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Authority from the Saint, Not the State: Shrines, *Urs*, and Shared Festivity in Eighteenth-Century Punjab

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the shrine, the *urs*, and the seasonal festival as the lived spatial infrastructure of religious harmony in eighteenth-century Punjab. Political power continued to weaken during the decline of the Mughal empire, marked by Afghan invasions led by Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Marathas' involvement, and the rise of the Sikh *misls*. The sacred geography associated with the saints and the agricultural calendar of the villages brought the three communities, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, together in shared rituals and observances. Drawing exclusively on the historiography of the period, the paper argues that the *mazar* of the Sufi saint, the gurdwara networks of Guru Nanak, and the great seasonal *melas* of Vaisakhi, Basant, Lohri, and Maghi constituted a non-state institution whose authority derived from the saint and the soil rather than from the throne. At shrines such as those of Baba Farid at Pakpattan, Madho Lal Hussain at Lahore, Bulleh Shah at Kasur, and Haider Sheikh at Malerkotla, hereditary *khadim* and *sajjada nashin* families sustained cross-communal practice—shared *langar*, *qawwali*, *dhamal*, and pilgrimage—across successive regimes. Professional performers, artisans, and a common world of folk belief bound these gatherings together. The study concludes that the *mela* served as the practical guardian of interfaith coexistence precisely where formal governance failed.



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1. Introduction

Across eighteenth-century Punjab, communities of differing faith met one another less in the institutions of rule than at particular places, on particular days: at the tomb of a saint, in the courtyard of a *dargah* during the *urs*, on the festival ground where the harvest was kept. The century that hosted these encounters was, by every conventional measure, one of dissolution: Mughal authority decayed, foreign armies crossed the province at will, and the Sikh *misl*s rose into the vacuum, leaving no regime in place long enough to shape everyday life. Scholarship has registered that a shared culture cushioned this instability, yet it has rarely asked where, concretely, that culture was enacted.

This is a gap of object as much as of emphasis. The political and military history of this period has been well worked out, and the process of constructing religious boundaries has been done in sophistication, but this has been done with a focus on one community instead of on the interaction of all the communities of Punjab, and the active part played by sacred and festive space in sustaining intercommunal relations has drawn little attention. This study argues that the shrine and the seasonal *mela* together operated as a non-state institution of interfaith continuity, one whose authority was drawn from the saint's *barakat* and the agrarian calendar rather than from the throne, and that it survived invasion and dynastic collapse precisely because it never depended on the ruler of the day.

The contribution is threefold. It carries Harjot Oberoi's account of shared sacred space forward into the eighteenth century, where the case for porous confessional categories must be argued amid invasion and state breakdown rather than under the settled colonial conditions on which he chiefly draws; it treats the shrine and the *urs* as a non-state institution of continuity in their

own right, transmitted through hereditary custodianship; and it shows that the performers who animated these gatherings were bound to all communities by a structural economic interdependence that made their cross-confessional art a condition of their livelihood. The economic ground of this ritual life is supplied by Irfan Habib's account of an overwhelmingly agrarian society in which cultivators, zamindars, and artisans of every faith depended upon one another,¹ and its political conditions by Muzaffar Alam, who traces how the post-Aurangzeb erosion of imperial control raised regional and lower-status groups and shifted authority toward locally rooted identities.² Oberoi furnishes the central proposition that pre-colonial Punjab shared shrines, festivals, and folklore across Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim communities, which hardened into bounded religiosity only later;³ Farina Mir confirms the durability of that inheritance into the colonial era.⁴ To these, the study adds the specialist literature on the shrine—Richard Eaton on Baba Farid's *dargah*, Anna Bigelow and Yogesh Snehi on shrine pluralism, and Regula Qureshi on qawwali.

The evidence is qualitative and historical, drawn from the secondary historiography and from the documentary record peculiar to shrine and festival life: colonial district gazetteers, Kanhaiya Lal's account of Lahore's fairs, and the custodians' own traditions. The argument proceeds in seven movements. It reconstructs the century's political collapse and the vacuum into which non-state institutions stepped; defines the shrine as shared sacred space; and turns to five case

¹ Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556–1707* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963) 118–122.

² Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab, 1707–1748* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986).

³ Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity, and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁴ Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

studies—Baba Farid at Pakpattan, Madho Lal Hussain at Lahore and its Mela Chiraghan, Bulleh Shah at Kasur, the Guru Nanak sites, and Haider Sheikh at Malerkotla. It then examines the *urs* and the hereditary institutions—the *khadim* and the *sajjada nashin*—that carried practice across regimes, deriving their authority from the saint, not the state; the agrarian calendar and its festivals of Vaisakhi, Basant, Lohri, and Maghi; and the sound of the *mela* and the performer communities—*Mirasis*, *Dhadis*, and *Bazigars*—whose dependence on patrons of all faiths sustained it. A concluding chapter weighs this shared infrastructure against the age's real violence and presents the study's findings.

2. Political Collapse and the Vacuum that Folk Institutions Filled

No century in Punjab's recorded past saw authority change hands so relentlessly. When Aurangzeb died in 1707, the Mughal order began to disintegrate and it was this vacuum that was filled by rival forces that Aurangzeb's death did not stop from attacking—and never could—the Mughals: Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali's Afghans, the divided Mughal Governors, the growing power of the Sikh Misls, and the Marathas. By the 1760s, the 12 Misls of the Dal Khalsa were occupying land from the Afghans and Mughals.⁵ For cultivators and townsfolk this meant repeated invasion, ruined crops, and an administrative void in which no ruler lasted long enough to order daily life. This single fact frames the inquiry: where the state could not guarantee security, the burden of furnishing order fell upon institutions the people sustained among themselves. That this burden could be borne is owed to the rhythm of ordinary life proving more durable than the rhythm of rulers. Village life continued at its own pace—wheat was sown and harvested, the monsoon came

regardless of who ruled Lahore, and people gathered for melas.⁶ Into that space the seasonal festivals of Vaisakhi, Basant, Lohri, and Maghi, the shared musical genres, and the professional performers—*Mirasis*, *Dhadis*, and *Bazigars*—furnished a common social arena for Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh.⁷ The *mela*, agricultural in origin and predating both Islam and Sikhism, drew its authority not from any ruler but from the agrarian calendar itself, which is why it survived the failure of successive regimes.^{8,9} Colonial historians drawing on *Mirasi* genealogists recorded these festivals continuing, in modified form, throughout the upheaval, not passive resilience but a deliberate assertion of communal life where the state had ceased to supply it.¹⁰

3. The Shrine as Shared Sacred Space

Shrine culture in eighteenth-century Punjab is best understood by first establishing what a *mazar*, or shrine, meant to those who visited it, for it differed from the mosque in role and character. Where the mosque was dedicated to formal worship and the preaching of Islam, the shrine served otherwise.¹¹ A *mazar*, or *dargah*, is the tomb of a saint, in Persian, *mazar* means 'place of a gate' and a *dargah* is the tomb of a saint in India.¹² In the Sufi tradition the saint's life is not diminished by death but intensified: the grave connects the living and the divine,

⁶ Indu Banga, "Agrarian Structure and Rural Society in Punjab," in *Punjab Past and Present*, ed. Kirpal Singh (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1973), 44–46.

⁷ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 48–50.

⁸ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 49–50.

⁹ J. S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 108–11.

¹⁰ Syed Muhammad Latif, *Lahore: Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities* (Lahore: New Imperial Press, 1892; repr. Lahore: Takhliqaat, 2010), 376–78.

¹¹ Anna Barry Bigelow, "Sharing Saints, Shrines, and Stories: Practicing Pluralism in North India" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2004), 1, 133.

¹² *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Dargah," vol. 2, 141b: "Persian, literally 'the place of a gate' and generally 'the royal enclosure, the palace' in Persia, but in India with the additional special connotations of 'the tomb or shrine of a pir.'"

⁵ Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 135–40.

transmitting *barakat*, or blessing, through proximity, and pilgrims travelled great distances to touch the threshold and circumambulate the tomb.¹³

These practices were not exclusively Islamic. Hindus brought their own framework of worship and oblation, and Sikh devotees expressed reverence by placing Sufi verses within the Guru Granth Sahib.¹⁴ Many major shrines accordingly drew Muslim and non-Muslim visitors alike, often for practical reasons:¹⁵ a visitor approached the saint to request a cure or the birth of a child, regarding him as a local protector with divine power, without weighing his creed.¹⁶ Some shrines acquired connotations of a regional cultural unity: Haider Sheikh's shrine in Malerkotla is a case in point.¹⁷ The Nawab of Malerkotla's famous no to the killing of Guru Gobind Singh's sons, after Guru Gobind Singh had raised the *hā dā nāra*, the cry of justice on their behalf, made the shrine sacred to Sikhs and Hindus, and during the festivals, most of the visitors were Sikhs and Hindus.¹⁸

The *mazar* thus constituted a shared geography of holiness, even where the religious language describing it differed.¹⁹ Intercommunal mixing was also produced by the structure of the *dargah* complex, which typically held a tomb chamber, an outer courtyard, a prayer area, a *langar* hall, and housing for pilgrims.²⁰ The *langar* was especially significant: food distributed at the

tomb was believed sacred and its rejection an insult to the saint, so that Hindus were fed by Muslim *khadims* and Sikhs shared meals with Muslim devotees—a daily practice, not a self-conscious expression of tolerance.²¹

Two overlapping workers oversaw this economy: the hereditary *sajjada nashin*, who held spiritual authority and conducted the *urs*, and the *khadim*, who managed daily affairs and distributed offerings. Both offices passed from father to son and receive fuller treatment below.²² Crucially, their authority derived from the saint, not the state—significant where political control was weak and divided. Mughal and Sikh rulers alike granted land revenue (*madad-i-maash*) to religious institutions regardless of sect, sustaining the shrine economy through multiple streams of patronage.²³

The annual *urs* gave this shared space its most concentrated expression. The Arabic word *Urs* means 'wedding': this is a celebration and not a death anniversary because the saint is united with God.²⁴ Held over several days at the important shrines, it drew visitors from near and far,²⁵ and combined religious observance with the activity of a large fair, where vendors, musicians, and food brought together people who never met in everyday life.²⁶ The saint's blessing was understood to extend over the whole event, commercial and celebratory

¹³ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 147–55.

¹⁴ Yogesh Snehi, *Spatializing Popular Sufi Shrines in Punjab: Dreams, Memories, Territoriality* (New Delhi: Routledge India, 2019), 3–5.

¹⁵ W. H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 148–52.

¹⁶ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 175, 304.

¹⁷ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 9.

¹⁸ Yogesh Snehi, "Religious Encounters and Sufi Saint Shrines in the Longue Durée of Punjab," SC Misra Memorial Lecture, 83rd Session of the Indian History Congress, December 28, 2024, 1381.

¹⁹ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 180.

²⁰ "Madho Lal Hussain Shrine & Mela Chiraghan: Ultimate Guide to Mela Chiraghan in Lahore," Pakistan Tourism Places, <https://pakistan-tourism-places.com/madho-lal-hussain-shrine-mela-chiraghan-festival-of-lights>.

²¹ Snehi, "Religious Encounters," 1377; see also Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 297.

²² "Sajjada Nashin," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sajjada_Nashin: the hereditary spiritual successor to a Sufi saint, holding religious authority over the shrine.

²³ B. N. Goswamy and J. S. Grewal, *The Mughals and Jogis of Jakhbar* (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1967), ix–xii; B. N. Goswamy and J. S. Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori* (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1969), 3–6.

²⁴ Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 240–45.

²⁵ Lajwanti Rama Krishna, *Pañjābī Sūfī Poets, A.D. 1460–1900* (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1938), xxvi, 120.

²⁶ Gill and Rana, "The Contribution of Sufism and Bhakti Movement," 1029.

alike.²⁷

This shrine culture played a vital political role. As Mughal authority collapsed and the Sikh *misls* competed among themselves and with Afghan forces, mass gatherings required a security no state power could guarantee, and the shrine supplied it.²⁸ Disrupting a shrine or a saint's feast carried serious consequences for one's reputation within any military or political group, while its economic networks—*langar*, donations, the *urs*, and the trade of the fair—were assets local power holders sought to profit from rather than destroy, an interest reinforced by fear of the saint's curse.²⁹ Shrine precincts thus became informal sanctuaries in a period when much of life in the Punjab was genuinely perilous.³⁰

4. Shrines of the Eighteenth Century: Case Studies

The shrine of Baba Farid (Fariduddin Masud Ganjshakar, 1188–1266) at Pakpattan on the Sutlej ranks among the oldest and most visited Sufi shrines in Punjab. A Chishti ascetic, Baba Farid was one of the fifteen Bhagats whose Punjabi verse was incorporated into the Sikh Guru Granth Sahib, so that Sikhs visiting his tomb venerated a figure whose words they already held divinely inspired—forging an unusually close cross-religious bond.³¹ As Mughal authority weakened, his Chishti descendants asserted power over a semi-autonomous polity sustained by the pilgrim ford and an army of local Jat devotees.³² Their defense of the shrine against the Sikh Nakai Misl in 1776 demonstrated that shrine authority had

acquired a political legitimacy of its own amid the collapse of established rule.³³

The annual *urs*, celebrated in Muharram, focused on the Bahishti Darwaza (Gate of Heaven), which was opened for ten days, attracting Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh pilgrims from Afghanistan and Central Asia, each paying homage to the same saint in their own context.³⁴ Baba Farid's place in the Guru Granth Sahib shaped Sikh power's posture toward his shrine: in 1810, Maharaja Ranjit Singh captured Pakpattan yet donated to it and patronized its custodians, continuing an eighteenth-century pattern in which Sikh chieftains were reluctant to disturb respected saints' shrines and sometimes funded them—just as Mughals had protected Hindu and Jogi institutions. The shrine economy transcended sectarian boundaries.³⁵

The shrine of Madho Lal Hussain in Lahore honours two persons: Madho Lal, a young Hindu from Shahdara, and the Sufi poet Shah Hussain (1538–1599), who took Madho's name and was buried beside him. That pluralism—a Muslim Sufi and a Hindu youth equally revered—was the shrine's defining feature, embodying the religious crossing that Punjabi popular culture permitted.³⁶ Its *urs* became one of Lahore's great festivals, the Mela Chiraghan (Festival of Lights), celebrated since shortly after Shah Hussain's death in 1599. Ranjit Singh later institutionalised and named it, merging the *urs* with the city's spring rituals, and led a procession of thousands of Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus from the Lahore fort to the shrine—recorded in the *Umdat ut-Tawarikh* as a conscious act of cross-religious solidarity. Yet the festival long predated state

²⁷ "Bhakti and Sufism," IGNOU, 194.

²⁸ Krishna, *Pañjābī Sūfī Poets*, 29, 83.

²⁹ Sajid Mahmood Awan and Rahat Zubair Malik, eds., *Asian History, Culture and Environment: Vernacular and Oriental Paradigms*, vol. 4 (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2018), 1572, 1580.

³⁰ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 238–39, 347.

³¹ Snehi, *Spatializing Popular Sufi Shrines*, 12–14.

³² Syed Liyaqat Hussain Moini, "Devotional Linkages of Punjab with the Chishti Shrine at Ajmer: Gleanings from the Vikalatnamas," in *Sufism in Punjab: Mystics, Literature and Shrines*, ed. Surinder Singh and Ishwar Dayal Gaur (New Delhi: Aakar Books, 2009), 392–95.

³³ "Pakpattan," Kiddle, <https://kids.kiddle.co/Pakpattan> ; see also Salim Mohammad, "Introduction," in *Sufism in Punjab*, 13.

³⁴ "Urs of Baba Farid," *Auqaf* and Religious Affairs Department, Government of Punjab, <https://auqaf.punjab.gov.pk/shrine-baba-farid>.

³⁵ Goswamy and Grewal, *The Mughal and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori*, 12.

³⁶ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 384.

support.³⁷

It continued through the *Misl* period, when Lahore was repeatedly invaded.³⁸ The three-day *urs*, the lighting of lamps, the *dhamal* of *malangs* around a central bonfire, the *langar*, and the gathering of qawwals and devotees from across Punjab were already established, sustained year-round by the *khadim* families regardless of who held power—a continuity not politically organised but socially reproduced, as the *urs* became part of Lahori life.³⁹ The festival's third day was reserved for women of all religions, who brought offerings and prayed for intercession on fertility, health, or marriage—evidence of a gendered pilgrimage tradition in which women managed their devotions independently of formal religious institutions.⁴⁰

Bulleh Shah (Syed Abdullah Shah Qadri, c.1680–1757) lived through most of the eighteenth century and died at Kasur in 1758. His vernacular verse is treated in the companion study; the present concern is his shrine and *urs*. The mullahs' refusal to bury him in the communal graveyard became, ironically, the strongest advertisement for his shrine's later popularity, so that a man rejected by official religion became the patron saint of those who felt rejected or constrained by it.⁴¹ His shrine in central

Kasur drew devotees across traditions, and its three-day *urs* (10th–12th Bhaddon) featured a palanquin carried through the streets, qawwali, communal feasting, and the singing of his verses.⁴² In a frontier town raided by Durrani and Sikh forces alike, the shrine offered what mosque, gurdwara, and mandir could not: a place belonging to no faction but to a man whose message was avowedly non-sectarian—a character shaped by the memory of his teacher Shah Inayat Qadiri of Lahore, who lay outside Bulleh Shah's own spiritual lineage, and by his acceptance of that teacher despite social pressure.⁴³

Holy places associated with Guru Nanak functioned much like the Sufi *dargah*. The networks of Kartarpur, Nankana Sahib, and a web of small gurdwaras offered protection and community amid the upheavals of war, in an age when religious identity was loosely defined.⁴⁴ Many devotees were “*Nanakpanthis*”—Hindu and Muslim followers who revered Nanak as the world guru without adopting the full Khalsa identity—so numerous that by the eighteenth century their presence at Sikh gatherings was unremarkable, and they were seen as a link between communities.⁴⁵ The *Janamsakhi* account of Nanak's death dramatises this shared property: Hindu and Muslim disciples contended over his body until, lifting the shroud, they found only flowers, giving rise to twin shrines at Kartarpur—a Muslim *mazar* and a Hindu *marhi*.⁴⁶ Such sites, honouring Nanak as both “peer” and “guru,” could be claimed by no single institution.⁴⁷

³⁷ “Mela Chiraghan: 400 Years of Love & Light,” *Tribune India*, April 6, 2026, <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/arts/mela-chiraghan-400-years-of-love-light>; see also Krishna, *Pañjābī Sūfī Poets*, 25, 85, 144.

³⁸ “Madho Lal Hussain Shrine & Mela Chiraghan,” Pakistan Tourism Places, <https://pakistanismplaces.com/madho-lal-hussain-shrine-mela-chiraghan-festival-of-lights>.

³⁹ Richard M. Eaton, “The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid,” in *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam*, ed. Barbara Metcalf (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 335–56, at 340.

⁴⁰ “Mela Chiraghan,” *Daily Times*, April 4, 2019, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/372880/mela-chiraghan-the-festival-of-lights>.

⁴¹ Muhammad Bin Shakir, “Analyzing Bulleh Shah's Art as an Emergent Ideology” (M.Phil. diss., National College of Business Administration and Economics, Lahore, 2024), 10, 37, 60, 77.

⁴² “Shrine Baba Bulleh Shah, Kasur,” FlyPakistan, <https://flypakistan.pk/attractions-details.php?attractionname=Shrine+Baba+Bulleh+Shah>.

⁴³ Snehi, “Religious Encounters,” 2024.

⁴⁴ Karamjit K. Malhotra, “The Sikh Sacred Space in the Eighteenth Century,” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 74 (2013): 380–85.

⁴⁵ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 8, 24, 76, 90; Snehi, “Religious Encounters,” 1376; Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, 58.

⁴⁶ “Guru Nanak,” Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Guru-Nanak>.

⁴⁷ Snehi, “Religious Encounters,” 1377, 1384.

The same spirit was prevalent in the tradition: The Muslim Mardana played the rabab for Guru Nanak's *udasis*, the Qadiri Mian Mir laid the foundation stone of the Golden Temple in 1589, and the Guru Granth Sahib incorporated the verses of Muslim and Hindu saints, thereby making the sacred space available to both communities.⁴⁸ Visiting a Sikh holy place required no formal theology—people came because Nanak taught human equality, and through shared ritual, the common people contested divisions imposed from above during a century of crisis.⁴⁹

Malerkotla is associated with the shrine of Haider Sheikh (Sheikh Sadruddin Sadar-i-Jahan, 1434–1515), a Sherwani Afghan from Khurasan who settled by the Sutlej, became renowned for piety and healing, and founded the Malerkotla dynasty.⁵⁰ His tomb drew a devotional community from all walks of life, with no distinction made among those seeking the saint's blessing.⁵¹ In December 1705, the event that fixed Malerkotla's place in Punjab's history of harmony occurred: when the Nawab of Sirhind had Guru Gobind Singh's young sons walled up, the rulers of neighbouring territories were expected to accede, and a descendant of Haider Sheikh, Nawab Sher Mohammad Khan of Malerkotla, refused. Guru Gobind Singh himself raised his voice in protest, calling out the *hā dā nāra* (cry of justice) and declaring the killing of innocent children contrary to all justice. Sikh tradition holds that the Guru blessed Malerkotla with lasting peace—a blessing that shaped the collective memory of Punjab.⁵² In 1947, the town's Muslims were

kept safe by their Sikh neighbors, a deliverance directly attributed to the *hā dā nāra* of 1705.⁵³ Sikh devotees also visit the Shahi *Maqbara*, the Nawab's tomb, to honor his protest.⁵⁴ The shrine thus became a place where memories of past spiritual harmony were renewed annually, without formal ritual, simply through pilgrimage.⁵⁵

5. The Folk Practice of the *Urs* and the Institutions of Continuity

Across major Punjabi shrines, the *urs* offered a shared repertoire of folk practices accessible to participants from varying religious backgrounds. The simplest acts were visiting the grave and making an offering—flowers, incense, oil for lamps, cloth for the tomb cover (*chadar*), or food—performed by Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh worshippers alike as acts of reverence rather than as expressions of theological commitment. The lighting of oil lamps, which gives the *Mela Chiraghan* its name, drew at once on Islamic piety, the Hindu *diya* tradition, and the common impulses of hope and remembrance.⁵⁶ Equally important was the distribution of *langar*, free communal food prepared throughout the *urs* by the families of the *khadims* and by voluntary donors. The governing rationale held that the saint's blessing was available to all who came, so that to decline the food, or to refuse to eat alongside other pilgrims, was to reject the saint's hospitality. This produced the intermingling of pilgrims in the shrine courtyards—a basic social fact of considerable consequence—while voluntary offerings (*futuh*) and blessed food together anchored the shrine's social function.⁵⁷

⁴⁸ Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, 58, 60; Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 289; Surinder Singh and Ishwar Dayal Gaur, eds., *Sufism in Punjab: Mystics, Literature and Shrines* (New Delhi: Aakar Books, 2009), 32.

⁴⁹ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 288.

⁵⁰ Iftikhar Ali Khan, *History of the Ruling Family of Sheikh Sadruddin, Sadar-i-Jahan of Malerkotla, 1499 A.D. to 1948 A.D.* (Patiala: Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, 2000), 1–3.

⁵¹ "Important Places," District Malerkotla, Government of Punjab, India, <https://malerkotla.nic.in/tourist-places>.

⁵² Snehi, "Religious Encounters," 1380–81.

⁵³ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 206, 237.

⁵⁴ Iftikhar Ali Khan, *History of the Ruling Family of Sheikh Sadruddin, Sadar-i-Jahan of Malerkotla, 1499 A.D. to 1948 A.D.* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2000), 35.

⁵⁵ "Tourist Places," District Malerkotla, Government of Punjab.

⁵⁶ Eaton, "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid," 350–52.

⁵⁷ Jamal Malik, *Islam in South Asia: A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 146–49.

The musical highlights of the *urs* were *qawwali* performances. Persian in origin, these devotional songs absorbed elements of Punjabi and Hindi, expressing divine love in an idiom familiar to anyone acquainted with devotional songs in Hindu and Sikh cultures. The same themes appear in the poetry of Guru Nanak, in the verses of Baba Farid preserved in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, and in the *kafi* of Shah Hussain; a Sikh listener at the *urs* of Baba Farid, hearing *qawwals* perform compositions of his own tradition, would not have found the songs alien.⁵⁸ More ecstatic was the *dhamal*, a whirling dance performed by *malangs*—wandering ascetics defined less by formal Muslim or Sikh identity than by devotion to a particular saint—around a central bonfire. When *malangs* appeared at major festivals such as the *Mela Chiraghan* and the Bulleh Shah *urs*, the ordinary rules of religious segregation were temporarily relaxed, sustaining a cross-communal subculture of devotion centred on the shrines.⁵⁹

Each large Punjabi shrine was sustained by a family or network of families that administered it: the *khadims*, whose hereditary duty was to maintain the shrine, attend to visitors, receive and distribute offerings, and manage relations with pilgrims. The *khadim*'s authority was not religious—he did not preach, issue legal verdicts, or derive his standing from Islamic learning—but custodial and relational: he enjoyed privileged access to the saint because his family had always had such access, and visitors trusted him to mediate on their behalf. At Pakpattan, the *khadims* of Baba Farid traced their lineage to the saint's

relatives and disciples.⁶⁰ Such families afforded a continuity few other eighteenth-century institutions could claim, enduring as the Mughals, the Misl chiefs, and the Afghan armies came and went;⁶¹ this continuity itself functioned as authority, signifying that the saint's blessing had passed to this line and would pass on through it.⁶² The *khadim* also organised the shrine's multi-community culture directly, instructing Hindu and Sikh visitors—each according to their beliefs—on where to stand, what to offer, and how to approach the tomb; such guidance was economically sensible, since these offerings fed shrine revenue, but its deeper effect was to bind visitors to the shrine and make their return more likely, and it was so embedded in inherited practice that it rarely needed negotiation.⁶³ By later classificatory standards, some *khadim* families were themselves mixed, for conversion in Punjab ran in multiple directions.⁶⁴ Amid the period's instability, *khadims* sometimes occupied quasi-political roles—settling local conflicts, sheltering travellers, and granting safe conduct where state institutions were absent—a service to all communities that strengthened the shrine's standing as a neutral space.⁶⁵

Above the *khadims* stood the *sajjada nashin*, the spiritual heir, typically a lineal descendant, vested with the shrine's spiritual and administrative jurisdiction.⁶⁶ He was more than a religious figure: a landowner, since the great shrines held *waqf* endowment

⁵⁸ Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan: Sound, Context and Meaning in Qawwali* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 67–71; see also Nile Green, *Indian Sufism since the Seventeenth Century: Saints, Books and Empires in the Muslim Deccan* (London: Routledge, 2006), 67–72.

⁵⁹ Surinder Singh, ed., *Sufism in Punjab* (London: Routledge, 2023), 11.

⁶⁰ Eaton, "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid," 338–55.

⁶¹ Salim Mohammad, "Introduction," in *Sufism in Punjab*, 13.

⁶² Alam, *The Crisis of Empire*, 162–68.

⁶³ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 269, 393; Eaton, "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid," 338–52.

⁶⁴ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 12, 88; Anna Barry Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 34, 393.

⁶⁵ Salim Mohammad, "Introduction," in *Sufism in Punjab*, 13; Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 335, 407; Snehi, "Religious Encounters," 1371, 1381.

⁶⁶ "Sajjada Nashin," *Rekhta Urdu Dictionary*; Syed Ameer Ali, *Mohammedan Law*, vol. 1 (London: Thacker, Spink, 1912), 443–44.

lands whose income supported the *langar*;⁶⁷ a patron of the musicians who performed at the *urs*; and a political actor, since control of a major shrine conferred access that local power-holders coveted.⁶⁸ His authority rested on descent from the saint and access to the saint's *barakat*—believed available to all who approached with sincerity, irrespective of faith.⁶⁹ To exclude Hindus or Sikhs would have affronted the saint's renowned universalism, the very attribute that made his blessing powerful and the *sajjada nashin's* position desirable; inclusion was thus a matter not of tolerance but of legitimacy. With the Mughal decline, *sajjada nashins* lacked any reliable patron and negotiated continually with Sikh Misl chiefs, to whom a custodian revered by Sikhs and Muslims alike was far more valuable than a merely Muslim religious figure.⁷⁰ Pakpattan is the best-known instance: its custodians adapted to a succession of powers from the Mughals onward; the *urs's* appeal to traders, pilgrims, and locals from several communities underwrote its prosperity; and its custodial families survived precisely because the land was sacred to everyone—Muslim, Sikh, and even Afghan.⁷¹ The shrine of Sultan Bahu at Jhang shows the same logic, drawing visitors of diverse backgrounds for the saint's reputation as healer and intercessor and holding its *urs* even through the most turbulent years.⁷²

A central distinction in the eighteenth century lay between institutions sustained by state patronage and those that were not.⁷³ As Mughal authority weakened, so did its apparatus of *qazis* and official religious administration; Sikh institutions were strong

in territorial and military matters but not in settled religious administration,⁷⁴ while Hindu temple institutions, tied to particular sites and their Brahmin priests, were vulnerable to war and invasion.⁷⁵ The shrine tradition functioned differently: the *khadim* and *sajjada nashin* families who ran the major *dargahs* had no single political patron but drew their authority from the saint rather than the state, and the saint's authority did not lapse with a change of government. The *waqf* land that funded the *langar* did not, in principle, depend on the goodwill of the king or emperor, though in practice the matter could be more complex. The great shrines' large, multi-community throngs also afforded them greater social mobility than institutions drawing smaller numbers.⁷⁶ The most regular and politically independent element was the *urs* itself, observed annually on a fixed date belonging to a sacred history no political change could alter; this regularity allowed communities to plan around it, merchants to organise trade, and families to fulfill vows, so that in an age of unpredictable public life the *urs* provided a predictable anchor for people of different religious communities alike.⁷⁷

6. The Agrarian Calendar as Common Ground

Of eighteenth-century Punjab's seasonal festivals, Vaisakhi stood nearest the centre of the agrarian year. Although now much associated with Guru Gobind Singh who founded the Khalsa in 1699 on 1st Vaisakha, 13 or 14 April, its history goes back further still, further back than even Guru Amar Das, who formally added Vaisakha to the Sikh calendar to mark the meetings at Goindwal.⁷⁸ Before 1699, it was above all the festival of the farming community and the spring wheat harvest. For Hindu Punjabis, it marked the

⁶⁷ Jamal Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 145–50.

⁶⁸ Qureshi, *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan*, 58–70.

⁶⁹ Eaton, "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid," 333–56.

⁷⁰ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 376–79.

⁷¹ Mohammad, "Introduction," 15.

⁷² *Gazetteer of the Jhang District, 1883–84*, 51; "Sufism in the Digital Age: A Study of Fareed's Poetry," 184;

Yogesh Snehi, "Transcript: What is Sufism? Part 4."

⁷³ Snehi, "Religious Encounters," 1383.

⁷⁴ Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, 84–93.

⁷⁵ Malhotra, "The Sikh Sacred Space," 385.

⁷⁶ Alam, *The Crisis of Empire*, 190–94; see also Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 11, 271, 301.

⁷⁷ Bigelow, "Sharing Saints," 278, 305–7, 360.

⁷⁸ Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, 88–92

solar new year; for Muslims, it held no theological significance but still fell within the same agricultural cycle. Kanhaiya Lal's account of Lahore in the 1880s records the Vaisakhi Mela as an occasion when a temporary bazaar sold sweets and refreshments while entertainers performed before a freely mingling crowd.⁷⁹ The link to the Khalsa lent it significance for Sikhs, yet non-Sikh Punjabis continued to regard it as a harvest celebration well into the colonial period, for farmers of every community grew the same crop and shared the same weather.⁸⁰

If Vaisakhi belonged to the harvest, Basant belonged to the turn of the season and was the property of no single community. It was a celebration of the arrival of spring, at the end of January or beginning of February, 5th of Magh, none of whose traditional practices, like everyone dressing in yellow, making sweets and saffron rice, had any religious connotations, but were all traditionally Punjabi.⁸¹ The Mughals had long celebrated Basant at the Lahore Fort, and with the fall of Mughal power and the *misl*s' occupation of Lahore, the celebration was never interrupted. Thousands gathered at the Basant Mela at the *dargah* of Madho Lal Hussain, the sixteenth-century Sufi saint venerated by Hindus and Muslims alike, and the Lahore Gazetteer later recorded that between forty and fifty thousand attended.⁸² Yet a complicating story attaches to that ground. Haqiqat Rai, a Hindu boy of the 1730s or 1740s, was reportedly executed for blasphemy at Lahore and is remembered as a martyr by Hindu Punjabis; a *samadhi* was raised for him near the *dargah*, and an annual *basant* fair grew up around it, which later

observers misread as proof that Basant was a Hindu religious event.⁸³ Hindus congregated about Haqiqat Rai's *samadhi* while Muslims gathered at Madho Lal Hussain's shrine, each attaching its own meaning to the same season, even as the kite flying, yellow clothes, and food remained common ground. The case is telling: against the sectarian tensions of the day—to which his execution itself attests—seasonal celebration still functioned as a field of coexistence in which people need not agree on the theology of flying a kite.⁸⁴

Lohri, falling on the last night of *Poh* in mid-January, is among the most characteristically Punjabi festivals. Communities sat around a bonfire, tossing sesame seeds, jaggery, and popcorn into the flames, singing and dancing; it has always been common to Punjabis regardless of religion—Sikh, Hindu, Muslim, and later Christian.⁸⁵ Many of the songs concern Dulla Bhatti, the sixteenth-century Bhatti Rajput outlaw who robbed Mughal convoys and rescued girls from forced marriage.⁸⁶ His story became a parable of resistance to oppressive power, the fire a site of collective devotion as well as enjoyment and the songs an occasion to express a shared Punjabi identity across communal differences.⁸⁷ This carried over into Maghi the following day, when Hindus went to rivers or sacred tanks and Sikhs to gurdwaras for Mela Maghi, particularly at Muktsar, commemorating the forty Sikhs who died in battle against the Mughals.⁸⁸ Yet Punjabis ate the same foods—*khichdi* and

⁸³ *Ancient Punjab: Journal of the Centre for Archaeological Research*, vol. 10 (2022), 52–65.

⁸⁴ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 257.

⁸⁵ Studocu contributor, "Punjabi Festivals: Celebrations Across Cultures and Religions" (University of Liberia coursework document, May 2024), citing Chauhan (1995), <https://www.studocu.com>.

⁸⁶ R. C. Temple, *Legends of the Panjab*, vol. 1 (Bombay: Education Society's Press, 1884), 101–4.

⁸⁷ Margaret L. Trawick, "The Culture of Lohri and Seasonal Festivals in Punjab," in *Folklore and the Construction of Identity in South Asia*, ed. Peter J. Claus and others (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 67–69.

⁸⁸ W. H. McLeod, *Sikhs of the Khalsa: A History of the Khalsa Rahit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 78–80.

⁷⁹ Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Lahore* (Lahore, 1884; repr. Lahore: Takhliqaat, 2012), 230.

⁸⁰ M. S. Randhawa, *Punjab: A Land of Plenty* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1975), 45–60.

⁸¹ *Gazetteer of the Lahore District 1883–84* (Lahore: Punjab Government Press, 1884), 242.

⁸² Syed Muhammad Latif, *Lahore: Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities* (Lahore: New Imperial Press, 1892; repr. Lahore: Takhliqaat, 2010), 373.

rauh di kheer—regardless of community: Lohri and Maghi formed not a single ceremony but a series held at the same time and place, the common food and fire their true connections.⁸⁹

Alongside these stood many smaller village *melas* tied to local saints, serving at once as occasions for trade, the marriage market, religious merit, and entertainment, and described in colonial-period gazetteers as already several hundred years old.⁹⁰ Oberoi observes that the *mela* drew crowds across villages and regions, blurring the rules of communal separation—the more so in the eighteenth century, when communal identities were less fixed than they would become under later census politics.⁹¹

7. Sound, Performers, and the Craft of the Mela

The *mela* was a polyphonic event before it was anything else, and its sound rested upon a substratum of belief older and broader than any of the formal traditions present at it. Superstitions, omens, and convictions about the supernatural were shared across communities, applicable alike to those who worshipped at the mosque, the gurdwara, or the mandir.⁹² Their significance lies less in their content than in their distribution: Hindus, Muslims, and even Sikhs observed them despite the Gurus having denounced them, revealing a divergence between what was taught and what was actually done.⁹³ The same divergence appears in the conviction, accepted across all faiths, that saints held power over nature, so that ordinary Punjabis would seek help from the nearest reputed saint regardless of his affiliation. Roger Ballard's⁹⁴ analysis identifies this shared

conviction as one of the deepest layers of Punjabi culture, a stratum that transcends formal religious divides. Because all saints could serve as protectors of everyone, the ritual life of the *mela*—where blessings were sought, vows made, and amulets bought functioned as a genuinely cross-community phenomenon.⁹⁵

Upon this shared substratum rested the sound of the *mela*. Music was not the background but the heart of the social event, the vehicle through which spiritual, emotional, and communal life was shared. The dominant genres were Kafi, Qawwali, and *Dhamaal*. The Kafi,⁹⁶ is a devotional poetic genre that is based on Punjabi and Sindhi Sufi traditions, and features a refrain, and is typically written about the soul's journey to God through the language of love, loss and union. In use by the Sikh Gurus such as Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, and by Muslim Sufi poets, is itself proof of the porousness of the boundaries between these traditions in practice. The vernacular verse of the great eighteenth-century poets—Bulleh Shah, Waris Shah, and Sachal Saramast (1739–1827)—belongs to the literary analysis of the companion paper; what concerns the history of the *mela* is its performance.⁹⁷ These were the poets whose works were carried to the fairs and set to music by *Mirasi* musicians, who adapted them to local tastes, thereby converting lyric into a shared public event.

By the eighteenth century, the devotional style known as Qawwali had moved beyond the *khanqah*, and it was performed at *melas*, drawing people not necessarily attached to

⁸⁹ Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, 120–22.

⁹⁰ *Lahore District Gazetteer, 1883–84*, 78–82.

⁹¹ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 48.

⁹² Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 255–60.

⁹³ Denzil Ibbetson, *Punjab Castes* (Lahore: Government Press, 1916), 27–29.

⁹⁴ Roger Ballard, "Panth, Kismet, Dharm te Qaum: Continuity and Change in Punjabi Religion," in *Religion and Society in*

North India, ed. David N. Lorenzen (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 17–20.

⁹⁵ J. C. Oman, *Cults, Customs and Superstitions of India* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908; repr. Delhi: Vishal Publishers, 1972), 45–60.

⁹⁶ Qureshi, *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan*, 88–90.

⁹⁷ Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab from the Remotest Antiquity to the Present Time* (Calcutta: Central Press, 1891; repr. Lahore: Progressive Books, 1964), 231–34.

any Sufi order but attracted by the music's emotion and spirituality. Its assembly forms—the *qaul*, the *hamd*, the *naat*, and the *manqabat*—addressed God, the Prophet, and the saints in formal Islamic vocabulary, yet carried emotional overtones familiar even to non-Muslims.⁹⁸ The *Dhamaal*, a practice of ecstatic devotional dancing, chanting, and music performed at the dargahs of Punjabi Sufi saints, was not doctrinal and drew people of all communities to shrines such as those of Madho Lal Hussain and of Bulleh Shah at Kasur. It was participatory rather than performative, admitting no barrier between audience and devotee, so that the Hindu farmer, the Muslim weaver, and the Sikh trader all found themselves caught up in the same pace and the same sound.⁹⁹

This music and storytelling were transmitted by professional communities born to perform, remember, and pass them on—the *Mirasis*, the *Dhadis*, and the *Bazigars*. The *Mirasis*¹⁰⁰ were the musicians and genealogists of Punjab by birth, not confined by religion: in East Punjab, Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs all belonged to the community. They sang Kafi, Qawwali, and devotional songs, maintained genealogies that shaped rights and obligations, and preserved the region's collective memory. The *Dhadis*, a subgroup of the *Mirasi* world, acquired particular significance as a component of Sikh identity, recounting heroic verses of Sikh warriors to the *sarangi* and *dhadhs*—yet they too played to mixed audiences that included non-Sikh listeners.¹⁰¹ The *Bazigars*, by contrast, were acrobats and jugglers whose spectacle lacked any theological ground to divide its audience; the *Bazigar*, quite literally, walked a tightrope above the divisions of faith.¹⁰²

The financial dimension of these performers' lives reflected the same cross-community ties: the patrons of the *Mirasis*, *Dhadis*, and *Bazigars* came from every religious group, and the performers depended upon the patronage of those they served.¹⁰³ In a Punjabi village, a single *Mirasi* family would hold Hindu *Jat* patrons, Muslim *Gujjar* patrons, and Sikh farmer patrons alike, all of whom they were expected to commemorate at weddings, births, and festival times. The interdependence was therefore structural rather than incidental: one performing household drew its livelihood from all three communities at once, so that the economic web bound performers and patrons together and gave each a material stake in continuing to relate to the others.¹⁰⁴

8. The Limits of Harmony, and Conclusion

The folk culture of eighteenth-century Punjab did not abolish communal tension, and any honest reckoning must begin from what it failed to prevent. The killing of Haqiqat Rai in the 1730s,¹⁰⁵ the sectarian hatred Bulleh Shah condemned, and the atrocities Abdali's armies visited upon Sikhs and Hindus were not undone by communities flying kites at Basant.¹⁰⁶ A shared calendar could neither neutralize the politics of martyrdom nor blunt the sword of invasion; what it sustained ran alongside the violence, not over it. That doubleness is sharpest at Malerkotla. The town entered Punjab's memory through the *hā dā nāra*—the cry of justice Guru Gobind Singh raised against the walling-up of his infant sons, after Nawab Sher Mohammad Khan, a descendant of Haider Sheikh, alone refused to accede to the killing, his tomb honoured by Sikh devotees still.¹⁰⁷ Yet in the

⁹⁸ Qureshi, *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan*, 116.

⁹⁹ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 259–65.

¹⁰⁰ Ibbetson, *Punjab Castes*, 27–30.

¹⁰¹ Hardial Thuhi, "The Folk Dhadi Genre," *Journal of Punjab Studies* 18 (2011): 131–45.

¹⁰² "Bazigar (Goaar) People and Their Performing Arts," *Journal of Punjab Studies* 18 (2011): 1–10.

¹⁰³ Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, 267.

¹⁰⁴ Temple, *Legends of the Panjab*, 1–5.

¹⁰⁵ Details discussed in the analysis of the political and social background above; see Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Lahore* (1884; repr. 2012), 211–12.

¹⁰⁶ Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Lahore* (1884; repr. 2012), 211–12.

¹⁰⁷ Iftikhar Ali Khan, *History of the Ruling Family of Sheikh Sadruddin, Sadar-i-Jahan of Malerkotla, 1499 A.D. to 1948 A.D.* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2000), 35.

same town, in 1762, Ahmad Shah Abdali slaughtered roughly twenty-five thousand Sikhs in a single day.¹⁰⁸ That these traditions held communities together is inseparable from how little, against an army, that holding could protect: folk culture produced not concord but a working fabric of dependence.

That fabric was woven from convergent threads. The agrarian calendar set Vaisakhi, Lohri, and Maghi by the harvest and the monsoon, so that whoever worked the soil kept the same feasts irrespective of creed. The *Mirasis*, *Dhadis*, and *Bazigars* served, and were paid by, patrons of every community, carrying memory across the religious line as a condition of their livelihood. A common belief in *jinn*s, the evil eye, and the saint's command over rain and disease sent people of different faiths to the same tomb,¹⁰⁹ and the *mela* suspended, for its duration, the caste and communal separations the ordinary village enforced. Beneath all ran a Punjabi belonging wider than its three confessions: to weep at a Kafi in Bulleh Shah's voice, to fly a kite at Basant, to sit at the Lohri fire was a Punjabi act before it was a Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh one.¹¹⁰ Music did this most plainly, asking no agreement, only participation.

The decisive test came in the century itself: no institution held the society together, armies raided at intervals, and Lahore changed hands roughly once a decade. Yet the *mela* went on, because its authority lay elsewhere—a shrine that took its standing from the sanctity of the saint owed nothing to the ruler of the day. This is why the *khadim* and *sajjada nashin* families of Pakpattan, Lahore, Kasur, and Malerkotla carried a cross-communal practice intact through invasion and dynastic collapse, when the Mughal *qazi*, the state mosque, and the temple tied to a vulnerable Brahmin establishment could not. Herein lies this study's distinctive claim: where the lyric and

the *qissa* furnished a shared imagination, the shrine, the *urs*, and the *mela* furnished a shared infrastructure—physical, institutional, and economic—operating independently of the state because it had never depended on it. Those who tended the tombs and traded in their bazaars did not attain equality, nor escape the violence Malerkotla in 1762 makes impossible to forget, but in keeping these places open, they sustained a working coexistence where political coexistence had failed, an infrastructure of harmony the century's disorder could strain, and at moments drown in blood, yet never dismantle.

¹⁰⁸ Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Lahore* (1884; repr. 2012), 211–12.

¹⁰⁹ Oman, *Cults, Customs and Superstitions of India*, 54–58.

¹¹⁰ Qureshi, *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan*, 88.

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