

Udasi Sect and Its Popularity- A Study of Revenue-Free Grants in Punjab (Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century)

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Abstract: *The mainstream Sikh faith attracted a lot of state patronage but Udāsīs, an Order of Sikhs, was also very popular and attracted generous endowments. The udāsīs made an appearance on the scene of Sikh history before the end of the sixteenth century and consisted of various celibate ascetic Orders within the Sikh community. Establishments of the above-mentioned sect were known by different terms, akhārās, derās, darbārs, samādhs and dharamsālas. The present paper deals with the study of growing popularity of udāsīs by way of study of revenue-free grants in the Punjab during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and is largely based on documentary evidence, related to the revenue-free land grants, which was collected by the British administrators after the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 and this primary data is available at National Archives of India, New Delhi, in form of Foreign/Political Proceedings.*

Keywords: *Udasis, Dharamsalas, Akharas, Samadhs, Deras, Dharmath.*

Giving away of revenue-grants by a ruler in favor of an individual or an establishment has an ancient history in India and the same continued under the Turkish rule and the Mughals. The new rulers of Punjab, who rose to power during the late eighteenth century after the weakening of the Mughal authority, too followed the example of their predecessors and started giving grants and called them *dharmarth* or *bhet*. During the early nineteenth century, Ranjit Singh unified the Panjab and followed the Mughals in his procedures for making alienations to various faiths.¹ Persons and institutions belonging to the Sikh faith got immense support from the rulers of the period under review and so did the *purohits* and *brahmans*, *jogīs* and *mahants*. Hindu temples, *vaishnavamaths*, *thākurdwāras*, *derās*, *samādhs* and *dharmśālas*. State patronage was not just confined to the adherents and buildings of Sikhism and Hinduism but was also extended to the Muslim individuals and institutions by the new rulers of the Punjab.

The mainstream Sikh faith attracted a lot of state patronage but Udāsīs, an Order of Sikhs, was also very popular and attracted generous endowments.² The *udāsīs* made an appearance on the scene of Sikh history before the end of the sixteenth century and consisted of various celibate ascetic Orders within the Sikh community. Establishments of the above-mentioned sect were known by different terms, *akhārās*, *derās*, *darbārs*, *samādhs* and *dharamsālas*. The *akhārās* were the institutions established by a famous *udāsī* individual and were much larger than the centres called *derās* whereas *darbārs* were the Gurudwaras related to life of the

Sikh Gurus and were taken over by the *udāsīs*. The *samādhs* were memorials constructed on sites where *udāsī mahants* were cremated and *dharamsālas* were the establishments that played both secular and religious roles in the villages.³ These *udāsīs* centres, many of which were newly founded, were extensively patronized by the new chiefs of the Punjab.⁴ The lands given in grants to this Order were scattered over all the Doabs.⁵

The present paper deals with the study of growing popularity of *udāsīs* by way of study of revenue-free grants in the Punjab during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and is largely based on documentary evidence, related to the revenue-free land grants, which was collected by the British administrators after the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 and this primary data is available at National Archives of India, New Delhi, in form of Foreign/Political Proceedings.

The Order of the *udāsīs* and its establishments like *akhārās*, *derās*, *darbārs*, *samādhs* and *dharamsālas* were richly endowed. One extremely popular institution to be supported throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was the Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das in Amritsar. It was founded by Baba Santokh Das in the precincts of the Golden Temple in 1753.⁶ It received at least twenty-five grants for its support during the period under review. Koer Singh Tung gave the earliest grant of a well worth 200 rupees in Amritsar to Baba Santokh Das in Amritsar in 1753. The same was later confirmed by his son Dhanna Singh in 1811 where he addressed his father as 'Singh Sāhib'. Mahan Singh Sukarchakia gave a handsome grant of a village worth 2,000 rupees in Amritsar for *langar* at the institution in 1783.⁷ Among the Bhangi Sardars, Lehna Singh, Gujjar Singh, Gurdit Singh and Sahib Singh Bhangi gave grants worth 3,600 rupees.⁸ Out of these, Gujjar Singh Bhangi gave the maximum grant out of all the grantors who gave grants to this institution ever that too a village worth 2,500 rupees in Amritsar in 1801. Fateh Singh Alhuwalia of Kapurthala, a cis-Sutlej state, granted a village in Amritsar in 1823. There are thirteen references of Ranjit Singh alienating villages and wells for the *akhārā*. He granted at least 9,700 rupees between the years 1796 to 1828 though the grant given in 1796 was a confirmation of two villages worth 1800 rupees and 1300 rupees each. The first fresh grant by the Maharaja was given in 1799 and the document bears the seal of the grantor too. The instance of maximum grant by him was in 1803 when he endowed the establishment with 2 villages in Lahore district worth 2,100 rupees. Rani Chand Kaur, mother of Kunwar Nau Nihal Singh, gave a village worth 300 rupees in 1839. Even *jāgīrdārs* like Nihal Singh Atariwala and Fateh Singh Kalianwala gave lavish grants worth 700 rupees and 900 rupees, respectively. There are two references of *zamīndārs* of villages who gave grants to the *akhārā*. In one of these, the *zamīndārs* gave a well and land attached to it worth 100 rupees in Taran Taran as early as 1753. In another instance, they gave twenty-two *bighas* of land worth 15 rupees in 1843.⁹

Kashiwala Akhārāat Amritsar too received its share of endowments. It received village worth 1,200 rupees in Dinanagar from Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhiya in 1806. Jodh Singh Ramgarhia gave village worth 1,600 rupees in 1807 to Mahant Ganga Ram of the establishment for maintenance of its *pujāris*. Ranjit Singh gave eight grants of land, villages and wells worth 5,380 rupees to the *akhārā*. One of these wells worth 100 was granted by him to the *sādhs* of the institution as the well was sunk by them on their own expenses. A share of village worth 200 was granted by him in 1827 for *langar* at the institution. Maximum amount of grant given by Ranjit Singh to this *akhārā* was gift of 3 villages worth 2,030 rupees in Amritsar district to Udit Narayan Kashiwala in 1823. Prince Kharak Singh also gave a well worth 130 rupees in Batala to Mahant Ganga Ram in 1831. Mitt Singh Padhania, Jawahar Singh Padhania and Sham Singh Atariwala were the *jāgīrdārs* to give grants to the said establishment even if these were not very lavish grants in comparison to what the rulers gave. For instance, Sham Singh Atariwala alienated two wells worth thirty rupees in Qasur to Damodar Das in 1835 for the said institution. Other grantors included Nidhan Singh, Sham Singh Kanhiyawala, Mohan Singh Uthu and Udham Singh Majithia. The *zamīndārs* of the village also gave 100 *ghumaons* of land worth 12 rupees in Kasur to Sant Das. Among women, Mai Malkhan, wife of Nar Singh Chamariwala and Mai Sobhi, mother of Ranjor Singh Majithia, a *jāgīrdārs*, also acted as patrons to the *akhārās*. The former gave well and land attached to it worth 60 rupees in Amritsar in *ardās* to Mahant Ganga Ram in 1808. The *sanad* bore the seal of Sarup Singh, her son. Mai Sobhi gave a well worth 14 rupees in 1823 in Amritsar to Mahant Nanak Parkash.¹⁰

Akhārā Balanand at Amritsar and Jhelum, received immense support in form of village and wells in TaranTaran, Saurian, Amritsar, Shaikhupura and Gujrat from Ranjit Singh. A minimum of 2,505 rupees were alienated by him during the years 1810 to 1829. Jodh Singh Wazirabadia and *jāgīrdārs* like Hukm Singh Atariwala, Mehtab Singh Mann, Jwala Singh Padhania and Hari Singh Nalwa were among other grantors to the institution.¹¹ Out of these, the maximum grant in terms of value was given by Jodh Singh who gave a village worth 1000 rupees in Wazirabad in 1816 to Mahant Tahl Das. The only woman to make alienation to the *akhārā* was Mai Man, wife of Mahan Singh. It is important to mention that all the known grants were of early nineteenth century only.¹²

In case of Akhārā Pritam Das at Amritsar, the earliest grant was given by Karam Singh Bhangi in 1778 when a well worth 200 rupees in Amritsar was alienated to Pritam Das of the *akhārā*.¹³ Another chief to act as patron to said institution was Bagh Singh Miraliwala who gave a well worth forty rupees in Eminabad in 1796 for the *akhārā*.¹⁴ Ranjit Singh granted two grants worth 2,100 rupees in the years 1796 and 1819. The grants by various grantors were given in Amritsar, Eminabad, Gujrat and Wazirabad.¹⁵

Akhārā Bibeksar at Amritsar received grants worth 2,225 rupees from grantors Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, Bagh Singh Miraliwala and Ranjit Singh. The earliest was given by Jassa Singh Ramgarhia to Baba Harsukh in 1794 in Amritsar in *bhet*.¹⁶ Bagh Singh Hallowalia, another famous chief late eighteenth century, alienated a village in Sourian to the same grantee.¹⁷ Ranjit Singh twice endowed the establishment with villages in 1807 and 1839. Interestingly, Akhārā Baba Tahl Das at Amritsar found its patron only in Ranjit Singh who made alienations between 1805 to 1823. The total endowment given by him to Baba Tahl das of the *akhārā* was 2,220 rupees. One of these grants of a well was given as the Baba had sunk the same out of his own expenses in 1823. Another grant of a village worth 800 rupees in Leah was given for supplying food and accommodation to the *Sadhs* in 1823.¹⁸

Akhārā of Ghamand Das, another *udāsīśakhārā* at Amritsar, was handsomely endowed and received grants from prominent chiefs of the late eighteenth century.¹⁹ It received one of its earliest grants in 1703 that too by *azamīndār* named Lal Mal who gave seven *ghumāons* of land worth twenty rupees to this institution. Among the early rulers Jhanda Singh Bhangi, Amar Singh Bhangi, Amar Singh Bagga and Jai Singh Kanhiya gave grants to the *akhārā*. The latter gave a deserted village worth 1000 rupees in Amritsar in 1783 to the establishment.²⁰ He asked the grantees to reclaim the land and use the proceeds for maintenance of the institution and for feeding and clothing *sādhs*. There is also a reference of two grantors giving a grant together. For instance, Majja Singh and Amar Singh Singhpuria gave half a deserted village worth 250 rupees in *ardāsto* the *udāsīśakhārā*. Interesting confirmations by Ranjit Singh of the grants given by the new chiefs are available but there is no case of fresh grant to the above-mentioned establishment by the Maharaja. Yet his *jāgīrdār*, Fateh Singh Kalianwala, gave a village worth 440 rupees in TaranTaran in *dharmarth* in 1804.²¹

Akhārā of Karam Das at Narowal in Amritsar received 165 *bigas* worth 247 rupees in Amritsar in *bhet* as perpetual grant from Bagh Singh Hallowalia. Charat Singh and Sobha Singh Bhakha, father and son and also *jāgīrdār* of Haqiqat Singh Kanhiya, together gave a grant worth 600 rupees. Ranjit Singh too played part of the patron. It received grants from various *jāgīrdār* grantors like Sham Singh Atariwala, Dal Singh Kalianwala, Atar Singh, Ratan Singh Derwala and Dasoundha Singh. Out of these, the latter gave two grants to the institution in 1804 and 1829, though value of the same did not exceed 40 rupees.²²

Akhārā of Baba Sant Das at Vatala received grants from Ranjit Singh, Jodh Singh Ramgarhia and Himmat Singh Jallewasia. Prince Sher Singh gave a village worth 350 rupees in Dinanagar in 1829 to Baba Sant Das. Among women, Mai Sada Kaur gave two grants worth ninety rupees and seventy rupees in the years 1817 and 1821, respectively.²³ The *sanads* of both these grants bore the seal of her dead husband, Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhiya. There is also a peculiar reference where a slave of Mai

Sada Kaur, named Mai Dasi, gave away 5 *ghumaons* worth 10 rupees in Dinanagar in 1833. The *sanad* bore the seal of her master Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhiya.²⁴

Akhārā Gurdial at Kapurthala received grants from just early Sikh rulers like Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhiya and Karam Singh Ramgarhia. The latter gave a handsome grant of a village worth 900 rupees in Batala in 1804 and the same was later confirmed by Ranjit Singh in 1831. Akhārā Mahant Melaram at Lahore received grants just from one grantor i.e. Lehna Singh Bhangi.²⁵ He alienated grants worth 1,240 rupees to Mola Ram of the *akhārā* in the year 1791. Akhārā Mastram at Dinanagar to like the former *akhārā* received grants from just one grantor i.e. Bagh Singh Hallowalia. He made alienations of village and wells worth 385 rupees to the institution between 1768 and 1803. Most of these alienations were made at Talwandi and all these were confirmed by Ranjit Singh in 1831.²⁶

Among the *udāsīderās*, Derā-i-Kalān of Bhai Pheru was one of the oldest and most venerated institutions in the Punjab, founded in the second decade of the eighteenth century, and as a result received patronage from the Mughals and Sikh rulers, and also from the *kardārs*, *lambardārs* and *zamīndārs*. These grants were confirmed by Ranjit Singh who also gave fresh grants.²⁷ The above-mentioned *derā* at Qasur received as many as twenty-eight grants from sixteen grantors during the period under review. As already mentioned above the alienations to the *derā* date back from the time of the Mughals as a grant of village worth 425 rupees in *pargana* Qasur was given to Bhai Pheru when he settled in this village during the imperial times. Among the Nakkai chiefs, Ran Singh, Gian Singh, Kehar Singh, Khazan Singh and Wazir Singh were also the patrons of the establishments.²⁸ There are at least nine cases of fresh grants by the Nakkais which were worth 2,548 rupees and were assigned in Pak Pattan, Shaikhupura, but most of these were given in *pargana* Qasur of Lahore district and half of these grants were given by the Nakkai chiefs collectively between the years 1802 to 1813 to Tahl Das of the Derā-i-Kalān of Bhai Pheru. Lehna Singh Bhangi, Roop Singh Gill and Lal Singh Shamkotwala figured among the early Sikh grantors to the institution. Ranjit Singh gave villages and wells worth 2,600 rupees. In an interesting instance, he made over eighty maunds of salt from the salt mines in Pind Dadan Khan to the institution in 1804. Besides, the grants in form of land and kind, he assigned a cash allowance of eleven rupees a day to the *derā* in 1825. Courtiers of the Lahore State like *diwāns* were also generous to the famous *udāsīderā*. For instance, Diwān Hukma Singh, a courtier of Ranjit Singh, granted a well worth fifty rupees in 1813 to Tahl Das of the institution officials too were patron as there is an example of a *kardār* making an alienation as Fakir Chiraguddin, Kardār of Hujra, gave a village worth 110 rupees for reclamation of the same in 1847. This was also the latest grant that was given during the period under review. The *lambardārs* and *zamīndārs* also patronized the *derā*. Gian Singh Lambardār endowed it with seventy *bighas* of land worth seventy rupees in Shaikhupura to Tahldas. Bhai Punnu, a *zamīndār* of the village gave a

lavish grant of land worth of 500 rupees in *pargana* Kasur in 1783. Among women, Mai Karmon, mother-in-law of Ranjit Singh, and Mai Nakain, wife of the same, gave grants to the establishment.²⁹

Derā Khurd of Bhai Pheru also called Derā Narain Das at Qasur, a branch of the abovementioned Dera Kalān, also received immense support during late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in Punjab. It also received as many as twenty-four grants from the various grantors. Mohammedan Hakims of Qasur were the first ones to give grants to the *derā*. They assigned 488 rupees in Qasur and Pak Pattan in years 1713 and 1753. Lal Singh Tappewala and Wazir Singh Nakkai gave grants before 1800. The latter gave very generous grants worth 5,327 rupees in Pak Pattan, Kasur, Shaikhupura and Jhang. Among the royal family of Lahore, Ranjit Singh and his sons also acted as patrons. Prince Kharak Singh gave villages worth 2,650 rupees in Kasur. Most of these grants were given in 1813. Maharaja Sher Singh too gave cash allowance of 100 rupees in 1842. Among the officials of the Lahore State grant by a *diwānis* available. Diwān Sawan Mal gave land worth thirty-six rupees of land in Pak Pattan. The latest grantor to give alienations to the establishment during period under study was a *zamīndār* named Hira Singh who assigned twelve *ghumaons* of land worth twenty-five rupees in Shaikhupura in 1846. Both these branches received the maximum endowments taken together, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.³⁰

In comparison to the generosity squandered on the above mentioned *derās* the others *derās* received much less endowments. Diwan Lakhpat Rai was the first grantor to give grant to Dera of Bhai Pirthi at Qasur in 1753. Lehna Singh Bhangi was the only early Sikh ruler to make an endowment to the institution as he gave a well and land attached to it worth fifty rupees in 1793. He was followed by Ranjit Singh who made various alienations worth 745 rupees between the years 1813 to 1819. One of these grants of land worth forty rupees was given after it was reclaimed by *asādh* of the institution. Jwand Singh Mokal, a *jāgīrdār*, and Jodh Singh Saurianwala were among other grantors to give grants to the same. But where former gave generous grants to the tune of 1,025 rupees, the latter gave wells just worth fifty rupees in 1803. Only woman to alienate in favour of the establishment was Mai Nakain. The *derā* received 2,125 rupees in grants in total from all the grantors.³¹

Kalianwala chiefs, the *jāgīrdārs* under Ranjit Singh, were the major donors of Derā of Sant Parshad at Qasur giving 1,845 rupees out of the 1,948 rupees the total grants received by the establishment. Dal Singh Kalianwala gave a lavish grant of a village worth 800 rupees in Kasur in 1796 to the same. His son Chatar Singh gave half a share of village and wells worth 1,045 rupees in Pak Pattan in 1841. In one of these grants he promised to give half share of revenue of as many wells as were to be reclaimed by Ram Parsad of the *derā*. One of these wells was completely set free

for *langar* at the place. Other grantors included Jwand Singh Mokal and Sadhu Singh Nihang.³²

The main grantor to the Derā Baba Nanak at Vatala was Sardar Sudh Singh Dodiawho donated 1,101 rupees to the *derā*. In an interesting reference, a grantee named Baba Digana Singh Bedi, recipient of a grant from Jai Singh Kanhiyain 1793, gave the same to the institution in 1799.³³ Another *udāsīderā* at Kasur received grants from just one grantor that was Ranjit Singh. It received villages worth 775 rupees in Kasur in 1803. Dera of Bhai Sucheta at Qasur received grants from Prince Kharak Singh. He granted four wells to the *derā* in 1820. The *zamīndārs* also acted as patrons to the establishment. Prem Singh Zamīndār, alienated a well worth thirty-five rupees in Qasur to Ram Das in 1818.³⁴ There is a reference of a hill ruler too of making an endowment for an *udāsīderā*. Raja Mahan Chand of Kahlur granted a village worth hundred rupees in Pargana Una to Bhai Balla, an *udāsīfakīr* for Sādh Derā Banni, in 1804.³⁵

Another type of *udāsī* establishments to received patronage during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in Punjab were *udāsīdarbārs*. Darbār Rori Sahib at Sialkot received grants from *diwāns* imperial times. Diwans Sukhpat Rai and Jaspal Rai, officials of Lahore *suba* of the Mughals, gave well and a plot of land worth 160 rupees in Sialkot.³⁶ Charhat Singh Sukarchakia and Mahan Singh also figure as the grantors of the same institution.³⁷ Charat Singh assigned a handsome grant of a village worth 2000 rupees in Sialkot to Mahant Hira Das in 1773. Mahan Singh assigned a number of grants in 1793 to the said institution. Both the grantors and their *jāgīrdār* Mana Singh Majithia, Bagh Singh Hallowalia, Sahib Singh Jhulna and Sujan Singh Bhangi gave grants worth 3,929 rupees during the late eighteenth century. Ranjit Singh, Bagh Singh Miraliwala and Nidhan Singh Wadalewala gave grants between the years 1813 to 1821.³⁸ For instance, Nidhan Singh Wadalewala made an alienation of half a well worth ten rupees in Sialkot for the establishment in 1821.³⁹ Among the officials, *kardārs* also gave grants to the establishment. For instance, Diwan Dal Singh, a *kardār*, made a grant of village worth 900 rupees in Shaikhupura. All grants assigned to Darbār Rori Sahib at Sialkot, except one, were in Eminabad *pargana* of Sialkot district.⁴⁰ Charhat Singh Sukarchakia gave the maximum grant out of all the above-mentioned grantors and was also the earliest alienation made to the institution.

Another *udāsīdarbār* to have been richly endowed was Darbār Nankana Sahib at Shaikhupura. The earliest grant given to the Darbārat Shaikhupura was during the imperial times when five wells worth seventy rupees were alienated in its favour. Except this, all the other alienations were made in first half of nineteenth century. Ranjit Singh and his sons, Kharak Singh and Dalip Singh too were benevolent to the establishment. Ranjit Singh gave grants worth 600 rupees in Lahore, Shaikhupura and Pak Pattan. One of these grants worth 300 rupees was given on presentation of a white horse by the *sādhs* of the institution in 1835. Out of the three

grants worth 162 rupees that were given by Kharak Singh, one was given for *langar* at establishment as the land was reclaimed by the *sādhs*. This was the only grant that was given by him in the capacity of being a ruler as other two were given while he was a prince. Among the Nakkais, Khazan Singh, Arbel Singh and Hari Singh acted as patrons to the *darbār*. The minimum grant that was ever given to the establishment was by Khazan Singh who gave nine *kanāls* of land worth four rupees in Shaikhupura in 1813. Among the *jāgīrdārs*, Sham Singh Atariwala, Jwand Singh Mokal and Dal Singh Minhas too made endowments to the institution in 1822, 1831 and 1836, respectively. Other officers like Raja Dhian Singh and Diwan Sawan Mal too were benevolent to *udāsīdarbār*. The latter gave a couple of grants worth between the years 1842 to 1844. Two of these worth 39 rupees were given with the aim of reclamation of land.⁴¹

Darbār Balkira at Nankana Sahib, too like the above case, received an endowment during the imperial times when a few wells worth fifty rupees were assigned in Shaikhupura for the establishment. Reference to a grant by Kahn Singh Nakkai is also available as he is known to have set aside a plot of land and a well worth twenty-five rupees in Pak Pattan in *dharmarth* for Sawan Singh and Mitha Singh in 1828 for the Darbār.⁴² He is known to have yet given one more grant to the institution in 1840. Ranjit Singh as a grantor specified the number of wells in the *sanad* he was endowing the two above-mentioned grantees with. Even the *jāgīrdārs* like Sulakhan Singh Khudpuria, Mahr Singh Mariwala and Raja Tej Singh figure as grantors to the establishment alienating 831 rupees. In case of Darbār Nankana Khurd at Shaikhupura the reference to only two grantors are available. Lehna Singh Bhangi gave a grant to the establishment as early as 1787 when three wells were set aside in Lahore. Ranjit Singh later confirmed it twice once in 1799 and then in 1832. The Maharaja also gave fresh grants worth 710 rupees between 1821 and 1836. A lavish grant of a village worth 500 rupees in Shaikhupura was assigned by him in 1836.⁴³

All the grants to Darbār Baoli Sahib Guru Nanak at Sialkot were given in early nineteenth century. Ranjit Singh gave a village worth 400 rupees in Sialkot for feeding the poor in 1830. Among the princes of the Kingdom of Lahore, Kunwar Kashmir Singh, son of Ranjit Singh, too gave an endowment to the establishment in 1843. This was the only grant that was made by this grantor to any Sikh institution. Jamadar Khushal Singh, Jwala Singh Padhania, Sadda Singh Bheria and Amir Singh were the other grantors to the *darbār*. The officials of the Lahore state were quite benevolent to the institution. For instance, a *sanad* of Jwala Singh Padhania, the *jāgīrdār* of Ranjit Singh, mentions a grant of a plot of land worth 100 rupees in Sialkot in 1821. Jamadar Khushal Singh, the *deodhīdār* of Ranjit Singh, gave grants worth thirty rupees in Sialkot for the *darbār*. Darbār Sahib Mahistan, too like few other *udāsīdarbārs*, received grants during the Mughal times. It received 366 rupees 10 *annas* and 8 *paisa* during the early nineteenth

century. Jwala Singh Padhania granted a well worth 100 rupees for the *sādhs* of the Darbār in 1820 from the village of which he was the *jāgīrdārs* then. Prince Kharak Singh also played the part of the patron in 1828.⁴⁴

The *udāsīsamādh*sie the memorials constructed on sites where *udāsī mahants* were cremated, were also endowed during the period under review. From this particular category the Samādh of Sahib Ram Kaur at Dinanagar enjoyed patronage of the Sikh rulers and *jāgīrdārs*. However, the largest share of the *dharmarth* grants came from Kanhiya rulers, especially Jaimal Singh, and *zamīndārs* in the first two decades of the nineteenth century which were all confirmed by Ranjit Singh in 1834.⁴⁵ The Mahant of the establishment is also known to have received a grant from Ranjit Dev of Jammu as the latter assigned a grant for sadabart at the Shrine in 1754 at Kot Naina in Gurdaspur.⁴⁶ A detailed study of the grants proves that the above-mentioned establishment received forty-one grants during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Out of these, twenty grants were given by a single grantor only i.e. Jaimal Singh Kanhiya and the endowments amounted to the value of 881 rupees. Most of these grants were in form of plots of land in Dinanagar. But there are few references of grants by him in form of grain and cash. He was also the one to give the maximum amount byway of grant to the establishment as he gave a village worth 700 rupees in 1791.⁴⁷ Other Kanhiya sardars to patronize the *samādh* were Hakikat Singh and Fateh Singh.⁴⁸ Hakikat Singh Kanhiya granted two separate plots of land in Pargana Shakaargarh in 1783 for the Samādh of Sahib Ram Kaur at Dinanagar.⁴⁹

There are atleast ten references of grants by *zamīndārs* to the said institution during this period. Molak Chand, Purkha Singh, Jhanda Singh, and Naina Singh were some of *zamīndārs* to give these grants. The latter was the earliest from the entire list of grantors to the said Samādh to give a grant of land worth twenty rupees in 1753 in Dinanagar. The lowest amount ever given by a grantor to this institution was also by a *zamīndārs* of the village when they gave away two *ghumāons* of land worth two rupees in 1803.⁵⁰ The *chaudharīs* in late Medieval Punjab were also grantors of the *udāsī samādh*.⁵¹ For instance, Chaudharī Parkha granted a plot of land worth ten rupees in Pargana Shakargarh to the Samādh in 1811. An example of a *jāgīrdār* of the Lahore Kingdom is also available. Tej Singh, who later got the title of Raja, granted a piece of land worth 100 rupees in 1826 to Mahant Ramdas of the institution. Chuhar Singh, another grantor gave a grant in cash for purchase of oil and salt in 1837 worth 66 rupees. Even a *ghurchara jāgīrdār*, named Chahar Singh, gave a piece of land worth four rupees in 1821 to the Samādh.⁵²

Another *udāsīsamādh* to be patronized during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was Samādh of Baba Mahan Sahib at Wazirabad received all its grants in Wazirabad. Mal Singh Sohianwala made the earliest grant to the Darbār in 1773 in Sialkot. Other grants by the same grantor were made in 1791 in the same district bringing it to a total of 250 rupees. This was the only Sikh institution which

enjoyed the grant from the said grantor. Ranjit Singh gave wells and villages worth 670 rupees in Sialkot. One of these grants was made as early as 1794. Prince Kharak Singh gave lands and wells worth 60 rupees in 1834 and 1835. Budh Singh Sobhian, Suchet Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa, Amir Singh and Ladha Singh Mann and chiefs like Jodh Singh Wazirabadia and Sahib Singh Sialkotia were among the other grantors. For instance, Ladha Singh Mann assigned two grants for the establishment, one in 1830 and another in 1834, in Wazirabad. Sahib Singh Sialkotia too granted a well in 1813 worth forty-five rupees in Taluqa Daska for the said place.⁵³

Even Samādh of Bhai Anup at Dinanagar received grants during the period under review. The establishment is known to have received lands in *gumāons* from Kanhiyas like Jaimal Singh.⁵⁴ The Chiefs of Kingra territory too patronized the *samādh* by giving land worth twenty-five rupees in 1793 in Dinanagar. Other ruler to give grants to the same was Budh Singh Bagga.⁵⁵ He alienated two *ghumāons* of land worth eight rupees in 1828. Ranjit Singh gave grants worth 780 rupees to the institution. His son, Prince Kharak Singh and grandson, Nau Nihal Singh, gave grants in 1833 and 1838, respectively. Rani Chand Kaur too gave grants for the same in 1823. The *jāgīrdārs* like Desa Singh Majithia, Kahan Singh Mann, Nidhan Singh and Partab Singh Munhyewala were the donors to the institution. There are a number of references of grants by *zamīndārs* of the villages to the *samādh*. Other than the Lahore state, there is a reference of grant from the Jind state to the institution. Pahar Singh, a Mukhtiar of Sangat Singh of Jind (1822-1834), gave a well worth 100 rupees in 1834. The earliest grant to the same was given by a *zamīndār* of two and half *ghumāons* of land worth six rupees in 1753. The minimum grant was given by Sandhanwala Sardars of one and half *ghumāons* worth three rupees in 1835.⁵⁶ Among the *udāsīsamādhs*, Samādh of Sahib Ram Kaur at Dinanagar, Samādh of Baba Mahan Sahib at Wazirabad and Samādh of Bhai Anup at Dinanagar received grants worth 1,741 rupees, 1,340 rupees and 1,334 rupees, respectively.

The *udāsīdharamsālas* were another category of *udāsī* establishments to be patronized. The ones that were assigned grants were found in Bulaki, Chittorgarh, Dharamkot, Dinanagar, Gujrat, Jagraon, Kalanaur, Lahore, Moga, Multan, Pakhowal, Pak Pattan, Thanesar, Sahiwal, Samrala, Sialkot, Sodha Singhwala, Talwandi, Watala, Wazirabad and Zafarwal. One *udāsīdharamsālain* Lahore which was founded by Baba Jogdhian received grants worth 569 rupees. Ranjit Singh assigned a village worth 300 rupees in 1811 to the founder. Besides enjoying the patronage of the Maharaja, *zamīndārs* and *lambardārs* also gave grants to the *dharamsāla*. Two references of two *zamīndārs* giving a grant together for the said institution are also available. For instance, Jodh Singh and Wazir Singh, the village *zamīndārs*, assigned a plot of land worth four rupees to Bhai Ladhra in 1820. They gave a comparatively more generous grant worth sixteen rupees after two yearie in

1822. Whereas the *zamīndārs* gave grants between the values of four rupees to twenty-five rupees to the institution, there is a reference of a lavish grant by a *lambardār*, named Arura, of a plot of land worth 200 rupees in 1805. It ought to be mentioned here that all of these were given in Lahore district and that too in the early part of the nineteenth century.⁵⁷ The *udāsīdharamsāla* of Bhai Sadhuramin Pargana Sayyadwalaat Pak Pattan too enjoyed grants during the period under review. For instance, Wazir Singh Nakai gave a land-grant worth thirty-six rupees in Pargana Sayyadwala to Jodharam of the *dharamsāla*. Ranjit Singh endowed the institution twice, giving away grants in 1822 and 1830. The establishment enjoyed the grants to the tune of 460 rupees and that too in the same district.⁵⁸

Certain *udāsīdharamsālas* were erected by a member of the ruling class and hence endowed by them. For instance, Mai Nakainis known to have erected an *udāsīdharamsāla* in Shaikhupura for travellers and poor which was assigned grants worth 450 rupees by the Queen and her son, Prince Kharak Singh, between the years 1837 and 1839. For instance, both the grantors endowed the *udāsīdharamsāla* of Mai Nakain with a village worth 250 rupees in Shaikhupura to Baba Hargian Das and Sarbangi for the maintenance of the establishment and food for the poor. The *sanad* issued for the same had the seal of the Prince. Hence, it means the relatives of the builder also extended support. But no other grantor except relatives seems to have given an additional support to the same. The grants worth 450 rupees were assigned in total for the *udāsī dharamsāla*.⁵⁹

Another example of an *udāsīdharamsāla* to be erected and endowed by a member of the aristocratic class was the *dharamsāla* built by Mai Raj Kaur, aunt of Ranjit Singh and widow of Sahib Singh Bhangi, at Wazirabad. The lady patron set aside a village worth 300 rupees in Pargana Wazirabad for the *sādhs* of the establishment in 1821. The *sanads* issued by Mai Raj Kaur in support of the *udāsīdharamsāla* bore the seal of her dead husband. Just like the previous case here also a relative gave an additional grant. For instance, Raj Kaur's daughter, Mehtab Kaur, also gave a well worth 100 rupees in Pargana Eminabad in 1844. This document too had the seal of her father, Sahib Singh Bhangi, affixed to it. The total amount of alienations enjoyed by the institution was 550 rupees and all the grants were in District Sialkot.⁶⁰

Other donors to different *udāsīdharamsālas* include *jāgīrdārs* like Jwala Singh Padhania, was in the service of Ranjit Singh, who donated different plots of land worth 215 rupees in the years 1823 and 1828 to an *udāsīdharamsāla* in Dinanagar.⁶¹ In an interesting case, a donor while assigning the grant for an *udāsīdharamsāla* in Batala specified that the grantee is to enjoy the proceeds as long as the *dharamsāla*, where Granth Sahib is kept, is kept up.⁶²

The evidence of grants from cis-Sutlej states is also available. Bhai Bakhsh Singh of Kaithal donated a piece of land worth eight rupees in village Kakrala in Thanesar to an *udāsīdharamsāla* in 1814 which was later confirmed by Bhai Lal Singh, the

ruler of Kaithal, in 1830.⁶³ Another example of a grant from a cis-Sutlej state is that of Nabha. Ranjit Singh, son of Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha, granted a well worth thirty-seven rupees in Tehsil Samrala to Balanand Udāsī for his *idharamsāla* in 1821.⁶⁴ The reference of grants to *udāsīdharamsālas* by the Muslim rulers are also available. Bahawal Khan, Ruler of Bahawalpur, granted land along with well which was worth five rupees in Tehsil Ladhuan of Multan to Indersen for an *udāsī dharamsāla*.⁶⁵ The rulers of Raikot are known to have supported *udāsīs* by way of supporting *udāsīdharamsālas* as grants to the same by Rai Ahmed and Rai Alias are available. For instance, Rai Ahmed granted a plot of land worth twenty-six rupees in village Shahzad of Pargana Gungrana of Ludhiana District to an *udāsī dharamsāla*.⁶⁶ Not less than three grants are available of Rai Alias, another Ruler of Raikot who died in 1802, to *udāsīdharamsālas* and the earliest of these was given in 1772 when a plot of land worth four rupees in Dharamkot was given to Prem Das for an establishment.⁶⁷ The other two plots of land were given in Ilaqa Chuhar Chak of Mogaand of these was worth sixty-three rupees.⁶⁸ A grantor by the name of Baggar Khan of Malerkotla is also known to have assigned a well worth fifty-seven rupees in Pargana Gungrana in Ludhiana to Gursaran Das for an *udāsī dharamsāla*.⁶⁹ Interestingly, a Muslim *zamīndār* named Murad Bakhsh gave a cash grant of 195 rupees in Pargana Talwandi to Udāsī Dhyān Singh for a *dharamsāla* in 1799.⁷⁰

Plots of land, wells attached and villages were generally given in grant to the *udāsī* establishments but there is a reference where fruits were given in grant. For instance, twenty-five maunds of mangoes worth twelve rupees were given to Akhārā of Baba Sant Das at Vatala.⁷¹ While giving cash grants to these institutions clear directions were issued on how to spend that money. For instance, Gurmukh Das of Samādh of Sahib Ram Kaur at Dinanagar was told to spend twenty-four rupees a year on oil and twelve rupees a year on salt out of the sixty-six rupees granted in 1837 from Sham Singh.⁷²

Mostly the term *dharmarth* has been used in the documents of grants given to the *udāsī* establishments but there are instances, though very few, where the Mughal term *madad-i-ma'āsh*, has been used. For instance, while making an endowment of a well in Lahore to the Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das in Amritsar in 1793, Lehna Singh and Gujjar Singh, the Bhangi Chiefs, have used the above-mentioned term in their document. In another instance, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia also used the same term in his *sanad* while assigning a village worth 725 rupees to Akhārā Bibeksar at Amritsar and so did Bagh Singh Hallowalia while making an endowment to Akhārā of Karam Das at Narowal.⁷³

Occasions of giving grants to the *udāsī* institutions were varied. One such occasion was marriage. For instance, Ranjit Singh is known to have assigned a village worth 300 rupees to Baba Apbrahan of Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das in Amritsar in 1811.⁷⁴ In a peculiar case presentation of a special gift was a reason to get a grant.

Interestingly, on presentation of a white horse to Ranjit Singh by the *sādhs* of Darbār Nankana Sahib at Shaikhupuraa village was assigned in 1835.⁷⁵

Interestingly, many grants were given to *udāsīs* for reclaiming lands. For instance, Jai Singh Kanhiya gave a deserted village worth 1000 rupees to Akhārā of Ghamand Das at Amritsar and asked the grantees to reclaim land.⁷⁶ Similarly, Jawand Singh Mokal and Diwan Sawan Mal also asked the Mahant of Darbār Nankana Sahib at Shaikhupura to reclaim land granted to them.⁷⁷ Dhyān Das of Derā-i-Kalān of Bhai Pheru at Qasur specifically received a village in Pak Pattan in *dharmarth* from Fakir Chiraguddin, Kardār of Hujra, for reclaiming waste lands.⁷⁸

There are instances where grants were given after the wells were sunk by the grantee. For instance, *zamindārs* granted a well and a plot of land worth 100 rupees in 1753 as that well was sunk by an *udāsī* baba of Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das. Similarly, Khazan Singh Nakkai also gave a plot of land to Bhai Rava as he had sunk a well.⁷⁹ Half the well was given in grant by Ranjit Singh to Tahl Das of Akhārā Baba Tahl Das at Amritsar in 1823 for sinking that same well. Infact, at times the grantor gave share of as many wells as the person could bring into cultivation. In 1841, Chattar Singh Kalewala granted half share of any number of well that Ram Parshad of Udāsī Derā of Sant Prasad at Qasur could bring under cultivation. At times the garden was planted by the grantee on the piece of land that was assigned to the establishment.⁸⁰

Many of these *udāsī* establishments provided facilities like food and accommodation to common people and indigent persons. For instance, the *mahant* of Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das which was situated at Amritsar used to supply food and accommodation to any *faqīr* or indigent person who had the chance to apply for the same and even Akhārā Baba Tahl Das at Amritsar supplied food and accommodation to commoners. The tradition of supplying water on road to travelers is an old one in Punjab and was followed by many institutions in this region hence *udāsī* establishments were no exception. There are a few references of *udāsīakhārās* that kept up *chhabīl* to offer water to the passers-by. Akhārā of Ghamand Das at Amritsar and Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das performed the above-mentioned activity. Some of the *udāsī* establishments are known to have maintained charity schools as well. For instance, Akhārā Balanand at Amritsar kept a charity school.⁸¹

In retrospect, one can see that the *udāsīs* were also very popular and the same has been proved by the generous endowments they attracted as the *udāsīs* establishments like *akhārās*, *derās*, *darbārs*, *samādhs* and *dharamsālas* were richly endowed.

The early Sikh rulers to have assigned grants to the above mentioned institutions are Amar Singh Bagga, Amar Singh Bhangi, Amar Singh Singhpuria, Arbel Singh

Nakkai, Bagh Singh Hallowalia, Bagh Singh Miraliwala, Budh Singh Bagga, Charhat Singh Sukarchakia, Gian Singh Nakkai, Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhiya, Gujjar Singh Bhangi, Gurdit Singh Bhangi, Hari Singh Nakkai, Himmat Singh Jallewasia, Jai Singh Kanhiya, Jaimal Singh Kanhiya, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, Jhanda Singh Bhangi, Jodh Singh Ramgarhia, Jodh Singh Wazirabadia, Kahn Singh Nakkai, Karam Singh Bhangi, Karam Singh Ramgarhia, , Kehar Singh Nakkai, , Khazan Singh Nakkai, Lal Singh Shamkotwala, Lal Singh Tappewala, Lehna Singh Bhangi, Mahan Singh Sukarchakia, Mal Singh Sohianwala, Nidhan Singh Wadalewala, Ran Singh Nakkai, Roop Singh Gill, Sahib Singh Bhangi, Sahib Singh Jhulna, Sahib Singh Sialkotia, Sujjan Singh Bhangi and Wazir Singh Nakkai.

Chiefs of Kingra territory were also the grantors of *udāsī* establishments. The grantors from cis-Sutlej states included Fateh Singh Ahluwalia of Kapurthala, Ranjit Singh of Nabha and Bhai Bakhsh Singh of Kaithal. Among the Muslim grantors, Bahawal Khan, ruler of Bahawalpur and Rai Ahmed and Rai Alias, the rulers of Raikot, Baggar Khan of Malerkotla and Zamīndār Murad Bakhsh gave grants to *udāsī* institutions. The list of women grantors includes names like Mai Sada Kaur, Mai Nakain, Rani Chand Kaur, Mai Malkhan, Mai Man, Mai Karmon, Mai Sobhi and Mai Dasi.

Even *jāgīrdārs* like Budh Singh Sobhian, Chatar Singh Kalianwala, Dal Singh Kalianwala, Dal Singh Minhas, Desa Singh Majithia, Fateh Singh Kalianwala, Hari Singh Nalwa, Hukm Singh Atariwala, Jawahar Singh Padhania, Jodh Singh Saurianwala, Jwala Singh Padhania, Jwand Singh Mokal, Kahan Singh Mann, Ladha Singh Mann, Mahr Singh Mariwala, Mana Singh Majithia, Mehtab Singh Mann, Mitt Singh Padhania, Mohan Singh Uthu, Nihal Singh Atariwala, Partab Singh Munhyewala, Ratan Singh Derwala, Sadda Singh Bheria, Sadhu Singh Nihang, Sham Singh Atariwala, Sham Singh Kanhiyawala, Sobha Singh Bhakha, Sudh Singh Dodia, Sulakhan Singh Khudpuria, and Udham Singh Majithia figure as grantors too *udāsī* establishments.

The Courtiers known to have been patrons to *udāsī* institutions are Diwān of Mughals, Diwan Lakhpat Rai, Jaspat Rai and Sukhpat Rai and Diwāns of Lahore Kingdom like Diwān Hukma Singh. Others include Raja Dhian Singh, Raja Tej Singh, Diwān Sawan Mal, Jamadar Khushal Singh, and the *deodhīdār*, Kardār Diwan Dal Singh, Kardār of Hujra Fakir Chiraguddin and Pahar Singh, a Mukhtiar of Sangat Singh of Jind. Gian Singh Lambardār, Chaudharī Parkha and Zamīndārs Bhai Punnu, Hira Singh, Prem Singh, Molak Chand, Purkha Singh, Jhanda Singh and Naina Singh were the grantors of the sect.

This long list of grantors to the establishments of the *udāsī* sect speaks volumes of the popularity of the sect.

Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das in Amritsar was extremely popular institution to be supported throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century as it received

at least twenty-five grants during the period, the earliest grant having been in 1753 by Koer Singh Tung. From the cis-Sutlej states Fateh Singh Alhuwalia of Kapurthala figured as a grantor. There are thirteen references of Ranjit Singh giving grants for the institution as at least 9,700 rupees were alienated. Rani Chand Kaur, too acted as patron to the establishment. There is a reference to a grant by the *zamīndārs* as early as 1753. Kashiwala Akhārā at Amritsar too received its share of endowments from early Sikh rulers. Prince Kharak Singh was a grantor from among the scions of Lahore Kingdom. The *jāgīrdārs* too gave grants to the said establishment even if these were not very lavish grants. Among women, Mai Malkhanand Mai Sobhi also acted as patrons to the *akhārās*. Akhārā Balanand at Amritsar received richest grant from Jodh Singh Wazirabadia. The only woman to make alienation to the *akhārā* was Mai Man. The establishment received all its grants in early nineteenth century only. In case of Akhārā Pritam Das at Amritsar, the earliest grant was given by Karam Singh Bhangi and it received its grants from various grantors in Amritsar, Eminabad, Gujrat and Wazirabad. Akhārā Bibeksar at Amritsar received its earliest grant from Jassa Singh Ramgarhia in 1794. Akhārā Baba Tahl Das at Amritsar found its patron only in Ranjit Singh who made alienations between 1805 to 1823.

Akhārā of Ghamand Das received one of its earliest grants in 1703 that too by a *zamīndār*. Jai Singh Kanhiya gave a deserted village to the establishment. He asked the grantees to reclaim the land and use the proceeds for maintenance of the institution and for feeding and clothing *sādhs*. There is also a reference of two grantors giving a grant together to the institution. Interesting, confirmations by Ranjit Singh of the grants given by the new chiefs are available but there is no case of fresh grant to the above-mentioned establishment by the Maharaja. Yet his *jāgīrdār*, Fateh Singh Kalianwala, was the patron to the institution. Akhārā of Karam Das at Narowal received a combined grant from Charat Singh and Sobha Singh Bhakha, father and son and also *jāgīrdār* of Haqiqat Singh Kanhiya. Ranjit Singh too played part of the patron. Akhārā of Baba Sant Das at Vatala received grants from Prince Sher Singh among the princes of Lahore Kingdom. Among women, Mai Sada Kaur gave two grants and her *sanads* bore the seal of her dead husband. There is also a peculiar reference where a slave of Mai Sada Kaur, named Mai Dasi, gave a grant. Akhārā Gurdial at Kapurthala received grants from just early Sikh rulers like Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhiya and Karam Singh Ramgarhia. Akhārā Mahant Melaram at Lahore received grants just from one grantor i.e. Lehna Singh Bhangi. Akhārā Mastram at Dinanagar too like the former *akhārā* received grants from just one grantor i.e. Bagh Singh Hallowalia and most of these alienations were made at Talwandi.

The Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das in Amritsar got the maximum grants among *udāsīakhārās* to the tune of 17,815 rupees. Other *akhārās* to follow were Kashiwala Akhara at Amritsar, Akhārā Balanand at Amritsar and Jhelum, Akhārā Pritam Das

at Amritsar, Akhārā Bibeksar at Amritsar, Akhārā of Baba Tahl Das at Amritsar, Akhārā of Ghamand Das at Amritsar, Akhārā of Karam Das at Narowal at Amritsar, Akhārā of Baba Sant Das at Vatala, Akhārā Mahant Melaram at Lahore, Akhārā Gurdial at Kapurthala and Akhārā Mastram at Dinanagar. These received 9,035 rupees, 4,178 rupees, 2,920 rupees, 2,225 rupees, 2,220 rupees, 2,092 rupees, 1,577 rupees, 1,370 rupees, 1,140 rupees, 950 rupees and 405 rupees, respectively.

The *udāsīderās* were the other category of *udāsī* establishments to receive grants during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Among these, the Derā-i-Kalān of Bhai Pheru was one of the most venerated institutions in the Punjab and hence, received patronage from the Mughals and Sikh rulers, and also from the *kardārs*, *lambardārs* and *zamīndārs*. The *derā* received twenty-eight grants from sixteen grantors during this period. A grant of village was given to Bhai Pheru when he settled in this village during the imperial times. There are at least nine cases of fresh grants by the Nakkais. The institution was assigned salt from the salt mines in Pind Dadan Khan. Courtiers, officials and *kardārs* of the Lahore State like Diwān Hukma Singh and Fakir Chiraguddin, Kardār of Hujra were the grantors to the *derā*. The *lambardārs* and *zamīndārs* like Gian Singh Lambardār and Zamīndār Bhai Punnu and women, Mai Karmonand Mai Nakain also gave grants to the establishment. Derā Khurd of Bhai Pheru also received immense support as it received as many as twenty-four grants from the various grantors. Mohammedan Hakims of Qasur were the first ones to give grant. Wazir Singh Nakkaigave generous grants worth 5,327 rupees. The grantor to give latest alienation to the establishment during period under study was a *zamīndār* named Hira Singh. Both these branches received the maximum endowments, taken together, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

In comparison to the generosity squandered on the above mentioned *derās* the others *derās* received much less endowments. Diwan Lakhpat Rai was the first grantor to give grant to Dera of Bhai Pirthi at Qasur in 1753. Lehna Singh Bhangi was the only early Sikh ruler to make an endowment to the institution. Only woman to alienate in favour of the establishment was Mai Nakain. Kalianwala chiefs, Dal Singh and Chatar Singh, were the major donors of Derā of Sant Parshad at Qasur. The main grantor to the Derā Baba Nanak at Vatala was Sardar Sudh Singh Dodia. In an interesting reference, a grantee named Baba Digana Singh Bedi, recipient of a grant from Jai Singh Kanhiya, gave the same to the institution. Another *udāsīderā* at Kasur received grants from just one grantor that was Ranjit Singh. Dera of Bhai Sucheta at Qasur received grants from Prince Kharak Singh. The *zamīndār* also acted as patrons to the establishment. Raja Mahan Chand of Kahlur, a hill chief too made an endowment for an *udāsīderā*.

Among the *udāsīderās*, Derā Khurd and Derā Kulan of Bhai Pheroo at Qasur got the maximum grants upto 15,592 rupees, taken together, though former got 8,990 rupees and 6,602 rupees was endowed to Derā Kulan of Bhai Pheroo. Others to

follow were Derā of Bhai Pirthi at Qasur, Derā of Sant Prasad at Qasur, Derā Baba Nanak at Vatala, another *udāsīderā* at Qasur and Derā of Bhai Sucheta at Qasur. They received 2,125 rupees, 1,948 rupees, 1,216 rupees, 775 rupees and 250 rupees, respectively.

In case of *udāsīdarbārs*, Darbār Rori Sahib at Sialkot received grants from *diwāns* of imperial time like Sukhpat Rai and Jaspat Rai. Charhat Singh Sukarchakia, Mahan Singh, Bagh Singh Hallowalia, Sahib Singh Jhulna, Sujan Singh Bhangi, Bagh Singh Miraliwala and Nidhan Singh Wadalewala also figure as the grantors of the same institution. Among the officials, Diwan Dal Singh, a *kardār*, was also a grantor. All grants assigned to Darbār Rori Sahib at Sialkot, except one, were in Eminabad. Charhat Singh Sukarchakia gave the maximum grant out of all the above-mentioned grantors and was also the earliest alienation made to the institution. The earliest grant given to Darbār Nankana Sahib at Shaikhupurawas during the imperial times. Except this, all the other alienations were made in first half of nineteenth century. Kharak Singh gave one of the grants for *langar* at establishment and this was the only grant that was given by him in the capacity of being a ruler as other two were given while he was a prince. The minimum grant that was ever given to this establishment was by Khazan Singh Nakkai who gave land worth four rupees. Darbār Balkira at Nankana Sahib, too like the above case, received an endowment during the imperial times. Reference to a few grants by Kahn Singh Nakkai are also available. Even the *jāgīrdārs* like Sulakhan Singh Khudpuria, Mahr Singh Mariwala and Raja Tej Singh figure as grantors to the establishment. In case of Darbār Nankana Khurd at Shaikhupura the references to only two grantors, Lehna Singh Bhangi and Ranjit Singh, are available.

All the grants to Darbār Baoli Sahib Guru Nanak at Sialkot were given in early nineteenth century. Kunwar Kashmira Singh figures as a grantor to only this institution among all the Sikh institutions. Jamadar Khushal Singh, the *deodhīdār* of Ranjit Singh, also endowed this institution. Darbār Sahib Mahistan too received grants during the Mughal times. Among *darbārs*, Darbār Rori Sahib at Sialkot received the maximum grants to the tune of 4,649 rupees. It was followed by Darbār Nankana Sahib at Shaikhupura, Darbār Balkira, Darbār Nankana Khurd at Shaikhupura, Darbār Baoli Sahib Guru Nanak at Sialkot and Darbār Sahib Mahistan. These received 1,285 rupees 5 *annas* and 4 *paisa*, 831 rupees, 710 rupees, 700 rupees and 366 rupees 10 *annas* and 8 *paisa*.

The Samādh of Sahib Ram Kaur at Dinanagar enjoyed the largest share of the *dharmarth* grants from Jaimal Singh Kanhiya. Ranjit Dev of Jammu was the only hill chief to give grant to the establishment and is known to have received forty-one grants. Out of these, twenty grants were given by a single grantor only i.e. Jaimal Singh Kanhiya. He was also the one to give the maximum amount by way of grant to the establishment. There are at least ten references of grants by *zamīndārs* to the said institution during this period. Naina Singh, a *zamīndār* was the earliest

grantors to the said Samādh. The lowest amount ever given by a grantor to this institution was also by a *zamindar* which was just worth two rupees. The *chaudharīs* like Chaudharī Parkha also gave grants. Samādh of Baba Mahan Sahib at Wazirabad received all its grants in Wazirabad. Mal Singh Sohianwala made the earliest grant to the Darbār in 1773. This was the only Sikh institution which enjoyed the grant from the said grantor. Samādh of Bhai Anup at Dinanagar received grants from Jaimal Singh Kanhiya, Budh Singh Bagga, Chiefs of Kingra territory, Prince Nau Nihal Singh and Rani Chand Kaur. There is a rare reference of grant from Pahar Singh, a Mukhtiar of Sangat Singh of Jindtoo. The earliest grant to the same was given by a *zamīndār* which was in 1753. Among the *udāsīsamādh*s, Samādh of Sahib Ram Kaur at Dinanagar, Samādh of Baba Mahan Sahib at Wazirabad and Samādh of Bhai Anup at Dinanagar received grants worth 1,741 rupees, 1,340 rupees and 1,334 rupees, respectively.

The *udāsīdharamsālas* were another category of *udāsī* establishments to be patronized. The ones that were assigned grants were found in Bulaki, Chittorgarh, Dharamkot, Dinanagar, Gujrat, Jagraon, Kalanaur, Lahore, Moga, Multan, Pakhowal, Pak Pattan, Thanesar, Sahiwal, Samrala, Sialkot, Sodha Singhwala, Talwandi, Watala, Wazirabad and Zafarwal. Besides enjoying the patronage of Wazir Singh Nakai and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, *zamīndārs* and *lambardārs* also gave grants to the *dharamsālas*. Other donors to different *udāsīdharamsālas* include *jāgīrdārs* like Jwala Singh Padhania and women like Mai Nakain and Mai Raj Kaur

The evidence of grants from cis-Sutlej states is also available as Bhai Bakhsh Singh of Kaithal and Ranjit Singh, son of Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha, was the grantors to *udāsīdharamsālas*. The reference of grants to *udāsīdharamsālas* by the Muslim rulers like Bahawal Khan, Ruler of Bahawalpur and Rai Ahmed and Rai Alias, the rulers of Raikot, are also available. Baggar Khan of Malerkotla and, a Muslim *zamīndār* named Murad Bakhsh also figure as grantors.

Certain *udāsīdharamsālas* were erected by a member of the ruling class and hence endowed by them. For instance, Mai Nakain is known to have erected an *udāsīdharamsāla* in Shaikhupura for travelers and poor which was assigned grants. Hence, it means the relatives of the builder also extended support. But no other grantor except relatives seems to have given an additional support to the same. Another example of an *udāsīdharamsāla* to be erected and endowed by a member of the aristocratic class was the *dharamsāla* built by Mai Raj Kaur at Wazirabad. Just like the previous case here also a relative gave an additional grant as Raj Kaur's daughter, Mehtab Kaur, also gave grants. In an interesting case, the grantee was to enjoy the proceeds as long as the *dharamsāla*, where Granth Sahib is kept, is kept up.

Plots of land, wells attached and villages were generally given in grant to the *udāsī* establishments but there is a reference where fruits like mangoes were. Clear

directions were given on use of cash grants by spending it on salt and oil. Mostly the term *dharmarth* has been used in the documents of grants given to the *udāsī* establishments but there are instances, though very few, where *madad-i-ma'āsh*, has been used. Occasions of giving grants to the *udāsī* institutions were varied like marriage. Or on presentation of a special gift.

Interestingly, many grants were given to *udāsīs* for reclaiming lands. Jai Singh Kanhiya, Jawand Singh Mokal, Diwan Sawan Mal and Fakir Chiraguddin gave grants for this very reason. Akhārā of Ghamand Das at Amritsar, Darbār Nankana Sahib at Shaikhupura and Derā-i-Kalān of Bhai Pheru at Qasur specifically received *dharmarth* grants for reclaiming waste lands.

There are instances where grants were given after the wells were sunk by the grantee. Khazan Singh Nakkai, Ranjit Singh, Chattar Singh Kalewala and *zamīndārs* gave grants to Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das, Akhārā Baba Tahl Das and Derā of Sant Prasad at Qasur received alienations for sinking well. At times the garden was planted by the grantee on the piece of land that was assigned to the establishment.

Many of these *udāsī* establishments provided facilities like food and accommodation to common people and indigent persons. There are also references of *udāsīakhārās* that kept up *chhabīl* to offer water to the passers-by. Akhārā of Ghamand Das at Amritsar and Akhārā of Baba Santokh Das performed the above-mentioned activity. Some of the *udāsī* establishments are known to have maintained charity schools as well.

END NOTES:

¹ Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, pp. 163-172.

² Udasis is a sect within the Sikh community established by Guru Nanak Dev's elder son Baba Shri Chand. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, *Gurushabadratanakar Mahankosh or Encyclopedia of the Sikh Literature* (tr.), Vol. II, Patiala: Punjabi University, 2008, p. 21.

³ Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, ABS Publication, Jalandhar, 1999, pp. 2 & 23.

⁴ Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During The Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, pp. 163-172.

⁵ Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs: Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century*, Manohar Publications, Delhi, 1978, pp. 160.

⁶ Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 29-30.

⁷ National Archives of India, New Delhi, *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

⁸ Gujjar Singh (died 1788) and Sahib Singh Bhangi (1788-1810) were the rulers of Gujrat. Latter lost his territories to Ranjit Singh in 1810 and received a subsistence *jagir*. Gurdit Singh Bhangi (1800-1805) was the ruler of Amritsar) Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, pp. 167 & 169. Lepel H. Griffin & C.F. Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* (revised by W.L. Conran & H.D. Craik), Vol. I, Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1940. pp. 456-468.

⁹ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

¹⁰ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 16 April 1852, No. 48-51; *Ibid.*, 7 January 1853, No. 219; *Ibid.*, 14 January 1853, No. 219.

¹¹ Jodh Singh Wazirabadia (1776-1809) was the ruler of Wazirabad who lost his territories to Ranjit Singh in 1810. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, p. 168.

¹² *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

¹³ Karam Singh Bhangi was the brother of Gulab Singh Bhangi, the chief of Amritsar during 1782-1800. Lepel H. Griffin & C.F. Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* (revised by W.L. Conran & H.D. Craik), Vol. I, Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1940. p. 456.

¹⁴ The chief Bagh Singh Miraliwala lost his territories to Ranjit Singh in 1805. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, p. 176.

¹⁵ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

¹⁶ Jassa Singh Ramgarhia (1758-1803) was the ruler of Sri Hargobindpur and Diwan Singh was his nephew. Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 31, fn 90.

¹⁷ Bagh Singh Hallowalia, ruler of Zafarwal, lost his territories to Ranjit Singh in 1810. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 161.

¹⁸ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

¹⁹ Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 53.

²⁰ Jai Singh Kanhiya (died 1789) was the ruler of Batala. Amar Singh Bhangi was the son of Ganda Singh Bhangi, the ruler of Amritsar. Lepel H. Griffin & C.F. Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* (revised by W.L. Conran & H.D. Craik), Vol. I & II (reprint-first published 1909) Delhi: Low Price Publication, 2010, Vol 1, p. 380 & 477.

²¹ National Archives of India, New Delhi, *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

²² Loc.cit.

²³ Sada Kaur, the widow of Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhiya who was the son of Jai Singh Kanhiya, managed the affairs of the principality of Batala. She became a staunch supporter of Ranjit Singh after his marriage to her daughter, Mehtab Kaur, in 1795. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 20.

²⁴ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

²⁵ Lehna Singh Bhangi (1764-1797) was the ruler of Lahore. Lepel H. Griffin & C.F. Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*. pp. 477-484 (vol I) & pp. 38-39 (vol II).

²⁶ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

²⁷ Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 28 & 29.

²⁸ Ran Singh and Gian Singh, the Nakkai chiefs of Chunian, ruled during 1767-1781 and 1789-1807, respectively. Wazir Singh and Mehr Singh were the Nakkai chiefs of Gogera during 1780-1790 and 1790 onwards. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, pp. 123, 124, 169 & 173; Khazan Singh Nakkai was the brother of Gian Singh Nakkai, the ruler of Chunian (died in 1807). Lepel H. Griffin & C.F. Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* (revised by W.L. Conran & H.D. Craik), Vol. I, Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1940. p. 281.

²⁹ *Foreign/Political Consultations*, 27 May 1853, No. 202.

³⁰ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 219.

³¹ *Foreign/Political Consultations*, 27 May 1853, No. 202.

³² *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

³³ Sudh Singh Dodia (1795-1813) was the chief of Doda. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 168; *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.

³⁴ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

³⁵ Mahan Chand (1778-1824) was the ruler of Kahlur (Bilaspur) who was made subordinate in 1809 by Ranjit Singh. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 164; *Foreign/Political Consultations*, 9 January 1857, No. 216.

³⁶ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.

³⁷ Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, p. 53; Charhat Singh Sukarchakia (1763-1774) was the ruler of Gujranwala, father of Mahan Singh and

grandfather of Ranjit Singh. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, p. 163.

³⁸ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.

³⁹ Nidhan Singh was the son of Mehtab Singh Sandhu, the ruler of Wadala. The former lost territories to Ranjit Singh in 1810. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 178.

⁴⁰ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241. Gurmukh Singh, *Historical Sikh Shrines*, Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 1995, p. 60.

⁴¹ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241. Gurmukh Singh, *Historical Sikh Shrines*, p. 52.

⁴² Kahn Singh Nakkai, ruler of Chunian, lost his territories to Ranjit Singh in 1810. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, p. 169.

⁴³ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.

⁴⁴ Loc.cit.

⁴⁵ Jaimal Singh Kanhiya (1782-1812), the ruler of Fatehgarh, lost territories to Ranjit Singh in 1812. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 169.

⁴⁶ Sulakhan Singh, *Heterodoxy in the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 35, 36 & 51.

⁴⁷ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

⁴⁸ Hakikat Singh Kanhiya was the ruler of Fatehgarh. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab-During the Late Eighteenth Century*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, p. 169. Fateh Singh Kanhiya was the nephew of Hakikat Singh Kanhiya. Lepel H. Griffin & C.F. Massy, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* (revised by W.L. Conran & H.D. Craik), Vol. I & II (reprint-first published 1909) Delhi: Low Price Publication, 2010, Vol II, p. 121.

⁴⁹ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

⁵⁰ Loc.cit.

⁵¹ The *chaudharī* exercised jurisdiction over a number of villages for the collection of revenue. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 65.

⁵² *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

⁵³ Sahib Singh Sialkotia was a chief. Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, p. 20; *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.

⁵⁴ Jaimal Singh Kanhiya (1782-1812), the ruler of Fatehgarh, lost territories to Ranjit Singh in 1812. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, p. 169.

- ⁵⁵ Bhag Singh Bagga was the ruler of Sujampur who lost his territories to Ranjit Singh in 1809. Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab*, pp. 160-161.
- ⁵⁶ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 27 May 1853, No. 202.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.
- ⁵⁹ *Loc.cit.*
- ⁶⁰ *Loc.cit.*
- ⁶¹ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.
- ⁶² *Loc.cit.*
- ⁶³ *Foreign/Political Consultation*, 2 January 1857, Nos. 198-201.
- ⁶⁴ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 31 December 1858, No. 1099.
- ⁶⁵ *Foreign/Political Consultation*, 12 December 1856,
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 2 January 1857, Nos. 181-183.
- ⁶⁷ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 9 January 1857, No. 238.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 9 January 1857, No. 239.
- ⁶⁹ *Foreign/Political Consultation*, 2 January 1857, Nos. 181-183.
- ⁷⁰ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 22 April 1859, Nos. 41-48.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.
- ⁷² *Foreign/Political Consultation*, 21 February 1851, No. 87-A.
- ⁷³ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.
- ⁷⁴ *Loc.cit.*
- ⁷⁵ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.
- ⁷⁸ *Foreign/Political Consultations*, 27 May 1853, No. 202.
- ⁷⁹ *Foreign/Political Proceedings*, 14 January 1853, No. 241.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 7 January 1853, No. 219.
- ⁸¹ *Loc.cit.*