

Shared Religious Spaces in Sindh:

A Case Study of Udero Lal



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No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the Department of Anthropology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Field of Anthropology, Department of Anthropology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

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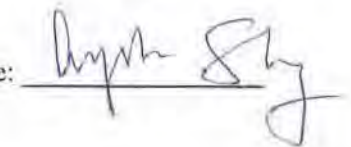
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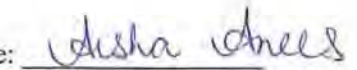
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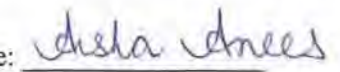
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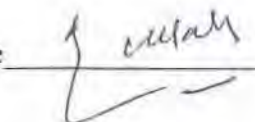
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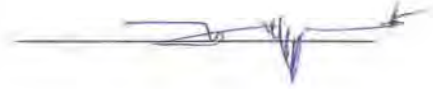
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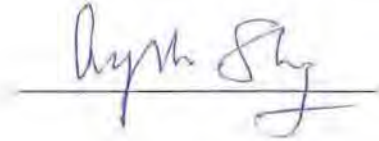
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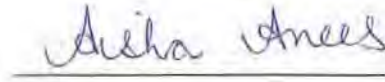
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DRSML QAU

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Abbreviations

ATN	Awaz Television Network
ASI	Assistant Sub-Inspector
AD	Anno Domini
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CM	Chief Minister
DC	Deputy Commissioner
FIR	First Information Report
GP	Government of Pakistan
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
KG	Kilogram
KM	Kilometer
KTN	Kawish Television Network
MNA	Member of National Assembly
MPA	Member of Provisional Assembly
PHC	Pakistan Hindu Council
PMIC	Pakistan Mashaikh Ittihad Council
SMTJ	Sheva Mandly Trust Juhle Lal
RSS	Rāṣṭrīya Svayamsevaka Saṅgha
SSP	Senior Superintendent of Police
SP	Superintendent of Police
SHO	Station House Officer
STN	Sindh Television Network
THQ	Taluk Headquarter
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UC	Union Council

Abstract

This Ph.D case study takes account of the shared religious space of the shrine of Udero Lal situated in District Matiari, Sindh, Pakistan. In the study, I have conducted ethnographic research methods. The shared religious heritage shrine of Udero Lal established under the name of saint Udero Lal has a dual identity and is venerated by religious community of both the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims. In the popular belief culture and conception in Sindh, it is generally presumed that Udero Lal shrine's shared space is a symbol of interfaith harmony, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence among the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims in Sindh. The shared and syncretic shrine complex of Udero Lal contains both the Mosque and the temple that represents its dual and hybrid identity and an „extrinsic source of information“ in the sense of religious symbol (Geertz, 1971) for interfaith communal relations between Sindhi Muslim and Sindhi Hindus. The saint Udero Lal is considered a god by Hindus and revered as a saint by Muslims. This study finds out that the apparent harmony and tolerance in the form of sacred visitation of the shrine have kept the observers obscure the deep and internal contestation between the practitioners belonging to two faith groups. The study reveals that the shrine space contestation and conflict takes place between the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims religious groups mainly on the Udero Lal's identity, ownership, economy and property. At present, the shared shrine space of Udero Lal has become the hotly contested and tolerance is seen to be damaged. For instance, the contestation and conflict have led to the physical transformation of the second part of the shared space *balanbo sahib* (sacred water well) where Shiv temple and equestrian structures have been constructed in 2016 and 2014 by the Hindu patrons of the shrine. Moreover, in the year 2020 the Hindu patrons of the shrine have also constructed the new main gate with figure depictions at the second part of the Udero Lal shrine complex. In these religious depictions, the statue of the *Pallo* (fish) on the top of the gate, the symbol of *Om* on the center of the gate, a trident (*trisul*) sacred sign on the posts of the top corner, and Swastika on the below posts of the corner of the gate have been fixed. This study further finds out that the shift in the main and the first part of the shared space of Udero Lal took place in the year 2017. In this shift the Hindu patrons attempted to transform the main shared

space of the Udero Lal, and they fixed the declaration of the Udero Lal notice board as Hindu Pir inside the shrine. On the other hand, the contestation on the part of Muslim community is also noticed in this study. The Muslim patrons of this shared shrine space of Udero Lal have also placed the holy Quran inside the shrine. Further, they have fastened the Islamic religious sticker inside the shrine walls. The Muslim group has also made the Mosque functional. The whole shrine complex of Udero Lal was of the white color historically over the generation but currently the Muslim patrons have transformed mosque into the green color. Despite all this the contestation and transformation have taken place at the shared shrine of Udero Lal, this study argues that the shared religious heritage identity of Udero Lal shrine complex display the sustenance and continuity of tolerance but it seems in a fragile condition day by day. In this context, my study argues that at present the shared religious space of Udero Lal shrine is tacitly practiced. This study mainly takes up anthropologist Robert M. Hayden's (2016) theoretical framework by specifically looking at the concepts of antagonistic tolerance and competitive sharing of religious sites and spaces. Anthropologically, this study has also investigated the process of rituals, symbols, and oral tradition of the Udero Lal shrine.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

UderoLal¹ Shrine is situated in district Matiari, 45 km from Hyderabad in Sindh Pakistan; constructed like a white castle that was built by the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan, Akbar's grandson. Shah Jahan, pursuing in the footsteps of his grandfather Jalaluddin Akbar, took a keen personal interest in erecting this landmark. He called skilled artisans and workers from Bengal and Kashmir to develop an exciting and innovative structure. It was constructed in 1616. The structure, a unique monument was administered in the long run under the management of the Mughals. It resulted from a combination of two diverse yet similar to the styles of Islamic designs, developed as the final abode of Udero Lal (Boivin, 2016). Udero Lal was born in 1007 as Vikram Samvat (according to the Hindi calendar (CE 950)²(ibid.: 2018, p.48). Udero Lal's birth place was Nasarpur as per the records, a town 35 km from Udero Lal's shrine. First is the shrine's domed an engineering structure, an intense component of the Udero Lal hallowed place. The other style can be seen in the burial place, with the bulbous vault, it was replicated from neighboring Persia's design. The dexterity with which these two styles have been amalgamated at the altar of Udero Lal, has helped in creating a structure of extraordinary and unmatched magnificence. A strengthened divider encompasses the sanctum, with three primary doors opening into a roomy patio whose immense measurements permit large rooms to shape its borders, giving haven to its pioneers.

¹According to local people „Udero“ means *Uder* (fly) in Sindhi. Whenever, any human being faced trouble, he would call Udero Lal and the latter would reach at the spot in no time to resolve the problem. Udero is a Sanskrit word which means close to the heart, near water or one who has sprung from the water. Lal is a noun in Sindhi which means *gahro* (red) or *pyaro* (lovely), Udero Lal was very much endearing to his mother, so she called him *munjho Lal* (my beloved).

² Udero Lal's date of birth has not been confirmed yet by authors, however, it is mentioned in the main source of „Shri Amar Udero Lal Sahib Jee Janam Sakhi“ by Talhiram Asodumal 1926, which is known as a main source of book from the Udero Lal's Hindu *gaadi nasheen* (caretaker) Mata Beena that Udero Lal is avatar of Varun Dev and he appeared from Indus River 1057 years ago. Further, Burton in his book „Sind Revisited“ mentioned the date of the birth of Udero Lal, A.H.341 (A.D. 952) (1877, p.379).

Map of Sindh



Source: DC office, Distt: Matiyari 2017

The rooms are enhanced by arcades, sharp curves, angled breaks, domed vaults, and other engineering and ornamental spectacles. The outside dividers are dovetailed into boards with dazed curves and squares, making a three-dimensional impact. The three primary entryways, confronting north, south, and east, are among the primary engineering components. Each entryway comprises three curves, on which rests a bulbous vault.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the shared space of the Udero Lal Shrine complex.

(Source: Sarfraz, 2019)

The Udero Lal shrine's common space is shared by both Sindhi Muslims and Sindhi Hindu communities. Muslims worship him as a Saint and Hindus venerate him as an Avatar. Hindus also view the shrine of Udero Lal as a pure place of Hindu worship and Muslims consider it Sunni Sufi Dargah³. Others consider Udero Lal as a syncretic

³ Dargah is a Persian word, meaning court. It is especially used for the Sufi shrines where saint's tombs are constructed, and this word is used for the various institutions of the Sufi. In Sindh, native Sindhis use dargah word especially for the Sufi shrines or saint's tombs such as Sachal Sarmast, Shah Inayat, Rakhyal Shah, Qalandar Shahbaz, Bhattai, Shakhi Hashim Shah, Rukun-Din Shah, Dargah Syed Muhammad Shah Jilani, Shah Waryo, Meo Syed Haji, Pir Sarhandi, Fakeer Nooh Hothiani, Udero Lal (Shaikh Muhamamd Tahir), Syed Muhammad Shah' Dadu Pir, Gul Ismail Ghot and Syed Dino Peer Dargah.

shrine that promotes tolerance, peace, and harmony in Sindh; nevertheless, the contestation exists at the shared space of Udero Lal between both groups. Udero Lal is also a fundamental god loved by the Sindhi Hindus of Sindh, an excellent encapsulation of the Indus River (*Sindhu*). The Sindhi Hindus of Pakistan in current times thought he was a symbol of the Vedic god Varun, just as the thinking goes in India. The Hindus believe that Udero Lal belongs to the Hindu Lohana⁴ caste. This belief finds its strength particularly when the locals in these spots revel in Syncretism, the appearance highlighted at one site of with practices or convictions related to more than one religion. Shared space⁵ term has been used in various ways for the different religious places, but as a socially known space, it can be shared with all ordinary people who can feel secure and express their feelings because shared space is not geographic. It is constructed keeping in view social and cultural aspects (Rallings, 2014).

⁴Lohana is the primary branch of Hindus station of Sindh. It some what began from Punjab, where they adored various gods like Udero Lal, the Indus River, Guru Nanak and Holy Sufis. There is likelihood that they were divided into two groups in the eighteenth century, namely the Amils and Bhaee band. The last gathering consisted of shippers and brokers, while the individuals from the primary gathering essentially served in the organizations of the Kalhoras, Talpurs and the British. They were in this manner the heft of Sindhi intellectuals and played a notable part in the investigation and establishment of Sufism.

⁵Space of Udero Lal shrine is shared by every caste, creed and coloured people. Hindus and Muslim males and females pay homage at the shared space. Usually, women do not participate in the common functions or ceremonies because of the male presence as well as dominance but they can participate in the *mela* fair of Udero Lal shrine's shared space where they freely visit whole fair till late night. It is believed by the devotees of Udero Lal that shared space is safe for their women, because Udero Lal is watching and is present in every nook and corner of this shared space. Due to his presence no one can harm the women at the shared space of the Udero Lal shrine and they are fully protected.



Aerial view of Udero Lal village and its surroundings.

(Source: Google Earth, 2022)

DRSML

Map of Udero Lal Complex

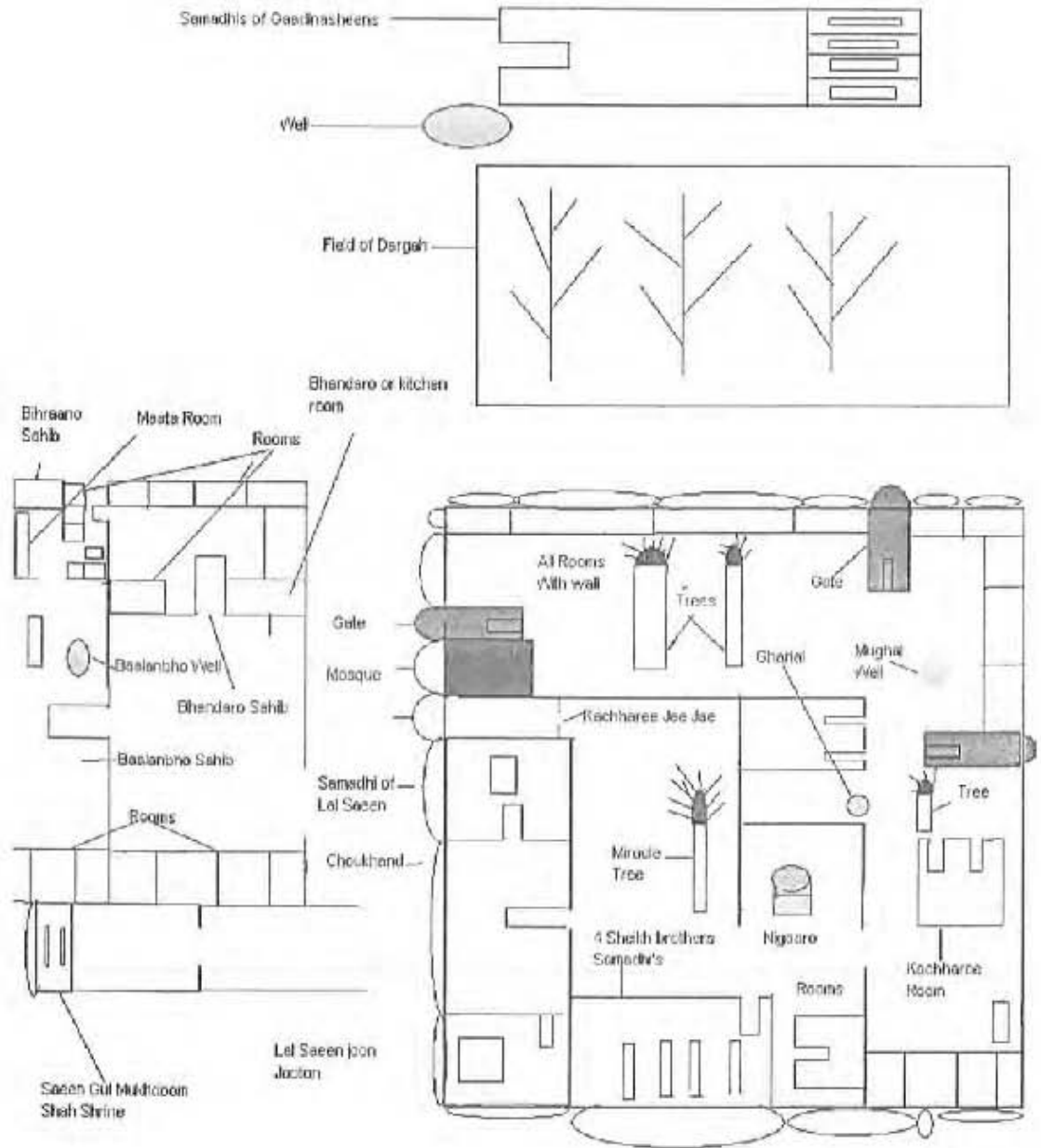


Figure 2 Map of the Udero Lal Complex (Source: Rehman Ali, 2019)

Thatta a historical town in Sindh, was ruled by a despotic ruler named Mirkh Shah after the Arab influence in Sindh . He was a tyrant who ordered the Hindus to accept Islam or leave Sindh. Hindus borrowed some time from Mirkh Shah to contemplate on his decree to accept Islam. All Hindus went to the banks of the Indus River with their Gurus to perform forty days rituals (*challeeha*) to eliminate the cruel despotic ruler Mirkh Shah who had forcibly tried to impose Islamic religion on them (Daduzen, 2018). Udero Lal defeated the Mrikh Shah and saved the Hindus.

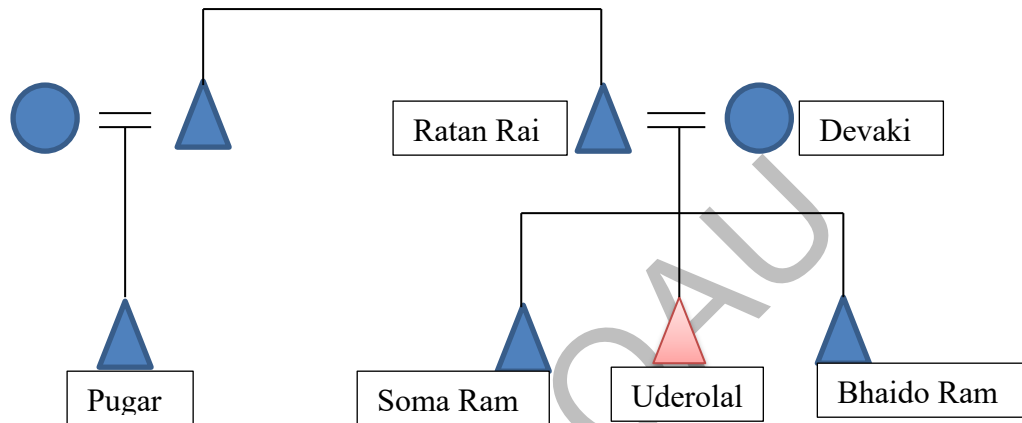
Everyone knows that the Indus River (*Sindhu*)⁶ is regarded as a sacred river for a long time, and the god Varuna had dug its course through it. As far as the study is concerned the Shrine of Udero Lal is the oldest shrine of the Aryan period in the Indus valley. There is poetry in the praise of Indus River that is closely related to its historical role and closeness to the Hindu gods (Saleem, 2012).

Due to the Indus River, the Hindus sect was known as a river's devotee (*Darya Ja Shwak*). The cruel Muslim King of Thatta ordered the devotees of Udero Lal's to accept the true faith within ten days; otherwise, heads of all Pagans would be severed off. Pagans walked over to the Indus River to seek mercy, prayed over there; a man emerged from the water, went directly to the Qazi's court, and asked to go and sit on the water on a *shawl* (a piece of cloth) but without a boat. Qazi accepted his challenge but could not manage it. He was close to drowning when in desperation called out loudly and then Udero Lal saved him. Udero Lal then disappeared and after ten months he took birth in Nasarpur city, which is 14 km from east Hyderabad. Udero Lal had promised that he will be incarnated (take birth) at the home of Ratan Rai, and that promise was fulfilled. The young man who took birth in the home of Ratan Rai at Nasarpur Sindh became the incarnation of the Udero Lal, who transformed into a sign of blessing for the pagans. Udero Lal faced many religious controversies. Finally, when he died, his disciples visited his shrine every month of Chaitya (March, April).

⁶ Indus River has various names in Sindhi such as *Sindhu*, *Mehran jee wadi*, *Dahrti Maa*, *Darya Shah*, *Darya Badshah*, and it is thought to be life line for the Sindh as well as Sindhi peoples. Udero Lal is also called Sindhi Indus River's name such as *Darya Shah Badhah* and *Dolha Darya*.

Yatra, pilgrimages frequently visited his place of death to pay him homage. (Burton R. F., 18 77 [2017]).

Kinship Genealogy of Udero Lal



(Source: Researcher, 2022)

The Hindus held a firm belief that whenever their religion faced a difficult time, the Avatar would appear from the deep waters of the Indus River, fight the enemy Mirkh Shah and save the Hindus and their religion from any damage. Sindhi Hindus prayed on the banks of the Sindhu River and called out Avatar to help them out of the grim situation. As if in answer to the distress call, a man appeared as *Avatar* (Avatar) and he would incarnate from the Indus River and glide on the water surface, with flowing white beard seated on the *Palla* fish and pleaded all Hindus to calm down and not worry, as their guide and savior Udero Lal had born in the home of Rattan in Nasarpur Sindh (which is also in district Matiari now). He would defeat the despotic ruler and bring peace to the land. Udero Lal performed many miracles and saved the entire Hindu community from the genocide of cruel monarch Mirkh Shah (Ramey, 2008).

Udero Lal set a rich example of religious harmony and tolerance among the Hindus and Muslims of Sindh. He set the syncretic example while having the *Mandir*

(temple), Shrine, and *Masjid* (Mosque) all in the same space. After the death of UderoLal, his shrine was also constructed between the temple and Mosque, which was acceptable to both Hindus and Muslims. One part was turned into *Mandir*, while the other appeared like a shrine and belonged to both Hindus and Muslims to enable them to pay homage, which led to religious harmony, peace, and tolerance in Sindh (Kalhor, 2018).

Due to India's partition in 1947, most of the Sindhi Hindu community migrated to India, but despite this exodus, they remain Udero Lal's steadfast devotees. They come to the annual fair (*urs*)⁷ from India regularly and perform their rituals at the annual fair, held every 15th of March or April. The Hindu community celebrates the first three days of the fair; after that, Muslims commemorate at the same shrine⁸ (Paracha, 2015). Udero Lal shrine is near the Indus River and has various nicknames such as Jhule Lal,⁹ Sindhi Bhagwan,¹⁰ Khwaja Khizar,¹¹ or Zinda Pir, Shaikh Tahir,¹² Amar

⁷ Urs is a Arabic word which relates to a wedding ceremony. It is also commemorated as observance of death anniversary of the saint in which *mela* (fair) is held annually. It is conducted for three days and various rituals are performed during the *urs* ceremony at the shrines in Pakistan.

⁸ Apart from the Hindus, influential Muslim landlord Syed Dado Shah of Udero Lal village conducted the one-week annual Muslim fair of Udero Lal outside the complex of Udero Lal in his own land, which is near Udero Lal shrine. However Muslim Syed is neither a follower nor caretaker of the Udero Lal; he is not concerned with any management affairs of the Udero Lal shrine, rather he just arranges the fair for making some profits as part of his business. Muslim Shaikh *Mujawars* (keepers) and Hindu custodians of the Udero Lal Shrine were not involved in Muslim annual fair of Udero Lal.

⁹ The name Jhule Lal was generally befitting and has in like manner become most prevalently perceived 'Jhulan' and this came to be acknowledged as the pet name for the kid. Jhule Lal epithet prominently displays both names, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar and Udero Lal. The initial segment is identified with the action word 'swing', and the second to red shading. It would thus be deciphered as the 'Swinging Red', proposing mobility. It is not known when the articulation began to be utilized, and how it came to be applied to both Lal Shahbaz Qalandar and Udero Lal. In any case, moving is performed for both. Sindhi Hindus consider Lal Shahbaz Qalandar the manifestation of the principled Raja Bharthari, the sibling of King Vikramaditya of Ujjain. He is additionally accepted by the Hindus as a manifestation of Varuna-Vishnu.

¹⁰ According to Sindhi Hindus of Sindh Udero Lal sprung out from the *Sindhu Nadi* (Indus River) water of Sindh on the back of *Palla* fish. He was born in Sindh, he spoke Sindhi language, he gave sermons of worship and looked after the Sindhu as well as his disciples, chose Sindh as his last abode beside the Indus River, therefore he is our Sindhi god.

¹¹ In different Islamic and non-Islamic customs, Khizr is depicted as a courier, prophet, wali, slave or holy messenger, who watches the ocean, reveals mystery information, and helps those in trouble. Udero Lal is likewise called Khwaja Khizr by the Muslims. Hindus call him Jindha Pir or Zindha Pir,

Lal,¹³ Lal Sain, Darya Shah,¹⁴ Darya Badshah, Dulha Darya, Jotyana wara Lal, Udai Chand,¹⁵ Kanlangi wara Lal, Bery wara Lal¹⁶ are different names of the Sufi saint, but prominent known Sufi saints are Shah Abdul Latif Bhattaee, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Shah Inayat, Sachal Sarmast Rakhyaal Shah in Sindh. Hindus and Muslims both are Udero Lal's devotees; as the latter is a saint for the Muslims and Avatar for the Hindus. Despite a dispute over the Udero Lal shrine between the Muslims Shaikh Mujawar¹⁷ and Hindu caretakers, the shrine space is shared by both Hindus and Muslims. Udero Lal's shrine has Hindu *gaadinasheen* Mata Beena and Muslim *sajadasheen*¹⁸ is Ghulam Abass Shaikh Mujawar. Both caretakers are not descendants of the Udero Lal; their forefathers were the keepers of the Udero Lal

his hallowed place is situated in the Bukkur Island Sukkhar, Rohri Sindh, where Hindus and Muslims love him. His holy place is generally found close to water, be it the ocean or the Indus River; he is accordingly the holy person who ensures safety to mariners and boatmen.

¹²Shaikh is an Arabic word meaning senior, which fits in perfectly, comparable to the Persian Peer in Sufism. The term is bestowed upon the people who give profound direction and education, or who head a Sufi request, both terms allude to senior Sufis who are positioned as explicit sorts of institutional experts in Sufi requests. Shaikh Tahir is the name of the Muslim holy person who is loved in a major sanctuary situated in the town of Udero Lal. To some, Shaikh Tahir and Udero Lal allude to a similar appealing figure, one name is given by the Muslims, and the another by the Hindus. To other people, in any case, they are two unmistakable figures, notwithstanding the clique of Shaikh Tahir and Udero Lal is as of now completely isolated, but the love seems undivided.

¹³ Peoples of Nasarpur called the infant Amarlal, which implies undying youngster. A supernatural occurrence from the very day of the introduction of the kid to the world and the support swung forward and backward like the unruly waves of *Sindhu* (Indus).

¹⁴ Daryais Sindhi word, which refers to the Indus River because the Sindhi Hindus of Sindh believed that Udero Lal appeared from the waters of Indus River.

¹⁵Uday (Kanlangi wara Lal) in Sanskrit implies moon-like light; here it implies one who gets light the dimness.

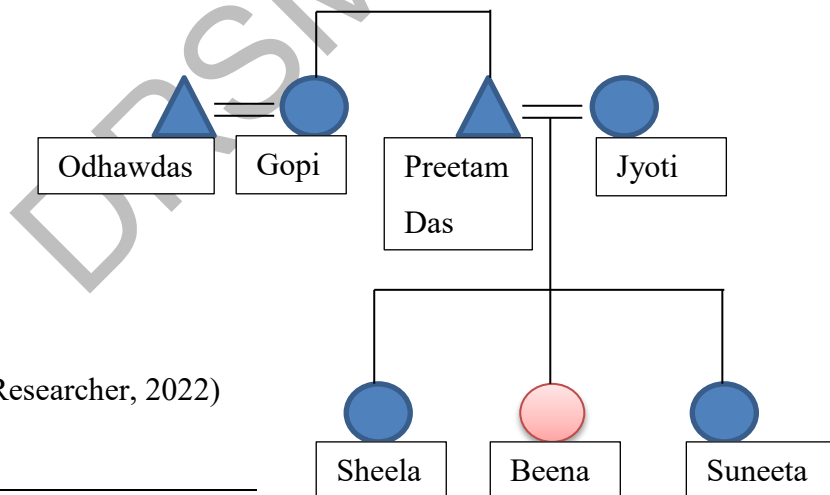
¹⁶ When the boats men and sailors used to drown in the Indus River, they call the Udero Lal to save them; he rushed to save their boats from the Indus River.

¹⁷ There is the Muslims Shaikh who called the *Mujawar* of the Udero Lal Shrine in Sindh. *Mujawar* word has been taken from Arabic for the overseer of a Sufi sanctum. In the writing, there is some of the time an uncertainty between the *mujawar* and the *sajjada nashin* (head of sufi lodge). Now and again, they are just one single individual, and in others, they are two particular people.

¹⁸ *Sajadasheen* is called as a head of the main shrine or dargah; it is also given a common Persian title to the leading sufi order; this word is also used for the spiritual master.

Shrine. Nevertheless, the Hindu keeper declared herself as *gaadinasheen*¹⁹ and the Muslim keeper as a *sajadanasheen* of the Udero Lal Shrine. According to the Hindus version, it is believed that Hindus Thakurs were the actual descendants of the Udero Lal; their 16th *peerhaee* (generation) were the primary caretakers of the Udero Lal shrine, who migrated to India from Sindh and never returned. After the Hindu Thakurs, Hindus *Bawas*²⁰ (attendants) became Udero Lal shrine's leading custodians. Following the migration of the Thakurs to India, first Udhab Dass *bawo* became the 17th generation of Udero Lal shrine's main keeper after his death. Then his son Preetam Das took over the responsibility as the main keeper. After his death, succession continued in his family as his wife Mata Joti became the next main keeper, and after Joti's death, the charge of the main Keeper went to her mother-in-law Mata Gopi. The daughter of Preetam Dass, Mata Sheela then became the main keeper and after her death, her younger sister Mata Beena declared herself as Hindu *gaadinasheen* of Udero Lal. She is currently the main custodian of the Udero Lal Shrine. She continued further as the 17th generation of her family to serve as the Udero Lal shrine's main keeper.

Genealogy of Hindu Gaadinasheen of Uderolal



(Source, Researcher, 2022)

¹⁹ Gaadinasheen is known as a keeper of the throne. It is also called the Sufi Master who heads the Dargah

²⁰ Hindus Bawas were known as a servant (attendants) of the Thakurs at the shrine of the Udero Lal. Now currently Hindu *gaadinasheen* of Udero Lal Mata Beena belonged to *bawas* family, her grand father Udhab Dass *bawo* was attendants of the Thakurs.

Inside view of Uderolal

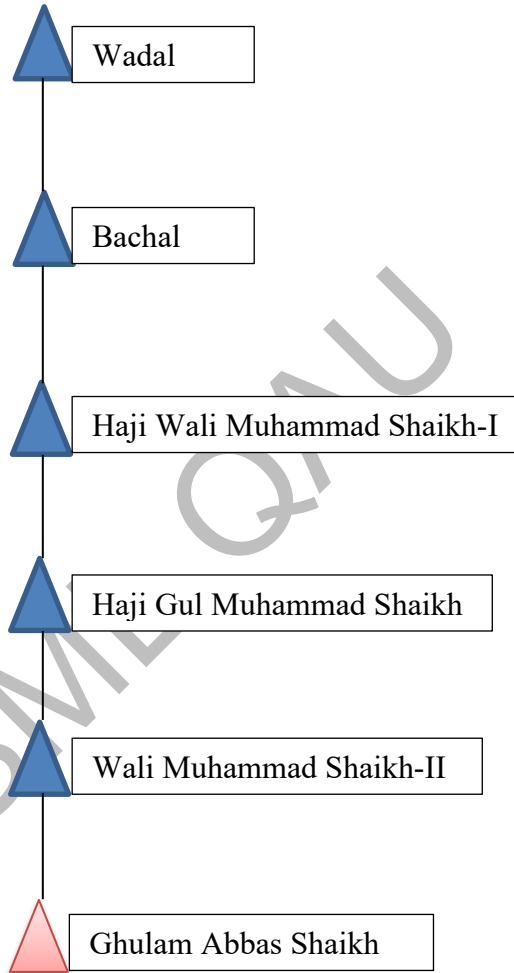


(Source: Researcher, 2022)

Muslims Shaikh *Mujawar*²¹ (attendants) had been old disciples of the Udero Lal. When Udero Lal chose his last abode, they donated land to him and made them his disciples (attendants) forever. The main old Mujawars were Shaikh Mamman, Shaikh Suharo, Shaikh Younis, Muhammad Aalam Shaikh, Bachal Shaikh son of Wadal Shaikh, Hajji Gul Muhammad son of Wali Muhammad Shaikh and Wali Muhammd Shaikh son of Haji Gul Muhammd, Ghulam Abass Sahikh son of Haji Wali Muhammad Shaikh and Muhammad Ismaeel Shaikh, while current Mujawars are Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh, Alee Muhammad Shaikh, Abdullah Shaikh, Ghulam Abass Shaikh (*sajadasheen*), Sarfraz Shaikh, Imtiaz Shaikh, Nazir Shaikh, Ghulam Ali Shaikh, Ali Hassan Shaikh, Jabbar Shaikh, Noor Muhammad, Maan Shakh, Afaque Shaikh, Ayub Shaikh, Sikandar Shaikh, Zulfiqar Shaikh, Khan Muhammad Shaikh, Parvaiz Shaikh, Maku Shaikh and Wahad Shaikh.

²¹ Mujawar is the Arabic word which is used for the caretaker of the shrines. Moreover, Udero Lal Muslim's Shaikh Mujwar used this word as *Buharidar* (who looks after the shrine) of Udero Lal.

Genealogy of Muslim Gaadinasheen of Uderolal



(Source: Researcher, 2022)

1.1 Background of the Study

Udero Lal has dual identities among the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims in Sindh. He is a Varuna god and an avatar (*awatar*) from the Indus River for the Sindhi Hindus. He is known as the savior for the Hindus. He also saved them from the despotic ruler who forced Hindus to convert to Islam. Muslims also venerated Udero Lal as a saint and spiritual leader; he had a Muslim's name; Shaikh Muhammad Tahir. After India's partition, most Sindhi Hindu families left Sindh empty-handed and migrated to India. When Sindhi Hindus reached India, they became aliens in the new land; even the local Indian Hindus did not accept them. Disappointed at the cold attitude of their brethren they finally saw the ray of hope in assembling under the umbrella deity of Udero Lal and thus found the much-needed solace. Sindhi Professor Ram Panjwani²² played an essential role in revitalizing the spirit of Udero Lal in India and succeeded in reviving the same culture, language, literature, and divinity of Udero Lal in India after the partition.

In this research study, I explored the process of regular rituals, contestations and physical transformation in the shared space of Udero Lal. The research study further investigated about tolerance at the Udero Lal shrine's shared space. Hayden's work is worth mentioning which he conducted on Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar's shared site in India; the shrine had a dual identity like Udero Lal. Hayden applied the "Antagonistic Tolerance" (Hayden, 2016, p.10) model. After the partition of India, the shrine of Shah Ramzan was fully physically transformed in 1990 by the Hindu extremists Shiv Sena in India. The shrine is now under Hindu control for conducting all sorts of activities. After this eventful episode, tolerance, co-existence, and interfaith harmony were suspended at Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar's shared site in India. Still, Udero Lal's shrine has been sustaining tolerance in Sindh, Pakistan. A dispute between the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims on the various issues of the Udero Lal shrine's shared

²²Ram Panjwani, a Sindhi educationist, started a boisterous development among the Sindhi Hindus in India to renew Udero Lal as their primary god. He succeeded in his endeavor, and to this day most Sindhi Hindus in India respect a holy person that their older folks had brought from Sindh. He additionally made first Sindhi film on Udero Lal named Jhule Lal in which Sindhis speak about the fundamental supernatural occurrences and theory of Udero Lal just as in Sindhi culture of Sindh.

space has led to a heated debate that unfortunately battered the tolerance at the shared space of Udero Lal.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

This research is a Ph.D case study that investigates the shared sacred space of Udero Lal shrine in District Matiari, Sindh, Pakistan. Udero Lal shrine's shared site is widely known as a social, cultural symbol of unity, interfaith harmony, tolerance, and peaceful co-existence among the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims in Sindh. This saint has dual identities, and he is a river god for Hindus and a saint for Muslims. In this research, I conducted a thorough case study of Udero Lal and used ethnographic methods to investigate the historical background of Udero Lal, who is venerated by Sindhi Hindus and the Sindhi Muslim community alike. I found the oral tradition about the historical background of Udero Lal during the fieldwork. The study investigates the processes of physical transformation at the shared space of Udero Lal. Moreover, this shared space of Udero Lal is subject to conflict between both communities.

The study further looked at about the reflection of tolerance, co-existence, and interfaith harmony at Udero Lal's shrine. Tolerance has become frail due to the contestations, and now the shared space of Udero Lal is tacitly shared, however shared shrine has sustained the tolerance. The study also explored the contestation between the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims on the belief system, dual identities, ownership, economy, authority, and property claim on Udero Lal. Now this shared space has become space of contestations between Hindus and Muslims. This research also unearthed the physical transformation of the shrine, which had recently taken place in the shared space of the Udero Lal.

The tolerance has become injured, and contestation has led to the physical transformation of the second part of the shared space *balanhbo sahib* (sacred water well) where Shiv temple was constructed in 2016 and equestrian was constructed in 2014 by the dominant Hindu group. However, Muslims also placed the Holy Quran into the shrine, and they have fastened the Islamic religious sticker into the shrine of

Udero Lal. They have made the Mosque functional, the whole complex of Udero Lal was white color since the years, but now Muslims have painted the green color to the Mosque. Rituals, performances, and symbols of the shrine of Udero Lal in this study have been thoroughly documented. This research study applied Hayden's model as a theoretical framework 'Competitive Sharing of religious sites and spaces "Antagonistic tolerance " (2016, p.10).

1.3. Research Objectives

- ❖ To investigate co-existence, interfaith harmony, and tolerance at the shared space of Udero Lal.
- ❖ To study the Contestation and transformation at the shared space of Udero Lal.
- ❖ To document the rituals, symbols of the Udero Lal shrine.
- ❖ To find out the Oral traditions of the Udero Lal.

1.4. Significance of the Study

It is the first anthropological research at the doctoral level on Udero Lal shrine's shared space in Sindh. This unique shared religious old site of Udero Lal has not been well documented in the Anthropological and Sociological approach. This research study has highlighted the importance of the shared religious space in which the Udero Lal shrine stands among Mosque and temple at same shared space. This research study has more significance because no one has highlighted the controversy and contestation between Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims at the shared shrine of Udero Lal, which has continued to this day after the departure of Udero Lal. This research is expected to help the national and International Scholars/Social scientists to explore and identify a long-standing unresolved issue dispute between the two religious

groups on Udero Lal. This scholarly work will open new windows of additional research to the national and International Anthropological and Archaeological scholars to explore the shared heritage of the archaeological site of Sindh. Udero Lal's shrine is constructed in the historical complex fort built in the sixteenth century by the Mughals Emperor Shah Jahan, and this fort is in despicable condition nowadays. This research study will further help the Department of Culture, Tourism, and Antiquities, Government of Sindh to promote Udero Lal for the Global Sindhi Hindus diaspora to visit the Udero Lal's shrine-like Kartarpur corridor of Punjab, Pakistan. Furthermore, this study would help the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to preserve the old fort of Udero Lal and the cultural heritage of Sindh, Pakistan. Furthermore, Udero Lal shared space has immense significance that still this syncretic shrine has sustained the tolerance inspite of the competitive sharing and contestations as well as physical transformations.

1.5. Research Questions

1. What makes the Udero Lal a shared religious space, how does the syncretic shrine of Udero Lal promote co-existence, interfaith harmony, and tolerance?
2. What are the reflection of contestation and transformation at the shared space of Udero Lal?

1.6. Research Site/Selection of Locale

The locale of this research study is Udero Lal's shrine in District Matiari, Sindh, Pakistan. There are three official Talukas, Matiari, Saheedabad, Hala. Udero Lal village is Union Council, and the district has a population of approximately 0.7 million. The main occupation of the people is agriculture, small business, dairy farm, fish farming, cattle farming, and Handicrafts. The district Matiari has a heterogeneous population located on the banks of the river Indus. The national highway passes along the district and connects to Karachi's Super Highway. Hyderabad the 2nd largest metropolitan city of Sindh province shares its boundary with district Matiari. The

main inhabitant castes are Syed, Makhdoom Memon, Quershi, Ansari, Rajput, Khaskhali, Abro, Khoso, while Hindu castes settled here are, Behraman, Lohana, Kolhi, Bagri, Bheel, and Meghwar. The shrines of Sufi saints, poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai, Udero Lal, and Talib-ul-Muala are located in this Matiari district.

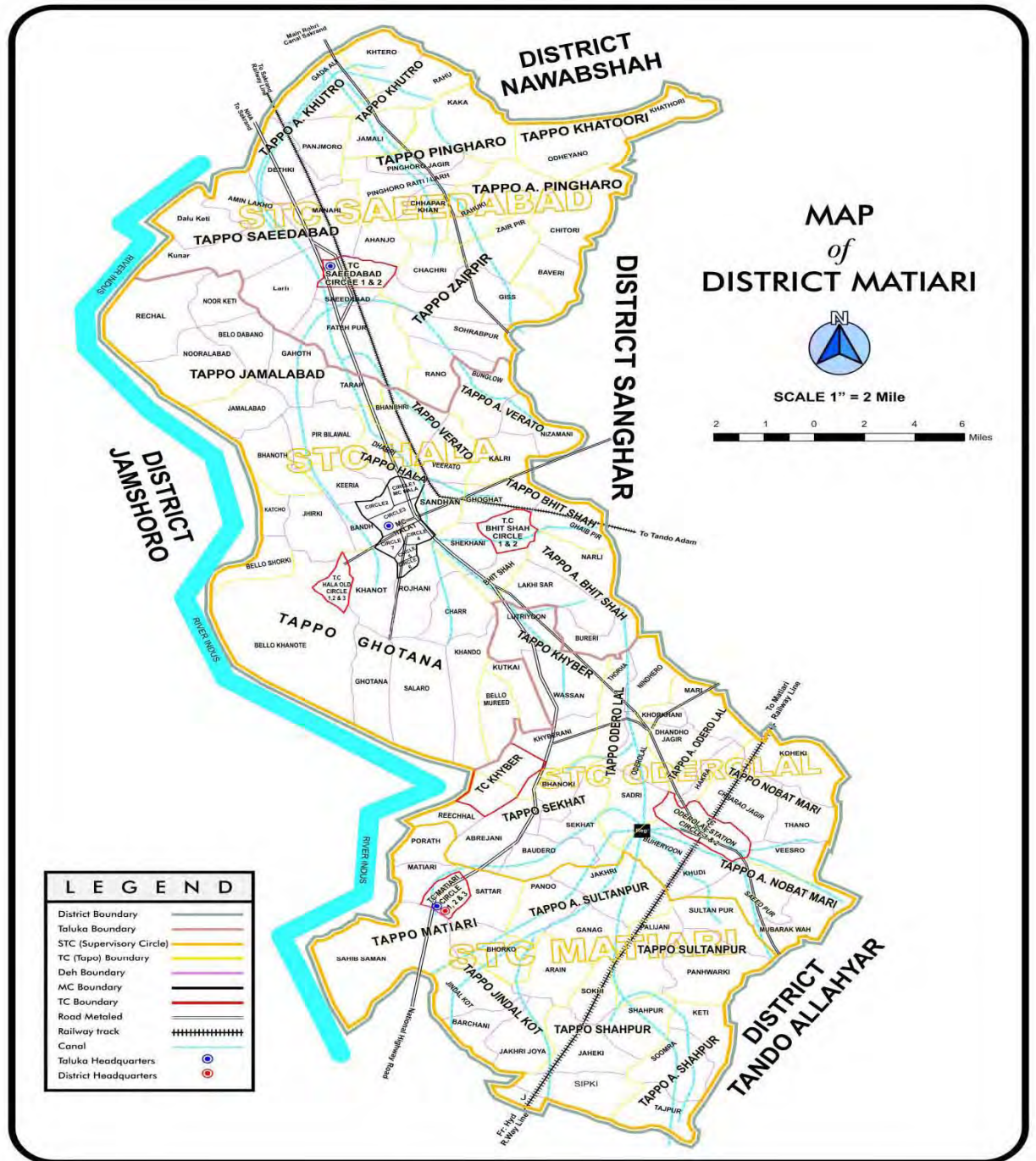


Figure 3: Map of District Matiari

(Source: Deputy Commissioner office Matiari, 2019)

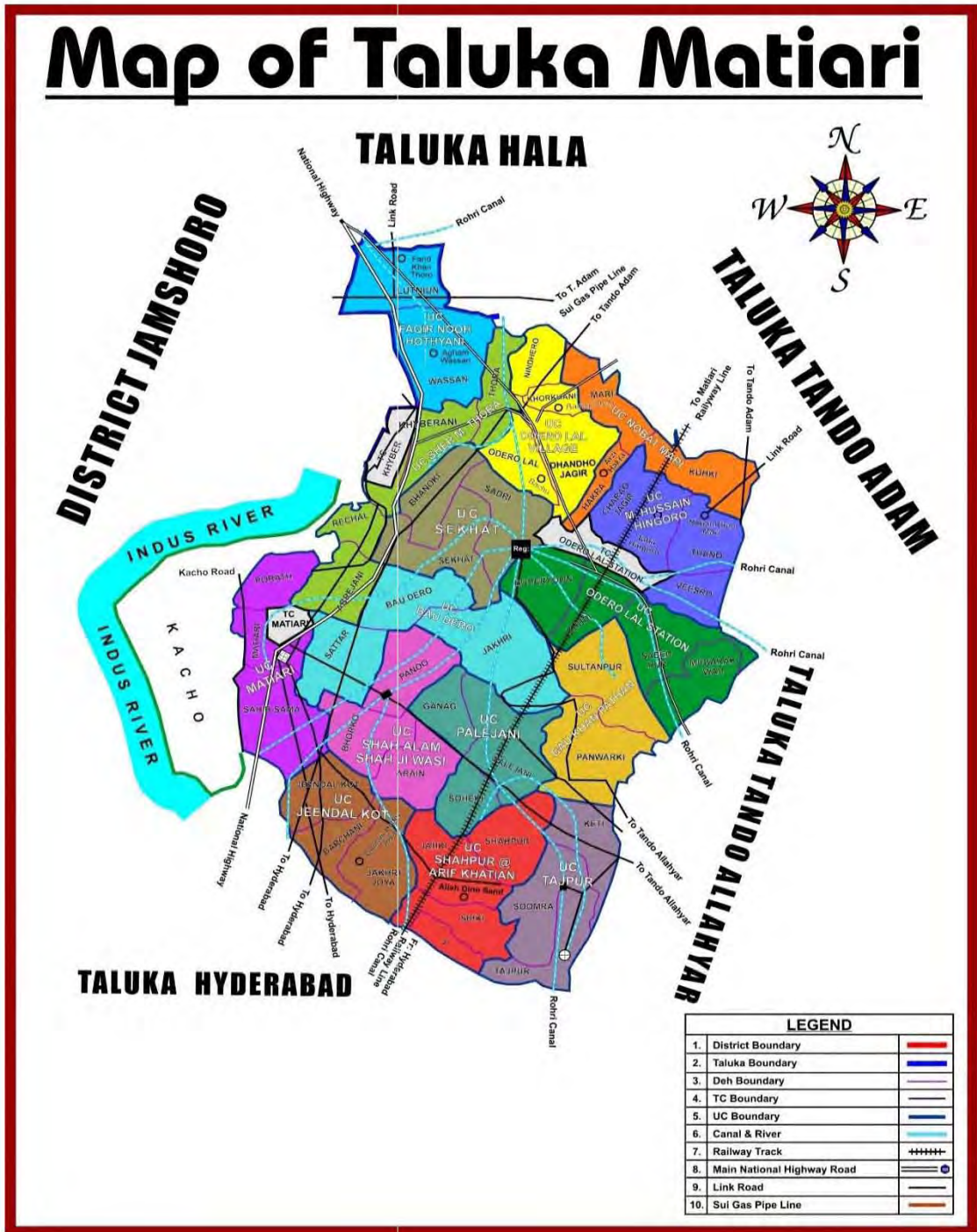


Figure 4: Map of Taulka Matiari.

(Source: Deputy Commissioner office District Matiari, 2019)

1.7. Conclusion

The Udero Lal shrine's shared space is an old site located in the District Matiari, Sindh. It lies 45 km from Hyderabad. The saint is venerated by Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims. He also has multiple identities and multiple names. He is Muslim Sufi saint Shaikh Muhammad Tahir for the Sindhi Muslims and god for the Sindhi Hindus. Hindus have their separate *gaadinaheen*, and Muslims have their *sajadansheen* for this saint. This research study aimed to investigate the reflection of tolerance, contestation, the process of physical transformation, at this shared space of the Udero Lal.

Furthermore, this research also investigated the oral tradition, symbols, and rituals process at this saint's shared space. This study has taken the theoretical framework of Hayden's model 'Competitive Sharing of religious sites and spaces' "Antagonistic tolerance" (2016, p .10). It has great significance because this research study will further help the Department of Culture, Tourism, and Antiquities, Government of Sindh to promote Udero Lal for the Global Sindhi Hindus Diaspora to visit the Udero Lal like Kartarpur corridor of Punjab, Pakistan. Further, this study would help the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to preserve the old complex of Udero Lal and the cultural heritage of Sindh. This study is essential because this is the first doctoral anthropological research on the shared space of the Udero Lal. This research study investigated the main significant issues of contestations on identity and the oral tradition of this saint. Udero Lal shrine's fort was constructed in the 16th century by the Mughals Emperor Shah Jahan. This Udero Lal fort is an old treasure heritage, which is in dilapidated condition nowadays. This study will further help the archaeologist to study the art and architecture and preserve Udero Lal's legacy.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

I have divided the literature review into two parts; the first part explains the brief background and historical perspective about the shared shrine in the different parts of the world, and the other part highlights the various models, ideas, and frameworks of the different research studies. The literature review's primary purpose was to find out reflections of tolerance, contestation, and transformation, and ritual process at the different shared shrines and to know the competitive sharing of the sites and spaces among the different faith believers who idolized the same shared shrine. I have taken the liberty of supportive or to differ an opinion with the studies mentioned in this chapter.

The primary purpose of the literature review was to discover the significant gaps in the literature about the debate, history, theory, and determinants regarding the shared spaces. The primary focus continued to be on the shared space of the Udero Lal in Sindh. I reviewed the literature of Pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Contemporary studies on the shared spaces. Much of the literature has not pinpointed the detailed account of Udero Lal's shared spaces. I found many gaps which are addressed in the body of the literature review. I find theoretical framework developed by Robert Hayden (2016, P 2) useful titled 'Antagonistic tolerance and competitive sharing of religious spaces' model in his ethnographic study of the shared space of the Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar in India. This saint had multiple identities, was contested between Muslims and Hindus, and was later owned by one dominant group. Hayden's model further opened the windows of understanding and provided the anthropological lens to observe the shared space of the Udero Lal. I have also differed with some studies which have ignored the main argumentative issues and problems. However, I was satisfied with the literature on interpretation of the rituals and symbols that gave a scientific way of observation of space of the Udero Lal.

2.2. Haji Malang

(Burman, 1996) has reported that after Shirdi, Haji Malang's syncretic shrine in the state of Maharashtra in India is the most famous. It is situated 12 km south of Kalyan in the outskirts of Mumbai. Haji Malang is a holy compound consisting of Ganesha, Waghjai, Durga, Maruti, Santoshima, and four Dargahs in India. The complex is taken care of by the Brahmins. Both Hindus and Muslim priests ensure that all the rituals and activities are held within the sacred complex. Hindus and Muslims organize and celebrate all the festivals jointly and also collect donations from the communities. It has been observed that when the Babari mosque was demolished, the visits of several Hindu devotees showed a marked reduction at the sacred complex. Political interference by Shiv Sena's affected the cooperation among the two religious believers, thus re-naming the saints as Machindranath after transformation. They have also installed some other deities in the sacred complex of Haji Malang. (pp. 211-215). I come to an understanding with the study of the Burman that the transformation process has continued in the shared spaces, and is still contentious between Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus. Other authors too have claimed that transformation has taken place in the various shared shrines that are venerated by the different faith believers. Babri Masjid's destruction in 1992 led to a massive impact on the syncretic shrine and shared spaces in the Indian subcontinent, especially.

Nevertheless (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2002) shared their field experiences that people pay homage at Pir Baba's shrine every Thursday in India. Muslims, Hindus, old and young, men and women visit the shrine of Pir Baba to demonstrate their love and devoutness for him. Both authors further explained that there were no combined rituals; women and men venerate the shrine to get peace of mind, blessings, and lasting happiness. People show so much respect that they do not even turn their back towards the shrine while exiting from the tomb. They further argue that women are reinterpreting their role in public sacred spaces because they gather and communicate with each other, share their sorrows and pains, and transform their role to express their feelings and problems (pp. 165-179).

2.3. Udero Lal

Parwani (2010) describes that Udero Lal shared shrine in Sindh is famously known as the shrine of tolerance, harmony, and the main deity of Sindhi Hindus. His followers (*Mureed*) are spread worldwide. He is also idolized due to the representation of Sindhiness and Sindhiyat. He is also related to the Sindhi Sufi identity. Udero Lal shared shrine has reshaped the Sindhi identity. Many myths are related to Udero Lal from the colonial period, one such as his being a Sindhi river god. Myths of Udero Lal provide us with an integral relationship with Sindhiyat and Sindhiness. Udero Lal's myths unearth the deeper understandings of the Sindhiyat. Interestingly, she has personified the personality of the Udero Lal with Sindhiyat (nationality). (pp. 3-15). Apart from the shared spaces, she has explored the other aspect of the shrine which constructs the identity of the Sindhi Hindus in India, but there is also a contradiction among the Muslims and Hindus in the case of Sindhi identity because a debate is ensuing among the Hindus youngsters that only they are Sindhis and Muslims are only Muslims and not Sindhs.

2.4. Rabbi Saadia Dasti

Moreover, (Driessen 2012) explained that the Jews and Muslims shared the Shrine of Rabbi Sadia Dasti and venerated this saint since pre-colonial and in colonial Morocco. This saint's shrine is in the Rif Mountains in the eastern foothills of Morocco. Legends are afloat that this saint came from Spain with his family in the 1490s by boat. Both Jews and Muslims visited the shared shrine from the remote areas to get the blessings of the saint. Jews pilgrims had faith in this saint because he healed their illnesses and protected them from the evils. Muslim devotees also visited the saint's shared shrine to get their wishes rewarded; in return, they distributed sweets and slaughtered the animals in his name. Every year, Jews came from distant areas of Melilla to celebrate Rabbi Saint's annual death anniversary (*hillula*). Jews gathered at the shared space and performed their rituals. The different beliefs and practices of the Muslims and Jews were dissimilar and separated them at the same shrine of Rabbi Saadia Dasti. Due to Arab and Israeli war in 1967, Moroccan Government stopped

Melilla Jews to perform the pilgrimage at the Rabbi shrine, which led to tensions and created a crisis for the Jews (pp. 144-146). I agree with the argument that when the state is involved in religious and private affairs of the public, then there is a significant impact on the syncretic and shared spaces. The example of India is not hidden from our eyes where Shev Sena extremists outrightly supported the Modi Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government that destroyed the sixteenth-century Babri mosque with impunity and converted many Muslim shrines into Hindu places of worship in India.

2.5. Tree of the Virgin in Matarieh

Similarly, (Mayeur-Jaouen, 2012) has argued that in Egypt the conflict at the shared and holy spaces had increased since the 1980s to such an extent that it led to a serious rivalry between Muslims and Christians. Both groups were set to outshine each other by building bigger worship structures of mosques and churches and their minarets and spires. She further narrates the story of the Tree of the Virgin in Matarieh, previously adored by Muslims and Christians alike, which has been changed from an unreservedly available "holy place" for the Muslims to a "historical center" covered by a boundary. Guests are required to obtain entrance tickets to the holy place but are forbidden to touch the tree. The Muslims have a greater role while the Christians have a lesser one in the present conflict taking place in the existing mixed society. In Egypt, the situation has remained tense as Egypt has turned the shared spaces into Museums. The disagreement has entered the stage where Muslims have been barred from entering the church, and Christians do not attempt to enter Muslims religious spaces (pp. 158-172). Other authors have also claimed that there is competitive sharing over religious sacred spaces in the Mediterranean areas among the Jews, Muslims, Christians at the sanctuaries and shrines.

2.6. The Well of the Virgin Mary in Beit Sahhour

Besides that, (Bowman 2012) argues that watching mixed shared spaces as they essentially are today is a contradiction in itself as observed. Whenever the opposing groups take up a scuffle the blending of shared shrines become a reality. He further

emphasized questions relating to resistance and power that take syncretic shape and shared shrine drift towards political involvement. On the West Bank holy place of Bir es-Saiyideh (The Well of the Virgin Mary in Beit Sahhour,) in the Palestinian intifada, the Christians and Muslims' identity was counted as a Palestinian public personality because of Israeli hostility (pp. 10-28). I settle with his argument that there is the question of power and resistance among the states, and we have the example of Israel that has occupied Palestine's sacred spaces that were shared in the past due to the backing of global powers.

2.7. Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar

Moreover, Hayden (2016) conducted an ethnographic study on the shared shrine of Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar, which has multiple identities in India. The place was called Madhi; it is a fascinating place for Hindus; the Saint is known as a Knaifnath. Being one of Nath saints of central India, he was the student of Jagindarnath, and he was a Hindu saint. The site was noted for its dual identity and is recorded in the Bombay Gazette 1885. If you ask Muslims, they proclaim that the actual name of the Saint is Shah Ramzan Mahi Savar and sometimes he is called Sufi Chishti. The general view about him is that he was born Hindu but became a Muslim after conversion to Islam. Since he was born Hindu he was entitled to the supernatural power of Guru. It is said that while he was flying through the town, a Muslim holy man hurled a pair of shoes at the Holy Nath Saint which hit him and he fell on the ground. The Hindu was so impressed by this act of the Muslim holy man that he pronounced he would take lessons on power, influence, and control from the latter and converted to Islam. The saint was much disputed among the Hindus and Muslims, and later he was forcibly converted to a Hindu saint by the Hindus (p. 6-8). I reach agreement with his argument that shared spaces are resisted and transformed as it is the religious possessiveness that dominates the will of the devotees. In his study of the model "antagonistic tolerance" (p.6-9) developed by Hayden about the shrine of Shah Raman Mahi Savar in India; tolerance does exist, but tacitly these reflect competitive sharing at the religious site, and one becomes an over powering group. This situation

aptly reflects the shared space at the shrine of Udero Lal in Sindh that in later stages was occupied and transformed at the site of the shrine.

2.8. Lal Qalandar Shahbaz

(Bhavnani & Simoes, 2018) also reported that Lal Shahbaz Qalandar was born in 1178 in the Iranian territory of Azerbaijan in Marand. Qalandar is also shared shrine as well as space in Sindh. His father Syed Ahmed Kabiruddin was a dervish. He memorized the entire Quran at the age of seven and became a Qalandar at the young age of 24. He traveled to Damascus, Beirut, Medina, Makkah, and Baghdad. On the way, he was challenged by the *faqirs* to prove his spiritual bravery to sit in the drum of boiling oil. He accepted the challenge happily and survived without any injuries, only his clothes were turned red. Other *faqirs* acknowledged his gallantry, and they called him as Lal. Qalandar once rescued his friend Farid Ganj-i-Shakar when he was being executed on a false charge. Qalandar became a falcon and he snatched Ganj-i-Shakar from the gallows in the wink of an eye. Due to his miracles, he was known as Shahbaz or „falcon“ and people in thousands became his devotees after watching his miracles and spiritual power.

When he arrived in Sehwan Sindh, Pakistan, he made his home in the outskirts of the town under the shade of trees. When the other saints learned of his arrival they sent him a bowl full of milk which signified that there was no place for other saints in Sehwan. The Qalandar returned the same bowl decorated with flowers, which implied that he would stay here permanently but would not become a burden on anyone. First, Firoz Shah constructed the dargah. It is also said that it was being built over the Samadhi and ashes of the Raja Bhartrihari. Both Hindu and Muslim devotees worshipped him. The Hindus lit the lamps (*dayo*) at the Dargah. The water dripping from the *guluband*²³ is pure and wholesome for the Muslims and Amrit for the Hindus. The Hindus also performed the henna (*Mehandi*) ritual at the dargah of

²³ Steel Jar flows the drops of water which is hanged above the grave of Qalandar Shahbaz in the shrine. It is believed by the devotees that *guluband*'s water is sacred which cures from all the diseases and illness.

Sehwan sharif. *Dhamal* ritual, a very enterprising dance, is also performed by both Hindus and Muslims at the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. His fair (*urs*) is celebrated every year from the 18th to the 20th of the Islamic month of Shaaban (p. 73).

There is a gap in Bhavanani and Simoe studies because both have not pointed out the contestation between Hindus and Muslims at the shared shrine of Lal Qalandar Shahbaz. Qalandar is also called the Jhule Lal besides Udero Lal. Lamps known as *Chragha* (light) are lit at the Qalandar's shrine and the same lamps are lit at the shrine of Udero Lal, which are known as *Jots* (light). Similarly, *Dhamal* (spiritual dance) was performed in both spaces. Qalandar's multiple identities are not highlighted or claimed. It is believed that he was born Muslim and remained Muslim, but the for Udero Lal Hindus claimed he was born Hindu and remained Hindu till his death.

On the other hand, the Muslims believed that he was converted to Islam at a later stage. According to a legend, Shiva Linga rested in the tomb of Qalandar but was later removed by the Auqaf Department of Sindh that controls all the shrines of Sindh. In contrast to this, Udero Lal is not under the control of the Auqaf department of the Sindh Government; Hindus exercise authority for its total management. They are the decision-makers and do not want to hand over the Udero Lal shrine to the Auqaf Department. They fear that government will hand it over to the Muslims to manage it which was not acceptable to the Hindus.

2.9. Shah Abdul Latif

Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai is shared space and shrine. He was born in Kotri near Hyderabad Sindh, Pakistan, into a Syed family. His family belonged to Sufi ancestry and he grew in the Sufi poetic world. When he was sent to school at an early age for learning, he refused to learn any words except for 'Alif' Allah. He also fell in love with a girl but refused to marry her. His life changed and he took up the journey to explore spiritual love by accompanying the Jogis, beggars, and Sanyasis, thus giving up the lust for the material world. He traveled to temples and dargahs in Baluchistan, Sindh, Kutch, Rajasthan, and Kathiawar. His poetry depicts Sindh's entire landscape

whether social or cultural and various issues related to the communities. He also went into *Wajd* (ecstasy) during *Dahmal*, (spiritual dancing). He settled in *Bhit Jo Daro* (dunes) in 1730 near Hala city of Sindh, Pakistan. He spent too much time with devotees, who were both Hindus and Muslims. Latif was a Sufi who never interpreted the rigidly of any religion. Once Shah Abdul Latif declared that „I am nothing but search for myself.' Once when he was performing *dahmal* the music suddenly stopped; Shah breathed his last, and devotees saw him in a state of ecstasy for the last and final time. Even today, Shah Abdul Latif is known as the symbol of Sindhyat and Sindhi culture and identity of Sindh. He has become the Sindhi icon for the inspiration of the Sindhi and Sindhi Sufi identity that is also admired by both Hindus and Muslims in Pakistan and India (Ibid, p.50- 51).

Both Sindhi Hindus and Muslims also adore Latif's shared space; there are no identity questions. However, there are heated discussions within the Muslims *sajadasheen* (Caretaker) for the position of *sajadasheen*. Now Syed Waqar Shah is the *sajadasheen* of the Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai's shrine. His family lives in the USA for pursuing education, and he also visits them twice a year but makes sure to attend all the major ceremonies at Shah Latif's Shrine.

2.10. Sachal Sarmast

Abdul Wahab (Sachal Sarmast) was born in the village of Daraza in 1739 near Khairpur, Sindh, He met with Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai at the age of five. His family belonged to a Sufi clan. He was deeply intoxicated in the Sufi mysticism and he called himself Sachal and Sarmast, which means man of truth and leader appointed by God. He was straightforward. He was keen to listen to spiritual music. The music was food for his spiritual soul and trance. When he listened to the music, his eyes shed tears and uttered the poetry in ecstasy; the devotees listened to his poetry in elation. He was also against religious extremists, especially Molvees. Once a Hindu boy was converted to Islam by the Molvees, a villager came to Sachal to invite him for the celebration. He refused to participate and desired to enquire from *mulla* (religious person) first so that the converttee should become a true Muslim. Bhavani further

mentioned Sachal's poetry in these words; "Religions have confused people in the land, The Shaikhs, the Pirs and elders have sorely misguided them, some read *namaaz* (prayer), some build temples, but none of these 'intellectuals' come close to love" (Bhavnani, 2018, pp. 252-255).

Sachal died at the age of 90 in 1829. A Hindu widow from Shikarpur Sindh saw the Sachal dargah in her dream and she became his disciple despite opposition from her family in the early 20th century. Her devotion and affection for Sachal Sarmast was so intense that she came to be known as Nimano Faqir and acquired a special status in her Hindu community. When she migrated to India after the partition, she established Sakhi Kutia. She died in 1963 and her body was cremated and the ashes were interred in the Sachal Sarmast's Dargah Daraza, Sindh according to her wish. A famous stanza from the poetry of Sachal opinionates "Neither a Hindu nor a Muslim, I am what I am" (*Na ma Hindu Na Musselman, Ma Jo ee Ahyan so ee Ahyan*) (Ibid, p.252-255).

2.11. Shared Spaces

Anna Barry Bigelow (2004) has vehemently but positively argued that saints' shared shrines spaces create communal tolerance, peace, and harmony. She conducted an ethnographic study of a Sufi saint, who is famously known as Haider Shaikh in the Indian Punjab town of Malerkotla. The Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs hold him in complete adoration; respect, and admiration. The author further argues that Malerkotla is the place that prevented and resisted the bloodshed when Indian Punjab was torn down in bloodshed during the partition of India in 1947. People of Malerkotla believe that the saint's power and sacredness blessed this city and it remained somewhat safe from being wrecked. If case any communal conflict arose, the multi-religious community that had always practiced tolerance and harmony encountered the outrageously belligerent situation most graciously and peacefully. She explains that identity and ownership of the shrine were not questioned by religious groups, a historical fact was more assertive that referred to the partition of India where most of Punjab was devastated by confrontational politics. However,

Malerkotla town resisted the bloodshed and remained peaceful among all the religious communities due to Saint Haider Shaikh (pp. 1-59).

I disagree with her central argument that shared space is strong evidence to maintain interfaith harmony. Shared spaces are not geographically established. The peoples make it possible due to divine healing at the shrine where communities from two religious faiths share the adoration of the same saint; only later, the conflict erupts on various issues at the same shared space. She has further mentioned that the Muslim saint Haider Shaikh whose shared space always encountered religious conflict equally and effectively also created peace and harmony. Anyhow, she has not pointed out a single issue among the Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs at the shared space of Haider Shaikh that could lead to conflict. Furthermore, she did not discuss South Asia's other saints who have multiple identities and are revered by both Hindus and Muslims in the same shared space, and that seems to be a gap in her research. I conducted an ethnographic study on the shared space of the Udero Lal in Sindh, which has multiple identities. He is the Avatar for the Hindus and saint for the Muslims; both communities have separate caretakes, but despite that Udero Lal shared space has led to conflict, contestation, and transformation by the Hindu dominant group after the Indian partition.

Furthermore, Khan (2004) noted that partition created a deep wedge among Hindus and Muslims that also led to further segregation among the two religious communities. She also disagreed with Hayden's antagonistic tolerance' model and the competitive sharing of religious sites and spaces. Robert Hayden (2016) argued that shared spaces accounted for peace, tolerance, and harmony among Muslims and Hindus. He conducted an ethnographic study on the shared shrine of multiple identity saints, which had been physically transformed as a Hinduized shrine by the Shiv Sena party in Ahmednagar Maharashtra, India. Now the tolerance has shrunk at the shared shrine. Muslims admired the shrine Dargah of Shah Ramzam Mahi Savar and or Knifnath as per the Hindus. He developed the Antagonistic Tolerance model and competitive sharing and the transformation of the shared religious spaces, which probed into peace, harmony, coexistence, and quarrels among the various religious

groups among the communities. Those groups have lived and mingled with each other peacefully from generation to generation and developed the combined belief of co-existence in their practices; however, they have now become prejudiced in their mutual relationship.

Hayden further argues that those groups represent different communities with their different competing interests. Nevertheless, both groups always interact peacefully though one group remains dominant. The one group's dominance indicates the control over the main shared religious space that may be indirectly shared for a long time. Over time, the sacred space is transformed, converted, and contested with significant changes by the other dominant group (ibid, 2016, pp. 6-9). In contrast, Lubanska has disagreed with Hayden's model and presents his own version. Magdalena Lubanska (2015) has conducted an ethnographic study on the religious practices and beliefs of Muslims and Orthodox Christians in the Balkans. She focused on the theory of Syncretism. Muslims and Christians spend their lives independently without adopting other's religions. She further argues about Robert Hayden's antagonistic tolerance concept, which was not much applicable because Muslims and Christians were not so many antagonists to one another. The author further explains that Muslims and Christians live like brothers. Both have syncretic attitudes; however, they fear, this may lead to intercultural misinterpretation (pp. 305-307).

I came to same opinion with Robert Hayden's model "Antagonistic Tolerance: Competitive Sharing of Religious Sites and Spaces" that one dominant religious group always tries to overpower the other group who competes to occupy the shared space, which leads to the "Antagonistic tolerance" and later physical transformation takes place. Robert has elaborated further on "Tolerance" terming it as active and passive. He argues that such competitive sharing is compatible with the passive meaning of tolerance but unsuited for the active meaning of tolerance, which was not fully acceptable to others. Robert used in his model antagonistic tolerance as active tolerance, which embraces the others too, but I looked at the Udero Lal shared space as passive tolerance when I saw it in the context of the "antagonistic tolerance" model

at the shared space of Udero Lal who is not fully transformed. In any case, it is contested and is in the process of transformation by the Hindu dominant group.

Boivin (2020) has argued in his research paper that Pakistan is a nation generally portrayed as a center of psychological warfare and Islamist radicalism yet, it is less broadly realized that there are various shared spaces of saints generally named Dargah. It is proven now beyond doubt that Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims share the religious spaces due to the sacred and blessed figures. His paper has highlighted Udero Lal as the ultimate revered figure that has helped bridge the bond between Pakistan and India, the two nations commonly portrayed as the „traditional foes' (Boivin, pp. 220-246). In contrast to Boivin's argument, Khan has claimed that Hindus and Muslims are known to have separate religions historically, so how could they remain peaceful in the same shared spaces, which later, unfortunately, turned into a communal conflict. She has pointed out the historical perspective regarding India's partition in 1947, in which Pakistan emerged as a separate Muslim state and this led to antagonism and hatred between Hindus and Muslims.

(Khan D.-S. , 2004) Hinduism and Islam are separated religions based on the monolithic contradictory belief system, and due to this shared heritage and cultural experience, they are generally neglected. There is also historical development between both religions, which gives different identities. The boundary wall has already been erected between Hindus and Muslims that presents a separate Hinduism and Islamist identity. She further argued that divine and healing sources of power go beyond the boundaries of the religion, ignoring the shared cultural heritage and religion's identity. Shared spaces create peace but these give way to excessive familiarity and results in communal conflict at times. Islam and Hinduism are not naturally created to represent different spaces; rather, partition and politics distinctly label the different religious ideologies of Muslims versus the Hindus (p. 123).

Michel Boivin (2018) has mentioned in his paper about the physical space and alternative space of Udero Lal. He highlighted the physical space at Udero Lal's shrine in Sindh and Chaliha Sahib temple in Ulhasnagar in Maharashtra, India. Further, he has given a comparison of both physical spaces and has focused on the

partition memory on shrines in Sindh, symbols light (*Jot*), water (*Jal*), and ritual object *Bahraano* (food offering) (pp.43-61). There is a gap in his literature; he left out primary data of the Udero Lal shrine; the Mosque is also a central focus on the shared space of Udero Lal, built-in Mughal period which stands next to the shrine and the temple too has not been discussed in the paper. Along with these are the old four graves of the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars Shaikh Maaman, Shaikh Suharo, Shaikh Younis, and Shaikh Muhammad Alam who donated the land for the Udero Lal shrine. He has also omitted the discussion on Gul Makhdoom Shah's shrine, which stands behind Udero Lal's shrine, and former's devotees are said to be Udero Lal's friends. He did not analyze the main *Chodas* (bath taking) ritual conducted after the annual fair that lasted the 13th day. *Palavo* (humbly pleads for the fulfillment of the wish while taking the lower part of the shirt) ritual is not mentioned in the literature. He did not analyze the shared space of Udero Lal and did not argue about the contestation and transformation of Udero Lal's shared space. This is a considerable gap in the literature. Had he used this data, it would have produced a better result.

Amen Jaffer (2018) argues that Lal Shahbaz Qalandar's shrine shared space has brought many ethnic and religious groups together. This assemblage forgot their differences and unconditionally participated in *Dahmal* (spiritual dance) at the shared space of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. The author further explained that the people who belonged to Muslim sects such as Sunni, Shia or Hindus, Christians, and Sufis, paid regular visits to the Shrine of Qalandar during the annual *Mela* (fair) of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, highlighting it as a unique thing. The Qalandar *Mela* had social, economic, and cultural importance and it strengthened the bonds among the different people, who amassed at the shared space for purpose of entertainment with their close relatives and friends. In South Asia, Shrines have a sacred well the profane area that is close to the shrine. Sometimes, a tomb is considered a sacred space but the area outside of the tomb is sacrilegious (pp. 23-39).

He has not analyzed the contestation and multiple identities and has not discussed the shared space from viewpoint of tolerance and peace. However, Raza Rumi (2018) narrates that Sufi saints recounted many stories from ancient times; one being that the

Sindhu (Indus) river played a significant role in the continuation of the folklore legends in pursuit of their holy sanctity. Today, the Udero Lal Complex is a place of worship by both Hindus and Muslims, and the cult of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar is also associated with the Indus River. He is mainly referred to as Jhule Lal a Hindu name for the water god (Udero Lal) and as Raja Bharati (Qalandar). The syncretic beliefs are practiced at Shah Abdul Latif Bhatti's shared shrine, worshiped enthusiastically by Hindus and Muslims. Shah Abdul Latif's famous book „Raislo“an epic Sindhi literary landmark is equally revered by Hindus and Muslims in Sindh (pp. 30-31).

In contrast, Anita C. Ray (2012) observed that there are main differences between the Hindus and Muslim beliefs and practices related to Udero Lal. Muslims have placed the Quran in their space rather than the burning lamp, a symbol of Udero Lal shrine. Muslims acknowledge him as a saint rather than an incarnation of Allah. Muslims gave him the Muslim name Shaikh Tahir (pp. 219-238). There is a gap in her literature because she has not focused on the contestation, rituals, symbols, or reflection of the tolerance at the shared space of Udero Lal. Her whole paper revolves around Udero Lal's meaning; despite that identity of the Udero Lal has remained shrouded, leaving many questions unanswered.

Linus Strothmann (2016) said that the state's central concept has remained to control their benefit whether space falls under the public or religious domain. The state controls the spaces through the regulations and any contravention leads to dire consequences. The state laws, for example, can be observed in the case of Tahrir Square in Cairo where space has become a significant political symbol for the public. Similarly, no soldiers are found guarding the religious spaces outside German Churches but one can find refuge over there. There are many examples that religious spaces are not excluded from politics, but they have become the central part of politics. In Pakistan, Lahore, Data Darbar Hujwiri, popularly known as Daata Ganj Bakhsh, the 11th-century saint's shrine, has become an integral part of the religious politics and was nationalized to bring its control under the government of Pakistan (pp. 1-36). If we compare Data Darbar Hujwairi's dargah with Udero Lal shrine in Sindh; we find that Hindus have administrative authority to manage its control. Both

Hindus and Muslim caretakers however are against the nationalization of the Dargah. The government has offered them a nationalization package but does not have enough power to bring the dargah under the management of the Government. Furthermore, they both feel that they will lose the revenue which is a source of maintenance of the shrine and other works if the government takes over the control. The dominant Hindu group individually takes every decision; therefore, contestation has increased on the dargah between the two religious groups.

The scholar further argues that the shrine of the Data Ganj Baksh Hujwiri was nationalized in 1960 due to which traditional *Sajjadanashin* had become powerless to perform his activities independently. The strict control of the government administration through the massive deployment of the police and guards and monitoring surveillance cameras inside and outside the shrine has led to control over the traditional dancing (*Dahmal*), drug user, and mixing of the genders space of Data Darbar. This has also helped in ousting many groups like homeless persons, addicts, folk singers, homosexuals, fakirs, dervishes, and malangs, the marginalized class in Pakistan (Ibid, p.6-7).

2.12. Syncretic Shrines

Haroon Khalid (2015) mentions that it is not correct that religious syncretism has only existed in rural Pakistan. There are also syncretic shrines in the cities that have survived the stresses of time and remained intact even before the Partition of the Indian subcontinent. The author further disclosed that syncretic shrines have been severely criticized and intense debate has continued since the inception of these syncretic shrines but had never come under physical attack. These shrines always had been much respected despite many differences. These shared spaces have given shelter to the refugees, regardless of caste and creed. However, nowadays these syncretic shrines spaces that are used to protect others have themselves come under attack. This new phenomenon has recently emerged in Pakistan, and in the process, thousands of precious lives have been lost at the syncretic shrine's spaces. (pp. 148-159). I have same point of view with Haroon's argument that this new extremist

trend has emerged throughout Pakistan where suicide bombers have blown themselves outside the shrine's shared spaces. A suicide attack on Sufi Qalandar Lal Shahbaz's shared shrine in Sindh province, Pakistan on 16 February 2017 left at least 75 devotees dead and over 200 injured, including women and children. Dargah of Sufi Rakhyal Shah shared shrine came under attack by a suicide bomber on 7th October 2017, in which 20 devotees were killed and more than 30 injured in Fatehpur District Jahal Magsi, Baluchistan, province of Pakistan. A bomb blast took place outside the Data Darbar in Lahore in which at least ten were killed and more than 20 injured on 7 May 2019.

Besides, Burton (1877) observed that the Hindu religion did not exist in pure form in Sindh. Hinduism is combined with the ingredients of Islam in Sindh. Hindus are the followers of Muslim saints. The Saints worshiped by the Muslims have Hindu names. Hindus faith is to believe in one God like Muslim's Khuda. Hindus think that their deities are the source to reach God just as Muslims have Prophets (pp. 324-325). I comply with his studies that before India's partition (1947) Hindus and Muslims in Sindh lived together and celebrated all the ceremonies collectively due to their same language, culture, and land. Both used to respect each other's religions. After the partition, when most of the Hindus migrated to India, Sindh became part of Pakistan. Their departure was a not-good omen, as the element of hate gradually permeated into the Hindus and Muslims. Udero Lal continued to be adored by both Hindus and Muslims in Sindh as was the case before the partition of India (1947); any minor conflict too didn't take long to settle. After the partition, this space has remained disputatious and is tacitly reflected in the communal context.

On the other hand, Saiyed (1989) insisted that many saints in India cure multiple diseases including sterility problems in women. Sheikh Sadhu treats depression and allied symptoms. Sahib Madar is believed to give medication for snake bite. Sakhi Sarwar provides remedy for eye issues, Makkhdum Sahib is believed to cure patients who had issues related to evil spirits (*Jin, bhoot*). People who belong to different faiths also visit these saints (pp. 215-220). Hindus come to the shrines of syncretic Muslim saints in Sindh for healing purposes. Ahmed (1994) acknowledged that if we trace the

history from ancient times, Syncretism is connected to the saint's shrines devoted to the natural objects. This is why human beings have remained dependent on these spiritual healers from times immemorial. Saint of the Woods or Pir Jarion was the earliest saint who preached and spread Sindh's syncretic values. Zahir Pir or Guga Pir had been known among ancient syncretic shrines of saints since India's ancient times.

In addition, Paul (1995) demonstrated that there is a village Ajaysen and Khakri near Ajmer in India where both Muslims and Hindus celebrate the festivals together, eat halal meat and also bury the bodies of their dead. The Hindu Diwali is celebrated full of joy in the Muslim's homes. Both Hindus and Muslims also frequented mosques and temples. The woman who belongs to the Muslim community also performed *phera* (seven rounds around the fire) like Hindus when a marriage takes place (pp. 23-55).

Furthermore, J Roy Burman (1996) opines that there are various syncretic shrines in India, where both Muslims and Hindus pay their respect and exhibit love. Syncretism in India has a profound cultural background between Hindus and Muslims, which has lasted for a long time despite the social and political upheavals. The author argued that in Indian culture, syncretism had been destroyed due to the flow of fundamentalism in the current years. Some researchers have conducted syncretism's study of local religion; however, others have studied different cultures. Sufism was the primary tool that created peace, tolerance, and harmony among the Hindus and Muslims in India. Nevertheless, many patron saints have relationships with professional and social groups, which show syncretism as Khawaja Khizr is the protector of all castes (pp. 1211-1215).

In addition to that, the syncretic belief is spread to a great extent and is deeply rooted in Western India. There the Shrine of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Hasan Chisti of Ajmer Sharif of Rajasthan is the most sacred and popular syncretic shared Dargah. He promoted peace, tolerance, harmony, and co-existence among both Hindus and Muslims of the sub-continent. Chishti also fought against the caste, creed, color, class system, and many other extremist ills, fundamentalists, and societies' evils. Akbar was one of the Mughal emperors who was an ardent supporter of Khwaja Moinuddin

Chisti and followed his teachings. The number of Hindu visitors at the Dargah of Hazarat Mula Ali is much larger than Muslims in Calcutta, India (Ibid, p.112).

2.13. Tolerance

(Hayden, 2016) demonstrated that tolerance means to accommodate the feelings of others even if these were undeserving and indecent. Tolerance in this particular case refers to accept with dignity the practices, and beliefs that are different from one's own culture but are adopted and practiced. The word toleration word comes from the Latin word ,tolerate which means to endure and bear pp.1-7) He has further defined tolerance as active and passive.

2.13.1. Active & Passive Tolerance

In his research studies, Hayden (2016) further argued that such competitive sharing reflects non-interference with the passive meaning of tolerance but is unsuitable to the active meaning of tolerance that fully accepts others in its bosom. Hayden has suggested that there are religious sites in South Asia, where competitive sharing is both passive and active but it largely depends on the nature of the sites. The Udero Lal's shrine is one site where shared space has remained competitive in Sindh between Hindus and Muslims due to the saint's identity. No literature has clarified the identity. Colonial and pre-colonial literature has mentioned the duality of the Udero Lal. The shared site of Udero Lal has been contested due to identity and ownership; therefore, "Antagonistic passive tolerance" (Ibid: p.6) is compatible with this shared shrine of Udero Lal.

2.13.2. Tolerance at the Shared Shrines

(Bigelow 2004) claimed that sacred shared spaces are the foremost powerful tool to serve the public and build peace, tolerance, coexistence, and harmony among civil societies (pp. 1-59). In her study she has not pointed out other shared shrines that have multiple identities and issues of ownership. She researched the Haider Shaikh shrine in India where the question of multiple identities and ownership does not arise. A

dominant Muslim group has assumed the responsibility of prime caretaker of Haider Shaikh's shrine. However, Udero Lal shared space has a different phenomenon because it has dual identity and management but the overall control of the shrine rests with the Hindus. Udero Lal is *Bhagwan* (deity) for Hindus and *Wali* (Muslim saint close to God). In contrast to (Bigelow 2004) argument, (Ajwani 2007), Udero Lal is highly venerated in Sindh compared to others saints. Muslim enemies of Udero Lal used to fear the sword and horse of Udero Lal. He was the savior and hope and aspiration for the miserably oppressed Hindus and instructed the extremist Muslims to refrain from converting Hindus into Muslims because Islam is the religion of peaceful existence and it was against compulsion and forcible conversion. The Quran is against the aggressors and states that all creatures are about peaceful co-existence. (pp. 35-40).

However, (Khan 2008) believed that Udero Lal had such a charismatic personality that despotic ruler's ministers and other Muslims were struck with awe and had no choice but to become his devotees. He spoke for both Hindus' and the Muslim community's rights. He preached and taught love and brotherhood. He further argued that Hindus and Muslims were all human beings and created by one God, whom Muslims call Allah and Hindus have named him Ishwar. He was desirous to strengthen unity among the Hindus and Muslims which would ultimately create harmony, peace, tolerance, and spirituality, and show the righteous path to the God-fearing people who believed in the oneness of God (pp. 72-75).

Similarly, Michel Boivin (2011) explained that the regional identity was built in Sindh due to the Sufi culture's foundation in the twentieth century. The *Shah Jo Risalo* was also published in Sindhi with a glossary. One Sufi school patron saint was Lal Shahbaz Qalandar and the other Shah Abdul Latif. He further elaborates that a vernacular *Sindh Ji Sufiyyani Saqafat* (Sufi tradition of Sindh) generated feelings of harmony, which brought together the Sufi philosophy of *Wahdat al-wajud* and Hindu Vedanta in Sindh on one platform. Sufism was flexible enough to bring into its fold the Muslims, followers of Last Holy Prophet Hazarat Muhammad (PBUH), and the local Hindus of Sindh or divinity such as Udero Lal Shiva. The Sindhi Sufi culture

incorporated the last category that propagated that Sufis were devoid of any religion and they were simply god-fearing Sufis. (pp.23-44). In addition, (Bhavani & Simoes 2018) highlighted in her book that Udero Lal was a diehard peace-loving saint who believed in tranquility, quietness, and live in a peaceful environment. When both Hindus and Muslims were fighting over the site of the temple and Mosque's and subsequent construction, Udero Lal appeared in the dreams of both Hindus and Muslims and requested them not to quarrel because both had their religion to follow and they should abide by the principles of their religions. She further explains that both groups accepted Udero Lal's verdict, resulting in the simultaneous construction of the temple and Mosque at the same complex of Udero Lal (pp. 73-75)..

Scholars have extensively argued about the tolerance that religious shared spaces create, but agree that every shared space has its phenomenon and nature. Shared space does not mean that there is no chance of conflict and contestation in fact it exists. Scholarly studies have ignored this area of research, which needs to be researched, however, shared spaces reflect tolerance but tacitly. In the case of Udero Lal believers of different faiths share his shrine, but the likelihood of communal conflict can not be ruled out. Lata Parwani (2010) further states that Udero Lal is known as the patron saint of Sindhi Hindus and is considered the main symbol of Sindhi identity and culture. Sindhi culture is entrenched more deeply in Sindhi Hindus because the Hindu caste system was absent in Sindh due to which they participated in venerating the other community's saints in Sindh. Muslims and Hindus Sindhis worshiped the same saints and participated in their rituals, festivals, and marriages. They mixed and respected each other's faiths and beliefs (pp. 3-10).

2.14. Contestation on the Shared Shrines

In the colonial and pre-colonial periods scholars have not written a detailed account of the saint (Udero Lal); however, they have pointed out the Muslim and Hindu names of Udero Lal. In the colonial period, a Muslim scholar claimed that Udero Lal was converted from Hindu to Muslim. There is still a heated debate among the Hindus and Muslims on the saint's identity and ownership, which remains unresolved and has led

to contestation and transformation in the shared shrine. I have analyzed below the literature on the identity and contestation of the shared shrine of Udero Lal.

Qane (2011[1181]) has claimed that Jaheja is a famous village where the shrine of Shaikh Tahir is located and he has multiple identities. He is known to Hindus as Udero Lal while Muslims call him Shaikh Muhammad Tahir. He always used to live in a state of divinity. He passed his early life in the forest, away from the crowded places in isolation. One day he held some seeds in his hands which he occasionally chewed. Suddenly a camel unfastened from its herd and sprinted towards Shaikh Tahir's hut. As God is omnipresent and omnipotent who lives among all the creatures, Shaikh Tahir felt that God dwelled in the camel. He knelt and pleaded before God: 'Oh God, you have appeared in front of me and blessed with me your presence which I do not deserve, so whatever food I have, you should eat with me.' Camel was scared and started to run away. Shaikh Tahir followed him relentlessly until he reached his destination and achieved a spiritual state.

The news of his spiritual adventure spread like wildfire and the people wanted to know more about the episode. After Shaikh Muhammad Tahir departed from this world, his shrine became the main center of the pilgrimage and people from far away places visited it. The big fair is held at the shrine every year without fail. People come from all over the Sindh to attend this fair and celebrate it with fervor (pp. 317-319). *Tufat- Al- Kiram* by Qane is the second oldest book on Sindh's history after the Chachnama. The colonial and pre-colonial ethnographer has also referred to this book for understanding Sindh's history in which only the Muslim name of Udero Lal is mentioned. However, a detailed historical account is not available. He has left out the main exhaustive account of Udero Lal regarding historical perspective, which has left a considerable gap in the old document about the meaning and identity of the saint Udero Lal. This has led to a heated debate between Muslims and Hindus for the ownership and identity of Udero Lal. The majority of Muslims claimed that this book is the oldest and authentic document that gives ample proof of Udero Lal's Muslim name as Shaikh Tahir, therefore he is a Muslim saint.

In addition it (Vafae, 2005 [1946]) acknowledged that Shaikh Tahir was a die-hard devotee of Shaikh Baha -ud-Din Zakariya Multani. He was a Hindu boy who used to earn his livelihood through hard work but suddenly his faith took a turn and he started following the path of God. He traveled to Shaikh Baha- ud-Din Zakariya with a renewed spirit to learn the teachings of God. When Baha-ud-Din gazed at him, his state of mind changed abruptly and he became religiously obsessed. He started delivering sermons in the Mosques and got guidance from his spiritual master (*murshid*), and became his disciple forever. He returned to Sindh and spent his entire life in Jahejo village and died in the same village (pp. 265-267).

There is a contradiction in authors argument because he has not given the exact date of conversion of Udero Lal to Islam. Udero Lal was born in 1007 as Vikram Samvat (CE 950) (Boivin 2018, p.48), while Baha-ud-Din Zakariya was born in (1182-1262 CE) (Boivin, 2015, pp.93-95). So, there is a considerable difference between the dates of birth of both saints. The available literature has massive ambiguity regarding the Udero Lal conversion to Islam; if studied in detail, there would not have been confusion about Udero Lal's conversion. This literature has created more issues than resolved regarding the Udero Lal identity, which needs to be researched.

Burton, (1877) reported that one day Shah Hussain, a Muslim merchant from Delhi was traveling to Makkah in a boat with his daughter in the Indus River. When he reached Alor, the King of the city named Dalurai, who was lower in rank and file spotted Shah Hussain's daughter and immediately desired to marry her. The merchant refused because Muslim women are not allowed to marry a Hindu man. The king did not desist and wanted to marry the merchant's daughter forcibly. Having failed in his wicked attempt, he conspired to kidnap the girl. King abducted the girl and took her to the boat waiting at the banks of river Indus. The merchant's daughter resisted and called Udero Lal for help. The saint appeared from nowhere at the site of kidnapping and asked her father who to untie the rope of the boat that had started drifting into the water. As the girl's father unfastened the rope, the river Indus changed its course, leaving the boat on a dry river bed safe and sound. The river in its new passage flooded the city of the King and destroyed it. The Muslim merchant of Delhi built the

shrine in A.H. 341 (A.D.952) in honor of Khwajah Khizer at the Bakkhar, Sukkur Sindh (pp. 200-380). Udero Lal had two Muslim names; one was Shaikh Tahir. The latter died and was buried with this name. His other Muslim name was Khwajah Khizer and his last residence was at Bakkhar Island Sukkur. When he died the Muslims made replicas of his shrine and made holy visits. This study has not discussed the detailed biography of the Udero Lal but has rather reported only one event of the Muslim Merchant Shah Hussain and Udero Lal's Muslim name. There is also a contradiction in the date of birth of the Udero Lal, (1007 Vikram Samvat (CE 950), Boivin 2018, p.48) and (A.D. 952), Burton 1877, pp.200) have given these dates of birth of Udero Lal.

Similarly, other studies have explored both Hindu and Muslim name of Udero Lal (Qane (2011[1181] pp. 317-319, Vafae, 2005 [1946], pp. 265-267, Burton, 1877, pp. 200-380; Hughes 1876) and reported that Hindus almost become the disciples of the Muslims saints in Sindh. The same saints are buried in different parts of Sindh, though not venerated individually, but both Hindus and Muslims give them separate names as a River god is venerated by both Muslims and Hindus with different names. River god is called Jinda Pir by the Hindus and Khwaja Khizr by the Muslims. The same way Lulu Jasraj became the Mango Pir, Raja Bartari is called Qalandar Lal Shahbaz. Hindus claim that Muslims have tagged their Muslim names on saints for their interest and allegiance (pp. 680-88). In addition (Thakur 1959) said that the Muslim followers constructed Khwaja Khizir's temple or Asthan of Udero Lal at Sukkur, where Udero Lal jumped into the Indus river from the Jahejo village and appeared in Sukkur to save the Muslim merchant's daughter from the captivity of the Dalurai. King Shah Hussain built the shrine in honor of Udero Lal, who is also remembered as Zindah Pir or Khwaja Khizr in Sukkur. He further mentioned that Hindus constructed a separate temple for Udero Lal in front of the main shrine on the right bank of the Indus at Sukkur due to the quarrelsome situation. (pp. 183-185).

Apart from Udero Lal's main shrine; there are other various *Astanas* (living places) in Sindh; Bakhur Sukkur being one where Udero Lal is believed to have dived into Indus River at Jahejo village and re-appeared at Bakkhar Island of the Indus at Sukkur to

save the daughter of Muslim merchant who was abducted in Hindu's boat. Studies conducted in the colonial era have not identified the detailed history and biography of Udero Lal, and this gap exists in the published study. It would have been much suitable to have studied the identity and background of Udero Lal which could have benefited both communities and averted the outbreak of communal conflict in the Island of Bukkhar Sukkur Sindh. The study mentioned above (Advani, 1923) claimed that due to squabble between Hindus and Muslims, the annual festival of Udero Lal was banned by the Hyderabad Collector to maintain the law and order situation. Now Cheti Chand fair of Udero Lal is being celebrated at Nasarpur. There used to be significant trade and commerce activity and the camel fair was the most significant one where these were purchased and sold (pp. 110-115).

Sikand (2011) mentioned that when he visited the main shrine of the Udero Lal, the Hindu man at the main entrance Shevadar advised him not to believe these people. Muslim Shaikh Mujawar, similarly would tell the visitors that Udero Lal belonged to the Muslims. It is advisable not to believe what they declare because their narrative is false and the listener is easily misguided about Udero Lal. Their primary purpose is to fleece money from the pilgrims visiting Udero Lal. The author further mentions that he met another man at the shrine who revealed that Udero Lal was a Hindu but later converted to Islam.

(Lata Parwani, 2010) has reported a dispute among the Hindus and Muslims over revenue collection at the shrines of Udero Lal in the early twentieth century. Muslims keeper filed a petition in the colonial court pleading that Udero Lal was a Muslim or a Hindu (pp. 3-5). In addition (Khan 2008, p.76 as cited in Khan, p.12-213) the author has emphasized that Udero Lal a deity and a saint is also known as Khwaja Khizr has brought a new identity in which Hindu nationalist and reformist movements have exercised a significant influence on the community. Therefore syncretic nature of the situation has become a contradiction because it is difficult for the exiled Sindhi Hindus to accept it. Khan has further presumed that Udero Lal and Fatimid Ismailism appear to have a relationship during the 10th century because of the presence of Shia Islam in Sindh, mainly in Multan. Udero Lal may have been related to Shia Ismailism

or connected to this sect; the identity of the Udero Lal however, has not been thoroughly investigated. One assumption is that this saint was associated with the historical Ismaili Mission in Sindh. Udero Lal's historical personality remained hidden and mysterious. (pp. 75-78). Udero Lal's identity had remained hidden due to a lack of literature or any recorded information. The available literature does not present the oral historical perspective of Udero Lal. The Colonial British officers recorded detailed accounts of Sindh's social life in the form of a gazetteer but somehow ignored any thorough historical perspective on Udero Lal.

The Muslims fought for the Udero Lal ownership in 1938, demanding the separation of Udero Lal complex from the Hindus. Hindus released the Gin (Ghost) in the shrine, said the Muslim caretaker. The latter showed a copy of a document about the British times dated 1938 and duly stamped by the competent authority, which had laid down the guidelines for resolving the dispute among both communities. The colonial court had decided in favor of the Muslim Sajjadasheen who became entitled to collect donations at the main shrine of the Udero Lal. The court also ordered that Hindus should make their separate place for worship, eating, and sleeping, so a separate complex was built in front of the main shrine of Udero Lal. The Hindus collected the donations from the Hindu pilgrimages at the sacred well of Hindus. Despite all the odds, the interfaith harmony demanded that Udero Lal shrine would stand as a symbol of unity for Hindus and Muslim pilgrimages (Albinia, 2008).

Albinia had not been a participant observer at the shared space of the Udero Lal; her research lacks evaluation extracted from the actual conduct of field data terming her research as below standard. I differed with her argument that the British stamped (1938) registry solved the problems. During my fieldwork, I found Hindus and Muslims engaged in fiery debate and dispute over the shared space of the Udero Lal. Muslim Sajjadanaheen Ghulam Abass claimed that he had the British government's official registry, which showed that he was the owner and caretaker of Udero Lal's shrine. The Hindu gaadinasheen Mata Beena too is a powerful decision-maker, possesses authority control and management of the Udero Lal's shrine. I also remained in the field for one year as an anthropologist for investigation but never

found any reference that they had gone to the court. Nevertheless, Muslim Sajjadanasheen Ghulam Abass Shaikh stated that he had the option to approach the court for settlement of the issue. He further stated that if Hindu Mata did not cooperate with him, he would then file the case in the court for the ownership of the Udero Lal's shrine based on the British Government document that is in his custody.

Moreover, (Kothari 2007) acknowledged that Udero Lal's narratives have become famous that Muslims' despotic ruler made the Sindhi Hindus' victimization in Sindh after India's post-partition. Udero Lal fought against the cruelty of the tyrannical Muslim ruler for Sindhi Hindus. When Sindhi Hindus returned to India after partition, they were not accepted whole heartedly, Udero Lal united them to their Hindu god (pp. 170-175). Muslims claimed that Udero Lal's identity was that of, a true Muslim and a pious saint from the Almighty Allah (Shaikh 2002). Hindus worship and take care of the Dargha day and night; therefore, people thought the Udero Lal was a Hindu saint.

In contrast to this literary review ((Boivin & Rajpal, 2018) reported that Udero Lal was born in 1007 Vikram Samvat (950 A.D). Mata Devki gave birth to a boy, wife of Ratan Chand Lohano in Nasarpur. Muslims believed that Udero Lal was born Hindu, but later he was converted to Islam. Hindus believe that he always remained Hindu. The physical spaces of Udero Lal played a significant role for his devotees with the result that when he wanted to leave this world, both Hindus and Muslims fought over his burial place. Udero Lal asked Muslims to build *Qabar* (tomb) and Hindus to build a Samadi to show their veneration for him in the future. (pp. 43-48). This literature has not focused much on contestation and identity.

According to (Naaren Das, 2014) the Hindus claimed that Udero Lal had been buried with the horse (*Gohrysamyat*) in the tomb, which is not correct and is an insult to Udero Lal. Mirkh Shah was a Muslim fundamentalist and strict follower of Islam, so how could he allow the people to bury the horse in the grave of Udero Lal. He mentions that according to the Hindu religion, there are twenty-two Avatar (*ottars*), who are also mentioned in the Bhagvat Geeta. The last avatar was Sheri Krishan and Balhram, so how could Udero Lal be the 10th avatar because the tenth avatar was

Machh (pp. 71-72). Hindus also have a different standpoint on the burial of the Udero Lal. Hindu Mata claimed that Udero Lal had been immersed in the earth and then a grave was made, but some Hindus claimed that Udero Lal was not buried with the horse.

(Bhavnani 2018) highlighted that When Udero Lal left this world; a clash broke out between Hindus and Muslims on the construction of the mosque. While Muslims persisted in the building of the mosque, the Hindus wanted to build a temple. While this skirmish was taking place, suddenly Udero Lal's voice emerged pronouncing that both groups were dear and equal in his eyes and he belonged to both. In his view, there was no caste or creed, neither any kind of difference existed between both sects. The two opposing groups understood Udero Lal's message of sanity and thereafter Mosque and Temple were constructed at the same Udero Lal shrine, now known as Udero Lal. Even today, mud lamps are lighted and burn day and night at both places at the shared complex of Udero Lal (pp.71-195).

2.15. Symbols and Rituals

(Douglas, 1966) was also interpretative and she worked on symbols. She focused on the phenomenon of purity and impurity and divided every society into two categories of polluted and non-polluted. She argued that women menstrual blood was thought to be impure or polluted facets. The concept of *halal* is pure and *haram* is impure; the concept of feces is haram. She further argued that, if you want to study society in-depth, you need to figure out what are pure and impure symbols. Halal and haram are limited not only to food, but actions too are halal and haram for example having marital sex is halal and outside the matrimonial is haram. The author argued that society is too powerful and decides the category of what is pure Halal and that which is impure Haram (pp. 484-486).

Moving ahead (Turner, Symbols in Ndembu Ritual, 1967) believed that the symbol is the little ritual that passes through the ritual behavior. The ritual also plays a significant role in regulating social behaviors and becomes the central part of social actions. The symbols remain attached to human means, interests, and purposes. The

single symbol gives various meanings and represents different things. The author explains that Ndembu women associate the various symbolical meanings to their trees named *mudyi* tree. In English when translated, the *mudyi* tree is called the milk tree. The *mudyi* (milk tree) is traced with all mothers' lineages' wombs, symbolizing the women and men's genealogical order. It is believed by the Ndembu community that their entire ancestress slept under this milk tree when it started growing. There was an initiation ceremony; all the women danced around the milk tree, and the novice slept under the milk tree during the dance; thus, the ritual is performed under the *mudyi* (milk tree) by the Ndembu community. (pp. 494-496)

Jot (lamp) is the main symbol of Udero Lal, which is sacred and pious for the Udero Lal's devotees. It is believed by the devotees that they see Udero Lal in the light of the lamp (*Jot*). (Geertz 1973) while being interpretative; talked about the religion, symbols, and system of symbols. He argued that culture should not be taken in visible form. A symbol is an object, an act, event, quality, or relation that serves as a vehicle for conceptions. Religious symbols demonstrate a sacred symbol which deals with suffering, pain and addresses world views. The author further explained that sacred symbols guide people's worldview. Thick descriptions focus on hidden meanings, as in the case of onion that has multiple layers, the same way culture has multiple layers. The thick description further constructs reality through language, verbal discourse, and behaviors discourse. The religious symbol has meanings for the life of the peoples, which also help the people. (Geertz, 1973).

I came around with this study because water (*Jal*) is the sacred symbol at the shared space of Udero Lal; devotees personify the water with Udero Lal. It is believed that Udero Lal is the River deity, who appeared as Avatar from the water; therefore, they perform *Chhando* (sprinkling water) ritual by sprinkling water on the faces or bodies of the devotees which protects them from evil. There is a well at Udero Lal's shrine named *Balanbo sahib*. The water from the well is thought to be sacred, and devotees perform the ritual from this sacred water. Another scholar (Winkelman, 2009) has observed that when people face personal and social problems, other stresses, and illness, they turn to religion to find a cure. The people who make healing through

religion by performing the rituals remain in deception and placebo effects. The west opinionates that there is no effect of religious rituals on people's health.

However, religious followers and believers are of the view that religious rituals and prayers heal the body of human beings. I acknowledged his observations that many people face problems and come to have their issues resolved. Many devotees of the Udero Lal used prayer to get their wishes to be fulfilled; in return, they distributed sweets, foods, and other items at the shrine of Udero Lal.

In addition (Kottak's, 2010) insisted that the rituals are repetitive and formal and performed at essential sacred spaces. The actions, behavior, words, and performances are included in the rituals. People become participants rather than an audience in their rituals. Information is conveyed by the rituals for their participants and their culture. It is a repeated act by the generations which gives meaning to the people's sentiments and actions. The rituals are known as social acts performed by the believer at the given unique spaces and time. Rites mentioned in the passages are associated with the transition from one phase to another phase. There are three stages of rites of passage. The human beings who had moved from their original place are included in the first phase of separation, then moved from the first phase but had not joined another phase of liminality. The last phase is the inclusion of human beings who passed the rites of passage to join the group as a collective phase. (pp. 195-200) .

I came to an agreement with his argument because the shared spaces are the central point of the ritual where devotees of the saint participate in the rituals. The bathing ceremony (*chodas*) ritual is performed twice a year at the shrine of Udero Lal in which they cleanse the shrine of Udero Lal with rose water and milk, which then becomes sacred and is distributed to the devotees, who take it to their homes and use it for different remedies. This is like the *Palla* (fish) ritual of Udero Lal where the fishermen catch it from the Indus River and eat it. They had been catching fish since the time of their forefathers; who used to live at the banks of the Indus River. *Palla* is a unique fish like salmon which fishermen usually catch from the Indus River (Sindhu). The *palla* fish migrates upstream to the Sukkur barrage of the Indus River.

The *Palla* continuously encircles Saint's shrine with respect and never directs its tail towards Udero Lal/Zindha Pir shrine.

The ancient book Chachnama (1963) by Baloch, is the first history of the Sindh that mentions the shrine of Shah Hussain by the Delhi merchant. (pp. 1-8). I have same opinion that many rituals are associated with Udero Lal, but I disagree that the historical account of Udero Lal shrine is mentioned in the Chachnama because this old book was written in the 6th-century hundreds of years before the birth of Udero Lal. However, some introduction of Udero Lal is mentioned in the other oldest book Tufuat-al-Kiram (1180) which was written after the Chachnama. (Pountney&Maric, 2015) generally agree that in the human culture, ritual practices and behaviors are the way of non-verbal meanings and communication. The rituals are complex cultural practices of the societies that are powerful and effective and change people's behavior as well as the situation. Many Anthropologists have studied and given a detailed description of the rituals for their better understanding, meaning, and interpretation especially from people's perspective (pp. 181-183).

Further (Boivin & Rajpal, 2018) have explained the symbols at the Udero Lal shrine. The lamp (*Jot*) and water (*Jal*) represent Udero Lal because both symbols play a significant role at the temple of Udero Lal, where there is no statue (*murti*) or other cultural material, but the lamp remains the central attraction of the temple without figurative representations. There are many other Udero Lal temples in Mol Sharif, Karachi, and Mirpurkhas, in which sacred figures are placed in the temples associated with the Udero Lal (pp. 43-44). I cannot entirely have same views with the data that the lamp room has no statue, but behind the *Jot*, the two little statues of the sacred cows are placed whom Hindus worship when they go into the lamp room.

2.16. Conclusion

I have drawn the information on shared saints and shrines from the literature review. Studies point out that due to competitive religiosity, sharing of religious sites and spaces had increased among the different religious groups; however, there was a gap in the literature that failed to focus on the reflection of contestation, tolerance, and transformation of shared spaces. My research studies investigated these gaps. Shared spaces provide an opportunity for contrasting thinking to share their experiences in a more tolerant environment.

However, they reflect the communal conflict too. Historically, shrines of the saints in Sindh are shared by Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, but these are contested sites and due to their multiple identities, we find an element of competition, which can turn into a sour situation. Similarly, Udero Lal has multiple identities where competitive nature arising out of the dispute over sharing of spaces between both Hindus and Muslims in Sindh is common. While the Udero Lal's shrine is subject to questionable identity whether it's single or dual, other shrines do not fall into this category nor do they struggle for competitiveness or contestation. There is a massive gap in the literature on the multiple identities of the shared shrines and saints conducted through various studies. An authentic ethnographic study has not been conducted on Sindh's shared spaces so far, particularly on Udero Lal's shared space. It provides the primary source of data to the other scholars to analyze the preliminary fieldwork of the study.

Research papers and articles were written from data collected through secondary source. Due to this, there is much ambiguity about the shared spaces of Udero Lal. Literature has not sufficiently focused on how tolerance was created? Is there a contestation on the syncretic shrine? What are the interpretations of the symbols and rituals at the shared spaces of Udero Lal? Most of the studies have not focused on the identity component which has led to further ambiguity about the shared space of Udero Lal. Colonial, pre-colonial and post-colonial contemporary primary and detailed field studies were not conducted that have led to vast gaps in Sindh's religious shared spaces and particularly the shared space of Udero Lal. All the gaps

need to be addressed by conducting preliminary fieldwork and research study that addresses all the gaps found in the literature.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction

The research methodology, I used that was based on ethnographic methods and qualitative research for the case study of Udero Lal's shared shrine space in Sindh, Pakistan. I conducted twelve months of primary first-hand research fieldwork from March 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020. Keeping in view the local environment, I wore a casual dress (*shalwar kameez*) during the fieldwork. To win over their trust, I engaged them in a very relaxed setting by gossiping (*kehchhari*) to strengthen friendship. I learned vernacular terminology of Sindhi's native language during fieldwork used by the Sindhi Hindus such as *Jot* (lamp), *Jal* (water) *Bahraano* (food/fruit offering ritual), *Bhandaro* (sacred food) *Sukha* (sweet dish), and *Saisa* (salty grains), which are served at the shrine of the Udero Lal. A case study is a deep research study that produces a lengthy analysis. It is specific rather than being general. A case study is also a holistic perspective rather than focussed; its emphasis is on natural standards. Researchers can use multiple methods in a case study (Martyn, 2008).

The first-hand purpose of the case study methodology is to have primary and natural settings of the present and real picture of field, program, and functions. Case study research methodology's primary aim is to use participant observation and firsthand information during the fieldwork and daily routine activities and program (Stephen, 2009). The utmost quality of research methodology is finding the basic answer to questions that search for truth in information about the universe's particular study (J.Pelto & H Pelto, 1978). The method means those research tools and techniques that are used to collect the data in the field, and methodology is the philosophy of the research process; it encompasses the assumptions and values and represents the primary rationale for the research (Bailey, 1978). Qualitative data are not limited to

the outcome of the specific methods. You are the tools and techniques and instrument of the qualitative study because your eyes and ears observe, see, and feel what will happen around your field. In your research data, you always gather and collect the informal data during your participant observation; informal discussions that help you understand and collect your first hand data (Maxwell, 2013).

3.2. Research Paradigm

Research is known due to the understanding of the important world views conducted by the scholar in his/her discipline. All those world views are known as research paradigms. Paradigm makes the way of seeing the world closely; interpretation of what is being observed. A researcher must see what things are true and real and vital to be documented. Paradigms of the research are represented by epistemologies, or to know the ways and world views. Paradigms help and guide the researcher to find the truth, evidence, and interpret worldly affairs. The main research paradigms in social science hover around interpretative, positivity, critical theory, constructivist theory, phenomenological, social network theory, and ecological theory. Intellectual debate, conflict, and competition, scientific paradigms, and social sciences perspectives are important approaches for social sciences researchers. However, some researchers view it as the most exclusive research paradigms in social science research; depending on the nature of the research question of the researcher to include it in his/her research study.

3.2.1. The Importance of Epistemology

Emile Durkheim favors the positivists' epistemological positions and suggests using the quantitative method at a large population scale. In contrast, Max Weber favors interpretivist epistemological positions. He emphasizes the use of qualitative methods because of addressing the meaningful importance of human life in society. Interpretivism believes that the analysis's primary objective must be to represent how community members understand their actions. It also shows the representations of the main issues regarding the member of the society so that positivists will pass much time in the process of extensive sampling, but interpretivist would spend much time to

know the people's representations and their actions in the understanding of the members of the society (Travers, 2008).

3.2.2. Interpretive Research Paradigm

The interpretive research paradigm has a different way of looking at reality by critical theorists and positivists. Interpretivism argues that when the reality is considered closely, it differs in its outlook because different people have different opinions about the truth and its hard to determine what is the exact truth. Everyone has a different perspective on one event, and everyone will explain it differently according to their opinion. "What we "know" then, is a function of our interpretation of events and the meanings we create to explain those events to others." Culture is constructed, which is also abstract; people interact with one another, participate in the activities, and share all the shared activities, expressed in symbols in common languages. All is reflected in shared meanings, expressed in symbols, common languages, and other means of communication. The interpretive approach is participatory because its meaning is reflected through the interaction of human beings. The Researcher must participate in the life of the participant's social events, social dialogue to interpret the meaning and background as they unfold. Interpretivists have a belief that meanings and cultural beliefs are socially constructed and are not fixed. The meanings and cultural beliefs are also participatory, positioned based, and relative to the main context (D.Le Compte & Schensul, 2010). My research paradigm is interpretive, and I conducted the interpretivist epistemological position in my qualitative research study.

3.3. Ethnographic Research Methods

I conducted ethnographic research methods namely the fieldwork, participant observation, informal discussions, unstructured interviews, audio, and video recording, which are mentioned in detail below:

3.3.1. Participant Observation

Participant observation is the most fundamental foundation of cultural anthropology in which ethnographer comes in very close contact with the community and makes them feel relaxed so that communication can become friendly and constructive. This way they share the experiences of their lives and lifestyles. Anthropologists participate in all field activities of the people and discuss sensitive topics; thus helping the Researcher's opening the field doors for information collection. Ethnographer must be native and he or she should know the native language and the art of mingling with natives much like a family member. Participant observation lets you understand the people's feelings and their inside views and allows collecting the required data with confidence. Many qualitative types of researches become very much tricky without participant observation (Sarivastva, 2011). I participated in the main events, rituals, and annual fair (*urs*) of the Udero Lal. Two main fairs (*mela*) were held at the Udero Lal shrine.

I participated in the annual fair held in month of April 2019 called the (*Chetichand /Jaat jo Melo*), commemorating Udero Lal's annual birthday. Another fair called *Asu jo Melo/adhJaat* was also celebrated in October 2019. I also participated in this fair. The rituals are performed by both Hindus and Muslims at the shrine of Udero Lal. The main rituals are performed by the Hindus, such as *Bahraano* (food offering) on every month of the moon sighting (*har maheeny jay Chand*), which also remains at the central part of the fair (*melo*). After the eleventh day of the annual fair (*Chetichand Melo*), *Chodas* (bath) ritual is performed at the shrine of the Udero Lal, *Chhando* (sprinkling water), and *Jarnyo* (rites of passage) rituals were performed. Muslims also performed their main rituals such as *Matam* (chest beating) ritual by Shia Muslims, *Jhand* (head shaving), and *Dhammal* (spiritual dance). I participated fully and with eagerness in all the rituals.

I wandered in the whole village of Udero Lal, passing by streets and houses and met the Hindu and Muslim communities of this village. I spent many days and nights at the Udero Lal shrine closely watching their premier festivals and rituals. I also visited the nearby temples of Udero Lal and Tando Adam temple of Udero Lal located at a

distance of 20 km, Mirpurkhas temple of Udero Lal, 45 km away, Hala temple of Udero Lal situated 30 km away, shared shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai, 25 km away, and Nasarpur, the birthplace of Udero Lal located at a distance of 35 km from the main shrine of the Udero Lal. I met with the devotees and caretakers, had informal discussions on the life of Udero Lal.

I also went to Sikh Gurdwaras at the Bhit Shah near the shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai; inaugurated by Syed Waqar Ali Shah the *Sajjadasheeh* (caretaker) of Shah Abdul Latif's shrine. In the same village, I traveled across the vast tracts of lands to meet with the local people who cultivated various crops, as well as shops in the busy areas to discuss several aspects of the village life. I spoke with men and women, young and old, poor, rich, in the local Sindhi language, Hindus and Muslims and every member of the religious group I met. I was interested in understanding the activity of an ethnographer during the fieldwork? They are supposed to collect the basic information while talking, watching, and mingling with the people along with reading the diverse reports and records related to their field and gathering the data from the field.

Observation is the most essential tool of an ethnographer's. He feels and watches all kinds of movement and activity and observes it through the anthropological lens. Good ethnographers spend considerable time in field observation. Ethnographer also has observation participants who take part in every kind of community activity that is going on in the field, searches for the insider view, peoples perspective, and experience in the peoples' view point in the community (Lapan, Quartaroli, 2009).

3.3.2. Unstructured Interviews

An unstructured interview is widely known and conducted in data collection during the ethnographic study in cultural anthropology. Informal interviews are conducted during the participant observation in the field regarding their boats, fields, and offices. The unstructured interview is of utmost importance in cultural anthropology and ethnographic study because primary and authentic data is collected only by applying this method. With unstructured interviews, you sit down with the respondent and

conduct the interviews; you both know the purpose and reason for setting up of the interview. You have a good time and engage with the informant in a pleasant mood and frank gossip. An unstructured interview is planned with clear objectives, what needs to be asked, and it has minimum control over the respondents in the field (Bernard, 1994). I conducted 85 unstructured interviews from 11 leading Hindu keepers, 01 Hindu *Gaadinasheen* (custodian) Mata Beena, 16 Hindus followers, 02 *Pandits* (priest), 12 Local Hindus Shevdar, 5 Hindus women, 01 Muslim *Sajjadasheen* (caretaker) Ghulam Abass Shaikh, 09 Muslim followers, 13 Mujawar Muslims Shaikh, 09 locals residence of the village and 03 Muslims women and 03 Muslim molvee's. All the interviews were conducted in the native Sindhi language, which I later translated into English.

Unstructured Interviews

Leading Hindus Keepers	Hindu Ghadinasheen	Hindu Followers	Pandit	Local Hindus Shevdars	Hindus Women	Total
11	1	16	2	12	5	
Muslim Mujawar	Muslim Sajjadasheen	Muslim Followers	Molvees	Local Residence of the village	Muslim Women	
13	1	9	3	9	3	85

(Source: Reseach, 2022)

An excellent ethnographic interview is the one that generates more candid conversation than the traditional kind of interviews that are mostly objective in nature. A keen ethnographer probes, responds, expresses, reacts, and engages in all aspects of life and living style and tries to get more information about his problem (Larpan and Quartaroli, editors, 2009). An unstructured interview is an essential part of the data

collection, and it is also referred to as an in-depth interview. First, the researcher makes the interview guide framework, and then he interviews in the light of the interview guide. The Researcher also develops the questions from the interview guide and asks the respondents in a way that is friendly but has an element of probing the issue at hand. The unstructured interview can be conducted one-to-one in the group or a focus group. The questions in an unstructured interview are random and not specific (Kumar, 1996).

3.3.3. Informal Discussion

An informal discussion has multiple layers of conversation, no fixed agenda and less structure and control. A researcher is occupied in gossip, chit-chat, and frank discussion with the respondents. He sits with them in the evenings while he works in the field in the morning making fresh acquaintance and interviewing the people who could be the primary source of information. The Researcher tries to remember and retain in his mind all the respondents' discussions and conversations that he had exchanged during the fieldwork during the whole day. He continually takes field notes and jots down regularly on daily basis activities. He constantly uses his laptop and writes down complete information for future purposes. Informal discussion is the choice of participant observation; when you enter the field for the first time, you try to develop your rapport and develop to get daily information. Informal discussion is the process that continues during the field to unearth the topic regarding your research (Bernard, 1994).

I had an informal discussion with both Hindus and Muslim followers of the Udero Lal at the shared space of Udero Lal. When Hindus *sheavadars* (attendants) used to serve me the delicious food of *daal and chanwar* (white rice with grain curry) we had informal discussions on every topic; the Hindus used to feel comfortable and shared all the information. I sat at the shrine day in and day out spending endless hours watching the activities that would be helpful in my research. I was also accompanied by the Muslim *Mujawars* (keepers) at the shrine and they served me regularly with the *dodh pati chanh* (milk tea). They had long sessions of informal discussion with me

about their life, ancestors, and various events that took place at the shrine of Udero Lal.

3.3.4. Audio and Video Recording

Ethnographic research methods are like a tool kit rather than a research tool. The Researcher must come up with his/her tool kits, use the research method technique, which will help the scholar face the current situation, and collect the first-hand field-based primary data within the particular context of the research (Fife 2005: 1-13). I recorded over one hundred and twenty hours of audio digital recording and five hours of digital video recording during my fieldwork. My key informants, Farooque Moorjo, supported me selflessly during the video and audio recordings. I translated all data from the Sindhi language into English which was a laborious task but helped me in compiling the important data.

3.5. Researcher Reflexivity

Reflexivity is evident when the researcher discloses his personal experience about the respondents and the social scientist shifts from the situation of a pariah to the situation of an insider throughout the survey. This also happens when the Researcher incorporates individual qualities, for example, religious inclination, caste, nationality, sex, race, age, sexual, individual experience, phonetic, custom, migration status, hypothetical approach and philosophical positions, and enthusiastic reactions to participants (Berger, 2015, pp. 219-234). The reflexivity course that encounters the researcher neutrality influences the research study due to his personal religious belief, sentiments, social and cultural background (Hsiung, 2008, pp. 211-226).

The procedure of reflexivity begins immediately when a scientist thinks about his research study topic. The researchers simultaneously conduct a review of the concerned topic and develop the research questions. The reflexivity must emphasize the researcher's aim, suppositions, and interest in exploring the scope of the subject for drawing up his muscles for specific examination of the activity. This is a fundamental approach for practical assessment by the researcher as it helps him

analyze the data from the receptive angle. Hence, at this stage, the inquiries that may come up are: what new phase do I bring to the exploration? What is my own and expert foundation? How does the subject stimulate in me the desire to explore with a probing mind and deal with recollections, sentiments, considerations, perspectives, biases, and thoughts as an analyst? (Tova Band-Winterstein & Naim, 2014, pp. 530-539). I conducted my research on the shared space of Udero Lal that had multiple identities. Muslims claimed that he is Muslim and saint for them, and Hindus claimed that he is Hindu and has remained Hindu, which is a deity for them. As an ethnographic researcher and a Muslim, I belonged to the Syed²⁴ caste, and it was challenging to research both Hindus and Muslims who were strong believers of Udero Lal and rested their faith in the glory of the saint. In the beginning, Hindus did not respond to me; however, Muslims overwhelmingly welcomed me, try their best to provide all the necessary information, and helped me beyond my expectations because they perceived that a Muslim who belonged to the Syed caste would favor them and declare a single identity of the Udero Lal as a Muslim. One of the Muslims stated that:

Sir (*sane*), it is an excellent, prestigious and honorable occasion for us that God has sent you to research on the Udero Lal. You are by caste Syed, and descendant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Your caste is highly respectful for us, whatever information you will need, we will provide you. Udero Lal has himself brought you here. Now God has sent you like an angel, and you have to prove that Udero Lal is not Hindu; he is Muslim, and Hindus have occupied the Udero Lal shrine and wanted to declare Udero Lal a Hindu saint. (Personal interview, May 5, 2019).

²⁴Syeds are known as highly prestigious and most respected caste than other castes in Sindh because they are the direct descendants of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Syeds are firmly connected to Sufism and are the *sajadanasheens* (caretakers) of the many Sufi shrines in Sindh. There are the many followers of Syeds in Sindh, Pakistan.

Hindus had an apprehension that being a Muslim and Syed by caste I may not favor them, but as an anthropologist, I knew my responsibility that I had to strictly follow the ethnographic research methods and revisit the impact of reflexivity on my research and data, so I started to intermingle with the Hindus in their social circle, guest rooms, and gatherings. I participated in every custom, social event, ritual, and marriage ceremony. I used to worship with them and had breakfast, lunch, and dinner with them during the fieldwork in the final stage. This was a mutual trust that was developed among us which I had to respect and honor. The result was that they started to share vital information regarding the study with me. One of the Hindus *Sheavdar* (attendant) stated:

We know that you are a Muslim and a Syed by caste, so we thought that you would not be neutral or impartial and would write in favor of your Muslim brothers because our elders have said that Muslims can never be friend of Hindus. However after four months, we observed that your nature is different from other Muslims, you have accompanied us in every ritual and ceremony and even worshiped with us, ate the same meal with us, shared your feelings with us, told us about your kids, and family, it seemed to us, as if you were a Hindu, not a Muslim, so we believed you and started sharing all the information with you (Personal Interview, June 10, 2019).

I was strictly bound to follow the anthropological responsibility, trust, and ethics, and tried to revisit the areas and people during my fieldwork as well as during the analysis of field data. I tried to overcome and reduce it and responded to my standing during the fieldwork and data analysis process. It was my ethical duty to intentionally and mindfully attend to my role as an anthropologist, interplay the research process, reduce continuous subjectivity and follow the objectivity and people's point of view.

3.6.Theoretical Framework

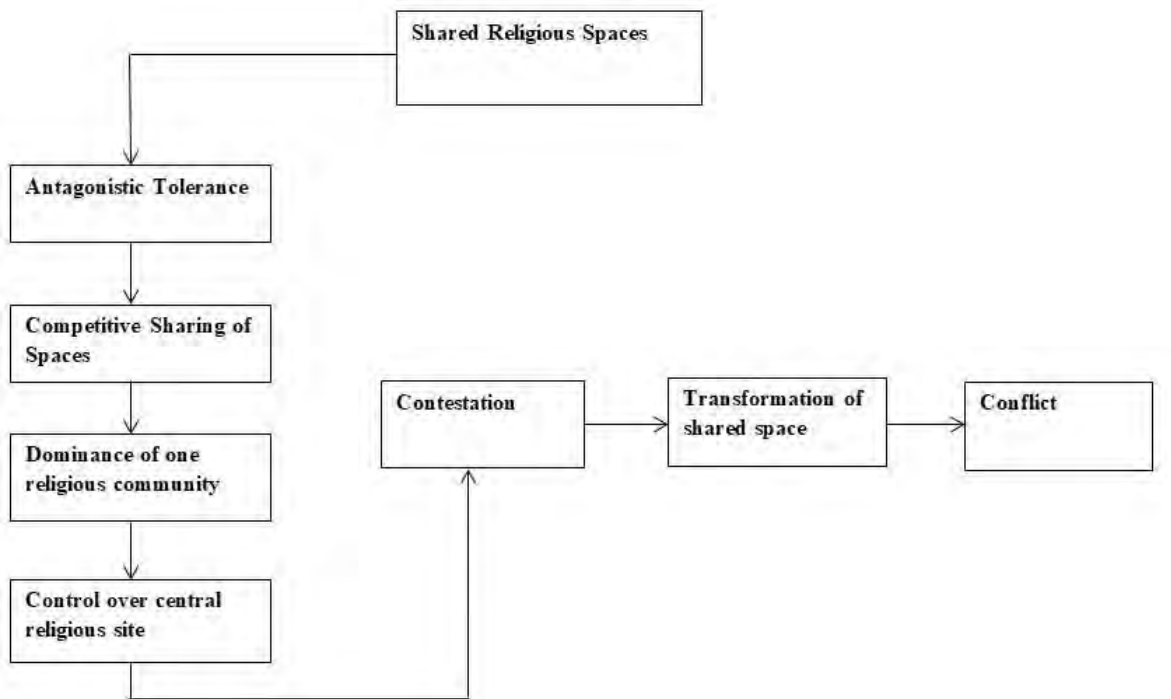
3.6.1. Hayden's An Ethnographic Study of a Shrine of Shah Ramzan in Pathardi Taluka, Ahmadnagar District, Maharashtra, India.

Hayden conducted an ethnographic study of a shrine in Pathardi Taluka, District Ahmadnagar, Maharashtra State, India. The Muslims called it *Dargah*, of the *Shah*

Ramzam Mahi Savar Chisti saint, and it was *Samadhi* for the Hindus and they named the saint as *Kanifnath*. This saint had dual religious identities and was an example of syncretism in India. He was historically venerated by both Hindus and Muslims in the pre and post-partition of India. Despite the saint's multiple identities, Hindus and Muslims had a long history of harmony, tolerance, coexistence and peacefully worshiped him and attended ceremonies together at the dargah, but were not free of disputable history. He used the Model of „Antagonistic Tolerance, and Competitive Sharing of Religious Spaces. He also emphasized this Antagonistic tolerance model and the analysis resulted in the contestation and physical transformation of shared space at Madhi India (Hayden 2016, pp.1-5). Antagonistic Tolerance looked into the pluralism, conflict, harmony, and coexistence among the various religious people and communities at the shared site of Shah Ramzan Mahi/Kanifnath. It adopted the multidisciplinary approach to comprehend the different religious communities who lived in peace and harmony for generations. They respected each other and created syncretism in their religious beliefs and practices at the shared space of Shah Ramzan/Kanifnath. One group always remained dominant over the other. That approach turned into a conflict over the shared religious spaces but did not aggravate any further as their cooperation was almost peaceful despite different competing interests.

However, the confrontational mindset led one dominant religious group to fight for a change, conversion, and occupation of the saint's shrine. The intrinsic nature of the perpetrator is not easy to understand and the shared religious spaces presented a perfect case of contestation different religious communities continued to aim at controlling these shared spaces. Hayden (2016) used historical, ethnographic, and archaeological data from India, Mexico, Balkans, Peru, Turkey, and Portugal to prove his theory. He used this model for comparative analysis, transformation, and possible contestation. His model explained the period of coexistence and peaceful interaction hung between two religious groups and had the possibility of turning into violence which could, lead to “ethnic cleansing.”

Diagram of the Theoretical Framework



(Source: Reseacher, 2019)

However, Hayden further elaborated upon the techniques to operationalize tolerance into active and passive modes. He further argued in his research studies that there are many sacred religious spaces that are shared by the different religious groups and create competitive sharing for their dominance, interest, and control over the shared space. Both religious communities carried out syncretic practices at the same shared site, but later they turned violent hinting to contested, transformed, and physically converted space by the dominant religious group. The author further argues that such competitive sharing reflects non-interference with the passive meaning of tolerance, but the active meaning of tolerance that fully accepts others is unsuitable. (Ibid,2016. p.6). Hayden has suggested that there are shared spaces in South Asia, where competitive sharing of religious sites' is passive and/or active. It depends on the nature of the sites. The Udero Lal shared space has remained a compulsive competitive religious site in Sindh between Hindus and Muslims due to the saint's dual identity and openness to ownership claim by each party. The claim by Hindus

and Muslims over the saint's identity has remained controversial and no authentic solution even in the literature has been found to satisfy the complainants. Colonial and pre-colonial literature has mentioned the duality of the Udero Lal. The shared site of Udero Lal has been contested due to identity and ownership; therefore, "Antagonistic passive tolerance" (Ibid: p.6) is compatible with this shared shrine of the Udero Lal.

I also looked at Hayden's Model of „Antagonistic tolerance and competitive sharing of religious sites and spaces“ as a theoretical framework in my research study at Udero Lal. Udero Lal also has multiple religious identities, as *Shah Ramzam Mahi Savar Chisti* saint/*Kanifnath* had in Madhi India. Both Hindu Muslim communities idolized Udero Lal as did the communities in India that adored Shah Ramzan/Kanifnath.

Despite the coexistence, harmony, pluralism, syncretism, and peace, Udero Lal's shared space is contested, and half of the space is transformed and confiscated by the Sindhi Hindus. I agree with Robert Hayden's model "Antagonistic Tolerance: Competitive Sharing of Religious Sites and Spaces" that one dominant religious group always tries to overpower the other and competes with each other to occupy the shared space, which leads to "Antagonistic tolerance" and later on to physical transformation. Robert has further elaborated on the "Tolerance" that focuses on the active and passive features. He argues that such competitive sharing is compatible with the passive meaning of tolerance but unsuited to the active meaning of tolerance fully that accepts others into its fold. Robert used antagonistic tolerance in his model as active tolerance, which embraces others, but I look at the Udero Lal shared space as passive tolerance in the context of "antagonistic tolerance" model at his shared space but not fully transformed; the reason being, it is contested and is in the process of transformation by the Hindu dominant group.

The shrine of Shah Ramzan/Kanifnath at Madhi, Maharashtra, India



1976



2013



1976

The dome of the Kanifnath/Shah Ramzan Shrine, Madhi, March 1976. The dome is Colored green and has a crescent on top.



(Source: Robert M. Hayden, 2016)

2013

The Madhi shrine dome, March 2013. The dome has multiple colors and a trident (*trishul*) on top, and there are Hindu saint figures in the posts at the corners that were not present in 1992.

3.6.2. Anna Barry Bigelow's An Ethnographic Field Research at the Dargah of Sufi Saint Haider Shaikh in the Town of Malerkotla Punjab in India.

Anna Barry Bigelow (2004) conducted his ethnographic field research at the dargah of Sufi saint widely known as Haider Shaikh (1454) in the town of Malerkotla Punjab in India. Her Ph.D. dissertation was „Sharing saints, shrines, and stories: Practicing Pluralism in North India.“ Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims were venerated peacefully at the shared shrine of Haider Shaikh. Anna argued that the shared shrine of Haider Shaikh encountered inter-religious communal conflict, bloodshed, devastation, destruction in Punjab after the partition of India in 1947. Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus successfully handled its multi-religious community because all the communities perceived Shaikh Haider's shrine as a shared space of communal peace, tolerance, and inter-faith harmony. They held the belief that the saint's power rests on this Malerkotla town. She further argues that due to extensive narratives and regulatory practices at the shared shrine, the Malerkotla city had become a place of harmony. The multi-ethnic harmony has manifested peace at the shared shrine of Shaikh Haider and created a network among communities.“ She further emphasized and argues forcefully that sacred space and shared shine had the power to create peace, harmony, and tolerance by practicing the rituals and narratives at the shared shrine but the communal conflict and antagonistic environment did exist and were overcome through cooperation and tolerance. The collective representation of the people at the shared space created unity, and this example continued to exist after the partition of India where Malerkotla city managed excellent governance; the harmony also remained intact after the post-partition. “My primary argument is that the sharing of sacred space and sacred histories is a powerful resource for maintaining peace in plural societies” (Bigelow, 2004, p.4).

She has not pointed out those other shared shrines with multiple identities and questions of ownership in her study. She researched the Haider Shaikh shrine in India who has no issue of multiple identities and ownership. There is a dominant Muslim group that is the primary caretaker of the Haider Shaikh; however, Udero Lal shared space has different phenomena than the Haider Shaikh because the former's shrine

has a dual identity and management is the under control of the Hindus. Udero Lal is a *Bhagwan* (deity) for Hindus and *Wali* (*Muslim saint close to God*). I disagree with her central argument that shared space is strong evidence for maintaining interfaith harmony. Shared spaces are not made geographically. The people make them due to divine healing they receive from the same saint but the conflict on different issues in the same shared space never dies down. She has further mentioned the Muslim Saint Haider Shaikh shared space always created peace and harmony without any contestations issues among the Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs.

Furthermore, she did not discuss South Asia's other saints who have multiple identities and are venerated by both Hindus and Muslims in the same shared space, which seems to be the gap in her research. I conducted an ethnographic study on the shared space of the Udero Lal in Sindh, which has multiple identities. Furthermore, Khan (2004) observed that the partition labeled Hindus and Muslims as having separate religions, which led to further segregation among the Muslims and Hindus. She also disagreed with Hayden's antagonistic tolerance model and the competitive sharing of religious sites and spaces.

3.7. Key Concepts

3.7.1. Shared Space

We call shared space a sensitive and emotional location . It has an emotional attachment for its followers and a sense of ownership too. It is the place where we cultivate our heartfelt feelings and emotions. The communities are expected to cooperate and show respect to each other for promoting peace and understanding. Shared spaces also address complex issues and challenges and help in removing misunderstandings. A shared space is the central place, where different communities meet and exchange views and mingle with each other (Sherri Torjman, 2006). Albera argued that most researches on social sciences focus on shared religious spaces at various levels (Albera, 2008).

3.7.2. Religion

Religion pleases and satisfies and controls the human being and his overall activities (Frazer, 1958). When the human being is lonely, alone, and unhappy he renews his relationship with God and strives to achieve a higher religious status (James, 1958). Rituals and belief system motivates the holy things only and all beliefs and practices unite under the community umbrella such as Church, which remains with them firmly (Durkheim, 1965). All religious symbols create an attraction to human beings and their intrinsic power to act positively. All those religious concepts and activities are thought be real to the man wherein he realistically performs his activities keeping the religion up front” (Geertz, 1973). Religion is opium for the devotees“ that binds humankind within a specific circle, and he/she goes into false consciousness and forgets the real world (Marx, 1970). Religion is a melodrama and a psychological process that glues to the people and keeps them subdued (Freud, 1942). Religion is related to the production and protection of primitive thought and mentality (Bruhl, 1926).

3.7.3. Syncretism

This concept of syncretism is applied to the religious perspective; however, it can also be applied to a change in culture and tradition, which mixes with the other religious beliefs and practices. Syncretism is the combination of various religious beliefs, traditions, and cultural values. It draws elements from other cultures and religions; it also merges into other cultures and beliefs. This term also comes into contact with other cultures, which creates diverse religious beliefs and cultural beliefs (Seymour-Smith, 1987). Syncretism is the combination of the various religious beliefs and practices in South Asia. It leads to diverse beliefs and cultures and creates unity with the performance of ceremonies, rituals, and practices accepted by all the different groups of the communities, religious people being part and parcel. This concept also finds the combined way of mixed practices and religious beliefs. There are many examples of Akbar, Kabir, and Sikhs who practiced syncretism (South Asia Folklore: An Encyclopedia, 2003).

3.7.4. Tolerance

The word tolerance has two meanings. The first one comes from English which means to accept the practices and beliefs of others. These could be different from one's own culture but are adopted and practiced jointly. At a later stage, this word was used by John Lock, who got toleration from the Latin word *tolerate* that means to put up with (in medicine one tolerates chemotherapy) (Hayden, 2016).

3.8. Conclusion

My research paradigm was interpretive, and I had an interpretivism epistemological position in my qualitative research study. My research methodology was a case study, and ethnographic methods were applied. I used ethnographic methods, conducted participant observation, carried out informal discussions, unstructured interviews, audio, and video recording for the case study of Udero Lal's shared space. Research fieldwork consisted of twelve months based on firsthand and primary fieldwork from 1st March 2019 to 31st March 2020. Eighty-five (85) unstructured interviews were conducted, 11) leading Hindu caretaker, 01) Hindu *gaadinasheen* (caretaker) Mata Beena, 16) Hindus followers, 02) *Pandits* (priest), 12) Local Hindus Shevdar, 5) Hindus women, 01) Muslim *Sajjadnasheen* (caretaker) Ghulam Abass Shaikh, 09) Muslims followers, 13) Mujawar Muslims Shaikh, 09) locals residents of the village and 03) Muslims women, 03) Muslims moulvee's in-depth interviews were also conducted. In-depth interviews were conducted in the native Sindhi language and translated into English from Sindhi. One hundred and twenty hours of audio digital recording and five hours of digital video recording were recorded during fieldwork.

Further, I applied Hayden's (2016) theoretical framework „antagonistic tolerance, competitive sharing of religious spaces“ in my research study of the shared space of Udero Lal. This model gave me the lens to further investigate tolerance, transformation, and contestation at the shrine of the Udero Lal. I agree with the main argument of Hayden that sacred space is shared by people with different mindsets but the sanctity of the shrine is so overwhelming that it soothes and pacifies the divergent views that result in building tolerance among the visitors. However, tacitly

contestation is present due to multiple religious identities of a saint and dominance of one group over the other, which can transform into discord, and ultimately the stronger party takes over the shared shrine exclusively for their community. This model proved that Saint Shah Ramzan's shrine in India had multiple identities but despite that both Hindus and Muslims visited the shrine to pay their respects. Power and sometimes absolute power creates a confrontational situation where the weaker party has to take a subdued position. The Hindus' dominant group had the backing of powerful people and it took an independent decision to take over the shrine solely for the worship of the Hindus only. With this unilateral action, the last ray of tolerance completely disappeared.

Likewise, Udero Lal shrine has multiple religious identities shared between Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus religious group became dominant over there because it had authority and controlled the management of the shrine. This contested situation resulted in an eruption of numerous conflicts. Half of the portion of the complex of Udero Lal shrine is under the control of the Hindus and they tried their best to physically transform the major space of the shrine. The Muslims always resisted but there is no permanent settlement of the issue.

The dominant Hindus group has already converted one portion of the Udero Lal complex where Shev temple was constructed and a fresh room for Udero Lal was made that had a statue showing the saint on the back of a horse which was not present before. In their continuous effort to take over the control of the sacred shrine Hindus tried to alter the central portion of the shrine that was the site of significant events in the past; one dating back to the colonial period. The Hindus installed the equestrian statue depicting Udero Lal on the horse on the main entrance gate of the Udero Lal shrine. In retaliation to Hindus' expeditious move, the Muslims destroyed the statue but the British government took personal interest and the shrine was restored to its original condition. Another event took place in 2017 when the Hindus Mata *gaadinashen* (keeper) declared Udero Lal as Hindu Pir or saint and she fixed a large board on the main entrance displaying that Udero Lal was the live saint of Hindus and was only immersed into the tomb. The Muslims were outrageous to see the writing on the main gate of the shrine and strongly protested against one-sided standpoint of the

Hindus. The matter came to the notice of the Government of Sindh and it sent a large contingent of police to the shrine that convinced the Hindus that their individual decision was against the sentiments of the Muslims and removed the board thus averting communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. To show their affinity to the shrine of Udero Lal the Hindus fixed the Hindu image portraits of Udero Lal inside the shrine. Once again the Muslims complained to the Government of Sindh and the police removed the Hindu image portraits from the Udero Lal shrine. It was decided by the Sindh police that the shrine should be restored to its original condition and all actions that led to the outbreak of communal riots should be avoided. The Hindus were determined that Udero Lal was a Hindu saint and Muslims wanted to occupy the shrine forcefully. They demanded Udero Lal was their deity and the whole management was theirs and only they had the right to transform or alter the major space of Udero Lal's shrine.

As Hayden's theory proved, Shah Ramzan's shrine was fully changed by one dominant group of Hindus, the biggest casualty being "tolerance." An air of differences and competitive rivalry has been consistently visible and fails to die down. The situation is ripe with silenced disparity and there seems no end to the claims by both parties. Sustained tolerance has become fragile at the shrine of Udero Lal due to continued row on the space of Udero Lal shrine. Neither Muslims nor Hindus have been able to change the complex nature of the shrine in their favor. There is another theoretical model of the Bigelow (2004) who conducted a study on the Muslim Sufi saint Haider Shaikh in the town of Malerkotal Punjab. I disagree with her central argument that shared space creates and sustains tolerance. However, there is no dispute here and her study on the Muslim saint reveals that this saint does not possess multiple identities and the management is run by the Muslims. If there is no question of the religious identity of the saint then why do Hindus claim the Hindu identity of the Haider Shaikh. She disagrees with Hayden's model on this particular point.

CHAPTER 4

ORAL TRADITIONS OF UDERO LAL

4.1. Introduction

These oral traditions are reminiscent of old stories, songs, proverbs, sayings, and relate to different cultural beliefs which had not been recorded or documented. The essence of oral traditions and their memories are preserved by the spoken words and passed from one generation to another to save the old stories of the past legends (Hamlet, 2011, pp. 27-31). Furthermore, (Tonkin, 1986) states "If we change the word 'tradition' to 'knowledge' it is more visibly a resource" (p. 206). Udero Lal's account is complicated due to his multiple identities, numerous names, and several faiths between the Hindus and Sindhi Muslims of Sindh.

Pre-colonial authors did not write any detailed history but briefly wrote their introduction. Oral tradition characterizes specific areas and places and puts them in proper perspective by clarifying the names and reality and recounting some significant occasions attached to them. Three ideas form a significant part of this cycle: home (scene), account (writing, legend, custom), and recollection (separate and group) (Katić, 2015, pp. 24-25). Colonial ethnographers also did not emphasize the biography and detailed account of the Udero Lal in Sindh during the eighteenth century. Local Sindhi authors briefly introduced Udero Lal's shrine; without giving a detailed biography. I found two main oral traditions accounts on Udero Lal by Hindus and Muslim communities during my fieldwork. This chapter attempts to explore the detailed oral traditions about Udero Lal collected from both Muslim and Hindu communities

4.2. Hindus Oral Tradition about Udero Lal

An old Hindu Shevadar, 85 years old Choeth Ram narrated an account on oral tradition of Udero Lal when Sindh was under the Arab influence in (939 A.D). Shahdad Khan was appointed Governor of Thatta, the capital of Sindh. The town was situated on the banks of the Indus River. To become the Governor of Thatta he removed Mirkh Shah by killing him and taking over the reins of Thatta. Mirkh Shah was a tyrannical fanatic Muslim religious ruler who was against the Hindus, so much so that he did not tolerate them in Thatta. He used to force Hindus to convert to Islam but Hindus resisted strongly embracing the Muslim religion. He used to become furious and killed many Hindus who refused to accept Islam. Thousands of faithful religious Hindus faced extreme hardships, became ready to sacrifice their religion, but refused to convert to Islam. There were incidents when many Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam by the cruel Muslim ruler Mirkh Shah.

Mirkh Shah wanted to convert all Hindus of Sindh to Muslims. Yousif Ahyo was the minister and senior adviser to MirkhShah. Both wanted to force all the Hindus of Sindh into the fold of Islam, alternatively, they would be killed, the rulers pronounced. This announcement made the Hindus of Sindh dismal and frustrated. They were forced to assemble and took a collective decision to sacrifice their lives for their religion, but not give up their religion and *Sindhu Maa Dahrti* (Indus mother's land).

Hindu elders had detailed discussions with Muslim ruler Mirkh Shah and requested him to abandon his policy of converting Hindus to Islam and impose his religion. They pleaded that there was no forced conversion in Islam and Hindus loved Hinduism as much as Muslims loved Islam. They thought that Muslims were their brotherhood and they both lived with them in a peaceful environment for generations in Sindh. The Hindu elders could not convince the King. He repeated the ordain that Hindus would be enforced to convert to Islam if they refused. The Hindus were convinced that they could not break the stubbornness of the Muslim ruler so they begged Mikh Shah to give them a few days to consider his order and consult their other Hindu brothers to which the fanatic ruler agreed.

Hindus of Sindh were now in big trouble and could not find a way out. They called emergent meetings attended by important people of their clan and the consensus reached was to get help from the Varuna (river god) at the Indus River bank (*Sindhu*). They had a blind belief in the powers of Vedic God Varuna, who they thought would help them. All Hindus Brahman, Khastrya, Vaish, and Shudras gathered at the Indus River bank for three days and three nights and implored before him to rescue them from the vicious clutches of the despotic Muslim ruler Mirkh Shah. During these three days worship, they observed fast, ate nothing, and only pleaded before the god Varuna at the Bank of the Indus River that it was his saying that during difficult times he would come to rescue Hindu religion; he will be incarnated on the earth to save the religion and its peoples from any cruelty. Now his people were in great trouble and he should save them from despotic Muslim ruler who was bent upon converting them to Islam and in case of refusal kill all the Hindus.

On the third night of their earnest prayer, a beautiful young man with a beard appeared on the *Palla* (fish)²⁵ from the Indus River. He declared; "Oh my loving and

²⁵It is believed by the devotees of the Udero Lal that he appeared from Indus River water on the *Pallo* fish that is why; *Palla machhe* (fish indigenous species of the Indus River) makes the round circle to pay the homage to the Udero Lal shrine which is located in middle of the river in Bakkhar Island of Sukkur Sindh; where Udero Lal is also known as Zindha Pir or Jindha Pir. All species have the mating and feeding cycles; *Palla* fish has same cycles of the feeding and mating; this is why it circles round the water during the mating, however, it is believed by the devotees of the Udero Lal that this is miracle by the Udero Lal that fish revolves round the shrine of the Udero Lal. *Palla* fish swims against the course of the Indus water which also the delicious dish of the Sindh. This delicious *Palla* fish is still served at the Al Manzar Jamshoro road on the Indus River bank in Sindh. *Pallo* fish does not go to the north of Bakkhar Island, staying away forever tail upon the river god, out of regard; and the *pallo* is only here and there discovered north of Sukkur. Fishermen tells when the *pallo* arrives at Zindha Pir it is turned from dark to silver and gain a red spot on its head. What is more, at exactly that point does it become flavorful to eat. For the Hindus, obviously, the *pallo* is something beyond a normal fish: it is the vehicle of their Indus river god, Udero Lal. According to Legends Indus River (*Sindhu pani*) water would come from *Hazari Dar* (Second main gate of the Udero Lal complex from which thousands people can enter at a time) of the Udero Lal complex on which *palla* (fish) would appear to pay the homage to the Udero Lal shrine than come back.

adorable Hindus! do not worry and convey my message to Mirkh Shah that I will soon incarnate in Ratan Rai home at Nasarpur city, will meet him soon, so have patience until I meet him. Now all of you should go back to your homes, I will settle all your problems." He again disappeared into the Indus River after delivering this message. The Hindus were ecstatic and overwhelmed with joy to hear the message of the Vedic God Varuna's Avatar; they returned to their homes quite satisfied.

Hindus came to Minister Ahyo, conveyed him the message of the Avatar of the Indus River and the Ahyo Minister informed Mirkh Shah as narrated by the Hindus. The uncompromising Muslim ruler did not believe in the Avatar of the Hindus who promised to incarnate and save them. He declared that the Hindus were lying; it was impossible, he contemplated that there was no way that an avatar appears in human form from the river and promises to help his people. He had intense consultation with his minister Ahyo and as a result, the known oppressor Mirkh Shah and the minister called the Hindus and pronounced that "let us see how your avatar of the River god will help you and save you; this is impossible. However, once again, I declare that this is your misconception; it has never happened that God may appear in human form and save his people." Arguing vehemently, Mirkh Shah threw down the gauntlet, asserting that if their Avatar of the River god did not come to him, then all of you shall have to convert to Islam on your own will. All Hindus returned to their homes and started worshipping the Avatar of the River god to appear soon and save them from the Muslim ruler's tyrannical action.

The Avatar of the River god was born in Nasarpur city to Ratan Rai and Mata Devki, a childless couple. The new born baby was named Udero Lal at birth by his parents. Unlike other children, Udero Lal looked like a beautiful prince at birth, the weather became cloudy, attractive and it started drizzling. The Hindus were jubilant and celebrated the birth of Udero Lal with frenzy and pomp. All the *pundits*, *Mahraj* conveyed best wishes to Ratan Rai and Mata Devki that Avatar had been born to them, the savior of Hindus and their religion.

When Mata Devki tried to breast him feed , the baby refused to take his mother's first feed. Ratan and Devki both became upset. When the baby opened its mouth, his

mother saw the Indus River flowing inside his mouth with species running into the water and a pious man offering food. His parents discussed this strange phenomenon with Marahjas, who concluded that the baby wanted to offer food to species in the Indus River. His parents immediately offered the food to the species and brought water from the Indus River and poured a few drops of Indus River in the baby's mouth, only then the newborn started taking his mother's feed.

This news spread like wildfire among all Hindus in Sindh that Avatar (Udero Lal) had been born at Nasarpur to Ratan Rai and Mata Devki. The Hindus danced with joy and became determined that Udero Lal would now fight with this zealot Muslim ruler and get rid of him forever. When the news reached Mirkh Shah that the Hindu's god was born at Nasarpur, he did not believe it to be true? He shared with his minister that Hindus wanted to use tricks to frighten his kingdom; hence, he was fearful that it would not be suitable if this news turned out to be real. On hearing this fresh development, Mirkh Shah started to commit further atrocities on the Hindus and threatened them to convert to Islam at the earliest.

The Hindus by now had become bold and conveyed to Mirkh Shah²⁶ that they are not afraid of him because their Avatar had been born at Nasarpur and he saves them at every step. When Mirkh Shah and his minister Ahyo came to know about the daring response from the Hindus, they jeered and mocked the Hindus and queried, let's see how Avatar will protect you. The Hindus remained steadfast and conveyed a determined message to the Ahyo minister to stop the barbarism of his ruler as they would not convert to Islam because their Avatar had promised to save them from the oppression of the Muslim ruler and his plan to convert Hindus into Muslims. When Mirkh Shah was informed of the Hindus' determined intentions, he became vexed and

²⁶Dr. Qureshi Hamid Ali Khanaee, *Tareekh Nasarpur* (Karchi: Dr. N.A Balouch Institute of Heritage Research, Department of Culture, Tourism & Antiquities Govt of Sindh, 2014). p.349-350. In this book, it has been mentioned that despotic ruler Mirkh Shah, a nonexistent ruler whose name is absent from the genuine rundown of dynasts who governed over Thatta. Book further mentioned that Dr. Nabi Bux Khan Baloch who is Scholar and Historian of Sindh prepared the list of „*Sindh ji Saman ji Saltant*, dynasty of Sindh's Samas in which no Muslim ruler Mirkh Shah name was mentioned.

ordered his minister to travel to Nasarpur to confirm if this news is correct and bring the Hindu god to Thatta.

When Minister reached at Nasarpur, he enquired from the people about Hindu Avatar, and he was informed that a male child had been born to Ratan Rai who was the Avatar of the Hindu and the master of miracles. Ahyo minister was convinced about the birth and presence of Hindu's god. He visited Ratan Rai's home physically to witness himself the presence of a Hindu god. The baby was sleeping in the cradle. When the Minister came close to the cradle to see the baby, he was shocked to see many miracles of the baby. He was taken aback at the stunning beauty of the child. In the next moment, the baby transformed into a youthful young black-bearded man and then into a white-haired older adult and back into the cradle again. He saw that the same baby was once again lying in a cradle, and swinging by itself. He was astonished to see the master of the miracles; he was strongly convinced that it was the Avatar of Hindu; the famous Udero Lal.

When Ahyo Minister returned to Thatta he informed about all miracles of Udero Lal to his Muslim ruler. Ahyo explained to the ruler that Udero Lal was the Avatar of the Indus River, he was the master of miracles, they can not fight him, therefore it was wise to reconcile with Udero Lal and should not force the Hindu to convert to Islam. The extremely frenzied ruler became fearful of this development and asked his minister Ahyo to call Udero Lal in his courthouse. Ahyo went to the Indus River and humbly requested Avatar to appear from the water because Mirkh Shah wanted to meet him in his court.

Udero Lal emerged from the Indus River gracefully sitting on the horseback, elegantly dressed as a leader, with a sword in one hand and a flag in the other hand. He had a crown on his head and led a large well-equipped army riding on the elephants and horses on the water surface of the Indus River. When Ahyo Minister saw Udero Lal's army, he started to shiver. Udero Lal came close to Ahyo and introduced himself as Udero Lal, the Avatar of the Vedic Varuna God/Indus River. He said he could be found in water and land because he was present everywhere and worked for the well-being of all humanity. Udero Lal then directed Ahyo to return to

the court of Mirkh Shah. A frightened Ahyo humbly requested Udero Lal that Mirkh Shah did not want to engage in a battle with your Hindus; hence, he was requested to come without an army. Udero Lal ordered his army to go back into the Indus River. Udero Lal accompanied by the Ahyo Minister came to the court of Mirkh Shah.

Minister Ahyo informed Governor Mirkh Shah about Udero Lal's miracles and introduced him as the god of the Hindus. Mirkh Shah welcomed Udero Lal in his court. He was frightened by the miracles of the Udero Lal. The Muslim religious people (*Mulvees, Qazi*) were also present in the court; they became very jealous when Mirkh Shah welcomed Udero Lal in his court. Udero Lal engaged with Mirkh Shah, *Molvees*, and *Qazi* (religious people) in a prolonged theological debate to explain them, using Geeta and Quranic references that "we all are equal and creation of one and same God, Muslim call Allah and Hindus it Bhagwan. Islam is the religion of peace, tolerance, harmony, and co-existence and it does not force anyone to convert to another religion. The holy prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a blessing for humanity who taught equality, brotherhood, love, and tolerance and never forced anyone to convert to another religion, rather respected the other religions. As you love your religion, the Hindus too love their religion; therefore, it is my advice to you not force the Hindus to convert to Islam and let them live peacefully."

Mirkh Shah listened carefully to Udero Lal's speech. He consulted with *Qazees and Molvees* (religious people) at the end of the hot session. The courtiers were already against Udero Lal, so they advised Mirkh Shah that Udero Lal's sermon had some magic and it was instigation against Islam, so it was in the best interest of Mirkh Shah to reject his speech, imprison him, and force all Hindus to convert to Islam. Once again, Udero Lal warned Mirkh Shah not to listen to his advisers because they had always misguided him. Mirkh discarded the advice of Udero Lal and ordered his army to capture him but Udero Lal disappeared in such a way that the army searched the entire city of Thatta but could not find him. Mirkh Shah announced that the Hindu god had fled away from here, he was branded as a coward because their Avatar had run away. He ordered the Hindus to immediately convert to Islam as soon as possible; otherwise, their heads would be severed off.

When Hindus heard this news, they became very frightened and again called Udero Lal in a loud frantic manner to save them from the stubbornness of the fanatic ruler bent upon eliminating them and their religion. When Udero Lal heard their moaning and screaming, he once again emerged from the Indus River to pacify his followers. He advised them not to be scared or upset at the outbursts of Mirkh Shah. He promised to protect them from the tormenter and advised all Hindus to make it to a shelter near the Indus River. The saint further advised them to stay in the shelter until the time he destroys the forces of Mirkh Shah and brings peace to the region.

Udero Lal then entered the ruler's court with splendor and pomp and transformed himself into water. In a flash the high-rise gushing water waves from now here engulfed Mirkh's army, his advisers and his courtiers ran to save their lives. The entire court was flooded and most of the people found themselves drowning. The torrents next entered the town of Thatta and over ran the entire place. In an unending rage, the Avatar transformed into gusty winds and inferno, turning into a massive cyclone shrouding everything as the entire environment became dark. All the Muslims became terrified. They thought that Mirkh Shah had annoyed Hindu's god that is why mishap had befallen on them.

Nature's wrath that Udero Lal leashed on the Muslims was so menacing that Mirkh Shah had no option but to accept defeat. As he succumbed to his downfall he thought it wise to ask for forgiveness from the Hindu's Avatar. He, therefore, accompanied all his advisers to Udero Lal to plead mercy and the latter agreed to forgive Mirkh Shah. Udero Lal got a firm and unconditional assurance from the Muslim ruler to free the captive Hindus and protect the lives and honor of both Hindu and Muslim communities and let them live peacefully in Sindh. Having accomplished his mission, Udero Lal decided to leave Thatta despite the persistence of Hindus to stay. He again advised Hindus not to feel worried because he was always with them. If they worshipped the lamp (*Jot*), you will find Udero Lal always in the *Jot*. Udero Lal left and immediately immersed into the Indus River near Thatta. Hindus made a temple at the Thatta, which is famous today for "*Khday*."

The baby born at Nasarpur to Rata Rai and Mata Devki became very famous among all Hindus because of Vedic God Varuna's Avatar and was known as the same Udero Lal who defeated Thatta's Muslim ruler and became the savior of all Hindus in Sindh. Hindu elders started to worship the baby at Ratan Rai's home and were elated to see their god. The Hindus constructed a temple at Nasarpur for the worshippers. When Udero Lal turned five, his father sent him to a *Brahman* teacher for getting preliminary education. When the teacher started to teach him the first lesson, he was astonished to find that Udero Lal already knew the lesson. The teacher informed his parents that Udero Lal doesn't need to learn, he knows all lessons beforehand. Brahman teacher predicted that he was an Avatar and knew about all the things of the universe. *Janrya* (sacred thread) ritual of Udero Lal was conducted when he turned eight. Gorkhnath became the Guru of Udero Lal. When Udero Lal reached adolescence he would often sit at the temple and start giving sermons on the *Jal* and *Jot* at Nasarpur.

As Udero Lal entered his teens his parents decided to start a business for him so that he could earn for the household. His parents gave him a *thal* (basket) of boiled grain (*koohar/ charran*) for selling in the adjacent village. Udero Lal traveled to that village regularly to sell the grain. He would also distribute grain among the poor children free of cost, dropped the remaining grain in the Indus River, and return home. He got his *thal* (basket) filled with barley (*joor*) from the Indus River. When he returned home, his parents were surprised to see a basket full of barley. Once they followed him and saw that he played with children, distributed the grain among the poor children without charging a penny, offered the unsold grain to the Indus River and the River generously handed him a full basket of barley. His parents knew that there was not an iota of doubt that their son was a genuine avatar of the Vedic God Varuna.

As Udero Lal grew into a wise young man, he was found to be sagacious and able to handle difficult situations with grit and shrewdness. He would lecture on peace and human relations and Hindus of Nasarpur followed Udero Lal's teachings. He made his cousin Pagur, a prudent young man as his caretaker. Pagur started to disseminate Udero Lal's message among his all followers in Sindh. Once Udero Lal took his cousin Pagur to the Indus River bank and they dived into the water and reappeared on

the mountain tunnel at Rohri Sukkur Sindh, which is known as "*Gahat Udero*." A symbol on the mountain can be seen where both showed up. They built a temple called *Jinda Pir and Amar Lal* (Living saint) at Rohri Indus River. The place is famous for the festival held annually by the followers of the Udero Lal to mark the historical event.

Udero Lal also had two brothers Soma Ram, and Bhedo Ram, who had refused to become Udero Lal caretakers; both were greedy, and Udero Lal too did not permit them to indulge in his affairs. He formally started to make the *Darya Panth* (Indus cult) and assigned this duty to his cousin Pagur primarily to enhance his Indus cult and disseminate his teachings to them. Pagur was given seven Symbols for his *panth* to be shared equally among his follower in which *Jal* and *Jot* were most valuable. He also gave a title to Pagar Sanat 'Thakur,' and then his decedent carried this title from generation to generation. Once Udero Lal took his cousin Pagur into the Indus River and the latter was dazzled to see the decorated temple with diamonds, pearls, and Jewels in which *Jot* was burning amid the Indus River water. The followers were seen sitting there with Udero Lal busy worshipping the *Jot sahib* (lamp) in the temple.

Udero Lal traveled to Punjab, Multan, Kachh, Marwara, Rajputana, Thatta, Hinglaj and Karachi, the places where temples were constructed for his teachings and spread the message of harmony among the people. A Temple was also built on the oceanic (*samundari*) Island of Manhora Karachi, where the annual *Chetichand* festival is now celebrated. He came back to his *Janam Bohmi* (birth place) Nasarpur in the company of his followers. Udero Lal's parents died when he was 16 years old. Now he wanted to leave Nasarpur and settle in another place permanently. He conceived a place of worship in Sindh where people belonging to any religion should gather to exchange ideas, disseminate his message of peace, tolerance, brotherhood, love, and harmony for humanity, and make this gathering an annual event and participate with fervor and zeal. He forbade Nasarpur forever and settled in Jahejo village, 25 km away from Nasarpur and 22 km from taluka Hala. (Now Jahejo village is named after Udero Lal, Taluka, District Matiari). Anyhow, when he reached Jhejo village, he met an old Muslim Maman Shaikh. Udero Lal asked him if he was interested in selling his well (*koh*) and the adjacent land to him. Maman Shaikh told Udero not to joke with him, as

he was only a child, so from where would Udero Lal bring the money to purchase the costly land and the well.

Udero Lal replied that he was not joking with him, and was determined to purchase the land and well at any cost demanded by the Shaikh. Smiling uncannily, Maman Shaikh told Udero Lal if he could show the money, he (Maman Shaikh) would readily sell the land and well. On hearing this Udero Lal struck his stick into the ground and to the astonishment of the Shaikh a heap of diamonds and pearls pooped out and lay in the feed of Maman Shaikh. Udero ordered Maman Shaikh to take the treasure and sell the land and well to him. When Maman Shaikh saw Udero Lal's miracle, it struck his mind that he was the same Avatar and saint of God born at Nasarpur. He agreed but requested Udero Lal to let him consult with his wife.. When Maman went to consult his wife, he remembered Udero Lal standing under the hot sun but when he returned with his wife he was amazed to see Udero Lal standing under the shadow of a tree, which was not present before, surprising both of them. Both were surprised to see the miracle of the tree. That tree stands there to this day and is in the complex of Udero Lal.

Both Maman and his wife asked Udero Lal why he wanted to purchase this land and well (*khuh*). For the people's welfare, he replied. The people would quench their thirst in this hot weather from the well and cultivate their crops to lead a prosperous life. He further told them that he wanted to make a worship place for both Hindus and Muslims where well is necessary for their well-being. Maman and his wife agreed to give the land and well free of cost but requested that in return Udero Lal bless them with a son because they were childless and they and their generation wanted to remain *Mujawar* (keeper) of your place of worship forever. Udero Lal promised to Maman that they would be blessed with a son who will remain as *Mujawar* (keeper) of this worship place and this would continue for generations and bring prosperity in their living if they sincerely looked after this place of worship. Maman was blessed with a son; his generation has continued to be the *Mujawar* of the Udero Lal shrine to date.

The last message Udero Lal gave to his followers before he left this world was "we are the creation of same and one God, all Hindus and Muslims are brothers in Sindh, we

have to remain peaceful with everyone, my message is love, peace, tolerance, harmony and co-existence of all the humanity.” He further added that they should not worry because he was always with them. “When you worship the *Jot* , you will find me with you.” Udero Lal was on his horse "*Gagan*." He stood on the horse near the miracle tree (*khobar jo warn*). The earth opened, (*Jal*) water gushed out and Udero Lal along with his horse was immersed into the open wedge, and the earth again immediately patched up as nothing had happened (Personal interview, April 6, 2019).

4.3. Muslims Oral Tradition about Udero Lal

Muslim Wadero Guhulam Jahejo, the 75 years old native of the Udero Lal village, narrated Muslims Oral tradition about Udero Lal, believed that the latter was *Jamd-i-Jam* (God gifted & master of miracles). In ancient times, there was a rebellion against the Muslim Syeds in Sindh. When Udero Lal was born, he was hidden in a wooden box by his parents like Hazrat Moosa, and to save his life from the enemies the box was left to the mercy of the Indus River. Hindus had always remained the worshipper of the two things: *Jal* , and *Jot* , which are also the primary source for living in this world. In ancient times, Hindu religious people worshiped the Indus River's flowing water (*Sindhu*) in the early hours of the morning. The Indus River course²⁷ was close to Nasarpur in Sindh in ancient times, which changed during many centuries.

Nasarpur was a major town of Thakur Hindus who had lived there for decades. Thakur Ratan Rai was a washerman who used to go to the Indus River early in the morning to worship. While he was busy in his worship his eyes caught a floating wooden box which surprised him instantly. He pulled out the box and carried it home thinking it contained treasure from River Indus. He informed his wife that he had found a wooden box in the Indus River. When both opened the box, they found a beautiful smiling newborn baby inside. They were delighted because they had no child, and they thanked Indus River for blessing them with a beautiful child.

²⁷He has mentioned in his book that Indus River (*Sindhu Nandi*) had ancient course from the Nasarpur, later Indus River changed her course from Nasarpur in 1758. Bheeru Mall Maharchand Adwani, *Sindh Jay Hindun jee tareekh* (Hyderabad: Roshni Publication, 2006), p. 72.

Ratan Rai and his wife Devaki loved the child excessively and started to take regular care. He was named *Lal Dina*²⁸ by his step father Ratan Rai²⁹. By the time child reached the age of 12, Ratan Rai had become old; he could not wash the clothes anymore and it became difficult now for him to run the home expenditure.

Wheat was scarce (*karak*) at that time. Rattan and Devaki were surprised to see the wheat at their home. Both decided to follow Udero Lal to find the source from where he brought the wheat. They saw him offering the filled pot of grain to the Indus River, and in return, he received a filled metal pot (*thal*) of wheat. They were astonished to see this miracle of Udero Lal. When Udero Lal noticed that his step-parents were watching him he put his hand into the *thal* (metal pot), and came out with jewels and pearls which he handed to his parents. Both observed him with intent as he dived into the Indus River, fully convinced about his invincibility as a great saint of God, and returned home. His step father Ratan Rai made the *Asthan* (place for followers) at Nasarpur; therefore, the first place of residence of Udero Lal is at Nasarpur, which is also known as the first birthplace (*Janam Bhomee*) of Udero Lal.

The Indus River journeyed through Thatta; so when Udero Lal dived into Indus River at Nasarpur, he reappeared at Thatta, now known as district Thatta and Taluka Gohra Bari. He made the *Asthan* at Gohra Bari, which also became famous as an Udero Lal village. He lived in this village in his youth. It was also the central hub for trade due to the seaport. Most of the Hindus were also traders who traded from Thatta's seaport to other cities.

The Thatta's Muslim ruler announced that non-Muslims were not allowed to trade in the Thatta port. In case the Hindus wanted to do so they shall have to convert to Islam, and only then they will be allowed to use the Thatta port trade activities. In comparison to the Muslims, Hindus traders had established businesses in Thatta at that time. Following the fresh command by the Muslim ruler, the Hindu businessmen

²⁸ Lal Dina is Sindhi word which means beloved son is given by God.

²⁹ It is believed by the Muslims that Ratan Rai is not the real father of Udero Lal, he is step father and found Udero Lal from the Indus River.

were forbidden to carry on any trading activity. They were perplexed about what to and how to do make the ruler agree to take back his official order.

It was a difficult time for the Hindus because they were not powerful enough to fight with the despotic ruler who was bent upon converting them to Islam. In order to tackle this grave situation, the Hindus called a meeting of their elders and *pundits* (spiritual leaders). They discussed how to convince the Muslim ruler not force them to convert to the Islamic religion and also restore their business at the seaport of the Thatta. It was quite evident that the major earnings of the Hindu community were dependent on trading business. They were also ready to pay the hefty tax to the despotic ruler in case he restores the business activity. Hindus tried their best to induce the ruler but all their efforts were in vain and all their business started heading towards insolvency. This depressing news spread to Nasapur like wildfire. When Ratan Rai's step-father of the Udero Lal came to know this heartbreaking news he consulted with senior Hindu religious leaders on this issue and they were ready to talk to the Muslim ruler to resolve the matter, primarily out of fear.

Ratan Rai always thought about the prosperity and welfare of the Hindus and how to keep them away from the enemies. He recalled Udero Lal a young boy who dived into the Indus River in front of his eyes and disappeared, laden with miracles. Ratan Rai immediately knew that Udero Lal was the ultimate savior of the distressed Hindus so he had to be found. He called all the Hindus, apprised them about Udero Lal's miracles and his power to avert danger, and instructed them to find out this young boy. Ratan Rai informed Hindu leaders that Udero Lal had dived into the Indus River flowing towards Thatta. So they got ready to travel downstream on a boat to find out Udero Lal. While searching the Indus River, they reached Thatta. Someone told them that a dervish (saint) lives at the Gohra Bari³⁰ village in the Thatta who can help in tracing Udero Lal. The Hindu group headed to Gohra Bari village in search of Udero Lal and to their pleasant surprise they saw the same boy (Udero Lal) sitting by the River Bank at Gohra Bari village.

³⁰ There is also temple of the Udero Lal in Gohra Bari which is in District Thatta, Sindh.

Udero Lal who had a lot of respect for Ratan Rai, asked him the purpose of his arrival here in Thatta. Ratan Rai narrated the whole story about the despotic Muslim ruler and how he had imposed a ban on Hindus trade and business at Thatta port. Udero Lal was informed that the ruler had made it strictly compulsory for Hindus that they would be permitted to trade at the Thatta seaport only if they converted to Islam. Due to the restrictions, the business of the Hindus had come to a standstill. He requests Udero Lal most earnestly to take some remedial steps by persuading the Muslim ruler to restore their trade at Thatta port and lift the ban from the port and stop forcing the Hindus to convert to the Islamic religion. All our other *Gurus* (elders) and pundits refused to talk to the Muslim ruler out of fear and possible intimidation. He said that he had come with great hope to plead before the Godly Saint to talk to the cruel ruler Mirkh Shah and convince him to reinstate the previous status of the Hindus for them to restart their trade and spend their life according to their own will.

Udero Lal listened carefully to all the complaints of the Hindus and decided to talk with the Muslim ruler. He traveled on his horseback with Hindus to Thatta from the Gohra Bari village and camped on the bank of the Indus River at Thatta to meet the despotic ruler. He conveyed a message to the Muslim ruler demanding him to stop atrocities on the Hindus and let them do their business peacefully because Islam does not force conversion upon anyone and it teaches harmony, tolerance, and peace. The Muslim ruler was surprised to see this communication and got angry at the person who dared to send him this message.

The Muslim ruler ordered his ministers to investigate the person who sent this message to him. The Ministers reached the camp of Udero Lal and conveyed to him that the ruler had ordered him he should not indulge in the affairs of the state and return to his original place. Udero Lal made it clear to the ministers that being Muslim, he knew about Islam quite thoroughly and this great religion did not force anyone to change their religion. Nevertheless, they again stressed upon Udero Lal that their ruler does not listen to anyone, so you should leave this place; otherwise, you will be killed by the ruler because you are only a few people with just one horse; how could you fight with a large and powerful army of Mirkh Shah.

After listening to the belligerent tone of the Ministers of the ruler, Udero Lal asked them to return to their kingdom and tell their ruler emphatically that he (Udero Lal) would wage war against their ruler and achieve his objective. When ministers heard these hard-hitting words, they started to mock Udero Lal, suggesting how a few people could fight with a strong and dominant ruler who commanded a large army. The Ministers enquired from Udero Lal the whereabouts of his army if he wanted to wage a war against the ruler, to which Udero Lal pointed his finger towards Indus River and said assertively; that was his army. The Ministers to their utter surprise saw thousands of people on the river bed and were shocked to see a massive army of Udero Lal waiting for his orders. Noticing the shock on clueless faces of the Ministers, Udero Lal asked them to convey to their ruler what they had seen. The entire scenario was conveyed to the Muslim ruler who sent his advisors to Udero Lal for verification of his claims.

The advisers too were flabbergasted to see a massive army of Udero that made them knelt before him in fear and awe. Udero Lal quoted Surah Kafaroon from the holy Quran that said “*Lakum deen Lakum walyadeen*” Your religion is with you, and their religion is with them. The advisers reported to Mirkh Shan that Udero Lal unveiled enormous military power and it was useless to fight him. The Muslim leader impressed by his adversary lifted the ban on the Hindus trade and allowed them to live a peaceful life in Thatta Sindh. One tradition says Udero Lal was Shaikh Tahir.

Udero Lal left the isolated Ghora Bari village from Thatta and traveled along the bank of the Indus River. He reached Jahejo village, his last abode, and named it Udero Lal village, District Matiari Sindh. When Udero Lal came to this village, it was known as “*Dareja Jahejo*” (mound of Jahejo) village. There was sweet water well (*mitheparni jo khooh*) in that village. When he reached the well he performed ablution and offered prayer beside the well. He felt the peace of mind at this place. Udero Lal wanted to purchase this well for the people of the village. He was told that the well belonged to Muhammad Aalam Shaikh, Suharo Shaikh, Younis Shaikh, and Mamman Shaikh the four Muslims. Instead of selling it, the Muslims decided to donate the well free of cost subject to the condition that Udero Lal would make this village his last abode. Udero

Lal agreed. Now this well is called *balanbo Sahib* by the Hindus devotees of the Udero Lal.

When Ox (*Dhaga*) was plowing in the field, the owner of the field uttered the left *Jaat*, which means now plow in the left lane. Upon hearing the word *Jaat* Udero Lal thought that if the annual fair of *Jaat* is held at this village, it would bring tremendous joy and happiness to all the villagers. Udero Lal asked the Jahjas to sell him the land so that both Muslims and Hindus devotees would participate in the festival. Many Jahejas gathered to decide to sell the land because everyone had a share in it. *Khdri* and *sadder* castes received their share in rupees but other Jahejas did not accept their share in rupees from the Udero Lal.

Udero Lal told them that in case of their refusal, those Jahjas would remain with his *Mujawars* forever, and devotees Thakur Hindus would be *shavadar*³¹ (attendants) because both Muslims and Hindus were the followers. He further said that his name was Shaikh Tahir, and Hindus had called him Udero Lal; both names were acceptable to him and he blessed both as they were his arms. Now, Baawa Hindus became *Gaadinashen* (keeper), the servant, and *shevadar* (*attendants*) of the Thakurs. Thakurs left Sindh after India's partition and settled in India. The Baawa shevadar then became *Gaadinahseen* and took charge of the management of Udero Lal's shrine. The Muslim *Gaadinashen* of the Udero Lal became Muslim *Mujawar* Shaikh and still holds the same position to date. He was quite generous and, donated the land to Udero Lal free of cost. Udero Lal was a relative of neither Muslim Shaikh nor Hindus. Both were the *Khadmatgars* (caretakers) of Udero Lal (Personal Interview, March 11, 2019).

³¹ Hindus who look after the shrine regularly worship and perform the rituals at the shrine. These are called Sheva dar and Muslims Shaikh who also look after the interior of the shrine and are called the *Mujwar* at the Udero Lal shrine.

4.4. Conclusion

During fieldwork, I found two Oral traditions about Udero Lal, one from Hindus and the other from Muslims. The Hindus had their separate oral tradition for Udero Lal, and Muslims had their distinct oral tradition for him. The Hindu oral tradition tried to prove that he was the Avatar of River Indus or Vedic God Varuna and he appeared from the Indus (*Sindhu*), fought against the Muslim ruler Mrikh Shah, defeated him, and saved the Hindus from conversion to Islam. That tradition also mentioned that Udero Lal was born as an avatar in the Hindu's home Ratan Rai at Nasarpur. Apart from the oral traditions; Sindhi Hindus also quote the main source of Udero Lal's as a primary source of their reference '*Shri Amar Udrolal Sahib Ji Janam Sakhi*'³² which was published annually by the Udero Lal Sheva Mandly.³³ This '*Janam sakhi*' made additions of new annual events on the directions of the current administrator Mata Beena who is the female *gaadinasheen* of the Udero Lal. Udero Lal's Hindu identity and events are mentioned in this '*Janam Sakhi*', but none of the Muslim identity about Udero Lal appears in this *Janam Sakhi*. It, however, does mention that Shaikhs are the Muslim *Mujawars* (keepers) of Udero Lal. The Muslims Oral tradition claimed that Udero Lal was not Avatar, neither did he appear from the Indus (*Sindhu*), He was found in a wooden box by the Hindu washerman Ratan Rai who used to worship the water early in the morning. There is no truth in the fact that Ratan was childless, he found the child in the floating box in Indus River and raised him at his home. Nevertheless, the oral tradition of the Muslims accepts that he was raised in a

³²Talhiram Asodumal, *shri Amar Udero Lal Sahib Ji janam Sahkhi* (Bombay: India, 1926). Talhiram Asodumal was also resident of Nasarpur; he did L.L.B, became an advocate and later, shifted to Hyderabad. The book was regularly published in Pakistan and India. This is the most consistently utilized primary references for Udero Lal in Pakistan and in India, and it is used as the main source of reference by Sindhi Hindus community about the Hindu identity of the Udero Lal. Some variety can be found in the different oral and composed adaptations. He has mentioned in his book that Udero Lal appeared to save the Hindus who were persecuted by the Muslim cruel ruler Mirkh Shah.

³³ Udero Lal or Amar Lal Sheva mandly is a trust as well as the management committee of the Udero Lal shrine which takes care of the internal and external management issues of Udero Lal shrine whose head is the Hindu *gaadinasheen* Mata Beena. There are no Muslims members of the Sheva mandly now, all Sheva mandly members consisted of the Hindu community. Muslim's *sajjadnaheen* Ghulam Abass has no role in the Sheva mandly; all management of Sheva mandly is under control of the Hindus.

stranger's home, who was a Muslim and not Hindu. Udero Lal was a Muslim saint and had a large Hindu following just like the Muslims. Muslims Oral tradition further mentioned that Udero Lal was a spiritual leader full of miracles. He saved the Hindus from the despotic ruler Mirkh Shah and they became his diehard followers. When the Muslim asked Udero Lal what was his name, he replied that his name was Shaikh Tahir. Apart from Muslim oral tradition, the Muslims have quoted references of few Muslim authors who mentioned the Muslim name of Udero Lal as Shaikh Tahir in Sindhi literature. The Muslims especially quote the primary reference for Muslims' identity from the book 'Tuhfat-al- Kiram'³⁴.

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³⁴ The book was written in Persian in 1180, it was translated in Sindhi by the Sindhi Adabi board Jamshoro, Sindh in Sindhi language in 1955. The Sindh's old history dated 1050 years is documented in the pre-colonial book. No detailed account is found in the history of Sindh about Udero Lal. Ali Sher Qani was first pre-colonial historian who gave brief introduction of Udero Lal's in his book but has not mentioned about Udero Lal's early life and family. Udero Lal's Muslim name Shaikh Tahir has been mentioned in this book. Two colonial authors have also referred this book for understanding the history of Sindh. Mir Ali Shir *Qani, Tuhfat-al-Kiram* (Hyderabad: Sindhi Adabi Board Jamshoro Sindh, 1975 ([1180]), p.317-318.

CHAPTER 5

REFLECTION OF TOLERANCE AT THE SHARED SPACE OF UDERO LAL

5.1. Introduction

“Antagonistic Tolerance model” (Hayden 2016: p.9) was developed by Hayden, which describes a long relationship between the two groups that distinguish themselves as separate communities one as self and other based on religion. This model further investigates the level of tolerance between the members of the different religious groups who have lived peacefully for a long time and engaged in combined religious practices.

But then became antagonistic to each other because both groups began a struggle and started competing for their interest to occupy the shared space. However, their interaction remained peaceful, but one religious community remained dominant and controlled the religious site, while that space may be indirectly shared for an extended period, but with the passage of time, it is contested and converted to serve their interest by one dominant religious group (Hayden 2016: pp.1-9).

Hayden’s main argument holds ground because Udero Lal’s religious space is shared by both Sindhi Hindus and Muslims for generations most peacefully with a forbearance that is a hallmark of serenity. Of late, however, due to a desire to take over the command of the shared space of Udero Lal, both sides have shown signs of conflicting behavior. Moreover, the Syncretic shrine of Shah Ramazan Mahi, who had multiple identities, had been fully transformed by Hindus in India, and the urge to tolerate the change had become defunct at his syncretic shrine (Ibid: pp.70-78). However, Udero Lal’s shrine continued to show harmony and a peaceful environment. Furthermore, in this chapter, I have analyzed the maintenance and promotion of tolerance at the shared space of the Udero Lal in Sindh, Pakistan.

5.2. Udero Lal Message for the Tolerance

Whatever you call this saint, Udero Lal or Shaikh Tahir, he is a real legend, scholar, educationist, peacemaker, and historical personality of the subcontinent. He spread the message of tolerance globally, but this needs to be explored and preserved further to understand the philosophy of promotion of diversity. The Sindh government must save this jewel of heritage for future generations (Bukhari, 2002, p. 156). Furthermore, Zulfiqar argued that Udero Lal set an example of religious harmony and tolerance among the Sindhi Hindus and Muslims.



Figure 5: Inside view of Udero Lal shrine in the first part of the main complex of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

He built both *Mandir* (temple) and *Masjid* (mosque) at the same place. After his death, his shrine was constructed between the temple and mosque according to his wish, which was acceptable to both Hindus and Muslims. One part was included in the temple, while the other part was made into a shrine that belonged to both religious communities and became an example of religious harmony, peace, and tolerance in Sindh. The shared space of Udero Lal became a conduit in promoting peace and tolerance in Sindh (Kalhor, 2018, p. 20). Udero Lal had a charismatic personality; he used to help both Hindus and Muslims whenever they faced trouble. Udero Lal was known as a *savior* for Hindus and a peacemaker for Muslims (Boivin & Rajpal 2016, p.48). Udero Lal had a dynamic personality, and he was a man with tolerant nature and forgave his foes and led them to the right path to serve humanity beyond color, caste, and creed. Further, the local historian and writer Dr. Azizullah Talpur narrated:

Udero Lal was a great personality; he was against the class system and caste. He preached about tolerance and peace, but Muslim rulers changed his name and tried to make him a Muslim. He was a hero of tolerance due to the Muslims and Hindus caste problems; both groups, therefore, conflicted over his identity. They have divided Udero Lal into two parts each claiming him to be their leader. (Personal interview, 14 January 2020).



Figure 6: Udero Lal shrine's white tomb is amidst the mosque painted with green color on the right side and Jot room/ temple in white color tomb left side of the Udero Lal tomb in the main first part of the Udero Lal complex.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Furthermore, Sila argued that Udero Lal had a captivating personality due to which the despotic ruler's ministers and other Muslims became his followers. He was a spokesman for the rights of both Hindu and Muslim communities. He preached and taught love and brotherhood. He fervently argued that Hindus and Muslims were created by God, whom Muslims call Allah and Hindus call him Ishwar God. He was quick to note that the relationship among the Hindus and Muslims was shaky and unstable and needed a constant infusion of peace and harmony to keep them united on a single path that led to belief in the oneness of God (Khan, 2008, pp. 79-80). One proof of this as Lata argued could be traced back to the time when he requested Mirkh Shah, the despotic ruler to stop the forced conversion of all Hindus to Islam? The basic idea was to remove the conflict and belligerent attitude of Mirkh Shah.

Moreover, Deevan Lekhraj Manglani retired President of the Udero Lal Sheva Mandly, who served 24 years at the shrine of Udero Lal, stated that:

Both Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims, are two wheels of Udero Lal's shrine and Udero Lal is the rider or driver and keeps under his shadow, the peace among Hindus and Muslims running and unrelenting. This is an excellent sign of the co-existence of the believers of the mosque and temple the two buildings that stand side by side to the Udero Lal's shrine in the same space. Space is shared and worshipped by people of all colors and creeds. Have you ever imagined Lion and Goat sharing the same space yet they do not become enemies rather live amicably? That's what symbolizes the shared space of the Udero Lal. They may have differences outside the shared space, but the animosities disappear and convert into a calm and relaxed environment forging respect for each other. Udero Lal professed that both Hindus and Muslims were equal for him. Everyone was bound to abide by the sayings of Udero Lal as he spoke of brotherhood, harmony, and coexistence and that is the lesson to be learned from Udero Lal (Personal interview, 14 April 2019).

Further, the Hindu follower of Udero Lal Chetan Dass mentioned that:

Udero Lal gave the message of love and brotherhood to both Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims. They had always lived together; yet, a few elements did not want to see brotherhood, the prevalence of peace, and tolerance between them. The Saints always gave the teachings of humanity and spirituality and tolerance. They quoted the Holy Quran's message that believed in equality among mankind. *Deevan* (Hindus) community obeyed the saint and frequently visited Sindh's saint because they loved the message of God. Saint was not confined to only one; therefore differentiating between communities was like tantalizing the religious sentiments. I am fond of spirituality and the emanating love, and peace; I also visit the Muslim saint Qalandar Lal Shahbaz, Bhit Shah, Bhulay Shah, and Sultan Bahoo; all are Sufis and friends of Udero Lal who gave a universal message of friendship and goodwill. (Personal Interview, 12 November 2019).

Udero Lal wanted to bring Sindhi Hindus and Muslims under the umbrella of peace. He wanted people to follow his philosophy of syncretism, peace, tolerance, and harmony. He was very much tolerant to both communities and forgave the tyrant ruler Mirkh Shah for his misdeeds and allowed him to become his devotee.

Interestingly, Udero Lal also saved the Muslims whenever they faced trouble. Besides that, a local of the same village Attuallah Shah argued that:

Once, a man came rushing to Udero Lal and asked him that some people are converting Hindus forcibly into the Muslim religion. Udero Lal enquired from this person who was a *molvee* (a Muslim clergyman) and as to why he was converting Hindus into Muslims by force. He further asked him to recite the Holy Quran verse „*La Iqra fiddeen*“ (there is no compulsion in religion) and the *Molvee* recited the verse. Udero Lal asked the religious person if a man is not willing to accept another religion why would he convert him forcibly? *Molvee* responded that he was forcibly converting Hindus to Islam to which Udero Lal asked him where it was written in the Holy Quran that Hindus should be asked to give up their religion forcibly. The Quran had forbidden the Muslims to refrain from this practice of forcibly converting people to their religion. The person returned satisfied with Udero Lal’s explanation (Personal interview on 28 April 2019).

There is a famous account regarding Udero Lal who saved the Muslim Merchant’s daughter from the cruel Hindu King. A Muslim merchant Shah Hussain who belonged to Delhi constructed the shrine of the Khwajah Khizer (Udero Lal) in CE 925 in Bakkhar, Sukkur, Sindh. One day, he went to Makkah in a boat on the Indus River to perform the Hajj with his daughter. On the other side, the cruel Hindu King wanted to marry his daughter even if forcibly but Shah Hussain refused to say that Muslim girls cannot marry a Hindu; it is against Islam’s teachings.



Figure 7: Sindhi Hindus represent Udero Lal's image at the Udero Lal shrine's main complex.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The frightened girl called for Udero Lal's help who saved her from the clutches of the Hindu king by letting the rope tied to the boat lose itself, thus Indus River changed its course and the boat went to a safe place. In this process, the city of Aror was drowned entirely. Delhi Muslim Merchant Shah Hussain built a shrine in honor of Udero Lal (Hughes, 1876, pp. 680-681).

5.3. Sustenance of the Tolerance

A retired member of the Sheva Mandly Babu Rajkumar expressed that:

I do not see peace and tolerance on the borderline in the future at the shared space of the Udero Lal because there had been transformations that made deep divisions in the hierarchy of administration and rising clouds of conflict in the shared shrine after the partition. Currently, Mata Beena Sahib has taken over the charge of the shrine. All senior members of the Sheva Mandly's management were replaced with junior members by the Mata Sahib, but the Juniors misguided her, leading to her hostile attitude towards the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars. However, there is still a visible and gradual threat to the sustenance of tolerance due to the contestation that could cause fissure to the sustenance of fortitude (Personal Interview, 27 November 2019).

Nandita too argued that nowadays, the people of Sindh are facing environmental, religious, political, and economic problems. Sindh's Sufism's tolerance and coexistence and culture are under threat (Bhavnani, 2018, p.9). Both Hindu and Muslim communities do not follow the message of compassion of Udero Lal. Hindu *gaadinashen* of Udero Lal Mata Beena always struggled to physically transform the Udero Lal main shrine, and Muslims *sajjadanashen* of the Udero Lal Ghulam Abass Shaikh fully resisted this transformation. Furthermore, a native Muslim and follower of the Udero Lal Syed Muhammad Ali Shah states that:-

I think tolerance would sustain at the shared space of the Udero Lal shrine because Islam is a flexible religion and it gives space to forbearance and respects the minorities. Hindus also avoid conflict for a saintly person like Udero Lal. Hindus and Muslims also have good relations in terms of trade and business. Hindus own factories and lands and they have a good relationships with influential Muslim landlords and political people. Whenever any mishap happens, most of Muslims support the Hindus because they share the same land and same culture, and Sindhi identity. Further, I would say that social and cultural factor is a strong bond between Sindhi Hindus and Muslims, which keeps them united and helps in sustaining the views of each other at the shared space of Udero Lal. However, there is contestation over the shared space of the Udero Lal between the Hindus and Muslims claim the ownership of Udero Lal. Now there has been split among the groups and Udero Lal's shrine will remain closed after the Esha prayer on daily basis. All the Hindus have rituals where Muslims too participate but these have to be completed before Esha prayers. The Key of the shrine is under the control of the Hindus. (Personal interviews, 13 March 2019).

Hayden argued that intolerance had increased globally during these decades because a conflict has increased due to interstate confrontational and challenging social, economic, and political problems giving rise to secessionist movements. The people stopped living and inter-mingling since generations (Hayden, 2016, p.5). Attaullah Shah remarked that:

Tolerance will continue to make its strong foothold at the shared space of the Udero Lal's shrine. Since he had no offspring there was no succession in his family. Both Hindus and Muslims had become caretakers as *gaadinashen* and *sajjadanashen* and were a compulsion to remain friendly because the survival of Hindus and

Muslims depended on living more acceptably. Any confrontation could lead to division in their relations and bear financial losses too. The tussle on money matters will end in the closure of the shrine and loss in the earnings. If they fight over the ownership and identity of the Udero Lal, then Sindh's Government Auqaf³⁵ department would take over the shrine. The economic factor is also essential and strong, which has sustained the tolerance between both groups. This factor is also more powerful. Another thing is that the locals and natives of Udero Lal are more educated and support the peaceful environment at the shared space of the Udero Lal. I think that shortly tolerance will continue to make its presence felt. The Udero Lal shared space will sustain in the future (Personal interview, 28 April 2019).

Furthermore, the Udero Lal's shrine has remained a hotspot of the contestations, and there is no mutual understanding and cooperation between both communities and their heads. Moreover, Muslims *sajadanasheen* of the Udero Lal Ghulam Abass Shaikh stated that:

Hindus Mata Beena's mind has become empty, and she is fully blind to the current issue. She has discarded tolerance, harmony, and peace from her memory, which was the main message of Udero Lal. She has made tolerance like a lame man who has become weak at the shared space of Udero Lal; however, Udero Lal's shrine has sustained the pressure due to his power of miracles. She attempted to make the Hindu signs and symbols and wanted to show her ownership that everything belonged to Hindus, and it was no concern of the Muslims at the shrine of the Udero Lal. Therefore, she has constructed the big equestrian and Shiv temple and has now made the figurine of the fish on the main gates. Mata wanted to exercise her influence and wanted to transform all Udero Lal's former and main part of the complex in Hindu architectural style to declare Udero Lal as a Hindu Pir controlled by Hindu administration. Muslims may not be allowed to enter the shrine of the Udero Lal. She is unaware of the consequences of the physical transformation of Udero Lal's shared space. If she physically transforms, then there would be communal riots and bloodshed between Hindus and Muslims in Sindh and that would not let her physically transform the shrine. It should retain its sole status as it has remained for

³⁵ Auqaf Department is provincial subject of Sindh, which works under the Pakistan's Ministry of religious affairs. It controls and regulate the major Mosques and shrines all management in Sindh.

generations; however, Hindus could perform their rituals (Personal Interview, 19 September).



Figure 8: Besides the Jot , Hindus gaadinasheen performs the Dhago (thread) ritual amidst the followers of Udero Lal at the annual fair of the Udero Lal (Chetichand) in March 2019.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

During fieldwork, I met with the head of the other Hindu temples of the Udero Lal and other senior members of the Sheva Mandly of the main complex of the Udero Lal, and they showed their reservation against the newly Hindu appointed *gaadinasheen*. They believed that Mata Beena was a rigid lady and her attitude towards the senior members of the Hindus Sheva Mandly was rude. She took over the control of all the management of Udero Lal shrine and dominated the seniors. She also replaced all the senior members of the Sheva Mandly of the Udero Lal, who were thought to be sincere to the cause of Udero Lal. She brought in new junior members even though

they were inexperienced. The seniors maintained good relations with Muslims and hardly any dispute took place as they were able to handle the conflicting situation in a very wise manner, acceptable to all the contesting factions. The junior members created more problems and were not able to solve the intricate problems, rather created additional problems for other Hindus including Mata Sahib. Lekhraj, the senior Hindu member of the Sheva Mandly stated that:

Now all members have become *gaadinasheen* (custodian) of Udero Lal. The Mata Sahib has removed senior members of the Sheva Mandly. The new people do not possess sufficient experience to handle the other communities. I am not satisfied with their performance. I served here for 24 years with dedication, honesty, and sincerity. Four presidents of the Sheva Mandly of the Udero Lal were changed in four years, and now juniors boys have taken over the charge of this Dargah but they are unable to run the management of the shrine adequately. Their ineffective policies created many problems between the Hindus and Muslims, when I was in charge I used to handle all the problems through mutual negotiations with Muslims, and they were amicably resolved and to this day Hindus and Muslims lived in peace. It is the history of Udero Lal's Sheva Mandly that senior members were not expelled from the Dargah; however, keepers have increased (Personal Interview, 14 April 2019).

Muslims Shaikh Mujawar argued that Mata's elders cooperated with the Muslims and never made any physical transformation. Now, this new Mata did not maintain their elder's legacy. She does not follow in the footsteps of her elders. Her father Preetem Dass was the Hindu custodian, who was the permanent resident of Sindh. He did not go to India and preferred to live and die in the complex of the Udero Lal shrine, but she does not live here and lives in Bombay, India, she neither mixes with followers of Udero Lal, and she is not able to understand the Hindus and Muslims attitude. They further said that they are compelled to follow Mata Sahib's instructions because she is the daughter of Preetam Dass who was Hindu's main custodians. Hindu's senior member and former president of the Sheva Mandly of Udero Lal Bhool Chand Iesrani stated that:

The Temple of the Udero Lal's Mol Sharif Mata is very active compared to Udero Lal Mata. Mol sharif Mata always interacts with her disciples. She looks after everything herself; she makes round at night to check the servants' management and

enquires from the devotees for water availability, meals, and beds. Former *gaadinasheen* of the Udero Lal Mata Joti, mother of this current Mata Beena, had amicable relations with Mata Teely of Mol sharif in those days. They even used to offer *gaadi* to each other, and they had no differences at that time. The main difference is that Mol Mata is available every time among the devotees, she is local and Pakistani, but Udero Lal's current Mata Beena visits once or twice a year and then returns to her home in Bombay, India. After the partition, the situation worsened she went to India and became an Indian national. If Udero Lal's current Mata lives here, she would always be among the devotees, and many problems would be resolved (Personal interview, 14 March 2019).

They further argued that Mata should change her behavior and attitude and get advice from the seniors because they have good relations with Muslims and have served under her father Preetam Dass. If Mata Shahib does not follow the seniors, then riots between Hindus and Muslims can become imminent and uncontrolled; then the Sindh government would take over and seal Udero Lal's shrine for both Sindhi Hindus and Muslims. They said that Mata must give up the physical transformation plan of the Udero Lal. She should stay in Sindh and understand that Muslims' have a greater religious influence because it is their Muslim country now; this is not old pre-partition Sindh. The Babu Rajkumar, Hindu Senior members of the Sheva Mandly of Udero Lal, argued that:

The Mata Beena's attitude has worsened day by day with the Seniors Shevadars (keepers) of the Udero Lal Shrine. She also has terrible behavior with the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars of Udero Lal, which also leads to hatred among Hindus and Muslim followers of the Udero Lal. When Mata comes to worship at the Udero Lal's shrine on Friday, no other person is allowed to enter the Udero Lal's shrine; even Muslims mujawar and other visitors are prohibited from entering the shrine. If Mata's attitude remains the same, it will further create hatred and more contestation towards the harmony and shared shrine of Udero Lal. When Mol sharif Mata visits the shrine of Udero Lal, she does not prohibit and meets every Muslim mujawar, and everyone is allowed to enter the shrine, but Mata Beena has a harsh attitude towards the Muslim Shaikh Mujawars and senior Hindu Shevadars (Personal interview, 24 March 2019).

This is difficult to fully Hinduize the main shrine of Udero Lal because Muslims also believe Udero Lal as their Muslim saint. It is better for all Hindus that Udero Lal's old legacy and message must be restored and Mata Sahib should follow the tolerance message of Udero Lal, and she should be flexible with the other Muslims. They argued that if they look at Udero Lal, he also maintained tolerance and took both Hindus and Muslims together under the shadow of one umbrella.. Mata Sahib also should stick to the tolerance philosophy of Udero Lal, only then she would be successful; otherwise, there would be hatred, and the government would take over the Udero Lal complex. Any physical transformation of the Udero Lal shrine should therefore be avoided. Moreover, The Muslim follower and native of the same village of the Udero Lal Rana Rashid Mehmood argued that:

This current Mata Beena of the Udero Lal is extremist, her mind is fundamentalist, and she has made many blunders. She wanted to transform the Udero Lal main shrine into a Hindu Pir physically. Her forefathers were peaceful and cooperative with Muslims, but she is not cooperative. We the Muslim youth is angrier because Hindu Mata did not allow us to perform the funeral prayer of our Muslim brothers inside the mosque of the Udero Lal complex. Udero Lal is a Muslim saint, and there is a mosque, and Muslims are not allowed to perform their practice in the mosque in a Muslim country. Now Hindu Mata can not do this because it would lead to riots among Muslims and Hindus. Now Muslims' hatred against the Hindus has increased too much. Our Muslim brother was not allowed for the funeral prayer, so the Muslims had to perform the funeral prayer outside the main gate of Udero Lal shrine. I will complain to Pakistan's higher authorities that Mata Beena is spreading hatred among Hindus and Muslims and her behavior can lead to a commotion between Hindus and Muslims in Sindh (Personal interview, 4 March 2020).

During fieldwork, Muslim seniors Mujawars also mentioned that the new Mata Beena is rigid. Her behavior was no less than dreadful with Muslims; her elders though were very cooperative with the Muslims, had lively gatherings in the evening at the courtyard of the complex of the Udero Lal, and they exchanged views for the development of the complex of Udero Lal, the mutual decision used to be taken by both Hindus and Muslims at that time by Preetam Dass who was the father of Mata Beena. When any problem came up they used to solve it amicably, and now Mata Beena takes the unanimous decision whether anyone likes it or not. She has declared

that she would not listen to anyone's opinion, and she is always ready to have a conflict with the Muslims and wants to transform the main complex of the Udero Lal. Besides, senior Muslim Mujawar Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh remarked that:

Mata Beena's forefathers were Hindu Bawa (servicemen) of the Udero Lal shrine, and they were not descendants of the Udero Lal, now this current Mata declared herself as *gaadinashen* of the Udero Lal, she should be ashamed of her actions because, since generations, they have remained the *Shevadar* (service provider) to the shrine of Udero Lal. Muslims Shaikh *sajadansheen* should also feel ashamed while declaring himself as the Muslim *sajadanshen* (caretaker) of the Udero Lal; his forefather never declared himself as the *sajjadanaheen* (caretaker) because Muslims Shaikh Mujawars are not descendants of Udero Lal. We too are *Buhardidar* (service provider) to Udero Lal's shrine. Now Ghulam Abass Shaikh declared himself as Muslim *sajjadanashen* of Udero Lal. I swear to God Udero Lal is annoyed with Muslim *sajjadanashen* and Hindu *gaadinashene*, who have broken the old traditions and fundamental principles of Udero Lal. Udero Lal will punish both because they created hatred between Hindus and Muslims of Sindh and did not promote the message of tolerance taught by Udero Lal but were interested in collecting money from the shrine because both are greedy (Personal interview, 3 February 2020).

Moreover, seniors Muslims Shaikh Mujawars and seniors Hindus members of the Sheva Mendly of Udero Lal were not satisfied with current Muslim *sajjadanashen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh. They thought that old Mujawars were cooperative and flexible, had good relations with the Hindus *gaadinashen* of Udero Lal and they promoted Udero Lal's message of peace and tolerance.



Figure 9: From the first window of the right side, Muslim Sajadasheen Ghulam Abass Shaikh decorates the par (clothes sheet with verses from Holy Quran) on the grave of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Furthermore, senior members of the Hindus Sheva MendlyBhool Chand told that:

Muslim *gaadinsheen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh did not cooperate with us. He takes enormous revenue from the Udero Lal's shrine; he never helped us renovate the Udero Lal's shrine's complex. He did not give us a single penny for the kitchen (*Bhandaro*) of the Udero Lal. He follows in the footsteps of Muslim religious persons who misguide him about the Udero Lal's identity. He did not follow the message of the tolerance of Udero Lal. Once, he threatened me that he would thwart the celebration of the annual fair (*Chetichand*) of Udero Lal. I was surprised to listen to his words then told him that Udero Lal himself will arrange the *Chetichand*, we are nobody" so if you want to stop the *Chetichand*, ask Udero Lal and stop him from holding this ritual (Personal interview, 8 March 2019).

5.4. Conclusion

Udero Lal was a Sufi, a scholar, an intellectual, educationist, and man of tolerance and patience; his philosophy and teachings were based on co-existence, peace, harmony, love, tolerance, and brotherhood. He talked about humanity and equality. He further gave the message of love to all species. The *Bahrano* (food offering) ritual was performed on the bank of the Indus River, and all fruits were offered to the Indus River as species of Indus River could eat these fruits. He showed his concern for species, including human beings. He was against the forced conversion to any religion. He always protected humanity from evil. He tried to explain to both Hindus and Muslims of Sindh that Khuda and Bhagwan are the same; there is no difference; Hindus call Ishwar and Muslims call him Allah. Both groups were like brothers and should always live peacefully. He gave a lesson on syncretism.

He used to love both Hindus and Muslims. Whenever a Muslim Qazi tried to convert any Hindu to Islam, he used to intervene and avert this action. When any Muslim faced trouble, he used to rescue him. He was a protector and savior for both Hindus and Muslims. When Muslim ruler Mirkh Shah fought against him and was defeated, Udero Lal pardoned him and increased his following. Udero Lal had a charismatic personality that attracted both Hindus and Muslims who became his loyalists. He strictly instructed both the Hindu and Muslim followers never to fight against each other and live like brothers. Udero Lal was a symbol of peace and harmony for both religious groups. When he died, both Hindus and Muslims were engaged in a debate regarding his Muslim grave and Hindu Samadhi. A voice from the wilderness said he belonged to both Hindus and Muslims. The problem was amicably resolved.

The shrine's structure was made into a tomb and both communities accepted it. . According to a legend Udero Lal constructed the Mosque and temple *Jot* and then his shrine comprised of mosque and temple at the same shared space according to the wish of Udero Lal. It became the symbol of the peace and tolerance that was shared by both communities in Sindh. A lecture Hall in the Udero Lal complex was constructed in a shared space called *kehchari* (discourse room). Seminars and conferences were being held in this lecture hall, where people of every caste, creed,

and color visited to listen to the lecture, and they were equally treated. There were interactive sessions and everyone was given an equal chance to share their views, generate new debates and hold a healthy discussion. Everyone's arguments were listened to carefully. Most of the discourse was based on Philosophy, Sufism, Religion, and tolerance.

Udero Lal chose his last abode at Muslim village Jahejo, a Muslim Maman Shaikh donated the fertile land to the Udero and became the *Mujawar* of the Udero Lal, and Hindus Tahkurs who were said to be the Hindus descendants of the Udero Lal became the custodians of the complex of the Udero Lal. Thakurs settled in India after the partition then Hindus Bawas who were *sheavdar* (attendants) of the Thakurs, became caretakers of Udero Lal shrine. Uhdhab Dass, Pareetam Dass, Mata Joti, Mata Gopi, and Mata Sheela were also attendants of the Udero Lal. However, they never declared themselves as Hindu *gaadinaheen* (custodian) of Udero Lal, rather they preferred to be called *khadmatgars* (attendants) of Udero Lal's shrine. They never indulged in the transformation of the complex of Udero Lal and maintained good relations with the Muslims. Now Mata Beena who proclaims to be the descendant of her forefathers has declared herself a Hindu *gaadinaheen* (custodian) of Udero Lal and has fully changed the second part of the complex that was not there before.

She further attempted to transform the main part of the complex but could not succeed. She did not maintain good relations with Muslim Shaikh *Mujawara* as her elders had. Muslims old Shaikh Mujawars Muhammad Alam, Shaikh Suharo, Shaikh Younis, Shaikh Mamman, Shaikh Wadal, Shaikh Bachal, Gul Muhammad Shaikh, Wali Muhammad Shaikh, Muhammad Ismaeel Shaikh, Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh never declared themselves as Muslim *gaadinasheen* (caretaker) but only *buahridar Mujawar* of Udero Lal shrine, However, their descendants Ghulam Abass Shaikh declared himself as Muslim *sajadanasheen* of Udero Lal. Now the juniors Muslims Shaikhs Mujawars are ignored by him, and there is no cooperation within the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars; nevertheless, all Muslims Mujawar collect at one platform when Hindus Mata tries to attempt the physical conversion of the main shrine of Udero Lal. Now there had been too much contestation over ownership and identity of the Udero between both groups. Both communities have no cooperation and mutual

understanding. Their old descendants had collective ritual performances, and now there is no joint ritual performance. Current Hindus Mata replaced old and senior shevadar and appointed new juniors for the Udero Lal Sheva Mandley. Many significant events took place to transform the Udero Lal's main shrine by the Hindus. However, Muslims resisted, and the physical transformation was temporarily suspended at the main shrine of Udero Lal by the Sindh police. The Hindu Mata in any case has entirely transformed the second part of the Udero Lal complex.

Now Udero Lal has become the hotspot of the contestation between the Hindus and Muslims. Hindus Mata, time and again plans to bring physical change to the whole main shrine of Udero Lal because she is determined to demonstrate that Udero Lal was as Hindu Pir, and only she has the authority to manage and control all the affairs related to Udero Lal. She does not pay any heed to Udero Lal's message of sufferance. Now both groups are competing to own Udero Lal as their spiritual leader and his virtuous deeds are completely ignored. There is no doubt that due to the inflexible attitude of both groups, Udero Lal's ownership and control of the shrine have become historically controversial.

CHAPTER 6

UDERO LAL CONTESTED SAINT

6.1. Introduction

Udero Lal has been known as a symbol of forbearance between the Hindus and Muslims in Sindh. No in-depth research study on Udero Lal's shrine has been conducted so far that attempts to study core disputes at length. Many centuries have passed and his identity and ownership are still controversial. The historians are of the view that the two religious groups have very strong and deep-rooted fundamental values that are not easy to change let alone exhibition of any semblance of flexibility. Hayden argued that the main aim of the dominance of one group over another is to control the religious spaces, which had been silently shared for a long time. With time, however, the stubborn attitude of both parties in question has played a significant role in achieving an acceptable situation. He also looks at the broader aspect of understanding the feelings and relations among all these communities and groups. "Antagonistic tolerance" develops a comparative model of the competitive sharing and transformation of the religious sites." These research studies are not seen as separate, rather all are assembled into an analytical framework that gives an understanding of how long harmonious attitude can play a peaceful role and lead to acceptance of shared religious spaces among the religious communities. If animosity is let to grow it can easily trigger violence among the two factions that can result in bloodshed and extermination of either group (Hayden, 2016, pp.6-12).

There is a dearth of literature on the identity of the Udero Lal. It has remained an old site that belongs to the mid-10th century; its exact date is also unclear in different books because no in-depth research has been conducted on the saint's identity. Pre-colonial, colonial, and contemporary literature does not give a detailed account of Udero Lal. However, this study has attempted in all earnestness to unearth Udero Lal's controversy on the identity, ownership, temple, funeral, and revenue generation between the Hindus and Muslims at the shared space. While conducting the year-long

fieldwork, I came across various modes of disagreement that were not mentioned in the literature, which I reviewed before going into the field. There is a considerable gap in the literature in which contestation regarding Udero Lal has not been properly focused on by many authors. During the fieldwork, I closely observed and experienced various forms of disputes at his shrine's shared space. These findings have been analyzed in detail in this chapter.

6.2. Controversy on the Identity of Udero Lal

Hindus claimed that Udero Lal was Hindu by birth and remained Hindu throughout his life. Muslims claimed that he was Muslim by birth. The Molvee of the Udero Lal mosque Muhammad Ibrahim Khaskhali argued about the Muslim identity of Udero Lal and said that:

Hindus are struggling to confiscate Udero Lal and want to bring him into the fold of Hinduism for a long time, and they have an enduring policy to oust the Muslims from this complex. I assure you that we have enough physical evidence to show that Udero Lal is a Muslim and not a Hindu, and anybody can come and judge from the evidence that we have with us. The funeral ceremonies of Udero Lal were performed according to the Islamic ritual and his grave too was made following Islamic burial practice. There is no Samadhi of Hindu in the shrine and the complex of Udero Lal; however, there are four graves of old Muslim *Mujawars* Muhammad Alam Shaikh, Suharo Shaikh, Younis Shaikh, and Mamman Shaikh's beside the shrine of Udero Lal. The Mosque is situated in the complex beside the shrine of Udero Lal. Holy Quran is placed for a long time in the shrine. Muslim's Qalama Sharif is written on the main entrance gate of Udero Lal which is also the primary evidence. Had he been Hindu's Pir, would the Hindus allow Qalama Tayyaba on the main entrance gate? Hindus are only followers of Udero Lal, not a Hindu peer or Avatar. (Personal Interview, 25th March 2019).

When visitors came to Udero Lal's shrine, Muslims Shaikh *Mujwar* was introduced as a Muslim saint Shaikh Muhammad Tahir and Hindus respected him as Hindu deity Udero Lal. This saint's brief reference in earlier times is mentioned by the pre-colonial local historian, Mir Ali Shir Qani Thathvee, he writes:

Jahejo village is notable for the Dargah of Shaikh Tahir, the Muslim saint who is known for his miracles. He is also famously known as Udero Lal by the Hindus. Inebriated with the wine of Divinity, he spent his early life wandering in the desert. One day when he was trying to grasp a few seeds to eat, a camel, fleeing from its proprietor, showed up at the doorstep of his unassuming homestead. Watching the camel with his deep inward eye, he saw God living in the animal. He tended to God and stated: 'Goodness Lord since you have favored me by showing up before me in creature form, plan to impart my food to me so please help.' The camel would not stop to take his contributions; however, Shaikh Tahir continued to run after it, until he reached a high worldly station as if the camel guided him to that place. It was like a journey to heaven not accessed easily by the general population. This incident became famous and an annual fair is held here. Hindu women assemble from everywhere in Sindh and can be seen in jubilant mood and dancing through the Jahejo village's roads and streets (Qanee, 2011[1180], p. 317)

Muslims firmly believed that Udero Lal was a Muslim and Hindus were the devotees of Udero Lal. Just like Hindus come for the pilgrimage of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Sachal Sarmat, and Abdullah Shah Gazi; in the same manner, they come here for the pilgrimage of Udero Lal too. Muslim *sajjaadhanasheen* of Udero Lal Ghulam Abbas Shaikh explained that:

Udero Lal was Muslim by birth. He belonged to the Ahle Sunnat sect of Muslims. His name was Shaikh Muhammad Tahir and had saintly qualities. He came to our Muslim Jahejo village and met with our Muslim elders Shaikh Mamaan, Shaikh Muhammad Aalam, Shaikh Suharo, and Shaikh Younis. He showed interest in purchasing a fertile piece of land, and our elders donated his land free of cost. We are Muslims of the Jaheja caste, later converted to Shaikhs. Udero Lal gave us the title of Muslim Mujawar Shaikh and told us that we were the Shaikhs. Udero Lal took a word from us that we shall forever remain *Mujawars* of his shrine and collect Dargah's revenue. We are the owners of this land. We have official documents that stated where Udero Lal made his last residency and was buried according to Islamic teachings. His shrine was constructed in the Islamic style. He gave us a message of peace, tolerance, and harmony and made his last abode in our Muslim Jahejo village. Hindus had always tried to declare him a Hindu Pir; they produced biased literature regarding him and wanted to prove his identity as Pir of Hindus. Hindus never showed our relationship with this saint. They tried to show that Muslims Shaikh

Mujawar had no role and relation with this saint (Personal interview, March 12 2019).

According to the colonial authors and officers Aitken and Burton, who have written a detailed account of the history of Sindh, Udero Lal, is known as a river god by the Hindus but is a known Muslim saint popularly called Shaikh Tahir by Muslims, A.W. Hughes writes:

Hindus almost became the disciples of the Muslim saints in Sindh. The same saints are buried in different parts of Sindh's, venerated not only by one sect but by Hindus and Muslims. They have given them separate names like River god is venerated by both Muslims and Hindus with different names. Hindus call him Udero Lal, and Muslims call him Shaikh Tahir. The River god is also called Jinda Pir by the Hindus and Khwaja Khizr (Udero Lal) by the Muslims. The same way the Lahu Jasraj became the Mango Pir, Raja Bartari is called Qalandar Lal Shahbaz. Hindu claim that Muslims have tagged Muslim names on their saints for own their interests and to serve their purposes (Hughes, 1876, p. 680).

Hindus and Muslims accepted the founding narratives about the Udero Lal that he was by birth Hindu and raised in the Hindu home and his birthplace is Nasarpur. However, Muslims claimed that he was later converted and remained Muslim throughout his life and Hindus claimed that he was by birth Hindu from the Lohano caste. According to their belief, he was incarnated in the home of Ratan Rai and Mata Devaki. In contrast to Muslim *Sajjadhanasheen*, Hindus *gaadnasheen* Mata claimed that:

Shaikh Tahir is the false name of Udero Lal, which was given by the Muslims Shaikh. If they glance at the history, they will not find Shaikh Tahir's name related to the Udero Lal by any standard. The name of Udero Lal had been mentioned in every official document before and after the partition. The name of Shaikh Tahir was not found on any official document. It was significant clear evidence that Udero Lal's name was mentioned in the record of every station, Village, School, Police Station, Library, revenue book. The *Pallo* (fish) and equestrian of Udero Lal were engraved on the stone of the main entrance gate of Udero Lal tomb. Now, Shaikhs have covered it by fixing the Islamic posters on them and have also placed Holy Quran in the tomb of Udero Lal, previously missing. Nevertheless, we did not object because Allah's sacred book is most respectful for us. Syed Farman Ali Shah, a Muslim

organized a national conference on Udero Lal's identity solely to prove him a Muslim. The Hindus were portrayed as a selfish community working against the interests of the Muslims and their fundamentalist and extremists images were highlighted in the conference. Udero Lal has a history; he is by birth Hindu and always remained Hindu and fought against the Muslim ruler's brutality. Who wanted Hindus to convert into Muslims? Udero Lal saved Hindus from conversion to another religion. He is our avatar of the (*Sindhu*) river Indus (Personal interview, November 15, 2019).

During fieldwork, I also had informal discussions with some educated Muslims and Hindu people in Matiari, Udero Lal village. They insisted that Hindu *gaadinaheen* Mata Beena Sahib and Muslim *Sajjadhanasheen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh Sahib should not indulge in the political, religious, and economic issues and both must think beyond these affairs and should adopt the visionary approach to promote and disseminate the teachings and philosophy of the Udero Lal for the betterment of the both Hindus and Muslims communities. They further believed that after India's partition in 1947, and the creation of Pakistan, both Hindus and Muslim caretakers did not perform their role to promote the key message of interfaith and harmony of Udero Lal. Udero Lal's identity had remained obscure due to the lack of colonial and pre-colonial research. Moreover, they argued that educated Hindus and Muslims would not favor the physical transformation of Udero Lal's shrine. Muslim and Hindu communities should sustain Udero Lal in multiple identities because the question of the saint's identity will remain unresolved in the future. Further, Syed Attaullah Shah emphasized the importance of Udero Lal's birth and identity and it is not much different from the earlier respondents:

Udero Lal is Hindu by birth from Nasarpur, and then he was converted into Muslim and named Shaikh Tahir. Most of the devotees to the Udero Lal's shrine are Hindus, the Muslim visitors are fewer. All credit goes to Hindus for the repair and renovation work and regular management of this Dargah. In the past, If we look at the past at the Hindus and Muslims had a brotherly relationship. It is a historical fact that the identity of Udero Lal would remain a questionable issue due to different claims by the two groups (Personal interview, September 1, 2019).

Udero Lal made his cult, which was named *Darya Panth* (Indus cult). People of this cult used to live near the Indus River (*Sindhu*) because it was their lifeline, and they were dependent on water for their agricultural lands, daily purpose, and their livestock. Alice narrates that the Pakistani people still believe that the power of Indus and Islam coexists. The Sufi saint Khwaja Khizr's shrine is on the bank of the Indus River in Sukkur Sindh. It is said that a woman dropped the holy Quran in the middle of river Indus, where water was thought to be the purest as she believed that her son would get blessings from the river by performing this action. She further argues that when she asked the woman the reason for throwing the holy Quran in the middle of the river, the woman replied that being an educated woman, you should not ask such a question, because you know everything. (Albinia, 2008, pp. 70-90). Rumi mentioned that people related different roles and belief systems with the Indus River. The Indus plays a significant role in the lives of many peoples in modern Pakistan.

However, the Vedas declared that the Ganges River, known as India's most significant and purest of rivers, *Sindhu* (Indus) river, also known as the defender of the people witnessed the action performed by the people in the name of Vishnu to guard them. The Indus River's space is also represented as pure and impure, and Hinduism also makes a category of the physical spaces as impure and pure. (Rumi, 2018, pp. 29-31). Mirza Qaleech Baig also discusses a brief account of Udero Lal's identity. He writes:

There is a tomb of Shaikh Tahir in the Jajeho village. Hindus call him Udero Lal, Dolha Lal, or Amar Lal. According to Hindus, Udero Lal's real name was Mangal; he was the son of Ratan. There was Muslim Qazi in the Nasapur, who used to convert Hindus into Muslims forcibly. Udero Lal had a theological debate with the Qazi, and he won the debate. Udero Lal had a bet with Qazi that he will place a piece of cloth (*shaal*) on the Indus water and Qazi has to sit on that piece of cloth, if he does not drown, then we will accept his power. The Qazi accepted this challenge of Udero Lal, but when he sat on the piece of cloth he started to drown and it was Udero Lal who saved him (Baig, 2014 [1926], p. 54).

Udero Lal had a theological debate in the court of Mirkh Shah on the forcible conversion of Hindus to Islam. He argued that only one God is the creature of all human beings; (Vasvani, 2017, p. 117).

Many Hindu *Shevadars* (attendants) of the Udero Lal shrine managed the significant ceremonies and rituals of the Udero Lal shrine with Hindus Mata Sahib. Hindu *gaadinasheen* always kept in contact with them when she returned to her home in Bombay, India. One of the old Shevadar Ramesh Lal argued that:

Udero Lal is not a Muslim; he is our Sindhi Hindu deity. No one has ever heard about Shaikh Tahir's name in 50 years. There is no document to prove Udero Lal's name as a Shaikh Tahir. His name Shaikh Tahir alias Udero Lal name on Mosque is not authentic. *Kalama sharif (Lal ela ha el Allah, Muhammad dar Rasul Allah)* was written on the main gate of the Udero Lal by the Muslims Shaikh, but you observe beneath to enter another gate there is a portrait of the Udero Lal. when Muslim Madni mosque with green color which was glued inside the shrine. This is a conspiracy against the Hindus that Muslims Shaikh wants to take over the whole complex of Udero Lal. God forbid; if any unknown person commits blasphemy, then who will be responsible, whole blame would be on the Hindus, though we respect and honor the Holy Quran because of sanctity of the sacred and holy book of God (Personal interview April 6, 2019).

There is another famous temple of Udero Lal called *Zindah Pir* by Muslim devotees or Khwaja Khizir at Sukkur. Both Muslims and Hindus venerate this temple (Thakur, 1959, pp.181). There is another source of the nineteenth century which also provides a brief account of the identity of the Udero Lal in which U.T Thakur narrates as the following:

The Muslim followers constructed Zindah Pir or Khwaja Khizir (Udero Lal) temple or Asthan of Udero Lal at Sukkur, where Udero Lal jumped into the Indus River and reappeared at Sukkur. A shrine was built in honor of Udero Lal at this place (Ibid: 1959, pp. 183).

Lekhraj Hans writes a similar story:

Mirkh Shah was the cruel king of Thatta; and an extremist Muslim who wanted to convert all the Hindus into Islam. Hindus had no option but to rush to *Sindhu* (Indus River) to seek Udero Lal's assistance. After three days the Hindus saw a beautiful boy like an angel who emerging from the Indus River on a horse and claimed he was Udero Lal. He said to Hindus, "My name is Udero Lal, I am Avatar. He declared to

fight within a week. Within a week he was born in the Ratan Rai at Nasarpur and annihilated Mirkh Shah and later became his devotee. He got a donation of land from Jahejo village from Muslim Shaikh Mamman. He instructed all Muslims and Hindus to live in peace. (Hans, 2001[1979], pp. 46-146)

The source of the nineteenth century also provides a brief account about the conversion of Udero Lal from Hindu to Muslim, which is written by Mulana Din Muhammad Vafae:

This is famous story about Shaikh Tahir that he was the disciple of the Shaikh Bhauddin Zakariya Multani.³⁶ He was a Hindu boy, used to labor for his livelihood. One day, suddenly, the love for God was created in his heart. He came to Shaikh Bahu-u-din to learn the lesson about God. When the Shaikh Sahib saw him, he became pale; his state of mind was changed. He gave *Khotba*³⁷ in the mosque and then got spiritual instruction from his spiritual master (*Murshid*), he became the devotee. Shaikh Tahir returned to Sindh, he made his last abode in Jahejo village and passed away in this village (Vafae, 2005 [1946], p. 264).

. One of the religious persons Syed Mahfooz Ali Shah claimed that:

Baha -ud-Din Zakariya converted Udero Lal into a Muslim. Mosque was constructed with this saint's shrine. If this saint had been non-muslim, Hindus should have made the Hindus samadhi in Hindu style. There is only *the Jot sahib* room (lamps room) that belonged to Hindus, without figurine. If there had been a temple in the shrine, then there would have been a figurine of the Hindu gods in the temple. All proofs and

³⁶Baha, ud-Din Zakariya Multani (1182-1262 CE): the originator of the Indian part of the Suhrawardiya. His progenitors are said to have accompanied of Muhammad Qasim and his entourage who offered Hajj and went to the Middle East where he closely worked with Shihab ud-Din Abu Hafs' Umar al-Suhrawardi who in turn requested him to dispatch a mission to India. He set up a somewhat wealthy, world class style of life for carrying on tradition in Multan. He kept up open associations with the kings of Delhi, and by and large didn't develop relations with the adversary Chishtiya. He is said to have sent delegates to Sindh including some of his family members, and visited Sindh himself a few times. Various stories interface him with Sufis from Sindh, for instance, Char yar (Boivin, 2016, p.93-94).

³⁷ Khotba is recited in the Juma namaz (Friday prayer) in the mosque by the Muslims.

evidence are witnesses to the fact that Udero Lal is a Muslim saint (Personal interview, January 16, 2019).

In contrast to Syed Mahfooz Ali Shah, Naren Dass Motyani writes:

If Udero Lal had been Muslim, why would he have immersed himself alive into the earth, which is against the teaching of Islam? If Udero Lal had been Muslim, he would have converted all the Hindus into Islam, entered all Hindus into Janat (heaven), and got blessings from Allah. Motyani further claimed that it seems to him a massive conspiracy by the Muslims to occupy the Udero Lal temple and Dargah (Motyani, 2014, p.133).

In contrast few Muslims conceded that Udero Lal is a Hindu by birth or his birthplace is in Nasarpur, and he was raised and born in a Hindu home. They further said that their forefathers used to tell them those Hindus were the primary caretakers of the Udero Lal, and he belonged to a Hindu family. When Muslim rulers ruled in Sindh, they made the shrine of Udero Lal in Muslim style. Now Muslims have the majority; therefore, Hindus are compelled to allow the Muslims at the Udero Lal's shrine. Udero Lal performed many miracles and saved the Hindus from the genocide of cruel Mirkh Shah. He then beseeched and begged Udero Lal to protect his places, too, and then Udero Lal instructed the water to recede, and the fire to extinguish. Even today, Udero Lal attracts both Hindus and Muslims in Sindh. (Ramey, 2008, p. 105). Furthermore, Muslim scholar Dr. Azizullah Talpur acknowledged that:

Udero Lal is an old Sindhi Hindu name; *Lal* (red) is the Hindu name because there is no *aenainak* in Sindhi letter in the Sindhi word of *Lal* which is written after the Udero +Lal. The common Hindu names are Krishan Lal, Chaman Lal, Ramesh Lal, but in Sindhi, there is *Laam lakur and Alif and laam* (Lal), which means red (*gahro*). That is, used for Udero, *Laam Alif laam* (Lal) is Hindus name and Hindus worship the red color because fire is red, they call it Agni Devi. Contrary to Udero Lal's name. Qalandar is also called the Lal; there is *aenainak* Sindhi letter in Qalandar's Lal, which means stone (*hero waro pathar*) *laam aen lam* (Lal) is a Muslim name used for the Qalandar as a Lal. Udero Lal is the famous real name of a Hindu's deity; no one knows Shaikh Tahir's name. I challenge you; please come with me on the Indus Road, ask 20 people if they know about Shaikh Tahir, not a single person would nod in affirmative but when you would ask them about Udero Lal, all

of them will point out the shrine of Udero Lal. It is clear from the name “Udero Lal” that he was Hindu, not a Muslim. The other temples were not built on Sindh's other Muslim shrines, such as Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai, Sachal Sarmat, and Qalandar Shahbaz. Flags (*Aalm*) are hoisted at another Muslim saint’s shrine but not on Udero Lal’s shrine. Udero Lal was also a Sufi. Muslim rulers made his grave in Muslim style (Personal interview January 14, 2020).

Besides, there was another Muslim native of the Udero Lal place, Muhammad Sadique Soomro, and he believed that:

Before the partition, there was no concept of Sindhi Hindus or Muslims in Sindh as all carried Sindhi identity. Both Hindus and Muslims used to live peacefully. Our forefathers used to say that they attended Hindus wedding ceremonies like a family member. The majority of the Muslims used to attend the annual fair (*chetichand*) of Udero Lal. After the partition, Hindus were forced to leave the Sindh for India though they were unwilling to do so. Our forefathers further confirmed Udero Lal was Hindu, his birthplace was Nasarpur, they never mentioned the name of the Shaikh Tahir. Syed Saleem Shah was a powerful man of the village who belonged to the Muslim Wahabi sect; he gave the *fatwa* that *Melo* (fair) was celebrated for the Hindu pir, which is a great sin because immoral activities were performed during the fair (*mela*). Saleem Shah resented Udero Lal's fair and wanted to stop it. He forcibly purchased all the lands from the Korieh cast, which was nearby the Udero Lal dargah, and disallowed any fair to be held. He used to embarrass the Hindu Mata Sahib. Now Muslims do not go to Udero Lal’s fair, but go only to harass the Hindu women. When Hindu and Muslim conflict started, Muslims forcibly declared Udero Lal's name as Shaikh Tahir (Personal interview December 10, 2019).

French Anthropologist Boivin writes:

Udero Lal is a deliverer for the Hindus and a mediator for both Muslims and Hindus. Udero Lal’s identity continued to remain controversial despite tall claims by both sides (Boivin, 2018, p-47-48).

When the Sunni rulers persecuted the Ismailis, they adopted the *taqiyya* (invisible) to hide their real identity to save themselves and continue their preaching mission. Khan has traced the historical perspective of Udero Lal, but he has assumed, he is not sure about Udero Lal whether he belongs to Fatimid Ismailism. Khan is a prominent writer

who has seen various similarities between Udero Lal and Fatimid Ismailism. During the tenth century, this kind of Shia Islam was common in Sindh, especially in Multan. He further proposes that the *Darya panth* (Indus cult)³⁸ may have been associated with Ismailism. However, the subject has not been additionally examined by him in depth. He has not seen, for example, that the same period when Udero Lal is said to have grown is related to a significant function throughout the entire existence of the Ismaili mission in Sindh. He is not firmly sure that Udero Lal had contacted the Ismaili mission. (Khan A. Z., 1975, pp. 212-213) . One of the old Muslim Mujawar Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh claimed that:

We heard from our forefathers that the Indus River had its course run near Nasapur in ancient times. Hindus used to worship the Indus River, they saw a child floating in a box on the Indus River. The child was brought home and he was Udero Lal. When Udero Lal became young, Hindus gave him grain for sale which he used to offer to the Indus River and in return, he used to get the coins from the Indus River. When Udero Lal's step-parents followed him, they saw that he offered the grains and got

³⁸Udero Lal made the Cult (*Panth*) for disseminating his teachings, he made his cousin Pugar the head of *Panth*. Udero Lal took his cousin Pugar to the Indus river and both dived into Indus river from Nasarpur and they re-appeared at Rohri Sukkur. At this juncture stands a symbol of appearance of Udero Lal which is called Gahat Udero. They established a temple there with the name of Jindha Pir. (Asdoumal, 1926, p. 106). The evidence for the worship of water (*Jal*) had been found in the ancient civilization of *Mohen-Jo-Daro* (mound of dead). This is the reason that archaeologists and historians have narrated that ancient people were worshipers of water (*Jal*) and Indus Cult. The Indus Cult (*Darya panth*) is before the Hinduism (Allana, 2002, pp.143-146). Devotees of Udero Lal had been known as a *Daryapanthis* (Indus cult). After the partition of India in 1947, majority of the Sindhi Hindus migrated to India. Udero Lal became the main Sindhi Hindu deity and identity of the Indian religion for the Sindhi Hindus (Falzon, 2004, p.58). Path of the River (*Daryapanth*) is related to the devotees of the Udero Lal who is also called the Darya Shah. Sindhi Hindus of India have become main followers of the *Daryapanth* in India and this cult has primary importance among the Sindhi Hindus in India. Udero Lal delegated all the responsibilities to his cousin Pugar to organize this cult in entire Sindh. (Boivin, 2015, p. 127).

coins from the Indus River. Udero Lal showed their anger at being followed and came to Jahejo village. His name is *Uderano* which means flown here (*udriayo*) (Personal interview February 3, 2020).

6.3. Ownership of the Udero Lal between Hindus and Muslims

Apart from Udero Lal's identity, both Hindus and Muslims claimed ownership of the Udero Lal shrine and his other property. Muslim *Sajjadasheen* of Udero Lal Ghulam Abass Shaikh firmly believed his forefathers had been looking after the whole shrine complex of Udero Lal for generations. Descendants of Muslims Shaikh *Mujawars*, Muhammad Alam Shaikh, Suharo Shaikh, Younis Shaikh, and Maman Shaikh donated this shrine's land to the Udero Lal. Upon their death, their forefathers looked after this land of Udero Lal complex. Hindus do not have any document and official proof that this land of shrine complex belongs to them. Muslim *gaadiansheen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh further acknowledged that he has the official British Registry of 1938, which is his grandfather's Gul Muhammad Shaikh's name and is a detailed authentic document which mentions ownership of shrine in Muslim name. Furthermore, Muslim *sajadhansheen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh Mujawar claimed that:

I have the Udero Lal shrine's official registration of the British colonial period in 1938 that cannot be challenged in any court of law. Ownership is mentioned in Muslim name and also entitled to collect rent of shops and stalls during the fair and revenue contributed by the visitors. I am sure that Hindus do not have the official documents or a registered paper on Udero Lal. Federal investigation Agency officers came from Islamabad to investigate the ownership Udero Lal's shrine and demanded physical evidence but Hindus failed to produce any. Hindus sent a message to my father to ask the date of the Udero Lal shrine registry. I have significant proof that the Udero Lal shrine is ours it belonged to us since the generation (Personal interview, June 15, 2019).

Hindu Mata *gaadinasheen* of Udero Lal is in a state of denial and rejects the necessity of evidence as demanded by Muslims for ownership. Udero Lal in her opinion is the Avatar of the Vedic God Varuna; he is a Hindu deity; he belongs to Hindus. Hindus have run the whole management of the shrine for generations, while the Muslims did not spend a single penny even for the expenditure of the shrine yet take away the

entire revenue generated from the shrine. The Muslims are not interested in Shrine's maintenance or management. She argued further that all district official revenues records are in Udero Lal's name, Shaikh Tahir's name appears nowhere. In addition, one of the *shevadar* (attendant) Ramesh stated that:

It is ample proof that we have keys to the whole Udero Lal complex, and all financial management annual arrangements of the Udero Lal shrine is looked after by us for generations. I assure you that Muslim Mujawars have no answer to any claim regarding the management. There is no doubt Udero Lal is Hindu and belongs to us. Muslims lay a wrong claim on Udero Lal yet we want to live in peace with Muslims. (Personal Interview, April 6, 2019).

During the field, I asked Hindus *gaadinasheen* to show the official documents but she refused; the Muslims *sajjadhanaheen* however showed the documents and gave me a photocopy official British Registry dated 16 May 1938, on Stamp paper of Indian four rupees with stamped seal of the sub-registrar of Hala, District Hyderabad. It was written in the Sindhi language, and the document is 82 years old; it was not fully readable due to the unclear Sindhi writing; nevertheless, I tried my best to translate the key points showing ownership of the Udero Lal between the Muslims and Hindus. The main witness was Hajji Syed Muhammad Saleh Shah, son of Syed Usman Shah (Matiari), the landlord of Udero Lal village

6.3.1. Translation of British Registry (1938)

Bachal 45, son of Wadal Suleman Shaikh, single and Mujawar of Dargah Lal Sahib (Udero Lal) is a resident of Udero Lal taluka Hala. The Revenue of the Dargah's Udero Lal's space is generated from, *Mamber*, *Mariktari*, and *Maswar ji jae* (rent place); its annual income was seventeen rupees in 1938. The rent is generated from another land divided into three plots; their areas are mentioned below: Plot 1. *Uttar bae Jo Bagh Dargah Lal Sahib jo kot ubrandi*, Plot 2. *Ulhandi bae joo jayoon*, Plot 3. *Uttar Bae Jo Dakhan Khad*. Gul Muhammad Shaikh is his relative and cousin. He has served during his long period of illness; however, Gul Muhamad is not young anymore. I am ill and not sure how long will live. I declare in writing with my full senses and will, in front of the main witnesses that I am the *Pagdar* (custodian) of Dargah Sharif of Lal Sahib (Udero Lal). I handed over and bestowed all the land and right of *Paag* (custodian) of Udero Lal to Hajji Gul Muhammad son of Wali

Muhammad Shaikh 25 years of age, who is a primary school teacher at Sher Muhammad Thora resident of Udero Lal, Taluka Hala. He is a true and legal owner and has authority as well as the right to receive all the income of the shrine and additional rents of dargah Lal Sharif's land. Once again, I hereby also declare in front of the witnesses with full sense and will that I handed over and bestowed the Paag (custodian) right and other income and land of Dargah Sharif Lal Sahib (Udero Lal) to Gul Muhammad Shaikh and I will never claim this Dargah Sharif's (Udero Lal) property (British registry, 1938, Hala Sub-registrar office, Hyderabad, Sind.

British Registry of Udero Lal-1938

RS.



بریتانیا رجسٹری

بجرت نمبر ۱۶۶ کے تحت لال شریف کے مالک اور اس کے جائیداد کے حوالہ سے

والہ محمد شاہین اور دیگر مالکوں کے لئے یہ ہے کہ وہ سب نے جمعاً ۱۶ جولائی ۱۹۳۸ء

کو اپنے حق میں لے لیا ہے۔

لیفٹننٹ ڈائریکٹر راجسٹری

چوہان نمبر ۱۱۱۱	۱۱
سب رجسٹرار ہالا	۱۱
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سب رجسٹرار

تعمیر خورشید آباد روڈ ہلال شریف کے مالک اور اس کے جائیداد کے حوالہ سے

مالکوں کے لئے یہ ہے کہ وہ سب نے جمعاً ۱۶ جولائی ۱۹۳۸ء کو اپنے حق میں لے لیا ہے۔

لیفٹننٹ ڈائریکٹر راجسٹری

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شماره اول از این کتاب در این روز جمعه در روز اول ماه ربیع الثانی ۱۰۱۳

چون بر وقت سببی بیک سواد و علم نداشتند که در این کتابت سببی هم در این کتابت
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تعداد و مشخصات بستانهای عهدیه و غیره در شهرستان آمل . مصدق ۱۶ شهریور ۱۳۲۲ برابر ۱۵ اردیبهشت ۱۳۲۱

تعداد ۱۴۰۰۰ نخل مسوم

تعداد نخل قابل بار برداشتن ۱۰۰۰۰

مصیبت کلی عهد ولایتی عهد شایع بخشش و شکر و نخل آمل و نخل
تعلو حال مشهور بخشش ناموس آمل بر پاره آمل پیشه و بدای
قبول کنایه مصیبت حال نون پرودی سور ۱۶ شهریور ۱۳۲۱

شاهیه و مصالیح و اولاد عثمان بن زین العابدین و اولاد فضل تقی و غیره
مردود کل و سایر کل تمام شکر و بخشش ناموس آمل بر پاره آمل پیشه و بدای
قبول کنایه مصیبت کل آمل چونان در حال نخل آمل پیشه و بدای
شهری ۱۱-۱۲ شهریور ۱۳۲۱



بجای آنکه در اصل عهد مشهور و مشهور بود اما اکثر بستانها
بزرگها طایفه پس از این عهد را بجزایر و بجزایر آمل آمل
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تعداد و مشخصات بستانهای عهدیه و غیره در شهرستان آمل . مصدق ۱۶ شهریور ۱۳۲۲ برابر ۱۵ اردیبهشت ۱۳۲۱
تعداد ۱۴۰۰۰ نخل مسوم
تعداد نخل قابل بار برداشتن ۱۰۰۰۰
مصیبت کلی عهد ولایتی عهد شایع بخشش و شکر و نخل آمل و نخل
تعلو حال مشهور بخشش ناموس آمل بر پاره آمل پیشه و بدای
قبول کنایه مصیبت حال نون پرودی سور ۱۶ شهریور ۱۳۲۱

کل عهد

۱۴۰۰۰

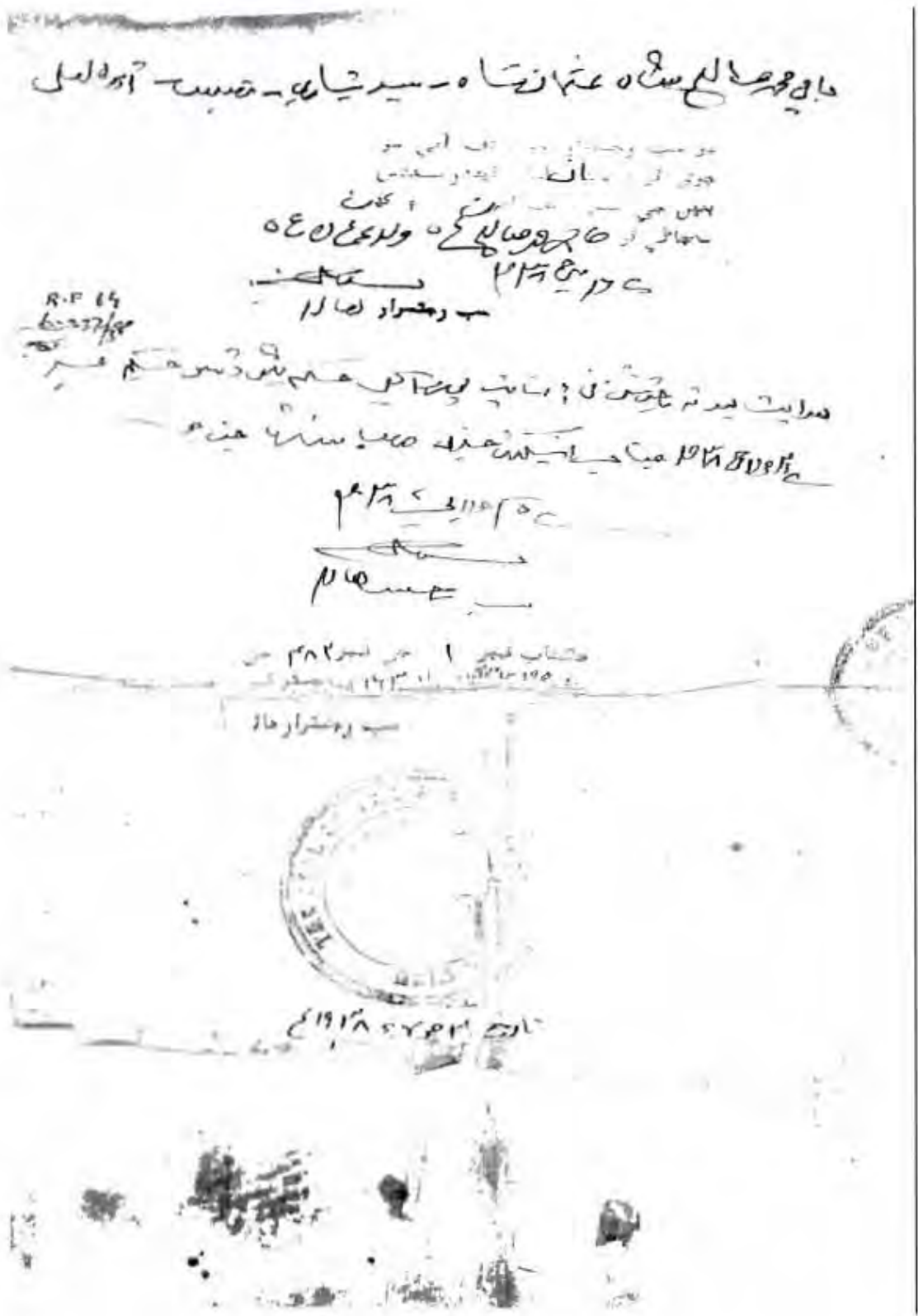


Figure 10: Copy of British Registry 1938.

(Source: Muslim *gadinahen* of Udero Lal, Ghulam Abass Shaikh, 2019)

6.4. Contestation Over the *Jotyā Waro Kamro* (Lamps Room)

The temple in the Udero Lal shrine complex is known as *Jot Sahib* or *jotyā jo kamro* (Lamps room) temple. Hindus claimed that this is *the Jot*³⁹ (lamp) temple of Udero Lal. Nevertheless, Muslims claimed that this is not a temple; it is the lamp's room. However, senior Shevadar and Head of the Tandoadam Udero Lal temple babu Raaj Kumar has this to submit:

It is an old concept of the four *Jots* (lamps) of the Lal Sahib. This is the Hindu temple of Udero Lal. The bath ritual ceremony (*gosāl*) was not performed in this temple because no evidence was found about the bath ritual (*gosāl*) in the temple. The Muslims Shaikh Mujawars themselves made this assumption. Hindus have been worshipping *Jots lamps* since the Indus period. When the first anniversary of the Udero Lal was celebrated, the Chetichand celebrated with *Jots* (lamps) and *Jal* (water) because Udero Lal told them that he is Hindu and devotees should celebrate his birthday with the worship of the *Jal* and *Jots* (Personal interview, November 27, 2019).

There are four *Jots* which are always lighting in the temple, the three *Jots* are in the same lane burning permanently and the remaining one *Jot* burns behind the main three *Jots* where Ganesha image is installed above the fourth *Jots* and besides, two small statues of cows with golden colors are placed. Other pictorial images of Udero Lal in a frame lie in the cradle, and few are hanged around the *Jot* temple wall. Muslims claimed that this is not a temple but the space of bath (*gosāl wari Jagah*), where the bath ritual of Udero Lal's dead body was performed before burial. According to Muslims; after the sunset, Udero Lal body was given the bath (*gosāl*) according to the Muslims records, so lamps were lighted, then the bath (*gosāl*) ritual was performed in the lights of the *Jots* , which they now call *Jot* . According to Udero Lal's Muslim *gaadinashēen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh:

³⁹ The local people believe that the *Jot* has been continued burning by generations of caretakers for more than 800 years at the shared space of the Udero Lal in Sindh, Pakistan.

This is *Jot's* place, not a temple; it is wrong that there was a temple. Our elders permitted the Hindus to worship only *Jot*, lighted during the bath ritual of the Udero Lal. This room is called the *Jotyān wārō kamrō* (lamps room), which is without a figurine. Now Hindus are trying to convert it into a temple, which will not be acceptable to us at any cost. However, Hindus can worship the *Jot* according to their belief in this place (personal interview, March 12, 2019).

Muslims further claimed that Hindus were also the Udero Lal followers, so they requested the Muslims to permit them to worship these *Jot* because, in that lamp's *Jots*, Udero Lal's bath ritual was performed. Now Hindus call it the temple of the lamps (*Jotyān jō mandar*) which is wrong. According to the Muslims, this is not a temple, but rooms of lamps (*jotyān wārō kamrō*).

6.5. Contestation Over the Burial of the Udero Lal

According to the village intellectuals, when Udero Lal died, conflict arose between Hindus and Muslims upon Udero Lal's burial. Muslims wanted to make his grave and construct a tomb in the Muslim style, and Hindus wanted to build a Samadhi in the Hindu style. Hindus argued that if Muslims make a grave and tomb in the Muslim style, they will not allow Hindus to enter the Udero Lal shrine to worship. Muslims also argued that if Hindus make the Samadhi and temple of the Udero Lal in Hindu style, they will not allow the Muslims to enter this space. After intense debate, both contesting parties agreed and decided to request Udero Lal to solve this problem and his decision will be bound on both parties. Furthermore, Hindus *gaadinashen* stated that:

The tomb is built on the Samadhi of Udero Lal. He is *Zindha Pir* (Immortal), who went into the earth with his horse. Udero Lal is still alive in the Samadhi as *Zindha Pir* (immortal). He comes out of the Samadhi, visits *Jot* room, *kehchare Jō kamrō* (guest room) and visits the whole complex on the horseback daily, and returns to the Samadhi. He is sitting with us for 24 hours and seeing us all the time. Samadhis of my mother, father, grandfather, sister Sheela, and sixteen Samadhiss of my sixteenth generation are within his lens (*peerhees*) (Personal interview, November 15, 2019).

So both Hindus and Muslims awoke the whole night to hear the decision of the Udero Lal; and then Udero Lal announced that “My aim of life is to create peace, tolerance, harmony, and unity among Hindus and Muslims, so the architecture of the space should be built in such a way which should be acceptable to both Muslims and Hindus. Both may worship in their way at same space, and Muslim will forever remain *Mujawar* of this Darbar.” So Muslims made the grave in Muslim style and constructed a tomb over the Udero Lal's grave in the same space, and Hindus constructed the *Jot* room in the same space, which is also said to be the *Jots* temple in which four *Jots* were illuminated. The Hindus in the same space worship four *Akhand Jots*. Both Hindus and Muslims shared the same space as Udero Lal. Besides, Molvee Muhammad Ibrahim Pesh Imam of Udero Lal Mosque stated that:

It is not the Samadhi; this is the Muslim grave of the Udero Lal, which is made according to Islamic teachings. It is a Muslim-style grave made by the Muslims, how it could be Hindu Samadhi. Hindus have separated Samadhi's room, which is out of Udero Lal's complex; for generations, there is no Hindu Samadhi in Udero Lal's complex. Now Hindus have started to call Udero Lal's grave Samadhi, which is wrong. If Hindus claimed that Udero Lal was Hindu, how other seniors Muslims Mujawars Shaikh's grave were made into the complex, and there are no prominent *Shevadar's* (attendants) Hindu Samadhi in the complex. If Udero Lal had been a Hindu, then there would have been other Samadhis of the Hindus. We Muslims have evidence that Udero Lal is a Muslim Lal (Personal interview, February 22, 2019).

The mosque was also constructed in the same space in which Muslims pray five times a day. Muslims Shaikhs are Mujawars, and Hindus are the *shevadars* (attendants) of Udero Lal Shrine at the Udero Lal complex's shared space. Nevertheless, Hindus and Muslims still disagree on the burial of the Udero Lal. They call the grave (*Qabar*) of Udero Lal Samadhi, the reason being that Udero Lal submerged into open earth with a horse. Muslims have made the grave in the Muslim style and there is no sign of *Samadhi* of Udero Lal. The grave of the Udero Lal is made according to the Islamic style, and their forefathers who were the Mujawars of the Udero Lal performed the funeral prayer according to the Islamic teachings.

6.6. Contestation Over the Revenue Generation of the Udero Lal Shrine

Hindus Mata *gaadinasheen* and Muslims Shaikh Mujawars of the Udero Lal blame each other regarding the collection of revenue generated at the Udero Lal shrine. Hindus accuse Muslims Shaikh Mujawars of having embezzled all the revenues while Hindus blame Muslims in the same breath. Muslims Shaikh Mujawars of Udero Lal collect revenue early in the morning. Muslim Shaikh Mujawar Sarfraz Ahmed Shaikh insisted that:

Muslims Shaikh Mujawars collect Udero Lal's shrine's revenue for our expenditure but never spend on this Dargah for any maintenance work. I have repeatedly requested other Muslim Shaikhs Mujawars, including the Muslim *Sajjadhanasheen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh to open a Bank account in the name of the Dargah Udero Lal and deposit some money that can be used for repair and renovation of the Dargah's fort and the arrangement of some programs on the teachings of this saint, but they are not interested. We are around twenty Muslims Shaikh Mujawars who collect the revenue from Udero Lal's shrine, but not a single penny has been spent on the Dargah of Udero Lal; nor does anyone contribute to Dargah's Sheva Mandly accounts. The absence of transparency of the amount collected and expended has brought a bad name for the Muslims (Personal interview November 2, 2019).

Apart from the shrine, the Hindu Mata fixed all other donation boxes to collect revenues generated at the shrine. A significant portion of the revenues go to the Hindus to the trust of Amar Sheva Mandly and Jhule Lal Sheva Mandly (Darbar Udero Lal). The money in the Trust is spent on Hindus followers who live in Sindh. There is a massive diaspora of Sindhi Hindus globally, who contribute handsomely to the Trust and the Hindu administrators spend on the welfare of their community that is closely associated with Udero Lal. One of the senior Muslim members of the trust, Wadero Ghulam Jahejo, said that:

Hindus have made *Sheva Mandly* trust for Udero Lal, which has seven members. Five are Hindus, and one is an untouchable like Bheel, Kulhee, Bagari, and one Muslim. There is a President, a General Secretary and a Finance Secretary who meticulously manage *Sheva Mandly* and report to the *gaadinaheen* Mata Sahib.

Trust has a personal Bank account in Udero Lal's name, which is operated by president *Sheva Mandly*. All donations are submitted in the trust of the Udero Lal thus Hindus have developed a strong belief in Udero Lal's miracles. When Hindus launch a fresh business, they promise to give a share of the Udero Lal monthly or yearly as a donation to the trust of Udero Lal and also get blessings of the saint. The account of Udero Lal's trust is open throughout the year. The donors can send money from any corner of the world into the trust. Trust bears all the expenses of the servants, utility bills, food, festivals, and fair charges. An amount of approximately three crores rupees is available in the account of the Udero Lal trust. This trust also supports the Hindus followers of the Udero Lal, who want to start their business. Once their business is established, they return the loan to trust. This trust does not give money directly to establish a business but indirectly supports the needy people who are not supported by anyone. Hindus are sincere and honest with the Udero Lal's trust. If anybody is found guilty, strict action is taken against him by Mata Sahib. He is punished and removed from the membership of the trust. Now Muslims and Shudars members are excluded from the trust membership. (Personal interview, November 2, 2019).

6.6.1. Hindus Revenue Generation from the Udero Lal Shrine

Amar Sheva Mandly and Jhule Lal Sheva Mandly (Darbar Udero Lal) are officially registered as the Welfare Trust of Udero Lal. This trust does not have outside funding or by Muslims; its funding is generated by the Udero Lal's followers, who share their own will according to their earnings. Trust avoids taking the fund from the government.

Current members of the Trust are:

1. Mata Sahib (Mata Beena and Suneeta)
2. Raja Asar mal (Chief after Mata Sahib)
3. President Choeth Ram (Shahdad Pur)
4. Secretary-General Ramesh Kumar (Hala)
5. Vice President (VP) Shaloo mal
6. Joint Secretary Dileep Kumar (Sakrand)
7. Information Secretary Teeras Das (Hala)
8. Treasury: Ishwar Lal (Tando Adam)

One of the Muslim Shaikh Mujawar stated that:

Hindus *gaadinasheen* Mata Beena does not believe in the members of the Sheva Mandly; she has changed many senior members of the Sheva Mandly due to corruption charges. Lekhraj was a senior member who worked for 24 years. He was blamed on grounds of corruption and removed. Bhool Chann alias Shaloo mal Essrani was also a senior member who was found involved in embezzlement and was sacked. Ramesh Lal was also removed from his position and now Mahaish is President of Sheva Mandly. Mata Beena does not trust the old members and has replaced the members who were not happy with Mata. Now they do not interfere in the management of Udero Lal Sheva Mandly; they only come and visit the shrine and return home without meeting Mata (Personal interview November 7, 2019).

Apart from these members, the other 20 members are businessmen and traders. This welfare trust is registered with these names throughout Sindh. There are official members of Sheva Mandly, who works for the Dargah of the Udero Lal. It is purely a neutral welfare Trust working for the Dargah only and does not interfere in political activity. Sheva Mandly does not demand any fixed donation from Udero Lal's followers. It is up to them whatever amount they are willing to contribute for the religious cause. There are other small Sheva Mandlies at the temples of the Udero Lal such as Tando Adam, Shahdadpur, Mirpurkhas, Thano Bula khan, Usta Muhammad; all other Udero Lal temple's Sheva Mandly whose donations are important. There are seven big steel made charity boxes in the whole complex of Udero Lal; three of them in *Jot* room, one is beside the Juhla (cradle) of Udero Lal, the second box is before the main *Jot*, and another little box is behind the *Jot*, one big box is installed on the *Balaanbo Sahib*. Another one is installed in the Sheva room, one in Mata's room; one is at the horse room (*ghory waro Hall*). Hindu members of Sheva Mandly Bhoolchand stated that:

Expenditure at the *Chetichand* fair of the Udero Lal is more than 50 lacs. All the expenses are managed by the Sheva Mandly of the Udero Lal to support all Hindu disciples of the Udero Lal., We do not have any power; this is the Udero Lal miracle, as we do not force the Udero Lal disciples to give any money. We have a detailed list of all expenditures and strict audits of all Udero Lal Sheva Mendly. Daily food is prepared for the more than 50 followers/visitors; all expenditure is charged from the Sheva Mandly of Udero Lal (Personal interview, August 15, 2019).

The income from the complex is collected in these charity boxes controlled by these Mata Hindus *gaadinashen* and keys remain in her custody. When she annually visits the shrine of Udero Lal from Bombay she unlocks all the boxes, empties them, and reveals the actual amount. However other respondents shared that the Hindus followers of Udero Lal pour unlimited donations in the charity boxes. The current in charge Sheva Mandly Mahaish explained that:

The Muslims Shaikh takes complete revenues of the Udero Lal shrine, but does not spend a single penny on the maintenance of shrine. Shaikh's behavior is not cooperative with us as he seldom consults us on the promotional activity of Dargah. The Shevadars pay rupees 60 thousand per month to Sheva Mandly. *Bhandaro* (food) arrives and is served by this Sheva Mandly to more than 3 to 5 hundred visitors. The expenditure is heavy and is managed privately by the Udero Lal Sheva Mandly. Donations keeping pouring in no one knows from where; it could be one of Udero Lal's miracles. The kitchen never stops and food is prepared and distributed round the clock. *Bhandaro* (food) is served to everyone, whosoever comes irrespective of the faith. 20, thousand are collected per month from the charity boxes installed at the Dargah of Udero Lal. (*Bhandaro*) kitchen's annual expenditure is 13 lacs; all Udero Lal Dargah expenditures are managed by Sheva Mandly of this Dargah (Personal interview 4 April 4, 2019).

Natives of the Udero Lal village argued that both Shaikh Mujawars and Hindu *gaadiaheen* fight over the revenue generation of the Udero Lal shrine because both hate each other and are dependent on the income of the Udero Lal shrine. They do not preach the sermons and philosophy of Udero Lal. One of the natives of the Udero Lal village Syed Attaullah Shah observed that:

Hindu *gaadinashen* Mata Sahib and Muslims Shaikh Mujawars fought over Udero Lal's ownership because of their interest and economic dominance. When they became financially corrupt and greedy, they became dependent on Udero Lal's shrine, and conflict and contestation started. They separated the shrine on a religious basis. They did not promote the teachings and philosophy of the Udero Lal. If their conflict continues for a long time, then the Sindh Auqaf department's government will take over this shared shrine (Personal interview September 1, 2019).

Muslim Shaikh Mujawars claimed that Udero Lal gave authority to their forefathers to collect the revenue from the shrine, but Hindus have not allowed the installation of charity boxes in the shrine. The followers place the money on the shrine's windows, and Muslim Shaikh Mujawars collect and distribute it among themselves on daily basis. Udero Lal shrine's windows distribute to each family of the Mujawars. Muslim Mujawar Zulfiqar Shaikh acknowledged that:

When the Hindu followers are asked to place money at the shrine, they angrily tell us that we are healthy and young (*hato kato lago pyo ahen*), and should not beg. Followers tell the truth, we can not respond and exercise patience. We plead we are jobless and this is the only earning from Udero Lal because he promised us our share. Some visitors argue about begging for money but we are speechless. They tell us not to assemble in large numbers and beg money from visitors. Mujawars create a disgraceful scene and visitors shy away from any contribution. *Fakiri* (mystical) way is a difficult thing to accept and carry it as a label. I do not deserve to be called *fakir* or a beggar of Udero Lal. I visit Udero Lal's shrine on special occasions such as *Chetichand*, annual fair, *Asu Jo Chand*, and every month of the moon because most of the people are gathered at these events and give a lot of donations Udero Lal's shrine. A man should not be greedy because greed is a great curse (Personal interview March 26, 2020).

Mujawars wanted to fix the charity box in the shrine, but Mata did not allow it. Muslim Shaikh Mujawars argued that the Hindus Mata *gaadinaheen* installed eleven big charity boxes in different parts of the complex for collection of revenue, showing her total dependence on the revenue from Udero Lal's shrine. The entire travel expenditure to Mumbai and back is charged from Udero Lal's revenues as she has total control over the operation of all expenditures. The fort is in a dilapidated condition but she does not get it repaired. She is interested in the construction and repair of Hindu portion only that comprises of Shev temple and Horse of Udero Lal. Muslim old Mujawar Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh told that:

Our forefathers told us that Hindus forcibly wanted to install a box in Udero Lal's shrine to collect the revenues, but our old Muslim Mujawars refused and protested against this Hindu measure on the plea that how will they run home expenditure if the shrine's revenue is whisked away. Udero Lal has promised that only they will collect the shrine's revenue; Nevertheless, Hindus brought the police in the evening

and installed the box in the shrine to collect the revenue. The old Muslim Mujwars got angry with Hindus. When Hindus came early in the morning they saw the boxes had been removed from the shrine. They never installed the box and did not claim the shrine's revenue. Earlier Shaikh had been taking the shrine's revenue (Personal interview on February 3, 2020).

6.6.2. Muslims Shaikh Mujawars Revenue Generation from the Udero Lal Shrine

A rectangular wooden canopy of Udero Lal shrine is constructed and, painted with golden color. It has ten windows, used for distribution for the economic purpose among the Muslim Shaikh Mujawars of Udero Lal. The significant seven shares are made among the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars from the Udero Lal shrines that generates revenue. The revenue of the shrine is shared among the 1. Ghulam Abbas Shaikh (Muslim *Sajjadanasheen* of Udero Lal, 2. Imtiaz Shaikh, 3. Sarfraz Shaikh, 4. Abdullah Shaikh, 5. Khan Muhammad Shaikh, 6. Noor Muhammad Jahejo, 7. Ayoob Shaikh. However, Muslim *sajjadhanasheen* and Hindu *gaadinaheen* of Udero Lal are not in favor of handing over to the shrine to the Auqaf Department, Government of Sindh because both Hindus and Muslims are dependent on the revenue of Udero Lal's shrine. Muslim *sajjadhanasheen* of the Udero Lal Ghulam Abbas Shaikh confided that:

I am also not in favor of taking over Udero Lal's shrine by the Auqaf Department, Government of Sindh. Auqaf Department, Government of Sindh, has reportedly embezzled a huge amount of money from Lal Shahbaz Qalandar shrine. This Department is known for massive corruption. Another example is that of the Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai shrine, which is also under this department's management. Auqaf Department occupied and embezzled the property of Latif's shrine. If Udero Lal's Dargah is handed over to the management of Auqaf department's it will open new doors of corruption. The main official focal person has also offered us to hand over Udero Lal shrine to the Auqaf Department, but I have refused because this department is not fair in its financial dealings (Personal interview, March 24, 2019).

Apart from the main festivals and rituals ceremonies, the regular revenue generated from the Udero Lal shrine is rupees 5000 per day, which annually becomes eighteen

lacs sixty thousand (1860,000). Every month, the main *Bahraano* (offering the food) ritual is celebrated on the first day of moon sighting (*har chand te*) at the Udero Lal shrine by the Sindhi Hindus. Rupees fifteen thousand (15,000) income is generated from the shrine, which annually accumulates to one lac eighty thousand (180,000). Two major festivals are held annually at the shrine of the Udero Lal; one is *Chetichand Jo Melo* and the other is *Asu Jo Melo*; Revenue generated annually from both events is one lac (100,000) rupees from the shrine. Two-time major ritual *Chodas* bath taking ceremony) of the Udero Lal shrine is celebrated in which annually the shrine generates revenue of one lac (100,000) rupees. The total annual income of the Udero Lal shrine is twenty-two lac and forty thousand rupees (2240,000); which is shared among all the Muslim Mujawars Shaikhs. Retired Muslim Shaikh Mujwar Abdullah Shaikh further insisted that:

Muslims Shaikh Mujawars made the guest room in the Udero Lal shrine's complex for their friends and Muslim visitors and placed the visiting book to generate revenue. Both Muslim and Hindu caretakers of the Udero Lal shrine are interested in shrines' revenues generation and fight with each other over this issue. I also requested Sindh Government to take over Udero Lal dargah under the management of the Auqaf department. If the Sindh government department does not take over the shrine, riots will erupt between the Hindus and Muslims, and become uncontrollable. Sindh government has taken all Sindh's Dargahs in the Auqaf department so this Udero Lal dargah should also be brought under the Auqaf department's management. Hindus fear that if the Sindh government takes over this shrine, they would lose the revenue from the Udero Lal's Shrine. They also fear that religious Muslims would take over and transform the Dargah and declare Udero Lal's shrine as entirely Muslim. Hindus view the devious plan of the Auqaf department of Sindh government. On the other hand, Muslim Shaikhs do not want to hand over the management of Udero Lal's shrine to the Auqaf department of the Sindh government because they would not be able to get the revenue of the Udero Lal Dargah if the shrine is handed over to the government of Sindh. Therefore, both parties are not in favor of handing over the Udero Lal shrine's management to the Auqaf department, primarily for their interest (Personal interview, March 9, 2019).



Figure 11: Followers of the Udero Lal placed the rupees, gold, and other items at the shrine of the Udero Lal on occasion of annual fair

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

There is no box for money collection in the shrine; followers place the money on the shrine canopy window. Every Shaikh Mujawar stands before the shrine canopy window side to collect the money; as followers enter the shrine, Mujawars take out one thousand, five hundred, hundred, fifty or ten rupees notes from their pockets and place them on their windows side as followers may notice that this is the proper place for the. A senior member of the Udero Lal Shave Mandly Ramesh Lal mentioned that:

We are not in favor of Sindh's Auqaf department because it will take over all the management under its control. This whole complex belongs to Udero Lal; he has asked us to look after his whole complex. Hindus of Sindh support us, and we had been looking after the whole Dargah for generations. We have not felt any difficulty in managing all the affairs so that we will take care of the shrine ourselves and will not surrender to the Sindh's Auqaf Department. The consequences can be hostile as all members will try to become *sajaadhanasheen*. Any Muslim religious person too can become a minister, and declare it a Muslim Darga with total control. This is not acceptable to Hindus. We do not trust in government department because Auqaf is a corrupt department that occupies the shrines' property and loots Dargah's money. There is no transparency and audit in this department. We have strict accountability in Sheva Mandly of Udero Lal. Every member is accountable for a single penny of

the Sheva Madly. So, we trust our Sheva Mandly, which has an internal and external audit system. It performs with honesty and dedication. If any member is found guilty, he is punished and dismissed from Udero Lal Sheva Manldy. Every follower of Udero Lal also trusts the fairness of the Sheva Mandly of Dargah of Udero Lal (Personal interview, November 28, 2019).

It depends on the devotees where he/she places the money; however, a few Shaikh Mujawars asked followers and pointed out with a hand to place rupee notes on their shrine's side canopy window. In contrast to Ramesh Lal's argument about the Sindh's Auqaf department, the head of the Udero Lal temple in Tandoadam, Babo Raaj Kumar, insisted that:

Hindus have a strange fear that the entire shrine and its assets will be taken over by Sindh's Auqaf department. However, my opinion is that Dargah of Udero Lal should be handed over to Sindh's government's Auqaf department because the religious activity will not be affected in any case by the Auqaf department's control. Hindus will become stronger and get more authority. The Udero Lal Dargah would be promoted on the official state level globally. Mata Sahib is not ready; she fears from bias and discrimination of the government of Sindh and the Muslims. I fully support that the Udero Lal's shrine should be controlled by Sindh's Auqaf department's cultural heritage section because the Sindh government is sincere to protect the Hindu's rights. Udero Lal will officially be declared as a cultural heritage and would be promoted at the official level. Sindh's government would be involved officially in all the matters, and then Muslims Shaikh Mujawars and other Muslims will not take control of Udero Lal's dargah. It will be the government's official responsibility to look after the shared shrine and complex of Udero Lal and sustain it in its original shape (Personal interview, November 11, 2019).

Muslims Shaikh Mujawars collect the money when devotees leave the shrine. One of the young Muslims Mujawar of the Udero Lal's shrine Imtiaz Shaikh expressed that:

We realized that it did not suit us to surround the Udero Lal's shrine and pick the money from the shrine's canopy window. The visitors also felt awkward to observe this behavior; especially the educated ones. So we requested the Hindu *gaadinasheen* Mata Beena to allow us to install a box for revenue collection in the shrine as we can collect the donations one time in the evening from the revenue box and share them among the members. Mata Beena did not take any interest in resolving this problem.

We also asked many seniors Hindus for the box installation in the shrine, but they refused to say that if you fix the revenue box in the shrine, no one will put rupees in our *Jot* temple. We have differences within ourselves. Our share is distributed strangely; the shrine's canopy windows are allocated to every Mujawar. When followers visit, every Mujawar asks the devotee to contribute sometimes stretching out hands in shame and guilt. The followers at times are confused and embarrassed about which side to place their donation. We Mujawars are jealous of one another and greed leads us to amass more and more money from the shrine of the Udero Lal. We have lost self-respect while the Hindus on the other hand have become more robust and self-confident. (Personal interview, February 3, 2019).

Followers of the Udero Lal garlanded the golden necklaces to *Paag* (head) of the Udero Lal shrine when their wishes are fulfilled. When newly married Hindu couples visit Udero Lal's shrine, they gave *Mohkhya* (gift) of five hundred and twenty-five rupees to the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars.



Figure 12: Muslim Mujawars collect the rupees from the shrine of the Udero Lal at the annual fair.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Hindus perform the *Jarnya* (rites of passage) ritual and pay one hundred twenty-five rupees to the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars. *Chadar* (clothes) are placed over the shrine of the Udero Lal by the followers. There is a room for wooden sandals (*chakhris*), the Muslims Mujawar Shaikh takes away all income from the shrine. The four graves decorate the shrine with shining covers of cloth. The income from their rooms is shared among the seniors Muslims Mujawars Shaikh Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh, Aleem Muhammad Shaikh, and Khuda Bux Shaikh. With tears rolling down his eyes the oldest Mujawar Gulam Muhammad Shaikh, who is 75 stated that:

My senior Mujawar told me that once he was sitting at the shrine of Udero Lal, when a Hindu follower called him and handed him a coin. My elder got angry and refused to receive it and scolded the giver that he was not his servant to come and receive his coin. I am Mujawar of Udero Lal. I do not beg you; if you want to give a coin, then you must come to me. The Hindu follower apologized and came to me and gave the coin. So those were our elders who possessed respect and credibility. Now our Shaikh Mujawars follows the Hindus till their car leaves and the rich devotee may offer some additional money. Hindus used to be the devotees of our elders Muslims Shaikh Mujawars. Our elders did not ask for the money. Hindus themselves used to give, but now our youngsters are beseeching the Hindus to give the money and place it on Udero Lal's grave. We Muslim Mujawar have lost our respect through our bad deeds. If any Mujawar does not get the money, then they say that Hindus are immoral. Most of Udero Lal's Hindu followers place their donation on Udero Lal's shrine because they are firm faith believers of Udero Lal. Muslim Mujawars get revenue from the shrine of Udero Lal the entire year but do not thank God the Almighty. The young Muslims Shaikh Mujawars do not respect the elders. They are eagerly looking forward and are interested only in the revenue of Udero Lal shrine.

Mujawars do not follow the footsteps of their elders and the teachings of Udero Lal. Even Hindus said that your elders followed Udero Lal's teachings, but you do not have any respect for them. Due to the misconduct of the Mujawars, we have become a laughing stock. Our younger Shaikh's Mujawars should follow their elders' teaching and follow Udero Lal philosophy's only then all Hindus will follow them; otherwise, there is the possibility that Muslims Shaikh Mujawars will follow the Hindus. Now it is high time for the Mujawars to improve their behavior and behave like elder Mujawars. Shaikh Mujawars are not united, and they are married out of family and are disoriented. (Personal interview, March 26, 2020).

The Muslims Mujawar Shaikh"s do not spend the money on the repair and renovation of the shrine and the complex. However, they manage all the mosque's expenditure, which is beside the shrine of Udero Lal. Syed Dado Shah, who is a powerful and influential Muslim of this village who conducts the Muslim fair of Udero Lal on his land, which is beside the Shrine of Udero Lal. He lets the Muslim parties hold the festival of Udero Lal and charges twenty to thirty lacs per year as rent. He does not spend a single rupee for the welfare of the shrine of Udero Lal. All the expenses related to the management of Udero Lal"s shrine are taken care of by the Sindhi Hindus Sheva Mandly on daily basis.

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6.7. Conclusion

First pre-colonial Scholar and historian Mir Ali Shir Qani Thathvee (1180, p.317) mentioned in his “Tufatal Kiram” book the brief account of Udero Lal. He has neither written the date of birth and death of this saint nor claimed his single identity. He mentioned the dual identity of Udero Lal where both Hindus and Muslims worshiped him. Muslims call him Shaikh Tahir and Hindus call him Udero Lal. Colonial British Gazetter of 18th century (Burton,1851, pp.333), (Hughes,1876, pp.680), (Aitken,1907, pp,156-166) and other 19th century and contemporary authors, (Baig,1925, p.54), (Thakur, 1959, pp.93-94), (Boivin,2016, pp.93-94) have mentioned that Udero Lal’s Hindu River god is also known as Shaikh Tahir by Muslim followers.

Nevertheless, both Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims have disagreed with each other on the identity and ownership of the Udero Lal. Hindus claimed that Udero Lal was Hindu by birth and remained Hindu throughout his life. He is their Avatar and deity of the Hindus, and Muslims are his followers. Muslims believed that Udero Lal is Muslim by birth, his Muslim name is Shaikh Tahir; some believed that later he converted to Islam and Hindus are the followers of the Muslim saint. Muslims further claimed that it is against the teaching of Islam that Muslim become the devotee of a Hindu pir. There is no such example in Sindh's history that Muslims are the devotees of the Hindu pir. Moreover, Sindhi Muslims claimed that the whole complex structure is in Muslim style, Udero Lal was buried according to the teachings of Islam, and his grave is made in Muslim style.

The Mosque is made constructed beside the grave of Udero Lal, his shrine is also made in Muslim style, Holy Quran is placed in the shrine and there is no sign or symbol of the Hindus into the shrine which can prove that Udero Lal is Hindu pir. However, there is *Hindus jotayan jo kamro* (Lamps room) without figuring where they worship, but it is not a temple but a room of lights (*Jotyan jo kamro*). There are graves of the four old Muslim Mujawars besides the shrine of Udero Lal. Khan (1975, pp.212-213) has also tried to trace Udero Lal's identity that Sunni rulers used to persecute the Ismaili; therefore, they adopted invisibility in the form of *taqiyya*. He further argued that Shai’s version of Islam was prominent in Sindh during the 10th

century in Multan. He has assumed that Udero Lal cult *Darya panth* may have been associated with Fatimid Ismailism. However, he has not investigated the similarities and connections of Udero Lal with the Ismaili mission any further. He is not sure when Udero Lal cult flourished and had contact with Fatimid Ismailism in Sindh during this period.

Moreover, Hindus claimed that their *Jot* temple is beside the shrine of Udero Lal and keys of Udero Lal shrine and its management is under their control for a long time. Muslims Shaikhs Mujwar has no interference in the management of the shrine. Hindu's regular worship and rituals are performed in the shrine of Udero Lal but not of the Muslims. Hindus blame that Muslims Shaikh Mujawars collect all the income generated at the shrine and do not spend Udero Lal's shrine. Both Hindus and Muslims do not want to hand over the shrine to Sindh's Auqaf department keeping in view the insecurity and economic interest. Muslims *sajjadasheen* claimed that he has a British official document (1938), which is significant proof that the Udero Lal shrine and other property of Udero Lal belong to him.

In contrast, Hindu *gaadinasheen* claimed that every revenue record, Station, School, Library, and Shrine, as well as the village, is in Udero Lal's name because Udero Lal is a Hindu name of their deity. Muslims Shaikh Mujawars blame that Hindu *gaadiansheen* has Indian nationality, follows the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) mandate and Prime minister of India's Modi behaves like a Shev Sena extremist party member. She wanted to convert Udero Lal in Hinduism from Muslim. In contrast to Muslims, Hindus blame the Muslims are converting Udero Lal; they are using the Islamic religious forums to convert the Udero Lal from Hinduism to Muslim. Hindus further argued that everyone knows that Udero Lal is a Hindu pir.

CHAPTER 7

TRANSFORMATION AT SHARED SPACE OF THE UDERO LAL

7.1. Introduction

I have done a detailed analysis of the transformation of the Udero Lal shrine in Sindh, Hindus took over the control and transformed the Shah Ramzan shrine with the Shiv Sena's party support in Bombay in October 1990. This shrine had multiple identities. Shah Ramzan was a saint and the shrine was venerated as a Dargah for Muslims, and Hindus venerated him as Samadhi of Kanifnath. Hindus removed the Islamic symbols from the shrine to fully Hinduize the shrine. They erased the Bismillah writings, glass balls, ostrich eggs and fixed the granite footmarks, erased the green color from the shrine, and painted the Hindu saffron color. Hindus also demolished the mosque, which was in the shrine complex, converted it into the temple of Navnath, and cut the Muslim sacred tree of pomegranate. They changed it with holy basil (*tulsi*). They fixed the big trident before the shrine (Hayden, 2016, pp.208-209). There were scuffles and rivalry on the Babri mosque's ownership (*Masjid*) since the 1980s between Muslims and Hindus. Muslims and Jews had bitter conflict over the mosque and temple Mount. These owners' claimed the disputes turned the space into physical transformation (Singh, 2020, pp. 209–226). The developments between the Hindus and Muslims took place to transform the Udero Lal Complex's shared space in Sindh. Hindu group remained dominant, and they transformed the second part of the Udero Lal complex. However, they attempted to transform the main (first part) of the Udero Lal complex's shared space but failed.

7.2. Transformation of Udero Lal Complex by the Hindus

Mata Beena Hindu's *gaadinasheen* of the Udero Lal Shrine has brought about major progress in the physical transformation of the second part of the Udero Lal complex in 2014. Her father, Preetam Dass, was the main custodian before her, but he never

physically worked on the transformation of the place. Furthermore, Syed Attaullah Shah Bukhari, who is a Muslim native of this village, argued that:

Hindus are making new development and have constructed a separate Shiv temple and equestrian of the Udero Lal to prove that it was built since the inception of the Udero Lal. They are working on more expansion and physical transformation to prove the supremacy of Hindus and want to Hinduize the shared shrine of the Udero Lal. Dargah and religion should remain separate entities. New developments and physical transformation of the shared space of Udero Lal by the Hindus should stop. Otherwise, this new transformation would create further problems and chaos in the future for the new generation of both Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims. I do not understand why Hindus "Mata is spoiling the old, shared space of tolerance shared by Sindhi Muslims and Sindhi Hindus that existed for generations. Dargah and saints are not the property of anyone and there should not be any claim to the property and space, nor the, contestation and conflict should have arisen (Personal interview, 28 April 2019).

7.2.1. Fixing of the Equestrian Figure on the Main Entrance Gate of Udero Lal Shrine

The major event of the physical transformation of Udero Lal's shrine took place by the Hindus during the British colonial period in the mid-eighteenth century but the event is not recorded. In any case, I found the details of this oral event during the fieldwork. According to local oral traditions, a significant event occurred at the Udero Lal shrine during British rule in the 18th century. Major riots occurred between the Hindus and Muslims over the physical transformation and ownership of the Udero Lal.

During fieldwork, 75 years old Muslim local native of the village Wadero Ghulam Jahejo narrated famous religious contestation about the Udero Lal shrine. Hindus installed the equestrian statue at the main gate of the Udero Lal shrine without taking into confidence the Muslims Shaikh *Mujawars* of Udero Lal shrine. Equestrian Statue was fixed at night by Hindus when all the Udero Lal complex gates were closed. The key was in the custody of the Hindus caretakers, so they opened the main gates again at night and installed the equestrian statue inside the entrance gate of the Udero Lal to

prove Udero Lal as Hindu *peer* (saint) and made their ownership to occupy the whole complex of Udero Lal along with his tomb.

When Muslims came to the Udero Lal tomb early in the morning for worship, they saw the statue installed on the main entrance gate of the Udero Lal tomb. Muslims got angry and restless. They were not ready to tolerate and accept that a statute was installed over their Muslim saint. Muslims' angry mob gathered inside and outside the Udero Lal's shrine and questioned why Hindus installed the statue on the Muslim saint. Muslims started the resistance that it was a conspiracy against the Muslims to Hinduize the Udero Lal shrine. Muslims were not ready to tolerate this act, so they decided to remove the statue. The ancient mosque in the Udero Lal village named Daira Shareef which was looked after by Muslims Syeds, prepared a young man named Dodo Burro for breaking the statue. Dodo was a former and local native of this village. When there was Hindu's *Sheva* (worship) time in the evening, Muslims offered Esha prayers in the mosque at the shared Complex of the Udero Lal. After the worship, Hindus used to close all main gates of the shrine of the Udero Lal. Dodo hid in the one corner of the Udero Lal complex. When all worshippers left the Complex after the worship he came out, broke the lock of the main gate, and entered the shrine of the Udero Lal. He then broke the entire equestrian statue with a hammer, removed it from the main entrance gate, and fled away from Udero Lal's Complex at night.

When all the main gates were opened at 5 o'clock early in the morning for the Hindus' worship, they were aghast to see the broken equestrian statue. They got enraged, and an angry crowd of Hindus gathered inside and outside the Complex of the Udero Lal. The situation got worsened by the day. Riots broke out among the Muslims and Hindus on the Udero Lal's identity. This news spread like wildfire in Sindh during the British government. The British colonial missionary took immediate action to halt any additional riots by sending a law enforcement contingent. A British officer was appointed to resolve this conflict on an urgent basis. In 1844, Governor of the Bombay presidency Sir Charles Napier came from Bombay to witness the proof of Udero Lal shrine for the resolution of the conflict regarding the ownership claim of Udero Lal shrine by Hindus and Muslims.

Before coming to the Udero Lal complex, the Governor studied the whole background history of the Udero Lal to understand the problem and its possible solution and make efforts to resolve the conflict between the Hindus and Muslims. The Governor decided to come to the Udero Lal's complex in Sindh from Bombay presidency by train. The last Railway Station's destination was Ghanghra Station (Udero Lal Station) in Sindh to reach the Udero Lal complex, So Ghanghra Station was renamed as Udero Lal Station. He visited the site of the Udero Lal shrine complex in Sindh. He called all the Muslim Shaikhs who were the main *Mujawars* of the Udero Lal; he also called all the Hindu's primary caretakers. Muslim leader, Ghulam Muhammad Burhgari was a Muslim political leader in Sindh during the British government Sindh. He was accompanied by the British officer when British Officer visited the Udero Lal shrine complex. Burhgahri Sahib showed the British officer that Udero Lal was Muslim, and he belonged to Muslims.

The first evidence in favor of Muslims was that Udero Lal's grave was made in Muslim style. Second, Qalama tayyaba of the Muslims was written over the main gate of the shrine of the Udero Lal, which was still visible, third, the grave of the Muslims *sajjadanashen* of the Udero Lal was present in the Complex of the Udero Lal, fourth, there was Muslim Mosque close to Udero Lal shrine, fifth, Udero Lal also had a Muslim name Shaikh Tahir. So it was proved from all available evidence and based on the ground realities that Udero Lal was a Muslim saint and he belonged to the Muslims. The British officer assessed and investigated all the evidence, then he decided in favor of the Muslims. However, he also passed the verdict that Hindus had a blind belief over Udero Lal, subsequently, they too have the right to worship in their way and Hindus should also worship the *Jot* temples. He further added that no one should try to transform this Complex; it should continue to retain its old status. The Muslims narrated another oral tradition about the Udero identity and its ownership with British Officer Sir Charles Napier to the Governor. The latter was confused and not sure who Udero Lal may belong to. He asked to bring the key to the main gate of the Udero Lal shrine and asked all the Muslims and Hindus about their claim on Udero Lal's ownership He said he will hide the key of the main gate, and whosoever finds this key, he will be proclaimed the owner of Udero Lal. Muslims *Mujawar*

found the main gate's hidden key and showed it to Governor Charles Napier. The Governor retorted; "This peer is big *Padree* (saint)" and he ordered to install the first Muslim Qalama Tayyaba at the main gate of the Udero Lal tomb. He said that this saint is Muslim because Muslims have found Gates's key; however, Hindus may worship the Udero Lal. Hindus can worship the *Jot* temple and *Balanbo Sahib* (well). He further said that both the Hindus and Muslims should remain peaceful at this shared space of the Udero Lal shrine in Sindh.

7.2.2. Fixing of Declaration Board for Udero Lal as Hindu Pir

On 30 September 2017, a major event of Udero Lal's transformation took place at the Udero Lal's shrine. According to the Muslims, Hindu *gadinashreen* Mata Beena tried to fully transform Udero Lal into the Hindu religion while installing the signboard inside the Udero Lal tomb in which she wanted to declare Udero La as an entirely Hindu deity. The notice board was written in the Sindhi language that "*Sheri Amar Udero Lal Sain Hindu Peer Ghorhe Sudho Hin Qube Sahib mie Samaeyal Ahe*" (Udero Lal is a Hindu saint/deity who is immersed into the tomb with his horse). Furthermore, Muslim *gaadinashreen* of the Udero Lal Ghulam Abass Shaikh stated that:

We are poor and believe in tolerance. Hindu community is more powerful than us; therefore, they attempt to physically transform the main shared space complex of Udero Lal. The Sindh government supports the Hindus community. They are also more educated and present their case strongly and effectively. The condition of Muslims in India is quite depressing and the Hindus continue to suppress them. In comparison, the Hindus are much prosperous and well off than the Muslims in Pakistan and the Pakistan Government also protects the Hindus and supports them on every issue. Hindus have a strong lobby and are supported by powerful authorities in Pakistan. Our other Muslim Shaikh *Mujawrs* also support the Hindus, and they take the benefit of it. Civil society also supports the Hindus in Pakistan (Personal Interview, 20 September 2019).



Figure 13: The declaration board of Udero Lal as Hindu Pir was fixed by the Hindus at the main entrance gate of Udero Lal's shrine on 30 September 2017.

(Source: Muslim *Sajadinasheen* of Udero Lal Ghulam Abass Shaikh, (2019)

When all gates of the Udero Lal shrine were closed at 9 pm, Hindus secretly entered Udero Lal's shrine to install the signboard in Udero Lal's shrine as no one noticed them at night. When Muslims visited the shrine early in the morning for prayers, they were surprised to see the Hindu *Pir* (Hindu deity) signboard installed on the main entrance gate of the Udero Lal shrine. This news spread rapidly among the Muslims and thousands of them gathered at the shrine of Udero Lal under the leadership of the Ghulam Abbas Shaikh Muslim *sajjadanasheen* of Udero Lal. The angry mob was swelling and the situation was becoming out of control. Udero Lal's conversion as a Hindu deity was not acceptable to the Muslims. In addition, Syed Mahfooz, Ali Shah⁴⁰ stated that:

⁴⁰He is the Hafiz Quran and prominent religious person of the Udero Lal village, he is Syed by caste, he has his own Madarssa which is run by him free of cost, his Madarssa name is „Darul Uloom Rashdiya Naeemyah Udero Lal.“ He is also district president of Jamaet ahle Sunat, Matiari, Sindh, Pakistan.

There had always been a conflict on the identity of the Udero Lal between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus Mata always tried to transform the Udero Lal shrine as Hindu Pir physically, but the Muslims never allowed the Hindus to do their way because Udero Lal is a Muslim saint. If Udero Lal had been a Hindu, then how Muslims would have gone to pay homage to his shrine. A few years ago, in 2017, the Hindus fixed the declaration on the notice board of Udero Lal at the shrine that this saint is a Hindu Pir. This angered the Muslims and they protested against the Hindus. Allah Dino (A.D) Khawaja was Inspector-General of Police Sindh police and he was deputed to investigate the case. He supported a lot of Hindus because he was raised in a Hindu's home as a Muslim. When Hindus fixed this Hindu Pir declaration board of Udero Lal, then Superintendent of Police of District Matiari was not ready to listen to the Muslims complain against the Hindus. Muslims and Hindu riots were about to break but then the Police realized that situation would get out of hands and they were compelled to remove the declaration board of Hindu Pir of Udero Lal (Personnel interview, 3 January 2020).

Muslims wanted to remove the Hindu deity signboard. The Sindh government directly intervened. The Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah took urgent notice and instructed the Sindh police to promptly intervene. SSP District, Matiari Syed Imdad Ali Shah visited Udero Lal's shrine immediately. Bhool Chand, a senior member of the Shev Mandly of Udero Lal shrine, stated that:

Udero Lal belonged to us, but the Hindus run every management aspect and . We did not do anything wrong while fixing the declaration Hindu Pir notice board. Muslims shaikh did not have genealogical proof or evidence to prove that Udero Lal is a Muslim saint; if they claim that Udero Lal is Shaikh Tahir, they should bring the genealogical evidence proof; since they do not have it; they are telling a lie. If they claim that Udero Lal was converted to a Muslim, then why Station and village names were not kept on Muslim names as Shaikh Tahir. However, we want peace and tolerance. Hindus and Muslims are equal in the eyes of God. However, they want to spoil the peace and the result would be hatred and chaos in the future. If they continued to claim that Udero Lal is a Muslim saint, it would result in communal and religious violence. (Personal interview, 03 October 2019)

Police took over control of the shrine. Prominent Hindus were called as well as the Muslim *sajjadhanasheen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh. The Muslims demanded that the

Hindu deity declaration of notice board be removed; otherwise, they will resist and remove it themselves. Hindus did not agree to remove the notice board. During the press conference in 2017 against the Hindus, Pir Ghulam Mujdad Sarhandi⁴¹ and Muslim *Sajadansheen* Ghulam Abbas Shaikh stated that:

It is the conspiracy against the Muslim Dargah of the Udero Lal who advocated the message of peace, tolerance, and harmony between the Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims of Sindh. He is a Muslim saint, and we want to live in peace and want to promote the message of tolerance of this saint, but Hindu Mata who comes from Bombay, is an Indian national. She wants to create hatred among the Sindhi Hindus and Muslims of Sindh. Whenever she comes, she brings the new plan to create riots among the Hindus and Muslims in Sindh. She fixed the declaration board of Hindu pir in place of Muslim Saint. We will never tolerate such kind of evil act which spreads bloodshed among Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims. Sindh is the land of Sufis, love, harmony, and co-existence, we want peace, but she has an Indian mindset. She does not want peace. Therefore we warn her, that she must stop any step to transform this Dargah. It should remain in the same condition as it has been in for generations. However, Hindus are the followers of this Muslim saint; they can come and worship here. (Press conference at the shrine of Udero Lal on September 29, 2017)

⁴¹Pir Ghulam Mujdad Sarhandi is the Pakistan Mashaikh Ittihad Council (PMIC) Markazi president and *sajadansheen* (caretaker) of Dargah Mujdya Naqshbandya Pir Sarhandi Matiari, Sindh, Pakistan.



Figure 14: Muslim sajudanasheen of Udero Lal Ghulam Abbas Shaikh and the Pakistan Mashaikh Ittihad Council (PMIC) Markazi president Pir Ghulam Mujdad Sarhandi had a press conference in the shrine of Udero Lal against Hindus during the fixing of the declaration board of Udero Lal as a Hindu Pir 30th September 2017 in the shrine of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Ghulam Abass Shaikh, 2019)

At last, Police decided that the declaration of Udero Lal's Hindu Pir notice board should be removed to stop the Hindus and Muslim riots, and the shrine of Udero Lal should remain in the old and same condition; neither Muslims nor Hindus may install anything at the main (first part) of the shared space of the shrine. Udero Lal's shrine retained its old glamour. The notice board of Hindu Pir was then removed by the police department and finally, the anger of Muslims subsided. However, this notice board has left another mark on the Udero Lal contestation between the Hindus and Muslims. I had informal discussions with the Sarfraz Shaikh, Muslim Mujawar, at Udero Lal's shrine. He argued that:

Hindus insulted the Dargah of Udero Lal when they installed the signboard of Hindu peer (Hindu deity) suggesting that Udero Lal is a Hindu Pir who is buried with a horse in the tomb. Hindus wanted to convert the Udero Lal as a Hindu deity, we know well that Hindu *gaadinasheen* Mata Beena is behind all this mess. She was the one who installed the Hindu deity notice board to declare Udero Lal as a Hindu deity so that Muslims could not claim Udero Lal as a Muslim saint Shaikh Muhammad Tahir. Had she succeeded in her efforts, then no Muslim would have been able to enter the shrine and offer a blessing to their Saint. Mata made a blunder to declare Udero Lal as a Hindu Pir, which further cultivated hate among the Muslims and Hindus. She has an Indian extremist mindset like a Shiv Sena member who demolished the Muslim sixteenth-century Babri Masjid in 1992. She was not a Sufi nor she was interested in tolerance and harmony in Sindh like her forefathers (Personnel communication 2020).

Robert investigates how various religious groups were able to co-exist in peace, harmony and involved in disputes too. Those groups have lived and intermingled peacefully for generations and developed the combined belief in their religious practices; despite their aggressive relations. The author further argues that those groups reflect different communities with their different competitive interests; nevertheless, both groups interact peacefully always though one group remains dominant. One group's ascendancy indicates the control over the main shared religious space that may be indirectly shared for a long period. Over time, the sacred space is significantly transformed, converted and contested changes in with other dominant groups.' (Hayden, 2016: pp 10-13). Furthermore, Hindu member of the Sheva Mendly Ramesh stated that:

We made the correct decision and fixed the declaration of the Hindu Pir board of the UderoLal, on which was written that '*Udero Lal Hindu peer hin qubay andar gohry samaet samayal ahe* (Udero Lal was immersed in the land with horse and he is a Hindu saint), The day was 9th Muharram sharif. Muslim Shaikh misguided Syed Imdad Shah the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) district Matiari about the declaration of the Hindu Pir board of the Udero Lal. A large number of Muslims were gathered on the occasion and they made many demands to the Hindus. We accepted all demands because we did not want to fix the declaration Hindu board for our own identity, but it was a fact and the real identity of the Udero Lal was at stake. If you visit the shrine, Muslim Shaikh fixed 'Labbik Hussain' text on the main gate of

the shrine. We are also the followers of Hussain. If you visit Hala, you will come across many Hindus who are the followers of Hussain. When SSP Imdad Shah called us during the declaration of the Hindu Pir board's conflict, all old white-bearded Hindu men attended his call. He insulted all the old aged and senior Hindu citizens blaming them as mischief-mongers and who created chaos among the Muslims and Hindus. He made the wrong decision in favor of the Muslims by removing the declaration Hindu Pir board of the Udero Lal board. One day, he met me in Hala, said that he made the wrong decision because he had Muslim pressure, so he apologized to me, I asked him that Udero Lal knows better because he watches all our actions (Personal interview, 6 April 2019).

Udero Lal Hindu *gaadinasheen* has been trying to transform the shared Space of the Udero Lal, and she used her authority because she is more powerful than the Udero Lal's Muslims *sajadansheen*. She is also more educated and is a barrister by profession. She knows how to develop the principal proof through the Hindus signs and symbols to declare Udero Lal a Hindu Pir and if any case is registered against her in the court for the identity of the Udero Lal as she can win the case through the evidence and symbols. On the other hand, Muslims *sajadanashen* claimed that he has documentary proof that Udero Lal shrine belonged to Muslims. Muslim *Sajadanshen* emphasized that:

I have official documentary proof of the Udero Lal shrine that belongs to us. I have colonial period British's official registry of 1938 of Udero Lal Dargah which is in the name of my grandfather Haji Gul Muhammad which substantiates that it belongs to us. Hindus do not have any documented proof and in case if they have evidence, they can show us. The whole property of Udero Lal's shrine belongs to us. If Hindus further tried to dominate us, I will sue them in the court of law based on my British official documents (Personnel Communication, 2020).

7.2.3. Transformation of Balanbo Sahib (Sacred Well) and Construction of Shev Temple

In another part of the Complex of Udero Lal there is an old *Khooh* (sacred well) named *Balanbo Sahib* where both Hindus and Muslims perform the water rituals. These rituals are sacred for the followers, the well water was used to cure many diseases of the Muslim followers, and it is sacred for

Hindus like Ganga water and abe-zamzam. Muslim Shaikh Mujawar Afaque Shaikh stated that:

Along with Hindus, Mata Been Hindu *gaadinasheen* wants to occupy all the Complex of the Udero Lal. She is determined to Hinduize the central part of the Complex consisting of the grave of Udero Lal and to achieve that purpose, she has physically transformed the *Balanbo sahib* (sacred well). Shev temple was made here and an equestrian horse room was made, and now she has transformed the gate with Hindus symbols, as visitors can understand that Udero Lal belongs to only Hindus, not the Muslims. In any case, we will never allow her to transform the main shrine of the Udero Lal. We shall move to the court, report to Sindh police, and will protest against Mata Beena that she wants to convert Udero Lal into Hindu specific place (15 June 2019).



Figure 15: Before the transformation, Blanbo sahib/ khooh (sacred well) April 2015 into the second part of the Udero Lal's Complex.

(Source: Muslim Shaikh Mujawar Sarfraz, 2019)



Figure 16: After the transformation, Balanbo Sahib (sacred well) is seen on the left side, and on the right side is Shiv temple, which was constructed at another part of the Udero Lal complex in March 2016 that was not present before.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The Hindu *gaadinaheen* of Udero Lal Mata Beena transformed the space of the sacred well (*balanbo sahib*) in 2016. She constructed the Shiv temple beside the *Balanbo Sahib* (sacred well). Now Muslim followers of the Udero Lal do not go to the sacred well (*balanbo sahib*) to perform the water ritual from the sacred well due to the construction of Shiv temple. Muslims Shaikh Mujawars requested Mata sahib not transform the *balanbo sahib* space; it should remain in its original space. Muslim *sajadhanasheen* Ghulam Abass Shaikh stated that:

We all Muslim Shaikh *Mujawrs* and other Muslims brother requested Mata Beena Sahib not to transform the old space of the *balanbo sahib* (sacred well) because her father had always avoided it to let Muslims followers come and perform the water rituals from the *balanbo sahib* . Her elders used to welcome the Muslim devotees who were satisfied with the performance of water rituals. Now Muslim followers do not go to *balanbo sahib* due to its transformation (Personal interview, 15 July 2019).



Figure 17: Inside view of Shev Temple10, March 2019.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The head of the other temples of Udero Lal in Sindh was also annoyed at *gaadinasheen* Mata Beena and resented her move to transform the *balanbo sahib* place and construct the Shiv temple. Udero Lal is their Avatar and has its own entity among the other avatars of the Hindus. The head of the Mirpurkhas Sindh's temple of Udero Lal Babo Suresh shared that:

Mata Sahib does not live permanently in Sindh; her visits are few and far between from Bombay, India. Still, she does not mix with the Sindhi people. She gave all her authority to servants to look after the shrine but they hardly take care once she leaves for India. Her partners do not give good advice to Mata Sahib. It was better that she must not have constructed the Shiv temple because Udero Lal is popular among all Hindus of Sindh. He is our River god, Sindhi Bhagwan, and Avatar, who saved us and gave us new life. (Personal interview, 12 September 2019).

After constructing the Shiv temple at the *Balanboh Sahib's* space now, Muslim followers do not go there. Aneeta Muslim women, followers of Udero Lal from Nawab Shah said that:

Now there is a Hindu *Mandar* (temple), and statues are fixed at *balanbo sahib* space, being a Muslim woman, how can I go there? My male members do not allow me to go there because of temples; when there was no temple, all our family members used to perform the water ritual at the *balanbo sahib*, now we avoid going there. (Personal interview, 15 September 2019).

7.2.4. Establishment of Equestrian of Udero Lal

Hindu *gaadinasheen* of the Udero Lal shrine established the equestrian in August 2014, in another part of the Udero Lal complex beside the *Balanbo Sahib*, which was not there before. It shows Udero Lal seated on this horse back. He has a black beard, wears a crown with pearls on his head, a sword is in his right hand, and a flag is in his left hand, inscribed with words *Jae Juhle Lal beraaee par* (long live Jhuel Lal, the destination is reached). He is decorated with hundreds of Pakistani currency notes. Udero Lal is shown on the equestrian as a King warrior who has won the battle.



Figure 18: Equestrian of Udero Lal (GhorywaroKamro) which was not present before 2014.

Source: Researcher (2019)

The equestrian place is called the *Lal sane jo ghory waro hall* (equestrian room of Udero Lal). Hindu followers of the Udero Lal go into the hall to pay homage to Udero Lal's equestrian. It is believed by the Hindus *gaadinasheen* that Udero Lal is alive; he submerged into the land with a horse where his tomb is now erected. Equestrian is framed in the mirror glasses. *Shevadar* (attendants) Jahman Dass stated that:

Hindu *gaadinaheen* has the authority to open the glass frame of the equestrian of Udero Lal (*gohry waro hall*). She has the glass frame and she opens it only when she

returns from Bombay India to attend the annual fair of Udero Lal. The followers of the Udero Lal come to venerate and place the money in this room. Mata is too much interested in decorating this room because it is also a sacred room for the Hindus followers of Udero Lal due (Personal interview, 12 July 2019).

7.2.5. Transformation of the New Main Entrance Gate

Hindus had also constructed the new main gate with figures at the other part of the Udero Lal's shared space shrine complex on 10th January 2020, which was not present before, on which statue of the *Pallo* (fish) was fixed on top of the gate. *Om* Hinduism symbol was fixed on the center of the gate, a trident (*trishul*) was made on the posts on the top corner and ancient religious icon Swastika is made on the below posts on the corner of the gate. *Juhle Lal Bera Ee Paar, Dargah Shiri Amar Udero Lal* (he who calls Udero Lal, all his wishes would be fulfilled) is written in the Sindhi language among the Hindu Symbols of *Om, Trishul (trident)*. Swastika was not present on 15 May 2019. This new gate is in front of the main entrance of the Udero Lal's shrine. Muslim *sajjadasheen* of Udero Lal Ghulam Abbas Shaikh argued that:

Mata Beena does not want peace and tolerance at the shared Space of Udero Lal among Hindus and Muslims. She comes up with new plans to transform this Dargah. Her mind is influenced by the Indian extremist thought. Her elders never transformed this shared Space of Udero Lal, rather maintained it in its original form and kept it in the same condition for centuries, now you can see that she is transforming this Udero Lal shared space. She has made Shiv temple besides Balanho Sahib and equestrian (*Ghoro*) and transformed the whole entrance gate of the second part of the complex with Hindu symbols, which will lead to great chaos among Sindhi Hindus and Muslims. We will never let her transform the whole shared Space of Udero Lal. We have always extended her cooperation to maintain peace in Sindh, but she is very obstinate in her attitude. (Personal communication 2 January 2020).



Figure 19: Before the transformation, the other part of the Complex of Udero Lal's entrance gate was without the Hindus symbols on 15 May 2019, which is in front of the first part of the main Complex of Udero Lal shrine and besides the Balanbo Sahib (sacred well).

(Source: Researcher, 2019)



Figure 20: After the transformation, the second part of the Udero Lal's entrance gate's shared complex with Hindu symbols on 10 January 2020 is in front of the first part of Udero Lal shrine's main Complex beside the Balanbo Sahib that was not present before.

(Source: Researcher, 2020)



Figure 21: Close view of the gate, the statue of the *Pallo* (fish) was fixed on the top of the gate, and Om was written on the center of the gate, a trident (*triśul*) was made on the posts on the top corner, and Swastika is made on the below posts of both right and left corners of the gate that was not present on 15 May 2019.

(Source: Researcher, 2020)

There is *Jot* room; Hindus also call it a temple beside the Udero Lal's shrine in the first main Complex of Udero Lal. According to Muslims, this *Jot* room was without a figurine for the generation, but now Hindus placed the small statue of cows. They wanted to place more statues in the *Jot* room to transform the main 1st part of the Complex of Udero Lal. During fieldwork, I found that the Ganesha picture was fixed above it, and two small *murtis* of cows (statues) with golden colors were placed near the fourth *Jot* in the *Jot* room at the main Udero Lal complex.

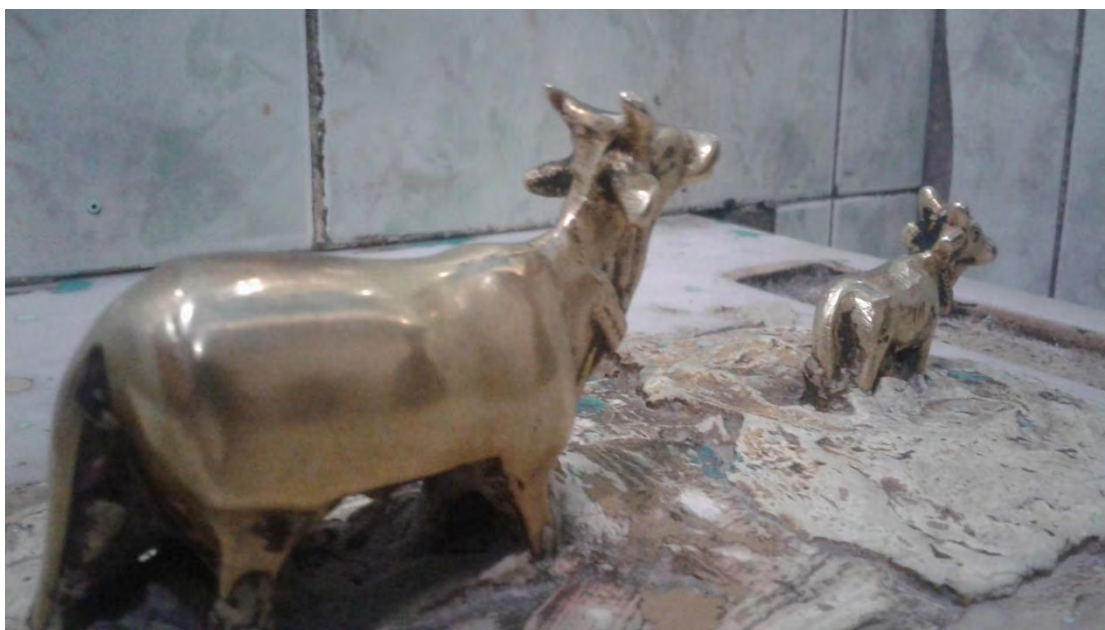


Figure 22: Two small cows figurines are placed in the Jot room in the first part of the Udero Lal shrine's main Complex. (Source: Researcher, 2019).

Muslims further objected to Hindus fixing the mark of Swastika symbol and *Ganesh* on the *paag* (head) of Udero Lal grave, which is against Islamic teachings.



Figure 23: Muslim Mujawar Shaikh Shows the Ganesh figure he removed from the graveyard's Paag (head) of the Udero Lal. (Source: Researcher, 2019)

They further argued that if Muslims would see these Hindu symbols, it would be impossible for them to venerate the Muslim saint. Moreover, they said that it is the conspiracy of the Hindus against the Muslims that the grave of the Muslim saint should be Hinduized, to prevent Muslim devotees of Udero Lal to enter the shrine. Molvee Nadeem Panhwar Naeemi told that:

Hindus always wanted to Hinduize the grave of the Udero Lal. They wrote the word 'Ohm' with *sandur* on the grave of the Udero Lal. Hindu also fixed the small statue of *Ganesh* and *Swastika* mark on the head (*paag*) of the Udero Lal's grave, which is unethical and against Islam's teaching. This would only create more hatred among Muslims. Hindus sowed the seeds of hatred when they fixed the declaration board of Udero Lal as Hindu Pir buried with his horse in this grave. This angered the Muslims who termed the Hindus as extremists, and egoists. We the Muslims always forgave them, and do not have an ego. Our Islam has taught us tolerance (Personal interview, 25 November 2019).



Figure 24: A swastika was marked on the Udero Lal's grave paag (head) by Hindus. Source: Researcher, 2019

7.3. Transformation process of Udero Lal Complex by Muslims

F.W. Hasluck (1929) mentioned the transformation of Sanctuaries, Churches into mosques by Ottoman Sultan Osman. The Cenaculum at Jerusalem had been known as the Tomb of David in the eighteenth century in which Muslims started to perform the prayers but later it was converted into a mosque. The author further argued that urban sanctuaries are outwardly converted from the Church into a mosque, and Christians' Cults had been converted into Muslims. The author has further highlighted that the transformation from Christianity to Islam was less in Asia but high in European Turkey (F.W, 1929). As I mentioned above, the Udero Lal shrine complex has two parts: the main grave and shrine were built; the other part is *Balanbo sahib* (sacred well). As I mentioned above, the Hindus physically transformed the second part of the Udero Lal shared space complex.

Furthermore, the central first part of the Udero Lal shared space shrine Complex is not transformed by the Hindus; though they had been trying to do it with the passage of time. However, Muslims had always resisted, which created a law and order situation. Due to the maintenance of law and order by the Sindh police, it was essential to avoid communal riots between the Hindus and Muslims over the shared shrine of Udero Lal. According to Hindus, Muslims are trying to transform and declare Udero Lal as a Muslim saint and want to occupy the whole Complex of Udero Lal. Now, the Muslims have placed the holy Quran in the shrine of the Udero Lal. During fieldwork, I observed some recent developments on transformation in the main shrine of the Udero Lal by the Muslims who fixed religious text stickers and other religious symbols in the shrine of Udero Lal.



Figure 25: Islamic text LabbaikYa Rasool Allah (O Messenger of Allah) stickers were fixed on the main entrance gate of the Udero Lal shrine by the Muslims.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

I saw the *Molvee* who daily visited the shrine early in the morning and recited the holy Quran daily in Udero Lal's shrine, followed by the Muslims. Moreover, Hindus *gaadinasheen* of Udero Lal Mata Sahib argued that:

Before that, the holy Quran was not placed in the Shrine of Udero Lal. Now, they have brought and placed the holy Quran, but we did not object because this is the sacred book of Allah, and it is most respectful for us. The mosque did not exist in the beginning and was the only place to pray when Muslim travelers used to come from far-flung areas to offer prayers in this recently constructed mosque but we did not object to the *namaz* (prayer). The Muslims then occupied our land and constructed the mosque. This is Udero Lal shrine and everybody can come here. Both Muslims and Hindus can come and pay homage to Lal sane (Udero Lal). (Personal communication, 2019).



Figure 26: Muslim Mujawar of Udero Lal Sarfraz Shaikh shows the holy Quran (sacred book) placed.

(Source: Researcher, 2019).

Muslims further argued that the *holy* Quran (sacred book) had been placed in the shrine for generations and Hindus are lying. Vikram Dass, a Hindu follower of the Udero Lal said that:

Muslim Shaikh Mujawar is only interested in collecting money; therefore, he fears that if Udero Lal was transformed as Hindu Pir, then it would become difficult for the Muslims to collect the money because Hindus would not allow them to enter into the shrine of the Udero Lal. Therefore, Muslims always try to portray Udero Lal as a Muslim saint and placed the holy Quran in the shrine which was not there before. They also fixed the Muslim Qalama on the main entrance gate of Udero Lal's shrine and glued numerous Islamic texts on the shrine to prove that Udero Lal is a Muslim saint. The Islamic inscriptions were not present in the shrine before (Personal interview, 12 November 2020).

There are main differences between the Hindus and Muslim beliefs and practices concerning Udero Lal. However, both share the same physical, religious space but have made a separate shrine. The Muslims have placed the Quran in their space rather than the burning lamp which is a symbol of Udero. Muslims accept it as a saint rather

than an incarnation of Allah. Muslims exposed him as a legend and gave him a Muslim name Shaikh Tahir (C. Ray 2012, pp.219-238).



Figure 27: Muslim's Qalama tayaba was written on the tile fixed by the Muslims on the main entrance gate of Udero Lal shrine.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Furthermore, Hindus argued that Muslims fixed the religious inscriptions inside Udero Lal's shrine that were a new addition. First Muslim Qalama '*La ilaha illallah Muhammad-ur- Rasulullah*' was fixed at the main entrance gate of Udero Lal shrine, and it has also been posted inside the shrine of Udero Lal. Khem Chand, who is a Hindu follower of the Udero Lal, stated that:

We, the Sindhi Hindus are in minority and the majority has migrated to India after the creation of Pakistan in 1947. Our elders did not go to India and preferred to live in Sindh because our Avatar Udero Lal is Sindhi *Bhagwan* (god) who appeared from the *Indus* (Sindhu). Extreme religiosity has increased now and Muslims religious people want to declare Udero Lal as a Muslim saint and want to occupy the shrine due to their economic interest. The Muslim Shaikh *Mujawars* (keeper) seek to confer with his religious people who advise them not to cooperate with Sindhi Hindus or befriend them. Muslims Shaikh fixed the Islamic religious text in the shrine of the

Udero Lal in order to prove that he is Muslim saint. These Islamic religious texts were not present before (Personal interview, 12 September 2019).



Figure 28: Muslim's first QalmaTeyab was fixed inside the shrine of Udero Lal by Muslims.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The Muslims pasted the various Muslim texts and image stickers in the Udero Lal's shrine, such as Muslims Qalma, *Ya Allah, Ya Rasulallah, La baik, Ya Rasulallah, Mashallah*, images of the Kabba, and tomb of the Muhammad (peace be upon him). Muslim Mujawar Nazeer Shaikh stated that:

The Qalma Sharif was fixed on the main entrance gate of the Udero Lal when the Udero Lal shrine was made, and we have not fixed it now. Hindus are fabricating a lying. If Hindus have any doubts they call the old mason who will tell the truth. We believe that Udero Lal is a Muslim saint. We are weak because the Hindus run all management, and they have control over the Complex of Udero Lal's shrine (Personal Interview, 10 November 2020).



Figure 29: Wrapped in red cloth, the Holy Quran is placed on the right top corner, before the image of the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) green tomb. Kabba Sharif sticker is pasted on left side amid Allah and Muhammad (PBUH) name's frame is fixed in the shrine of the Udero Lal by the Muslims.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The Muslims strongly believe that Udero Lal's grave and shrine are made in Muslim style. The grave of the Udero Lal was made according to the Islamic teachings, he was given *gosal* (bath) in the Islamic way, and his *Janaza namaz* (funeral prayer) was performed according to Muslim teachings in which a large number of Muslims devotees participated. However, Hindus have disagreed with the Muslims; they said that Udero Lal's samadhi was not grave. The Ramesh Lal Hindu *Shevadar* (attendants) argued that:

We call Udero Lal a Dargah, not a shrine. *Jeyareh Samadi* (Living Samadhi) a Hindu spiritual master, said before his death to make his samadhi alive and only then would sit. The Samadi is prepared and he lives forever in the Samadi. I give you an example of the Shah Inayat Juhak Shif saint where a Hindu's relative Dada Bohgre was buried and his grave was made in Muslim style, and his grave is still there. He wished that after the death, he should be buried at Shah Inayat Dargah so his funeral prayer was performed by the *gaadnaheen* of Shah Inayat Dargah and buried there. Hindu graves can be made, and the dead can be buried according to their wishes. Many Hindus are

buried at the Dargah of the Shah Inayat Jhok Sharif (Personal interview, 6 April)2019).



Figure 30: Udero Lal's grave is decorated with Sindhi Ajrak.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Muslims further claimed that there is no Hindu samadhi in the main Complex of Udero Lal shrine. Hindus samadhi room is located outside the Complex. If Udero Lal had been a Hindu his grave should not have been constructed according to Muslim tradition. They further claimed that the graves of their forefathers Muhammad Alam, Shaikh Suharo, Shaikh Younis, and Shaikh Maman's who donated the land and well to Udero Lal are inside the main Complex of Udero Lal.



Figure 31: Four graves of the old Muslim Shaikh Mujawars of the Udero Lal, Shaikh Muhammad Alam, Shaikh Younis, Shaikh Suharo, and Maman Shaikh who donated the land and well to Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

7.3. 1. Mosque in the Main Complex of the Udero Lal

Mosque and *Jot* temple stands beside the Udero Lal shrine in the first part of the main shared space complex of the Udero Lal. Mosque was not functional in the past, but now the Muslims have made the Mosque operational and pray five times a day. The Moulvee teaches the holy Quran to the children and arranges Islamic religious programs annually in the Mosque. The whole Complex of Udero Lal was colored white- for generations, but now Muslims have painted it green. The Hindus further argued that the Muslim's Mosque, which is beside the shrine of the Udero Lal in the main first part of the Complex of Udero Lal was not a Mosque but a open space for the Muslim followers of Udero Lal who came to pay homage to him and offer prayers. Muslims transformed this place into a Mosque. Hindus do not enter the Mosque; they go into the Udero Lal and Jot room's shrine at the main complex of the Udero Lal. Moreover, Hindus *gaadinsheen* of Udero Lal stated that:

There was no Mosque. In the beginning, this was a place where Muslim travelers used to come from far-flung areas and pray at this place. We did not object then and neither do we have any problem when Muslims offer their prayers. We permitted them but then they occupied our land and constructed a Mosque in this place. It is Lal sane complex and everybody is allowed to come here. Muslims and Hindus are followers of the Udero Lal, both are allowed to come and pay homage to Lal sane (Udero Lal) (Personal Interview, 15 November 2019).



Figure 32: The left side is the Udero Lal shrine's white tomb, and the right side is the Mosque with green dome in the first part of the shared space at Udero Lal's complex.

(Source Researcher, 2019)

In contrast to Hindus, Muslims claimed that this is an old Mosque built by Udero Lal. Hindus imposed a ban on the *Azan* (call of God for prayers), disallowed the use of loudspeakers and closed the mosque doors. Further, they argued that now with all Muslims help, they have made the Mosque fully functional. There are two Muslim Khateeb/Molvee (clergy), Maulana Nadeem Panhwar Naeemi, and Molvee

Muhammad Ibrahim, who teaches the holy Quran to the Muslim children and leads the prayer five times a day in the Mosque. The *Juma namaz* (Friday prayer) is also held for Muslims every Friday in this Mosque. The Muslims named the Mosque Jamia Masjid Shaikh Tahir. However, the Hindus did not accept it as Shaikh Tahir Masjid. They preferred to call it Udero Lal place of prayer for the Muslim followers of Udero Lal. Additionally, the Molvie Muhammad Ibrahim of the Udero Lal complex Mosque stated that:

Hindus are wrong. This Mosque is old and constructed within the Udero Lal complex. Hindus prohibited Molvie Abdul Hakeem from calling the Azan in this Mosque in 2008. I asked him to call the *azan* because this is God's house. There is no reason to fear from the Hindus, God would protect them from any harm. Police said that Hindus complained against the Azan saying it should not be called in the Udero Lal complex mosque. Many Muslims were gathered when they heard that Hindus stopped the Muslims from calling *azan*. The Station House Officer (SHO) Azhar Samo talked to Senior Superintendent Police (SSP) on the wireless mobile and informed him that Muslims had gathered demanding for *Azan*. If Police stopped them then there will be conflict among the Muslims and Hindus. SSP agreed to SHO's report and asked him to allow Muslims to call the *Azan*. In this way, from that day onwards, *Azan* was regularly called from the Mosque's loudspeaker. After molvi Abdul Hakeem's death, I became the *peshimam* (clergy) and caretaker of the mosque. Syed Saleem Shah also supported us against any Hindu advances and advised us to separate the electricity meter of the Mosque from this complex (Personal interview, 27 November 2019).

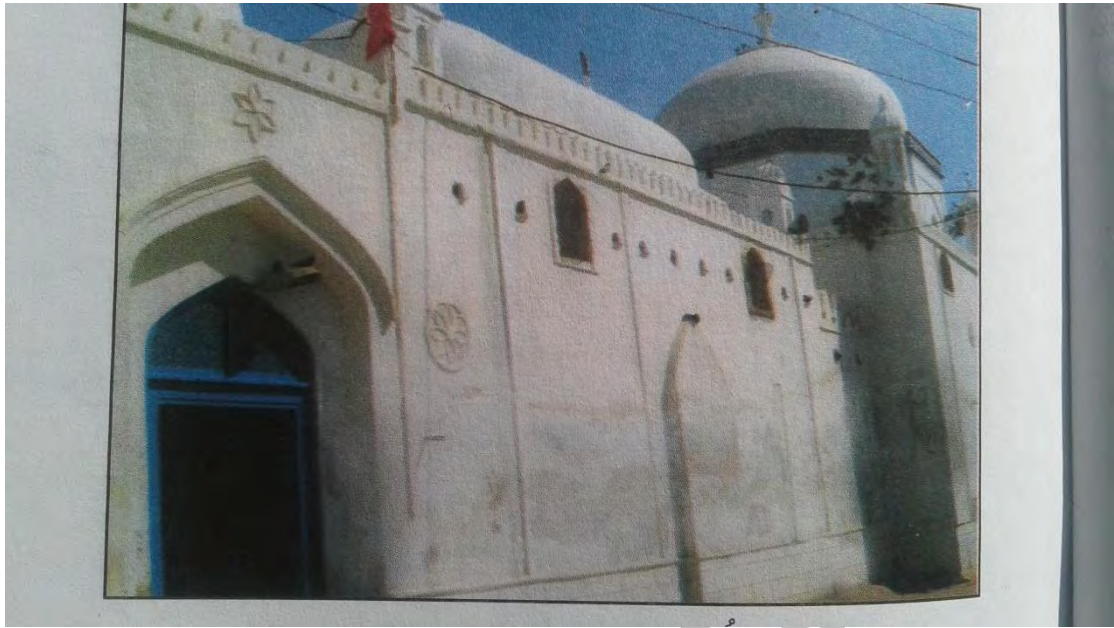


Figure 33: The backside view of the Mosque, the right is the tomb of the Udero Lal, and the left is the white-colored Mosque without green color, loudspeaker, minarets, and Islamic inscriptions in a shared complex of the Udero Lal shrine before 2014.

(Source: Naraean Dass (April 2014))

The Muslims argued that Hindus used to call the whole main complex of the Udero Lal shrine a Hindu temple, without mentioning the mosque and the whole complex was white-colored. The Hindus used to misguide the visitors about the Mosque. They further argued that Hindu Naraean Dass (2014) also mentioned in his book that this is a temple not Mosque in the complex of the Udero Lal. That was the reason they removed the white color and painted it green to make it visible as a Muslim mosque in the main complex of the Udero Lal's shrine.



Figure 34: Close front view of Mosque; white color was removed, and the green color was painted on the Mosque in 2014, loudspeakers minarets and Islamic inscriptions were fixed on the Mosque's main entrance gate that was not present before.

(Source: Researcher, 2019).

However, Hindus argued that Muslims physically transformed this place into a Mosque in 2014. This was only the prayer place for the Muslim followers of the Udero Lal, who used to pray in this place. The Muslims fixed the loudspeaker, constructed the minarets and posts, and painted the green color, and declared this place a mosque. They fixed the tiles on the front wall of this place, written with Islamic inscription *Ya Allah, Ya Muhammad, Ya Hussain, Ya Hassan, Ya Ali, Ya Fatima, La ullah ha ilellaho Muhammad-ur- Rasuallahe and Aslatu wasalam Alaika ya Rasulullah*. Babu Rajkumar, head of Tando Adam temple of the Udero Lal, stated that:

Muslims could worship peacefully in the Mosque of the Udero Lal complex; it was not forbidden to pray. Now Mosque has been politicized by religious persons and

tagged with one Muslim sect, and it is used by the Muslims religious fundamentalist for the physical transformation of the Udero Lal complex. The religious person also used Muslims Shaikh Mujawars to transform the shrine of the Udero Lal. Muslims are getting support from religious persons. I assure you that time would come when religious people would cheat the Muslims Shaikh and take over the Udero Lal's shrine. The Muslims Shaikh should cooperate with Hindus and resolve all the issues amicably; otherwise, the situation would worsen, and then communal riots will break out between Hindus and Muslims over the shrine's ownership of the Udero Lal. (Personal interview, 27 November 2019).

Haji Malang's holy compound consists of Ganesha, Waghjai, Durga, Maruti, Santoshima, and four Dargahs in India. The Complex is looked after by the Brahmin. Both Hindus and Muslim priests take care of all the ritual activities that take place within the sacred Complex. Hindus and Muslims organize and celebrate all the festivals together. Both communities also collect donations collectively. It has been observed that when the Babari mosque was demolished, the visits of Hindu devotees' at the sacred complex decreased. The cooperation has been affected by the Shiv Sena and his extremist policies. They have also transformed the saint and renamed Machindranath. They have also installed some other deities in the sacred Complex of Haji Malang (Roy, 1995). However, some Muslims disagreed with the act of Muslims who painted the tomb of the mosque green. They argued that the whole complex is white-colored for hundreds of years which is the symbol of peace and tolerance while the green color has spoiled the peace, and that will lead to conflict and hatred between the warring factions. In addition to that, Syed Muhammad Ali Shah, who is a Muslim native of the same village, stated that:

Muslim placed Udero Lal complex mosque under the Sunni Muslim sect management and converted their old white color into the green which shows their narrow approach and spoils the symbol of tolerance. This practice is bound to lead to more friction and differences between the two communities because the whole complex was white for a long time and remained a symbol of peace. The complex was open for all, and not specific to one sect or community. If they make it specific, then thinking of both communities would be different, and it will also lead to hatred and further transformation as we all as a physical change of the complex. The reason behind the change in the mosque's color and Sunni management did not mean

intimidation of Hindus. It was since other Muslim communities might occupy the Udero Lal's mosque. (Personal Interview, 13th February 2019).

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7.4. Conclusion

The transformation for shared space of the Udero Lal shrine in Sindh is an ongoing process between Hindus and Muslims in Sindh, and both are determined to prove the identity and ownership of Udero Lal and trying their best to transform the main shared complex of the Udero Lal. Hindus are more powerful in exercising their authority at the shared shrine of the Udero Lal because the entire management and decision-making are under their control. They are sound and secure economically and politically and have good connections in the higher echelons. Muslims lack power and authority and they can not take a unilateral decision without the permission of the Hindus. During fieldwork as a participant observation in the shrine, I observed when Hindus *gaadinashreen* of the Udero Lal Mata Beena came for the worship to the shrine of Udero Lal then all Shaikh Muslims Mujawars were evacuated from the shrine by the Police. The Muslim Mujawars could return to the shrine only after Mata Sahib has completed her worship. Mata Beena's behavior towards Muslims was very rigid, especially with the Muslim Shaikh Mujwar Ghulam Abbas *sajadanashreen* whom she declined to acknowledge as Muslim *sajadanahseen* of Udero Lal, same as Ghulam Abbas Shaikh also did not acknowledge her as the Hindus *gaadinashreen* of Udero Lal. Both were at daggers drawn for a long time and refused to give up their respective positions.

The Udero Lal complex is vast, adjacent to another part where *balanbo sahib* is located. The first main part of the complex of the Udero Lal has its shrine. To the right of the shrine are the Mosque and the Jot's room/temple. Graves of four Muslim's old Shaikh Mujawars can be seen beside the shrine. Muslim followers also used to visit the other part of the complex to perform the ritual from the sacred water of the *balanbo sahib*, but after its transformation, they stopped going there. Hindus made the Shiv temple and equestrian statue and decorated the main gates with Hindu symbols.

Udero Lal's first and foremost shared space which has his grave, remained a hotspot for transformation. Muslims Shaikh Mujawar's stay in the shrine from morning to evening in the main complex of Udero Lal's shrine and regularly collect revenue.

They leave for their homes only when the shrine's gates are closed by the Hindus. The key of the Udero Lal shrine is in the possession of the Hindus. The Muslims remain present in the shrine and welcome the visitors and inform them that Udero Lal is a Muslim's saint, not a Hindu. Similarly, the Hindu attendants tell their followers that Udero Lal is a Hindu. Muslim followers do not enter the *Jot* room of the Hindus. The Mosque was not functional earlier but still, Muslims used to pray in the open space. The Mosque became fully functional in 2014, a loudspeaker was fixed, and one religious person was hired for maintenance of the Mosque and call the *Azan* (call of God) five times a day. The Muslims started to arrange religious programs in the Mosque annually, now it is fully functional. The mosque is located inside the main complex and the keys of the mosque are in the custody of the *Molvee* (muslim clergy). Muslims claimed that now Mata wants to transform the main shrine of the Udero Lal because she fixed the Hindu Pir declaration board of Udero Lal, *Ganesh*'s figure, and swastika symbols on the Pag (head) of the Udero Lal. Hindus blame Muslims for trying to transform Udero Lal's Shrine by fixing the holy texts and placing the holy Quran on the shelf.

I observed eye witness during the fieldwork in the main complex of the Udero Lal shrine that Udero Lal grave was made in Muslim style, Holy Quran was also placed in the corner and first Kalama was written on the main entrance gate, and other Islamic inscriptions were written around the shrine of Udero Lal and graves of four Muslims old Mujawars are made left side of the entrance shrine of Udero Lal. There was no Hindu Samadhi in the main shrine of the Udero Lal. Mosque and *Jot* room/temple stand beside the shrine of Udero Lal. However, most Hindu followers come and pay homage to the Udero Lal's shrine and go to *Jot* for worship. Muslims are conspicuous by their absence. The Hindus performed regular worship in the evening and morning in the shrine of Udero Lal. When Hindus visit the shrine, they first pay homage to the Udero Lal than *Jot* room but do not frequent the Mosque. When Muslim followers pay homage to Udero Lal's shrine, they do not enter the *Jot* room/temple, but a few Muslims do visit the Mosque.

After the full transformation of the 2nd part of Udero Lal shared space complex, Hindus are now planning to transform the main part of the complex where Udero Lal

rests in the grave. However, they have not succeeded to transform it because of the severe resistance from the Muslims in form of noisy protests which could have led to communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. To handle the law and order situation Sindh police intervened and avoided the communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. For maintenance of the law and order situation, the Sindh police have effectively handled the chaotic situation. The Police outlined in a policy declaration which read that the first main complex should remain as it is and should not be transformed both by the Hindus and Muslims Further, if any group would transform the Main Complex of Udero Lal shrine it would be dealt with a stern hand and disciplinary action would be taken against the them by the Sindh police as per existing law and instructions from Sindh governmentt. It stated that Hindus could run the management of the Udero Lal main complex and both Muslim and Hindu followers could freely pay homage to the shrine of Udero Lal.

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CHAPTER 8

RITUALS PERFORMANCE AND SYMBOLS AT THE SHRINE OF UDERO LAL

8.1. Introduction

Ritual is a religious ceremony that influences the strong belief about the spiritual perception of the truth that religious directions are rigorous and then become more effective due to human mood and motivations that help the communities to survive logically and sensibly (Geertz, 1972, pp.167). Moreover, ritual performance is an essential part of any religion. Religious rituals are mainly performed in situations and unique places such as sacred spaces, temples, and social and cultural places. Rituals have cultural practices and are complex. Rituals practices have non-verbal meaning and communications that are important for the human culture. Rituals push the functions of societies, cultures, and individuals. Ritual gives the primary interpretation and explanation to the culture (Pountney & Maric, 2015, pp. 161-183). Many such rituals are performed at the shared shrine of Udero Lal by both Hindus and Muslims though not collectively. The Hindus perform the rituals regularly while the Muslims perform occasionally. Turner further argued that ritual performance is like a drama in which the participants perform their actions as actors in a given situation. Due to the intrinsic accomplishment the rituals, are transformed and change the society (Turner, 1969, pp.25-77).

The *Akho* (offering the food) ritual is performed regularly in the evening and morning at the *balanbo Sahib's* space by the Hindus. Muslims do not participate in the ritual. *Bahraano sahib* (food offering) ritual is the main ritual that takes place on the 1st of every month on the sighting of the moon. *Jhand* (head shaving), *Jarnyo* (Rites of passage for boys), *Chhando* (sprinkling water), *Chodas* (bath), *Pallav/Juhlee* (pray), all these rituals are performed by the Hindus at the complex of the Udero Lal shrine. Muslims also perform the rituals at the shared space of the Udero Lal, such as *Par wajhan* (decorating the piece of cloth on the grave), *Jahand* (head shaving) like

Hindus they perform this ritual but separately. *Qull parharan* (recitation of verses from the holy Quran on Udero Lal's grave) and *Matam* (chest beating). Moreover, in this chapter, I have analyzed in detail the rituals and symbols of both Hindus and Muslims at the shared shrine complex of Udero Lal.

8.2. Hindus Rituals

Hindus rituals begin with *Sheva* (worship) at 4 am early in the morning at the Udero Lal's shrine followed by *Nagaro* (drum) beat. The whole shrine, *Chokhandi* (veranda), *Jot* room, *Kechari jo Kamro* (discourse room), and four Muslim Shaikh Mujawar's (graves) are washed with fresh water, and all *Jots* are filled with fresh oil at the shrine and the *Jots* room. Moreover, Hindu Shevadar (worshiper) Geno mentioned that:

In winter, *Sheva* (worship) begins at 5 am, early in the morning. Key of the Udero Lal complex is always in our guardianship and we open the main gate at 4 am, and recite these lines" *ayolal Juhle Lal, Sabhaee chao Juhle Lal, ayo Lal Kalangi waro, ayo Lal Darya waro, ayo lal Sindh jo Lal, Sabhee jo Jhuel Lal* (Udero Lal has come, all should say, Udero Lal, he belongs to all), then *Nagaro (drum)* starts to beat early morning. I do not go to the mosque for cleaning it. Muslims clean the mosque (Personal Interview, 28, March 2019).

After the cleaning drive, all main doors of the shrine are opened, fresh roses are plucked from the garden, fresh water is sprinkled in whole the shrine of Udero Lal. *Klangy* (like a small trident) of the silver was decorated at the (*paag*) heads of the Udero Lal, then *tilk* (red color mark) was marked into the *paag* (head) of Udero Lal grave. Fresh flowers were spread and water sprinkled on the grave of the Udero Lal. The Holy Quran, which was placed near the Udero Lal's grave was then decorated with rose flowers regularly by the Hindus. The *chhando* (sprinkling of water) and flowers were strewn on the *Jot* room, *kehchari* (discourse) room, and Muslims Shaikh Mjuawrs (graves) room. The *chadar/par* (a sheet of cloth) of Udero Lal's grave is replaced every Friday, sighting the new moon and *chodus* (bath) ritual. *Wass* (fumes of fragrance)) were spread over the shrine, *Jot* room, *Kehcahri* (discourse room), Shaikh Muslim Mujawars (graves) rooms, *Nagaroro* (drum) room than also other

parts of the complex. Finally, the Sheva (worship) was performed. Flowers were also placed at the Gul Makhddoms shrines, who were the friends of Udero Lal. He who did not visit my friend's shrine, I will not accept his/her homage at my shrine," said Udero Lal about his friend Gul Makhddom Shah. Another *sheva* (worship) was also performed in the Hindu portion of Hindu's *gaadinaheen* Mata Beena Sahib's room, *Ghoro of Udero Lal*, (equestrian) *balanbo Sahib*, and shiv temple. Hindus also perform the Sheva in the evening and clean the whole shrine of Udero Lal's complex and, then closed the doors after 9 pm. Hindus *sheavdar* (worshiper) does not enter the mosque nor cleans it, Muslims separately clean the mosque and look after it regularly.

8.2.1. Bahraano Sahib (offering the food) Ritual

The *bahraano sahib* (offering of fruits, sugar, rice, and kneaded flour) is a vernacular and main central ritual of the Sindhi Hindus, which is almost performed on every new Sindhi month of the moon sighting (*Nao Chand*), *Chetichand/Jat Jo Melo* (birthday of Udero Lal) ritual of the Sindhi new year, *Adh Jaat/Asu Jo Melo* (Asu Fair) which has an essential role for the remembrance as well as the celebration of the Udero Lal by the Hindus at the shared space of Udero Lal complex. The twelve *bahraanas* are celebrated annually by Udero Lal Darbar at the shared complex of Udero Lal. *Bahraano Sahib* Ritual also shows the aesthetic relation of the disciples with Udero Lal. The *Bahraano Sahib* ritual was started by the Indus Cult (*Darya panth*). Nowadays, Udero Lal's devotees bring the *bahraano sahib* from the different parts of Sindh on the *Chetichand* (annual fair) for offering at Udero Lal and offer in the *balanbo sahib*. The *bahraano sahib* is the central and prominent practice of the Sindhi religious culture because it makes the necessary memories and attachment of the Udero Lal between India and Pakistan (Boivin & Rajpal, 2018, pp.58.60). The origin of the *Bahraano Sahib* word was taken from the two Sanskrit letters used for the *Bahraano's* word. *Bahr+Raano*, *Bahr* means *Darya* (ocean), and *Raano* means *rawaano ya parwan karn* (offerings/immersion). The other meaning of the *bahraano sahib* is *bahar* that means Ocean, *Aan* means food, which means food into the ocean; offering the *bahraano sahib* is a way to feed the species who live in the water.

Udero Lal had instructed all devotees to perform this ritual with punctuality and full fervor because he becomes happy when his disciples offer the *bahraano* into the Indus water (*Sindhu*). He loves and wants to save all the *Jeewo* (species), who live in the water. When *bahraano sahib* is offered the ritual is served and, all the species pray for all universe's well-being. This *ritual used* to be offered in the Indus River before the partition. Nowadays, it is offered in the *kooch* (well) at the complex of Udero Lal shrine. Well in the local language is also called *balanbo sahib*. Moreover, Prehstom, Sindhi Hindu devotee of Udero Lal, stated that:

There was a heavy flood into the Indus River in Southern Sindh in 2011. Many people died and became homeless. When the Indus is flooded, it overflows its banks and vast lands are inundated. A large population is displaced and there are huge losses to property and livestock. Therefore, we all performed the *bahraano sahib* ritual in the Indus River (*Sindhu*) and the water of the Indus River receded and started flowing in a normal manner after a few days. Sindhi Hindus perform the ritual together with the *bahraano sahib* to calm down the Indus River and make him happy. Makhdoom Amin Faheem, the head of the Sarwari Jammāt and Dargah in Hala Sindh, also offered his gold ring to the Indus River during the flood in 2011 to hold the Indus River at bay. He also accompanied Hindus who offered the *bahraano sahib* to the Indus River which gradually withdrew its fright. (Personal Interview, 15 November 2019).

An infertile married couple came to Udero Lal's shrine for the baby's blessings. When their wish was fulfilled then they offered the *banraano Sahib*. The *bahraano Sahib Ritual* is also offered to the Indus River to fulfill many wishes such as a healthy job, successful marriage, good health, a wealthy business, a prosperous family, and a good agricultural crop. Moreover, when there are crises at home, and the family faces hard times, the *bahraana sahib* is also offered to the Indus River. Shankar Hindu a follower of the Udero Lal stated that:

Indus River is our lifeline. Its not possible to breathe and survive without it. Our survival and happiness depends only on Indus water. Our avatar is also a River god who has also come from the Indus; when we offer *bahraano sahib* into the Indus water, all species (*Jeewa*), get the food. In return, we get prosperity and prayers from the Indus water's river god and species. He further added that *bahraano sahib* Ritual

is an integral part of the *Jal* (water) and *Jot* (lamp) (Personal Interview, 12 July 2019).

8.2.1.1. Origin of the *Bahraano Sahib* Ritual

According to the oral tradition when Udero Lal was incarnated at the home of Ratan Rai and *Mata* (mother) Devakee; he was a newborn baby; his mother Devakee breastfed him, but he refused and closed his mouth, all family members saw the baby's refusal and they could hardly believe this strange and unusual scene. His father Ratan Rai called the priests but even they did not have an answer to the child's behavior. When the baby opened his mouth, his mother, *Mata* Devakee was taken aback to see the Indus River flowing into the newborn baby's mouth and a large number of species floating. She further saw that *Maha Pursh* (Priest) was gulping down the water of River Indus. After having seen all this weird thing, his mother observed that the newborn baby wanted first to offer the food to River species. The mother offered the sweet meals and kneaded flour to the Indus River and poured three drops of River water in the baby's mouth. The baby immediately started taking her mother's milk and continued afterward.

There is another oral tradition about the origin of the *bahraano sahib* when Udero Lal was young, his mother *Mata* Devakee gave boiled grain *Thaal* (large metal plate) for selling in the market so that he could earn for running home expenses. Instead of selling the grain, he offered the *Thaal* (large metal plate) to the Indus River for the species of the Indus River. In return, he used to get full *thaal* of wheat and pearls/jewels from the River. Since the origin of those events, Udero Lal devotees started to worship the Indus River and offered food such as sweet meals, kneaded flour, and fruits to the River. *Bahraano sahib* tradition started in this way. When people had any wish (*bass*), they would offer the *bahraano sahib* ritual to the Indus River and their wish was fulfilled. Devotees of Udero Lal believed that their river god becomes happy when the River species eat the food and, in return get the saint's blessings for their well-being. *Bahraano sahib* is offered on different occasions such as on the day of *Jumo/Tharoon* (Friday), *Chand* (moon), and *chodas* (bath) ritual. *Bahraano sahib* can be made in the house, and it could be offered to any river, well,

and canal of the water; there is no fixed day for the *bahraano sahib* ritual; it can be performed on any day. Geeta, a female Hindu follower of Udero Lal mentioned that:

Udero Lal gave *Bahraano Sahib* ritual which is important, because he loves all the species, including those who live in the water. Udero Lal has become a source for all the species. When *bahraano* is offered to the water, Udero Lal becomes happy, and all our wishes are filled. My son was not feeling well, and I made the wish, now he has recovered. I offered the *bahraano* at *balanbo Sahib*, we all are happy today because Udero Lal prayers are always with us; therefore, we say “*Ayo Lal Jhule Lal, Sabhaee chao Jhuleeee Laaaaaaaaaaal, sabhni Ja bera par*” (Udero Lal has come, all should say Jhule Lal and we all succeed) (Personal interview, 12 July 2019).

8.2.1.2. Preparation of the *Bahraano Sahib*

Assan is an old disciple and main *shivadar*, (worshiper) who performs the *sheva* (worship) at Udero Lal shrine for 35 years. When he was ten years old, he started the *sheva* at the shrine of the Udero Lal. He belongs to Sindhi Hindu's Lohano caste. He prepares the *bahraano sahib* without any charges for the *sheva* of Udero Lal. He decorated the *bahraano sahib* with various beautiful designs and colors.



Figure 35: Shavadar, who prepares the Bahraano Sahib.

(Source: Researcher, 2019).

The other *Asthaans* (worship place) of Udero Lal replicates decorated *bahraano sahib*. He is also *mureed* (disciple) of Mula Ali and all others in Sindh. He has also decorated the Tazeeya of the Hazarat Imam Hussain during the month of Muharram. When the wishes of Udero Lal's devotees are fulfilled, they call him, prepare the *bahraano sahib* for them, but do not charge any money. If they willingly want to give any money, he receives, but does not demand for making the *bahraano sahib*. *Aama* (mother), old *gaadinasheen* (custodian) of Udero Lal Mata Gopi, has given him the responsibility of making the *bahraano Sahib* and its *sheva* (worship). He performed it with his heart and soul. He wants to transform this *sheva* of making *bahraano sahib* to the new generation so that the tradition of making the *bahraano sahib* is carried forward. He has learned this skill from the old *gaadinaheen* of Udero Lal *Ama* (mother) Gopi. Aasan old Shevadar, further stated that:

Udero Lal says that if someone wants to make me happy, he must first make the Indus River happy. Udero Lal said that you should serve every species on the land,

whether humans birds or animals; they would not ask you for the food. You might have observed that a crow comes home and sits on the open roof or tree and caws the food same as a dog who just barks for food. A beggar begs for a loaf of a bread in the name of God and people give them. Udero Lal said if you have served the *Jeewa* species who lives under the water in the Indus River it means you have served Udero Lal. He further said that first give food to those species who do not demand the food because it is not possible for them to do so. This is a saying of Udero Lal to all Indus River worshippers (Personal Interview, 10 September 2019).

8.2.1.3. Steps for the making of the *Bahraano Sahib*

There is a specific process for making *bahraano sahib*. It takes two to three hours for preparation. The first two *daigs* (small pitcher of baked clay) are made, the name of the first *daig* is *bojee daig* (*baked rice pitcher*), and the other is *Kheerani wari daig* or *Tahiree wari daig* (*sweetened rice pitcher*). The composition of the *Kheerani wari daig* is *Mesri* (crystallized sugar lumps), *Kheer* (milk), *Elaichi/ chai wara phota*, *Peshta*, *Badam* (coconut) *Akhrot*, (almond) *Keshmesh*, *Gur* (a form of sugar). *Ghee* (oil) is not used. The milk is added instead of water in this *daig*. It is called *Tahiri* or *Kheerani daig*. This *daig* was not cooked in the past but now a day's people cook this *daig*. They do not cook this *daig* here; it remains uncooked because *Mata* (mother) has explained *shevadar* not to cook the *Taaheree daig*. When *daig* is prepared, then the symbol of Hindu Ganesh and Om is made with vermilion on the cover of the *daig*, made of kneaded wheat flour.



Figure 36: The right side is the Bojiwari daig, and the left side is Kheerani/ Tahairee waridaig.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Bojiwari Daig: this is a small pot which is made by the potter and offered with the *bahraano sahib*, the composition of the *daig* is *chawar* (rice), *tel* (oil), *loor* (salt) *basar* (onion) *Garhyoon marchoo* (red chilies), *chara* (grain). Afterward, this *daig* is cooked on the fire; this *daig* is also offered with the *baraano sahib*. Both *Kheerani* and *Bojiwaree daig* are also part of the *bahrano sahib*. The *Jot sahib* is the core of the *bahraano sahib*. Jag Jeet Hindu follower of the Udero Lal, argued that:

Udero Lal has advised for the *Jal* (water) worship and *Jot* (lamp). Both are eternal parts of the *bahraano sahib*. When *bahraano sahib* is offered to the Indus River, *Jal* is also floated along with it which symbolizes Udero Lal's boat. If there is no *Jal* and *Jot*, then humankind is incomplete. Everybody can offer the *bahraano sahib* ritual wherever he lives. If anyone's wish is fulfilled, then they offer the *bahrano sahib*. One can perform everywhere; whether it is in Tado Adam, Thana Bola Khan, Karachi, and the *Samand* (ocean). Where there is a river, well, and canal, one can offer this ritual. *Jal* and *Jot* both are offered with the *bahraano sahib*. He is a worshiper of the Indus cult (*Darya panth*) and will first offer fruits to the Indus River before taking them home. This is an old tradition of the *Darya panth* people that when they bring any vegetable, sweets, and fruits, first they offer to the Indus River

(*Sindhu*); if there is no river, canal water then can be given to *Nayani masoom* (little girl) (Personal Interview, 13 November 2019).

First, in a large *thal* (big flat metal dish) *Ganesh* symbol is made, five *Modak* (kneaded wheat flour-like cone) are placed on the green leaves around the metal dish. The *modak* consists of the *kark jo ato* (wheat flour), which is garnished with the Misri (crystalized sugar lump) cardamom and cloves. White uncooked rice is poured into the *thal*, till the *modaks* are fully covered. Fruits are placed around the *thal*. Seven or five fruits are placed into *thal* of the *bahraano sahib*, such as mango, (*anb*) orange, (*naarangi*) banana, (*kela*) apple (*soof*) and grapes (*angoor*). Fruits or *modak* must be in odd numbers. Flowers of the rose's leaves are placed around the *thal* to make a *bahraano sahib* decorative and beautiful. The other decorated small *Thal of Jot sahib* is placed in the *bahraano sahib* *thal*'s main center.



Figure 37: Preparation of the bahraano sahib in the thal (metal plate) with fruits and other items.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The *Jot Sahib* is also made from the wheat's kneaded flour, which is also decorated with the roses' garlands. The *Jal Jee Jahree* (water pot) is also placed beside *Jot sahib*

in the *thaal*, for making *bahraano sahib* steps. The *Jal* and *Jot* is an eternal part of the *bahraano sahib*. Now *bahraano sahib* has been prepared, ready for the other steps to proceed for Udero Lal's *bahraano sahib's* ritual performance. Old Shavadar Aasan, who made the *Bahraano Sahib* said that:

Bahraano sahib ritual is increasing daily and globally because the Sindhi Hindus diaspora, who are the Udero Lal devotees, celebrate this ritual on every *Chetichand* (annual fair) of the Lal Sane. This is the age of internet and all Sindhi Hindus diaspora is closely related to Udero Lal and the *bahraano sahib's* ritual. All the global and diaspora devotees of the Udero Lal celebrate the *bahraano sahib's* ritual with *Satsung* (music) to have all their wishes are fulfilled. Ali Qazi is head of the Sindhi Channel KTN TV and Sindhi newspaper Kawish in Sindh. He offered the *Jot* of blood to the Indus River and the Indus River got angry at the Sindhi people. As a result heavy flooding was caused due to the overflowing of the Indus River in 2011. Udero Lal was annoyed by the offering of blood ritual with the *Jot* to the Indus water because Udero Lal did not like the blood ritual, he was a peace lover and tolerant person. He is against bloodshed; therefore, heavy floods were witnessed due to the Indus River. Udero Lal has said that food should be offered to the water species, but instead of food, Ali Qazi offered the blood to the Indus River as that was his serious blunder. Ali Qazi was educated, he must have studied the importance of this ritual and how to perform it. *Jot's* blood ritual symbolizes the hatred and war of blood in which innocent people are killed (Personal Interview, 4 April, 219).

8.2.1.4. Performing the Ritual Steps of the Bahraano Sahib

The performing of the *bahraano sahib* ritual consists of five steps.

The first step: is to light the *Jot*. After the preparation of the *bahraano sahib* in a sacred room decorated with pictures of *gaadinasheens* family members, *bahraano sahib* is brought that has an equestrian statue (*Lal sane jo Ghory waro kamro*) too. Udero Lal is shown seated on riding horse and holding the sword in the right hand. After a while, an announcement is made that heralds the preparation of *bahraano sahib* in the sacred room. All the devotees of the Udero Lal are requested to gather in the sacred room, without their shoes, and heads covered with a piece of cloth. The women too are asked to cover their heads with the *Rao* (a piece of cloth) to show respect to honor *bahraano sahib*.

Men and women gathered in the sacred hall where the equestrian statue is placed. The main *shevadar* Ramesh appeared, who is authorized by the *Mata sahib* Hindu *gaadinasheen* of the Udero Lal to light the *Jot*. All the men and women stood in front of the *bahraano sahib*, which was placed before the equestrian statue at the center of the Hall. Men were sitting on the left and women on the right side of *bahraano sahib*. The assembly raised the slogans “*Aayo Lal Jhule Lal, Sabhaee Chao JuhleLal Jeko Chawando Jhule Lal Tahnja Thenda bera par, Wari Sabhee Chao Ayo Lal Jhule Lal, Jae Jae, Jae, Jae.....Jae.... Jhule Lal*” (Udero Lal has come. He is present among us, again all should say Udero Lal, he who will say Jhule Lal, he will succeed, and again all should say Jhule Lal, live long, live long Jhule Lal). Shevadar Ramseh lit the *Jot sahib*, amid the slogans “*Aayo Lal Jhule Lal, Sabhaee Chao Jhule Lal*” (Jhule Lal has come, all must say Jhule Lal).



Figure 38: Decorated Bahraano Sahib with Jot .

Source: Researcher (2019)

The second step: is to perform the *Aarti* (moving the lamp clockwise in front of the *bahraano sahib*. All the men and women wait for their turn to perform the *Arati* of the *bahraano sahib*. First male devotees perform the *Aarti* ritual one by one to the *bahrrano sahib*. They are followed by women who perform the *Aarti* to the *bahraano sahib* one by one. After performing the *Aarti*, men sit on the left side and women on the right side of *bahraano sahib*. The *bahraano sahib* is placed in the center of the hall in front of the equestrian statue of the Udero Lal. Female Nandni Hindus, a follower of Udero Lal stated that:

When we sing the *panjrahs* of Lal sane, we are involved in trance and ecstasy. I feel that Lal, sane is sitting in front of us and listening to us. Lal sane is always among us, he watches and hears us. Lal sane said that you will find him in your inner soul when you remember him. (Personal interview, 17 October 2019).

The third step: is Udero Lal's remembrance through the *Panjraas* (Rhymes of two to three lines in praise of Udero Lal). Ram Dass, an old *shevadar* (worshiper), started to play the keyboards, Ramesh Lal, the main *shevadar* started to beat the drums, and Devan began singing *Panjraas* in his beautiful voice. Men and women sang the *Panjars* in admiration of Udero Lal, and it appeared that all the devotees of Udero Lal were mesmerized in ecstasy and spirituality.

1. *Dolha Darya Shah, ahe Lalan Jo Lal,*
Dokhyan bokhyan paapeyan ja, bhla karen tho bhall,
Kaee meryan mal, jay achan daar Juhlelan jay,

1. Udero Lal, you are the king of all,
Sad people, hunger, you solve their problems,
Many people come, you bestow their wealth and health

2. *Dolha tunhgy dar tey, Karyan thee ardas,*
Naam panjho dae chet mein, Maan mein dae wesh vas,
Bekhnan dar panjhe tan, Kajaen keen naras,
Pori kajahs ahs, Panjho jary nader khe,

- 2 O! Udero Lal, I humbly request at your shrine,
 Make my heart pure; give me your love in my heart,
 Please, do not despair me from your door
 Fulfill my wish, as if I am yours,
3. *Palae paen dar te, Aaj ayo pojari,*
Bankhy bahro ja, Sabh ahn bekhari,
Jotan waro jag jo, Ahe datar datary,
Bhar por Bhandari, Dendo daan dadan khe,
- 3 Devotees have come to your door for the prayer,
 All Indus cult worshiper request to you humbly,
 You are the powerful and globally king of the light's worshiper,
 You always fulfill the wishes of the hopeless and destitute,
4. *Julan dar sawaly, Achy bodho aney bar,*
Dar tan hin datar jy, Wajy na ko khaly
Waseelo aney waly ahe saro sansar jo.
4. O! Juhle Lal,
 Young and old come to your door for solution to the problems,
 No one returns empty-handed from your door; you are the king and head
 of the whole universe.

The fourth step: is the *Chhando* (sprinkling the holy water), the water kept beside the *bahraano sahib* in *Jahree* (small pot) was sprinkled on the devotees one by one, he who receives the *chhando*, becomes the blessing for the devotees. Ramesh also performed this *chhando* ritual. The *chhando* water is thought to be sacred water of the Indus River and a remedy for all sorrows and difficulties.

The fifth step: *Palao* (holding the lap for praying) after the *chhando*, all the men and women perform the *pallao* ritual; they catch the front part of the shirt and (*Johlee*)

hold up clasped hands to pray for their wishes to be fulfilled. Devotees continuously hold the *pallao* for fifteen minutes and call Udero Lal to help them and overcome their sorrows. After performing this ritual, devotees come and perform the *dandey a* dance before the *balanbo sahib*. They enjoy a lot while performing the folk and traditional *dandeya/chhej* dance in front of the *balanbo sahib*. *Chhej* means flood, crescendo, and inundation. The *chhej* dance performers hold the sticks and clap with sticks in the circle with rhythmic drums and music. The dancers make such movements during the *chhej* dance which looks like Sindhu waves (Indus River).



Figure 39: Dandiya (folk dance) was performed at the time of the Bahraano Sahib ritual.

(Source: Researcher (2019))

Sixth is the procession: *The bahranno sahib* is placed into a mirror box. It was taken to Udero Lal's shrine in the main complex beside the mosque. The *bahraano sahib* is also passed in front of the mosque in the Udero Lal shrine's complex. The *bahraano sahib's* procession continues with the slogans "*Ayo Lal, Jhule Lal, Sabhaee Chao Juhle Lal*" (Udero Lal has come, all may say Jhlue Lal). The *bahraano sahib* passed from the complex's seven gates to reach the main graveyard (*qabar*)/*Qubo sahib* of the Udero Lal

Muslims Mujawars Sarfraz, Imtiaz, Ghulam Ali, Afaq, Abdul Jabbar, and Sikandar Shaikh remain in Udero Lal's shrine before the arrival of the *bahraano sahib* in the shrine; they all collect the *bhatta* (money) which is placed on the *mazar* (graveyard) of Udero Lal. Hindu devotees of the Udero Lal give the *bhetta* to the Muslim *Mujawars* during the *bahraano sahib's* procession at the shared complex of Udero Lal. Before the arrival of the procession of the *bahraano sahib* ritual, other Muslims, old *Mujawar* Aleem Muhammad, and Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh remain present at the door of the old graveyards shrine of the Muslims *Mujawar*. Hindus devotees also give them the *bhetta* during the *bahraano sahib* ritual at the Udero Lal shrine's shared complex.

People hold the *thal* (metal plate) on their heads and circumambulate *Bahraano sahib* seven or eleven times in the shrine of the Udero Lal with the slogans “*Ayo Lal Jhule Lal, Ayo Lal Jhule Lal, Sabhaee chao Jhule Lal* (Udero Lal has come, all should say Jhule Lal). This is the importance of the ritual and the natural feelings that go with the ritual, accompanied by dance, songs, singing, loud clapping, and rhyming of bells. *Bahraano sahib* is placed in front of the *Jot* room and brought to the old four Muslims *Mujawar's* graveyard rooms, then taken to the *kachhari* (discourse) room where *chhakhri* (wooden sandals) of the Udero Lal Sahib is secured in front of the *marik taro* (miracle tree). *Bahraano sahib* has been placed ahead of the mausoleum of the Udero Lal, which is the last place of the procession of the *bahraano sahib* ritual at the complex of Udero Lal. The Sufi fakirs also perform the Muslims Sufi *raag* during the *bahraano sahib's* ritual with the *yaktaro* and *chapri* (local music instruments) and keyboard instruments. The Sufi sings in front of the *bahraano sahib*:



Figure 40: The local folk singer sings the Sufi kalam at the shrine of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

*1. Mazbhan mulk mein mahroon munjhaya,
Shekhi peeri buzrgee behad bhlaya,
Kay namazoon navree parhan, kan mander wasaya,,
Oda keen aya Sachal aqul wara, Ishq je,*

Religions confused the people,

Priest, *Molvees*, and elders also misguide the people,

Someone prays in the mosque, someone worship in the temple,

The wiser man did not come close to love, Sachal says

2. *Aesa koe Jahan mely, Jahan hoton pey muskan mely,*

Oh! Kash mely madir mein Allah aur Masjid mein Bhagwan mely.

There may be such a world where there must be love and tolerance,

Would that! Allah may be found in the temple,

Moreover, Bhagwan (god) may be found in the mosque.

3. *Ko ah Rehman ji pasy , ko ah Bhagwan ji pasy,*

Munjho sajdo un hee khe aha jeko insan jey pasy,

Someone takes the Muslim side, and someone takes the Hindu side,

I kneel to those who take humanity side,

4. *Khateeban khe budae chhad ta mokhy khuf kone ko,*

Munjhee halat na hooran san, nakee ghlman ji pasy,

Tell the priest, and I am not afraid of you,

I do not need the princes and heaven,

5. *Awhan joon aadtoon dasjee asan jo rooh roe tho,*

Ehyo je thunjho je mazhab aha, Ma ahyan shetan ji pasy,

Our soul is unhappy to see your evil deeds,

If you belong to such religion, then I will take the side of Satan,

6. *Asan je deen aeny eeman jo dastor panhjo aha,*

Na hondo jekadhen hafiz, bory beman je pasy,

Our faith and religion is different from others,

Hafiz will not take the side of the evil deeds,

Bahraano sahib was taken from the Udero Lal complex to the *balanbo sahib*, which takes three minutes to reach at the *balanbo sahib*.

The seventh step: is the offering of the *bahranno sahib*: *bahraano sahib* was brought to the last destination of the *balanbo sahib*. It was placed on the wall of *balanbo sahib* which was the last step of the *bahraano sahib* ritual procession in which all the items of the *bahraano sahib* were immersed one by one in the deep water of *balanbo sahib*. Once again, male and female devotees came close to the *bahraano sahib* to perform the *arati*. All the devotees performed the *aarti* ritual of the *bahraano sahib* one by one. The *chhando* (sprinkling water) ritual was performed. *Palao* was also performed. The first two *daigs* (a steel round container filled with rice) were immersed into the *balanbo sahib*; before immersion of the two *daigs*, every devotee kissed the two *daigs* to show respect, both *daigs* were immersed in the depth of the *balanbo sahib*. All the items of *bahraano sahib* were immersed one by one into the *balanbo sahib*. Finally, *Jot sahib* was immersed in the *balanbo sahib*. Immersion of *Jot sahib* is worth watching in the deep water of the *balanbo sahib*. Once again, all Udero Lal followers said, *Sabhaee Chao Ayo Lal, Jhule Lal, Jheko Chawando Jhule Lal Tanhja Thenda Bera Paar* (All should say Jhule Lal, Udero Lal has come, all may succeed).

8.3. Akho (offering the food)

Akho ritual is also offered at *balanbo sahib* regularly in the morning and evening in the *balanbo sahib* at the Udero Lal complex's shared shrine. The *akho* consists of *acchac hanwar* (white rice), *Pani* (water), *maiwat* (fruits), (*kheer*) milk, *loungpuoto* (cardamom), *Ilaechi*, *Misri* (crystallized sugar lumps) *atto* (wheat kneaded flour),

ghee (oil) *narail* (coconuts) *meathaae* (sweets). The *akho* ritual is prepared and performed by the main *shevadar*. Hindus Shavadar Geno Mal told that:

We offer *akho* to please Lal sane. Lal sane becomes happy when fish and other species eat all the items of *akho* and then pray for Lal sane. Udero Lal rode on a *palo* fish when he triumphantly came out of Indus water as an avatar. The wishers also pleaded to pray *sawali* for them. I call their names one by one while holding the *pallav* and humbly requesting Lal sane to pray so that their wishes may be fulfilled. In return, they will offer the *akho* or *bahraano sahib* at the shrine of the Udero Lal (Personal interview, 18 November 2019).

8.3.1. Difference between *Bahraano Sahib* and *Akho*

Both *bahraano sahib* and *akho* rituals are performed at the bank of the Indus River. Both have consist of almost the same items. Interestingly *Jot* is not lighted on the *akho* ritual. The *akho* ritual is performed regularly in the evening and morning on the *balanbo sahib* at Udero Lal's complex. *Bahraano sahib* is performed on special occasions such as in the month of every new moon (*nao chand*), *Chetichand* (fair), the birth anniversary of the Udero Lal. When someone's wishes are fulfilled, they perform the *bahraano sahib* in return. The *bahraano sahib* ritual has procession steps, and *akho* ritual has no procession steps at the Udero Lal complex. The *akho* ritual is performed in a simple manner at the *balanbo sahib*; the feast is not arranged for this ritual. When *bahraano sahib* is performed, *Jotis* are lighted, especially feast and other music programs are arranged in which many devotees participate. Gopi Mal Hindu follower of the Udero Lal mentioned that:

We do not make any difference between the *akho* and *bahraano Sahib* because both rituals are essential for making Lal sane happy. However, the *akho* ritual is celebrated on a small level, and *bahraano sahib* is celebrated on a more significant and larger level in which invitations are extended. *Bhandaro* (food) is arranged for the participants. He further stated that *bahraano sahib* is more costly and *akho* is less expensive (Personal interview, 15 December 2019).

8.4. *Pallav / Juhlee* (pray) Ritual

Pallav/Johlee ritual (extending the front lower part of the *khameez* (shirt) or *Rao/potty* (scarves). Shavedar performs the *pallavo* ritual early in the morning and evening at the shrine of Udero Lal. The saint also used to perform the *pallav* ritual during the *akho* ritual at *balanhoh sahib* early morning and evening. The Udero Lal main complex shrine's gate is opened and closed with the *pallav* ritual by the Hindu Shivadar. *Sheva* (worship) of the Udero Lal regularly starts with the *Pallav* and ends with the *Pallav* ritual. The married couples visit the shrine of Udero Lal and perform the *pallav* ritual. Female Neeti Hindu follower of this ritual stated that:

My both sons are jobless. They have received a degree but still have not landed any good jobs. We are facing difficult times because my husband has become old and can not do any physical labor. He has educated his children to get the job and earn for the families. I also have a daughter, and we are upset about her marriage because , we do not have sufficient funds to marry her. After all, there is too much expenditure for arranging such occasions. We have come to Lal sane to perform the *pallav* ritual so that our problems are solved. We believe in the spiritual power of Udero Lal, we are convinced that he resolves all our problems (Personal interview, 14 October 2019).



Figure 41: Follower of the Udero Lal performs the Pallav ritual in the shrine of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The devotees of Udero Lal humbly beseech him while holding their *pallav/Jolhee* to have their wishes fulfilled and eliminate all their difficulties and sorrows. Males and females both performed this ritual. When devotees of the Udero Lal come for pilgrimage at his shrine, they perform the *pallav* ritual at *Jot* temple of the Udero Lal. The *Pallav* ritual is performed as an individual as well in a collective manner. The joint ritual of *pallav* is performed on the eve of main events such as *bahraano sahib* ritual held in front of the *balanbo sahib* or when *Mata sahib* (mother) performs the *pallav* ritual during the *Chetichand* (fair) of Udero Lal. The *pallav* ritual is also performed with the *akho*, which is performed regularly in the evening and morning at the *balanbo sahib*. Further, Jeevan, a Hindu follower of the Udero Lal said that:

If you have a firm belief in Lal sane, your intentions are genuine, and you perform the ritual of *pallav* with heart and soul, I assure you that Lal sane would listen to you in a short while, and all your wishes will be fulfilled (Personal interview, 17 May 2019).

Mata Sahib also performed *Pallav* ritual before the opening day of *Chetichand* of Udero Lal, in which all the main *shevadars* and devotees of the Udero Lal attend the ritual from the different parts of Sindh, Pakistan. This *pallav* ritual is performed collectively at the *balanbo sahib* during the *bahraano sahib* ritual or *Chetichand* and *Chodas* (bath) ritual. All the people sit on the floor and the main *shevadar* stands up in front of the *balanbo sahib*. He has a list of problems of all the people who want to get their wishes to be fulfilled. He reads out the name of the person and his wish one by one without being loud noisy while holding the *pallav* and humbly requesting Udero Lal to listen and confirm the wishes as Mohit Sharma utters that:

Lal sabnee ja kam kando, Gham laheendo,

Chao Juhle Lal, Sabhaee chao Jhule Lal,

Lalan sane ladla ahyum ghotan sando ghot

Jeky laryal laga ahn tawhan ji tanh kh kae na dejaom khot

Lal would remove our all sorrows and sadness,

Say Juhlelal, all should say Juhle Lal,
Lal sane you are lovely and like a groom,
Whosoever comes to you, in return, are fulfilled,

Bodh dard madan jee report,

Dakhal kajao darbar mein,

Datar tawan je dar te munhje shanja shah,

Nadeem kumar Usty waro jo ulad lye saawal athao,

Datar jolryoon sayoon kajaos.

Listen to the sad people,

Permit your entrance,

You are a king among kings,

Suneel Kumar, who belongs to city Usta Muhammad, request you for the son,

O, king! Bless him with a baby boy,

Moti Ram Jahlmagsi khe akhyan jee jot je rahmat kajaos,

Vekeyy Kumar Usty Muhammad waro pot Jo sawalee athao,

Dolat Ram Badha Jo ankyan jo sawali athao baba, jot ji nazardiyos,

Moti Ram, who belongs to Jahlmagsi city, is blind, bestow him with light,

Veky kumar, who belongs to Usta Muhammad city, bless him with a son,

Dolat is also blind; he cannot see, bestow his light,

Ae munjha shahan shah bi parwah,

Aseen kehra araz kary kehra araz kayoon,

Aagy be asanjo tawhawn khe araz aha munjha datar,

Jacobabad joon ba nayaroon ane yba mard khajee waya ahn,

Munjhe sane maher kar panjhee rahmat kar,

Ae munjha shahan ja Shah bi parwah,

Chodas dehry sawaly tawhan daron na khaly,

Oh, my lord! You are superior,

What should we request from you? We have already made a request,

Because you are the knower of all secrets,

Two daughters and two sons of the Hindus had been kidnaped from Jacobabad,

May Udero Lal, bring them back with your almighty power,

O, my Lord! We request to you on the day of *chodas* (bath) ritual,

Ae munjha datar dar munjhe rakhya kar,

Aaj kaha poe asan tekehra kast ttha achan tenh lye tawhan jaro tha,

Par unhan khe dur kardatar, hanry be asan ja kara jraas kar,

O, my Lord! Save us,

Hard days would come to us; you know well all the secrets,

O, my Lord, remove our all sorrows and troubles,

Waqat bharee thae kar sataary nekry thee narwar,

Panjhe bachran jee laho sar datar,

Dhram jee rakhya kar, nigari ji kalyan kar,

Now time has come, protect us like lion,

We are just like your children, save us,

Save our religion, look after our houses,

Jeenyh waraee bera par kar,

Ae munjha Shansha, Asan tawhan je dar tan kadhen khali na wendaseen,

Ayo lal , Juhle Lal, Sabhaee chao Julelal

As you wish, fulfill our wishes,

Oh, my king! We will not come back, empty-handed from your door,

Lal has come; all should say Juhle Lal,

Lalan lalan ma karyan munjho lalan kehry kund,

Aoo baryaan wethee lakryoon, munjho Joolan barum bund,

Hanry lallan mo manjh kehray ghond ,

Tu leky wetho ahen laat mein.

May I look hither thither, where my Lord has gone?

I burn the sticks of wood, but my Lord burn the log,

O, my Lord! What is my mistake?

You have immersed yourself into the light,

Jeko achy juhlelal te tehnjee mansha maan dahry,

Aamr aahas Mandan ja sotatt kam kary,

Harny chao rang par chary soka war sawakary,

He who comes to Juhle Lal, in return fulfills their wishes,

He fulfills the wishes very soon, who so ever comes to him,

He who fulfills the color of life and converts the barren land into fertilization,

Welha wasaee gahr,

Sukan banyan te har hanr pokh panchaendo panr,

Ae mujha Lalan ja Lal kar bhlayoon bhal,

He makes the house prosperous

Plough in the barren land, he will fertile the land,

O, my lord, bless on us,

Prem bahraano kadhyo athao agty bi hin je selection theyh bera par kajaos,

Ayo Lal Sabhaee chao Jule Lal,

Saat gru Aamr lalke jai, DaryShah sahib avatar ke jai,

Prem has performed the *bahraano sahib* ritual,

May you help him with the selection in medical colleges?

Lal has come; all should say Juhlelal,

Live long! Aamar Lal,

Live long! River god,

Pallav jenpaya se sadaeen sawa,

Raky aahs ander mein dolha twahn dar se ahy,

Asan ja ahn kam kasa, poe dolha deya kandao

Palavo je paeen tanhja khawand khilai na karyum,

He who performs the *pallav* ritual, their wishes are always fulfilled,

He who request to you with heart and soul at your door,

We make a mistake, but you forgive us,

You do not return us empty-handed when we have performed *pallav* ritual,

Hee dar tawhwa ji bhrya aee ahn,

Jeky khittaon asan kha thyon ohey maaf kar,

Oh, ji mehr ji nazar karum, so aeeb na tkey hakro

Ayo Lal Juhle Lal, Sabhaee chao Juhle Lal

Your doors are always fulfilled,

What mistakes, we committed, forgive us,

When you bestow a blessing on us, our faults have vanished.

Lal has come, all should say Juhle Lal.

8.5. *Jhand Lahan* (head shaving) Ritual

Jahand (Head shaving) ritual is performed by the Sindhi Hindu devotees of the Udero Lal at Udero Lal Shrine's shared space. Muslims also perform the same ritual. The Udero Lal's devotees come to his shrine, beg, and wish for a son's birth when their wishes are fulfilled. In return, they perform the *Jahand* ritual at the shrine of Udero Lal. All the disciples gather at the *Balanbo sahib*.



Figure 42: Hair is wrapped in cloth and tied with the tree branch after performing head-shaving (*Jahand*).

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

They brought the barber who shaved the head of the baby. The removed hair is wrapped in a piece of red cloth along with five- or ten-rupees Pak coin. Sometimes the devotees place five hundred rupees into the hair folded in a red piece of cloth. The wrapped cloth is then tied to the branch of a green tree (*khobar*) in front of Udero Lal's shrine. This tree is also called the miracle tree. Devotees of the Udero Lal make the round of his shrine and pray that they have fulfilled their rituals and have performed the *Jahand* ritual. They distribute the *seesa* (sweets) at the shared space of Udero Lal. Further, Mukesh Hindu follower of the Udero Lal said that:

I was childless for four years and requested Lal sane for the birth of a son. I had a blind belief that Lal sane would bless me with a son. I waited for a long time, and I was sure that one day, Lal sane would listen to my wish, and then, I will perform the *Jahand* ritual and distribute the sweets at the shrine of my *murshid* (spiritual master) Lal sane. Now Lal sane has blessed me with a son. I am thankful to Lal sane, and I do not know how to thank my Lal sane for such a blessing. He further uttered, *Jai Juhle Lal, beraae par* (Live long Jhlue Lal, all wishes will be full filled) (Personal interview, 11 September 2019).

8.6. Jarnyo (Rites of Passage for Boys/ Thread Ritual)

The rites of passage pass in three stages. The first stage is the separation in which people are separated from the other group, the second stage is liminality where people move from one place to another place, the third stage is incorporation when people enter in new society (Turner, 1967, p.14). *Jarnyo* (thread ritual) is the rites of passage in the Sindhi Hindu community in Sindh at the Udero Lal shrine's shared space, performed by the devotees of the Udero Lal. If a boy successfully passes the liminal stage through this ritual he can perform every Hindu community task. In the *Jarnyo* ritual, sacred threads are garlanded around the boy's neck. Sometimes *Jarnyo's* sacred thread is pierced into the boy's ear by the Hindu priest (*Maharaja*). The *Jarnyo's* sacred thread consists of three colors green, white, and pink because three threads are given in the names of Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh Bhagwan. The boy is prepared like a groom. He wears new clothes, shoes, and a white turban. They place a garland of currency notes around his neck. There is no fixed age in this ritual. It is also performed at the age of 5 to 25 years. All the Hindu devotees of the Udero Lal must perform this ritual before getting married.



Figure 43: Jarnyo (rites of passage) ritual is performed at the shrine of the Udero Lal complex

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The boy made three rounds of the bonfire, then *Mahraja* (Priest) recited *mantar* (holy verses) over the threads; he decorated a garland of threads around the boy's neck. He further taught the boy, not to do evil deeds, respect parents, elders, and teachers, never tell a lie, always speak the truth, always protect religion, and respect all other religions, do not deceive anyone, and work hard with honesty and sincerity.



Figure 44: After performing the Jarnyo (sacred thread) ritual, boys paid homage to the Udero Lal shrine.

(Source: Researcher. 2019)

Jarnya can be performed at any temple. The devotees of the Udero Lal conduct this ritual at his shrine. The Shaikh Muslims Mujawar receives rupees 125 as *bhetta* from Hindu devotees who perform the *jarnyo* ritual. They also pay Hindu's Mata sahib rupees 1125 as *bhetta* for *Jarnyo* at the Udero Lal shrine's . Furthermore, Moti Ram, a Hindu follower of the Udero Lal, mentioned that:

Come what may, we are Lohana a Hindu caste, perform *jarnyo* (thread ritual), like a Muslims circumcision ceremony. It is of utmost importance for us to conduct this ritual at Lal sane's shrine, but I am not sure if other Hindu castes such as Bagri, Kulhi, Bheel, Meghwar Jandryawara have the same regard. Before 50 years, the devotees of the Udero Lal used to wear *dhotee* (a piece of cloth) traditional dress and perform the *janrya*. Nowadays, the youngsters adopt the western dress pattern and perform this ritual in English dress, but the core of this ritual has remained unchanged. (Personal interview, 17 October 2019).

8.6.1. Historical Background of the Jarnyo (Thread Ritual)

According to the oral traditions, *Janrya* (sacred thread) is a symbol and ritual of the Hinduism religion. When enemies teased the Hinduism followers, Hindu priests called Varun Dev to protect their religion. He listened to his followers and came as Avatar of the Bhavani Devi. She started to kill all sinners and drank their blood. She placed a garland of the sinner's head around her neck. She also killed other innocent people. All Hindu religious priests went to Vishnu Bhagwan and narrated the entire story. On listening to their story, Vishnu asked followers to go to Shri Shankar Bhagwan. All priests asked Shankar Bhagwan to save them from the Kali Mata Devi's atrocities and her killing of sinful and innocent people. As Kali Devi was crossing Mahesh Bhagwan, he decorated the sacred golden thread (*sonojanrya*) around her neck and requested her to bestow the innocent people. Kali Mata Devi became happy and forgave them. The *Jarnyo* is known for Vishnu, Brahma, and Mahesh Bhagwan, who protected the *Jarnyo*. The *Janrya* ritual had started at that time and continues till this day.

8.7. *Chhando* (sprinkling water) Ritual

Chhando (sprinkling water) ritual is performed with sacred water. The *chhando* is a Sindhi word that means sprinkling the water (*paree jee chhandkar karan*). It is used in the rituals for sprinkling water. The *Jahreer* (metallic pot) was filled with the *balanbo sahib* water. The *balanbo sahib* water is sacred water and reminiscent of the *Sindhu* (Indus River). This ritual is performed by Mata sahib herself during the annual fair of the Udero Lal. In her absence; the main *shevadar* (attendants) conduct this ritual. She/he puts her hand into the water then sprinkles on the faces of Udero Lal. This sprinkling water is sacred and blessed and saves them from evils. This *chhando* ritual is performed at every main event.



Figure 45: *Chhando* (sprinkling water) ritual is performed with this *Jahreer* (metallic pot) at the Udero Lal's shrine.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Before serving the *Bhandaro Sahib* (sacred food), the *chhando* ritual is performed on the *bhandaro shabib* (sacred food/kitchen) as it may not become less till the end and ought to be saved from the evil eyes. When *bahraano Sahib* Ritual is performed, then *chhando* ritual is also performed during *bahraano sahib* ritual. *Jahree* (metallic pot) always remains filled with water at *Jot* at the Udero Lal shrine. When the devotees visit Udero Lal *Jot*, they perform this *chhando* ritual at the *Jot* room . Lachhman Dass, a Hindu follower of the Udero Lal, stated that:

Chhando (sprinkling water) ritual cures all the diseases and overcomes our sorrows. It is sacred water and blessings for us because it belongs to Lal sane, and Lal sane has also appeared from this sacred water. This water also resembles the Indus River water that is Sindh's life line. (Personal interview 17 December 2019).

8.8. Chodas (bath) Ritual

Chodas (bath) ritual is a sacred ritual in which the shrine of the Udero Lal is given a bath with milk, rose water, and *balanbo sahib* (well) water twice a year after the eleventh day of the main fair (*Jaat / chetichand*) birth anniversary of the Udero Lal and (*adh jat/Asu*) fair. A large number of the Udero Lal devotees come from the different parts of Sindh, Pakistan, and abroad to attend this ritual. This ritual is like a pilgrimage (*Hajj*) for the Hindu devotees of the Udero Lal. This ritual starts at 4:00 am. The main gates of the Udero Lal shrine are opened at 4:00 am and the procession starts coming from the *blaanbo sahib* . Mata sahib leads the *chodas* ritual procession from the *balanbo sahib* to the main shrine of the Udero Lal with *pinjars* (rhymes) of the Udero Lal. This main slogan of the Udero Lal “*Ayo Lal Jhlue Lal, Sabhaee chao Ayo Lal Jhluelal, Kalnge Waro Lal, Jeko Chawando Jhlue Lal Tanhja Thenda Bera Par* ” (Udero Lal has come, he who says Jhule Lal, his/her wishes will be full filled) continues till the end of this ritual procession.

First, Mata Sahib enters the Udero Lal canopy accompanied by the other main *shevadar* (worshippers) and devotees. She gives a bath to the Udero Lal's shrine with rose water, *balanbo sahib* water, and milk, then devotees of the Udero Lal perform

this ritual one by one. The Udero Lal shrine's bath water is sacred water for the Udero Lal devotees that cures all the sorrows and diseases. Every devotee, family members, and friends take the water in small bottles for their homes. The *Paag* (head wearing like a crown) and *par* (white cloth sheet) was dedicated to Udero Lal's shrine by the Hindu *gaadinashen* Mata Sahib, accompanied by other devotees of Udero Lal. This ritual continued till 7:00 am. Mata sahib performs the *plavo* ritual at the end. Rakhi a female Hindu follower of the Udero Lal stated that:

Chodas (bath) ritual is like a Hajj (pilgrimage) for us. As Muslims go to Makkah to perform the Hajj, we come to the shrine of the Udero Lal on the *choadas* day, to perform this ritual as part of our pilgrimage. We take a bath at *balanbo sahib* on the day of *choads* ritual, which means, we perform the pilgrimage (Hajj) like Muslims. The Udero Lal bath water is sacred water for us as Muslims have *aab-i- zamzam* (sacred water from Makkah) water of Makkah (Personal interview, 20 April 2019).

According to a local oral tradition, Udero Lal came on *Gagan* horse near the (*khabar jo waar*) verdant tree, which still exists. The land opened like a window; *Jal* appeared, then Udero Lal disappeared into the land along with his horse. This miracle happened in the old Jahejo village near Hala (which is now Udero Lal village in District Matiari, province Sindh, Pakistan), Udero Lal's grave was made at the same place where he disappeared. *Chodas* day is also celebrated on the same day in which Udero Lal's grave is given a bath with the rose of water, milk, and *balanbo sahib* sacred water.

8.9. Muslim Rituals

Muslims did not perform the rituals regularly. They perform occasional rituals, but Hindus are very consistent in performing the rituals at the Udero Lal shrine. The Muslims and Hindus do not perform any rituals collectively. Muhammad Ashraf Muslim follower of Udero Lal stated that:

Most of the Hindu devotees pay a visit to the Udero Lal shrine and conduct the rituals, Hindu devotees worship more than the Muslims do; therefore, everything in the shrine gives a Hindu look. Hindus have blind faith in Udero Lal (Personal interview, 13 June 2019).

Some rituals are conducted by the Muslim disciples of Udero Lal at Udero Lal shrine; these rituals are mentioned below.

8.9.1. *Jhand* (head shaving) Ritual

Jhand (head shaving) ritual is also performed by the Muslim followers of the Udero Lal. First, they visit a shrine and request Udero Lal to bless them with a son. When the desire of the couple is fulfilled they perform the *Jahand* ritual. They celebrate with their relatives and invite them to Udero Lal's shrine. They perform cultural dances (*Juhmar*) and distribute sweets. Some sacrifice a goat at the shrine and prepare the food, and *biryani* (Sindhi food rice dish) from the goat's meat, and distribute it among themselves. They shave the child's head, put the shaven hair into pieces of cloth, and tie it on the miracle tree at the Udero Lal shrine. The Hindus also perform same ritual, which I have already mentioned, but Hindus do not sacrifice a goat.

8.9.2 *Par Wajhan* (decoration with cloth)

The grave is decorated with different colorful clothes, some decorated with green, white, and red pieces on which verses from the holy Quran were inscribed. Both Hindus and Muslims also performed the *Par* ritual.



Figure 46: The right side with white Sindhi topi (cap) is Shah Abdul Latif Bhit's *Sajadanasheen* Syed Waqar Ali Shah and left side Udero Lal's Muslim *Sajadanasheen* Ghulam Abbass Shaikh decorated the *par* (sheet of cloth) on the Udero Lal shrine.

(Source: Researcher, 2019).

The devotees offered the *par* (a piece of cloth) for the different wishes to be fulfilled, such as the blessing of a baby, jobs, cure from diseases, illness, a purge of spirit possession, and marriage. In return, they offered this ritual and distribute the sweets at the shared space of the Udero Lal shrine. The *Par* ritual was also offered on the main events such as the annual fair and bath ritual of the Udero Lal. When visitors or guests visit the shrine, they also offer this ritual as a symbol of respect for Udero Lal. Some Sindhi Hindus also offer Sindhi Ajrak to the shrine at the Udero Lal as a Sindhi god. Ali Zaman Muslim follower of the Udero Lal stated that:

This is the shared place for all, and everybody can visit here and get the soul of spirituality from the lovely saint who was sent by the almighty Allah, this saint is for all human beings, everyone comes and offer the *par* ritual as respect and pay tribute to him (Personal interview, 24 September 2019).

8.9.3. Qull Parhan (Offer the Holy Quran Verses)

Molvee (religious pedagogue) Nadeem Panhwar said that he calls *Azan* (call of God) five times a day, and teaches Holy Quran in the mosque located in the shared space of the Udero Lal's shrine. He sat on the left side corner of the shrine.



Figure 47: Sitting right side, Pesh Imam of Udero Lal mosque recites the Holy Quran verses in the Udero Lal's shrine.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

He recited the verses of the Holy Quran in the shrine of the Udero Lal. He stayed in the shrine for half an hour and recited verses from the Holy Quran, quite audibly and clearly. Furthermore, Molvee Nadeem *Pesh Imam* (keeper) of the Udero Lal mosque stated that:

Udero Lal is my spiritual master; he has called me here to look after the mosque and lead the prayer five times a day and teach the holy Quran to the children in the mosque. I teach the holy Quran free of charge and look after a mosque free of cost because Udero Lal came into my dream and asked me to come to Dargah and perform duty in the mosque (Personal interview, 5 December 2019)

8.9.4. Matam (Chest Beating) Ritual

The Udero Lal village's Shia Muslims are also Udero Lal followers; they conduct *matam* (chest beating) ritual every 10th day of the month of Muharram Sharif and mourn the death of Hazrat Imam Hussain at the shared space of Udero Lal shrine.



Figure 48: Shia Muslims perform *Matam* (chest beating ritual) in the shrine of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Syed Attaullah Shah, 2019)

They take out a large procession that passes through different main streets of the Udero Lal village and finally reaches the shrine of Udero Lal. They perform the *matam* (chest beating) ritual in the shrine of the Udero Lal for an hour. They stand around Udero Lal's grave and narrate the “Karbala episode” while performing this ritual. Muslim Shia Syed Muhammad Ali Shah argued that:

Our ancestors used to say that if you observed the appearance of the Udero Lal, it resembles with the symbols of Hazarat Imam Hussain in the Karbala battle. Udero Lal was also riding on the horse (*zuljenah*), he also held a sword and flag (*Alam*) in his hand, and finally, he had a beard which is *sunnah* of the holy prophet (peace be upon him), Therefore we believe that Udero Lal also belonged to us who fought against the cruelty and injustice perpetrated against the Hindus and Muslims in Sindh (Personal interview, 22 December 2019).

8. 10. Symbols at the Shrine of Udero Lal

The symbol is the little component of ritual objects, which keeps the vital characteristic of ritual performance. The specific form is essential in a ritual setting; they are empirical objects, gestures, events, relationships, and activities in a unique ritual position. Symbols became human purposes, ends, means, interests, and social actions (Turner, 1983, pp. 493-510). In addition, symbols assist people to discuss the objects that create the meanings. They play an essential role in religious ceremonies. There are many forms of symbols. A language is also a form of a symbol that combines sound, meaning, and culture. Religious ideas could be communicated through the arts, which give symbolic meaning to religious rituals. However, related community members can easily understand religious symbols, but members of the other community will feel difficulty in understanding (Stein & Stein, 2016, pp. 75-76). The Udero Lal shared space has many symbols that have meanings that are physically and emotionally attached to Hindus and Muslim followers of the Udero Lal. *Jot* is the eternal flame and central symbol of the Udero Lal for the Hindu followers at the shrine; they attached their emotions and feelings with this eternal flame and assumed that they feel and see Udero Lal in the *Jot*.

Both *Jal* and *Jot* relate to each other in every ritual at the Udero Lal's shrine. *Jal* is the lifeline for both Hindus and Muslims. *Jal* symbolizes their life as a source of living in this world. *Peehango* (cradle) symbolizes the Indus River high triggered waves, when newborn Udero Lal slept in it. *Kahchhari* (discourse) room of the Udero Lal disseminated the message of peace and tolerance. *Maniktaro* (miracle tree) provided the cure for the diseases. *Nagaro* (drum) gave the spiritual trance while dancing on the rhythm of the *nagaro*. *Bhandaro* (sacred food) was served to every person.

Ghenat Ghryal : (bell clock) informed the timings in ancient times. *Ghant* (bell) rang to notify the arrival of the followers. *Kalangi* (like trident) was marked on the *paag* (head) of the Udero Lal shrine regularly to symbolize the king of the Sindhi Hindu community. *Jahando* (flags) showed the identity and victory of the Udero Lal for the Hindu followers. Udero Lal handed over seven other symbols to both Hindus and

Muslim followers, but they did not correctly carried-on at the shared space of the Udero Lal. Every symbol of Udero Lal shrine is significant and essential for both Udero Lal followers who carried the essential meanings and message. I have analyzed in detail every symbol one by one in this chapter.

8.10.1. The *Jot* (Lamp)

Jot is a Sindhi language word that is used for the *Roshni* (light). The *Jot* symbolizes power, knowledge, light, hope, fertility, welfare, unity, and Udero Lal's representation. Udero Lal is also remembered through the *Jot*. It is also known as eternal flame and the form of Udero Lal. The *Jot* is placed beside the Udero Lal's shrine, also known as *Jot Sahib Jo Mandir* (temple of the lamps).



Figure 49: Main *Jots* (lamps) at the shrine of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019).

The *Jot* and mosque and the temple stand side-by-side next to the Udero Lal's shrine at the shared complex. *Jot* is worshiped in every temple of the Udero Lal in Sindh by Udero Lal's followers. *Jot* is also known as an iconic representation of the Udero Lal.

One attendant is especially deputed round the clock to look after the *Jot* room. Furthermore, Jahman Meghwar, an old Shivadar (worshiper) of the Jot temple at Udero Lal Complex's shrine explains that:

I have strict instruction from the Hindu *gaadinasheen* Mata sahib that come what may, the *Jot* should never be turned off. I look after the *Jot sahib* continuously for 24 hours. *Jot*'s light has been turned on since the inception of this temple at the shared complex of Udero Lal and burns till today. I have been looking after the *Jot sahib* for eight years and have never let it turn *Jot* off. I always remained alert about the *Jot* in the temple and ensure that its oil never dries or the pot doesn't run out of oil. I am paid rupees 11,000 per month for my work. I am happy, Lal Sane has given me a lot, and Mata sahib trusts me (Personal interview, 25 May 2019).

8.10.1.1. Main Jots (Lamps) at the Shrine of Udero Lal

The four *Jots* are placed in the temple, lighting since the temple's old building was constructed while three major *Jots* are lighting at the temple's center to the east. The *Jahri* of *Jal* (water pot) is placed near the *Jot*, and is used for the *Chhando* (Sprinkling water, which is the sign of the blessing for the Udero Lal devotees). The *Jal* (water) *Jot* (light) signifies an eternal relationship with the Udero Lal's devotees. The *Jal* and *Jot* are also central to the *bahraano sahib* ritual.

The fourth *Jot* is placed behind the main three *Jots* where Ganesha's picture is fixed on the wall above it, and small *murtis* (statue) of two cows are placed with golden colors near the fourth *Jot* in the *Jot* temple. Instead of the cow's two small statues, the temple's center remains occupied with the *Jot* in the shared complex of Udero Lal in Sindh. Few framed pictures of Udero Lal are placed in the temple in which he is shown sitting on the horse with a white beard, a crown on the head, and the sword is in his hand. The *Juhla* (cradle) is kept at the entrance door inside the temple. Two boxes are kept in which disciples put the money into the box during the temple's visit. Further, Chandar, who is the Hindu devotee of the Udero Lal, described that:

Muslims claimed that Udero Lal is a Muslim and belongs to Muslims. Hindus claimed that Udero Lal is Hindu and he is the pride of Hindus. Hindus made a bet with Muslims that they will place the turned off *Jot* in the temple; if the *Jot* is found

turned on itself that would mean Udero Lal belongs to Hindus and if not then he belonged to the Muslims. Muslims accepted this bet. Both Hindus and Muslims placed the turned *Jot* off into the temple and closed the temple door for a while. When they opened the temple's door, they found the *Jot* turned on in the Udero Lal shrine at *Jot* room. In this way, Hindus won this bet, and hence, it was proved by the Almighty *Jot* that Udero Lal is Hindu and he belonged to Hindus. *Jot* is a powerful symbol in which Udero Lal is always present (Personal interview, 13 September 2019).

There are others many temples of Udero Lal in Sindh, such as in Sanghar, Nawabshah/Benazeerabad, Sakrand, Sanjhor, Khipro, Mirpurkhas, Hala, Karachi, Hub chowki Lasbela Baluchistan, Gadab, Mol Sharif, Seree, Sukkur, Hala, Shahdadpur, Nasarpur (birthplace of Udero Lal where *Jot* is not lighted). In Tando Adam sacred sculptures and figures are placed which are associated with the Udero Lal but instead of the statues, the core of temples had always remained the *Jot* at all the temples in Sindh.

Bells hang inside and outside the *Jot* temple. Devotees of the Udero Lal ring the bell before and after the entrance into the temple. As the devotees enter into the *Jot mandir* (temple), they utter "*Jai Jhule Lal, Jeko chawando Juhle Lal tanhja thenda bera par, wari sabhe chao Julelal, Darya Badshah ke Jae*" (live long Jhule Lal, he who says Jhule Lal, he will be succeeded, again all should say Jhule Lal, long live the king of the Indus River). One of the devotees of the Udero Lal Gopi Bagari entered the temple. He banged the bells while pronouncing "*Munjha Maliq, Zindhafir, Daray Badshah, tu jarar har ahen, har hand mojooda hen assan khe daseen tho, asan ja dukh dur kar, Juhle Lal ayo Llal, jeko chawando Juhle Lal tanh jathenda bera par*" (My owner, living saint, king of Indus River, knower of everything, omnipresent, omnipotent, remove our sorrows, solve our problems, he who will say Jhule Lal, will succeed, he knelt in front of the *Jot*, cupped his hand three times over the *Jot*, touched his face and chest with the same hand and then took a droplet of water from *Jahari/Jal* which was placed beside the *Jot*. He further then held the *Palao* (lap) and started to utter the words: "*Asan khe hamesha hamth dae, musklat khe moh dayon, awhan khe palao khree araz kayan tho ta munjhe dil ji murad pory kary and*

mushkal waqat dur kar.” (Give us the courage to face the sorrows and difficulties, I request you while holding the lap to fulfill my wishes and overcome my troubles).



Figure 50: Jotyana Jo Kamro (lamps room)/temple at the shrine of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Further, he stated that:

Udero Lal is present everywhere through the representation of the *Jot* because he has instructed us, not despair because he is present in the *Jot*. When the followers miss him they can find him in the *Jot*. So I feel and see my *murshid Lal sane* (spiritual leader) in the *Jot* watching us every time, everywhere, and he knows the secrets of our hearts (Personal interview, 18 November 2019).

8.10.1.2. Other Jots (Lamps) at the Complex of Udero Lal

Apart from the main four permanent *Jots* in the *Jot* temple, which are in the Udero Lal complex, the nineteen other *Jots* are lighted at the different parts of the Udero Lal complex in the evenings, which are not permanent. Five *Jots* are lighted inside the tomb of the Udero Lal, two in the verandah, one in *kahchhari* (discourse) room, one in the *Khabar/Marik taro* (miracle tree), one in the *Nobat/Nagaro* (Drum) room, one in the *Shaikh sahib Mujawar* (Muslims caretaker) room, one in the *Gahryal* (wall clock) room, one in *Hazrat Syed Gul Makhdoom Shah'' shrine* (Muslim''s graveyard) room, one in *balanbo sahib/kooh*, five in the *Samadhi* of the *Mata sahib* (mother''s) room. The *Jots* are also lighted on various occasions and celebrations such as on the every *Chand* (new moon) *Chetichand* (fair/birthday of Udero Lal), *Asu/Adh Jat*, the ritual of Sindhi new year, *tharoon* (Friday), and on the ritual of the *bahraano sahib*. One of the Hindu devotees of the Udero Lal Teekam Dass described that:

Jot symbolizes life and death, same as Indus water; if *Jot* is turned off, then this is the sign of doomsday; it would come, we heard this from our forefathers, and it is also our own belief. *Jot* is the Symbol and manifestation of the Udero Lal (Personal interview, 19 October 2019).

According to the oral tradition, when Udero Lal was about to leave this world, he handed over the Indus Cult's spiritual leadership to his cousin Pugar who was very close to him. He also gave his cousin seven symbols, and *Jot* was an important symbol among all others, which symbolizes Udero Lal's existence. Further, one of the Hindu followers of Udero Lal Akash Kumar mentioned that:

When Udero Lal was sitting with his devotees in the *Kachari* (discourse) room, he informed all his disciples that he would depart from this world after a few days; while listening to this sad news, all disciples became dejected. Udero Lal asked them not to be disappointed; he was always with them everywhere. You can see and find me in the *Jot* (Personal interview, 27 August 2019).

After India's partition in 1947, Sindhi Hindu followers of the Udero Lal migrated from Pakistan to Ulhasnagar in Maharashtra in India and took *Jot's* flame from Sindh's Udero Lal temple into the Chaliha Sahib Udero Lal temple in India. The *Jot* also signifies the symbol of an unbroken relationship with Sindh and Sindhi's people, whom they left empty-handed during the havoc of the Indian partition. *Jot* has so much importance that it is still embedded in the Sindhi diaspora's love with their motherland Sindh and Sindhi language and Indus River in Sindh. (Boivin & Rajpal 2016, pp. 51-62).

8.11. Balanbo Sahib/ Khooh (Well)

Balanbo sahib/ Khooh (well) is the symbol of Udero Lal related to the Indus water. The *balanbo sahib* water is believed to be sacred water and a blessing for the Udero Lal's devotees. According to the Oral tradition: Udero Lal pierced his stick into the land surface and water sprung out. He asked his cousin Pugar to build a well where water has sprung out. He further explained that the water would be a remedy for all the sorrows, illness, and diseases, whosoever will get *sanan* (bath), *Chhando*, (sprinkling water) from the well with blind belief, in return his/her wishes will be fulfilled.



Figure 51: Balanbo Sahib/Khooh (sacred well) at the shrine of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019).

The well (*Khooh*) was named *Balanbo Sahib*; this word has been taken from the Sanskrit *baal* that means fresh, *Anmboh* means water, *balanbo* means freshwater, *Sahib* is Sindhi language word used for respected thing/person. *Balanbo* water is embodied with the Indus River water. This well has never dried up, and still, its depth has not been measured yet by anyone. This *khooh* water has a different taste and smell, which is believed to cure all troubles. The Udero Lal disciples also used this water, like Indus Rive water, at the peak of the ritual's performance. Few drops of *balanbo sahib* water are put into the dying person's mouth to bestow his blessing through this sacred water. The main rituals *bahraano sahib* and *akho* are performed at the *balanboh sahib*. The main ritual *balanho sahib* begins from the *Jot* and ends at *balanabo sahib* water (*Jal*). It is also oral narratives that when Udero Lal was leaving this world, he along with his *Neel Gohra* (horse) jumped into the *balanbo sahib* and never came back. The *balanbo sahib* also has more importance so Udero Lal offered himself into the *balanbo sahib*. Furthermore, the Hindu Shivadar Gano Mal said that:

Many devotees offered golden, silver jewelry, ornaments, cash rupees, sweets, and fruits to the *balanbo sahib*; in return, their wishes were fulfilled. He further said that they clean *balanbo sahib* twice a year in the presence of Mata sahib, and materials collected during cleaning are taken on the trolley and immersed into the Indus River because it is the latter's property. It is believed that there is no difference between the

balanbo sahib and Indus River water once they are mixed. (Personal interview, 21 May 2019).

Another oral tradition about *balanbo sahib* (well) is that Udero Lal came from Nasarpur to visit the Jahejo village (which is now Udero Lal village) in Taluka Hala, Sindh. He saw a beautiful well on the fertile land and wanted to purchase it. He met the Muslim owner of the well Mamman Shaikh and requested him to sell the well. The Shaikh refused to sell it. Udero Lal explained that he wanted to purchase it for the welfare and well-being of the people and make water available for survival for the species also.



Figure 52: Inside view of the Balanbo Sahib/Khooh (sacred well) at the Udero Lal complex's shrine.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

He further argued that the well water will be served to travelers from the far-flung areas. The landowner told Udero Lal that the well has high value and it is beyond your capacity to purchase. Udero Lal struck his stick into the land, and a jewel popped out. The owner of the well was taken aback to see such a unique miracle by Udero Lal. He immediately agreed to sell the well to Udero Lal. Mammon requested Udero

Lal to bestow his blessing for a son because as he was childless for long time and had grown old now. He promised that his descendants will remain Muslim Mujawars at his shrine forever. He agreed to hand over the well to Udero Lal free of cost. Udero Lal accepted his wishes and told him he agreed to have his decedents as Mujawars of this shrine. The Muslims are Muajwars of the Udero Lal shrine now at the shared shrine complex. In addition to that, Gopi Hindu (attendants) received many calls during the offerings of the *Akho* at *balanbo sahib*. He further mentioned that:

All disciples of Udero Lal knew that this is the offering time of the *Akho* into the *balanbo sahib*. I received calls on my mobile from throughout Pakistan to pray for them during the *Akho* ritual. I prayed for them that their wished be fulfilled. This *balanbo sahib* has great importance for Udero Lal followers because it is the central place of abode of Udero Lal. (Personal interview, 19 December 2019).

8.12. *Jal/Paree* (Water)

The people of Sindh believed that *Paree* (water) survives and continues to flow for the Sindhi people and all species. Udero Lal has integral relation with the Indus River. He is also personified with the Indus River because he is an incarnation of the Indus River by the Hindus. Udero Lal is also the River god of the Sindhi Hindus. Muslim's narrative also saved the Muslims from the Hindu king's cruelty at Indus Alor Sukkur. He also saved many Muslims from drowning who were crossing the Indus River on a boat. Udero Lal followers worship and perform the ritual with the water *chhando* (sprinkling water) because it is believed that this water is a blessing and sacred for them. It is given by the Udero Lal as a sign of wealth, fertility, hope, prosperity, and source of alive.

Udero Lal gave the symbol of water to his cousin Pugar for worship and asked him to disseminate the importance of waters among all the followers. Udero Lal also made the Indus cult (*Darya Panth*) on the Indus River bank to worship the water and build the temple on the Indus River bank to spread his message of Udero Lal in length and breadth of Sindh. In the olden time, the followers of the Udero Lal used to take *bahraano sahib* passionately amid singing and music, and famous raising slogans *Aayo Lal Jhule Lal, Jeko chawando Juhle Lal tanjhe thenda bera Parr* (Udero Lal

has come, all should say, Udero Lal, he who will say Udero Lal he will succeed) to Indus River and perform the *bahraano sahib* ritual for Indus. Nowadays, the Indus River has changed its course so the followers of Udero Lal performed the *bahraano sahib* ritual in the canal, river or well. Furthermore, Vijay Kumar and Hindus followers of the Udero Lal had this to say:

Jal is the symbol of Lal's sane because he stressed the importance of water. Therefore as a mark of respect to Lal sane, we should not waste the water rather save and worship it. We cannot survive without *Jal*. We are dependent on water; if there is no water, it would be difficult to cultivate our land and harvest crops like rice, wheat. Similarly, the vegetables and our animals could not survive without water nor the, creatures who live in the water. Udero Lal came from the water as an avatar of the Indus River and Vedic God Varuna; therefore, he has eternal relation with the Indus River water (Personal Interview, 12 November 2019).

8.13. Jhoolo/Peenhgho (Cradle)

Jhoolo (cradle) is one of the essential symbols of the Udero Lal. The four *Jhoolas* (cradles) are placed in Udero Lal's shared complex. One main *Jhoolo* is placed in the *Jot* temple in which Udero Lal's framed photo is preserved. *Jhoolo* is decorated with green and red pieces of cloth. When devotees enter the *Jot* temple, they swing the *Jhoohlo*. The devotees also place a *bhetta* (money) amounting to Pak rupees ten to one thousand in the *Jhoohlo*. When there is Udero Lal fair, then the main *Jhoolo* is swung for twenty-four hours a day by the *Shevadar* (worshiper). Second *Jhoolo* is placed in the Shiva room, third *Jhoolo* is kept in the *Naam jo kamro* (worship) room and the fourth is placed in the *Lal sane jo Ghory waro kamro* (equestrian room).

The other *Jhoolo* was also kept in the Udero Lal temple at Tando Adam and Mirpurkhas. The symbol of *Jhoolo* is found in every temple of Udero Lal as an essential symbol showing his presence in the cradle. The cradle's swinging also resembled the Indus River's waves by the Udero Lal's devotees. The name Jhule Lal is also connected with Udero Lal's *Jhoola* (cradle). Jhule Lal's name has been taken from the *Jhoola*. Now old cradle has been replaced with the new donated by the

female Muslim devotees of the Udero Lal, who belongs to the Shadadpur, Sindh. Furthermore, Hindu followers of the Udero Lal Deepak described that:

Jhoolo of Lal sane is a sacred symbol for us in whom we feel and observe that Udero Lal is present and swinging in the cradle. When Udero Lal was a newborn baby, he used to swing in the cradle. Udero Lal used to sleep in the cradle, and it used to swing itself. We must swing the cradle of Udero Lal when we call out the name of Udero Lal's shrine. Our wishes will be fulfilled, and all sorrows would vanish due to Lal sane's prayer (Personal interview, 12 January 2020).

8.13.1. History of the *Jhoolo* (Cradle)

According to the Oral tradition when the despotic ruler of Thatta Mirkh Shah came to know that Udero Lal Avatar of the Sindhi Hindus had been born at Nasarpur in the home of Ratan and Mata Devaki he refused to believe this news. Fear engulfed him and he thought he will fight with us. When Udero Lal was young and had profoundly protected the Hindus the emperor was worried. Mirkh Shah called his minister Ahyo and ordered him to kill the Hindu Avatar Udero Lal. Mirkh Shah also ordered all the Sindhi Hindus to adopt Islam as a religion, otherwise, their heads would be severed. When the Minister came to Nasarpur and reached Udero Lal's home, he saw that baby was sound asleep in the *Jhoola* which was swinging itself,



Figure 53: The follower swung Jhoolo (cradle) of the Udero Lal at the Udero Lal complex's shrine.

(Source: Researcher (2019))

Ahyo minister of Mirkh Shah had brought a poisonous flower with him to murder Udero Lal. As he brought the poisonous flower close to his face to make him smell it, the flower struck hard on Ayo minister's face and he fell on the ground. He was totally surprised to see such a great miracle. The baby suddenly became a 16 years young boy, swinging in the cradle, again he saw an older man with a white beard in the cradle. Further, he saw that young boy with the crown of the king, which was placed on his head. The other moment he saw that the same baby was sound asleep. In this way, Ahyo minister was shown different miracles in the *Jhoola* by the newborn baby (Udero Lal). Now Ahyo minister was sure that he is the saint and Avatar of the Sindhi Hindus. Ahyo minister apologized to Udero Lal for his mistakes. He went back and informed about the miracles of Udero Lal to Mirkh Shah's reaction quite abnormal; he didn't believe what he had listened to. Since then, the *Jhoola* has become an important symbol of worship by the devotees until today at all Sindh's temples of the Udero Lal in Sindh.

8.14. *Kachari Jo Kamro* (Discourse Room)

Kachari jo kamro (discourse) room is in the Udero Lal complex's shared space, which is beside the mosque, shrine, temple, and shrine of the four Muslims Shaikh

Mujawars. *Kachari jo kamro* was like a class room. Udero Lal used to deliver a lecture to his devotees on different topics such as religion, philosophy, peace, tolerance and harmony, equality, and other social and cultural issues. Everyone was free to criticize and raise questions. Everybody was given an equal chance to express their views as independently. Everyone had a right to agree and disagree on the topics.



Figure 54: Kachari Jo Kamor (discourse room) in which Chakhris (wooden sandals) of Udero Lal's are placed in the mirror box.

(Source: Researcher (2019))

It was a kind of University class where multiple topics were discussed, and knowledge was disseminated to ordinary people. There was no fixed criterion to participate in the *Kachari jo kamro*. Young, old, men and women could participate in the class and were free to express their arguments on any topic. Wooden sandals (*chakhris*) as symbols are now placed on the wooden chair in the room. The photographs of Udero Lal were also placed in this room. Both Sindhi Muslim and Hindu devotees of the Udero Lal visited the *Kachari Jo Kamro* room. Muhammad Aslam, a Muslim follower of the Udero Lal, stated that:

This room is like a lecture hall that was used as an informal class. Our forefathers used to say that people from different caste and classes used to participate to listen to Udero Lal's sermons. There was no restriction for anyone to attend the class and listen to the lecture and give his or her opinion, agreement or disagreement. Udero Lal was a fountain of knowledge and freely imparted education to all the people. He

informally delivered the lecturer on love, peace, tolerance, coexistence, and harmony (Personal interview, 17 May 2019).

8.15. Maniktaro/ Khabar Jo Wan (Miracle Tree)

The *Maniktaro* (verdant tree) is one of the essential symbols of Udero Lal at the shared space of his shrine. The devotees of Udero Lal's called this tree a miracle tree that provided remedies for all the diseases and illnesses. This tree was planted at the main center of the Udero Lal complex. The Mosque, Udero Lal's Shrine, *Kachari* room, temple, and the shrine of four Muslims Mujawars Shaikh stand in close vicinity of *Maniktaro* (verdant). The *Nagaro* room (drum) is behind this tree. The leaves of this tree have always remained green and never turned yellow. The followers of Udero Lal believe that if seven leaves of this tree are plucked and mixed into water and it is drunk, all the diseases and illnesses are cured. Waseem, a Muslim follower of Udero Lal, said that:

I had pain in my leg joint for five years. I went to many doctors but in vain. I came to this saint, plucked leaves of this miracle tree (verdant), and drank its water; after a few days, I became well. Now I am without pain and can walk and work efficiently. This tree was planted by our saint Udero Lal, and this tree has spiritual power, which treats all diseases; this tree has natural herbs, and it is a miracle tree of Udero Lal (Personal interview, 22 November 2019).



Figure 55: Maniktaro (verdant) at the shrine of the Udero Lal complex.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Two kinds of flowers grow on this miracle tree. One is red which is like a natural flower and the other is a white flower that produces crystals like sugar in the winter season that has a sweet taste. That is why it is said that the tree has a miracle that produces the sugar from its branches that is thought to have remedies for all the diseases and illnesses. The Hindus and Muslim devotees perform the *Jahand* (head shave) ritual and tie the hair to this miracle tree. The Udero Lal is also used to address the people under the shadow of this tree. Interestingly, the *Jot* was lighted under this tree in the night. It is also said that a giant cobra snake lives under this tree, drinks milk then disappears. Mohan a Hindu follower of Udero Lal said that:

Lal sane disciple does not kneel to the Mata sahib. Lal sane has shown me his *darshan* (appearance) in another way. I go under the green tree at night, where I serve the giant cobra snake with milk. Lal sane has given me spiritual power; otherwise, I am a cowardly person. It is a spiritual blessing and power of Lal sane that big cobra snake is served with milk. The giant cobra suddenly appears from under the tree and disappears after being fed (Personal interview, 19 July 2019).

8.15.1. History of the *Maniktaro* (Miracle Tree)

According to an oral tradition, Udero Lal was searching for his last abode. He started to visit many places in Sindh and finally, he arrived at his birth place Nasarpur that leads to Jahejo Muslim village, now UC (union council), Udero Lal's village in district Matiari. He spotted a fertile land 5km from the National Highway and 50 km from Hyderabad and decided to make his last home over there. He wanted to purchase the land from the owner of the Shaikh Mamman, but he refused to sell the land. Udero Lal immersed his stick into the earth and a green tree (verdant) appeared. The Muslim owner was awe-struck with this miracle and seeing this agreed to give the land to Udero Lal. He did not sell the land but donated the land free of cost to Udero Lal for the welfare of the people.

8.16. *Nagaaro* (Drum)

The *Nagaaro* (drum) has immense significance at the various shrines in Sindh. The Sufi shrines of Lal Qalandar Shahbaz and Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai's shrine also have *nagaaro* (drum). There is a famous drum beat that emotionally provokes the devotees to perform *dahmal* (spiritual dance). The *Nagaaro* is also the main symbol at the shared shrine of Udero Lal, which also has great significance in the shared space of the Udero Lal. This symbol was also among the seventh symbol given to Pugar as a symbol of Udero Lal's cousin. Interestingly, both Muslims Mujawar and Hindus *Shivadar* (attendants) beat the *Nagaro*. Geno Hindu *Shevadar* (attendants) told that:

When I beat the *Nagaro*, I remain in a trance, and I do not know where I am. I feel immense spiritual power, and my whole state of mind is changed. I feel that I have entered another world of spirituality. When I beat the *Nagaaro* (drum) naturally, I remain in a trance state beyond my expressions and feelings to share with you (Personal interview, 16 October 2019).



Figure 56: Muslim Mujawar Shaikh beats the Nagaro (drum) at the shrine of Udero Lal

(Source: Researcher (2019))

The main gate of Udero Lal was opened with the beating of the *Nagaro* early in the morning, and then worship starts by the Hindu *Shevadar* (attendants) of Udero Lal. The *Nagaro* beats in the evening and early in the morning when Udero Lal is worshiped by the main *Shivadars*. First, Muezzin calls out *Azan* (call of God) from the mosque. This is followed by the beating of *Nagaro* (drum) by *Shivadar*. When *Nagaro* (drum) beats, both the Muslims and Hindus devotees of Udero Lal perform *dhamal* and indulge in a state of ecstasy till the *Nagaro* stops. Men and women who are possessed by the spirit, also perform *dhamal* on the *Nagaaro* beat. Muhammad Salman, a Muslim follower mentioned that:

The *Nagaro* has a natural and spiritual rhythm, which attracts me to perform the *dhamal*. I feel relaxed, happy, and enjoy while performing the *dhamal*. I do not know how extra energy enters my body during the performance of the *dhamal*. The spirit also possesses me when I perform the *dhamal* and I become more relaxed and feel comfortable. I feel that my spirit leaves me because *Gin* (spirit) is also the disciple of the Udero Lal and obey the command of Udero Lal. I have performed the *dhamal*, and now spirit will not come to me (Personal interview, 13 August 2019).

8.17. *Bhandaro Sahib* (Sacred Food)

Bhandaro Sahib (sacred food) is the main symbol at the shared space of the Udero Lal, which is among the seventh symbol given to cousin Pugar by Udero Lal. *Bhandaro* is the kitchen's name where in which a variety of food items are prepared and served on all occasions. It is also served day and night to all the visitors/disciples of the Udero Lal. *Bhandaro* is usually served three times a day to all visitors and devotees of the Udero Lal. It is said for the *bhandaro* (sacred food) doesn't end till the last guest or devotees are served. Two specialist cooks are responsible for preparing the food and they are paid Rs.11,000 per month. Except for the beef, mutton, chicken, and fish, all other food dishes are prepared. Both Hindus and Muslims are served this food. Special rooms and halls are made to serve *Bhandaro Sahib* (sacred food) free of cost to whoever comes.



Figure 57: *Bhandaro Sahib* (kitchen), where food is prepared for the followers of the Udero Lal.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

The devotees of the Udero Lal collectively share all *Bhandaro Sahib* expenditure. If there is any ceremony or ritual, then 500 to 1000 people are served; otherwise, 20 to 50 people are regularly served with *bhandaro*. Three hundred *daig* (40 kg big metal utensil) of different food items are prepared on the day of the annual fair (*Cheti*

Chand) of the Udero Lal, in which 20,000 to 25,000 people are served with *Bhandaro* (sacred food) at the shared space of the Udero Lal. Before serving the *Bhandaro*, Mata Sahib performs the *chhando* (sprinkling the sacred water) ritual at *Bhandaro*. The first plate of food is offered to the *Bhalanbo Sahib* (sacred well). The *bhandaro* is served to the people after the ritual is over. In the past, the *Paatal* (leaves of the date's palm) were used to serve the *bhandaro*, and then the paper was used; now, metallic plates are used to serve the *bhandaro*.

During the *Chetichand* (annual fair) in 2020, I observed the discrimination in the distribution of the *bhandaro* (sacred food). Separate tents were installed for the Hindus women and men who belonged to the Hindu *Shudhar* (untouchable) caste, such as Bargi, Bheel, Jandawara and Oad. Similarly, separate tents were erected for the Bahraman women and men and Lohanas Hindus caste. I conducted many in-depth interviews with Udero Lal's primary caretaker but they claimed that no discrimination existed at the shared space Udero Lal. I also ate *Bhandaro* (sacred food) during the annual fair (*Chetichand*) of the Udero Lal, it was delicious, arrangements were excellent, food quality was like a five-star hotel. *Bhandaro sahib* was served with honor, dignity, and respectfully by the main *Shavadar* main custodians of the Udero Lal. They felt it their honor to serve the *bhandaro* with their own hands to the Udero Lal's devotees at the shared space. The main supervisor of the *Bhandaro* Choeth Ram explained that:

I am here since 1964; I am an old devotee of the Lal sane and belong to a landlord family from Shahdadpur, Sindh. Everybody is served food here, whether he belongs to *Shudar* (untouchable), Brahman or he is a Muslim. Humanity is served here at the shared space of Lal sane. Devotees of Udero Lal donate truck loads of *Rasha n* (raw food items) for the *Bhandaro*. Hindu devotees of the Udero Lal donate the whole night *bhandaro*'s expenditure of the annual fair (*Chetichand*), but the donors never want their names to be exposed. Once a full truck of *rashan* (raw food items) was sent for *bhandaro*,. I asked the driver who had sent it but he did not know the sender's name. He was instructed to off load food items from the truck at the *bhandaro*. Many devotees, of Udero Lal, share the flour and sugar trucks, and other food items free of cost for the *Bhandaro*. (Personal interview (22 April 2019).

8.18. Ghent Ghryal (Bell Clock)

Ghent Ghryal (bell clock) is also the significant symbol of the Udero Lal at the Udero Lal Shrine's shared space. This *Ghryal* (clock) was named after Udero Lal *Ghenat Ghryal*. It is round in shape and is made of metal, hanging in the wood hanger placed on the ground with water Jars (*Parnee ja maat*) at the entrance gate of the Udero Lal. The regular Hindi *Oam* word is written with Chandan wood by the *Shavadar* in the middle of the *Ghryal*. A stone is used to ring the bell, before entering the shrine & the *Jot* temple of the Udero Lal. Its sound is like a school bell. One of the Hindus *Sheavdar* Asan Dass informed:

Lal jo Ghenat Ghray (Bell clock of Lal), is also sacred for us. We also worship this symbol in the same manner as other symbols of the Udero Lal because it belonged to him and it carries extra value for us and teaches us a lesson of daily life. This Lal sane's *gahrayl* indicates that time is short in this world; do not injure anybody's feelings, love humanity, and show peace and tolerance at the shared space of the Udero Lal (Personal interview, 15 August 2019).



Figure 58: Ghent Ghryal (Bell clock).

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

It is banged thrice, or five times by the *Shavadar* on a regular basis before and after the worship of Udero Lal. This timing was fixed since the construction of the shared

complex by the old *Shavadar* of the Udero Lal. In olden times, there was no wall clock, so it was used to show the timings. It was the duty of one man to inform about the timings; so he banged the *gahryal* every hour by observing the shadow of the needle. It was also banged for the main events such as gatherings, food eating, and other performance of another ritual at the shared space of the Udero Lal. The *Shavadars* of the Udero Lal have continued the same tradition with equal spirit as the maintenance of the *Ghent Gahray* of the Udero Lal.

8.19. Ghant (Bell)

This *Ghent* (bell) symbol was found in every temple of the Udero Lal in Sindh. It is also an important symbol in the shared space of the Udero Lal complex. There are twelve *ghants* (bells) at the shared complex of the Udero Lal. Two big bells hang at the third entrance gate, and two on other sides and one small bell hangs at the same gate.



Figure 59: Ghant (bells) are at the main entrance gate at the shrine of the Udero Lal complex.

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Six bells hang at the *Jot* temple; two outside the gate, two inside the *Jot* room, and two small bells inside the *Jot* temple window. One is fixed in the Shiv temple near the *Balanbo Sahib*. A female Hindu devotee Radha stated that:

When we ring these bells, it signifies that we have got permission from Lal sane for the entrance into the shrine. You tell me that when you enter anybody's home, first you knock on the door or ring the bell; when getting permission then you enter and the same is here (Personal interview, 17 February 2020).

Interestingly, no bell was seen hanging at the last entrance gate of the Udero Lal shrine in the shared space complex. There was no bell hanging inside the shrine of Udero Lal. Bells toll at the main entrance gate during the *Dhamal* (spiritual dance) at the shared space of the Udero Lal in the evening and the morning. The bells also tolled along with *dahmal* on the *nagaro* (drum) till the *nagar* stops. During the *dahmal* the combination of bells and *nagaro* sounds engulfed both Hindus and Muslim devotees.

8.20. Kalangi (Like Trident)

Kalangi (metallic like a trident) is one of the essential symbols of Udero Lal; it's shaped like a long fork with four points, which exhibits the power, respect, and status of Udero Lal. There are two types of *kalangies*, one is made of silver, and the other is made from gold. The silver *kalangi* is decorated on the *Paag* (head) of Udero Lal shrine on the regular basis, and gold *kalangi* was decorated for the main events such as *bahraano sahib*, on every *chand* (on every month's sighted moon), *Asu* and *Chetichand* fair. A rose garden is primarily maintained for the rose flowers for the worship of Udero Lal daily. The fresh roses were plucked from the rose garden to decorate the *kalangi* early in the morning daily. There were also famous slogans of Udero Lal in which *kalangi* was also mentioned, *Ayo Lal*, *Juhle Lal*, *Kalangiwaro Lal* (Udero Lal, who had a crown on his head, has arrived). Hindu *Shevadar* (attendants) Jahman further said that:

I regularly decorate the *kalangi* of the Udero Lal shrine and if Mata Sahib is present then she does this sacred work. I decorate the *kalangi* daily. It is sacred for us

because it is a symbol of the Udero Lal. We also have gold *kalangi*, which is decorated on special occasions such as the annual fair (*chetichand*) and *chodas* (bath ceremony) ritual (Personal interview, 18 October 2019).



Figure 60: Udero Lal's Kalangi (like trident).

(Source: Researcher, 2019)

There was an oral tradition which states that when the despotic ruler Mirkh Shah sent his Minister Ahyo to bring Udero Lal for dialogue, the latter went to the Indus River bank and called Udero Lal and communicated to him that Mirkh Shah wants to meet with him to resolve the Hindu's matter. Udero Lal appeared from the Indus River on a horse back with a crown decorated with *kalangi* on his head. That is the reason that *kalangi* is decorated on the Udero Lal shrine's head daily.

8.21. *Jhando* (Flag)

The flag (*Jhando*) is also a symbol of the Udero Lal at Udero Lal shrine's shared space. Many small flags (*Jhanda*) with small sticks are fixed in the complex of Udero Lal. Two red flags are fixed on the main entrance gate of Udero Lal. There are twelve blue color flags fixed in the main shrine of the Udero Lal. Two flags of blue color are fixed at the main window's corner of the *Jot* temples of Udero Lal's complex. There was an oral tradition that when Udero Lal died in that place, his cousin Pugar fixed the flag as a sign for Udero Lal's tomb. There is also another tradition that when Udero Lal appeared from the Indus River as a Hindu Avatar, he had a flag and a sword in his hand, and crown on his head. All the flags are changed at the time of main event of the Udero Lal by the Shavadar of the Udero Lal. One of the old Shavadar Asan described that:

Flags are the symbol of Udero Lal's victory. When Udero Lal fought the war against the despotic ruler of Mirkh Shah, Udero Lal led his army riding on horseback. He held a victory flag in his hand when he defeated Mirkh Shah and saved his Hindu community from the forceful conversion to Islam. He was the charismatic personality who saved us from the Thatta's cruel king (Persona interview, 12 February 2020).

8.22. Seven Symbols Given by the Udero Lal

There are also seven symbols which were given to his cousin Pugar by Udero Lal, such as 1), *Jot* (lamp) 2), *Daig/ bhandaro* (food), 3), *Nagaro* (drum), 4), *Verah* (ring made of thread, 5), *Kantha* (clothes), 6), *Jahree* (water Jar) 7), *Tekh/talwar* (sword).

8.22.1. *Sat Nashnyoon* (Seven Symbols)

Udero Lal gave seven symbols to his cousin Pugar for his devotees to perform in their practical life. These symbols were expected to benefit them in their life and then transfer the same to the next generation. These symbols are also included in the Udero Lal teachings at the shared space. Except for the sword, all other symbols are revered

at the shared space of the Udero Lal by his devotees and transferred to a new generation by performing the rituals of these symbols.

8.22.1.1 Jot (Lamp)

This is an eternal and universal flame that wipes out the darkness and brings the inner light and knowledge in which followers can feel Udero Lal's presence. This *Jot* symbol is still maintained and worshiped for centuries at the Udero Lal complex's shared space. Four main *Jots* are continuously burning day and night since the inception of this temple at Udero Lal complex's shared space in the temple, which is called *Jotyoon* (lamps) or *Jots sahib Jo Mandar* (lamps temple). Further old Shavadar JahmanDass mentioned that:

I have been working here for ten years, and this lamp has never been turned off in this temple. It has always been burning since the foundation of this temple, and I am responsible for looking after these lamps. I carefully monitor and check the oil of the lamps during days and nights. I am strictly instructed by the Mata sahib that whatsoever the situation comes what may, the lamps must not be turned off (Personal interview, 23 August 2019).

8.22.1.2. Daig (Large Metallic Vessel for Cooking)

This large metallic cooked vessel never runs out of food till the last person takes his share of food. The symbol of *daig* is updated at the shared space of the Udero Lal. This symbol named *Bhandaro Sahib* (sacred food) is served at breakfast, lunch, and dinner to all the Udero Lal devotees free of cost. The Hindu devotees make collective donations for this sacred food of the Udero Lal. The large feast of *Bhandaro Sahib* is arranged on different mega-events such as the annual fair and *chodas* (bath ritual). The different delicious food items are prepared except the beef, mutton, and fish for the *Bhandaro Sahib* at the shared space of the Udero Lal.

8.22.1.3 Nagaro (Drum)

This drum has a spiritual sound that combats with all giant evils of society and listens to the heart's inner voice, which takes one into the spiritual world to search for the self. *Nagaro* is a significant symbol of the Udero Lal, which is also performed regularly today. The *nagaro* symbol was performed early in the morning as well as in the evening. The main gates are opened in the morning, and Sheva (worship) starts with drum beating and completed the same drum beating in the evening. The *dhamal* (spiritual dance) is performed by both the Hindus and Muslim devotees of the Udero Lal. Those who had spirit possession also performed *dhamal*.

8.22.1.4. Verah (Ring made of the thread)

It is worn on one of the fingers of the hand. Whatever is one's wish the response comes as a truth. If this ring is given to someone, his wishes are fulfilled in return. Verah symbol was still practiced at the shared space of the Udero Lal. Both Hindus and Muslims *Mujawar* performed this ritual. Furthermore, Muslim Mujawar Ghulam Ali Shaikh mentioned that:

I recite a few Quranic verses on the dago/verah (string ring), whiffed on it, and tie string knots around his/her finger of Udero Lal's devotee. Many disciples of Udero Lal visited who were possessed by the spirit, and I gave them vehro. Later they reported that they had been relieved of demon and felt. I am nothing and I do not have any miracle. It is only possible due to Udero Lal's superpower (Personal interview, 12 Novemebr.2019).

Hindus *gaadinashreen* Mata Sahib also performed *Verah* symbol practice for devotees of Udero Lal. In case of her absence verah is performed by other Shavadar.

8.22.1.5. Kantha (Silk clothes)

Wearing a white dress denotes a powerful meaning as, no ghost, snake, demon or evil will cause harm. This clothing is a shield against all diseases, enemies, and evils. It was a common practice among the old Hindus, but Hindu youth do not practice this

symbol. Old Muslims Mujawar too practiced this symbol. Furthermore, Muslims Mujawar Ghulam Muhammad Shaikh shared that:

I have been wearing Kantha (clothes) since my childhood, and now I am 62 years old. However, I still wear this dress because it is an order from Lal sane. The Hindus give us respect when we adorn this dress because it is our identity as Muslim Shaikh Mujawars. The young Muslim Shaikh Mujawars avoid wearing this white dress, neither do they act upon the teachings of Udero Lal, therefore, the Hindus do not respect our youth. We should not give up the teachings and symbols of Udero Lal (Personal interview, 15 May 2019).

8.22.1.6. Jahree (Vessels with Water)

This is sacred water like Indus River water that gives life to its species. A sprinkling of this sacred water (*chhando*) keeps the mind relaxed and cleans and protects you from all evils. The practice of the *Jahree* (vessels water) symbol is practiced at the shared space of the Udero Lal even today. This symbol is always found at the *Jot* sahib's temple where devotees perform the *chhando* ritual from the *Jahree*. This symbol was also performed at the *bahraano* sahib's ritual and *Bhandaro Sahib* (sacred food) ritual. In most cases, Mata Sahib performed this symbolic ritual on Udero Lal shrine's shared space until now.

8.22.1.7. Tekh (Sword)

The sword shields from inner and outer enemies and all kinds of sorrows and calamities. Nowadays, neither Hindu disciples of Udero Lal nor Muslim Mujawars perform this practice at the shared space of Udero Lal. However, the sword can be seen in the right hand of Udero Lal on the equestrian statue of Udero Lal, which stands close to Mata Sahib's room. The sword is shown in the different pictorial symbols of Udero Lal's shrine.

8.23. Conclusion

Sindhi Hindus and Muslims performed the rituals at the shrine of Udero Lal. However, both did not perform these rituals simultaneously, neither did they participate in them. Hindus regularly performed the rituals at the shrine and the Muslims performed on selected occasions. The Hindu followers performed these rituals in large numbers with their families from all over Sindh. The core segment of this ritual is *bahraano* (food offering) and it is performed every month at the Udero Lal shrine. They sang *panjras* (rhymes), danced, and distributed sweets and foods until late at night.

Everyone participates in this ritual process of the *bahraano sahib*. This ritual is worth seeing how Udero Lal's followers exhibit their emotions and show that Udero Lal also participates with them in this ritual. Every follower of the Udero Lal is in ecstasy elate while performing this ritual. They performed the *bahraano* rituals in the shrine in form of a procession and chanted slogans “*Jai Jhule Lal, Ayo Lal Jhule Lal Sabhaee Chao Juhle Lal*” (Udero Lal has come, all should say Udero Lal) continued to be raised till this ritual ends. Both Hindus and Muslims performed *Jahand* (head shaving) rituals but separately. *Janryo* (sacred thread) ritual is a Hindu ritual, performed by all Udero Lal followers in which they invite their families, prepare feast and serve to the people. Cultural dances and folk songs are performed as part of this ritual. *Chhando* (sprinkling of water) ritual was executed on occasions like the annual fair and *bahrrano* rituals. *Chodas* (bath) ritual is also essential for the followers who swarm the ritual and take shower with sacred water. Muslims perform some rituals at the shrine of the Udero Lal, and they decorate the shrine of Udero Lal with *chadar/par* (a sheet of cloth). Their wishes are almost always accomplished. The visitors or guests decorate the shrine of Udero Lal with *chadar*. Shia Muslims also conduct *matam* (chest beating) rituals at the shrine especially on 10th Muharram Sharif every year.

In addition, symbols play a significant role in Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslim followers of the Udero Lal. *Jal* and *Jot* are the main symbols that are the central focus for the followers. According to the Hindus, the lamps indicate the light for life.

It is an eternal flame for them because when Udero Lal was leaving this world, his followers were vexed on his eternal journey. In this situation, Udero Lal confirmed his allegiance with his devotees. He advised that if they worship the lamp from deep down their soul, they will find him, so keep the lamp lighted and burning. They also believe that if lamps are turned off it will be the end of the world. *Jal* is a lifeline for both Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslim followers.

Mostly Sindhi Hindus personified Udero Lal with waters of the Indus River because they believe that their Avatar (Udero Lal) appeared from the Indus River therefore, Indus River water is sacred to them. They worshiped the water and performed the *bahraano Sahib* (food offering) ritual to the Indus River water to pay tribute to the River god. Udero Lal gave seven symbols to his cousin Pugar to enforce them in the right spirit, but only a few are practiced by both communities. Sword, white cloth, *Ghent ghrayl* (bell clock) symbols are out of practice. However, Sindhi Hindus have continued to maintain the practice of significant symbols for a long time. *Balanbo Sahib* symbol is among one of them, which is still revered and is preserved by the Sindhi Hindus. The water of *balanbo sahib* is sacred for them like Indus water. Nowadays *bahraano sahib* ritual is performed at the *balanbo sahib*, instead of at the Indus River. *Kalangi* symbol represents the Udero Lal as king of the state, who sits majestically on the throne. This epitaph is decorated on the grave of Udero Lal. Flags represent the symbol of his victory over his enemy and the battles won.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This Ph.D. research was conducted on the shared space of the Udero Lal shrine in Sindh, Pakistan. The research study aimed at investigating the reflection of tolerance, contestation, and the physical transformation process at Udero Lal shrine's shared space. The research further looked into the process of the rituals, symbols, and oral tradition at the shared space of Udero Lal. The research methodology was qualitative and was based on a case study. Twelve months of primary firsthand research fieldwork was conducted from 1st March 2019 to 31st March 2020.

The research paradigm was interpretive, and I had the interpretivist epistemological position in my qualitative research study. The research was based on ethnographic methods, participant observation, informal discussions, unstructured interviews, audio and video recording that I applied in the fieldwork. The Research study has great significance in promoting the personality of Udero Lal for the Global Sindhi Hindus Diaspora followers and urges them to visit Udero Lal like Kartarpur corridor Punjab, Pakistan. Udero Lal's shrine fort was constructed in the 16th century by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. This fort is an old heritage, which is in a dilapidated condition nowadays; This study would further help the Department of Culture, Tourism, Antiquities, Government of Sindh, and UNESCO's World Heritage Centre to preserve the old fort of Udero Lal and the cultural heritage of Sindh. This study would also assist the anthropologists and archaeologists to study the art and architecture in preserving Udero Lal's heritage. This research study further investigated the main significant issues of contestation on identity and the oral tradition of this saint.

Hayden's (2016) theoretical framework „Antagonistic tolerance, competitive sharing of religious spaces was applied in this research study of the shared space of Udero Lal. This model gave a lens to investigate further the reflection of tolerance, transformation, and contestation at the shrine of the Udero Lal. As Hayden argued in his model, religious space is shared and creates tolerance. However, contestation was

there due to multiple religious identities of a saint and one group tries to be dominant over the other due to competitive sharing. The latter dominant group turned to conflict, and it led to contestation and transformation of the shared shrine, as his model proved that saint Shah Ramzan shrine in India had multiple identities. The Saint's identity was shared by both Hindus and Muslims in India but later turned into contestation and was transformed by the dominant Hindu group. The whole shrine is domineering by Hindu presence now and tolerance has been shelved. Supporting Hayden's main argument about Udero Lal saint has multiple religious identities between Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims in Sindh. Hindu religious groups became overpowering because Hindus exercised authority and controlled the management of the shrine while the Muslims had to take a backseat. Hindus claimed that Udero Lal is their Vedic God Varuna or an avatar of the River Indus and was Hindu by birth, belonged to them, and remained Hindu up to his death. The Muslims claimed that Udero Lal was converted to Muslim at some stage of his life and adopted a Muslim name Shaikh Muhamad Tahir. The Muslims revered him as a Muslim saint and had his blessings. Udero Lal as a Saint has been contested between the religious groups and conflicts over his identity, ownership, transformation, property, and economy. This shared space has become the hotspot of controversy between Hindus and Muslims after India's partition in 1947 and Pakistan's creation.

Udero Lal shared shrine complex has two parts; the first and main part is that comprises of Udero Lal's shrine (grave) while the second part is known as *Balanbo Sahib* (sacred water well). As part of their extension plan, the Hindus entirely transformed the *balanbo Sahib* Section of the complex in 2014. Shiv temple and equestrian stood and were restructured by the Hindus. The Muslims kept away from this newly redesigned structure. The Udero Lal shrine's main shared space has always remained the center of debate between Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus attempted to convert the main part of Udero Lal complex too. Another major event took place in 2017 when the Hindus current Mata Beena *gaadinasheen* declared Udero Lal as *Hindu Pir (god)*. She fixed a notice board on the main entrance gate of Udero Lal, which read „Udero Lal is alive saint of Hindus and he immersed into the tomb with his horse.“ When Muslims saw this declaration notice they lodged a strong protest and

resisted the new mischievous endeavor by the Hindus. The situation became so volatile that both communities came close to blows and the situation almost led to riots. The Government of Sindh then intervened and promptly sent Police contingent to probe the matter and calm down the warring factions. The police immediately removed the declaration notice board to avoid the breakout of communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. The third event took place in 2020. This time the Hindus fixed Hindu images portraits of Udero Lal inside the shrine and again the Muslims became outraged and resisted. The Government of Sindh had to intervene once again and simmer down the situation. This time too the Sindh police removed Udero Lal's Hindu images of portraits from the Udero Lal shrine and restored not only peace but the old status too. However, the Hindus were determined that Udero Lal is a Hindu saint, and Muslims wanted to occupy the shrine. They claimed that the Saint was their deity, and the whole management for long time was in their control. They asserted their justification for the transformation of the main space of the Udero Lal's shrine.

As Hayden's theory proved, the Hindus entirely altered ShahRamzan's shrine. One group became dominant and tolerance was suspended; however, half of the shared space (*Balanboh Sahib*) of Udero Lal was converted where Shiv temple and equestrian existed. The central shrine space of the Udero Lal has not been fully charged, but the dominant Hindu group continues to demand alteration of the status of the Shrine due to competitive sharing. However, Udero Lal's shared space has sustained tolerance due to the main space. With time sustained tolerance has become fragile due to continuous debate and alleged claims over the shared space.

During the fieldwork, Hindus followers and main *Shevadars* (keepers) of the Udero Lal argued that current Mata Beena's behavior is not good with other senior members of the *Sheva Mendly* (management trust of Udero Lal). She had replaced the old management with relatively younger and inexperienced staff who misguided her on the conflict between Hindus and Muslims at the shared space. The seniors in retrospect were always in control of the situation. The behavior of the Junior members of *Sheva Mandly* further deteriorated the situation when they spread the word that

Mata Sahib was not flexible, she was rigid and she must be cooperative with the Muslims Shaikh Mujawars, who are also followers of Udero Lal for generations. Mata should understand that this is a Muslim majority country with strong religious influence and they respect the sanctity of the shrines and it was difficult for Hindus to declare Udero Lal as *Hindu Pir* and change the main shrine shared space. In their opinion, they should not have transformed the *balanbo sahib* space as Udero Lal has his individual of being an Avatar. Mata should not have made the Shiv temple at the space of *balanboshai* of the Udero Lal. Additionally, they said that Mata Been's father, Preetam Dass, and her grandfather Udhab Dass never attempted to take the risk of altering shared space of Udero Lal and preferred to retain the same old status. Now it is better for all Hindus of Sindh that they should avoid any effort leading to a change in the shared space of Udero Lal and restore its old status. If they failed to do so another power would occupy the Udero Lal's shrine.

The senior members of the Hindus further advised Mata to acquire Pakistani nationality and abandon the Indian nationality and permanently stay at the complex of the Udero Lal in the footsteps of her forefathers. She must stop frequenting to India and live in Sindh permanently because Udero Lal was their River god, Sindhi god, and Sindhi Bhagwan. She was advised to mingle with Sindhi Muslims and Sindhi Hindus of Sindh like her father and grandfather. Her negative behavior could lead to serious frictions with Muslims in the future. Most Hindus and Muslims argued due to antagonistic rivalry resulting from the disputes, the keenness to tolerate each other had become weaker than what it was before the partition of India in 1947.

Ghulam Abbas Shaikh the Muslim *sajadasheen* of Udero Lal has no authority at all, it rests with Hindu's *gaadinaheen* because she manages the total control of the shrine including decisions regarding all external and internal issues of the shared shrine. Her decisions are unilateral and other members of the *Sheva Mandly* have no option but to enforce her decisions. She also heads the *Sheva Mandly's* trust of Udero Lal which is responsible for collecting donations. Muslim *sajadasheen* is not in a position to take even a single decision for the Udero Lal shrine, and he is never invited nor taken into confidence for any official meeting of the *Sheva Mandly* trust or

decisions about rituals and the annual fair of the Udero Lal. No ritual is jointly celebrated by the Hindus and Muslims. There was a dearth of cooperation between Hindu *gaadinasheen* and Muslim *sajadansheen* of Udero Lal, which has bred hatred between Hindus and Muslims, making the forbearance fragile.

Neither Muslims *Mujawars* nor Hindu *Shevadars* are the descendants of Udero Lal, and both are the attendants (*khadmatgar*) of Udero Lal for generations. Like Hindu *gaadinasheen*, Muslim *Mujawar* Ghulam Abass Shaikh declared himself as Muslim *sajadansheen* of Udero Lal. According to Muslim *sajadanasheen*, Udero Lal is a Muslim saint for them for generations, and their forefathers were the *Mujawars* of this saint and senior Hindus were cooperative with their elders who followed Udero Lal's message of peace and tolerance. They never took any steps to restructure the shared space of the Udero Lal and retained its old status. Now Mata Sahib wanted to declare this saint as complete *Hindu Pir*, so how could Muslims venerate a *Hindu Pir*. He further argued that all the Sindhi Hindus are the followers of Muslim saint Shah Bhattai and Qalandar Shahbaz in Sindh since the centuries and the same Hindus are followers of Udero Lal in Sindh. Mata Sahib forgot the Udero Lal's message of tolerance, brotherhood, peace, and harmony, and instead expended her energies in brewing hatred against the Muslims. She follows the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) policy of hatred against Muslims. She must promote peace and tolerance for the Sindh and world which was the mainstay of Udero Lal's universal message.

According to Hindu's Mata, Udero Lal is an alive Hindu Pir, and he was immersed in the tomb along with his horse. The Muslims have now stamped Muslim named Shaikh Muhammad Tahir on Udero Lal that was unheard. Muslims want to occupy the whole complex of the Udero Lal and that is why they have constructed a functional mosque in the complex of Udero Lal that never existed before. The Muslims placed a copy of the Holy Quran and fixed the Islamic religious text in Udero Lal's shrine only recently. She further argued that Udero Lal is a Hindu by birth and his birth place is in Nasarpur. He was raised and incarnated in a Hindu home. The Hindus supervise the overall management of Udero Lal's shrine for generations. Udero Lal's name can be found on every official revenue record so how

could Muslim lay claim to Udero Lal and announce him as a Muslim saint. Muslims are the followers of Udero Lal so they can venerate him. They have attempted to transform the main shared shrine of the Udero Lal, but have not succeeded due to collective resistance from the Muslims. The rift created between the Hindus dominant group and the Muslims were by the Police department of the Government of Sindh who resolved the dispute and restored peace among the conflicting foes. It appears that the Hindu *gaadinasheen* is determined to transform the central shared space of Udero Lal shrine no matter what happens.

Nevertheless, Muslims are flexible and have interfered too much in the management of Hindu control of the shrine. They continue to show their veneration, participate in ceremonies and rituals at the shrine, but they are interested in having the shared space of the Udero Lal restored in its original condition. The Udero Lal shrine has become a bone of contention between Hindus and Muslims who disseminate the syncretic message, peace, harmony, and tolerance in Sindh. Tolerance message has become frail due to the dispute over the shared space of the Udero Lal so when any visitor or follower comes, Muslims *Mujawar* asks them Udero Lal is a Muslim saint and Hindu Shevadar tells he is Hindu pir. Tolerance is not suspended at the shared shrine of the Udero Lal at least and it has sustained the tolerance which is tacitly shared but has been damaged due to continued conflicting situation.

During fieldwork and participant observation, I observed total absence of coordination between Muslim and Hindu groups at the shared space of the Udero Lal. Both groups were in hostility regarding identity, ownership, property, economy, and transformation. Seniors Hindus disagreed with current Mata Been's performances and policy to transform the main complex and replacement with juniors workers and expulsion of seniors from the *Sheva Mandly*. Hindus were not united on the issue of shared space of Udero Lal. *Balanbo Sahib* shared space was fully changed where the current Mata Sahib constructed new Shev temple and equestrian was placed beside *balanbo sahib* that was not present before. Hindus had a separate place for the samadhi, which was outside the complex. This attitude of the current Mata Sahib was harsh because she had been instructed to vacate the shrine when she planned to visit.

She always tries to symbolize the whole complex as a Hindu form in Hindu-style construction and other Hindus images. She succeeded in altering the *balanbo sahib* shared space portion. She also attempted to change the central shared space of Udero Lal shrine but failed due to heavy resistance from the Muslims. The Udero Lal shrine was made in a complex like a fort in white color, which had three main gates. One gate is called *Lakhe darwazo* (one lac people can enter from the door). The second is called *Hazari dawazo* (thousands of people can enter from this gate) and the third one is called *Utryon Darwazo* (west side gate). The Udero Lal shrine stands among the mosque and temple. The Udero Lal grave was made in Muslim style, a copy of the Holy Quran was placed on a shelf and no figure was allowed to be placed in his shrine. Muslim religious text stickers were fixed on his shrine.

Muslims Qalam was inscribed on the main entrance gate of Udero Lal. Muslims *Mujawars* were always present in the Udero Lal's shrine to collect the revenues donated by the visitors. They also gave *dhago* (thread) and *taveez* (amulet) to the followers to have their wishes fulfilled. *Jot* room or temple burned without break. There was no other figures in the *Jot* rooms except for the two little statues of cows behind the main three *jots*. The graves of four old seniors Muslim *Mujawars* are near the shrine of Udero Lal. They were called the Muslims *Mujawars* of the Udero Lal and they were the ones who donated the land to Udero Lal for his last resting place. Their names are Shaikh Mamman, Shaikh Suharo, Shaikh Muhammad Aalam, and Shaikh Younis. Some Muslims do not visit the temple but, almost all Hindu followers visit Udero Lal's shrine and temple. The Hindus perform regular rituals while the Muslims abstain. The shrine remained open for Hindus and Muslims and other communities to pay homage to the famous saint.

Muslim *sajadansheen* is a government employee and lives in Hyderabad city 45 km away from Udero Lal's shrine. His brothers perform their duties at the shrine in his absence. He also visits the shrine every Sunday. There is a massive gap in the contemporary pre-colonial and colonial literature about the Identity of Udero Lal and there is a clear absence of a detailed account of this saint's life and achievement. They have mentioned just one paragraph about this saint but multiple identities have been

mentioned, however, no one has described the single identity of Udero Lal. I also found a detailed separate oral tradition of Udero Lal by the Muslims and the Hindus. I further documented the detailed ritual processes and symbols of Udero Lal. The identity question of Udero Lal has remained questionable and unresolved. However, this research has opened new windows for social scientists to explore further on Udero Lal's identity in the future.

DRSML QAU

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GLOSSARY

<i>Aarti</i>	Waving of the oil Lamp
<i>Asu Jo Melo/ Adh Jat Jo Melo</i>	Small fair
<i>Akhand Jyot</i>	Eternal Light
<i>Atto</i>	Flour
<i>Aulaya</i>	Saint
<i>Bahraano Sahib</i>	An offering made of food, fruit,sugar and rice
<i>Balanbo Sahib/ Khooh</i>	Sacred well
<i>Bhetta</i>	Donation for the Keepers
<i>Bhandaro</i>	Sacred food (Kitchen)
<i>Bhagavad Gita</i>	Holy book of Hindus
<i>Bhajan</i>	Religious chant
<i>Bass</i>	Wish
<i>Bawa</i>	Servant of Udero Lal
<i>Badshah</i>	King
<i>Chakhris</i>	Wooden sandals
<i>Chand</i>	Moon
<i>Chetichand</i>	Sindhi New Year
<i>Chetichand/Jaat Jo Melo</i>	Big fair
<i>Chodus</i>	Bath Ritual
<i>Chhando</i>	Sprinkling of holy water
<i>Daryapanth</i>	Indus cult/ the path of the River
<i>Darbar</i>	Complex structure with a few shafts of sacredness
<i>Dhamal</i>	Spiritual dance
<i>Daig</i>	Metallic large vessel
<i>Dhago</i>	Sacred thread
<i>Darshan</i>	Visualisation
<i>Deeyo</i>	Lamp
<i>Dua</i>	Prayer
<i>Day panth</i>	Indu cult

<i>Dhago</i>	Thread
<i>Dargah</i>	A place where saint's shrine is made
<i>Gin/Hesab</i>	Spirit possession
<i>Goth</i>	Village
<i>Ghant</i>	Bell
<i>Gaddi Nasheen</i>	Custodian
<i>Istadevata</i>	Chosen diety of Sindhi Hindus
<i>Jhando</i>	Flag
<i>Jal</i>	Water
<i>Jot/Deeyo</i>	Light/Lamp
<i>Juhle Lal Jo Ghoro</i>	Equestrain statue
<i>Juhlo</i>	Cradle
<i>Kheer</i>	Milk
<i>Jhari</i>	Jug
<i>Jaat</i>	Plough
<i>Khak</i>	Soil
<i>Kalangi</i>	Four finger metal like trident
<i>Kuhar</i>	Grain
<i>Kanth</i>	Piece of cloth
<i>Karamtu</i>	Miracles
<i>Kahchari Jo Kamro</i>	Discourse room
<i>Mandir</i>	Temple
<i>Mata</i>	Mother
<i>Mandly</i>	Trust of Udero Lal
<i>Mithaee</i>	Sweet
<i>Mazaar</i>	Shrine
<i>Mujawar</i>	Keeper
<i>Melo</i>	Fair
<i>Misri</i>	Crystallised sugar lumps
<i>Modak</i>	Cone is made of wheat flour
<i>Mula</i>	Muslim religious man
<i>Manikataro</i>	Name of tree

<i>Neel Ghoru</i>	Name of Udero Lal's horse
<i>Nagaro</i>	Drum
<i>Namaz</i>	Pray
<i>Pir</i>	Saint
<i>Panth</i>	Community
<i>Panjras</i>	Five-line poems
<i>Par</i>	Sheet of cloth
<i>Parsad</i>	Form of rice, sugar and wheat balls
<i>Pairandi</i>	Foot side
<i>Quran</i>	Holy book of Muslims
<i>Qabr</i>	Grave/Shrine
<i>Otaar</i>	Avatar
<i>Qull</i>	Holy verses recitation
<i>Rotee</i>	Meal
<i>Sairandi</i>	Head side
<i>Sat Patyoon</i>	Seven parts
<i>SajjadaNasheen</i>	Caretaker
<i>Sanan</i>	To take bath
<i>Sheva Dar</i>	Attendant
<i>Shaivak</i>	Devotees
<i>Sindhu</i>	Indus River
<i>Sabeel</i>	Water
<i>Saisa</i>	Grain/ Salty food
<i>Sukha</i>	Sweet
<i>Tilak</i>	Religious Mark
<i>Thaal</i>	Round metallic plate
<i>Taaj</i>	Crown
<i>Talwar</i>	Sword
<i>Vert</i>	Fasting
<i>Yatrees</i>	Devotees
<i>Wadero</i>	Landlord
<i>Ziyarat</i>	Follower meet with his Spiritual master

Masjid

Mosque

Buharidar

Servant of Udero Lal

Zameen

Land

APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Interview Guide

Shared Space/ Shrine of Udero Lal

- ❖ What is the meaning of Udero Lal word?.
- ❖ Why Udero Lal is called with different names?.
- ❖ What is the historical background of the Udero Lal?.
- ❖ What are other names of the Udero Lal?.
- ❖ What is the relationship of Udero Lal with Hindus and Muslims?.
- ❖ Are there others shared shrines in Sindh, except the Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Is the Udero Lal Shrine associated with the Sufi order or brotherhood (*Silsila*)?.
- ❖ Why does Udero Lal shrine is given less important by the government in Sindh as compared to others shrines such as Lal Shahbaz Qaland, Bhit Shah, Sachal Sarmast and Shah Inayat?.
- ❖ Why does Udero Lal shrine is neglected by the Sindh government?.
- ❖ Who are most of the visitors (Muslims or Hindus) at the shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Do the Majority of the Muslims or Hindus come to pay a visit at the Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Who arrange the *Mela* (fair), either Muslims or Hindus?.
- ❖ Is there another shared shrine that has multiple identities in Sindh?.
- ❖ Why Udero Lal has multiple identities?.
- ❖ How was the departure of Udero Lal from this world?.
- ❖ What was the cult of the *Darya panth* (Indus cult)?.
- ❖ Who constructed the fort of the Udero Lal, and when was it built?.
- ❖ Why is Qalandar Lal called the name of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ How do both Muslims and Hindu caretakers distribute the revenue among themselves, which is generated at the shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ How is revenue distributed among the Hindus and Muslim caretakers?.
- ❖ What is Sheva mandly ? Furthermore, who is the head of this mandly?.

- ❖ Do you know about the Oral traditions of the Udero Lal?.

Symbols and Rituals

- ❖ What are the symbols and rituals at the shared Space of Juhle Lal?.
- ❖ Are there separate symbols for the Hindus and Muslims at the shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ What kind of rituals are performed by the Hindus and Muslims at the shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Has there been still the same rituals continued at the shared Space of Udero Lal after the partition of India?.

Authority at the JuhleLal Shrine

- ❖ What is the genealogy of Hindus *gaadinashéen* of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ What is the genealogy of Muslims *sajjadanashéen* of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Is there any cooperation between Hindus and Muslim *GaadiNaheen?*.
- ❖ Who has the central authority, Hindu *GaadiNasheen* or Muslim *SajjadhaNasheen?*.

Tolerance and Contestation

- ❖ What kind of tolerance is manifested at the shared shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ What are the main reasons that Udero Lal that he has still sustained the tolerance?.
- ❖ Do both Hindus and Muslims engage in syncretic or anti-syncretic strategies in their relations at shared Space of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Do Hindus visit the mosque, which is at the shared shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Do Muslims visit a temple that is at the shared shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ Is identity the leading cause of contestation at the shrine of Udero Lal between Hindus and Muslims?.

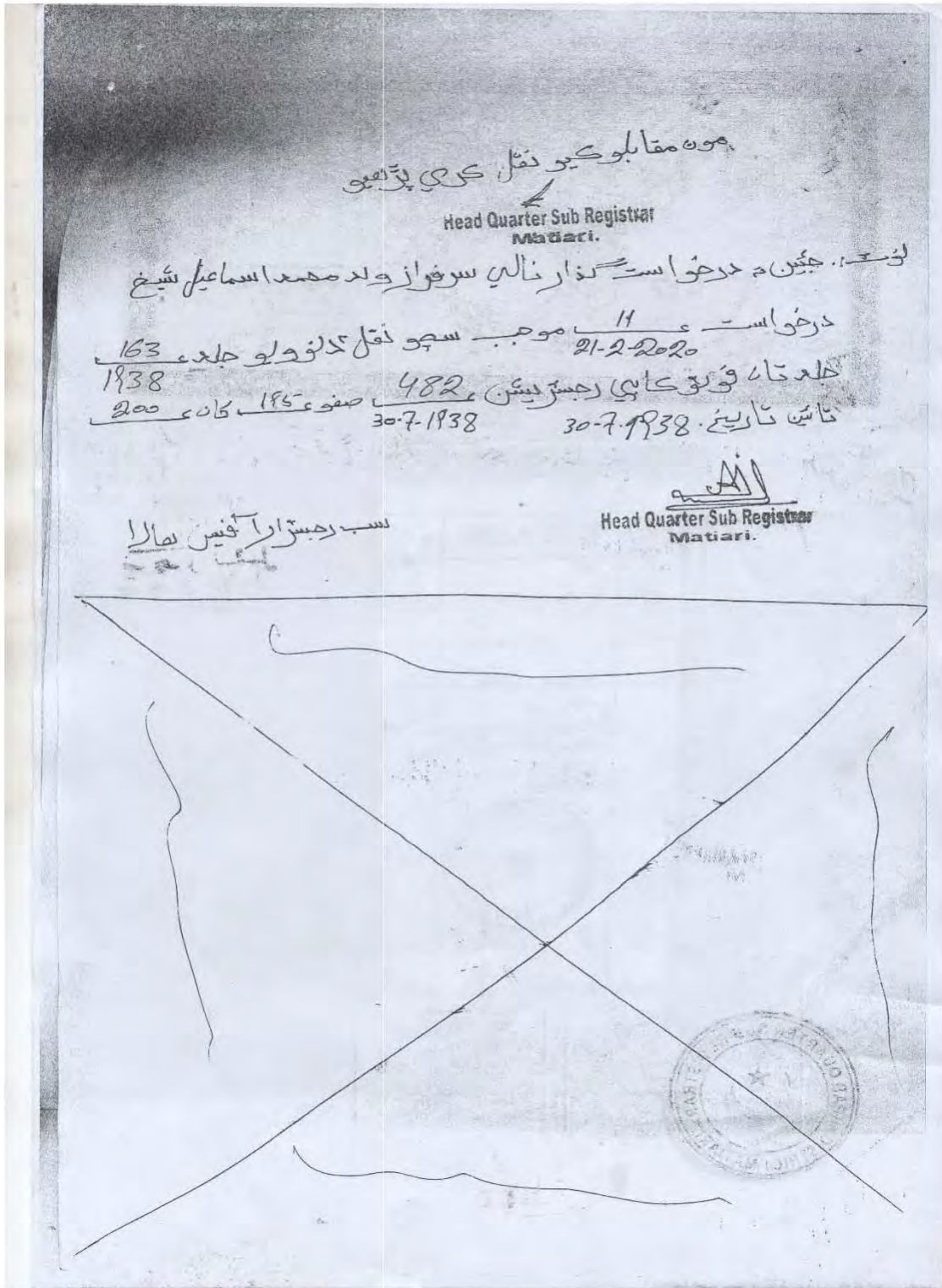
- ❖ Had there been any scuffle on the ownership of the Juhle Lal among Hindus and Muslims?.

Process of Transformation

- ❖ Is there any transformation at the shrine of Udero Lal?.
- ❖ What kind of transformation has taken place at the shared Space of the Udero Lal before and after the partition?.

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Appendix 2. British Registry (1938) of Udero Lal



1

کسی اٹھویں جو نشان بتا دے حالت منجھ کیا ہون ستی آکر ۲۶ ۱۹۵۰
۱۱۰۰ بقم لڑا ہی گمشا دوس دین بردار ہالا بنھی ڈریا ہی جوٹ مان و
کے ۱۹۲۸ لاء

مون نقل کیریم پڑھیر **چندر لال** مون مقابلہ پڑھیر

Ramchand
S.R
چندر لال



کے
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چھے (۶) روپیہ
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198

4

Serial No. of Instrument.

Endorsement and Certificate (Sections 62, 66, 69, and 80).

کاپی از سند

عری رهبر آهلی جهنجره بخش دیندر بخش و بندر زمان بلکل خزیش پر ایمی ۴۸۲
 آهلی یکله خوراک و نمیرا بله بخش و بندر وقت بخش دیندر بندر آهلی
 بخش دیندر جهنجره اعیان نیزی چهاره اعیان پر بندر من سب لهشون عری
 عری کوزاری رهبر اعیان میاقی تی خوب پر و سونه آهلی سنطجره بخش دیندر
 مشین دخر میل مجا ور که تی دیکار بل حصه موجب میسختی جایون پر درگاه شریف لعل صاحب بزرگ نادر
 تی یک جرمق سینی یک ساند واسطه رفتندن بعد کلهین سبیت سینی حق وامدن
 لایقین و نمیرا حقن سبیت بنا صحت حقن میوهن تی بخش و بندر تی
 پشت به یکت بخش تو کریان پر قبضه سختی جایون جرمق یکتانش درگاه
 شریف لعل صاحب تی دیکار بل کله بل حصه جو بخش و بندر تی حواله تو کریان
 پر بخش و بندر بهی خزیش سان بخش میل حق مشین و تی بهی
 حواله تو کریان جرمق سبیت لایق قائم آهلی رهندو صی بخش نامون همیشه
 لایق بخش میل آهلی پر خوب شرط زبانی باللیل شرطی بخش به
 نسبت ریل نه آهلی بخش و بندر اچ کلان بان پر سبیت و صی و اردت اختیار
 وارو آهلی رهندو کله بخش و بندر درگاه شریف لعل جرمق تی پندانش
 حوالا سختی جایون سمور لویک بایالو و جرمق و نمیرا بله صحت مه جرمق
 معینی و صی و اردت جرمق حق واسطه نه آهلی نه رهندو بخش میل
 ملکیت دیکار بل هن کانه ای سبیت زبانی سبیت و نمیرا کلان آراد
 منته لایق هن کانه تی منته به بخش میل ملکیت تی خوب شرط
 نه اهر کرا لایق بخش دیندر بهی سبیت سبیت پیش شرط سان
 دیندر



Serial No. of Instrument. Endorsement and Certificate (Sections 62, 68, 69, and 69). COPY OF INSTRUMENT. **چون نسل**

عری رضیہ
آصی پکا
بنگش
علی اذار
مشین ذ
بی بک اد
لاکاپن
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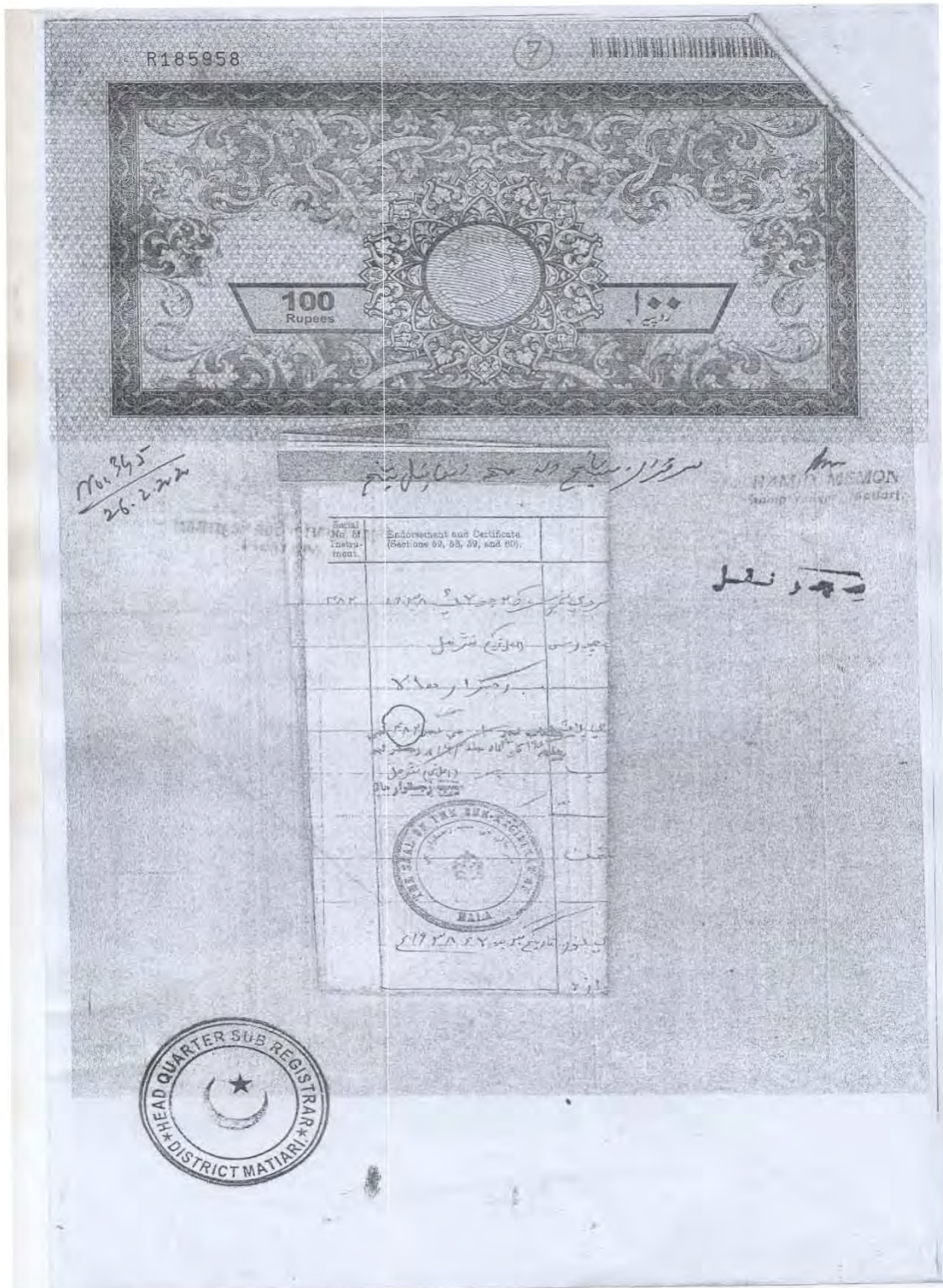
۴۸۲
بنگش میل ملکیت فی اسٹانپ سینین موجب تجدید تو ذمیر میل حسن درگا لا
شریف جی پکوانش مالیانہ جرمہ انجیل سترھن روپیہ صاحب و بیعت مالانہ پیکلائی
جمر حق سوا چالیس روپیہ آجھی پکھی جا عالف فی بازار کی قیمت اجوی پکھی انظر موجب
پنجش روپیہ پکھی بازار کی قیمت اجوی پکھی موجب پنج روپیہ روپیہ جہ
چار سو روپیہ آصی متھن فی روٹن موجب فی حد ڈی روپیہ صاحب جھن روپیہ
جدا اسٹانپ لکھل آھی

وہی بنگش نام ہمیشہ لایہ پشت ہمیشہ بنگش تیندر تھن لایہ
کی پر سندس وی وارثن کی قبول منظور آھی انہ پر تفادات نہ شیندو۔ می
بنگش بری ہمیشہ لایہ بنگش و نندرت پکھی فوشی سان و نٹ قبول تو مرمان
جا لوت آڈیر لامل متعلق سب دستخط حالار جبریشن دستخط حیدر آباد سندھ
پہ آصی، نقد ۱۷۷۸ مئی ۱۷۷۸ برابر ۱۵ اپریل ۱۷۷۸ سنہ ۱۲۵۷ھ تینصن سومر
(۱۷۷۸) لاکاپن اذار کی پکھی بنگش تیندر تھن

لاؤق) صاحب گل محمد ولد ولی محمد شیخ بنگش و نندرت و نٹ اذیر و لعل اعلو
علا مشیر بنگش ناموں لکریہ الکر پرتھی پکھی قبول عری علی جان نون
پوڈیون ۱۶ مئی ۱۲۲۸ھ

(۱۷۷۸) شاہدی محمد صالح شالا ولد محمد شیمان شالا زمیندار اذیر و لعل
شکوہ والا منصبی رو برو پکھی علی گل محمد مشیر بنگش ناموں لکریہ الکر
پرتھی پرتھی پکھی قبول عری پکھی منصبی لکریہ الکر ہون نشان پکھی
بنگش ہت اکرمیج وڈی ۱۶ مئی ۱۹۳۸
محمد صالح شالا ولد محمد شیمان شالا زمیندار اذیر و لعل منصبی رو برو پکھی





Contemporary copy of the British Registry (1938) of the Udero Lal.

(Source: District Headquarter Sub-registrar Office District Matari, Sindh, 2019

Appendix 3. Physical Transformation news of the main Shared Space of the Udero Lalin the Sindhi national Pak Newspaper of Sindh on 17th October 2017.



(Source: Pak Newspaper reporter Udero Lal village, 2019)

Appendix 4. A complaint was registered to the Deputy Commissioner Matiari against the Hindus for the Transformation of the main Shared Shine Space of the Udero Lal.

OFFICE OF THE
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MATIARI
NO. 3037 PSO/MISC/DC/MAT/2020
Matiari Dated: 19/10/2020

To: ✓
The Senior Superintendent of Police
Matiari.

SUBJECT: APPLICATION MADE BY MUSLIM ITTEHAD ODEROLAL VILLAGE.

I am directed to enclose herewith copy of an application dated 14.10.2020, (which is self explanatory), received from Muslim Ittehad Oderolal Village Taluka Matiari, for information & further necessary action.

Y ADDITIONAL DEPUTY COMMISSIONER-II
MATIARI

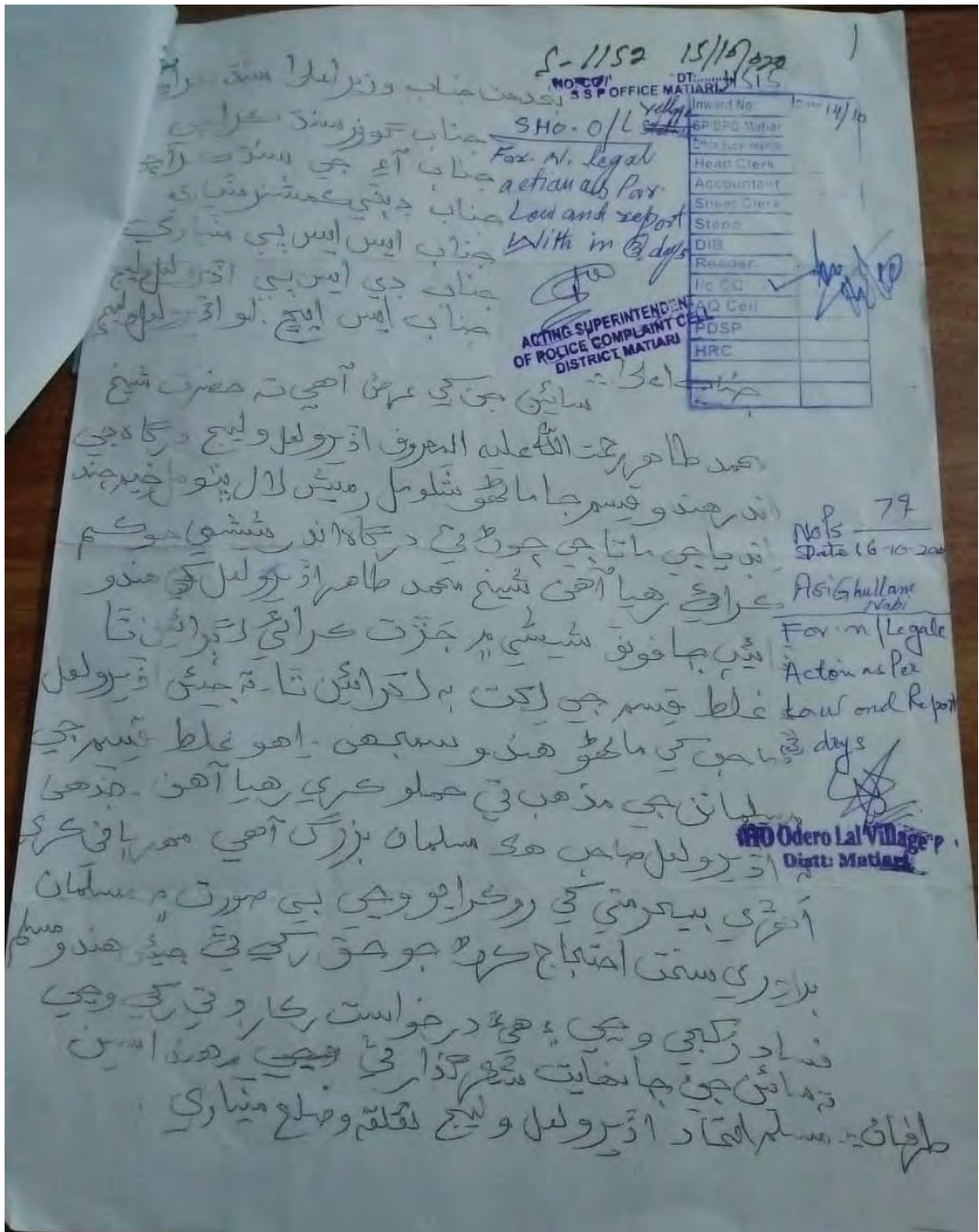
Copy to:

Sl. No.	Name	Date
1	The Applicant	11/10/20
2	Master File 2020.	
3	SP	
4	DC	
5	Head Clerk	
6	Asst. Secy	
7	Asst. Commr	
8	Asst. Insp	
9	Asst. Magr	
10	Asst. SDO	
11	Asst. TDO	
12	Asst. SO	
13	Asst. AO	
14	Asst. PDSO	
15	Asst. HRC	

*Nops 85-
Date 22-10-2020
Asi Ghulam Nabi
For M Magr
Action as per law
and report*

**SHRO Odero Lal Village ps
Distt: Matiari**

*Nos. 126
M. 22/10/20
SHRO village
Take MA Action As Per
Law and Report within
2 days. prep
Dshro*



(Source: Deputy Commissioner Office Matari, 2020)

Appendix 5. The Hindus fixed Udero Lal's equestrian images on the Shared Space of Udero Lal's main entrance gate in 2020 that was not present in 2019.



(Source: Researcher, 2020).

Appendix 6. Udero Lal's both images seated on the Palla fish & equestrian were fixed by the Hindus on the main entrance gate of the Shared Space of the Udero Lal in 2020 that was not present in 2019.



(Source: Researcher, 2019)

ANNEXURES

Annexure 1. Birthplace(*Janam Bhoomi*) of the Udero Lal at Nasarpur, Sindh.



(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Annexure 2. Inside view of the birthplace of the Udero Lal



(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Annexure 3. Udero Lal is shown sitting on the Equestrian, among the two guards at the carving of the main entrance gate of the birthplace of the Udero at Nasarpur, Sindh.



(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Annexure 4. View of the Nasarpur City (birth place of the Udero Lal)



(Source: Researcher, 2019)

Annexure 5. Hindu custodians (17th generation) of the Udero Lal, the right side is the Preedam Dass and Mata Sheela Bae, and the left is the Mata Joti Bae and Mata Gopi Bae.



(Source: Researcher, 2019)

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Annexure 6. Flyer of the Udero Lal fair (Chetichand/Jaat Jo Melo) 2019.



(Source, Udero Lal Sheva Mandly, 2019)

Annexure 7. Flyer of the Udero Lal fair (*Melo Adh Jat Jo*) 2020.

જન પલ્લે પારાયાલાલ જાલ કારજ સનોરિયાતન જા
 ડાતારાનમનજી ડરતે, મનમનજી આતોબઝારી,
 સાયંત મનમનજી કોનું હલતે, તોઝી ગઢઝી ંમરસારી,
 ડોહકીઆતમ યારી, બંધસીનંદી બંધસીન હારતોન

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પિટ્ઠાતી પાર

જેહોલી લાલ

મિલો અઢજાત જો

૩૦ ંસો (પરશોતર)
 સંબંધ ૧૯૯૧-૧૯

૧૮ ંક્ટોબર
 2020

ડેનિન આરતોલાર

હરસાલ જીયાન હન સલા બેશ્શર અઢિરોલાલ

મિલો શરી અમર અઢિરોલાલ સાહબ જો

સીની હંદો પાત્રન, પેનરન, માતાન, લાલ જી જેહાતિત્રન કી વેનિતી ઠી કજી તે "શરી હમર અઢિરોલાલ સાહબ"
 જી અઢજાત જો મિલો તારીખ ૩૦ ંસો (પરશોતર) સંબંધ ૧૯૯૧ અંગરઝી તારીખ ૧૮ ંક્ટોબર 2020 ં ડેનિન આરતોલાર જો
 ડામ ડોમ, સેક, શરડા ં خوشી, સાન મલહાયો પેવો વજી તોહાન પ્રેમીન કી વેનિતી ઠી કજી તે મિલો ં અજી
 જોતેન વારી જેહોલું જો ડરશન કરી પંજેજો મનશ જનર સ્લ બશાંનંદા ં જોતેન વારી જી જોત જેકાતી લાલ
 જો આશીરોવઢ પંઢ હાસલ કંનંદા, ંલી જેહોલોન પ્રી વેનંદા. જેહોલી લાલ.

નોંત: હન પ્રેરી મિલો કોરોના વેા જી કરી ંસ, ંવ, પેઝ જી તેહત મલહાયો પેવો વજી તોહાન પ્રેમીન કી પંઢ
 કઢારશ આ ંસ, ંવ, પેઝ તે સંહતી સાન ંમલ કીવો વજી, માસક ં સેનિટાઇઝર પાઢ સાન કઢ લાઝમી રકો.

જોત સાહબ 12:00 વગેરી મંજેહંદ જો જેકાતી વેનંદી
 બેરાતો સાહબ પ્રોવાન ૧૮ ંક્ટોબર 2020 ં 7 વગેરી શામર
 પેનંદારો સાહબ સજો ડેનિન જારી રેહંદો

પ્રોગ્રામ

સાતેન પ્રેરેતમ ડાસ સાહબ જન જી સ્ટરેહીન (17) પેઝઢેહી ગઢડી નશીન ડરપાર અઢિરોલાલ

અમર લાલ શીવો મંડલી ં જેહોલી લાલ શીવો મંડલી (ડરપાર અઢિરોલાલ)

સંડરશીવો મંડલી કોઢો ંવ હીડરબઢ 0333-2601943

(Source: Udero Lal Sheva Mandly , 2019)

Annexure 8. Flyer of the Udero Lal Welfare Peace Conference at Tando Adam, Sindh.



The brotherhood of peace love and interfaith harmony

**UDEROLAL PEACE CONFERENCE
& PEACE AWARDS**

THE FORMULA OF PEACE BY JHULE LAL SAI

25th September, 2019 Wednesday

Sain Udero Lal (Warun Dev) the most famous as Jhule Lal Sain.
The incarnation of sindh (the deity of water).
Hindus & Muslims have been worshipping sain Udero lal (Jhule Lal) for centuries with heart & soul.
Peace needs spiritual power to make real, to make it strong, to make it last.
Now in these days , world is worry about the peace ,extremism increasing as like pollution day by day.
All are searching peace, but world is looking fail by its efforts
But Udero lal sain has given exact accurate formula for peace . we the sindhi , being Pakistani must share it , through the philosophy & teachings of uderolal sain, we can change the world
Let's join, to spread the vibration of love and peace of Jhule lal sain to the world

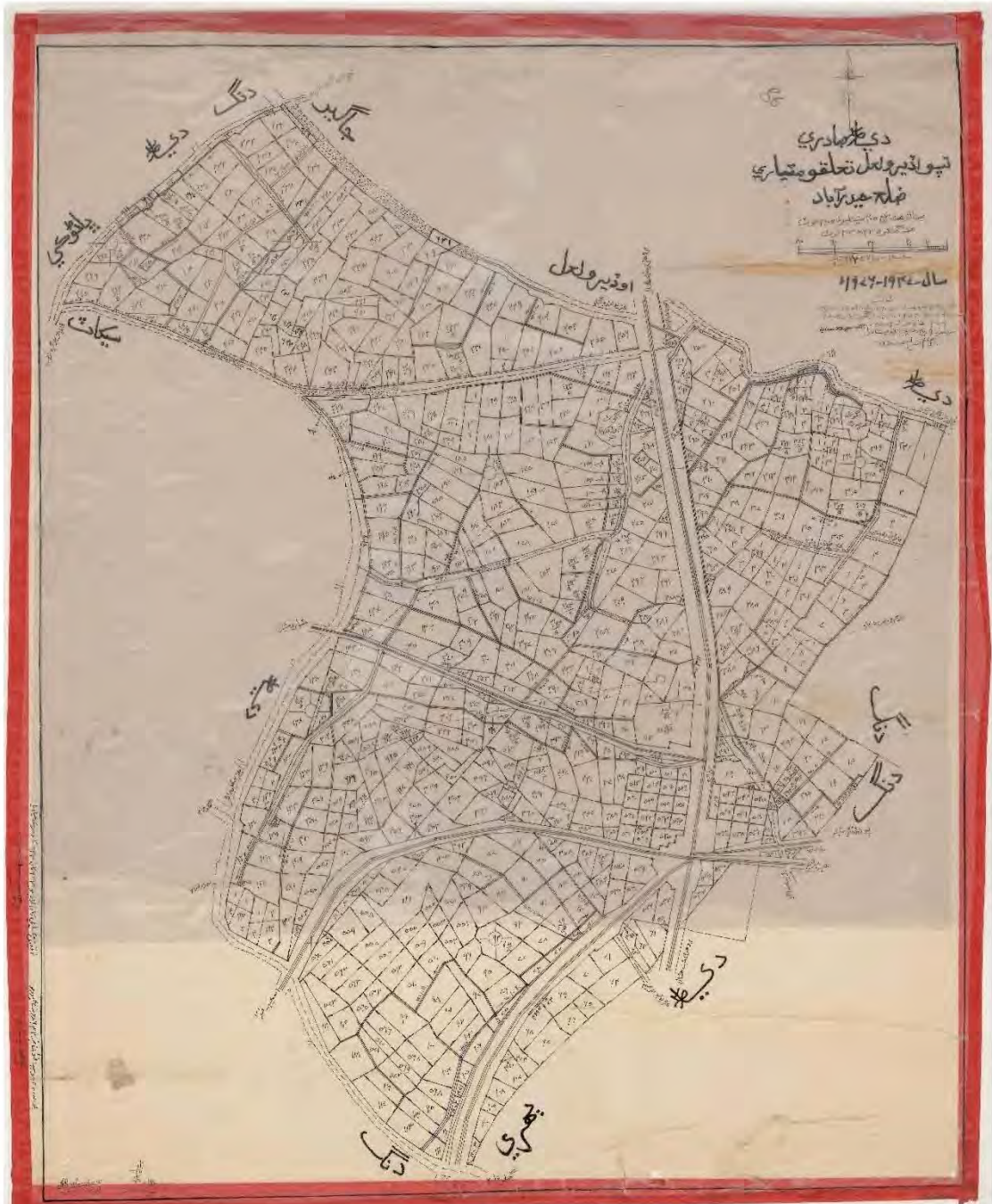
Time: 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm

MUHAMMADI GARDEN HYDERABAD ROAD TANDO ADAM

UDERO LAL WELFARE (R) TANDO ADAM Memon Muhalla (Tando Adam)
Contact: 03313871119 , 03013450641

(Source: Babu Rajkumar caretaker of the Tand Adam temple of the Udero Lal, Sindh, 2019).

Annexure 9. Tapo Udero Lal Taluka Matiari, District Hyderabad (1947-1976) Map, after India's post-partition 1947.



(Source: Mukhtiarkar Revenue office, District Matiari, 2019)

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Shared Religious Spaces in Sindh: A Case Study of Udero Lal

by Muhbat Ali Shah



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