.
The voyage towards pain is a voyage towards invisible. One has to merge with it to be one with Cosmic Consciousness. In this willful stage man negates himself to attain satisfaction. The poetry of Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi shows tendency of living pain with abrogation of the self of the self where they invite pain time after time. It is the finest desire to know the Cosmic Realities.

John Keats says: “A world of pains and troubles is necessary to school intelligence and make it a soul.” (qtd. in Stone, Brian 78). It is very willful stage. In this stage there is emotional cleansing. More pain experienced means a greater state of observation, harmony, ease and peace. Mohan Singh experiences this pain every moment and retorts:

Does not matter we could not
Become the stable ornamentation
Of your consort
It is enough for me that I was
In your talk just for a while (Trans. Gill, Tejwant Singh 67).

Mohan Singh negates the concept of ‘I’ in the above lines. He is happy that he was in the talk of his beloved for a while. This short presence is a matter of joy for him. Sundervilas, a Hindi poet, also affirms that “without wounded heart love is impossible” (quoted in Shourie, Arun 67) (chet bina tan preeti na upaje). In this way just a momentary talk of beloved about poet is enough to immortalize him. It is the thinking level of a person that helps him to search these things. Mahadevi Varma in her poem ‘Neerja’ also negates herself when she writes:

_Kya Poojan Kya archan re
Us aseem ka sundar mandir
Mera laghutam jeewan re
Meri shwasein karti rehti nit priye
Ka abhinandan re (63)._

What to worship,
The pretty temple of
The Almighty is
Mine small home
My breathings are always welcoming
My beloved (translation mine)

Mahadevi Varma as a poet depicts deep pain and dispossesses the self of the self in the above lines. Amrita Pritam presents another dimension of pain when she writes:

The night of separation comes with light
The thread of memory raises high again
One drop of your love mixed in it
Therefore, I drank the whole bitterness of the age (Singh, Khushwant 54).

Birha di raat roshni le ke
Aaondi hai
Dhaga yaad da hor agan ho janda
Mil gyi is wich ikk boond tere
Ishq di
Es lyi main umar di saari kuddattan
Pee layi (53)

This is thoroughgoing Virha Ki Vedna where self is bereft of life. Mahadevi’s poetry is devoted to hidden/invisible. Amrita Pritam drank the whole bitterness of the age. The expression is different; the idea is one the abrogation of the self. The difference lies in degree. Somebody experiences pain at lower level, the other at advanced level. The level is different. Pain is same. It is beyond rational explanation to the logical mind. It is the capacity of living pain that provides stillness and then no logical explanation is sought after.
It is said that love is loveliest when embalmed with tears. Tears become emotional cleansing in this way. Man abrogates the self of the self. Shiv’s poetry is a paradigm of negating the self. The point to be noted is that intensity of pain in the poetry of Shiv is profound. He realizes pain from the core of his heart. When reader reads his poetry it seems to be the tale of their life. They start to weep in deep pain. Pain becomes here an aesthetic emotion. Poetry of Shiv consoles the readers. They become conscious about the concept of pain. Shiv kept on singing immortal verses of pain in his poem Tender of the fire:

Tender of the fire
Roast my sorrows in your pan
I will give you the grain of tears
Roast my sorrows in your pan
I am too late already
The shadows are fading
The cattle have returned, from the forest
The birds have raised their clamor,
Roast my sorrows in your pan
Tender of the fire (Trans. Malik, Keshav 34).

Bhatti waliye
Chamber diye daliye
Ni peeran da praga bhunn de
Tenu dean hanjuan da bhada
Ni peeran dapraga bhunn de
ho gya kuwela mainu dhal gayian
shanwan ni
belean chon mud gayian mujian
te gawan ni
paia chidian ne cheek chihada
Shiv wishes to visit another world in the above lines. He is too late. He is in a hurry and asks from the tender of fire to roast his sorrows in her pan. Shiv presents here egoless concept. This is Karmic conception where after paying the debt of this world he wishes to visit another world. Here Shiv dispossesses the self of the self to visit highest authority. He is too late. Cattle have returned from the forest, the birds have raised their clamor. This wish to visit Almighty through living pain is the cause of writing of his whole poetry. Pain matures him. He is ready to have more and more pain by negating his self. This selfless pursuit of pain immortalizes a person in his life. Amrita Pritam welcomes this state by saying: “welcome to separation/blessed by beloved” (Trans. Singh, Khusahwant 45).

Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi are Romantic poets with deep sense of pain. They paint what is in their inner self. Soul is enriched when it is excavated repeatedly. Negation of the self is great attribute of pain. Negation of self means a step toward Cosmic realities. Those eyes are futile which do not shed tears. As Swami Ram Tirtha says: “Of what use are those eyes which do not shed tears. It is the same as eyes without light” (M.S. Tripathy 72). In the same tune these three poets present different shades of pain. In a poem *Maye ni Maye* Shiv Kumar Batalvi postulates:

Mother! Mother!

I befriended a hawk

A plume on his head

Bells on his feet

He came picking the grain

I was enamored

I fed him *choori* (*sweet bread*)

He did not eat it

Therefore, I fed him

The flesh of my heart(*Poemshunter.com*56).
Maye ni maye!
Main ik Shikra yaar banaya
Ohde sir te kalgi
Te ohde pairin jhanjar
Te oh chog chuginda aaya
Ni main waari jaa
Choori kuttan te oh khanda nahin

Ohnu Dîl da maas khuaia (Sampuran Kaav Sangreh 249)

Shiv presents here deep pain where ego diminishes. He says Mother! Mother! It is a feminine trait. He wrote his whole poetry by visiting the unexplored cores of female psyche. First five lines are symbolic of aesthetics of pain. In other lines pain is intense where he abrogates self and offers his beloved the flesh of his heart. It perhaps may be Shiv’s pain only that leads to this intense level. He is happy that his beloved came who is like hawk. Hawk is a bird who eats only the flesh of heart. It is the greatest example of living pain where self is no more. Selflessness is everywhere. Shiv consciously offers his self to a person who has plume on his head. This plume means kalgi in Punjabi language. Shiv is surely recalling *Kalidhar* (kalidhar Guru Goibind Singh, 10th Sikh Guru) to come on this earth though in the guise of hawk. He is ready to offer an invisible the flesh of his heart. Only an enlightened person can understand this pain. William Wordsworth in ‘Solitary Reaper’ also sings the songs of pain related to separation. He writes:

Will no one tell me what she sings?-  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
And battles long ago:  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and maybe again? (qtd. Yosef, Nancy 78).
There is nostalgic touch with deep pain in the above lines. This is a mystic state, the urge in the soul for losing the individual ego into the cosmos. Wordsworth’s idea of pain is similar to Shiv Batalvi’s because both negate themselves to highlight pain but Shiv’s presentation of pain is illuminating. In a poem *Lucchi kuri* Shiv presents a lass who is harvesting and singing the songs of the past. She is like Wordsworth’s Solitary Reaper mentioned above. In these poems poets shed physical plane and delve into eternity. In the same way Mohan Singh’s poem *Kuri Pothohar di* is symbolic of poet’s yearning for pain. He writes:

> With the bale on her head  
> With dancing steps, swinging her waist,  
> Sister’s blessing she invokes  
> And holding me by the arm  
> Whom endless woes have engulfed  
> She carries me across them all  
> Those Pothohar lass  
> But before my mind’s eye lurks yet  
> The memories of her loving touch (Trans. Gill, Tejwant Singh 78).

*Jhagg waganda, pair ukhadda*  
*Sir te chukki pand gha di*  
*Pailan pandi jhole khandi*  
*Veera jeena rahein bulandi*  
*Aa ke phad laye meri baanh*  
*Te dhoondi dhoondi lai jaawe*  
*Mainu paar kuri*  
*Par hale na bhulle mainu*  
*Usdi ik sho pyar di* (Trans. Gill Tejwant Singh 23)

Here merely a sympathetic touch of a girl is enough for a poet to live the whole life. The poet when in after life is surrounded by worries and discomforts, *Kuri Pothohar*
Di appears again in his imagination, catches hold of him by the arm and takes him out of that state of life. The laden head of a girl with the heap of grass and her dancing movements remind us of Keats’ ‘Ode to Autumn’ where he personifies autumn as a woman:

…………….like a gleaner thou dost keep

Steady thy laden head across brook. (Stone, Brian 98)

Autumn may be seen here as a woman who is a gleaner. A gleaner is a woman who collects grains from the field when the crop has been harvested. A gleaner may be seen walking along steadily with the weight of grains upon her head, crossing the stream. Like Shiv Kumar’s ‘Lucchi Kuri’, Mohan Singh’s ‘Kuri Pothihar di’, Wordsworth’s ‘Solitary Reaper’, Keatsian ‘Ode to Autumn’ is also a paradigm of Divine pain beyond human insights. It is necessary to note that Eastern yearning of pain is towards intense mode of deep separation.

Pain is the highest point in human life. Life begins with pain. No creation is possible without pain. Without pain there will be no inspiration. Shelley says “poet is like a nightingale who sings melodies of loneliness in the darkness”( Barth, Robert 86).These soul stirring melodies come from the deepest recesses of the heart. Separation becomes sweet bliss and urgent reality.

Amrita Pritam in a poem ‘Anant Peera’ (deep pain) describes her ideas about pain. She aspires for pain which is in the surface of lower level of stars. It is stable. Her attraction towards pain is like the rays of the moon from the heart of ocean. She demands this pain again and again:

I aspire deep pain
Which is in the lower surface
Of the heart of stars
Stable and still
My fascination be like the
The heart of the ocean observing
The rays of moon
Your inspiration should be
Like the sleepy rays on the
Ice berg
Yeah my eternal
I want to be incomplete as
You are complete (Singh, Khushwant 67).

The desire for incompleteness is an assumption of negating the self of the self. Pain becomes panacea in this stage. Amrita Pritam yearns for this pain repeatedly. She does not want to be eternal and complete. The very idea of incompleteness is enough to immortalize her. Poetry is the finest source to present one’s desires and feelings as observed by Surjeet Patar “I often take shelter in the lap of poetry, this is my mosque, my prayer, window for inhaling breath, Gorakh for me, I was drowning in the river” (qtd in Gurcharan Singh 89). In poetry poet is present in every word. He/she depicts his/her notions in their own way. Shiv Kumar Batalvi also delves deep into human consciousness to present the realities of human psyche. In his poem Birhada he emphasizes:

People worship God
I worship this separation from you
It is worth Hajj to a hundred Meccas
This separation from you.
People say I am sun
I am famous,
What a fire it has lit in me,
This separation from you
Sometimes it colors my words
Sometimes it weaves through my songs,
It has taught me great deal,
This separation from you (Trans. Kalsey, Surjeet 56).
Loki poojan Rabb
Main tera birhada
Sanu so makkean da hajj
Ve tera birhada
Loki kehan main sooraj baneya
Main roshan hoya
Sanu kehi laa gya agg
Ve tera birhada
Kadi tan saathon shabad rangawe
Kadi tan saathon geet unawe
Saanu lakh sikha gya chajj
Ve tera birhada (Sampuran Kaav Sangreh 577)

Therefore, like Amrita Pritam Shiv Kumar Batalvi is not satisfied with his birha. He aspires more and more birha. He worships this virgin pain. Amrita Pritam gives references of stars, mountains, icebergs and drops to present her opinion. Natural scenery is helpful to present views about nature. Shiv presents religious imagery to prove his view. He completely negates his self in his poetry. He keeps on worshipping separation. It is Hajj for him to a hundred Meccas. Mecca is a religious place for Muslims. Shiv immortalizes this place with birha. He is famous as a poet of birha. The spark of pain is lit in his heart by birha. Sometime separation seems to be coloring his words. Through his songs separation speaks. Shiv is overwhelmed with this precious gift given by separation. Amrita Pritam mostly shines her pain with natural imagery but Shiv while presenting natural scenery, does not leave the lap of separation that is the finest assumption of dispossessing the self of the self. Like a female Amrita Pritam has the feeling of patience, compassion and harmony. She presents an image of a female who demands incompleteness. The super most authority in the guise of man is Almighty. Shiv Kumar Batalvi and Amrita Pritam experience finer shades of Over Soul. The difference lies in the level of intensity. Shiv is intensity personified. He depicts what is in the inner core of his heart. Pain cannot be measured in scale, it can only be felt. Mohan Singh also experiences this pain and its shade. He
also says: “Ishq mere di manzil kade na puri huye” (the destination of my love might never complete) (Trans. Singh, Karanjeet 56). These three poets excel in different shades of separation by negating themselves. In this condition of incompleteness poet pays tribute to Almighty through pain. Incompleteness is an attribute of a poet that leads a person to eternity. This is benign ambition of a thirsty heart.

This tendency of abrogation of the self of the self leads to self purification. Purification is an important stage in the voyage of pain. It is necessitated because a man has to remake himself anew. This reconstruction is a long but slow process because soul has to be prepared to move from lower levels to a higher level. Human consciousness becomes fit for a flight to Eternity only after it has left behind all impurities. All the burdens, cares, dirt, ignorance that have previously been tied to its feet are now shed. All the confusions are set at rest. The wall of unreality is dismantled. Man’s being is flooded with sympathy, harmony and love. Thus, having reconstructed itself in a new image, less human and more divine, the soul prepares to enter the higher reaches of mystical experience.

Purification of the self is a continuous process, which demands relinquishing ‘self-love’ in the first instance, and then to rise above the love of other useless or useful objects of the world, which previously held a sway over one’s consciousness. It is only after complete purification that the soul itself would start glowing like the radiant Being. A Hebrew saint, while singing enquires: “who will reach the high summit of God? Who will reach his sacred place? Only he whose hands will be clean, whose heart will be pure”. (quoted in Radhakrishnan 88).

According to Margaret Smith, only “when all images of the earth are hushed, the clamor of the senses is stilled, and the soul has passed beyond thoughts of self-can the eternal wisdom is revealed to the mystic who seeks the higher communion with the unseen”. Referring to purification, a Sufi saint writes that “so long as man does not end his ego into the existence of God, he cannot reach the heights of immortality” (Ariel, Glucklich 57). According to Encyclopedia Britannica, “annihilate yourself gloriously and joyously in Me, and in Me you shall find yourself, so long as you do not realize your nothingness, you will never reach the height of immortality” (Towards Paul 97).
Mohan Singh read with deep devotion the poetry of Wordsworth and Browning. Mohan Singh defines poetry as an outcome of the excitement and ecstasy for love, beauty and pain:

\[
\text{God fashioned beauty and pain to reveal Himself} \\
\text{And pain’s unbearable blandishments} \\
\text{Brought forth love} \\
\text{Rode the ravished heart} \\
\text{Turned eloquent;} \\
\text{The flood of verse burst out at last.} \quad \text{(Gill, Tejwant Singh 78).}
\]

Poetry here has been described as an outcome of pain. Pain becomes here an emotion of creativity and purification. Poetry here is seen a flood of unpremeditated strains whose origin is divine. From pain the flood of verse burst out at last. Here poetry is natural impulse that soothes our emotions and purifies it. Rightly says William Wordsworth: “poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (Barth, Robert 42). Beauty and pain are Godlike in the above stanza. Pain produces love, out of this love the flood of verse bursts out at last. Pain here becomes an educative emotion. This emotion helps to live life fully. Amrita Pritam welcomes pain as a blessing. Pain is the uppermost reality for Amrita Pritam that purifies emotions filled with an ecstatic flavor. When poet welcomes pain, it becomes a source of immortal joy. Identically, Mohan Singh compares pain to incense:

\[
\text{Wherever grows the plant of pain} \\
\text{Leaves incense from miles} \quad \text{(Trans. Gill, Tejwant Singh 78)} \\
\text{Jithe wi dard da bootda ugda} \\
\text{Meelan meelan ton aawe dard di khushboi (77)}
\]

The emotion of pain here is like incense that spreads everywhere and purifies emotions. Nobody can conceal it. It is natural. Pain is also natural. Living pain is like feeling of intensity. The incense of this pain strengthens the idea of devotion. It is emotional cleansing. Pain is as natural as poetry. John Keats utters “if poetry does not come as natural as the leaves to a tree, it has better not to come” (quoted in Michael,
Ferbert 45). One fruit of the tree of poetry is pain. The incense of pain is forever and perennial. It is related to overall harmony that we are enjoying in our life. The songs of sadness are always in our psyche. Nobody can escape from the pangs of separation and pain. It is universal truth. Keats regarded pain as the mother of beauty. It is in this connection that aestheticism, pain and sense of bliss are correlated.

The poetry of Shiv Kumar Batalvi is the finest assumption of living pain. Throughout his life he sang the melodious verse of pain and separation. He beseeches more and more pain to purify his emotions in his poem ‘Give me O Lord one more borrowed song’:

Give me, O Lord  
A few more borrowerd songs.  
My fire is dying  
Give me a spark  
At a very young age  
I used up every sorrow  
For my youth  
Give me a virginpain (apanorg.com)  
Saanu Prabh ji  
Ik addh geet udhara hor deo  
Saadi bujhdja jaandi agg  
Angara hor deo  
Main nikki umre saara dard handa baitha  
Sadi joban rutt layi dard kuwara hor deo (Sampuran Kaav Sangreh 569)

This divine spark of pain helps an individual is ready to be ready to negate his self. He does not want to let any spark of pain leave. He wishes to enjoy each and every spark of pain. For his youth he needs more pain and sighs. This transformation of psyche lies in ‘deconcentrating’ from without to within. From outward experiences it is an
inward voyage that is just experiential. It is the deeper and deeper reality where silence becomes an attribute of pain. Shiv in his chup presents:

I see in the voyage of silence
That silence sings, weeps, smiles
And silence has wonderful language
I learn the language of silence
From the surface of the sand (Trans. Pritish, Nandy 65).

Main chup de safar wich dekheya hai
Ke chup gaondi hai rondi hai hasdi hai
Te chup nu bhut hassen juban aanondi hai
Main dharti de atha chon

Chup di zubaan sikhda haan (Sampuran Kaav Sangreh 77)

Here Shiv glorifies silence that purifies psyche. A person who has negated his self of the self is not an ordinary person. He becomes a hermit who carries his pain and takes others pain as sweet melody. In Punjabi it is called dil di gribi(humbleness of the heart). This dissatisfaction leads to inner reality. In this condition mind is ready to have pain again and again which purifies feelings.

Death has been the negative concept in the history of human world. But these three poets glorify death in their own way. Kabir says: “jis marne te jag dare mera mann anand, marne te hi paaea puran parmanand”(Singh, Sarnam 88) (People are afraid of dying, but my mind in the state of eternal bliss, whole steadfastness may be gained only by death). Death is like getting Brahma. The state of puranparmanand signifies the affirmative statement. Without death life is trifling matter. There should have been a transformation in life.

In Gurbani and Sufism death is regarded as the superior most. It is the transformation from one life to another. Life exists in death. Death appears and we transform again. Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi lay emphasis on death in their poetry. Death is willful in their poetry. Mohan Singh desires his ashes to be flown to
jhana(Chenab), where Sohini and Mahiwal the lovers, had jumped into the lap of rising waves. He indicates in his anthology Doors:

Immerse my remains in the river Chenab
I am a rhymester my remains are befitting of
Immense worth is these for enamored,
The supposed sacred Ganga-----
However, cannot discern their merit (Singh, Mohan 78)
Mere Phul jhana wich pane
Main shayar meri phull suhane
Ganga brahmani ki jaane
Ina di keemat (Trans. Gill Tejwant Singh 71)

A person who takes separation as a Divine phenomenon can only understand these things. Poet does not want his remains to be flown to Ganga, a sacred river in India. He wishes his remains to be flown to jhana(Chenab). This is the paradigm of aesthetics of pain where death wish is willful. After death poet wishes to live in the lap of Sohini and Mahiwal, the immortal lovers. It is like meditation where a seer keeps on singing his immortal verses. The very landmark of these verses is the eternal birha (separation). Poet himself affirms that he is a rhymester, his remains are pious. Ganga is a pious river but cannot understand the immortal love stories of lovers. Sohini and Mahiwal drowned in the water of Chenab. Chenab river is pious for a poet because it reminds of the sacrifice of lovers. Poet’s death wish here is Divine. He is happy before death even for the dream of death. Here Mohan Singh’s concept of death is similar to the concept of death presented in Gurbani and Sufism. At this juncture death is related to harmony, ease, peace and self observation.

Through experience and self observation mind becomes ready to endure pain patiently as Barth, J. Robert says in Romanticism and Transcendence: “it is a sensation of fulfillment” (67). Mohan Singh presents these sacred notions about death where he wishes to be one with Cosmic whole.
Indian concept of birha and death is soothing and mystical. The concept of separation and death in Western poetry is full of charm. Keats is afraid of that he will die without expressing himself in the form of poetry. Shelley emphasizes saddest memories.

Wordsworthian imagination is to die in the lap of nature. Browning in Last Ride Together immortalizes few moments in the lap of his beloved. He does not care of death in these moments of love. He makes the present immortal while riding alongside his beloved and feels ‘who knows the world may come to an end tonight and, therefore, for him the last ride with his beloved has the full life’s enjoyment and he makes the best of it’. Poet wishes to save love and live in the present moment of aesthetic pain. He does not care for death in these moments.

Indian concept of death is mystical. Bhai Vir, Puran Singh give importance to death. It is the last and stable place in our life. It is the way of voyage towards eternity and Cosmic Consciousness i.e. to experience the inner light. In this stage birha becomes marham (balm), pain becomes bosom friend. For the pilgrimage to separation the aspiration of death is the finest award. Byron says: “it may be death leads to the highest knowledge.” (Barth, Robert 67). Death can lead man to this spot of permanence.

Walt Whitman also glorifies death. He says in Songs of Myself: “death is the ‘real relief’ which patiently waits behind the mask of materials, no matter how long. That is why “Whitman glorifies death which one day takes control of everything in the universe.” (quoted in Davidson, Loren K, 47).

Amrita Pritam says: “I want to be born again, only with a pen in my hand” (Malik, Keshav 67). Amrita loves her writings. She wishes to be a poet after her death. She wishes to come on the land of tears and wailings. Tears are mystic roses for her. In her death wish she promises to come again in her poem I will meet you yet again:

I will meet you yet again
How and where?
I don’t know.
Perhaps I will become a figment
Of your imagination, and maybe,

Spreading myself, in a mysterious line,

On your canvas,

I will keep gazing at you (Trans. Singh Khushwant 88)

Main tenu phir mélangi

Kis tran kithe

Nhi jaandi

Shayad main ik akas ban jawangi

Teri kalpana da, ate, shayad,

Apne aap nu, ik rahasmayi pankti wich

Canvas te phaila dewangi

Main teri wal lagataar dekhdi rahangi (89)

The death wish in Amrita Pritam’s poetry is full of optimism. The above poem ‘I will meet you yet again’ is filled with deep pain. This deep pain is the source of inspiration. She compares herself to a figment, mysterious line and canvas. These things are related to creative art. Figment is a product of mental imagination and images. Mysterious line is the fragment of enigmatic images. Canvas is the living image upon which mental pictures are painted. In the last stage of her life she painted these images on the very canvas of her mind. This death wish is creative and full of mysticism that is the feature of Indian mentality. In the next lines death wish is enthusiastic:

Perhaps I will become a ray of sunshine,

To be embraced by your colors.

I will paint myself on your canvas

I know not how and where-

But I will meet you for sure (90).

Shayad main ik kiran ban jawangi sooraj di
Tere rangan naal pyar kardi hoyi
Main apne aap nu tere canvas te chitar karangi
Main nhi jaandi kis tarah te kithe
Parantu main tenu pakka milangi (91)

In these lines Amrita Pritam paints natural scenery with death. She will meet her beloved like sunshine and a ray. Sunshine and ray are symbolic of hope and optimism. Death here is light and ray. The gorgeous color of beloved will bless her to the long lasting wish of death. The question of how and where is out of date now. She will meet her beloved in the next birth surely. In the last lines she says:

Maybe I will turn into a spring,
and rub the foaming drops
Of water on your body,
And rest my coolness on your burning chest.
I know nothing else but that this life
Will walk along with me.
When the body perishes; but the threads
Of memory are woven with
Enduring specks.
I will pick these particles,
Weave the threads, and I
Will meet you yet again (92).
Shayad main ik badal ban jawangi
Ate jhagg dian boondan teri deh te malangi
Apni thandak teri tapdi seene te malangi
Main kuch nahin jaandi
Parantu is zindgi wich tere naal challangi
Jadon deh chali jaandi hai
There is a seasonal, nostalgic, and metaphorical assumption in the above lines. Spring is the season of enthusiasm and celebration. In this season old leaves wither and new ones come. It is like rebirth. New flowers appear and there is greenery all around. Poet argues she will arrive in this season of spring and rub the dirt and filth from your body to purify you. And will bless you with her calmness. When body perishes all does not perish. The thread of memory is very strong. She will be picking and recollecting these pieces of memory and will meet her lover again. The thread of memory is linked towards death. Death is not a matter of sorrow and pessimism for a poet. She takes it easy. Where John Keats and other Romantic writers are afraid of taking death easy, Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi are filled with various shades of colors. These colors are permanent.

For instance in the poem “AWild Flower”(Jungle Da Phull), Mohan Singh wishes he had been a wild flower so that he might have blossomed and perished, away from mortal man. It is reminiscent to Shiv’s poem Assan tan joban rutte marna(I wish to die in the season of youth):

I want to die in the season of youth
Whosoever dies young becomes
Flower or star( Trans. Nandy, Pritish 4)
Assan tan joban rutte marna
Joban rutte jo vi marda
Phull bne ya taara (5)

It is again a deep pain where poet wishes to die with his sweet pain. Mohan Singh wishes to be a flower of a forest to live and die here alone. In this location death wish is related to solitude. Poet does not want to be seen by the mortal world. He wishes to live and die alone. For saints and hermits death is not horrible. For a
poet death is not a burden. He wishes to liberate himself from mortal gazes. Shiv Kumar also wishes to die soon. After death he wishes to become a flower or star. Flower and star are natural objects. He loves this earth and its natural objects. In one of his poem ‘Trees’ the desire to be a tree is prominent. Death for these poets is a sacred emotion. Without life and death the circle of cosmos is nothing. It is a stage of Trans and sat, chit, anand where poet experiences egoless position. The important point is this that these three poets enjoy their pain and glorify it. There is no rationality behind this acceptance of enjoying death; but then, certainly it is reformatory phase; a state of mind where the individual begins to realize his ‘inner being’ through pain. This journey of pain from ephemeral to permanence is a soul stirring experience. It is a transcendental state of being where the ‘Atman’ comes to experience ‘The Parmatman’, and the poet dispossesses himself of the self only to merge with the cosmic ‘whole’.

John Keats in ‘Ode to Nightingale’ wishes easeful death. The ache in his heart almost sounds pleasurable. In the realm of sweet pain poet’s heart beats as if he has just drunken intoxication. “Hemlock” is the poison that the Greek philosopher Socrates took when he was put to death for corrupting the youth. Here hemlock is intoxication. When poet hears the song of nightingale he really loves the song that pierces his heart. In the first stanza the speaker compares his mental state to being intoxicated by the song of a nightingale. In the next lines poet affirms:

Darkling I listen, and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death (qtd. King, Neil 54).

In the world of nightingale, he thinks it would be rich to die. He thinks this is easy. There is charm for easeful death. In this way death would be another way to free poet of all worldly cares. He wishes to die easily. In the next lines poet wishes to cease upon the midnight with no pain:

Now more than ever seems it rich to be
To cease upon the midnight with no pain (54)

Poet would like to go out quietly, in the middle of the night. There will be no pain in death. This is Western concept of death that is filled with fascination and charm. This is quiet and tranquil stage of death. He immortalizes the sweet painful song of
nightingale, and wishes to die in the world of nightingale. Nightingale’s world seems permanent and death is also immortal. Keats immortalizes these two worlds. Eastern concept of death is filled with mysticism and devotion. Death is a gateway of relief. Death is beautiful and shows the way to rebirth. Shiv Kumar Batalvi in many of his poems presents marvelous views about death. He says “sikhar dupehra sir tem era dhal chukya parshawan, kabran udeekdian mainu jeo puttran nu maawan” (Sampuran Kaav Sangreh 32) (afternoon is on full swing, my shadow is aged, graves are waiting for me as mothers to their sons). Death is like a life force in his life. He was waiting for this auspicious moment. He was enjoying the voyage unto death in his poem Menu bida kro:

Bid me goodbye
Lord
Bid me goodbye
Gift me a warm tear
Lay separation upon my palm
And bid me goodbye
Circle pain around my head
With the sacred water of tears
To every single lover in the world.
And Lord, if a drop remains,
Gulp it yourself
And bid me goodbye. (translation mine)
Mainu vida kro mere Raam jeo
Kossa hanjh shagan pao mainu
Birha tali dharo
Te mainu vida kro!
Vaaro peer meri de sir ton
Nain saran da paani
Is paani nu jag wich vando
Har ik Aashiq taani
Prabh ji je koi boond bache
Ohda aap ghut bharo
Te mainu vida kro (Sampuran Kaav Sangreh 283)

Shiv does not want to die easefully. He welcomes death and recalls it. He demands more fresh tears and sighs for virgin pain. He wishes to enjoy each and every aspect of pain. His head should be filled with tears and pain. He calls tears sacred water of the river. At every step of his life he seems to be taking pain as panacea. There is no way out for him. He is one with pain. This feeling of oneness is at the highest in his life. In this stage life becomes serene and pious as William Wordsworth renders:

That blessed mood, in which the burthen
Of the mystery, in which the heavy
And the weary weight, of all
This unintelligible world,
Is lightened (qtd. Yosef, Nancy 37-41).

In this juncture, Wordsworth adjacents his notions about nature. In the realm of nature he presents spirituality. He goes on connoting his spiritual relationship with nature, which he believes will be a part of his life until he dies. Shiv developed this sort of relationship with pain. He worships pain. The sublime gift that the beauteous pain gave him was a “blessed mood” that made the weight of the world seems lighter. But modern man has no time to excavate himself. Materialistic world is busy in earning and spending. Man has no time for others. He is self centered. There is a feeling among the common people that humanity has achieved the materialistic progress at the cost of spiritual values and this loss is the root of chaos. Instead of moral and spiritual themes, the works of art are full of chaos, boredom and emptiness in human life. It is as if the theory of the reversal of ‘gyres’ put forward by Yeats is coming true. W.B.Yeats records the disillusionment, dilemma and valuelessness that had crept into the society during that phase of history in his poem, ‘The Second Coming’:
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity (294).

The social ideals are falling apart and religion that is considered as the “centre” of values is unable to hold the society together. The moral and ethical values are pushed to the back stage which has resulted in confusion in the standards whereby man lives. What is left is the human life devoid of any genuine larger significance. Without purpose, life becomes worthless on this earth. It becomes illogical. The efforts of man can be compared to the efforts of Sisyphus who rolls the stone uphill to see it roll downhill. There is no higher motive seen in the life and there is a lack of true direction of progress. The sense of meaninglessness that people experienced in modern time can be compared wonderfully to the lines from Shakespeare’s Macbeth, where life is called “a tale/Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury/, Signifying nothing”( Nancy, Yosef 160).

The primary cause that has led to the feeling of disillusionment among people is the rapid progress that science has made in the last few decades. The fine values of humanity are lost. Living pain teaches moral values, harmony, tranquility and stillness. The logic of science can neither expand itself nor explain the log rhythm of religion of pain. Living pain is a way of state of being and operates on the dynamic principles of continual conviction. It provides the boulder: to see is to believe, to feel is to interact and to experience is to merge with and emerge from. The inner being provides solidity to reach this paradigm.

In pain the role of yaad (reminiscence and nostalgia) plays an important role. In pain poet creates pretty scenery of his emotions. He imagines past memories that pierce his heart with sweetness. To escape from the past is impossible. Nostalgia is also related to pain. Nostalgia is a sentimental longing or wistful affection for a period in the past. This pining for the past leads to sweet sad memories. It is sentimentality for the past, typically for a place or place with personal associations. In fact past is always
beautiful. The poetry of Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam and Shiv Kumar Batalvi is filled with reminiscences. This longing for the past is associated with pain. This sentimentality is being seen in most of their poems:

A girl whose name is love

Lost! lost! lost!

Simple, benign modest personality

Lost! Lost! lost!

She is like fairies

Modest like Marium

Lost from centuries

It seems to be a matter of today. (Trans. Malik, Keshav 68)

Ik Kuri jida naam muhabbat

Gum hai! Gum hai! Gum hai!

Saad- muradi sohni phabbat

Gum hai! Gum hai! Gum hai!

Suran usdi parian vargi

Seerat di O Mariam lagdi

Gummean janam janam han hoye

Par lagda jeon aij di gall hai (69)

Poet remembers invisible girl in his imagination. He does not know to which city she belongs. Girl’s name is love. She is pious like Marium. She is lost from centuries but still seems a matter of today. Here Shiv develops a spiritual relation to a girl. He reminds the girl who is hidden. Indirectly poet’s desire to understand the cosmic realities is visible here. In ‘La belle dame Sans Merci’ John Keats tells the tale of a damsel who leaves him after ‘kisses four’. He does not develop any spiritual relationship with this damsel. The Knight in this poem is wandering here and there to search her. But it is not a spiritual search. This is the difference between oriental and occidental philosophy of pain. Shiv shows his search towards Almighty, Keats
presents an image of a wandering Knight. These poets are searching damsels. Shiv compares this lass to Marium. But Keats’ belle is a seducer. In the poem of Shiv, there is a feeling of devotion toward this girl. Mohan Singh in a poem ‘Main jeewan ik Kuri layi’ (I live for a girl) is a paradigm of pure devotion. One thing is notable here is that the craving for unknown is very powerful here as in the poetry of Mohan Singh:

I live for a girl
I don’t know where she lives
Outside and inner
Or across the seven seas
I don’t know
Perhaps inside a lovely island
She might be blessing incense. (Trans. Kelsey, Surjeet, 78).

Main jeewan ik kuri layi
Main theewan ik kuri layi
Pta nhi o kithe rehndi
Ya phir mere andar bahar
Ya phir satt samundaron paar
Kise haseen tapu andar
Rahi sugandh khilaar (qtd. Bhogal, Piara Singh 52)

Mohan Singh’s reminiscence reaches to haseen tapu (enchanting island) where this hidden girl lives. It is really true in this connection “the mind is its own place, and in itself, can make heaven of hell, a hell of heaven (abolitionist.com/suffering.html). Only an innovative mind can search these precious pearls. He lives fora lass he does not know. He only imagines perhaps she is living inside a lovely island and blesses this place with sweet incense.

The notion of craving for this unknown girl in the poetry of Mohan Singh and Shiv Kumar Batalvi is same. The dissimilarity lies in the level of pain. Shiv calls this
girl a paragon of Marium. It is an assumption of piousness. Mohan Singh remembers her as if she were is inside a lovely island. Idea may be same. What distinguishes one from the other is the intensity and level of pain. Shiv has reached his peak of thoughts while presenting his poetry. This line of Surjeet Patar reminds me of the intensity of pain in Shiv “assin tan khoon wich dub kliki hai shayeri, oh hor honge jo likhde behar ander”(Bhogal Piara Singh65). (We had written poetry immersing ourselves in the blood, they will be others who write in metre). Shiv’s whole poetry is the model of deep pain. The meaning of khoon wich dub ke likhi hai shayeriis to dive deep into the recesses of heart. It is not easy. One has to negate oneself to achieve this, as gurbani says “aapa gwaie tan sho paaye”, (qtd. Macauliffe, Max Arthur 88) (if one loses himself he gets fame. the idea of dispossessing the self of the self is very significant in Gurbani. Amrita Pritam in her poem ‘Sade vehre amrit vria ni’(our courtyard is resplendent in nectar) reminds her intensity towards her beloved. As a woman she presents her emotion in full of calmness and warmth. She welcomes this auspicious guest. This poem is reminiscent of Mohan Singh’s poem “ni aj koi aaya sade vehre” (oh friend! today a person stepped into our courtyard) in which he also welcomes a guest who has come to him. He compares the body of this guest to butter, honey and sweet. On the very land of the surface of heart there is always a yearning for invisible. This image of the hidden is an affirmative response because it is the initial ladder to climb higher and higher in the path of eternity. Mohan Singh’s poem ‘ni ajj koi aaya sade vehre’ is reminiscent of spirituality through living pain. Shelley reminds us “our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought”(qtd.Yosef, Nancy 88). The intensity of pain is in experiencing the various shades of pain. At the very last stage pain becomes panacea that soothes our emotions.

Memories never die. Memories are hidden in our subconscious. Reminiscences are the greatest asset in our life. Memory reminds us of our sweet and sour experiences of life. Shiv glorifies nostalgia by uttering:

Whose yearning I have
Wearing nose pin of moon
Coming night
Moon carried in its lap
Mine first baby birha (Trans. Pritish, Nandy 89).

Eh kisdi ajj yaad hai aayi
Chann da long burajian wala
Pake nakk wich raat hai aayi
Puttar paleti da mera birhada (88)

Shiv’s nostalgic touch is surpassing the limit of time and space. He remembers his beloved with sweet pain. In his memory he sees night wearing nose pin of moon. There is aestheticism and pain. What is the combination of nose pin of moon and night? In fact nose pin is the symbol of an ornament. Shiv wishes night should also wear this ornament so as to make it look beautiful. Shiv in whole of his poetry lays emphasis on beauty and sorrow. In his memory he cannot see night without an ornament. In the light of moon he finds his first baby birha. In his memory there is no completeness without birha. First baby is most lovable to parents. Shiv might imagine here second baby but his all babies are baby-birha. Birch is his first and last lovable baby.

Mohan Singh admires the memory of separation by comparing it with golden feather:

Your memory came carrying golden feather
And sat on the branch of heart
Unveils the curtain of glorious consciousness
Lead me to the deepest core of awareness
Told me the mystery of soul union (Trans. Malik, Keshav, 71).

For Mohan Singh nostalgia works as (Soul Union), ‘Atam Sanjog’. It is glorious consciousness for him. This sort of memory is helpful for soul union. Golden feather and branch is natural object. Wordsworth finds relief in the lap of nature. Mohan Singh through natural objects shows his inner quest of the soul union with Almighty. Ways and modes of presentation of pain are various in their poetry but motive is same i.e. to understand the soul stirring remedies. Amrita Pritam in Ammri Da Vehra (courtyard of mother) remembers sweet days of her childhood and youth:
We lead a life like monarch
In the courtyard of our mother
Whose king was father
And mother queen
We enjoyed a life


The house of mother is like a paragon of comfort for a girl. Amrita Pritam remembers those carefree days. He calls her father king and mother queen. There was full enjoyment in those days. As a female she shows real pain in her poem. A girl has to leave the house of her mother one day. She has to go willingly or unwillingly to another place. The adjustment of life in new home is not easy but a girl has to compromise with these situations. She misses sweet old days of her childhood and youth. This pain is related to aesthetic taste. Memory is unveiling the pages of life. The book of life opens and poet yearns for her pleasurable past with sweet pain. In these moments pain, memory, aestheticism is immortal. Memories are priceless assets for a person. Nobody can steal it. Man can open it whenever he wishes.

In the realm of nostalgia Mohan Singh remembers Guru Nanak Dev, first Sikh guru. Amrita Pritam remembers WarisShah, writer of immortal tragic romance Heer and Ranjha. It is universal consciousness. Poet feels other’s pain as his/her own. Amrita Pritam recalls Warisshah to come and turn the next page from the book of love. Mohan Singh recalls Guru Nanak Dev to save the humanity from blood suckers of that time. The intensity of pain in the poetry of these poets is very high. Poet wishes to save earth and in favor of peasants. In one of his poem Mohan Singh remembers the beauty of Taj Mahal as “putting their lingering arms, around milk-white marbles/ delicate and frail moon-rays, lay without qualm of every kind(45) and in the next lines he deprecates against Taj Mahal which is established on the bones of down trodden. He very forcefully claims: “Is it beauty in a real sense / or just an illusion to beguile/ on the tears of toiling masses/that so painfully does arise”(46). In the last two lines of the poem, the poet deprecates the beauty, which arose from the hunger and death of ill-paid and overworked laborers. It is this consciousness and compassion for paupers that helps the poet to understand the real extent of pain in the
universal context. Thus, his poetry indicates universal pain impregnated with reflective expression of feelings. Shiv’s position as a poet in the context of pain is illuminating. In one of his poem ‘Tiddi Dal’ he reminds us of blood sucking ties where man is only a puppet. He aspires to read the melody of injustice rather than a lock.

These soul stirring remedies repeated in the poetry of these poets. Poet takes pain as sweet emotion. They have great regard for their mother earth. Shiv wishes to revisit earth in the guise of trees. He claims: “if anybody wishes to behold me, I will be in the guise of trees.”(56). Mohan Singh says in his anthology Doors' mainu te je rabb vi khe aa mere chodepan vich ralja, kde na ralan vakh hi khlan’(77) (If my Master states me to come and merge in my world, I will be far behind from Him and stand in solitude). Amrita Pritam says:

My thirst for life’ll not appease
I long for a fleshly fort;
And thus I seek to be born again,
And thus the cycle of birth,
Move perpetually for aeons( Trans. Singh, Khushwant 54)

The pull of mother earth is very strong in their poetry. The real purpose of life should be man’s quest to realize the inner self of his own being.

In this chapter different shades of pain are depicted to understand the real extent of pain. The very first stage of pain is birha. Birha is uppermost in human life. It is the finest gem of human mind. Poet has to recognize the Divine self from living pain. This should be the purpose of the purpose of life.

Second shade of pain is dispossessing the self of the self. By feeling deeply the Divine pangs of separation man becomes strong. He is never scared of pain. He feels and invites the auspicious moments of separation.

Third level of pain is to enjoy death through living pain. Death has been admired in religion and literature. Aspiration for death is another way to enjoy living pain. Pain is a way from transitory stage to permanence.
Fourth level described in this chapter is memory. This is memory by which man can relive. He can imagine the best moments in his life. This is like purification and emotional cleansing. Memory on the land of emotion is soul stirring remedy.

In the fifth level poet yearns for his mother land. He remembers old pretty days spent in the lap of nature. He wishes to be reborn on this land again and again.

Living pain is always present in human emotion. The difference lies in the level of pain. These three poets take pain as panacea. The quest for deep pain is the quest for the realization of the cosmic consciousness. Genuinely the voyage becomes introvert crossing the routes of extrovert, to realize the inner self that is the part of Divine self. Only deep living pain can lead to this realization. This realization is a sole step towards love, compassion, harmony and tranquility as Samuel Taylor Coleridge implies in Ancient Mariner:

He prayeth best who loveth best

All things both great and small;

For the dear God who loveth us,

He made and loveth all (qtd. Robert, Barth 20).
Notes:

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Ishq majaji: When hearts yearns for physical comfort.

Ishq Haqiqi: When heart finds ecstasy in spirituality. Heart becomes still and tranquil.