Chapter 5
SIGNIFICANCE OF Charhdi Kala IN THE CONTEXT OF:
(A) PLACE OF WORK
(B) EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
(C) OFFICIAL MANAGEMENT

The educational institution, official management and place of work are the key institutions to carry out the Charhdi Kala as shown in the diagram. Educational institution is the brain, official management is the mind and place of work is the body of the concept of Charhdi Kala. Educational institution is the main body to impart knowledge on the theory of Charhdi Kala while official management and the place of work are the laboratories to do practicals in Charhdi Kala. Educational institution is the reservoir of knowledge and the other two are action-regions to apply that knowledge of Charhdi Kala. So, it is important to study their relationship to reach the heights of Charhdi Kala.

(a) Place of work:

Guru Nanak’s concept of Charhdi Kala gives supremacy to truth by adopting a truthful living.1 “He who eats what he earns through his earnest labour and gives some in charity with his own hands out of his hard-earned income, finds the path of Charhdi Kala.”2 One’s place of work is the source of one’s material income. It is not the type of work that is important, but truthful earning in that work, which is more important. One’s profession or nature-of-work may be farming, trade, business, service or any of these. It is not the work that matters but
truthful earning from that work is something that really matters to the Guru. Guru Nanak working in the store house at Sultanpur Lodhi set an example of an honest civil servant. He remembered God as he performed his duty as a store keeper; maintained the account diligently and always alive to the problems of the needy.

Our place of work is very important in the context of Charhdi Kala. It can uplift us to the heights of Charhdi Kala and even contribute to bring us down to the nether regions. Our place of work is the major implementing body of Charhdi Kala in our life. It is the most slippery area where we can fall. As our place of work is related to money, our material life and our economic upliftment, the Guru forewarns us to take care that our place of work, may not cease to be a mere ‘dhandha’ or material worldly work as the Guru calls it. The Guru makes us conscious that we may not finish as corrupt beings at our place of work.

**Virtuous Self-Perusal In An Atmosphere of Charhdi Kala:**

One’s place of work should have an atmosphere of Charhdi Kala around. And how will that atmosphere emerge? It is the mind in Charhdi Kala which will help to bring about an atmosphere of Charhdi Kala in one’s surroundings. It is by sticking to the concept of ‘Know-Thyself’ leading to self-introspection and “knowing one’s origin”\(^3\), which can help us in developing a Charhdi Kala atmosphere in one’s surroundings. Self-perusal becomes self-abnegation, the moment we take a dip into the popular words of the Guru, “We are not perfect and no one is low or bad.”\(^4\) These words give us an opportunity to look into what we are and what we ought to be. “We are not good and nobody is bad \(^\), takes us in to a world of philosophy where we will have to sit and think what is good and what is bad. The moment we do so we start reaching the conclusions that the world is essentially good. It is only we who will have to dig the goodness out. This search for goodness, helps us to become good from within and without. It also gives an opportunity
to partake in the social welfare and contributes to the collective Charhdi Kala of the society we live in. The Guru-wardly attitude that everybody is good converts our place-of-work into a home of Charhdi Kala.

A Positive and Stable Mind:

Conditioning of the mind, which is central in Charhdi Kala stage, is very important at one’s place of work. Mind is illusionist, and saunterer which has spread its wings into the sky like a bird. Mind is a recluse but when it slips into indulgence, it becomes unwise and ignorant. Mind is the giver and beggar also. Mind can be only be won through the Guru and the Creator whose seat is above the mind.

A stable mind devoid of any strife or confusion within commands more authority at one’s place of work. “The strife within the mind can go by singing God’s praise. Then the Perfect Master easily merges through ‘sehaj’ into one’s being. The vacillating mind becomes stable in this way and man starts leading a life by practically involving himself in truthful doings and living a true life through honest truthful earnings.” The Guru warns “the wobbling mind not to fall down but ascend a straight path of Charhdi Kala.”

As there are two sides of everything in this world, this mind has also two sides i.e. positive and the negative side. It is a unique quality of the mind that it goes on moving into both sides like the needle of the pendulum. Change is the natural quality of the mind as it never remains stable. “At times the mind ascends high up and at times it falls into the nether regions. The greedy mind does not remain steady and searches for pleasure in four directions.” One will have to struggle positively to gain Charhdi Kala at one’s place of work — a struggle which may lead to stability and Charhdi Kala.

A Life full of Love:

Love is a great lighthouse which spreads its pleasing rays in the surroundings and keeps everyone in Charhdi Kala. The Guru says, “If
thou, wish eagerly to play the game of love, then come thou in my lane
placing thy head on thy palm. When you put forward your feet on this
path of Charhdi Kala, don’t be ashamed of laying down your head.”¹⁰

The life of a person in Charhdi Kala remains fully drenched in
love. A person in Charhdi Kala fully believes in what fourth Guru says
in Rag Gauri, “The arrow of God’s love has pierced my mind.”¹¹ A life
full of love is the life oozing out love for all. It is a life based on love
and aims at spreading an atmosphere of love for all.

Company of the Virtuous and Honest Living:

Man is known by the company he keeps. The Guru wants us to
have the company of the lovers of God who help in spreading the rays
of love for the God. One should keep a cordial atmosphere at one’s
place of work by keeping a positive friendship with all. But at the same
time one should be aware oneself of the “mammon-worshipers whose
friendship”, the Guru says, “is false and one gets falsehood only in the
company of the false.”¹²

Honest living is the key to success at one’s place of work. “He
alone, O! Nanak, finds the path of Charhdi Kala who earns with the
sweat of his brow, and then shares it with his fellow-beings.”¹³ Out of
the three-dimensional commandments we receive from the Guru in the
form of ‘naam japo’, ‘kirat karo’ and ‘vand ke shako’, ‘kirat karo’ is
basic as far as one’s living and earnings are concerned. As sphere of
‘kirat’ is economic covering the economic Charhdi Kala of the Sikhs
and as our mind has a tendency to slip and fall, the firm and final
message of the Guru is that of honesty. We find the Guru condemning
the bribery,¹⁴ accumulation of money through sin,¹⁵ a life of
resignation,¹⁶ graft and corruption, and motivating us to “ live an active
life by doing hard efforts in entrepreneurship and to enjoy the comforts
of our earnings and meet the God through meditation (‘dhianein-dian’) which will remove all the apathy and anxiety, O, Nanak.”¹⁷
‘Vand ke Chhako’:

‘Vand ke Chhako’ is one of three major principles given by the Guru as the path-finders of our life. It is based on Guru’s concept of the welfare and promotes Guru’s idea of eating after sharing with others. The Guru wants us to earn money honestly and spend it on the welfare activities. Money should remain a means to an end and should not become an end in itself. The Guru’s concept of sharing one’s income with others (‘Vand ke Chhakna’) should be given a practical shape at one’s place of work. Besides sharing one’s earnings one should help others in their work load as a goodwill gesture at one’s place of work. This is based on the concept of welfare of all, which makes one’s place of work an enjoyable place of earning, learning, friendship and welfare.

Concept of Work As Illusion:

Work is something which brings money with it. We do the work and get some money as a reward. This leads to more work and more money. The money we earn, we try to invest in our endeavour to earn more money. Ultimately it becomes a blind race for money. Forgetting real aim of life, we become money-minded and waste the whole of our life in it.

The Guru does not want us to lead this type of life. The Guru says, “The world runs after worldly occupations and gets ensnared in the trap. So powerful is the trap of these worldly occupations that it does not realize the idea of the God’s Name.” “He does not do the self-recognition, remains in extreme anxiety and spends his life every day in worldly doings.” “Wasting his life in worldly occupations, the mortal does not sing the God’s Name which is the treasure of virtues.” Such a “money-minded person goes so deaf and blind in his illusion that he does not listen to the ‘sabada’ in this noise of the strife.”

The Guru wants to save us from this worldly work ending the illusion of money. That is why the Guru gives the concept of ‘anjan-
mahe-mranjan: i.e. the concept of remaining detached in wordly attachments. This great concept of the Guru restrains us from becoming corrupt and becomes a storehouse of motivation to lead an honest life.

(b) Educational Institutions:

"Deliberation in education, turns one into a philanthropist." How to deliberate in education is the question. The Guru answers that deliberation in education is possible through the grace of the Guru. "By the grace of the Guru, one deliberates in education and rises to glory and comes to Charhdi Kala by reading and studying. Within one’s self the God Himself becomes manifest and one obtains the bliss of Name-Nectar (from within)." When the deliberation in education culminates into philanthropy, it becomes all the more imperative to understand the importance of the philosophy of Charhdi Kala for the upliftment of our educational institutions.

An educational institution is the temple of knowledge. It aims at imparting the light of knowledge to the people. It makes good human beings, good citizens, good officers, good leaders, saints and sages—all the people in Charhdi Kala in the respective fields of their life. The Guru says that, "There is no emancipation without knowledge and education." The Guru tells us the way to obtain that education. Guru says, "A Teacher is said to be educated if he, with cool mind reflects on education. He should deliberate over education which is the God’s Science, find its quintessence and develop love and concentration for God’s Name." The Guru says, "How one can get knowledge without initiation from the Guru." A learned educationist remains immersed in education in such a way as eyes get comfort in the process of seeing and as tongue runs after the tastes and as Thy people, O, God like singing the praise of the God." The Fifth Guru says, "Mercy, peace, riches, nine treasures, wisdom, knowledge and all miraculous power, education, austerity and yoga all fall within the concentration into the
God’s Name. Knowledge is the highest and most superior ablution.”  
Giving us a convincing definition of the educated, the Guru says, “He alone is educated, learned and wise who wears the necklace of the God’s Name, O, Nanak.”

Even in education, God’s Name remains the central point around which revolves the whole infra-structure of education. The Guru shows concern over the quality of the teaching and the teachers of his times which remains universally relevant in all the times. The Guru says, “The learned being who indulges in greed, craving and pride should be reckoned as an educated fool.” The Guru clearly says that “knowledge does not come from idle gossiping. The description of the essence of knowledge is as hard as steel. We obtain knowledge only by God’s Grace. All other devices and treatments bring only embarrassment.”

We come to know from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib the limitations of education. “Millions of educations relate all the attributes of the God, but it cannot come to know Thy end, O, God.” The Guru does not want us to be mere book-worms engrossed in scholastic pursuits: “The more one writes and reads, the more one burns in heart.” “The mortal may read and read the cart-loads of books. He may read and read the full multitudes of books. He may read and read the boat of books. He may read and read and fill the pits with books. He may read year upon year and month upon month. He may read for his whole life that he has and may go on reading in all the breaths of his life. Only one thing will come into one’s account, O, Nanak. All else is rattle and babble in pride.”

There is a great significance of Charhdi Kala in the context of educational institutions. From our theory of Charhdi Kala we can make a sketch of the type of education the institutions in Charhdi Kala should impart to the students.
(a) First of all, all the educational institutions should aim at Charhdi Kala of the institution, students, staff and the management. It is possible if the educational institution is run on the principles of Charhdi Kala. If all are in Charhdi Kala in an educational institution, the institutions starts touching the skies. For the Charhdi Kala of educational institutions, all the characteristics of Charhdi Kala are equally relevant.

(b) The training of the staff is of great importance. The education institutions should train its staff on Charhdi Kala lines and make the teachers aware of the theory of Charhdi Kala. The teachers should be made the torch-bearers of Charhdi Kala.

(c) Studies, sports, cultural activities and all other activities should go side by side. An educational institution should aim at the development of an integral personality of the child, who should be an all-rounder, who should remain always in Charhdi Kala and who should be capable of doing anything under the sun.

(d) The educational institution should propagate the complete theory of Charhdi Kala. A student should be made God-conscious, should know the importance of Spiritual Master i.e. Shri Guru Granth Sahib, should meditate on the God and take ‘naam-ras’ and ‘gur-sabada’.

(e) The management of the educational institution should check the education from becoming “a babble in pride”. The students should cease to be bookworms. Guru-wardly atmosphere of Charhdi Kala should prevail in the educational institution and stress should be given on enkindling the light of Charhdi Kala from within.

(c) Office Management

Office management is the mind of any organization. If the office management of any organization is good and positive, the organization comes to Charhdi Kala. If the office management gets good people to manage its affairs and if there are persons in Charhdi Kala in office the same organization starts getting supreme position.
Planning is done in the office, decisions made and practical steps taken to implement the decisions. So, we find office to be decision making body. If the decisions taken and implemented are good, and welfare oriented, the office-management is said to be in Charhdi Kala.

To conclude, office-management is the mind of an organization which should remain in Charhdi Kala to enact ‘sarbat-da-bhala’ by organizing welfare activities and promote ‘sarbat da bhala’ as one of the major characteristics of the doctrine of Charhdi Kala.

References & Footnotes (Chapter 5)

1. भुजिद महु अरन्कु (भलश-1, पंज.62)
2. बालिक धारणा बिखु उचु शेषी (भलश-1, पंज.1245)
3. आपत्त मृदु चलात (भलश-3, पंज.441)
4. तभ स्वती चंदी छुका छती लेखी (भलश-1, पंज.728)
5. मत्त मापिरा महु परिपुर्ण महु यथी अबारम (भलश-1, पंज.1330)
6. मत्त मैंमा महु ईजीमा महु मृदुधु गाड़ु (भलश-1, पंज.1330)
7. तोत्त पुत्र चुम्बन सबु सबु सबु (भलश-1, पंज.1344)
8. ते मत झुम्बा ल ईजीमे मी मापिरा पाँच (भलश-1, पंज.1410)
9. बबूल सीनो भुट्टि छलनी दे बबूल नागिन घड़ियाले। संजीव सीना विघुर न विघुर दे चाहे बटोर जाे।

(भजन-1, वेद-876)

10. नयी बीसे यें नंदे मेलिया ला बाधिया। निम्म धवन उली गली मेंजी माधि। विघुर भावजा बोल बंधीसे। निम्म दीने बालिंग हो जीसे।

(भजन-1, वेद-1412)

11. नहीं भरि ज्ञा लाई उड़ि ढील। (भजन-4, वेद-861)

12. नाच लिखाने हेष्टी मुझे वृजी भाजि।

(भजन-1, वेद-1412)

13. नाच लिख विघुर उबलु बेलिंग। हरसु उबु भक्तिविधि मेंजी।

(भजन-1, वेद-1245)

14. नहीं है वे जुझ बाहसे। (भजन-1, वेद-951)

15. सवी पन लिखि मजु वहाँ भागि। (भजन-1, वेद-951)

16. सवी हिंदी आला बर्बुर अल। भारी भारे बेलिंग दुः।

(भजन-1, वेद-951)

17. दिकाय वेषिका मेंधु दुः कमरिखा मध्य बंधु।

(भजन-5, वेद-522)

18. नाच लिखि विघुर उबलु बेलिंग। हरसु उबु भक्तिविधि मेंजी।

(भजन-1, वेद-1245)

19. धीरे घरबु नया कामिणा म गुहे हीखां।

(भजन-1, वेद-1010)

20. नया बहुच निकाय अरु न भक्ता। वेंया बविखान भलिखु बिघुर।

(भजन-3, वेद-159)

21. धीरे घरबु निकाय अरुपनि ज्ञा निधि सांभ न आरिंग।

(भजन-5, वेद-501)
22. अधिशापणी अविभक्त अंतर्गत वेदना।
(अवला-3, धरत-313)

23. उद्धचो भवि निर्लमसंगी बौद्धि संस्कृति लूट उल्लोषक।
(अवला-1, धरत-730)

24. विज्ञानी दोषपरिचय के उद्देश्यालय।
(अवला-1, धरत-356)

25. न्यून वर्तमानी विज्ञानी बौद्धि प्रति परिकल्पना भवन।
अभ्य अध्याय पर विद्यामूल विद्या महिमा निमित्त नहीं।
(अवला-1, धरत-1329)

26. भवन दोषी विज्ञाना विज्ञाना।
(अवला-1, धरत-903)

27. वाम विज्ञाना अध्यायी विज्ञाना विचारों सत्कारी मुद्दा।
विज्ञाना साधन उद्ध संह नभ निर्विहार।
(अवला-1; धरत-937-38)

28. विदु वृद्ध दीर्घ वैष्णवें वैष्णवा।
(अवला-5, धरत-1140)

29. विज्ञाना भवि विद्यामूली विज्ञाना तैल वेदित मूल पर्याय।
(अवला-5, धरत-613)

30. वेद मंडळ विचार तत्त्व तत्शर। वृद्धि विभावने मध्य उप-निर्विहा।
विज्ञाना मध्य संहु बूढ़ प्रभाव। विभावने मैत्रे-मूढ़म फिर्मतन।
(अवला-5, धरत-295-96)

31. रस्मि में विज्ञाना में प्रदत्त चीता निम्न रमण रमण बालि रचा।
(अवला-1, धरत-938)

32. विज्ञाना मूढ़ अध्यायी निम्न संहु संहु अन्धकार।
(अवला-1, धरत-140)

33. विज्ञाना न रूपिको चुचुको विभावना वर्तमान भवन।
वर्तमान चुचुको वर्तमान नित्य वर्तमान।
(अवला-1, धरत-465)
34. विदिषा वेद में गुण लिये। उद्धृत यात्रयुग वा अनूठे ह लिये।
(दैविति वेदांश, भारत-1163)

35. सिधै सिधि यज्ञ। देवा यज्ञ।
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36. पाभि पाभि गाड़ी लकीरनांि पाभि पाभि लकीरनांि माम।
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लकीरनांि धीर बाल धीर धीर स्तंभ धाव।
(भारत-1, भारत-467)

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