ABSTRACT

India owes to Lala Har Dayal a great debt of gratitude. What he did in totality to his mother country is yet to be acknowledged properly. The paradox ridden Har Dayal – a moody idealist, intellectual, who felt an almost mystical empathy with the masses in India and America. He kept the National Independence flame burning not only in India but outside too. In 1905 he went to England for Academic pursuits. But after few years he had leave England for his revolutionary activities. He stayed in America and other European countries for 25 years and finally returned to England where he wrote three books. Har Dayal's stature was so great that its very difficult to put him under one mould. He was visionary who all through his life devoted to Boddhi sattava doctrine, rational interpretation of religions and sharing his erudite knowledge for the development of self culture. The proposed thesis seeks to examine the purpose of his returning to intellectual pursuits in England. Simultaneously the thesis also analyses the contemporary relevance of his works which had a common thread of humanism, rationalism and scientific temper. Relevance for his ideas is still alive as it was 50 years ago. He was true a patriotic who dreamed independence for his country. He was pioneer for developing science in laymen and scientific temper among youths.

Perhaps after Raja Ram Mohan Roy he was the first who had studied the comparative religions and critically evaluated their contemporary relevance.
Judge by his writings Har Dayal seems to be an ardent nationalist, genius, linguist, a rare intellect and a prolific writer of immense calibre. He had very sharp memory and could repeat a lesson verbatim of having heared only once. He knew Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali and Tamil. That is why he was called ‘haft zaban’ (master of seven languages). Besides, he knew seven European languages viz. English, French, German, Italian, Turkish, Swedish and Portuguese. The thesis not only throws light on his work but elucidates also the contributions of Ghadrites in general and Har Dayal in particular. In the company of revolutionaries, Hardayal was a completely changed man. First he discarded English food, then English dress and finally English speech. He always met and talked to Indian students in Indian languages. He discarded what he called “all badges of slavery”. He organized India’s first armed and secular revolution with the help of sikh peasants and other Indian settler’s in USA (California) and Canada in (British Columbia). The Americans got scared with the activities of Hardayal but did not have concrete evidence with them. Under pressure from England they objected to what he wrote as Editor of the Ghadar journal. They were also fed up with his lectures. On March 23, 1913, they arrested him under immigration laws. But he was bailed out. Kartar Singh Sarabha and Harnam Singh Tundelat were always with him, acting as his body-guards. On March 16, 1914, the American Government struck again when he got off the tram on his way to deliver a lecture. While the police was whisking him away, Sarabha and Tundelat brought out their pistols and fired in the air. People gathered and wanted to see
the warrant. Police then let him off but got his signatures on a blank warrant. In view of such daily confrontation it was decided that Lala Hardayal should go to India. The Ghadar Party chalked out his programme to India via Europe. Accordingly, he first went to Turkey, then to Geneva and then to Berlin. In Turkey, he was known as Ismial Haqqi and in Berlin as Ramdas. It was one of the most powerful terrorist movement in history of India’s freedom movement as well as first one to rise above communal considerations. He plunged whole-heartedly into the freedom struggle. His other associates were Madanlal Dhingra, Master Amir Chand, Rash Bihari Bose, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Sohan Singh Bhakna, Barkatullah and Prithvi Singh Azad. After the martyrdom of Madanlal Dhingra, he returned to India and unfolded before Lala Lajpat Rai in 1908 his plan of Independence through ‘passive resistance’ to begin with. His own life reflects this ideology to uplift the masses and delay his own salvation for sake of others. Through his books he wanted to spread the message of “Dayalism”. It was his philosophical and ethical propaganda which included economics and politics. It aims at preaching the ideal of free thought in a constructive fashion. The spiritual vacuum in which modern people pass their lives must be filled in. It describes human personality to bloom these four facets: Intellectual, Physical, Aesthetical, Ethical. He stood for a national system of education which alone could awaken the minds of the younger generation. According to him, India needed moral energy more than the physical one, to face the British might. The three main problems of India where communalism, casteism and untouchability, eroding the progress
in India. In the present thesis, an attempt is made to examine this great figure of twentieth century nationalism from the vantage point of the beginning of the twenty first. Har Dayal’s life is a fascinating story in its own right. He stands a peerless global revolutionary who had sacrificed his wife, child, education, friends, relatives and country itself. His life long passion and dream was India’s freedom. In Sweden, he led the life of a recluse. He ate little and slept even less. He had just a room but he was widely respected. He taught free and accepted nominal amount for his lectures. Known as a “an Indian sage”. He did in Sweden what Swami Vivekananda had done in America”. He lived in several Swedish cities. Books were his only possession. The rise of M.K. Gandhi who was fully realized the earlier lapses and drawbacks of the aspirations of Indians for India’s independence. He came up with new ideas, methods. He was at the center stage till his assassination. Till that time all the constitutional, militant and revolutionary movement will all hue and colour had failed. Here is a quarry either late Lala Har Dayal, M.N. Roy, Savarkar and other few who never realized that foreign assistance from Germany, Turkey and unsuccessful experience to Indians. Har Dayal visited India on a very short visit later moved to Europe and on a lecture tour he died in Philadelphia. Savarkar and M.N. Roy came back to India to shun all their past ideas and activities majority of them were in self exile.

The thesis contains six chapters including few appendix. Chapter 1st embodies the biographical sketch of Lala Har Dayal. It relates the early
environment of his learned father and mother. His early education in Cambridge Mission School. His intellectual quest began with St. Stephen College and Govt. College Lahore (Punjab). From the later he was awarded the 200 pound scholarship for Oxford. There he got himself enrolled for Higher studies in Modern History. Disillusioned from Oxford education which celebrated and idealized occidental imperialism he felt a sense of patriotism inside him by watching students at Oxford celebrating England’s victory in Boer’s war and it traces out the revolutionary character in his personality and patriotism through his childhood activities, his marriage to Sundarani, involving in activities during his college days in India which was of the initial beginning of ardent patriotism though the true revolutionary spirit resurfaces at Oxford.

The second chapter deals with his life long passion and dream i.e. India’s freedom. For that he had to quit his scholarship at Oxford and said goodbye to England. He went to Germany, Afghanistan, Sweden and to America where he formed the Ghadar party. The vision and thought of India’s Independence never vanished from his mind and heart even for a single moment. From that aim he sacrificed his wife, child, education, friends, relatives, country itself (as he was banned to return to India) and finally his life too. For ten long years he remained isolated, loner, pessimist in Sweden. His dream unfortunately remained uncherished and unrealized and died.
Chapter third entitled ‘Boddhisattava Doctrine’ deals with his passion for Buddha and Philosophy of Boddhisattvas. His own life reflects this ideology to uplift the masses and delay ones own salvation for sake of others. The Boddhisattava ideal reminds us of the active altruism of the Franciscan Friars in the 13th century. It deals with Arhat, Sravaka, Boddhi Sattava, it covers the factors like influence of Persian religiocult, Greek-art, and Christian ethics. It basically deals with the thought of enlightenment for the welfare and liberation of all creatures. Lastly it analyses with thirty seven practices and principles conductive to the attainment of enlightenment.

‘Hints of Self Culture’ is being discussed in forth chapter. It was his Philosophical and Ethical propaganda which included economics and politics. It aims at preaching the ideal of free thought in a constructive fashion. The spiritual vacuum in which modern people pass their lives must filled in. It describe human personality to bloom under these four facets – (a) intellectual, (b) physical, (c) aesthetical, and (d) ethical. According to him this is a complete four facets development of human personality, through which man can live and enjoy his life fully.

The fifth chapter deals with ‘Twelve Religion and Modern Life’. In this chapter he laid emphasis on scientific ethics, and rational interpretation of religions. He indicates some elements of permanent values in twelve religions from stand point of modern Humanism. He also wanted to prove in his work Twelve Religion and Modern Life that there is One Energy, One Universal
Force, One Eternal Tao, everywhere in the Electrons, Protons and Molecules, in the Cells and the Tissue, in starlight and cosmic rays and even in the mind of man. So all the things are the same in their innermost essence, proclaiming that the universe is one.

The sixth chapter takes care of Lala Har Dayal as writer and his legacy. In Legacy the lesson left by Lala Har Dayal for us is of courage, scientific attitude, rational spirit, basically he was very elusive personality, which cannot be judged by putting him under one mould. Only in centuries such a person is born, specially with a extraordinary brain, famous for his photogenic memory. An ardent nationalist, and linguist who knew 14 languages, a rare intellectual and a prolific writer many comparisons and tributes of famous personalities are quoted towards his different views and thoughts, e.g. world outlook, his views on religions, bodhisattava doctrine, self culture and message of Dayalism i.e. humanism backed with rationalism.

The last but not the least is Conclusion in which an attempt is made to see the thesis divided between admiration and criticism of Lala Har Dayal. But more it is delved into Har dayal’s life, more it is admiration which goes on deepening. His legacy is ours. We agree with every thing he stood for. What we are today it is due to the efforts of the unsung heroes who took lot of pains not only to revitalize India politically but socially as well. As a man, Har Dayal was even greater. He was a true Sufi who possessed nothing and nothing possessed him except the freedom of his country. A restless soul, he wanted
every Indian youth to be a Madan Lal Dhingra. He was an extraordinary scholar whose books “Hints on Self Culture” and “Wealth of Nations” rank among the best in the world on character-building. He edited several papers such as ‘Punjabi’, ‘Ghadar’, ‘Vande Mataram’ and ‘Yugantar’. We owe in great measure to one man that is Lala Har Dayal. This is his story. The quest nonetheless has just began.

The methods of study have been historical i.e., descriptive and analytical. Efforts have been made to collect all the relevant data and interpret it in historical perspective and from the current relevance, most of the research material has been collected from different libraries in India specially National Archives of India, The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, The Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, New Delhi, Jamia Millia Islamia Library, New Delhi, the Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh and the History Seminar Library Centre of Advanced Study, Aligarh Muslim University, etc.