**Sanatan Dharma Human Development Research & Training Center**

**an undertaking of**

** Sanatan Dharma College (Lahore), Ambala Cantt.**

**In Academic Collaborations with**

**Department of Sanskrit & Pali, Punjabi University, Patiala,**

**Department of Sanskrit& Pali, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar**

**Council of Historical Research & Comparative Studies, Panchkula.**

**Darshan Yoga Santhan, DakshinaMurti Bhavan, Dalhousie**

**(Under the VedaVyaasa Restructuring Sanskrit Scheme)**

One Day interdisciplinary National Seminar cum panel discussion

**CRITIQUE OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, PRACTICES & LITERATURE OF BAIRAGI SECT (PART-1)**

**बैरागी सम्प्रदाय के इतिहास, दर्शन, प्रथाओं एवम् साहित्य की मीमांसा (भाग-१)**

Academic Support by - Departments of Sanskrit, History, Hindi, Punjabi, Music (I & V), History, Mass Communication, Central library,

**Date – 28 October, 2017, Saturday, Time - 09.30 a.m.**

Place - Seminar Hall, S D College, Ambala Cantt.

Dear Sir/ Madam .......................................... ,

Bairagi is a generic term which is commonly applied to many sects of devotees who are devotees of Ramanand, the founder of a famous Indian bhakti sect. The name Bairagi is said to have come from Sanskrit term 'Vairagya', it signifies a person who is free from all kinds of human passions. A true Bairagi is one who cultivates a sense of bairag, i.e. detachment, towards the material world while still living the life of a common householder, adheres to high moral and ethical standards, and attunes himself completely to the Will of God, constantly meditating upon His name. "He who hath his mind fully in control call him alone a bairagi," says `Guru Amar Das. There are basically four Vaishnav sampradayas or main sects of Bairagis. These are namely-

1. The Ramanujis, who are the followers of Vaishnavite reformer Ramanuj in southern India,

2. The Nimanandi, Nimat or Nimbaditya sect, the followers of Nimanand sect,

3. The Vishnu-Swami or Vallabhacharya sect, the worshippers of Lord Krishna & Radha,

4. The Madhavacharya sect prominent in southern India.

Besides, these four main sects, Bairagis have certain minor sects too. These minor sects comprise followers of some saints and mendicants Bairagis. One sect is known as the Bendiwale, those who wear a dot. Another sect is known as the Chaturbhuji meaning four-armed. Chaturbhuj is an epithet of lord Vishnu.

Among the Bairagis, there are seven Akharas besides the four main Sampradayas. These Akharas are known as the military divisions or schools for training. These were instituted at a time when the Bairagis had to fight with the Gosains. Any member of the four main Sampradayas can belong to any one of these seven Akharas. Further, a person is also allowed to change his Akhara as when he likes. However, a person can not change his Sampradaya. These Akharas do not have any special sect mark and they are distinguished with the help of their flags or standards that are elaborately decorated with gold thread particularly embroidered on silk. Once in 12 years a meeting of these seven Akharas of Bairagi sect is held at a decided place. The seven Akharas are 1. Digambari, 2. Khaki, 3. Kathia, 4. Nirmohi, 5. Munjia, 6. Nirbani or Niranjani and 7. Lasgari.

Moreover these Bairagis also have 52 Dwaras or doors, and every man of the sect must be a member of a Dwara besides being a member of the Sampradaya and Akharas. These Dwaras serve as the exogamous sections of the sect and members of the same Dwara do not intermarry. Bairagis hold a respectable position in the society. The Bairagis have numerous monasteries or maths.

The Hindi term *akhāṛā* means “wrestling arena,”from which *akhāṛiyā* derives, meaning “master fighter,” “skilled manoevrer,” or “strategist.” There is a network of *akhāṛā*s throughout India, particularly in the north, where men train in wrestling and other methods of fighting. *Akhāṛā*s specialize in various techniques of fitness and combat, which include the use of weights, clubs, and maces. The *akhāṛā*s have a resident *guru*. The wrestlers’ patron deity is → Hanumān. This network of *akhāṛā*s, which serves local men who typically train before or after work, is distinct from another network of *akhāṛā*s pertaining to groups of (formerly) militant ascetics with particular religious and sectarian identities. That religious ascetics would be inducted into fighting regiments is neither necessarily perverse – in the context of the history of traditional Hinduism – nor necessarily a radical break from a previous mode of life. There is an obvious similarity in the lifestyles of both soldiers and ascetics: both require rigorous self-discipline, enduring the hardships of lengthy travel and extended periods of camping; subsistence, sometimes, on meager rations; being subservient to a commander or *guru*; and enduring extended (or permanent) celibacy. In medieval India, asceticism, trade, and war were not incompatible.

Fighting ascetics are usually referred to as *nāgā*s (deriving from the Hindi term *naṅgā*, “naked”). *Nāgā*s are usually almost naked, except for a loincloth (*laṅgoṭī/kaupīn*), and besmear their bodies with ash known as *bhasm* or *vibhūti* (“supernatural powers,” “dignity”), the most sacred (or pure) form of which is made from the product of burnt and filtered cow dung. They keep a sacred fire (*dhūnī*), and some have experience of training in fighting and the use of basic weaponry, particularly the sword, mace, and dagger. Some members (particularly *nāgā*s) of some *akhāṛā*s smoke a great quantity of *gānjā* (the buds of female cannabis plants) and *caras* (cannabis resin), mostly in chillums (Hind. *cilam*, clay pipe), and may also regularly eat *bhāṅg* (prepared cannabis leaves; see also → intoxicants). While some *nāgā*s keep their hair short, many wear *jaṭā* (dreadlocks). In terms of appearance and lifestyle, *nāgā*s are in many respects indistinguishable from South Asian Sufi *faqīr*s (Arab.; Hind. *fakīr*). Some *nāgā*s practice rigorous austerities, such as maintaining an arm aloft (*ūrdhvabāhu*) or remaining standing (*khaṛeśvarī*) for many years (see also → *sādhu*s); some practice *yoga* exercises.

One of the earliest available (semihistorical) references to militant (or armed) ascetics (or *yogī*s)

in the Indic world is in Bāṇabhatṭ ạ ’s 7th-century romance *Harṣacarita* based on the life of King

Harsạ , who ruled (606–648 CE) North India from Kanauj and Thanesar (Sthāṇvīśvara), near Kurukshetra (150 km northwest of Delhi). In the *Harṣacarita* appear two ascetics (Pātālasvāmin and Karṇatāla) who eventually become employed as personal guards to King Pusp̣ abhūti, “elevated to a fortune beyond their wildest dreams . . . occupying the front rank in battle” (*HCar.* 3.130). In the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha* (8th–10th cents.), there is a reference (18.202–207) to “mendicant mercenaries with strange weapons” who are described as shaven-headed → Pāśupatas who are protecting trade. There are a couple of references

(see Sanderson, 2009, 261–262n616) in the *Mayasaṃgraha* (5.182) and the *Piṅgalāmata*

(10.28–31), from the 9th to 12th centuries, to Śaiva *maṭha*s (monasteries) containing armories for the storage of weapons of war. In a frequently cited reference to fighting ascetics in the mid- 16th-century *Bījak* of → Kabīr (*Ramainī* 69), scorn is poured on *yogī*s, *siddha*s (another name for *yogī*s), *mahant*s (chiefs/superiors), and ascetics who resort to arms, keep women, and collect property and taxes. An entourage of (perhaps) three thousand, which included armed *yogī*s in service to a *yogī* king in conflict with a ruler in Gujarat, is described by Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna the early 16th century (see Winter Jones, 1863, 111–112) in what may be the first patronage. During the latter half of the 16th century and the early part of the 17th century, a number of bands of fighting ascetics formed into *akhāṛā*s with sectarian names and identities.

These armies were of mercenaries who often largely disbanded during cessations of conflict and during harvest times, when many of the men would return home to attend to agricultural duties. The formation of mercenary *nāgā* armies occurred largely in parallel with the constitution of a formal and distinct identity for many of the currently recognizable sects of *sādhu*s, including the Rāmānandīs and Daśanāmīs. Several commentators (e.g. Orr, 1940) have maintained that members of the Nāth sect (→ Nāth Sampradāya) have at times constituted elements of *nāgā* armies, but there seems to be no substantial evidence to support this assertion. It is most likely that observers mistakenly identified either Rāmānandīs or Daśanāmīs as Nāths.

भारत के स्वाधीनता संग्राम में वैष्णव बैरागी संतों का बहुत बड़ा योगदान रहा है। चाहे मुगलों के विरुद्ध आंदोलन हो या अंग्रेजों के विरुद्ध, बैरागी संतों का राष्ट्र प्रेम और वीरता उल्लेखनीय रही है। जैसे कि - 1857 की क्रांति में, अंबाला की जेल में सबसे पहले फांसी पर चढ़ने वाले वीर का नाम था **महंत रामप्रसाद बैरागी**। 18 57 की क्रांति में अंबाला की ही जेल में फांसी पर चढ़ने वाले दूसरे बैरागी संत थे पंजाब के फरीदकोट के निकट डाबरी गांव के **महंत श्याम दास बैरागी**। जिन्होंने ने डाबरी गांव और आसपास के लोगों को मिलाकर अंग्रेजो के विरुद्ध लड़ने के लिए एक सेना तैयार कर ली थी ।सेना में हिंदू और सिख दोनों ही धर्मों के लोग थे। डाबरी गांव में अंग्रेजी सेना का महंत श्याम दास की अगुवाई वाली सेना ने सशक्त संघर्ष किया। १८५७ की क्रांति में , अपने प्राणों की आहुति देने वाले एक और बैरागी थे हरियाणा के हिसार जिले के हांसी तहसील में रोहनात गांव के **महंत बीरड दास स्वामी।** इन्होंने इस क्रांति में बढ़-चढ़कर भाग लिया और अंग्रेजों ने उन्हें फांसी की सजा दी।

इसके अतिरिक्त अयोध्या में बैरागी संतो और मुसलमान फकीरों के बीच धर्म को लेकर हमेशा संघर्ष रहा है। लेकिन राष्ट्र प्रेम का यह अनूठा उदाहरण है कि 1857 की क्रांति में अयोध्या **में महंत रामदास**, मौलवी आमिर अली, शंभू प्रसाद शुक्ला और अच्छे खान ने अंग्रेजो के विरूद्ध बगावत की और इन चारों को ही एक साथ फांसी पर लटका दिया गया। महंत रामदास, निर्मोही अखाड़े के बैरागी संत थे और उन्होंने न केवल साधु संतों बल्कि आम जनता को भी अंग्रेजो के खिलाफ स्वाधीनता हेतु जंग करने के लिए प्रेरित किया। 1857 की क्रांति में फांसी पर चढ़ने वाले इन चार बैरागी महंतो के अतिरिक्त, ग्वालियर के **महंत गंगा दास बैरागी** का नाम भी आजादी की लडाई में सवर्ण अक्षरों में लिखा गया है। जो 52 बैरागी द्वारों में से एक, पूर्ण बैराठी द्वारे के गद्दी नशीन महंत थे। झांसी की रानी लक्ष्मीबाई के वे आध्यात्मिक गुरु थे । आखिरी वक्त में रानी झांसी ने महंत गंगा दास जी से निवेदन किया कि उनके मृत शरीर को भी अंग्रेजों को नां दिया जाए और उनके प्राण त्याग के तुरंत बाद उनका अंतिम संस्कार कर दिया जाए। रानी झांसी के शव  की रक्षा करने के लिए उस वक्त गंगा दास जी की कुटिया पर 12 सौ बैरागी संत सैनिकों की एक पूरी जमात उपस्थित थी। निर्मोही अखाड़े की इस जमात ने रानी झांसी के मृत शरीर की रक्षा हेतु अंग्रेजों से डटकर मुकाबला किया इस लड़ाई में 745 बैरागी संत शहीद हो गए। महंत गंगा दास की कुटिया को तोड़ कर रानी झांसी के लिए चिता बनाई गई और महंत गंगा दास जी ने स्वयं अपने हाथों से रानी लक्ष्मीबाई का अंतिम संस्कार किया।

इस प्रकार बैरागी ससम्प्रदाय का इतिहास एवम् दर्शन विद्वानों द्वारा गम्भीर शोध की अपेक्षा रखता है ताकि बैरागी सम्प्रदाय को इतिहास को वह सम्मान प्राप्त हो जिसके वह अधिकारी हैं।

**[Following research material is available for scholar to write papers. If anyone needs any research material SDHDR&T Center will provide on demand on line]**

1. The Fighting Ascetics of India By JN Farquhar, MA, D Li (Oxon.), Professor of Comparative Religion in the University of Manchester.

2. The Founding of the Ramanandi Sect By Richard Burghart, London School of Economics and Political Science , University of London.

3. Warrior Ascetics in Indian History By David N Lorenzen, Journal of American Oriental Society, El Colegio De Mexico

4. Armed Religious Ascetics in Northern India By WG Orr, Scoland.

5. Subaltern Sadhus? Political Ascetics in Indian Myth Memory, And History - by William R Pinch, Wesleyan University.

6. Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empire - By William R Pinch, Cambridge University.

7. Ascetics Rights in Early 19th Century Jaipur Rajasthan by Catherine Clemenn- Ojha, Paris-Ehess

8. Towards a history of Devoonal Vaishnavism in the West Himalyas; Kullu and the Ramanandis, C. 1500-1800 by Arik Moran, University of Haifa, Israel.

9. The Charbagh-I Panjab: Socio-Cultural Configuraon by J S Aggarwal, Institute of Punjab Studies Chandigarh

10. Indian Freedom Movement in Princely States of Vindhya Pradesh (Page 23) by AW Siddiqui (Jhansi ki Rani and Ganga Das Bairagi)

11. Between Text and Sect: Early Nineteenth Century Shis in the Theology of Ram By Vasudha Paramasivan (Chapter 4 – The Ramanandi Sampraday , PHD Thesis)

12. A history of Indian Philosophy By Surendranath Dasgupta, Cambridge University Press

13. Ayodhya - The Dark Night By Dhirendra K Jha and Krishna Jha

14. An Invesgaon Of The Noon Of Avatara In The Philosophical Systems Of Shankara By Maniraj Sukdaven Phd Thesis Dept Of Religion Studies University Of The Freestate

15. The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India Vol 2 By RV Russell. The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd Toronto.

16. Poorva Madhya Kaal Me Vaishnav Dharm - Adhayayan - PhD Thesis By Brijendra Singh, Rajshree Tondon Open University Allahbad.

17. Bairagi Mandals By Richard Burghart, London School of Economics and Polical Science , University of London.

18. The Wandering Ascecs of Ramamnandi Sect by Richard Burghart, London School of Economics and Polical Science , University of London.

19. Sadhu - Organisaon and the way of Life (About Akharas Chapter 5)

20. The Dasanami Samnyasis by Mahew Clark.

21. The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India Vol 1 By RV Russell. The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd Toronto

22. Manipur Past and Present Philosophy Culture and Literature by Naorem Sanajaoba

23. The Ramanandis of Galta (Jaipur Rajasthan) by Monika Horstman.

24. Moghul and Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori. By BN Goswami and JS Grewal, Indian Instue of Addvance Studies, Shimla.

25. Peasants and Monks in Brish India by William R Pinch, Cambridge University.

26. Religious Formaons in Mughal Times by Jack Hawley

27. Historical Background to the Rise of Bhakti Movement in Northern India in historiography, religion and state in medieval India by Sash Chandra

28. Journal of Vaishnav Studies 3.3 (1995) Special Issue on Vaishnav Temples especially in and around Vrindawan

29. Brij ke Dharm-Sampradayon ka Ihaas by Prabhu Dayal Mial

30. Center of Krishna Pilgrimage by Alan W Entwistle

31. Early history of Vaishnav Faith and Movement in Bengal by Sushil Kumar

32. The Bhak Sect of Vallabhacharya by Richard Barz

33. In search of Ramanand, the Guru of Kabir and others by Purshoam Aggarwal

34. The Hagiographies of Anantdas: The Bhak Poets of North India by Winand M Callewaert

35. A Garland of devotees: Nabhadas Bhaktmal in History by James Hare, Columbia University.

36. History Devoon and the Search for Nabhadas of Galta by William R Pinch

37. Poets, Sants, and Warriors: the Dadupanth, Religious Change and Identity Formaon in Jaipur State by James M Hasngs University of Wisconsin-Madison

38. Bhak and Monascism by Monika Hortmann

39. Report on the revision of Selement of Panipat Tehsil and Karnal Pargana by Sir Denzil Ibbetson.

40. Saints of Ancient and Medieval India Vol 2 Page 273 (About Kabir) by Vidyotma Singh.

41. Patronage and Popularizaon, Pilgrimage and Procession by Heidi Rika Maria Pauwels (About Ramanandi warriors at ayodhya page no 104)

42. Fall of Mughal Empire: 1789-1803 by Jadunath Sarkar( Sacrificed 40 Ramanadi Bairagis and 50 Vishnuswami Bairagis )

43. The Asiac Journal and Monthly register for Brish and Foreign Vol 24 (the temple of Kapila in the vicinity of Kolkata)

44. Rulers, townsmenand Bajaars : North Indian Society in the age of Brish by CA Bayl.( Page 185 about the Bairagis of Bharatpur)

45. Discovery of North East India by Suresh Kant Sharma (About Arjundas Bairagi)

46. Anatomy of a confrontaon by Sarvepalli Gopal (Hindu Muslim Fight in Ayodhya in 1855 page 31)

47. Soldier Monks and Militant Sadhus by William R Pinch in the book contesng the Naon: Religion, Community, and the polics of democracy edited by David Ludden.

48. Tirupa Part 7- Hathi Ram Ji and his connecon with Tirumala Arcle dated 14 Dec 2010 Anushankaran.blogspot.com

49. History of the hindu religious endowments in Andhrapradesh by Koutha Nirmala Kumari

50. A history of Tirumala-Tirupa Devasthanam Educaonal by P Krishnamurthi

51. Early Hunter gatherers adaptaon in the rupa valley by Jacob S Jayaraj, Shri Venkateshwar University.

52. Bairagi Madam temple at Muthialpet, Chennai.

Topics for the seminar:

1. The origin of Vaishnav sect’s chatusampradiya.

2. History of Vaishnav gotra.

3. The founding of Ramanandi Sect .

4. The founding of Nimbark Sect.

5 Role of Vaishnavas in propagation and protection of Sanatan Dharam.

6. Role of Vaishnavas in Arts, Music and Literature.

7. Role of Vaishnavas in freedom struggle of India.

8. Famous temples constructed by vaishnav saints.

9. Tirupati Balaji and Hathiram Bairagi of Nagaur.

10. The movie on Hathiram Bairagi

11. Banda Bairagi: A Ramanandi Saint and Warrior.

12. The Vaishnavas of Manipur and Assam.

13. Vaishnav Rulers of Nandgaon and Chhuikhadan.

14. Vaishnavas relations with Mughals.

15. Vaishnavs relationship with Sikhs.

16. Vaishnavas relations with Jats Rulers of Bharatpur.

17. Vaishnavas relations with Rajput Rulers of Rajasthan.

18. Ganda Das bairagi of Gwalior and the Rani of Jhansi.

19. Baba Lal Das bairagi and Dara Shikoh.

20. Role of bairagis in protecting Ram Janam bhoomi.

21. Raja Jagat Singh of Kullu and Krishan Das Payohari.

22. Bairagis Mutt Chennai.

23.When Swami Balananda fought for Jat Rulers of Bharatpur.

24. Makhandas Bairagi: the Guru of Bharatpur Jats.

25. Swami Haridas Bairagi: the Guru of Tansen and Baiju Bawara.

26.  Surdas: the great vaishnav poet of Vallabhachariya sect and asthachhap.

27. Aluri Bairagi of south, Kainla Bairagi of Nepal and Balkavi Bairagi of Madhya Pradesh, the great vaishnav poets and their literature.

**P.S. -** 1. No T.A. / D.A. is admissible and no stay arrangements possible.

2. Please reach latest by 9.15 a.m. so that discussions be initiated at proper time and time for presentation be given to every participant.

3. Since it is seminar cum panel discussion so bring only succinct notes to share with other scholars.

With deep Regards,

**Ashutosh Angiras Dr. Raj Singh Vaishnav Dr. Rajinder Singh**

Hony. Director Registrar of Companies (Pb. HP, HR, Chd) Principal & Patron

09464558667 Chandigarh S.D. College (Lahore)

[Sanskrit2010@gmail.com](mailto:Sanskrit2010@gmail.com) 09466596782

**Sh. Neeraj Atri**, Director, Council Historical Research & Comparative Studies, Panchkula.

**Dr. Virender Kumar**, Incharge, Department of Sanskrit, Punjabi University, Patiala.

**Prof. Dalbir Singh Chahal,** Chairman, Department for Sanskrit, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

**Dr. Pushpinder Kumar,** Department of Sanskrit, Punjabi University, Patiala.

**Sh. Munishwar A Sagar**, Principal Correspondent, Hindustan Times, Chandigarh.

**Dr. Ashish Vasitha,** Public Health Policy expert , Mohali

**Sh. Hemant Goswami**, Social Activist, Chandigarh.

**Maj. Gen, Amil Kumar Shori,** Colmunist & author, Panchkula

**Dr. U.V. Singh,** former head of dept. of Histroy, S D College, Ambala Cantt

**Dr. Jaiprakash Gupt**, Amritkalash Chikitsalya, Ambala Cantt.

Organizing & Reception Committee

**Dr. Uma Sharma,** Department of Sanskrit, **Dr. (Capt.) Vijay Sharma**, Head & ANO, Dept. of Hindi & NCC, **Dr. Paramajeet Kaur,** Head, Dept. of Music (Instrumental), **Dr Madhu Sharma,** Head, Dept of Music (Vocal), **Dr. Balesh Kumar,** Chief Librarian, **Dr. Nirvair Singh,** Head, Dept of Punjabi, **Dr. Chiman lal,** Dept of Political Science, **Prof. Meenakshi Sharma,** Dept of Computer Science, **Dr. Madan Rathi**, Head, Dept of History, **Dr. Vishal Bhardwaj**, Dept of Sanskrit, Hindu College, Amritsar, **Dr. Vinod Kumar,** Dept. of Humanities, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara., **Dr. Piyush Aggarwal,** Sanskrit Teacher, Govt. Sr. Sec. School, Sector 28, Chandigarh, **Dr. Gaurav Sharma**, Assistant Professor, Ayurvedic College, Pilkhua (U.P.), **Dr. Gaurav Sachar,** Principal, SVM Sr. Sec. Vidya Mandir, DeraBassi. **Dr. Pawan Tripathi,** Dept. of Sociology, Maharaja Aggarsain College, Jagadhari. **Dr. Praveen Chaube**, Dept. of History, Govt. PG College, sector 46, Chandigarh., **Dr. Gobind Sethi,** Dept. of Political Science, Govt. PG College, sector 46, Chandigarh.,

**To**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ,**

From -

**Principal,**

**S D College (Lahore),**

**Ambala Cantt. 133001**

**Haryana.**

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