

**Nationalistic reverie and cultural pride in the selected poems of renowned punjabi poets:  
Dhani Ram Chatrik, Heera Singh Dard, and Prof. Mohan Singh**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Dhani Ram Chatrik, Heera Singh Dard, and Prof. Mohan Singh, revered figures in Punjabi literature, stand as exemplary nationalistic poets, each contributing a distinctive voice of Punjab to express cultural pride and love for the nation. Dhani Ram Chatrik, with his unique vernacularism, offers a more grounded portrayal of Punjab's cultural pride and resilience. In his work "Saddi Zameen" (Our Land) Chatrik eloquently captures the connection between the people and the land of Punjab. His nationalistic fervor is expressed in his verses and reflects the common folks' simplicity and strength. Chatrik's poetry serves as a testament to the unsung heroes of the soil, embodying the spirit of a united nation rooted in its cultural heritage. Heera Singh Dard is always considered the "Shahenshah-e-Mausiqi." He weaves cultural pride into his verses, celebrating the vibrant traditions of Punjab. In his poems, Dard skilfully intertwines music and cultural imagery to evoke a sense of nostalgia and pride, creating a lyrical tapestry that reflects the essence of Punjabi heritage. Prof. Mohan Singh's works include "Bol Mitti Deya Baweya" (Speak, O Man of Soil) where he explores the symbiotic relationship between the people of Punjab and their land, delving into the cultural roots that form the bedrock of their identity. The present research paper meticulously examines the themes of nationalistic reverie and cultural pride embedded in the selected poems of the three distinguished poets of Punjab through a comprehensive literary analysis. The paper explores how these poets encapsulate the spirit of their land, articulating a profound love for their culture and a collective aspiration for a unified nation.*

**Keywords:** Punjabi poetry, Dhani Ram Chatrik, Heera Singh Dard, Prof. Mohan Singh, Culture, Society, Nationalism

**INTRODUCTION**

Punjabi poetry has a rich tradition that reflects the cultural, social, and geographical ethos of the Punjabi people. The spirit of nationalism is a recurrent theme in Punjabi poetry, especially considering the historical and political context of the region. Many Punjabi poets express deep love and attachment to the land and geography of Punjab (Serbyakov 1968). The fertile plains of the region, the rivers, and the overall landscape are often romanticized and used as symbols of the Punjabi spirit. The selected Punjabi poets- Lala Dhani Ram Chatrik, Heera Singh Dard, and Prof. Mohan Singh not only show their love for their motherland but convey a strong sense of belonging and pride for the culture they live in. Punjabi poetry carries nationalistic fervor and is often accompanied by a call for social justice and equality. Poets advocate for a society where everyone is treated fairly and has equal opportunities, reflecting the ideals of a just and inclusive nation. Patriotism and the willingness to make sacrifices for the greater good are significant themes in Punjabi nationalist poetry. Chatrik mentions in his poem 'Bharat Mata'<sup>1</sup>:

Text in Punjabi	Punjabi Pronunciation	English Translation
ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਮਹਿਕਾਈ, ਸਰਦ ਚਾਨਣੀ ਖਿੜਾਈ, ਰੁੱਖਾਂ ਬੂਟਿਆਂ ਸਜਾਈ, ਅੰਨਾਂ ਧਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਪਟਾਰੀ, ਮਾਤਾ !	Phulām mahikāī, sarada cānaṇī khiṛāī, rukhām būṭīāṁ sajāī, anām dhanām dī paṭārī, mātā!	the fragrance of flowers, winter light that shines, adorned with trees and plants, You are those buckets of riches, mother!
ਹਾਸ ਤੇ ਮਿਠਾਸ ਭਰੀ, ਸੁਖ ਦਾਤੀ, ਵਰ ਦਾਤੀ, ਮਾਣ ਦਾਤੀ, ਤ੍ਰਾਣ ਦਾਤੀ, ਸ਼ੋਭਾ ਦੀ ਅਟਾਰੀ, ਮਾਤਾ !	Hāsa tē miṭhāsa bharī, sukha dātī, vara dātī, māṇa dātī, trāṇa dātī, śōbhā dī aṭārī, mātā!	full of laughter and sweetness, Happiness giver, boon giver, Honor giver, comfort giver, you are attic of grace, mother!

Poets often exhort their readers to be dedicated to the welfare of the community and the nation. These three poets are committed to nationalistic ideals, transcending regional and religious boundaries to present a unified India. Prof. Mohan Singh's philosophical reflections and spiritual patriotism harmonize with Dhani Ram Chatrik's earthy depiction of rural life, collectively shaping a narrative that celebrates diversity within a shared national identity. Through their evocative verses, Dhani Ram Chatrik, Heera Singh Dard, and Prof. Mohan Singh become torchbearers of the cultural legacy of Punjab, fostering a deep sense of pride and love for the nation in the hearts of their readers. By dissecting the linguistic nuances, symbolism, and historical context of these poems, this paper aims to unravel the intricate layers of nationalistic sentiment and cultural pride. The analysis not only sheds light on the individual poetic styles of Chatrik, Dard, and Prof. Mohan Singh but also illuminates their collective impact on the broader narrative of Punjabi literature, contributing to a deeper understanding of the intricate interplay between literature, culture, and the spirit of the nation. In his poem 'Naujwana Nu'<sup>2</sup>:

Text in Punjabi	Punjabi Pronunciation	English Translation
ਵਤਨ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਭਾਰਤ, ਸੋਭਾ ਜਿਸਦੀ ਅਸਾਂ ਵਧਾਣੀ ਏ । ਜਿਥੇ ਹਿਮਾਲਾ ਵਰਗੇ ਪਰਬਤ, ਗੰਗਾ ਵਰਗਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਏ । ਜਿਮੀਂ ਜਿਹਦੀ ਤੋਂ ਸੋਨਾ ਉਗੇ, ਪਰ ਕੈਦਣ ਅਜ ਰਾਣੀ ਏ । ਸੁਰਗ-ਬਗੀਚੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੀ, ਅਜ ਸਾਰੀ ਦਰਦ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਏ । ਭੁਖ ਨੰਗਾ ਹੈ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਤੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਪਤਿ ਲੁਹਾਈ ਏ । ਹਿੰਦੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਤੂੰ ਵੀ ਜਾਗ ਦੇਰ ਕਿਉਂ ਲਾਈ ਏ ।	Vatana pi'ārā bhārata, sōbhā jisadī asām vadhāṇī ē. Jithē himālā varagē parabata, gagā varagā pāṇī ē. Jimīm jihadī tōm sōnā ugē, para kaidāṇa aja rāṇī ē. Suraga-bagīcē bhārata dī, aja sārī darada kahāṇī ē. Bhukha naga hai dēśa vica tē bāhara pati luhāī ē. Hidī naujavanām tū vī jāga dēra ki'um lāī ē.	Dear motherland India, the glory of which we have to increase. Where there are mountains like the Himalayas, and water like the Ganges. The land from which gold grew, but the queen is still imprisoned. The paradise garden of India, today is a story of pain. There is hunger in the country and outside the country. young man of this land, why didn't you wake up?

Punjabi nationalism ideologically emphasizes the unity of Punjabis to the nation as India not as Punjab. Though separatists try to demote socio-cultural brotherhood and unity around the world, it has always been united by the poets of Punjab with their patriotic poetry. The demands of the Punjabi nationalist movement are linguistic, cultural, economic, and political rights. The impact of nationalism on Punjabi poetry is a topic that has been explored by scholars with a positive attitude. It has been argued by a few scholars that Punjabi poetry has been affected by past political incidents and tries to configure its language and identity at the

national level. It is, furthermore, a serious concern that poetry composed in a regional language is usually excluded from the purview of "national high culture." Experimentalism and its impact on Punjabi literature have also been studied throughout. According to cultural historian Alyssa Ayres, Punjabi nationalism largely emerged in the 1980s, partly due to the emergence of other regional identities in India. However, Dhani Ram Chatrik's poems 'Bharat Mata', 'Bharat Wale', 'Bhaarti Sher', 'Desh Dard', 'Maat Bhoomi', 'Mera Hindustan', 'Mere Bharat'; Heera Singh Dard's poems 'Jalliah Wale Bagh Di Vasakhi', 'Tain Ki Dard Na Aya', 'Utho Naujawano', 'Watan Di Azadi Laee'; and Prof. Mohan Singh's poems 'Desh Pyar', 'Sipahi da Dil' carry the essence of the unity of Punjab as an integral part of India which can be deciphered and decoded with the understanding of the culture that Punjab beholds.

The stances of cultural pride in the poems of Dhani Ram Chatrik, Heera Singh Dard, and Prof. Mohan Singh are visible throughout. Chatrik's poetry is steeped in Indian traditions of romance and classical poetry, often celebrating varied moods of nature and feelings of love. In his poem 'Bharti Sher'<sup>3</sup> he mentions:

Text in Punjabi	Punjabi Pronunciation	English Translation
ਤੂੰ ਭਾਰਤ ਦਾ, ਭਾਰਤ ਤੇਰਾ, ਗੈਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਚੁਕਵਾ ਦੇ ਡੇਰਾ। ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਦਾ ਝੰਡਾ ਝੁਲੇ, ਹੋਏ ਮੁਹਕਮ ਅਮਨ ਜਹਾਨ ਦਾ। ਉਠ ਜਾਗ, ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸ਼ੇਰਾ ! ਤੂੰ ਮਾਲਿਕ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦਾ।	Tū bhārata dā, bhārata tērā, gairām dā cukavā dē ḍērā. Āzādī dā jhaḍā jhulē, hō'ē muhakama amana jahāna dā. Uṭha jāga, bhāratī śērā! Tū mālika hidusatāna dā.	You belong to India, India is yours. Outsiders shall be removed from the place. the flag of freedom shall lead and will be the epitome of peaceful land. Wake up, lion of India! You are the master of India.

He explored and expressed nationalism in his poetry during and after the Indian freedom movement. His work is characterized by a blend of Indian and Western influences and a focus on rediscovering Punjabi identity and language. Heera Singh Dard has produced the cultural intimacy of the community through his poems. In his poem 'Koyile, Geet Navan Koe Ga'<sup>4</sup>:

Text in Punjabi	Punjabi Pronunciation	English Translation
ਕੋਇਲੇ ਨਵੀਂ ਬਹਾਰ ਲਿਆ, ਮੇਰਾ ਵਤਨ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਕਰਾ, ਨੀ ਕੋਇਲੇ ਗੀਤ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਗਾ ।	Kō'ilē navīm bahāra li'ā, mērā vatana āzāda karā, nī kō'ilē gīta āzādī gā.	Cuckoo, bring the new breeze, set my country free dear cuckoo, sing the songs of freedom

Prof. Mohan Singh is mentioned as one of the poets who introduced new themes in his poems that did not conform to the known models of Punjabi poetry. In his poem 'Bharat hai Waang Mundri'<sup>5</sup>:

Text in Punjabi	Punjabi Pronunciation	English Translation
ਭਾਰਤ ਹੈ ਵਾਂਗ ਮੁੰਦਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਨਗ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ । ਭਾਰਤ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਇਹ ਨਸ਼ਾ ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਦਾ ।	Bhārata hai vānga mudarī vica naga pajāba dā. Bhārata hai jē śarāba iha naśā śarāba dā.	India is like a ring and Punjab is a gem. If India is an alcohol It is the essence of it.
ਗੰਗਾ ਬਣਾਵੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਤੇ ਜਮਨ ਦੇਵੀਆਂ	Gagā baṇāvē dēvatē tē jamana dēvī'āṁ	Ganga produces gods and the goddesses But the lovers can only be

ਆਸ਼ਕ ਮਗਰ ਬਣਾ ਸਕੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਚਨ੍ਹਾਬ ਦਾ ।	āśaka magara baṇā sakē pāṇī canhāba dā.	produced by The water of Chenaab
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Chatrik’s compositions are concerned with the folk culture of Punjab and present real expression, emotion, countenance, and idiomatic expression of Punjab. His poems celebrate the grandeur of Punjab's folklore, history, culture, and nature; and emphasize India as a united whole. Chatrik's poetry is known for its patriotic fervor and its emphasis on the unity of India. His poems are known for their patriotic fervor and their emphasis on the folk culture of Punjab. Some of his famous works include ‘Fullan Di Tokri,’ ‘Bharthri Hari Bikramajit,’ ‘Nal Damayanti,’ ‘Dharmvir,’ ‘Chandanwari,’ ‘Kesar Kiari,’ ‘Nawan Jahan,’ ‘Noor Jahan Badshahbeghum,’ and ‘Sufikhana.’

Giani Hira Singh Dard, a Punjabi journalist and writer, was a revolutionary whose writings depicted his revolt against social evils. He began writing religious and patriotic poetry in his early youth under the pseudonym "Dard." His work reflects his strong nationalist sentiments and revolt against colonialism and social injustices. Dard was a member of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee and was one of the founders of the Punjabi Sabha, reflecting his active involvement in nationalist and political movements. His writings focus on achieving freedom through national integration and making his countrymen prosperous. In his poem ‘Azadi’<sup>6</sup>, he mentions:

Text in Punjabi	Punjabi Pronunciation	English Translation
ਟੁੱਟ ਗਏ ਸੰਗਲ ਗੁਲਾਮੀ ਦੇ, ਓ ਦੋ ਸੌ ਸਾਲ ਦੇ, ਕੰਮ ਆਏ ਹਠ ਤੇ ਤਪ, ਗਾਂਧੀ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਦੇ	Ṭuṭa ga'ē sagala gulāmī dē, ō dō sau sāla dē, kama ā'ē haṭha tē tapa, gāndhī javāhara lāla dē	Shackles of slavery are broken, of two hundred years old, Persistence and tenacity came has worked, Of Gandhi and Jawaharlal

Therefore, his poetic themes centered on nationalism, anti-imperialism, and the struggle against social and political injustices.

Prof. Mohan Singh was a noted Punjabi poet and academician amongst Punjabi litterateurs. He obtained a Master's degree in Farsi and began his academic career as a Persian Lecturer at Khalsa College, Amritsar, in the early 1930s. In 1939, he moved to Lahore and founded the influential Punjabi monthly magazine *Punj Darya*, through which he set new standards in Punjabi poetry and inspired countless poets. His significant poetic works include *Saave Pater* (1936), *Kasumbhra* (1939), *Adhvate* (1944), *Kach Sach* (1950), *Aawazan* (1954), *Vadha Vela* (1958), *Jandre* (1964), *Jai Mir* (1968), *Nanakayan* (1971), and *Buhe* (1977).

Prof. Singh was also a distinguished translator, rendering Edwin Arnold's epic *Light of Asia*, the Greek classic *King Oedipus*, and notable novels such as *Godan*, *Nirmala*, and *Peengh* into Punjabi. He also authored *Gad-Pad Rachna*, a comprehensive work on the grammar of Punjabi language and poetry. For his

immense contributions to Punjabi literature, Prof. Mohan Singh is celebrated as one of the greatest Punjabi poets of the 20th century.

The poems of Dhani Ram Chatrik, Heera Singh Dard, and Prof. Mohan Singh exhibit recurring themes of nationalistic reverie and cultural pride. These poets deeply value their Punjabi identity and use their verses to express their love for their homeland and celebrate its rich heritage. Their poems evoke a sense of national unity and inspire a collective consciousness towards the nation among Punjabis, urging them to preserve their unique cultural traditions. Their poems reflect a strong desire for independence and portray the struggles faced by Punjabis in their pursuit of freedom. They also highlight the resilience of the people of Punjab in the face of adversity.

Punjabi poetry has significantly added to the Indian cultural identity and reflected the deep meaning, beauty, and hope through literary compositions. The Guru Granth Sahib, one of the most essential Punjabi literary works, is renowned for its spiritual and philosophical significance. The influence of Punjabi poetry is not limited to the Punjab region, as it has also played a significant role in diaspora literature, with poetry dominating the writings of the Punjabi diaspora and serving as a leitmotif for nostalgia. During the 1970s, radical progressive movements led by poet-activists in Punjab made substantial headway, contributing to the confluence of ideology and identity in the region. The birth of Sikhism is deeply entwined with Punjabi poetry, as many Sikh Gurus were accomplished poets and musicians who contributed to the rich tradition of Punjabi poetry. Therefore, Punjabi poetry has been a vital component of Indian cultural identity, reflecting its spirituality, philosophy, and the resilience of its people.

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