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## Development Of The Artistic And Cultural Traditions In Patiala State (1820-1947)

The Contribution of Patiala Rulers towards development of Art and Cultural Traditions in Patiala

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### Abstract

From the earliest years of Patiala becoming a state, the Maharajas of Patiala made an effort to maintain friendly ties with the East India Company. Because of these relationships, the state's calm was preserved, and the rulers were highly educated and westernised. As a result they were able to provide able patronage to works of social, economic and modern improvement and development. The arts and culture at Patiala that was founded and flourished under the patronage of these monarchs included singing, painting, architecture, and photography. The cultural pulse of Patiala is still present in the monuments, art and cultural nuances of the state which make it distinctive and special, forming the melodic symphony of the past.

This research paper aims to examine the cultural significance of the Royal city of Patiala. The impact of Patiala on the development of Punjabi culture has been enormous, and the various types of craft evolution, diversification, tradition, and local customs, as well as their connections to lifestyle, dress, jewellery, diet, and accessories that reflect royalty, class, pride, and cultural wealth, are now a part of Punjabi culture.

**Keywords:** Patiala, Maharajas, Culture, Art, Punjab

## **The Phulkian States of Punjab**

With the takeover of territory by the Sikh Sardars in the 1750s, the Afghan governors, administrators, and minor officials assigned by Ahmad Shah Abdali to control various sections of the Punjab were directly motivated to be removed from their positions.

The Phulkian States are comprised of the three indigenous states of Patiala, Jind, and Nabha in the Punjab. These are the most significant Cis-Sutlej states. The majority of territory in these states is between 29° and 30° North and 74° and 77° Fahrenheit. Its western and eastern boundaries consist of the District of Ludhiana, the Cities of Ambala and Karnal, the Districts of Rohtak and Hissar, and the Cities of Ferozpur and Faridkot State. This was the original homeland of the Phulkian family. It was believed that its southernmost half, in and around the mediaeval town of Jind, was situated inside the sacred boundaries of Kurukshetra. In addition to stretching north into the Pawadh or "East" and south across the Ghaggar into the Nardak, it is mostly located in the vast desert or wooded area known as the "Jangal" Desert. Due to the dispersed and interconnected nature of their respective territories, the three states as a whole have a somewhat continuous terrain.

Phulkian rulers focused their attention, energy, and ability on the revitalization and expansion of that distinct place and a few other significant places under their direct or indirect control. Emerging from this position, they established circumstances to assure stability, which not only dictated the expansion of towns and cities, but also demonstrated rivalry and cooperation among the many rulers in terms of the administration of town and city affairs. For the protection of the area and the populace, they built new forts and repaired the older ones.

### **Relations of Patiala rulers with the British**

The British Proclamations of 1809 and 1811 established the paramountcy over the Punjab states in 1809. The East India Company had authority over the subordinate colonies throughout the first part of the nineteenth century. In the instance of Patiala, the rulers were aware of the burgeoning British authority and ingratiated themselves with the new power by offering British assistance during the 1857 insurrection. The three Phulkian republics of Patiala, Nabha, and Jind once enjoyed a position of equality in the eyes of the supreme ruler owing to their shared ancestry. The Sanads of 1860, the concessions made during the Anglo-Sikh war, the Proclamations of 1809 and 1811, and other documents all indicate a generally similar approach. Of all the Phulkian kings, Patiala's provided the supreme authority with unwavering loyalty. They were willing to put their state's resources at the British government's disposal and always upheld their end of the bargain.

## Contribution of the Patiala Rulers

Patiala State was formed by Raja Ala Singh, a member of the Sidhu Jat family of Rajput lineage. Baba Ala Singh, who founded Patiala in 1762, is credited with establishing the Patiala state. After Maharaja Amar Singh, Maharaja Sahib Singh (1781-1813), Karam Singh (1813-1845) and Maharaja Narinder Singh (1845-1862) arrived to Patiala Gaddi one after the other. The largest contribution to the development of Patiala was made by Maharaja Narinder Singh, but the state acquired fame and status during Bhupinder the Magnificent (1891-1938) as one of the prominent Punjab States under the British Colonial Government. Ala Singh Sidhu-Brar was the first ruler of Patiala's princely state (1691–1765). Born into a Jat Sikh family in 1691 in Phul, in the present Bathinda district of the Punjab, to Chaudhary Ram Singh of Phulkian Misl, he resided in the contemporary Bathinda district. His father had six children, from oldest to youngest: Dunna, Subha, Ala, Bakha, Budha, and Lunha. After the First Battle of Panipat in 1526 A.D., Babur first gave the Chowdhriat of Misl to his grandfather Brahm.

Narinder Singh, who had a strong eye for painting and a highly aesthetic approach to all forms of art, is solely responsible for the growth of creative endeavours. He was a kind and caring contributor to Patiala's growth and success. He erected the iconic Banarsi Bagh Baradari and Old Sheesh Mahal. It stands out among the magnificent palaces that all of the North Indian monarchs have constructed. Here, expert labourers, masons, artisans, and architects did their utmost to establish a Rajasthani-style environment.

It is important to note that the majority of architectural monuments were constructed during the reigns of Narinder Singh (1845-62) and his son Mohinder Singh (1862-76). Both were notable and generous benefactors of the arts. Through minority administrations, the construction of railroads, and regulations governing posts, money, and extradition, the supreme authority gradually expanded its controls. Equally effective forms of control were ceremonial Darbars, visits from the Viceroy, the regional governor, and the Political Agent, as well as the awarding of titles, salutes, and other honours.

In 1875, Patiala achieved the greatest level of academic relevance in all of Punjab by establishing Mahindra Institution, the city's first degree-granting college. During Rajinder Singh's and Bhupinder Singh's administrations, sports promotion reached a new height.

## Achievements of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala was renowned for both his wealth and athletic talent. His polo and cricket teams, Patiala XI and Patiala Tigers, were among the best in India. He was an avid fan of sports. Between 1915 and 1937, he featured in 27 first-class cricket matches and headed the Indian cricket team that travelled to England in 1911. He was a member of the Marylebone Cricket Club during the 1926–1927 season. He presented the Ranji Trophy to Kumar Shri Ranjitsinhji, Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, in his honour. The Maharaja of Porbandar succeeded him two weeks before India's first Test tour of England in 1932, when he withdrew

owing to health concerns. The bulk of the Chail Military School's buildings were donated to the Indian government by the Maharaja of Patiala.

Sir Bhupinder Singh founded the State Bank of Patiala in 1917. From 1926 until 1931, he served as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes. Patiala saw many of his socially and economically beneficial changes, including as the establishment of institutions and railway links. In 1934, Yuvraj also appeared in one Test for India. His two sons, Raja Bhalindra Singh and Maharaja Yadavindra Singh, were also first-class cricket players. Later on, Raja Bhalindra Singh served as the president of the Indian Olympic Association. Bhupinder Singh died on March 23, 1938.

By participating in many British operations in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Patiala Imperial Service Infantry and Patiala Imperial Service Lancers displayed their valour and commitment. In 1910, Punjabi was proclaimed the official language.

Maharani Bakhtawar Kaur was the senior most queen of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh and the representative of the Maharanis of India. During Queen Mary's journey to India, she gave her a lovely necklace. The Patiala ruby choker fashioned by Cartier in 1931 was an exquisite platinum choker necklace adorned with diamonds, pearls, and rubies. The Maharanis had additional jewellery that was one-of-a-kind and among the most exquisite of the period. When Bhupinder Singh ascended to the throne, a necklace composed of valuable diamonds that the House of Cartier created in 1928 at the Maharaja's request became part of the state of Patiala. The necklace was composed of five chains and a collar. The necklace contains 2,930 diamonds, including the seventh-largest diamond in the world at the time, the "De Beers" diamond. Additionally, the necklace has six rubies and seven additional big diamonds weighing between 18 and 73 carats apiece.

### **Abolition of Patiala State and Merger with India**

When Maharaja Bhupindra Singh died in 1938, Yadvindra Singh became the next king. Yadavindra Singh agreed to the union of the princely state with India on May 5, 1948. Prior to the merging of East Punjab with Punjab in 1956, he served as Rajpramukh of both the new Indian state of Patiala and the East Punjab States Union. After the partition of India, he created Yadavindra Public School on the model of Aitcheson College Lahore. Sir Yadavindra Singh gave Lal Bagh Palace to the school and also founded the Yadavindra Public School in Mohali. After 1956, he maintained his career, serving India as a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly from 1956 to 1957 and to UNESCO in 1958. He served sporadically as the head of the Indian mission to the FAO from 1959 to 1969.

His son Captain Amarinder Singh, a politician with the old Congress who is now a member of the Bhartiya Janata Party and who served as Chief Minister of the Indian State of Punjab from 2002 to 2007 and again from 2017 to 2021, succeeded him as head of the family. Yadavinder's daughter, Heminder Kaur married the former Indian minister of international affairs, K. Natwar Singh.

## Development of Art and paintings in Patiala

During the reign of the Maharajas, the drawings and paintings with a Sikh theme flourished as a number of well-known painters from Rajasthan moved to the Punjab where they found greater patronage and protection after fleeing the Kingdoms of Rajasthan due to ongoing unrest and wars. Sikh kings eventually gained control over the hill kingdoms. The Pahari painters themselves addressed the Sikh patrons between the years 1810 and 1830, which suggested a significant interest in the patrons' thoughts at Lahore Court.

These pahari painters began to focus on subjects pertaining to the Sikh religion, the Sikh nobility, and the Sikh aristocracy. Sikh painting survived as a successor of the Kangra School of Painting. It consists mostly of portraits, themes of ten Gurus and stories of Janamsakhis. Guler artists were the first ones to paint Sikh paintings around 1815-1820 to portray ten Gurus. Lahore, Amritsar, Kapurthala, Patiala etc. patronized Sikh painting. Patiala was one of the main centres of painting which flourished under the liberal patronage of Maharaja Karam Singh (1813-45) and his son Maharaja Narinder Singh (1848-1862). In the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, artists like Kehar Singh, Kapur Singh excelled in art of portraiture.

## Development of Architecture

The Motibagh Palace in Patiala was designed on the pattern of Shalimar of Lahore with terraces, fountains and canals followed by the building of Sheesh Mahal. The Mohindra College, one of the oldest educational institutions of Northern India was built by Maharaja Mahendra Singh (1862-1876). The Baradari Palace, which now houses Punjab State Archives, was built by the next ruler, Maharaja Rajinder Singh (1876-1900) as his residence. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh shifted to Moti Bagh and Maharaja Yadavindra Singh made Patiala a city of gardens, palaces and number of magnificent buildings like the Army Headquarters, the Bank of Patiala etc. The rulers of Patiala were patrons of learning, art, architecture and music. Patiala's style of architecture has a peculiarity of its own. It was no doubt borrowed largely from the Rajput and Mughal style, but its beauty and elegance are moulded according to the local colouring.

On the model of Shalimar of Lahore, Narinder Singh erected the Old Moti Bagh Palace for five lakhs of rupees, the gurudwara in front of it for one and a half lakhs, and the Dewan-e-Khas for five lakhs. In 1847, he also created the Sheesh Mahal in the back of the Moti Bagh Palace, which has the world-famous frescos with a stylistic attachment to the Pahari paintings of Gulay Nemack Guler and Kangra, when the art of painting and poetry was at its pinnacle. The religious passion of the king is reflected in these frescoes depicting the Hindu Pantheon. Although Narinder Singh attempted to replicate the Shalimar of Lahore, he ended up with superb and authentic Rajasthani architecture, since the majority of the builders, masons, architects, and craftsmen were from Rajasthan

## Contribution to Music

In actuality, Raja Narinder Singh developed the Patiala gharana between 1823 and 1862. Ustad Tanrus Khan Mian Kalu Khan also instructed this gharana's performers. This led to the popularity of this style among the sons and followers of this gharana. Being a fan of music, Maharaja Patiala Bhupindera Singh promoted classical music, which led to the rich development of Patiala gharana, one of the most well-known musical styles in the classical genre. The Patiala gharana of music rose to national popularity thanks to the Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's support, who had a great passion for music.

The nobility of Patiala was famous for their patronage of musicians and as avid music fans. The emperors were famous for their love of dance, music, and the arts. Patiala kingdom supported several artists who were banished from other courts owing to the dwindling wealth of the monarchs or political circumstances. The royal house of Patiala sponsored the only gharana today recognised in popular culture as being particularly associated with Patiala. Even while his successors, who also performed semi-classical genres such as thumri, tappa, and dadra, did not attain the same level of recognition as Late Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, their style, which is noted for its rich ornamentation, became renowned for the delivery of intricate but flowing taans.

In its infancy, Indian classical music was formed by the Patiala gharana, which is well-known for its accomplishment. It was first sponsored by the Maharajas of Patiala. The gharana is renowned for its thumri, ghazals, and Khayals, among other genres. From the Patiala gharana, which Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and Ustad Ali Baksh Khan revitalised, a number of renowned performers emerged. In the 18th century, the royal family of Patiala sponsored them. This gharana's members often choose to study Ektaal and Teentaal.

Finally, after relocating there, Tanras Khan asked Ali Baksh and Fateh Ali to study with him. The two young Khayaliyas were recognised as outstanding musicians after twenty years of education. Haddu Khan's gayaki madhya laya, Mubarak Ali Khan's rapid and complicated tans, Tanras Khan's Vilambit style and rhythmic changes, and Behram Khan's raga structure had been assimilated. In response to an invitation to play at Rajindra Singh's court in Patiala, Ali Baksh, Fateh Ali, and the renowned female singer Gokhi Bai travelled from Delhi to Patiala.

When their patron Maharaja Rajindra Singh died in 1900, the two singers, then known as Aliya - Fattu, were forced to leave the Patiala Darbar since their successor was a minor and sponsorship was discontinued until he attained legal age. Ali Baksh went to Tonk, near Jaipur, in order to serve as the nawab's court musician. The nawab bestowed upon him the honorific title "General," and thereafter the musician was known as Ali Baksh General. As soon as Maharaja Bhupindra Singh (d. 1938) gained the throne, he returned to Patiala. Since he was a fervent patron of the arts, Maharaja Bhupindra Singh introduced a new form of music and dance and maintained a company of artists. According to the Patiala gharana, its musical traditions incorporate those of the Delhi, Gwalior, and Jaipur-Atrauli gharanas.

The Patiala gharana is famous for its ghazal, Thumri, and Khayal styles of singing. It was influenced by and drew inspiration from four musical gharanas: Delhi, Gwalior, Reva, and Jaipur. Among the several vocal gharanas of Hindustani classical music on both sides of the India-Pakistan border, the Patiala gharana is believed to have the largest and most distinguished presence. In the second part of the 20th century, the Patiala form of b khayal singing diverged into two distinct genres. Ustad Amanat Ali Khan (1922–1974) and his brother Ustad Bade Ali Khan were exposed to a global style of music (1935-2017). Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1902–1968) and his brother Ustad Barkat Ali Khan (1907–1963) are often considered to be the two most influential exponents of the Patiala gharama.

### **Cultural legacy of Patiala**

The State of Punjab possesses a rich cultural heritage in the form of its famous forts, palaces of Maharajas, the wet lands, the museums and the historical Gurudwaras- associated with the Sikh Gurus. The most vibrant and lively people of Punjab who despite being the most mobile community of India have kept their tradition alive through folk songs and dance like *Giddha*, *Bhangra* and *Jindwa* etc. The manifestation of culture, which has been passed from generation to generation like the monuments, the rites, the rituals, the costumes, the fairs and festivals, ultimately become the cultural heritage of that place.

Historically, the Patiala Salwar was the customary dress worn by the King of Patiala. Since the turn of the century, men no longer wear dresses, but the classic women's Patiala salwar has been updated with new cuts and designs. Since the Patiala Salwar employs more fabric and is more intricate and extravagant, it has been synonymous with opulence and extravagance and is still regarded as the most regal of salwars. Patiala, one of the royal cities of Punjab, is famous for its turban, paranda, peg, jutti, and Patialashahi salwars. Golden and elaborately adorned, the traditional Punjabi jutti oozes beauty in an undeniable way. Patiala, Malerkotla, Muktsar, Ludhiana, Malout, Fazilka, Faridkot, and Abohar contributed to the production of elaborately designed Punjabi juttis.

### **Conclusion**

The Punjab princes made enormous contributions to regional, local, and sub-local history and culture, regardless of their political status during the most pivotal period in Indian history. These princely republics of the Cis-Sutlej region created a number of noteworthy traditional musical, architectural, and artistic assets. In the courts of the Phulkian Sardars, brilliant poets and writers were honoured, gifted musicians flourished, and renowned artists found refuge. Patiala became one of the most prominent princely kingdoms in India primarily as a result of the strong personalities of its rulers and their ability to effectively build tight links with the highest levels of the British officialdom in India and the colonial administration in London. Over the course of nearly two centuries, it was repeatedly demonstrated that the state of Patiala had a close and unique relationship with the colonial British Indian government, and that its rulers were on good terms with the British in fields as

diverse as the Army, civil administration, sports, art, and culture, etc. In this sense, the contribution of the Patiala kings is the most significant factor in the elevation of Patiala's status in the eyes of the colonial authority.

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