

# **GROUP (ALPHAS)**

# SUBJECT: WORLD LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

# **SUBMITTED TO: MA'AM RABIYA BILAL**

## **QUESTION NO.1**

**ROLL NO.79** 

**ROLL NO.15** 

**ROLL NO.99** 

**ROLL NO.5** 

## **QUESTION NO. 2**

**ROLL NO.75** 

**ROLL NO.74** 

**ROLL NO.12** 

**ROLL NO. 13** 

**ROLL NO.2** 

### Question no.1: BULLEH SHAH AS A HUMANIST?

The Punjabi poet Bulleh Shah (1680-1758) is revered by Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. In the extensive body of interpretive literature devoted to his life and work, scholars have contested his religious identity, characterizing Bulleh Shah in various ways, e. g. as a Sufi, a Vedantic Sufi, or a Via ava Vedantic Sufi. This article examines the nature of the debates about Bulleh Shah's identity, and how these debates have shaped the varying portrayals of Bulleh Shah's life, the corpus of his poetry, and the characterization of his religious affiliation.

Series of unexamined assumptions about the nature of biography and its relation to the development of a worldview, about the categorization of religious identity, and about the nature of authorship have created these conflicting portrayals of the poet and his work, making Bulleh Shah a kind of "portable" figure who is placed in widely divergent contexts. Arguing that Bulleh Shah's portability, or his placement within different contexts (for different purposes), is itself a useful topic for analysis, and provides the basis for a potentially more fruitful study not only of Bulleh Shah's life and work, but also of his audiences and their responses to him.

#### Bulleh Shah as a Humanist:

Bulleh Shah's writings represent him as a humanist, someone **providing solutions to the sociological problems** of the world around him as he lives through it, describing the turbulence his motherland of Punjab is passing through, while **concurrently searching for God.** His poetry highlights his **mystical spiritual** voyage through the four stages of Sufism:

- **Shariat** (Path)
- Tariqat (Observance)
- Haqiqat (Truth)
- Marfat (Union)

His humanism lies in his depicting the troubles that were being faced by the Muslims of his time, his rejection of caste system, and in his concept of God.

For Bulleh Shah real knowledge comes from history and real-life experiences. In the following Kafi, he points out that he has acquired the understanding of the world from the course of history where **anarchy shows the naked realities** hidden under the ongoing states affair. For example in the following Kafi he predicts his understanding of the reality of socio-economic relations within society and how they can be put upside down with the change of time:

Times have gone upside down

Hence, I discovered the secrets of love

The real duty of a humanist is to **depict the society's circumstances** and evaluate them. Bulleh Shah has done this job in the above Kafi. Bulleh Shah clearly established that human relations and consciousness are determined by historical conditions. In the verse '**Hukam Hazoroon'** (Orders from the Supreme), he affirmed

the concept of a pre-determined historical process but also unearthed the dynamics of change where the weakest can conquer the most powerful.

Within the bounded scope of "dictations from the Supreme" or history, real knowledge leads one to relate to humanity, nature and the universe. This goal can be achieved only through first surrendering your ego in front of your Murshid (spiritual master) and fall in deep love with this relationship:

When I learned the lesson of love

ورليا دا وحدت درياويكه

I entered the river of unity

اڑیا گھیریادےوچ گھمن

I was trapped in whirlwinds

پیار لایا عنایت شاه

Shah Inayat helped me to get across

As the last line indicates, Bulleh Shah became a follower of Sufi Shah Inayat Qadiri, who was a member of the Arain tribe of Lahore. For Bulleh Shah taking an Arain as his Murshid was an act of declassing, or surrendering his ego and negating the ingrained caste system. He was probably the only classical Punjabi who openly expressed ishq (love) for his Guru.

To admonish Bullah came his sisters and sisters-in-law,

Why have you brought disgrace to the prophet

And to the progeny of Ali?

Listen to our advice, O Bullah, and leave the hem of the Arain's skirt.

The reply to this reveals his humanistic attitude rather than the extremist. Bullah preached fearlessly that the guidance of a Master was indispensable for spiritual realization, and the caste of the Master did not at all matter in this pursuit. Even if he belonged to the lowest caste, his help would still remain indispensable. Thus, he proclaimed at the top of his voice that pride in being a Sayyed would land one in hell, and the one who held the skirt of a Master like Inayat Shah would enjoy the pleasures of heaven.

سدے سانونسید جیہڑا

Let anyone, who calls me a Sayyiad

سزاواں ملن دوزخ

Be punished with tortures of hell

And let him revel in the pleasures of heaven

Who labels me an Arain

If you seek the pleasures of the spring season

Become a slave of the Arain.

This quarrel of caste system disturbed him so much that he expressed this notion of annoyance in these lines:

O' Bulleh Shah let's go there where everyone is blind

Where no one recognizes our caste and where no one believes in us

Bulleh Shah articulated the role of organized religion and other obscurantist ideologies that were employed to sustain an uneven and unjust society. Bulleh Shah aptly discovered the basic contradictions of the society that were reflecting in religious differentiations. So, he declared himself unknown in one of his poems to degrade the class, caste and social status system. When he says I am unknown he is professing his humanistic view that is free from all the restrictions.

مسيتا وچ مومن ميں نا

Neither am I a believer in the mosque

ریتا دیا کفر وچ میں نا

Neither am I an infidel

يليتا وچ ياكا ميں نا

Neither amongst the virtuous nor amongst the sinners

فر عون نا موسا میں نا

Neither am I Moses nor the Pharaoh

كون ميں جانا كى بهليا

Bulleh, who knows who I am

Such was the devotional attitude of Bulleh Shah. Bulleh Shah, taught people to liberate themselves from the prison of bigotry. Bullah's message through much of his poetry matches his broad perspective of universality that is much deeper than the mere appraisal of natural beauty it has deep roots that reach down to the human

soul and human heart. This concept is larger than life: divinity to universality and then to spirituality; all are interconnected and cannot be separated.

This interrelation is characterized by the phrase "Ana ul Haq" ("I am divine"). Uttering such a phrase was considered at the time such a blasphemous expression that was uttered by the seer Mansoor Halaj and he was forced to drink poison for this crime. Bulleh Shah was a unique voice at that time in the Muslim world (and certainly in the present place and time as well), as he asked the people to destroy the mosque and the temple since it is in the human heart that God dwells.

The concept of "self" is his focal point as he addressed mankind, asking in one of his more famous poems (known as a kafi) **Come to Our Abode** 

Time and time again you go to temples and mosques

But have you ever entered your own heart?

He stood up against the background of ever greater levels of ethnic polarization between all three of Punjab's major religious traditions, and a resulting tendency for each tradition to be represented in essentialist terms. This concept of forsaking the established constructs of prayer, and in particular the physical trappings of worship, such as mosque, church, and religious books, later drew universal attention, and brought new awareness to people like Malcolm X and others who felt disenfranchised by the majority religion and culture by which they were ruled. Such an awareness or enlightenment often can be found to turn many from criminal outcasts to leaders and visionaries. To regard all as equals, to achieve a humanistic equality, is paramount to the path of the human being on earth, which was and remains the heart of Sufism.

To sum up all these three humanistic approaches we can say that at the time Bulleh penned these works, Islam became a fundamental part of everyday life in the Punjab. The influence of religious doctrine was an important element of the political and social structure of life in the Punjab. Indeed, to speak out against the so-called caste-system was equivalent to blasphemy, or at the very least, it was seen as a rejection of one's own humanity. But Bulleh Shah rejected this system and proposed that all are equal in the eyes of God. Secondly, it was Bulleh's perspective as a Sufi that guided him away from the formalist religious and political establishment and toward a more open-minded, humanistic, yet deeply spiritual view of God. Thirdly, he lived during a time of darkness and decay where the religious spirit of Muslims was broken down, much like today. Baba Bulleh Shah was a humanist even before the term was created, his message is still the strongest and appreciated by every culture that lies in sub-continent. He sought to bring the Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus of Punjabis together, realizing that beneath the skin lies the same blood.

### Question no.2: Bulleh shah as a love poet?

Bulleh Shah is a radiant star in the galaxy of the great Sufi poets. Bulleh Shah lived from 1680 to 1757. He lived mostly in the town of Qasur where he had received traditional education before he became affiliated to Shah Inayat Qadri of Lahore as his Murshid. Although Bulleh Shah was of a much higher Syed caste, yet he accepted Shah Inayat as his spiritual master and subordinated his life to his lower caste Murshid. Much of Bulleh Shah's verses about love are actually written directly for his spiritual guide, Shah Inayat. He was king of Punjabi Enlightenment. His writings represent him as a humanist, someone providing solutions to the sociological problems of the world around him, describing the turbulence his motherland is passing through, while concurrently searching for God. He does not believe in social status and caste system. He started his spiritual journey as a conformist. His poetry highlights his mystical spiritual voyage through the four stages of Sufism: Shariat (path), Tariqat (observance), Haqiqat (truth)and Marfat (union). It is said that Bulleh Shah knew the text of the Holy Quran by heart. This simplicity with which Bulleh Shah has been able to address the complex fundamental issues of life and humanity is a large part of his appeal.

His time was marked with communal strife between Muslims and Sikhs, but in that age Bulleh Shah was a beacon of hope and peace for the citizens of Punjab. As a poet, he is different from the other Sufi poets and represents that strong and living pious nature of Punjabi character which is more reasonable than emotional or passionate. He practiced the Sufi tradition of Punjabi poetry established by poets like Shah Hussain and Shah Sharaf. He thus pleaded to reach to Allah through the love of humanity and tameness of inner self.

Bulleh Shah was an evolved soul, a perfect faqir and a true lover. Through the love of his master, he realized the Lord. His life and writings are replete with subtle secrets of the path. They not only strengthen the love of a true lover but also encourage him to undergo the hardships for reaching the spiritual goal. His life and writings will serve as a lighthouse from times immemorial to true seekers of spiritual realization. Bulleh Shah conveyed that the spiritual progress lay in detaching one's mind from the outside world and attaching it to the God within. He preaches divine love. He condemns all futile ways for searching God. He believes that Man and God are inseparable. He says that the Beloved is not apart from me.

In his poem, This love-O Bullhe-tormenting, unique, he says:

"Can there be divinity without my beloved"

In this poem Bullhe Shah discusses the ecstacy in love that the lover of divine Beloved always remained in ecstasy. And he says Tha without Beloved, there is nothing.

He also says that for a Sufi, death is nothing. Sufi takes death happily. Because death gives a break from this world. And death is a chance to meet Beloved. So, death is happily accepted.

"This love is fearless, marches to death in defiance"

His poem, "He who is stricken by love", gives us the theme of spiritual love that a person who is stricken by spiritual love is different. That person can dance without any tune or music because rhythm lies not outside but inside that person. And the person who has Beloved in his heart, he is fulfilled with his love. And who has Beloved in his heart, he has no desire of worldly love. He does not need any material ties. He breaks away conventional norms. And he just enjoys his Ecstasy.

"He who is stricken by love

Sings and dances out of the tune

He who has the Beloved his heart,

He is fulfilled with his love

No need he has for formality,

He just enjoys his ecstasy"

However, he is better known as a poet, perhaps the best sufi poet of the Punjab. He wrote in several popular forms of Punjabi poetry, notably the' Kafi'. He is considered as the greatest mystic poet of Punjab, his compositions have been regarded as, 'the pinnacle of Sufi literature'. In his poetry, he preaches love, humanity peace, harmony and tolerance. It highlights the philosophy of reunion with God. His works reflects his learning, his mystical experience, and something of the life around him. He was a feminist. \*He used women voice in his works. He used enriched language. Divine love, Union with beloved after death and Unity of existence and God are important themes of his poetry.

Bullhe Shah uses the phrase Perm Nagar (the city of love) at several places in his works, and at one place he uses the phrase Sulh-i kul. An ideal city of peace is suggested by these phrases.

Many Sufi poets have expressed *Mahabah* for Divine beloved in their poetry. A Sufi's love for Divine increases with each passing moment, and the pangs of separation from beloved makes the Sufi yearn for beloved's love. Sufis believe that when they yearn for the Divine beloved, He yearns back for them too. As documented to Rumi, "Not a single lover would seek union if the beloved were not seeking it".

Shah's poetry is not confined to love for God but he expresses love for humanity, love for Shaykh, and love for the Prophet and ultimately love for the Divine. These **four stages of love** are discussed below:

Bulleh Shah's poetry has a very prominent portion which marks him as a humanist. Bulleh Shah disclaimed to be connected to some particular cast, religious orthodoxy or society. He condemns the arguments between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims over religion, prayer places and love for God. Many couplets and kafis are found on this theme. "Tear down the mosque or the temple; you may break everything you can/ but do not break a person's heart, it is there that God resides". Bulleh Shah's main focus is caring for the creation of God and not getting into differences. He talks of unity and discusses the themes which are broadly present in all religious beliefs. He emphasizes on not hurting anybody because it is God who gets wounded and suffers the pain when His people hurt each other.

In a kafi, Bulleh Shah negates the existence of all religious faiths and focuses on the true lovers, who are just humans and who do not claim to be of any faith yet are at the highest ranks on getting to the Divine love.

Lumpens live in the Hindu temples

And sharks in the Sikh shrines

Musclemen live in the Muslim mosques

And lovers in their clime

Bulleh Shah in the above-mentioned lines of a kafi says that a member of crude and uneducated class sits in temples, swindlers live in Sikh temples, and bruisers are the ones looking after the mosques but none of them is a true lover. They have found and named these places, have taken ownership of these religious places and have defined boundaries on who is allowed to come in their premises but their hearts are not present where they themselves are. However, the true lovers are not dependent upon these places made of brick, they live in their own self. They do not have boundaries as to who can access their property, their knowledge, and their secrets.

They are so pure and true in their love that they do not even care to have a place to belong to, all they care and yearn for is their beloved.

What a spark of knowledge is kindled

I find that I am neither Hindu nor Turk

I am a lover by creed

A lover is successful even when swindled

Bulleh Shah renounced to be belonging to any specific place. He does not want to keep any identity other than that of a lover. He believes dividing into tribal groups mean that one strongly believes in ethnic differences. Indulging in ethnic differences only cultivates hatred. Therefore, Bulleh Shah only approves one origin, the origin of a lover from the Love itself, from the Divine. He believes that even if the lover cannot reach his goal, he is still victorious, since he remained committed to his true origin and spent his life in the quest of his beloved. Moreover, in a couplet Bulleh Shah wrote,

"Gal smajh lie tey rola ki, aye Raam, Raheem tey Maula ki".

Yet again focusing on the concept of humanitarian view and emphasizing on understanding the true path of Love. What is the point of getting into arguments on the basis of religion if the reality is unveiled upon you? No matter what path one chooses, if one is yearning for the true beloved, sooner or later one will definitely reach Him. So, there is no point of fighting on different names of the Beloved.

Love for Shaykh is another aspect of Bulleh Shah's poetry. Bulleh Shah was greatly impressed by his spiritual master, Shah Inayat Qadri. From hagiographical accounts, it is identified that Shah Inayat belonged to Arain (a lower cast) family. When Bulleh Shah, a born Sayyid (direct descendent of Prophet), took bait at the hands of Inayat Qadri, his family, relatives and community disgraced him for ruining the family name. But Bulleh Shah, overwhelmed by love for his spiritual master ignored every taunt. He replied to his opponents as:

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Those who address me as Syed,

Shall be condemned to hell

those who address me as Raie,

Shall ride the swings in heaven

Arain and masters are born at every place,

God does not discriminate against anyone,

The lord is so carefree,

That he neglects the beautiful (others) and hugs the ugly (Bulleh Shah)

The poetic response from Bulleh Shah rejected his critics' false concept of inherent superiority and nobility of any caste and set the pattern of his lifelong challenge to accepted norms. Bulleh Shah disclaimed to be known as one of high caste and creed. He gave priority to be proudly known as an *Arain*. The reason for disowning his own cast was that his spiritual Master was an *Arain*. Bulleh Shah stood steadfast for his love for his teacher and firmly said that God Almighty does not see the cast when he bestows his blessing on his man. It is one's heart, one's righteousness which attracts God's mercy and blessings. God sometimes chooses his ordinary people over those of high casts to bestow secrets of Divine love and it is upon God's discretion to whom he may choose.

There is a very famous anecdote recalled to Bulleh Shah and Inayat Qadri. Once Bulleh Shah disobeyed his teacher and Inayat Qadri refused to see Bulleh Shah's face and threw him out of his place. Bulleh Shah, who was looking for ways to get his teachers attention back, dressed up as a dancer and went to Inayat Qadri. He danced in front of him and sang the following *kafi*:

Love for you makes me whirl in ecstasy

Return O Physician, my awareness's about to flee

Your love has made me dance to a fast beat!

Your love has taken abode within my heart!

Throughout this kafi, Bulleh Shah is expressing then yearning need for the presence and attention of the spiritual guide in a feminine voice. The importance of feminineness lies in the idea that woman is deliberated to be epitome of love and can express those emotions which are impossible for man to express, and with regard to Punjabi poetry, women were the quintessential ones in forming the Punjabi *geet* (songs of love) and laments. Bulleh Shah feels that it's the love for Shah Inayat that has made him dance and that each one of his moves is dependent on his teacher's glance. He clearly says that my guide is my physician and I am a patient. If he does not cure me, I might die. There is this showing immense form of dependency on Shaykh for all matters of journey to the Divine. Here the female voice cries, that "O my healer come quickly or else I will lose my consciousness".

Furthermore, Bulleh Shah stresses upon realizing the importance of Shaykh and loving him truly without even thinking of what people will say. This is also expressed in the following kafi:

Murshid is quietly watching the carnival; O people go and meet him

Love of the beloved can't be hidden

All of the creation is yearning for it

Don't go far away in search of it

It's here, look around, and embrace it

Take name of your Murshid, and get lost in him

When you've already fallen in love, then why feeling shameful

In this kafi Bulleh Shah has used the metaphor of funfair for this world. He is trying to communicate to common people that the Murshid is there, it is you people who have to look for him and embrace him. God has appointed the Murshid in this world to see who has the yearning for the Divine and who is ready to make the journey. Bulleh Shah wrote,

"nachan lagi tan ghoonghat keha",

meaning that if you've fallen in love with your spiritual master then do not think of what worldly people will say, just express your love to your Murshid and tell the world fearlessly about it.

Transcending from love for Shaykh, Bulleh Shah's **love for the Prophet** also appears in his poetry. Although this stage of love is not talked of at a greater scale in his Sufi poetry but a few instances are found. For example:

What a blessed day has dawned!

Ranjha has stepped into my courtyard

He has a staff in His hand and a blanket on His shoulder

He has masked himself as a cattleman

In the above-mentioned verses of a kafi, Ranjha's figure could be interpreted as that of a worldly beloved, a Shaykh or that of God Himself. But here one can interpret Ranjha's figure as that of Prophet as well. And one can clearly make a link to the references to the life of the Prophet. The words "staff in His hand", "blanket on His shoulder" and "cattleman" is too strong to be overlooked and it is essential to interpret them in linkage to some sort of historical or hagiographical accounts. Prophet used to be a shepherd, he used to look over the cattle of his community, and is remembered as *kaali kamli wala*, one having black shawl over his shoulders. One can say that in this kafi, Bulleh Shah is expressing his love for the Prophet. He might have seen Him in a dream, or felt his presence or maybe he just realized the true feeling of love for the Prophet.

After all other stages of love, Bulleh Shah enjoys the elevation of Love of Divine and Love for Divine. His love for his true beloved is of utmost purity in its nature. Bullah does not go overboard. He says that he is neither an infidel nor an orthodox believer. He is not intoxicated by the forbidden wine nor he is intoxicated by love of ecstasy. His state of love cannot be defined. It is formless. It is in the nature of things that love cannot be defined exactly, because there is something in love — as there is in pain— which cannot be portrayed or conveyed by description alone. Bulleh Shah's love for the Divine is full of pain, patience, wait and sadness. He is close to the Divine yet he feels he is far away. In one of his kafi, Bullah says:

Ever separated, my dreams are dreary,

Looking for you, my eyes are weary.

All alone I am robbed in a desert,

Waylaid by a bunch of way words.

Come my love take care of me,

I am in great agony

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"Man's love of God is a quality which manifests itself, in the heart of pious believer, in the form of veneration and magnification, so that he seeks to satisfy his beloved and becomes impatient and restless in his desire for vision of Him, and cannot rest with anyone except him" (Nicholson). Having great Sufi wisdom, being a pious peaceful preacher, Bullah still finds something lacking in his life. He thinks that that gap can only be filled with the presence of his Divine Beloved. Having everything does not suffice his need for his Beloved. This world is a place of pain for Bullah and he yearns and pleads in front of his Beloved to come and embrace Bullah and to take his care.

At first the love makes the lover so crazy and mad in search of the beloved that nothing mundane, earthly or of this world affects him. Then in second phase, separation leads to greater intensity in love. The lover yearns for union and experiences extreme restlessness. Lastly, lover sees the beloved in everyone and everywhere. Bulleh Shah's inclination towards this phase of love is seen in his couplets and *kafis*. Such as:

Bullah says, o beloved! I am your slave

I am dying to see your face

I implore you hundreds of times to unveil your face for me

How directly you have hit the arrow

Bulleh Shah is lost in the passionate love of Divine. He considers himself as a slave of his beloved. His own life is not his now, it belongs to the Divine. Bullah's yearning does not stop, it will only come to an end when there are no more veils between Bullah and his Beloved. Bullah begs and begs for hundreds of times to see his Beloved.

Bulleh Shah has used many symbols for the love of Divine. One of those symbols is *Ranjha*. Bullah conforms to the beliefs of religion but he does not belief in orthodoxy and practicing religion without having the true essence of it. The following verses of a kafi shows Bulleh Shah's extreme love for his Divine Beloved and simultaneously rejects the orthodox view of performing pilgrimage.

The hajis go to Mecca My beloved Ranjha is my Mecca. Yes, I am crazy!

Wherever is your beloved, there lies Kaaba, though you search the four books

Yes, I am crazy!

Muzaffar Ghaffar interprets this as "Heer" says that my Ranjha is my Makkah meaning that real pilgrimage is pilgrimage of the heart. The implication is that God is everywhere not merely in this town. This opinion of Sufis rejects the orthodox view. By saying that *I'm crazy*, Bulleh Shah means that what I can utter or what I am uttering is something a sound person cannot understand. I am in love of my beloved, God. And that makes me reject the form of worship which these people are carrying out. I believe in spirit of worship not the form of worship.

Bulleh Shah not just experienced great fame at his time but was also disgraced by many. First ones to condemn his views were among his family while others also did not hesitate to shun him. Bulleh Shah also realized that his opinion of religion and love for God is way too high for the common folks to absorb. When people accused him of being a heretic, he wrote, "A lover of God? They'll make much fuss; they'll call you a Kafir you should say -ves, ves, I am."

The path chosen by Bulleh Shah is the path of those people who aim to attain union with the Divine. Through the love of his spiritual teacher, Shah Inayat Qadri, Bulleh Shah found his Eternal Master, his true beloved. He soul evolved with all the mystical experiences he came through and expressed his all his stages and phases of love in his mystical poetry. His poetry is like a sea with numerous rivers flowing into it. These rivers are the themes in Bulleh Shah's *Kalam*. One of the most prominent themes found in his poetry is love. Bulleh Shah, through his kafis and couplets, has reproduced the feelings of a person who experiences intoxicated and all-consuming love. Furthermore, it tells how a fanatical lover is unaffected by the worldly or ordinary affairs and the taunts of the people. Bulleh Shah believes in embracing love, once one becomes a true lover there is no burying the truth. The famous saying "Love and smell cannot be hidden" goes along Bulleh Shah's ideology. He himself expressed all kinds of love in his poetry. In his early times, Bullah composed *kafis* on worldly love too but his meeting with the Shaykh changed him all over and his theory of love transcended from worldly love to love for humanity, then to love for Shaykh, then to love for Prophet and finally to the eternal love, the love for Divine. This phase overwhelmed the former Bullah and made him *Wali* of God. His poetry will remain an inspiration for those who have the quest to find the journey to the Divine.



