

SYMBOLS OF YOGA AND JAPUJI

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Abstract—There are numerous traditions of ascetics in India such as siddhas, nathas, yogis and during udasis Guru Nanak have a dialogue with them and the essence of this discourse is disclosed in his writings. Japu's 28th to 31st pauri are mainly addressed to Gorakhpanthis or kanphata yogis as their symbols are described. According to him true Yoga is not about leaving home, wearing special clothes or performing difficult physical postures. Real yoga is inward controlling the mind, overcoming ego and remembering the Divine through Naam. For him true yogi is one who instead of escaping from Gristha lives in society and remains spiritually balanced. In japuji Guru Nanak explained the archetypal working behind the symbols of Yoga.

Index Terms—Japu, Guru Nanak, Yoga, Yogi, Religious Symbols

I. INTRODUCTION

Guru Nanak's understanding of Yoga and Yogi is deeply spiritual and practical. He does not reject the symbols of Yoga; instead transforms the philosophical interpretation working behind them. According to him true Yoga is not about leaving home, wearing special clothes or performing difficult physical postures. Real yoga is inward controlling the mind, overcoming ego and remembering the Divine through Naam. For him true yogi is one who instead of escaping from Gristha lives in society and remains spiritually balanced. In japuji Guru Nanak explained the archetypal working behind the symbols of Yoga.

Japu with regard pronounced as japuji is opening text cited by fifth Nanak, Guru Arjun Dev while compiling Adi Granth. According to rehatnamas, it is mandatory for a Sikh to recite and memories Japu. From the time of Guru Nanak's stay at Kartarpur, Sikhs have started reciting Japu in routine. (Bhai Gurdas: vaar 1 pauri 38) Mahakavi Bhai Santokh Singh of Nirmala tradition, in Garba Ganjani teeka, an exegesis of Japu, has summed up its significance by saying that 'he who calls himself a Sikh and have not yet memorized Japu is like a husk containing no grains' [1]. This is the status of Japu in Sikh religion. It comprises of mull mantra containing attributes of Ultimate Reality, two shlokas and thirty-eight pauris (stair). According to some scholars the second shloka is revelation of second Nanak, Guru Angad Dev. From writings of Bhai Gurdas and Janamsakhi literature, we learned that during udasis (a great journey) Guru Nanak Dev had a conversation with notable intellectuals of his contemporary world representing various religious thought and traditions, Brahmans at Kurukshetra and Haridwar, Nathas and Yogis at Gorakhmatta (presently called Nanakmatta) and Achal Batala, Siddhas at Mount Sumeru, Muslims at Mecca and Madina, Sufis at Bagdad and Multan. During his four udasis Guru Nanak compiled his thought and philosophy regarding these religious traditions and systemize it during his stay at Kartarpur. Guru Sahib's major dialogue is with religious traditions following renunciation. The Japu and Siddhagosti are most profound philosophic writings of Guru Nanak Dev. In both of these, the main argument is frequently addressed to the yogis at places, even by name, as is the case in the Siddhagosti [2]. In Japu, pauris from 28 to 31 are addressed to yogis. In this paper we will try to outline brief concept of symbolism, Religious tradition of Yogis, and their sacred symbols and archetypes as evoked by Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Japu.

II. CONCEPT OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

The term symbol originates from the Greek word *sumbolon*, which means 'to put' things 'together'. Religious truth being intangible by nature has given rise to much of symbology. Every religion has its own body of symbols which propound the Ultimate Reality, the deity, and other spiritual truths [3]. Religious language, religious practice, religious scriptures all are symbolic in nature. There are innumerable things beyond the range of human understanding, we constantly use symbolic terms to represent concepts that we cannot define or fully comprehend [4]. Famous theologian, Paul Tillich describes six characteristics of symbols as following; (1) It point beyond themselves to something else. (2) It participates in that to which it points. (3) It opens reality which otherwise is closed for us and it not only opens up dimensions of reality but also unlocks dimensions and elements of our soul. (4) Symbols cannot be produced intentionally. (5) They grow out of the individual or collective unconscious and cannot work without being accepted by the unconscious dimension of our being and (6) symbols cannot be invented they grow and die [5]. As they open closed dimensions of reality so they play vital role in religious experience, which is essential to grasp the true essence of religion. There are two things one is symbol and second is the thing symbolized by it. This means if a person is ignorant of idea symbolized by symbol and focuses only on symbol than it is idolatrous. So along with symbol it is important to perceive what did the symbol symbolizes. According to Martin Lings for fallen man, symbols offer enlightenment which guides him on his path of return, to join with supreme archetype and person experiencing a symbol, experience its archetype [6]. Every religious tradition has distinct symbols that delineate their identity as well as inspire neophyte to achieve his religious goal.

III. ORIGIN OF YOGIC TRADITION

Around the 8th century when the followers of Buddhism were pushed out of India, the monistic doctrine was concerned with practical aspect of sadhana. Its aim was purification of mind and body and attain bliss through awakening of the kundalini with hatha yoga. Yogis had emerged on the ground of revolt against the stiff caste distinction and orthodox attitude of society [7]. Matsyendranatha and Jalandharanatha are considered pioneer of yogis and Natha sampradaya and they derive their inspiration from Siva also called Adinatha or Adiyogi in yogic language. It is popular in tales that when Siva was reciting the yoga doctrine to Parvati, standing on a seashore, Matsyendranatha in the form of fish listened to it [8]. Further from him tradition of yoga begins. Kanipanatha was disciple of Jalandharanatha and Gorakhanatha was disciple of Matsyendranatha. Mostly they use Pancatattva

Sadhana, means use of five m's in worship, madya (wine), mamsa (flesh), matsya (fish), maithuna (sexual union) and mudra (gesticulation) [9]. Gorakhanatha did not approve pancatattva sadhana and give more importance to detached outlook (vairagya), celibacy and hatha yoga practices [10]. His followers were spread in twelve orders and were therefore called Barahapanthis. These twelve divisions are described by Pandit Tara Singh Narotam as Het, Pava, Ai, Gamyā, Mangal, Gopal, Kanthari, Ban, Dhvaj, Coli, Raval and Das [11]. They were called Yogis (as refers to their traditional practice of Hatha yoga), Gorakhnathi (upon name of their founder), Darsani (because of huge earrings as their distinctive mark) and most distinctively Kanphata (due to practice of having the cartilage of their ears split for insertion of the earrings) [12]. As followers of Gorakhnatha gives more significance to outlook, so, we can deduce that symbols discussed in four pauris of Japu like Mundra, Khappar, Adesh, Aipanth, etc. are mainly associate with yogis belonging to Gorakhnatha and its tradition. According to Bhai Bala Janamsakhi these pauri's are discourse between Gorakhnatha and Guru Nanak [13].

Guru Nanak has discourse with Siddhas, yogis, and nathas, they all are mostly considered having their legacy with Shaivism, but according to Sirdar Kapur Singh, Siddha belongs to Buddhism, their founder was Asanga, who taught doctrine of Yogacharya school of Mahayana at Nalanda University. He applied the principles of the yoga system of psychological discipline of Patanjali to the Mahayana Buddhism, which was mixture of Saivite mysticism and Tantrism. During attack of Bakhtiyar Khiliji, some of his students escaped and moved to inner Himalaya. They were called siddha with whom Guru Nanak have a dialogue compiled in the form of Siddhagosti [14]. There is a difference between dialogue held at Achal Batala and Mount Sumer. In the writings of Bhai Gurdas the Yogis of Achal Batala created an awful atmosphere by performing miracles but Siddhas at Sumer were calm and quiet. In his first vaar's 40th pauri yogi Bhangarnath asked Guru Nanak why have you put off your yogic grab but in Siddhagosti siddha ask why have you worn the yogic grab. We use words Siddha, natha and yogi in same sense but there are differences in their practice and their religious traditions. According to Dr. Jodh Singh the differences are to be found in certain aspects of doctrines and practices of different groups of Siddhas, yogis, and nathas. These differences are due to the variations in the religious system to which they belonged i.e. Buddhism, Saivism, Saktism, Vaisnavism, and Patanjali yoga [15]. So we can conclude that a dialogue held at Achal Batala was with the yogis wandering in the society having occult powers which are mentioned by Bhai Gurdas and the dialogue of Siddhagosti did not take place at Achal.

IV. SYMBOLS OF YOGI IN JAPU

From Guru Nanak's hymns, it is apparent in Japu he addressed split eared yogis or Gorakhpantthis, as their symbols are named.

Mudra: The first symbol mentioned in the starting of 28th pauri is mudra (earrings). The origin of practice of splitting ears has many speculations. Firstly, Siva was the great ascetic and he wears earrings (Kundal) so it believed to be started from him. Secondly, it established by Matsyendranatha as an initiation ceremony, which was followed by Gorakhnatha and his followers. Thirdly, it is said that yogi Bhartri urged his guru Jalandharanatha for distinguishing mark, so his ears were pierced and clay rings were inserted as a distinct mark. The fourth opinion is that Siva ordered Parvati to split Gorakhnatha's ears and thus, practice arose. From there in the ceremony of initiation, chosen guru splits the ears of his neophyte with double-edged knife. According to yogis splitting ears symbolizes:

1. The commitment of a yogi
2. Guru cuts the Nadi (mystical channel) in the cartilage, which assists in acquiring the yogic powers.
3. Wearing mudra a yogi becomes immortal [16].

These mudras (earrings) are also called darshani, as clear from name that these are sign that wearer has a vision of Brahman.

According to Guru Nanak Dev Ji, mudra symbolizes the santokha (contentment) and it formulates by hearing along with sat (truth) and gian (luminous knowledge). (Japu 3) Writings of Bhai Gurdas, called as a key to Gurbani elaborates this concept further. He answered to the question what to hear? The answer is that sermons of Guru are the earrings of a Yogi. (Vaar 20 pauri 16) So hearing teachings of Guru are compulsory to stimulate santokha, which is symbolized by mudra of Yogi. Further Bhai sahib explained Sikh as a true Yogi, 'Yogi Sikhs of guru are forever awake and remain detached from Maya. Guru's mantras or sabad for them is the earring.' (Vaar 29 pauri 15) In Gauri raga, Guru Nanak elaborates it by saying that 'Let your earrings be those earrings which pierce deep within your heart.' (Gauri 155) So it can be concluded that for a true Yogi it is compulsory to attain the stage of contentment which is symbolized by earrings in his ears and contentment is achieved to yogi's life by following the words of Guru which pierce deep in heart.

Jholi/Khappar: While describing the outlook of a Yogi, G.W Briggs mentions that they carry a begging bowl, a wallet, fire tongs (Chimta) and a staff. The begging bowl (khappar) may be of coconut shell [17]. Kapalika sect of Yogis founded by Jalandharanath ate and drink out of a cup made of human skull [18]. In Japu Guru Nanak used the words patt and jholi together used by yogis to collect food. Here patt word is originated from Sanskrit word patar which stands for utensil like bowl, it is also called khappar in yogic language. According to Guru Sahib begging bowl and pouch of a yogi symbolizes sharm a Persian word also translated as shram in Sanskrit. This word is taken in two senses, some scholars take it as piety (hard work) and some as modesty. Opening the symbol of begging bowl, in raga Asa Guru Sahib says that meditation and contemplation is begging bowl of Yogi. (Asa 360) The charity which I have to receive in bowl is the name of lord. In Ramkali raga Guru Sahib addresses to Machhindranath that his begging bowl should be loving devotion. (Ramkali 877) So, to receive name of lord as charity, begging bowl and pouch symbolizes modesty and piety which is main aim of a Yogi to attain.

Bibhut: In the initiation process body of neophyte is covered with ashes. Several reasons are given for the use of ashes some of them are as follow

1. They signify death to the world.
2. They indicate that the body must be reduced to ashes.
3. Sign that yogi has abandoned the world [19].

According to Guru Nanak ashes on Yogi's body symbolizes meditation in his life. In Ramkali raga, third Nanak, Guru Amardas asks a Yogi to smear your body with ashes of realization of cycle of life and death. (Ramkali 908) Kabir beseeches to become a true Yogi, make realization your ashes smearing the limbs. (Ramkali 970) This realization occurs with meditation on lord's name and this is possible with the help of a guru. In Sri Raga Guru Nanak explains how can I climb up to the fortress without a ladder? And answered it as, by meditating on the lord through the guru I am blessed and exalted. (Sri 17) So guru gives that ladder of recitation of naam to climb. Hence, with guru's grace meditation is possible and through meditation occur realization. So, ashes on Yogis body symbolize the true roots of meditation.

Khintha: Yogis wear a patched coat as a dress called khintha in yogic language. It is the main symbol of their identity. According to Guru Nanak, this symbol symbolizes thought of death. Yogis have forgotten their objective of life and they were just indulged in practice helpful in increasing their age. In Ramkali raga fifth Nanak, Guru Arjun dev addresses to yogi that the patched coat of the body shall last only for few days, so meditate on your lord. If name of lord becomes your patched coat and robe, then you can become steady and stable. (Ramkali 886) In raga Asa, Guru Sahib also describes it as forgiveness. (Asa 359) In Gorakhvani it is addressed to yogi for accepting the death and being informed to die like gorakhnath [20]. So yogi should live in this world, detached from maya.

Jugat: Jugat in yoga, is the way of life yogi should live. Guru Sahib declared it as, virgin body or archetypal body (kuari kaia). In raga Gauri Cheti Guru Nanak says that o yogi, when your earrings are in your heart, the body be your patched coat and by taking control over five disciples your mind becomes your staff, then you attain your true yoga praxis. (Gauri 155) Five disciples discussed here are five sources of knowledge attained from five sense organs of our body. Various practices in yoga are performed to control over these and according to Gurbani by controlling them your mind becomes your staff which plays crucial part in spiritual journey. The yogi who can perform this practice of controlling five, his stage of body is like virgin's body means away from peccancy. Fourth Nanak, Guru Ramdas in Gauri Ki vaar explained that they who search the Lord's riches outside the body at any other place are foolish. (Gauri 309) Everything is in body so, all yoga practices revolve around body. As Gorakhnatha says that when yogi gets knowledge of yoga jugat he searches his body to attain spiritual height [21] Guru Nanak says that body is sanctified which sings guru's praise. So jugat of a yogi is to live like virgin body, away from vishe vikaars and should sing lords praise. Yogi should remain pure in the worldly impurities, to attain jugat or way of yoga. (Suh 730)

Danda: Staff or stick carried by yogi is called danda in yogic language. According to Guru Sahib Symbol of danda in the hand of yogi symbolizes God's realization. Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjun says that 'as a yogi I have made realization of essence my staff, and the love of his name in the mind my way of life.' (Gauri 208) Third Nanak, Guru Amardas elaborate it as 'oh yogi, make meditation the staff and divine knowledge the horn to blow.' (Ramkali 908) From meditation, divine knowledge is acquired then, God's realization is possible. This all is done with grace of Guru. In Sri Raga, Guru says that without true Guru, neither realization nor love is possible. (Sri 65) When man's mind dies of Guru's word, he gains realization and his ego and evil are banished. (Gauri 162) So in conclusion, God's realization symbolized by staff of yogi is possible to attain with the grace of Guru.

Bhugti: Yogis collect food in khapper and jholi and serve it in their communion. This food in the yogic language is called Bhugti. The Bhugti of yogi symbolizes divine knowledge (gianu). In Japu Guru Sahib says that make divine knowledge the food and compassion the steward (bhandarani). In Gauri raga fifth Nanak, Guru Arjun says that God's servant is satisfied with the food of his name. (Gauri 264) In Ramkali Guru Sahib elaborated it as make God's name and sabad your food. (Ramkali 879) As God's name is food for yogi so in your khapper and jholi of truth and contentment respectively, put ambrosial name of lord as food. (Ramkali 908) So bhugti of yogi symbolizes divine knowledge. Guru Sahib called Bhandaran as compassion. In Japu, 16th pauri it is described compassion as mother of ox of dharma. (Japu 3) Ambrosial name of lord which proliferates divine knowledge is food of yogi which is received by him through the compassion of Guru, which gives birth to dharma.

Naad: Yogis wear janeo, or sacred thread. To this thread, a ring is attached which is called pavitri (representing Parvati). To this ring, a whistle is attached called singnad. The singnad is, as the name implies, a whistle made of horn, either of black-buck's horn, of stag's horn or of rhinoceros horn. Singnad is blown by yogis before the meal and before morning and evening worship [22]. The music produced from it called naad. In gurbani, singnad is also called singi. In Japu this sound or naad produced by yogi is symbolized by divine music or mystical sound beating in every heart. Guru Nanak says that if lord pleased than the yogi smears his body with ashes and sound of the horn produces the mystical sound. (Majh 145) This sound is helpful for him to move on spiritual path. Guru Nanak says that when within yogi's surate (consciousness) divine music or singnad rings spontaneously, then he is able to see the light of lord among all the hearts. (Ramkali 907) Gorakhnath also talks about naad which is in a continuous process without any break [23]. Music produced from singnad by yogi symbolizes the eternal divine music in every particle of his creation.

Natha: According to G.W. Briggs nathas are religious leaders or gurus or guides who derive their names from Adinatha or Siva. It is also a sect name of kanphata yogis having their connection to nine immortal teachers of the sect, of whom Gorakhnath is sometimes called the chief [24]. Mostly yogis call Siva the founder of yogis, as natha or Adinatha. According to Japu symbol of natha is the lord who has bound every sphere in his discipline. He is the source of bliss and with the help of true guru, we can have a union with him. (Gujri 505) Natha according to Guru Nanak is supreme lord, who is creator, protector, and destroyer. Union with such natha is possible with the help of true Guru. So symbol of natha symbolizes supreme lord.

V. CONCLUSION

A Religion means to re-join or re-establishment of a ligament with the supreme archetype, and one must resort to a symbol for that purpose. So, in religious traditions some symbols are given to a neophyte (cela) by initiator (Guru) so that he can experience the archetype bridged with them and these archetypes assist him in fabricating relation with supreme archetype (Lord).

There are numerous traditions of ascetics in India such as siddhas, nathas, yogis and during udasis Guru Nanak have a dialogue with them and the essence of this discourse is disclosed in his writings. Japu's 28th to 31st pauri are mainly addressed to Gorakhpantis or kanphata yogis as their symbols are described. In 28th pauri, Aipanth, one sect out of the twelve divisions of Gorakhpantis is mentioned. They pay homage to Aidevi, also known as Bimla Devi, one of the female disciples of Gorakhnatha. Ai is word used for mother or mai. In further pauri's Guru Nanak also discussed about true mai, who is followed by these yogis. In a nutshell, these were kanphata yogis to whom Guru Nanak addressed in Japu.

Guru Nanak established the archetypes from which these symbols originate and reversely what they symbolize. He co-relates mudra, khapper, jholi, vibhuti, khintha, jugat, danda, bhugti, bhandaran, naad and natha with contentment, modesty, meditation, thought of death, virgin body, realization, divine knowledge, compassion, recitation of lord's name and supreme lord. Guru Nanak insists on these spiritual values. At time of Guru Nanak, yogis have forgotten what their symbols symbolizes. They just wear them for getting preference in society. They carry bowl and jholi to beg food. Their practice concentrate only upon obtaining miraculous or supernatural powers (ridhi sidhi) and long life to create panic in society. So instead of achieving archetype which is symbolized by symbol, they just remained clingy with outer symbols. Guru Nanak in his writing condemned the wearing of outer symbols. He tried to re-establish or re-define the relation of symbol and archetype to make transcendent the true essence of yogi's life and through it he explained higher reality of cosmos. Like Guru Nanak, Gorakhnatha too has condemned the mere wearing of outer symbols. He says that yogi who wears them but did not take them in their realization is hypocrite [25]. The aim of yoga is to unite

the individual self (atman) with the universal self (Brahman) in the superconscious state (Surte). In this process elements symbolized by symbols of yogis as described in Japu have essential place. Guru Nanak emphasizes more upon what is symbolized than symbol. Moreover, when symbol shatters from its truth, it becomes idolatrous and such symbols are futile. Archetypes of yogi's symbol, described in Japu, further join with Higher Reality to whom Guru Nanak called Primal, Pure, Eternal and Immutable in the ages.

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