

Punjab



by Purn Sandhu

On the wedding of a Punjaban (Punjabi girl), let's pay respect to Punjabi culture and items by remembering and introducing them to our children and to the world.

With love

Sardar Gurbachan Singh Phoolka and
Sardarni Bakhshish Kaur Phoolka.

Grandparents



Reetu, Preet, Deesh, Shana and Rabaab-
Thank you for your help.
– Pum Sandhu

Map of Punjab during Maharaja Ranjit Singh.



In 1947 Punjab was divided in two countries – India and Pakistan.



Punjab

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, “The Lion of the Punjab” (1780-1839)



This Maharaja, who ruled his people’s heart, was the head of a powerful state extending from Tibet to Sindh and from the Khyber Pass to the Sutlej. Baron Charles Hugel records: “Never perhaps was so large an empire founded by one man with so little criminality.”

The French visitor called Ranjit Singh “the first inquisitive Indian” who completely identified himself with the joys and sorrows of his people. Magnanimous to the fallen foe and generous to the injured and the insulted, Ranjit Singh was the last Indian king in whose reign the common man felt real freedom.

He was a far-sighted man who made many Punjabis learn English. He established the first printing press in Gurmukhi (Punjabi language script) at Lahore. He respected talent and asked the Punjabi traders to go abroad and trade with other nations. He thus freed Punjab from the

slavery of eight centuries, and brought peace and prosperity to the land of five rivers. The ravaged fields smiled once again, and Punjab once again became the cherished “golden sparrow.”

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a tender heart. He released the young lion cub which he had caged with care. Asked why, he said: “The lioness, the cub’s mother, had been crying and wailing throughout the night. I could not bear the cries of a mother.” Nobody could shoot a sailing swan or hurt a singing nightingale. With the onset of Monsoon he would order a 102-gun salute to the rising moon. No king anywhere had done it before or ever since.



Out of Maharaja’s famous possessions is the Kohinoor diamond which was worn by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in an armlet.



Glass replica of the Koh-I-Noor as it appeared in its original form, turned upside down. Current owner, Elizabeth II

The Kōh-i Nūr, “Mountain of Light”; also spelled Kohinoor, Koh-e Noor or Koh-i-Nur) is a 105-carat (21.6 g) diamond that

was once the largest known diamond in the world. The Kohinoor originated at Golconda in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India, and belonged to various Mughal and Persian rulers who fought bitterly over it at various points in history. Seized as a spoil of war, it was finally taken by the British and became part of the British crown jewels when British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli proclaimed Queen Victoria Empress of India in 1877. The legendary Kohinoor has been in the eye of the storm ever since it left the hands of its original owners – a diamond which was never bought or sold, but changed many hands.

Jade sword of
Maharaja Ranjit Singh



Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji’s sword. Handle made of ivory and gold inlaid detail on cover and handle; taken by the British.

The Patiala Necklace –

Weighing 234.65 carats, the De Beers is the seventh-largest faceted diamond in the world.

After its display in Paris, the Maharaja of Patiala bought the De Beers. In 1928 Cartier of Paris set it as the centerpiece of a ceremonial necklace that came to be known as the Patiala Necklace.



The Patiala Necklace made by Cartier – platinum set with rubies, diamonds and pearls – brought them their biggest-ever commission. The necklace totaled 962.25 carats, including the De Beers “yellow” 234.65-carat diamond.



In this picture girls are wearing Tikka on their foreheads and boys are wearing Kalngi on their turbans.



Wearing kameej (shirt), Patiala shahi salwar (pants), dupta or chunni (scarf) embroidered with sucha gota (jarri thread made of gold), shingaar pati and tikka on her forehead, guluband around her neck with rani haar (a long and heavy necklace), hath phul (fingers to the wrist) and pajeb (anklet).

Phulkari

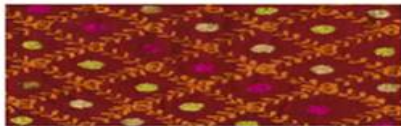
To make a Phulkari was a long process that required creativity, patience, hard work and most of all, love for the Phulkari. Originally, Phulkari was made of handmade cotton fabric, about three yards long and one and a half yard wide, hand-dyed usually red, and hand-embroidered with three or four bright colors.

Phulkari work is one of the most fascinating expressions of Punjabi folk art. It has also been customary for parents and relatives to give hand-embroidered clothes to girls in dowry. Punjabi women were known for embroidery with superb imagination. Phulkari is something of which Punjab is justly proud and is also noted as the home of this embroidered and durable product.

In the Phulkari work, the whole cloth is covered with close embroidery and almost no space is left uncovered. The piece of cloth thus embroidered is called baag, meaning a garden. If only the sides are covered it is called chope. The background is generally maroon or scarlet and the silken thread used is mostly golden. Color schemes show a rich sensitivity. Some Phulkaris are embroidered with various motifs of birds, animals, flowers and sometimes scenes of village life.

In old tradition, Phulkari was mostly used for happy ceremonies. With time, even though the process of making Phulkari has been changed, still Phulkari is used in Punjabi ceremonies as well as for fashion and decoration.

Phulkari is a cultural item that reminds of happy moments.



▪ Life is a fabric waiting to be embroidered with the colors of thoughts. Design depends on what you needle in at this moment.

Life is what we make of it.

Charka

Charka, a spinning wheel, is used to turn fiber into thread or yarn. This thread or yarn is then woven as cloth on a loom. According to the Britannica Concise Encyclopedia (2007): “The spinning wheel was probably invented in India, though its origins are unclear.” MSN ENCARTA (2007) further adds: “The spinning wheel, introduced into Europe from India between the 13th and 14th centuries, improved the hand-spinning method. The spindle was set horizontally in a wheel turned by a foot pedal and produced a single thread. Spinning by hand is still the principal method used in many developing countries.” A single string can create something so extraordinary. Paying close attention to your ideas, one can do wonders.



Spindle and punis

- Just one thought spinning on a wheel of mind create the whole picture in front of us and sometimes it's not the one we hope for - just like all the punis don't make a good yarn.

A positive thought with mindful spinning will take you anywhere you aim for.

Chajj

This hand-made item, made of “Sarkanda,” is used to separate grain from husk and thus throw out all the chaff and unusable things to prepare grains or beans to grind. The Chajj is also used in Punjabi ceremonies and other festive occasions with giddha, punjabi folk dance.

Sarakanda: Commonly found in Punjab, Sarkanda is a wild grass grown in swamps.



- Throw out “I can’t” from your vocabulary, Cause it only casts a shadow upon your intelligence.
-

Dhol

Dhol, the king of Punjabi instruments, the soul of bhangra, is one of the few percussion instruments in the world that draws people to the dance floor whenever it is played.

The dhol is a barrel-shaped instrument, made from a shell of hollowed-out mango or sheesham wood, with the treble on the right and the bass on the left. Historically, both sides of the drum were covered with goatskin, but today, plastic is sometimes used for one of the sides.

Two drumsticks are used to beat the drum. The tili is a thin cane stick; the dagga is a crooked wooden stick: their contrasting shapes and sizes suit the different properties of each side of the drum. It is the rhythm they create that is the most significant feature of dhol playing.



- The stillness of a hollow drum makes such a beautiful sound that inspires us to dance. Imagine what our brain can do if we throw all the junk, negativity, out of it and just believe in ourselves.

Jaago

Jaago is a ceremony performed almost exclusively by women in Punjab, at midnight. On the night before the wedding, the female relations of the bridegroom / groom prepare a Jaago. The ceremony is performed by taking a clay (or copper) pot, covering it with many (20-30) candles or diyas using some wet “atta” (flour), and putting it on the head of the bridegroom’s mothers’ brothers’ wife, who is then led by the mother’s relations, singing, dancing, frolicking, knocking at the doors of residents of the bridegroom’s village. The women take turns carrying this well-illuminated pot over the head, and marching in a procession through the village, gathering up more women as they go along and singing “bolis” regarding various topics. Typically, as in most Punjabi folk songs, the bolis sung in the beginning are just an interlude or a framework for the women to start improvising bolis that are more specific to the occasion as they warm up to the night. Typically the procession halts at various stops and everyone does gidda in the light illuminated by the jaago. Percussion is typically clapping . . . sometimes with dholki (small dhol) or the larger dhol. Typically the theme is women-oriented (women making fun of men, of their mother-in-laws, their young brother-in-law, their old father-in-law). As such Jaago has no standard lyrics, so each Jaago song you hear will probably be different – all with a common theme, but illustrating different parts of Punjabi culture.



What makes this whole process enjoyable is – individuality in togetherness.

Churra or Chudda

Chura is a set of red and beige bracelets that bride wears and is presented by her maternal uncle on the churra ceremony.

A set of churra usually contains 11 or 21 red bangles in the middle of two beige bangles painted with red dots on it. These beige bangles are wider than the red ones.

In old days churas were made of an elephant tusk considered to be the best. Now-a-days churas are made of plastic.

Vatna is a ceremony wherein bride's friends and sisters apply mixture of besan, haldi, chandan and kesar on bride's hands and legs and face. It's said that after applying this mixture, bride looks beautiful.

In old days vatna preferred to make at home. Mixing power of dried orange peel, vesan (garam Flour) or Atta (wheat flour) raw tumeric, chandan for fragrance. To make a paste it is mixed with mustarad oil. And the ceremony of vatna started seven days before the wedding ceremony.

Now-a-days it is available to buy. This ceremony is performed one day before wedding ceremony.

Suhag pitari

Suhag pitari is a decorated basket that bride receives from groom's mother. Usually it contains, mehndi (henna), red bangles, prandi, chuhare (dried dates), sindoor, lipstick, kajal, Khambni (a red soot (cotton) thread), lipstick. Surma (eye liner) sindoor, a comb, and mirror. Basked is covered with Red decorated cloth and presented with clothes and jewellery.

In old days: Except of lipstick a colored datoon or suk was added to the basket. Surmadani usually made of silver.

Colored Datoon: Women apply twig or bark of a walnut tree to clean their teeth to color their lips.

The twig or bark of neem tree forms a good datoon as well as medicinal herb for teeth and gums.

Vidai 'Doli' songs

Vidaai marks the departure of the bride from her parental house. Bride's relatives sing songs at the vidai time from the bride.

Kadd Ni Ammaddi Kuj Sajjeya Sajaaya

This lovely song catches that transient time between a known past and a dreamed of future. It shimmers with anticipation.

The bride was carried to her new home in a palanquin (doli) and the water carriers were the traditional carriers of the doli. The multi colored woven cords tied the short drapes of the doli together so that the bride could ride in privacy.

Mother, bring out something new, something decorated.
Something that you preserved for me.
Something that my father worked for,
Something earned by my brother.

Your time to give has arrived!

Water carrier, tie the woven cords
Morsels of betel leaf in my mouth,
I leave the lanes of my parents home.

Water carrier, untie the woven cords,
The cords on my doli.
For I must claim the lanes of my married home.



WELCOME

Pani Varna: On reaching the marital home, the groom's mother, who pours a little sarron da tel (mustard oil) outside on the doorstep before they enter, receives the couple. She then attempts to drink water from a 'garbi' (vessel), but the groom prevents her. She makes seven attempts to drink the water from the pitcher. The groom must allow her to succeed only at the seventh attempt.

There is an old saying, “Behind every successful man, there is a woman.” The role of Punjabi women as commandos on the battlefield is no less glorious.

The women Warriors:



Sada Kaur, the brave mother-in-law of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Sada Kaur, the mother-in-law of teenaged Ranjit Singh, shadowed her son-in-law in all his major engagements against the Mughals. She is remembered as one of the greatest generals of her time even in the Afghan records.

Rani Sahib Kaur, sister of the infant ruler Sahib Singh of Patiala, successfully defended her brother's kingdom against the attacks of the Marathas, Afghans and European adventurers like George Thompson and chased them away from the battlefield. From the Patiala house come also many names including: Rani Fato, wife of Rani Aus Kaur; and Rani Sahib Kaur.

Rani Desa of Nabha, Daya Kaur of Ambala's; Mai Bhago Ji and many more...

ੳ	ਊੜਾ (ūrā) u, ū, o	ਅ	ਐੜਾ (airā) a, ā, ai, au	ੲ	ਈੜੀ (īī) i, ī, e	ਸ	ਸੱਸਾ (sas'sā) sa [sə]	ਹ	ਹਾਹਾ (hāhā) ha [hə]
ਕ	ਕੱਕਾ (kakkā) ka [kə]	ਖ	ਖੱਖਾ (khakhkhā) kha [kʰə]	ਗ	ਗੱਗਾ (gaggā) ga [gə]	ਘ	ਘੱਘਾ (ghaggā) gha [gə]	ਙ	ਙੱਙਾ (ṅāṅṅā) ṅa [ŋə]
ਚ	ਚੱਚਾ (caccā) ca [tʃə]	ਛ	ਛੱਛਾ (chachchā) cha [tʃʰə]	ਜ	ਜੱਜਾ (jajjā) ja [dʒə]	ਝ	ਝੱਝਾ (jhajjā) jha [dʒə]	ਞ	ਞੱਞਾ (ṅāṅṅā) ṅa [ŋə]
ਟ	ਟੈਂਕਾ (tairikā) ṭa [tʰə]	ਠ	ਠੱਠਾ (thaththā) ṭha [tʰə]	ਡ	ਡੱਡਾ (daddā) ḍa [dʰə]	ਢ	ਢੱਢਾ (dhaddā) ḍha [dʰə]	ਣ	ਣਾਣਾ (ṅāṅṅā) ṇa [ṇə]
ਤ	ਤੱਤਾ (tattā) ta [tʰə]	ਥ	ਥੱਥਾ (thaththā) ṭha [tʰə]	ਦ	ਦੱਦਾ (daddā) da [dʰə]	ਧ	ਧੱਧਾ (dhaddā) dha [dʰə]	ਨ	ਨੱਨਾ (nannā) na [nə]
ਪ	ਪੱਪਾ (pappā) pa [pə]	ਫ	ਫੱਫਾ (phaphphā) pha [pʰə]	ਬ	ਬੱਬਾ (babbā) ba [bə]	ਭ	ਭੱਭਾ (bhabbā) bha [bə]	ਮ	ਮੱਮਾ (mam'mā) ma [mə]
ਯ	ਯੱਯਾ (yayyā) ya [jə]	ਰ	ਰਾਰਾ (rārā) ra [rə]	ਲ	ਲੱਲਾ (lallā) la [lə]	ਵ	ਵੱਵਾ (vavvā) va [və]	ੜ	ੜਾੜਾ (rārā) ra [rə]
ਸ਼	ਸ਼ੱਸ਼ਾ (śasśā) śa [ʃə]	ਖ਼	ਖ਼ੱਖ਼ਾ (kḥakhkhā) kḥa [xə]	ਗ਼	ਗ਼ੱਗ਼ਾ (gaggā) gā [ɣə]				
ਜ਼	ਜ਼ੱਜ਼ਾ (zazzā) za [zə]	ਫ਼	ਫ਼ੱਫ਼ਾ (faffā) fa [fə]	ਲ਼	ਲ਼ੱਲ਼ਾ (lallā) la [lə]				

Punjabi Culture is one of the oldest and richest cultures in world history, reflected in its folk dances, folk songs, arts and crafts. The craft which was handed down from mother to daughter is slowly disappearing. Let's remember as much as we can.

Be Proud.



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